

The Y-Men

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FADE IN:

EXT. ACADEMIC BUILDING - DAY

It's a small college campus, not unlike that of Juniata College. We establish an academic building in the light of an early spring day.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

In a semi-full classroom that acts as the meeting spot for Kender College's campus newspaper, CLARK sits towards the middle of the left-hand side. Clark is a senior at Kender College, a journalism major who doesn't really speak his own mind when it seems inconvenient to someone else. The sun is shining through the windows and the colors are more saturated than they would be naturally. Clark is leaning back in his seat, not paying too much attention to his professor, URICH, and messing around on his laptop.

Suddenly, his phone vibrates on his desk, drawing attention from everybody around him. It's a phone call from a random number that Clark doesn't know. He swipes over to dismiss the call.

CLARK
(guiltily)
Sorry.

He sets his phone to silent. Moments later he notices a voicemail notification light up the screen. Clark looks at the phone number curiously and Googles the area code. New York City.

When the class ends, everybody gets up to leave while Clark gathers his things and heads for the door. He brings out his phone to listen to the voicemail.

JOE (V.O.)
Hi Clark, this is Joe from *Last Week Tonight*. I came across some of your work for the Kender Gazette and I showed it to some of the guys up here and they loved it! We were wondering if you'd be able to come up to interview for a position on our writing staff. If you're interested, just give me a call back and we can set up a time. You can either use this

number, or my cell, which is 440-555-2398. Thanks, I hope we hear from you soon!

Towards the tail end of voicemail, Clark starts to get excited and his look of shock quickly turns into a wide grin. He brings his hand to his forehead in disbelief, as if this is too good to be true, which it is.

GLENN (O.S.)

Clark?

Clark is jolted back to reality by GLENN awkwardly standing in front him. Glenn is another student, awkward in nature. He isn't necessarily shy, just a little offbeat. The colors are more natural now, more muted. Clark closes his laptop quickly, with the screen still on his Google search.

CLARK

Sorry, Glenn, what's up?

GLENN

I was just wondering if you wouldn't mind swapping stories with me for this week, Dr. Urich assigned me the women's basketball playoff game, but I'm, uh, busy tomorrow night.

CLARK

(dazed)

Uh, yeah, sure, definitely, I'll forward you what I have so far.

GLENN

Thanks, I owe you one!

Glenn turns and exits the room with everyone else, leaving Clark alone. He picks up his phone, looks around, and listens to the voicemail.

TELEMARKETER

Hi, this is Joe with GlobalAuto, and you've been selected for lower car insurance! If you'd like to--

CLARK

Dammit.

Clark cuts off the voicemail mid-sentence and hurriedly packs up his things before walking out of the room. Upbeat music ala "Left Hand Free" by alt-j fades in while he puts his

headphones in.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Clark walks into the hallway as the music volume rises. He doesn't interact with anyone and keeps his head down while he exits the building.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - DAY

A extreme wide shot of campus as Clark enters the frame. We see the title splash on screen in time with the music: "The Y-Men".

Clark walks across campus to another building and goes inside. The music begins to die down as we transition into a conversation.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Clark is sitting with his friends, ELLIE and JAMES. Ellie is a driven, hard-working pre-med student who puts up with the antics of her friends, while James is a biology student, but he's a little bit more free and casual in his mannerisms. They are in the lounge area of the dining hall with remnants of lunch still on the table; empty bags of chips, cups, etc. Ellie is working intently on her laptop, while Clark and James have notebooks and laptops in front of them, but aren't paying any attention to them.

JAMES

Yeah, she was not happy with me after that.

CLARK

(laughing)

Maybe next time, don't tell your aunt "that's awesome" when she talks about her husband's hoarding addiction.

JAMES

(miming air quotes)

It's not my fault! Who starts a conversation with "he really turned his life around" and means it in a

negative way? The only time people say that is when people quit smoking or something.

CLARK

Well, she's not technically wrong.

JAMES

I feel really bad, I don't think I can go to their place for Thanksgiving this year.

Ellie finally chimes in, not even looking up from her laptop screen.

ELLIE

Apparently neither can your aunt.

JAMES

Dude.

CLARK

Nice.

JAMES

Aren't you supposed to be working on your application, anyways?

ELLIE

Not anymore.

Ellie shuts her laptop, raises her hands in the air, and takes a deep breath.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

I'm all done.

JAMES

Hey, congratulations, you're a doctor now!

ELLIE

(smiling)

That's not how med school works.

CLARK

But that's what *Scrubs* taught me.

ELLIE

Alright, I need a night off before these interviews start kicking in.

Let's do a movie night tomorrow.

JAMES

Oh, let's watch *Patch Adams* and get you prepped for the workforce.

Ellie gives James a look.

CLARK

I can be there for five seconds, but after that I have to cover the basketball game tomorrow.

ELLIE

I thought you hated writing for sports?

Clark's expression becomes slightly more downtrodden.

CLARK

I do, but Glenn asked to trade stories with me cause he couldn't make it to the game.

ELLIE

Why didn't you just tell him to find someone else?

CLARK

Have you met Glenn? His face is like a constantly disappointed younger brother, I can't say no to that.

JAMES

I always wondered why you never talked about your childhood.

CLARK

Besides, it's not like I was dying to report on the college's switch from Nestlé to Starbucks coffee.

ELLIE

Have you thought about asking Urich to put you on more interesting stuff?

CLARK

Nah, I don't want to bother him.

ELLIE

(sarcastically)

Because the last thing a professor
wants is for a student to be more
engaged with their work.

Ellie's last comment is pretty transparent. James looks to Clark expectantly to see his reaction. He chooses to ignore it.

CLARK

The game starts at 8, so I can hang
out for 30 minutes, but then I gotta
go.

Ellie is in that spot of being between annoyed and disappointed. This isn't the first time that Clark has avoided confrontation in this way. James starts packing his things up and stands.

JAMES

Speaking of, I have to get to a
meeting, so I'll see you guys later.

ELLIE

Alright, see you later! try to think
of a movie that isn't set in a
hospital.

JAMES

Oh, how about Grey's Anatomy?

ELLIE

One, not a movie, two, still no.

James grins and leaves. Clark gives a half-smile and a wave before looking back down.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - DAY

Clark and Ellie are standing outside of the student union while Ellie waits for a prospective student to arrive. They're continuing the conversation, or rather, Ellie is pushing the subject while Clark wants to leave it be.

ELLIE

I just don't understand why you won't

try to go for something more. I mean, it seems like you've been pretty apathetic towards the paper.

CLARK

Well, I don't know, I guess it's just that I'm burnt out after 3 years on staff.

ELLIE

Have you thought about quitting?

CLARK

What? No, it's not that bad. Besides, it'll look good on my resume.

ELLIE

I don't think that a extra few months is gonna affect a whole lot.

CLARK

Well, y'know, it gives me more writing samples.

SIDNEY, the prospective student, starts walking towards them. Clark and Ellie lower their voices for the end of the conversation.

ELLIE

Right, because that one extra article about the revamp of the sprinkler system is gonna make employers swoon.

CLARK

Hey, low blow.

Sidney approaches them and Ellie's demeanor switches to that of a cheery camp counselor.

SIDNEY

Hi, are you Ellie?

ELLIE

Yep, and you must be Sidney! Welcome to Kender College! This is my friend, Clark.

