“There were voices...

“...and thunderings, and lightnings...

“...and an earthquake.”
And there followed hail and fire mingled with blood.

There fell a great star from heaven, burning as if it were a lamp...

...and I beheld, and heard an Angel...

...saying with a loud voice...

...woe, woe, WOE to the inhabitants of the Earth.
"It’s Kaffee in the Revelation of Saint John! All of it!

I can go on... there's more...!

That's enough, Wesley.

I see things. Norman! Divine prophecies!

Nightmares, Wesley. You've had them before. That's why you're here...

Not nightmares, pastor.

Ah, jez...

Mr. Dodds... doctor...

Wesley, they're not...

"Seven thunders will utter their voices! And it was given unto him to make war with the saints!"

Babylon falls, Norman! Be the one who listens to me!

The sands run out... and I can do nothing but wait in my own filth for sleep to finally claim me! Someone must act!

For me, not Kaffee for you.
Hear me, Norman! Lowe you much.

...Yet I have nothing to leave you... save insight!

Yet I have nothing to leave you... save insight!

...And I will give power unto my two witnesses...

...And I will give power unto my two witnesses...

Be my witness, Pastor! Read the Word of God!

Wesley... 

It's all there! The end is near! Read the Book!

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep..."

...but we shall all be changed..."
There was more, but Wesley never heard it.

In the end, he was listening to another voice... from Lord knows where.

My service was brief... his mourners, few. My wife and I met Wesley in his twilight... and had been the last of his friends.

He came to our church questioning what there was to believe in these days. I wish now I'd had better answers.

The three of us shared many a dinner in this apartment. Ellen, God rest her soul, would in one moment tease Wesley mercilessly about living in the past...

...and in the next, beg him to spin another tale of his... how did she put it?... his glory days.

Sometimes, I wish I'd made more time to listen with her. Wes's stories were melodies of wonder. Back then, it seemed, his dreams were of yesterdays, not tomorrows... of times bright, not barbaric.

Once upon a time, he said, he'd called himself the Sandman.

U.N. Enacts More Metahuman Censures

Will Censures curb Metahuman Violence?

91% NO
7% YES
2% Undecided

He was a super-hero.

You'll excuse the expression.
Before the bitterness overcame him, Wesley and I would walk... pick our way through the city.

For hours, he'd bemoan the passing of things like Olympic Games and Nobel Prizes.

Sometimes, he'd ambush complete strangers and ask them how much they missed the concept of human achievement.

I don't know what surprised me more. The oddity of the question...

...or the growing number of people who seemed to know what he was talking about.

I'd try to defuse him. I'd joke that he was grooming like any old codger unable to appreciate the new generation.

He wouldn't laugh.

Wesley insisted that human initiative began to erode the day people asked a new breed to face the future for them.

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Wesley insisted that human initiative began to erode the day people asked a new breed to face the future for them.
He mocked their worth, these newcomers... and spoke instead of legends gone.

Of costumed champions who had, in his day, inspired human achievement... not belittled it.

He swore he'd never forget the world they came from.

He wanted them to be remembered.

He wanted them to live again.

HOW MAY I SERVE you?

GOOD AFTERNOON, CITIZEN!
SO WHADDAYA THINK? NOT A BAD JOB ON THE TIGHTS, HUH? THEY TELL ME I MAKE A PRETTY GOOD GREEN...

...WHADDAYA CALLING... ARROW.

HELLO, CITIZENS—HOW MAY I SERVE YOU...

I WANT TO SPEAK TO THE MANAGER, TELL BOOSTER GOLD THAT BEATS HERE TO SEE HIM...

I'LL HAVE AN AMERICAN WAY ON WHITE...

...DAMN IT, SOMEBODY'S RUN OFF WITH THE HANDCUFF ARROW...AGAIN...

GIVE ME A BLACK CONDOR, STRAIGHT UP...

AND FOR THE LADY?
The Sandman had gone to his grave without one grain of faith in the future.

And the saddest part was... he was far from alone.

With each passing day, hope for tomorrow has become more and more precious a commodity among everyday folk.

Still, I tried to keep the faith... and how to the scriptures.

According to the word of God, the meek would someday inherit the earth.

Someday.
But God never accounted for the mighty.
The world Wesley left is filled not with his heroes... but with their children and grandchildren.

They number in the nameless thousands... progeny of the past, inspired by the legends of those who came before...