Sidney puts her bag and sleeping bag on the ground as they shake hands.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

So we can help you carry your stuff up to where you'll be staying and then I'll take you to your meeting with the admissions counselor. Sound good?

SIDNEY

Sure!

Clark and Ellie grab the sleeping bag and suitcase as they walk towards Ellie's dorm.

SIDNEY

So, what do you guys study?

ELLIE

Well, I'm a biology pre-med major, so I'm trying to become a doctor. I actually just finished submitting my applications today for medical school.

Sidney reacts with genuine excitement.

SIDNEY

Wow, congratulations! My cousin is actually a doctor, too, she's with Doctors Without Borders.

ELLIE

Oh, wow, that's so cool, I've been reading about that a lot lately.

SIDNEY

Yeah, I could put you in contact with her if you want!

ELLIE

Really? Yeah, that'd be great, thank you!

SIDNEY

No problem, I can give you her email later!

She nods towards Clark.

SIDNEY (CONT'D)

What about you?

Clark is a little bit more hesitant to give his answer.

CLARK

Oh, I'm majoring in journalism.

Sidney is clearly less enthusiastic about this one.

SIDNEY

Oh, cool. What field do you want to write in?

CLARK

Well, um, I'm still kinda figuring that out. I write for the school paper, so that's helping me get experience and hone in on what that'll be though.

SIDNEY

(nodding)

Cool.

Clark notices her lack of response and tries to lighten the mood.

CLARK

Yeah, my friends always joke about me being Clark Kent just cause I'm in Journalism and stuff.

The trio approach the doors to the dorm.

SIDNEY

Oh, do you like comics?

CLARK

No, not really.

SIDNEY

Ah.

Crickets. Ellie opens the door.

ELLIE

Alright, well here we are, we're just gonna go up these stairs and take a left through the door up there.

As the three of them go through the door, Clark is last inside. Shaking his head, he mouths, "stupid".

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

We look through a door to see Clark inside a classroom with two other newspaper staffers, all helping each other edit and sort out assignments for the next issue. They sit around one table, with their laptops and article drafts out. Clark is leaning back with his legs crossed, very casual posture. The Urich and WRITER are discussing an article while Clark is on Twitter.

URICH

I think if you cut out the quotes from that second student about the stolen books you'd probably be under the word count, he basically just says the same thing as the faculty.

WRITER

Okay, I can do that right now.

URICH

Do you have photos of the scene of the break-in yet or no?

WRITER

Uh, I think Marty is scheduled to get that done tomorrow.

URICH

Okay, just double-check with him and make sure that that's happening.

Urich turns to Clark.

URICH (CONT'D)

Do you have your draft ready, Clark?

CLARK

Oh, Glenn asked me to trade with him, so I'm covering the basketball game later tonight.

Urich looks down and flips through the papers in front of them.

URICH

Okay, sounds good, just try to send me something by the next afternoon.

CLARK
(jokingly)
If you want I could just send you the
last time I covered basketball, I
usually just swap out the stats and
call it a day.

Clark grins at his own joke and looks at the other two. They
aren't paying attention and don't respond. His smile fades

CLARK (CONT'D)
Kidding.

Urich finally looks up

URICH
Sorry, what?

Clark waves it off.

CLARK
It's not important.

The editor nods and looks back down. It's silent with some
soft typing and page turning. Clark looks around at them, out
the window, and back to them.

CLARK
Well...I'm gonna go, so I'll see you
both later.

Clark starts to pack his things and stand up while Urich and
the writer mumble their goodbyes. Clark gives a half-wave
over his shoulder as he walks out the door, but pulls back
when he realizes that they're not paying attention.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Smooth transition as Clark walks from the room to the
hallway. He starts to untangle his headphones from his pocket
and put them in when he crosses a wall of different fliers
for clubs and events on campus. He doesn't pay any attention
to them and walks out of frame. Beat. He comes back into
frame and looks at one flier that stands out in particular.

It reads, "Want to serve and protect the community? Join the
Y-Men today!" It has cheesy logo attached to it (think X-Men,
but not too close) as well as contact information and meeting
times, week nights at 9 PM. Conveniently, there's a meeting

tonight, but at the same time as the basketball game.

Clark looks around him, takes a slip, and walks away as he puts it in his pocket.

CUT TO:

INT. ELLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Clark, Ellie, and James are all together getting ready to watch a movie. James sits in a chair, scrolling through Netflix while Ellie is in the kitchen getting popcorn and snacks and Clark leans against the counter, on his phone. James yells from the chair.

JAMES

How about *Doctor Strange*? That's still about doctors.

CLARK

Cutting it close, don't you think?

JAMES

Yeah, you'd think there'd be more doctor movies off the top of your head.

ELLIE

You know, it's really okay, we can watch *Coco* or something.

CLARK

Oh, come on, you know I want to see that.

ELLIE

Well, then don't trade with Glenn next time. *Coco* it is.

Ellie walks out of the kitchen, clearly messing with Clark. He follows her into the living room.

CLARK

Hey, you know that this is the last thing I want to be doing.

ELLIE

(less jokingly)
Then tell Ulrich what you do want to do.

Clark starts to get frustrated. He doesn't want to go over this again.

CLARK
Ellie, come on--

ELLIE
No, I'm serious--

CLARK
Well, maybe I don't know what I want do yet.

ELLIE
You know what you don't want to do, so go from there. Don't just wait for something to hit you in the face, cause you're kinda running out of time.

Those last words sting a little bit and Clark gives an exasperated laugh. James is a little wide-eyed and just looks between the two, not quite sure how to ease the tension.

CLARK
Well, you're not wrong. Thanks for the advice. I gotta go to the game, I'll see you guys later.

Clark makes his way to the door.

JAMES
Alright, see you tomorrow, bud.

ELLIE
Bye.

The door closes behind Clark. Beat.

JAMES
So...not Coco?

ELLIE
(matter-of-factly)
No, we're watching Coco.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - NIGHT

Clark is walking across the campus towards the gym for the

basketball game. He's shaking his head at the exchange that just happened. He stops at a crosswalk and pulls his phone and earbuds from his pocket. He starts to untangle when he notices the slip from the flier is folded up in the mix.

Clark pulls it out and reads the location and meeting time again. He looks up at the gym in the distance, then turns to look at another academic building down the road. He takes a couple beats before putting everything back in his pocket and changing course to the other building.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Clark enters the academic building. It's dark, as a lot of the hallway lights are either off or dimmed. He finds his way down to the edge of a hallway where one classroom door is open. All of the desks and tables are moved to the side, save for a few that are in a circle in the center of the room. Think 'Alcoholics Anonymous' or any kind of support group; that's the kind of vibe that's going on here.

Seated in the center of the room are two people: Glenn and MINDY. If you were to ask around campus about Mindy, you wouldn't find out much more than what Clark sees here: she's intimidating and she's not here to make friends.

Glenn is wearing a long sleeve black T-shirt with a Y on it, made out of red duct tape. He also has a domino mask on with the letters K and D over his eyes and no eyehole for the K. Mindy is in street clothes, not wearing a mask or the shirt, although she is holding one. She's leaning back in her seat while Glenn is sitting on his hands.

Clark is standing a few feet away from the doorway, peering in to see what's going on. He's not too thrilled by what's in front of him.

CLARK
(whispering)
Oh, god...

He tries to turn quietly and leave, thinking he's made a mistake. Right when he takes his first couple of steps, however, TYLER turns around the corner and starts walking towards him. If Michael Scott from The Office was in college and loved superheroes, this is him. An enthusiastic leader, despite his leadership skills being a little rough around the edges. Tyler is also wearing the 'Y' made out of duct tape.

TYLER
Are you looking for the Y-Men?

CLARK
Um...yeah?

TYLER
Well, you're in the right place! Do you need help with something or are you joining up?

CLARK
(stammering)
Oh, no, I--

TYLER
Don't worry, if you want to hide your identity, we still have masks left over.

CLARK
It's not that, I just...

Clark trails off for a second, trying to think of something.

CLARK (CONT'D)
I'm a reporter for the paper, I'm writing a piece about clubs on campus.

Tyler's eyes light up at the opportunity to spread the word about the Y-Men. He walks up to Clark.

TYLER
Oh, are you Clark? You wrote about the sprinkler revamp last month! Good stuff, dude. I'm Tyler.

Tyler extends his hand out to Clark for a handshake.

CLARK
Uh...thanks.

TYLER
Well, here, why don't I introduce you to the team.

Tyler motions Clark to go into the classroom with him. As they enter, Glenn notices Clark with wide eyes before looking down and to the side. Clark looks at him and immediately recognizes him, giving a confused look.

TYLER
Hey guys, this is Clark, he's writing an article for the Gazette about all

the amazing work we do for the community. Clark, this is Mindy and this is the Kender Defender.

(to Clark)

We don't know his real name, he tries to keep his identity under wraps.

Clark knows that it's Glenn, but he decides to go with it.

CLARK

Got it.

He and Tyler move to sit down at the table with them.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Well it's great to meet you both...for the first time. So, what work do you do exactly?

GLENN

(masking his voice)

The police would call us vigilantes.

Clark and Tyler give Glenn a strange look as he does an iffy impersonation of Christian Bale's Batman voice.

MINDY

We'd only be vigilantes if we got anything done.

TYLER

Hey, hey, we're a task force, and we do get things done. In fact, we have some fan mail that came in today!

Tyler waves an envelope in front of everybody, and it certainly doesn't look like fan mail. More like summons to appear in court. Glenn gets a cartoonish grin on his face while Mindy sighs. Tyler starts to open the letter.

TYLER

This is a big milestone for the force, and we should all be proud of ourselves for putting in the work to start getting some notoriety around here.

Tyler pulls the letter from the envelope.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(giddily)

"To the Y-Men: On behalf of my clients at Marvel Entertainment, Ltd., I hereby order you to cease and desist all activities involving and/or relating to the name 'Y-Men' or any other variant that shares a likeness to intellectual property owned by Marvel Comics."

As he reads the letter, Tyler's excitement gradually dies down, barely finishing the sentence above a whisper. He folds the letter and places it back in the envelope in silence. Clark has a look of slight shock, eyebrows up and mouth agape. He looks over to the others. Glenn is downtrodden and Mindy face-palms, shaking her head.

GLENN

(normal voice)

Does that mean we have to change the name again?

TYLER

No, we already made the shirts. We might want to take down the posters though.

Glenn nods.

TYLER (CONT'D)

(to Clark)

Would you mind not including this in your article?

Clark mimes zipping his mouth and throwing away the key. Tyler stands and shifts moods entirely and tries to bring the vibe back up.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Great! Well, I think it's time we go on patrol. Shall we?

CLARK

(confused)

What now?

TYLER

You wanted to know what it is we do? We protect the people of this campus and this town, and you, my friend,

have a front row seat to see us in the trenches.

CLARK
Oh, I don't know--

TYLER
Oh, come on, even journalists have to get into the thick of it sometimes, don't they?

Clark searches for an excuse, but he can't find one.

CLARK
Okay, sure.

TYLER
Yes! Alright team, let's go!

They all stand up and head for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREETS - NIGHT

Clark, Tyler, Glenn, and Mindy are all walking down the sidewalks of campus. It's silent outside and nobody else is in view.

CLARK
So, why is your group called the Y-Men?

TYLER
"Task force", and it stands for the 'Y' in Tyler.

CLARK
Okay...why aren't you the T-Men then?

TYLER
Pfft, my cousins jumped on that name before I had a chance.

CLARK
Oh, do they also have a "task force"?

TYLER
No, they run an underground tea shop in Portland.

CLARK

What do you mean by underground--

GLENN

Tyler, look out, we have incoming.

The group stops in their tracks and looks ahead at a PEDESTRIAN who is walking in their direction. He has headphones on and is eating a bag of chips. He doesn't pay attention to the group as he starts to pass them. When he finishes the bag, he casually tosses it to the grass by the sidewalk.

TYLER

Hey! You!

The pedestrian takes off one headphone and turns back.

PEDESTRIAN

Huh?

Tyler approaches the pedestrian, looking back and giving the group a wink along the way.

TYLER

Do you know what the fine is for
littering in the state of
Pennsylvania?

PEDESTRIAN

(looking around)

Um...no?

TYLER

Then either you take this back, or
we're gonna go find out together!

Tyler holds up the bag that the pedestrian tossed onto the ground, shaking it in his face.

PEDESTRIAN

You're kidding, right?

Tyler shoves the bag into his chest and backs away towards the rest of the group, trying to look cool while doing it.

TYLER

Oh, no. In fact, We're the most
serious thing you're ever gonna face.
So, why don't you take that bag and
put it into a trash can instead of

treating this campus like your own
personal dumpster.

The pedestrian takes a look at the crew, which doesn't really look all that intimidating, but he doesn't want to bother dealing with them. He scoffs, shakes his head, and walks away, bag in hand. Tyler turns around to face the group.

MINDY

Okay, not gonna lie, that was pretty cool.

GLENN

Yeah, that guy seemed pretty shaken up!

TYLER

I know, I have so much adrenaline right now, I could fight a bear!

Clark looks on at the scene with a mixture of amusement and confusion as the Y-Men continue to excitedly boast about their "win". He looks back down the path at the pedestrian where he notices that he just waited a few more steps before tossing the bag to the side again. He looks back at the group to mention something about it, but they're still pre-occupied.

TYLER

So, do you have a better idea of what the Y-Men are about, Clark?

CLARK

Uh, yeah, definitely!

Clark feigns excitement, but is still a little conflicted about his new friends.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Clark walks into the academic building the following morning, yawning, coffee in hand. He's heading to the Kender Gazette meeting when Glenn calls out to him, entering the building behind him.

GLENN

Hey, Clark!

Clark turns around to see Glenn jogging towards him.

CLARK
Hey man, what's up?

GLENN
Not much. Can I talk to you for a second, though? In private?

CLARK
Uh...sure, yeah.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Glenn enters an empty classroom, checking around the corners to make sure that no one is around. Clark follows in behind him and shuts the door.

CLARK
So, what's up?

GLENN
(nervously)
Okay, so I know that this could be kind of a shock, but, um...

He takes a beat.

GLENN (CONT'D)
(more confidently)
I'm the Kender Defender.

CLARK
Right.

Clark takes a sip of his coffee, expecting Glenn to continue talking, not realizing that he isn't supposed to know this. Glenn looks at him expectantly and Clark almost spits his coffee when he realizes his mistake. He starts to fumble over his words, not sure how to course correct.

CLARK
(feigning shock, poorly)
Oh, I mean, wait, what? Really? I mean, wow, that's wild, that's--

GLENN
Wait, did you know?

CLARK
Did I know what? Did I know that you

were the Kender Defender? No. I mean, maybe. I had a hunch, I guess--

GLENN
(disappointed)
You knew.

CLARK
Yeah, I knew.

GLENN
How'd you know?

CLARK
Well the mask doesn't really leave much to the imagination.

GLENN
Well then why didn't you say anything?

CLARK
I don't know, I didn't want you to feel bad, I guess. Also, you're definitely blind in one eye when you wear that thing, right? There's no eyehole for the 'K'.

GLENN
Yeah, but I've just kind of learned to live with it.

CLARK
Why not just change the name?

GLENN
Hey, why don't you try coming up with a superhero name! All the good ones are taken already.

CLARK
Okay, fine, whatever. Why did you want to tell me in the first place?

GLENN
Well, I figured if you were gonna be hanging out with the Y-Men, it'd be easier to just tell you who I am then to try and hide my voice every night.

Clark nods, but isn't entirely convincing with his response. He isn't sure if he is going to be hanging around the Y-Men

for much longer.

CLARK
Right, gotcha.

GLENN
You are coming back tonight, right?

CLARK
(uncertain)
Well, I don't know, man, it seems
kinda out of my league.

GLENN
Out of your league, you were a natural
out there!

CLARK
Glenn, I didn't do anything.

GLENN
Hey, don't sell yourself short, you
were instrumental in that littering
bust.

Clark shakes his head, not quite sure what to say in the
situation.

CLARK
I don't know--

GLENN
Okay, how about this: join us on
patrol tonight, try it out one more
time, and then if you still want to
drop it, I'll understand.

CLARK
(beat)
Maybe. We'll see.

GLENN
Alright, fine, I'll drop it, but Tyler
was pretty excited for us to finally
have a fourth member.

Clark thinks about this for a moment, and then nods toward
the exit.

CLARK
Come on, let's get to the meeting.

They both turn and head for the door. After a couple beats of silence, Glenn speaks up.

GLENN (CONT'D)

Wait, weren't you supposed to cover basketball for me?

CLARK

Don't worry, I got it covered.

CUT TO:

INT. LOUNGE - NIGHT

In a student lounge, Clark, Ellie, and James are all together, working individually, books and laptops scattered across the table in front of them. It's silent, except for some typing. Clark's laptop is in front of him with an empty Word document open. He stares at for a bit when Ellie looks up and breaks the silence.

ELLIE

I am sorry about last night. I mean, my thoughts haven't changed, I just didn't mean to take that tone.

CLARK

(nonchalantly, but sincere)
Don't worry about it, you're good.

JAMES

And we'd be willing to watch Coco again with you, it's a small sacrifice.

CLARK

(laughing)
No, that's fine, really, I'll find time for it on my own.

They're all smiles as they look back at their screens.

JAMES

How did the game go last night anyways? Ryan said he didn't see you down where press usually is.

Clark is a little caught off-guard by this, but covers his tracks with only a few um's thrown in.

CLARK

Oh, I got there late, so I just went up to the top of the stands. It was pretty packed cause, y'know, playoffs, it would've been a hassle trying to make it down.

Ellie looks at Clark with a slightly confused look. He seemed to over-explain just a tad, but Ellie looks back at her laptop and doesn't make anything out of it.

Silence fills the room again as James and Ellie continue working while Clark stares at a blank screen. He's fidgeting a little bit, trying to focus up, but it doesn't work. Eventually, he takes a look out the window and realizes that this isn't where he wants to be and takes matters into his own hands. He checks the time and decides to pack up.

CLARK

I'm gonna call it, actually, I just have to do some cleaning up around at home and then I'm gonna go to bed. I'll see you guys tomorrow.

Ellie and James say their goodbyes as Clark puts on his backpack and heads out the door. Once in the hallway, he looks around to see that it's empty, and then jogs to the exit.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Clark enters the same building from the night before and then jogs down to the Y-Men's meeting place. Mindy is there, sitting at a table, but no one else yet.

CLARK

Hey guys, sorry I'm late--

Clark pauses and notices the empty room.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Where is everybody?

MINDY

Tyler's fixing the duct tape on his shirt and KD's in the bathroom.

CLARK

KD?

MINDY
Kender Defender.

CLARK
Ah, right. Gotcha.

Clark leans up against the wall as an awkward silence falls on them.

CLARK
(grinning)
So, how'd you end up with the Y-Men?

MINDY
(no eye contact)
The less you know about me, the better.

CLARK
(straight-faced)
Alright.

Silence. After a couple beats, Tyler enters the room.

TYLER
Hey, Clark, you're back!

CLARK
Yeah, sorry I'm late!

TYLER
Oh, no worries, I'm just glad that there's a reporter ready to tell our story.

Clark laughs nervously, not sure how to respond since the story doesn't exist as of yet. Luckily, Glenn makes his entrance to change the subject.

GLENN
(muffled)
So, you were able to make it?

CLARK
Yeah, well, I just had to take care of some things and-- what are you wearing?

Clark starts the line with a smile, turning to face Glenn when he's met with a black ski mask with the Kender Defender domino mask laid over top.

GLENN

It's for my identity.
(hushed, to Clark)
Just because you found out doesn't
mean I want others to know.

Clark just stares and nods, going with it, not sure what to say.

GLENN (CONT'D)

Hey, what do you guys think about
capes?

TYLER

(ignoring Glenn)
Alright, I guess we should head out
then! Let's do a doubles patrol. Mindy
and KD, you take the east end of
campus, and Clark--

Tyler places a firm hand on Clark's shoulder.

--we'll take the west end and I can
show you the ropes, maybe give you
some good quotes to run.

CLARK

Uh, alright, sounds good!

TYLER

Alright! Let's go, Y-Men!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREETS - NIGHT

Clark and Tyler are walking down a sidewalk on campus, side by side. They're approaching an academic building.

CLARK

How long have the Y-Men been around?

TYLER

About a year and a half. We're really
just now getting traction. For a while
there it was just KD and I, and then
Mindy showed up about a month ago. And
now we have you to put us on the map!

Tyler looks over at Clark.

TYLER (CONT'D)
Shouldn't you be writing this down or something?

CLARK
Oh, right.

Clark takes out his phone from his pocket and hits a random button to pretend like he's recording.

CLARK (CONT'D)
And...recording. So, why did you start up the Y-Men in the first place?

TYLER
Well, ever since high school I've always wanted to do more for the community, to help people out, but I never knew how. I joined all those community service clubs that everybody else joins and they just weren't doing it for me. So, I had just been struggling with that, but then last year--
(deep breath)
--everything changed.

CLARK
(nervously)
What happened?

TYLER
I saw *Kick-Ass* for the first time.

CLARK
Oh.

TYLER
Yeah, and so I thought, "I took karate until middle school, I can do that!" And here we are today!

CLARK
Wow, that's...great.

Clark and Tyler approach the academic building

TYLER
Hey, let's stop in here real quick, I

gotta take a leak if you know what I mean.

CLARK
I don't think there's any double meaning there.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Clark and Tyler enter the building. Clark hangs out around the entrance while Tyler continues down the hallway, passing a staircase.

CLARK
Oh, there's a bathroom at the top of the stairs.

TYLER
I know, but they just have paper towels, I need the hand dryers.

CLARK
Why?

TYLER
(Laughing)
Right, like I'm gonna use paper towels on my hands and then I'm expected to fight crime? You'll learn, Clark, you'll learn.

Tyler walks down the hallway, leaving Clark dumbfounded as to what that means. He shakes his head and waits, reading some of the posters and flyers on the wall.

He continues this as he gradually moves further down the hall, coming close to an open door into a department office. The lights are off, seemingly empty, but then Clark hears a noise coming from the office. He looks down each end of the hallway before slowly moving towards the door.

CLARK
Hello?

No response. He enters through the door, peeking around at first. The sound of rummaging around is getting louder, the further in Clark is. He turns a corner to see a BURGLAR, dressed in all black. He's leaving one of the individual offices, a bag full of stolen items in hand. He hasn't noticed Clark yet.

CLARK

You know, it might just be the weird
"I'm not supposed to be here" vibe
you're giving off, but I have a
feeling you're not supposed to be
here.

The burglar turns around quickly. He and Clark stare at each other for a moment, when the burglar makes the first move, pushing Clark out of the way before running out the door and down the hall.

Clark chases after him. As the burglar tries to exit the building, the bag is caught on the door, so he leaves it behind. The chase takes them outside, Clark running past the bag.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREETS - NIGHT

Glenn and Mindy are walking through campus, towards the academic building that Clark and Glenn were in, mid-argument.

MINDY

Listen, all I'm saying is, you can
barely walk straight, so what happens
if something actually happens and you
need to run after someone?

GLENN

Well, if it's serious, then sure, I'll
take the mask off.

MINDY

But isn't the point of this that there
could be something serious?

GLENN

Mindy, how else am I supposed to
protect my identity--

Mid-sentence, Glenn trips on the sidewalk, at a corner where to paths meet. At the same time, the burglar cross the street and turns the same corner while looking behind him, tripping over Glenn in the process. Mindy and Glenn are shocked by this as Clark comes up behind them, out of breath from the chase.

CLARK

Hey guys, thanks for the assist.

MINDY

I'm sorry, what's happening here?

Clark is about to answer, but Tyler joins them and interrupts, holding the bag that the burglar had dropped.

TYLER

So I found this bag on the floor, it has a ton of textbooks and mugs and stuff.

Tyler looks up from the bag.

Who's this guy?

Clark points between the bag and the burglar.

CLARK

Thief.

It takes a second for Tyler to register, but once he realizes, he's all smiles.

TYLER

Alright, good work team! We got ourselves our first felony!

Tyler high fives Clark and Mindy, while Glenn is still on the ground and the burglar is laid down half on top of him. Clark is still out of breath, but he smiles and laughs. There's a beat of silence.

GLENN

Can someone help me up?

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - DAY

Clark and Ellie are walking across the quad. It's midday, and they're on their way to class.

CLARK

So, here's something that you might like: I think I'm gonna talk to Urich about a potential story that I'm actually interested in.

ELLIE

That's great! What's it about!

CLARK

Well, I don't want to get into specifics yet, cause I don't know what he's gonna say, but I was thinking of highlighting some clubs on campus who I think should get more attention.

ELLIE

Well, hey, no matter what he says, I'm glad that you're trying.

CLARK

Yeah, me too.

Clark is smiling, happy to get some positive feedback, even if he is being vague about what exactly he's talking about.

ELLIE

By the way, are you going to James' thing tonight?

CLARK

There's a thing tonight?

ELLIE

Yeah, didn't you hear anything about it? Him and his roommates have been talking about all week.

CLARK

I guess I've just been busy. I don't know, I'm not sure if I'm feeling the whole "people" vibe tonight.

ELLIE

(laughing)

Yeah, I'm not sure either. I might try to make an appearance, but do you just wanna do a movie night after that?

CLARK

(sarcastically)

Two movies in one week? What do you even do around here?

Ellie give Clark a stern look.

CLARK

Kidding, kidding! That sounds good.

Clark is approaching his stop at the next academic building,

so he slows down. He hears a strange bird call coming from one of the doors. Confused, he looks behind Ellie to see Glenn standing in there, signaling for Clark to come talk to him. Ellie also hears it and turns around.

ELLIE

What was that?

Before Ellie can see him, Glenn rushes into the building.

CLARK

I think it was just the wind.

ELLIE

I don't think wind usually sounds like a beached whale.

CLARK

Well, that's not fair, how many beached whales have you seen?

ELLIE

Fair point. So, do you wanna do around 9?

CLARK

Yeah, that works.

Clark looks behind Ellie to see Glenn still waiting by the door, from the inside this time.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Actually, I just remembered, I have a, uh, group meeting tonight, so I'll have to push it back to 10-ish?

ELLIE

Who has group meetings at 9 PM on a Friday?

CLARK

Well, the people in my group are kind of...night owls, I guess.

ELLIE

(resigned)

Alright, whatever. But I get to pick the movie.

CLARK
(backing away)
I wouldn't expect it any other way.
I'll talk to you later!

Clark walks through the door.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

When Clark enters, Glenn is there on the other side, waiting for him.

CLARK
(exasperated, but not too much)
What was that?

GLENN
That was the secret signal.

CLARK
Okay, first, I don't think we need a secret signal, and second, I think if we did, you don't get to decide that on your own.

GLENN
Okay, then what do you think the secret signal should be?

CLARK
I don't know?

GLENN
And that's why you don't get to choose the secret signal.

CLARK
Okay, fine, just--what did you want?

GLENN
You never told me what you thought about capes.

CLARK
(under his breath)
Oh my god.

Clark starts to walk away. Glenn calls out after him.

GLENN
I'm gonna get one!

CUT TO:

EXT. THE STREETS - NIGHT

Clark is standing outside of the meeting spot for the Y-Men. Mindy and Tyler have already left on patrol, and Glenn is approaching him, late to the party.

GLENN
I couldn't get one. The only costumes left at Walmart were Superman, and I just want a black cape.

CLARK
(beat)
So instead you got a fanny pack?

Pan down to reveal Glenn's fanny pack. It's not a great look for him.

GLENN
Utility belt.

CLARK
Glenn, I think you're focusing on the wrong details for this costume thing.

GLENN
You say that now, but when you get hungry later tonight--

Glenn unzips the fanny pack and pulls out a granola bar.

GLENN (CONT'D)
--you'll be thanking the utility belt.

CLARK
If you're using it for food, it's definitely just a fanny pack.

GLENN
Well, I'll probably get duct tape and stuff too.

Clark and Glenn start to walk down the sidewalk and start their patrol.

CLARK
Maybe some sunscreen, bug spray?

GLENN
Actually, bug spray could be good.

Clark laughs and shakes his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. JAMES' HOUSE - NIGHT

A little while later in the night, Clark and Glenn are walking down a street that is slightly off campus, but still close to the college. We're technically still in "The Streets", but approaching James' house.

CLARK
So, you never explained why you're doing all of this.

GLENN
What, the costume stuff?

CLARK
No--well, yes, but why you're doing this whole Y-Men thing in the first place. I mean, honestly I wouldn't have pegged you as the "vigilante" type.

GLENN
I mean, I don't either.

They both laugh.

CLARK
Tyler said his main inspiration was *Kick-Ass*, is it a superhero thing for you too?

GLENN
More of a jealousy thing, actually.

Clark's smile fades a little bit, puzzled by what he means by this. It's not the answer he was expecting.

GLENN (CONT'D)
Like, yeah, I grew up really liking comic books and all that stuff, and as a kid you really look up to those

characters, people with superpowers who are always looking out for everyone else. But when you get older, you kinda realize that you can never actually be like Superman or Captain America cause, y'know, superpowers aren't real.

CLARK

Yet.

Clark smirks, trying to lighten it up a little. Glenn just keeps going, though.

GLENN

Trust me, been there, done that. Imagining every little scenario where you get struck by lightning, and boom, superpowers. Obviously, you'd still have to worry about "being an adult" and stuff like that, but I feel like it'd be so much easier to know what you're supposed to do. It might not be as dramatic as they show in comic books and movies and stuff, but there are always people who need help, and you'd be able to. But, again--

(laughing)

--not real. So, I guess I just got fed up with waiting for a lightning bolt, and when I heard about the Y-Men, I figured this was my chance.

They continue walking as Clark takes it all in for a couple of seconds. He stares at the sidewalk ahead of him, trying to think of a response, but he wasn't expecting that kind of confession. Even though he might not relate to all of it, the message hits close to home.

GLENN (CONT'D)

But yeah, the costume is definitely a superhero thing.

Clark laughs. He's glad that he doesn't have to follow up Glenn's monologue.

CLARK

I'll be honest, the mask is kinda growing on me.

Clark feels his phone vibrate in his pocket. He pulls it out

to see a text from Ellie.

ELLIE (TEXT)

Just got back from James' party. I
hope you know if you're late I'm going
to intentionally choose a bad movie.

Clark smiles at his phone and begins to type a response. As he and Glenn keep walking, they approach a house that's hosting a party. Lights are visible through the window, music blaring. Clark is still looking at his phone, so he doesn't see what house it is.

GLENN

Let's go talk to these guys, they're
probably gonna get a noise complaint
soon.

CLARK

Yeah, sure.

Clark follows him and puts his phone away. When he finally looks up, he realizes that this is James' house. They approach the door and Glenn knocks.

CLARK (CONT'D)

Oh no.

GLENN

What?

The door swings open and Clark steps to the side a little bit, somewhat out of view from the door. He distances himself, pacing around and trying to seem nonchalant. James' roommate RYAN stands at the entrance holding a red Solo cup. The party continues behind him. He takes a long look at Glenn's costume.

RYAN

Uh, this isn't a costume party.

GLENN

No, sorry, I'm the Kender Defender,
with the Y-Men.

Ryan takes a beat, looks at Clark, who's still turned away, and back.

RYAN

Yeah, I didn't get any of that.

GLENN

We were just wondering if you could turn your music down a little bit. We figured you wouldn't want the police showing up here soon.

Ryan's expression shifts from one of confusion to one of annoyance or anger. He takes a step out the door, leaving it a little bit open.

RYAN

That kinda sounds like a threat.

Clark goes wide-eyed and turns around to intervene before Glenn can say anything that digs him into a deeper hole.

CLARK

Nope! No threats, just trying to help each other out. We could just hear the music from pretty far out, so we were worried that your neighbors might get annoyed--

Clark starts to ramble, trying to calm James' roommate down when the door swings back open and James is standing there. He's surprised to see Clark.

JAMES

Hey, Clark! What's up, I thought you weren't able to make it?

RYAN

Batman said he'd call the cops on us.

CLARK

Nope, still not it, we were just in the neighborhood, wanted to say hi.

James takes in the scene and tries to understand what's happening, but is struggling. You would be too, if you saw Glenn in full costume on your porch.

JAMES

Alright, Ryan, why don't you head back inside, I got it.

Ryan turns around and exits, still slightly disgruntled. He closes the door behind him. There's a beat of awkward silence.

CLARK

So, the party sounds great!

JAMES

Yeah, it's good. I thought you had a group project or something.

CLARK

Oh, that, yeah, I did have that. But, uh, we just finished, so I just wanted to take a walk, and, y'know, say hello.

JAMES

(gesturing to Glenn)

Who's this?

CLARK

Oh, this is--

GLENN

--the Kender Defender.

Glenn puts out a his hand for a handshake while Clark shakes his head and looks down. James shakes his hand.

JAMES

Cool...so there's no actual noise complaint, right?

CLARK

No.

GLENN

But you might want to turn it down a little bit.

JAMES

Gotcha. So, if you guys aren't gonna come in, then I'm just gonna head back, so...

CLARK

Yeah, sure, I'll talk to you later, have fun.

JAMES

Thanks, nice of you to stop by. I'll see you later.

James starts to head back in the door.

GLENN

Wait--

Glenn opens up his fanny pack and pulls out another granola bar. He hands it to James.

GLENN (CONT'D)

I have a feeling your roommate might appreciate this for tomorrow morning.

James takes the granola bar and looks between Clark and Glenn. He's really weirded out by what just happened.

JAMES

(to himself)

Okay then.

James goes back inside and shuts the door. Clark and Glenn stand there for a moment, the former shaking his head in disbelief at how poorly that went.

GLENN

I bet someone feels pretty dumb for making fun of the utility belt right about now.

Clark just gives a heavy sigh and turns around to leave. Glenn follows suit.

CUT TO:

INT. ELLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Clark heads into Ellie's house, slightly out of breath, and sees Ellie on the couch. He grabs some water and goes over to join her in front of the TV.

CLARK

Hey, sorry I'm late, we just got caught up and I didn't realize the time.

He sits down next to her and takes a sip of water. She just looks at him and speaks up after a beat. Clark doesn't make eye contact.

ELLIE

So, you know that James texted me, right?

CLARK
Makes sense.

ELLIE
About you showing up at his house with
a guy in a mask?

CLARK
I figured.

ELLIE
And did you think I was just gonna
drop it?

Clark finally looks over and smiles.

CLARK
I was hoping so.

Ellie isn't having it.

ELLIE
So, you just straight-up lied about
the group meeting?

CLARK
Well, not really, I did have to meet
with a group.

ELLIE
Okay, I'm tired, I've been scrolling
through the worst movies I could find
while waiting for you, and I'm
honestly a little weirded out so I'm
sorry if I'm not huge on the B.S. half-
answer schtick.

Clark sighs, realizing that he's not getting out of this that
easily. He puts down his glass of water.

CLARK
Okay, this might not make much sense
at first--

ELLIE
--I'm counting on that.

CLARK
So, you know that article I was gonna
talk to Urich about?

Ellie nods.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Well, I found out about this club on
campus called the Y-Men--

ELLIE
Off to a great start.

CLARK
--and they're kind of a task force
designed to help people out around the
community and look out for people in
trouble.

ELLIE
I'm sorry, "task force"?

CLARK
(throwing his hands up)
Their words.

ELLIE
And they wear masks?

CLARK
Only one of them, it's to protect his
identity.

ELLIE
Cool, so you joined a cult.

CLARK
I don't think I'm explaining this very
well. (Alt: This doesn't work if you
keep interrupting.)

Ellie doesn't acknowledge that last bit and keeps going.

ELLIE
Why were you at James' house?

CLARK
Well, we were out on patrol, and KD
wanted to let them know that the music
was a little loud so that they didn't
get a noise complaint.

ELLIE
Patrol? So you just walk around campus
waiting for something to happen?

CLARK

Kind of.

ELLIE

Oh my god.

CLARK

Hey, sometimes we actually help people out, yesterday we stopped someone from stealing a bunch of stuff from people's offices.

ELLIE

What do you mean you stopped someone?

CLARK

I just kinda chased him until he tripped.

Ellie stands up and puts her hands to her forehead, beginning to pace.

ELLIE

You've got to be kidding me.

CLARK

Listen, I know it sounds crazy--

ELLIE

No, Clark, it is crazy! You're telling me that for the past week you've been following around these weirdos in tights, waiting to find crimes and then you just run at them as soon as you see them?

CLARK

...well, they're not tights--

ELLIE

Not the point, Clark! You're gonna get yourself hurt! What happens when you chase after someone and they have a knife or a gun or something?

CLARK

Ellie, the odds of that are pretty low.

ELLIE

Well, I thought the odds of my best

friend joining a cult were pretty low,
but here we are.

CLARK
It's not a cult!

ELLIE
Then what would you call it? Cause
"task force" doesn't sound a whole lot
better.

Both of them are exasperated. Clark takes a second to gather
his thoughts.

CLARK
You know what, actually, I'm gonna
head out. I'm glad that we get to have
these chats every time I come over,
maybe next time you can tell me all
about something else that's wrong with
me.

ELLIE
Can't wait.

Clark stands up and goes to leave the same way that he came
in, while Ellie storms upstairs. Clark slams the door on his
way out.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

We cut back in as Clark plops down into a desk the following
day at the Kender Gazette. He's tired and still agitated at
his argument with Ellie. Glenn enters and sits down next to
him.

GLENN
Hey, Clark.

CLARK
Hey, man.

GLENN
Are you doing okay? You seemed kinda
out of it after our stop at your
friend's house last Friday.

CLARK
Oh, yeah, I'm fine.

Clark forces one of those half-smiles that you give when you walk past someone you only kind of know in a hallway.

GLENN

Okay, just checking.

Clark pulls out his laptop and begins absent-mindedly browsing the Internet while URICH gives out assignments to reporters.

URICH

Alright, Glenn, apparently some people caught the book thief, but no one really knows how and public safety's being coy about it, can you follow up on that.

GLENN

Yeah, sure!

URICH

Great, thank you. Clark, can you cover the new racquetball facilities that were just built.

CLARK

Yeah, sure, no problem.

Clark turns back to his laptop and gives a heavy sigh. He still isn't huge on writing for the sports section, but he doesn't really feel like fighting it at the moment.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Clark heads into the building where the Y-Men meet up before patrol, headphones in. As he walks down the hallway to the classroom, he takes the headphones out and greets the group, who is already assembled there. Glenn and Mindy are sitting down with Tyler standing in front of them, about give some news.

CLARK

Hey, everyone.

He takes a look at them and notices their downtrodden expressions.

CLARK (CONT'D)
(concerned)
What's up?

TYLER
Why don't you take a seat, Clark.

Clark slowly moves to take the seat next to Glenn.

TYLER (CONT'D)
So, I got an email from the college administration this morning, and apparently they didn't really understand what it was that we did. But once they found out, they weren't a fan, so the college is shutting the Y-Men down.

CLARK
"Once they found out", what do you mean, how did they find out?

TYLER
I don't know, they didn't say. They said that they wouldn't do anything now, but if they caught us again in the future, they would take "disciplinary action". Something about endangering ourselves and harassing other students.

MINDY
How would they know if we didn't quit?

GLENN
We're registered with the clubs and activities office, they know where to find us.

TYLER
Listen, I know that this is a sad day, trust me, I think this could be a win.

They all give Tyler confused looks.

TYLER (CONT'D)
They didn't tell us how they found out, but my theory is that we got too close to the situation. We pissed off some people who got nervous and ratted on us.

Hold on Clark. The group continues talking, but Clark connects the dots and realizes that Ellie was the one who talked to the administration.

MINDY

Too close to what, though?

TYLER

I don't know, but I think the name of the Y-Men got into people's heads and we scared the right people.

GLENN

So what are we gonna do about it?

TYLER

I mean, nothing, I can't get expelled, but we should be proud of all the good work we did.

Clark has stopped listening at this point, and the dialogue going on around him begins to drown out. He shakes his head in disbelief.

CUT TO:

INT. ELLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sitting down at her dining room table on her laptop, Ellie is startled when three loud knocks come from her front door. She gets up to answer it. When she opens the door, Clark is standing there, just short of fuming.

CLARK

Are you kidding me?

ELLIE

Start over.

CLARK

You went to the administration?

ELLIE

Ah, that.

Ellie turns around and walks back into the house, Clark following her in and closing the door behind him. They walk into the living room with a decent amount of space between them.

CLARK

What gives you any right to do that?

ELLIE

Clark, you literally used the words "task force", that kind brings up a lot of red flags.

CLARK

What is it that makes you want to control every little aspect of my life? First, the newspaper thing, now this?

ELLIE

Okay, one of those is about writing for a newspaper, the other is about parading around at night in costumes, running headfirst into anything remotely sketchy. I'm not controlling you, you're old enough to make your own choices, but when you start making really dumb choices, I feel like I'm allowed to call you out on it!

Clark doesn't have a response for this. He just shakes his head and gives an exasperated laugh as he paces the room a little bit.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

Why are you pushing this thing so hard? You were there for like a week!

CLARK

Because I felt like I was actually doing something! You're the one who kept saying that I should be more assertive, right?

ELLIE

That was about the Gazette, Clark, whatever this is is way beyond that!

CLARK

Exactly! I'm kinda done with being the odd one out!

ELLIE

What?

Clark stops pacing. He's a few feet away from Ellie still.

CLARK

For four years, you guys have been talking about becoming doctors or going off to save the world or whatever, and for four years, I've been sitting here writing about every \$5 donation to the school. I'm not exactly in the same league!

ELLIE

Well, I'm sorry you feel that way, and that's a whole other conversation, but that also doesn't really give you a free pass on this one.

CLARK

Why is this the hill you're dying on? You tell me to put myself out there, be more assertive, I finally do, and then you just nuke it! There were other people in that group who needed that more than me.

ELLIE

Clark, if you really thought that that was just like any other club, you wouldn't have lied about it all last week.

CLARK

Cause I knew you'd think it was weird!

ELLIE

I don't care about weird, you knew that it was dangerous!

CLARK

Ellie, I was never going to get hurt--

ELLIE

Look me in the eye and tell me that as you chased down some thief, you really thought to yourself "there's no possible way that this could end badly for me". Either you're really that naive, or you knew that joining the "Y-Men" or whatever was a bad move.

CLARK

Sure, we knew that it could possibly happen, but what if we could've helped

more people than ourselves if we were out there, isn't that worth the risk?

ELLIE

That's not your job, Clark.

CLARK

(snidely)

Cause that's reserved for you, right?

Ellie looks Clark directly in the eye. She could snap back at him, but she knows it's not going to get her anywhere. Clark holds the stare for a beat. Pin-drop silence. Then, he's had enough. He shakes his head again, then heads for the door. It slams behind him.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. CLARK'S ROOM - DAY

An alarm begins to blare from the black. We cut back in to see it set at 9:00 AM. Pull back to reveal that it's Clark's alarm, and that he's already awake and has been for a while. Clearly, his argument with Ellie is still on his mind. He turns from his side to turn the alarm. He sits up off of his bed, rubs his eyes, and then stands up to get ready.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - DAY

Clark is crossing the quad, headphones in, looking down at his phone mostly. When he finally puts it away in his pocket, he looks up and sees James exit one of the surrounding academic buildings. Clark pauses, before realizing that he should go over and talk to him about what happened the previous Friday night.

When he begins to move away from the path he was taking, Ellie walks out of the same building, meeting up with James. Clark lets out a resigned sigh, and turns back to where he was headed.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Clark heads into the Gazette meeting and plops down in his usual seat. He pulls out his laptop and browses before class.

URICH
Alright, let's get started everyone!

Clark looks next to him and notices the empty seat where Glenn usually was. He looks around the room, but doesn't see him anywhere. His expression is both a little confused and curious.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Clark is sitting up in the dining hall, food in front of him, as he types away, actually doing work this time. We don't hold on this wide shot for long, but long enough to see that he's a little more isolated.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A couple days later, Clark has another Kender Gazette meeting. He enters the room and heads for his spot again, gesturing with his arms when Glenn still isn't there. He sits down and pulls out his laptop, opening it to Facebook. He searches "Glenn Dwigt", and no results appear. He does the same for "Kender Defender", but still nothing. Clark shrugs. It was worth a try.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARK'S ROOM - NIGHT

In the evening, Clark is sitting in his room, making edits to an article for the Gazette. Eventually, he stops typing and his head just slams on his desk. He's going crazy.

He's also easily distracted, so instead of doing his work, he starts to watch Coco on his TV. In the middle of the movie, he checks his phone. It reads 9:21 PM. Clark looks out his window before letting his head fall back and breathing a deep sigh, thinking of what he could be doing instead.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - DAY

Out on the quad, Clark crosses through the center path, making his way towards the dining hall. He's looking down at his phone, but when he looks up he sees Glenn headed the same to the same place from a side path to the building. He jogs

after him.

CLARK

Glenn!

Glenn's head perks up and he smiles, excited to see him.

GLENN

Hey, Clark!

CLARK

Hey, where have you been? I don't think you've ever missed Gazette meetings until this week.

GLENN

Oh, yeah, I quit the Gazette.

Clark gives him a confused look.

GLENN (CONT'D)

Yeah, honestly, I was just there so that I could keep my ear to the ground for Y-Men stuff, Superman-style.

CLARK

(nodding)

Well, that's good, you had me worried there when you just kinda ghosted us since the, uh, Y-Men thing.

GLENN

I'm okay, it's definitely sad, but it wasn't the end of the world. Tyler took it hard after that next night, but I think he'll be fine, he's too cheery.

CLARK

What about Mindy, how's she doing?

GLENN

Yeah, I don't think she actually goes to Kender. I think she's just an actual vigilante, cause she just disappeared after that night.

CLARK

(laughing)

That'd explain a lot.

CLARK (CONT'D)
Hey, were you headed to lunch?

GLENN
Yeah, you too?

CLARK
Yeah! Let's go.

They walk up to the stairs and Clark opens the door, holding it open for Glenn.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARK'S ROOM - DAY

Empty wrappers and bottles are on Clark's desk while he and Glenn play *Marvel's Spider-Man* on the TV. They're still talking as they play.

CLARK
I'm telling you, the original trilogy doesn't hold up.

GLENN
Listen, you can't say anything to change my mind, Tobey Maguire was the perfect Spider-Man.

Clark jokingly moves to grab the remote for the TV.

CLARK
Okay, this was a mistake, we're changing games.

They laugh, and Clark changes the subject.

CLARK (CONT'D)
So, you're sure you're okay with the team being shut down? You seemed pretty invested.

GLENN
Yeah, I think so. I mean, my nights are more freed up now, so that's a bonus.

CLARK
It kinda bums me out to think of it, though. I know I wasn't there for long, but it felt good to be able to

at least have the chance to help people out.

GLENN

Well, that's what I realized over the weekend. I think superheroes are overrated.

CLARK

(smirking)

That's a bold statement for someone who was wearing a domino mask less than a week ago.

GLENN

I know, I know. I think it's more towards any superhero that's designed around destiny or fate. Cause with them, you don't really get the sense that they're heroes because they want protect people, it's more out of obligation. It's kinda B.S.

CLARK

(grinning)

How's that?

GLENN

Well, think about it, how many characters or stories do you like where everything happens to them instead of because of them, like destiny or whatever. Probably not many, because that's barely a story, that's just a coincidence. It's the definition of too good to be true. But then you look at characters like Spider-Man or Batman or whatever, and sure, coincidences exist, but nobody told them they had to become a superhero, like it was their "destiny". They chose to because they wanted to and it was the right thing to do. And I realized that that applies to real life too. Not the superhero part, the being passive part.

Clark gives a half-grin.

GLENN (CONT'D)

I was just waiting for things to happen to me, which I realized can be dangerous, cause that's basically driving with no hands on the wheel. But there's something to be said for even getting one hand on it. I mean, I didn't get hit by super-powered lightning before I joined the Y-Men, so there was no sense of obligation or responsibility. I just decided that I didn't want to sit back and wait any more, even if I wasn't really able to "fight crime" or whatever. I don't think that's what it was ever really about, it just felt good to do something that was good for others, but also good for me.

Clark's grin fades slowly. He's taking in what Glenn is saying, and he's hitting close to home. Clark takes a beat before he responds.

CLARK

That's a lot of introspection for being one week removed.

GLENN

Well, like I said, my nights opened up.

They laugh again, before it gets quiet outside of the game they're playing and the sounds of the controller. Beat.

GLENN (CONT'D)

Hey, I just realized, your name is Clark and you're a journalist. Like Su--

CLARK

Like Superman, yeah, I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. ACADEMIC BUILDING - DAY

We establish with the same shot of the academic building from the first scene.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The brighter color palette is back as Clark sits in his seat in the meeting for the Kender Gazette. He absent-mindedly browses the Internet.

URICH

Alright, thanks everyone, I'll see you
on Friday!

Clark packs up his laptop, grabs his backpack and exits.

He starts to walk down the hallway. After a few steps, he looks up and sees Ellie walking his direction, who hasn't noticed him yet. Clark, determined, approaches her.

CLARK

Hey.

ELLIE

(looking up, somewhat surprised)

Hey.

CLARK

So...sorry about that.

ELLIE

Which part?

CLARK

Most of it. Not all of it, cause I don't want to apologize for feeling things in general, but I definitely could've contained myself better and I'm sorry that I took so much of it out on you.

ELLIE

You know, I'm not trying to control you, right?

CLARK

(smirking)

Yeah, I know, I guess I just didn't like the idea that someone else had a better grasp on my life than I did. But I'm working on that. A friend helped me realize that tights aren't necessarily the key to a higher self-

esteem.

ELLIE

Was that me?

CLARK

Oh, god no. I mean, I guess you were kind of there.

They both laugh, the tension gradually easing up throughout the conversation.

CLARK (CONT'D)

So, are we good?

ELLIE

I guess we'll have to wait and find out.

URICH (O.S.)

Alright, thanks everyone, I'll see you on Friday!

Clark is jolted back from expectation to reality once again. We're back to the normal color scheme as Clark packs up his stuff again.

When he leaves the classroom, he walks down the hallway and stops at the entrance to the lobby, looking down to see that Ellie isn't actually there. He lets out a sigh, as the camera moves around him to show the lobby itself. Sitting at a table is Ellie, laptop out, typing away. Clark turns his head and sees her, while she hasn't looked up yet. Clark takes a deep breath and goes to sit down with her. When he does, she looks up, the same slight surprise from Clark's daydream.

ELLIE

Hey.

CLARK

Hey.

He gives a sheepish smile.

CLARK (CONT'D)

So...about that.

ROLL CREDITS:

THE END.