...if not the morals.

They no longer fight for the right. They fight simply to fight, their only foes each other.

The superhumans boast that they've all but eliminated the super-villains of yesteryear.
They move freely through the streets... through the world.

They are challenged...

...but unopposed.

They are, after all...

Small comfort.

...our protectors.
I tell myself that this, too, shall pass...

...that humans still have a chance to reclaim a world rightfully theirs while it still exists.

That in the face of superhuman might and superhuman odds...

...time has not yet run out for humanity.
"AND THERE FOLLOWED HAIL AND FIRE MINGLED WITH BLOOD..."
"...AND THE THIRD PART OF THE TREES WAS BURNT UP..."

"...AND ALL GREEN GRASS WAS BURNT UP!"

"AND HE OPENED THE BOTTOMLESS PIT..."

"...AND THE SUN AND THE AIR WERE DARKENED!"

"FEAR GOD--AND GIVE GLORY TO HIM--FOR THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME! HE..."

"FORGIVE ME, THIS...ISN'T WHAT I WANTED TO..."

"...HE..."
As they leave, they shy from my gaze. My congregation has trusted me for years...and today I betrayed them.

In mourning...unable even to fathom the news that has stopped the world, they came to me seeking encouragement...

...that I cannot give.

The visions he had...the prophecies, the dreams...I thought he was insane.

His dreams are now mine...and they are visions of utter despondence. He wanted someone to act...but what can anyone do?

But if he was...

...then so now am I.

Kansas proved it. Thanks to the superhumans, the end is near...and the Word of God, so very far...
...away...
I have need of you, Norman McCay.

And now the visions talk to me. I have gone mad...

Even as I stand before you, an act of unspeakable evil has begun to manifest. Armageddon is fast approaching.

Hardly, in fact your sanity may be paramount to mankind's survival.

But you know this. You have the dreams.

You...see into my mind...my soul? You are an angel...?

Long ago, I would have judged...swiftly, with clarity...but my faculties are not what they once were.

Of a sort, a higher power has charged me with the task of punishing those responsible for this coming evil.

In order to carry out my task, I must anchor myself to a human soul who seeks justice.

But I don't...

You will.
IF THIS IS TRUE... IF THIS IS NOT SOME NEW DELUSION... THEN WHY ME?

NOW YOUR DREAMS WILL GUIDE US BOTH, IN ORDER TO FULFILL MY MISSION, WE MUST BOTH WITNESS THE EVENTS THAT WILL LEAD TO ARMAGEDDON.

BECUSE I CAME TOO LATE IN SEARCH OF THE DREAMER WESLEY DODDS, HE SAW TOMORROW WITH A POWER HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND... BUT PASSED TO YOU NONETHLESS.

I... I CANNOT SIMPLY LEAVE, MY CONGREGATION DEPENDS ON ME. THEY LOOK TO ME FOR--

COME WITH ME!

VERY WELL... BUT EXPLAIN THIS TO ME.

IF YOU ARE TRULY A BEING OF GREAT POWER... HOW IS IT YOU CAN FIND NO WAY TO AVERT THIS CATASTROPE?

THAT IS NOT MY TASK.

THEY ARE, IN MANY WAYS... THE PROBLEM.
WHERE...
WHERE ARE WE?...

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

I SEE A MIDWESTERN FARMLAND...
...BUT THAT'S NOT...

POSSIBLE...

THERE IS NO NEED TO LOWER YOUR VOICE.
WE CANNOT BE SEEN OR HEARD.
NOT EVEN BY HIM.

THE FARMER LOOKS...
...FAMILIAR.

HE SHOULD...
THOUGH HE IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.
HE CAME TO EARTH...
BY NAME HE HAS NOT USED IN TEN YEARS...

I REMEMBER! HE LEFT METROPOLIS, SOMETHING HAPPENED... A... TRIAL...?

I CAN'T... REMEMBER WHAT WAS INVOLVED... BUT I RECALL A SENSE OF...

...INEVITABILITY? OBVIOUSLY, WHATEVER HAPPENEDrove HIM HERE. BUT, MY GOD... HE IS SO ALONE.

NOT ALWAYS.

...NOT SINCE HE BEGAN HIS SELF-IMPOSED EXILE.
Hello, Clark...

These are my roots. You can't live forever in solitude.

I'm not afraid of him.

I didn't mean him. I meant...

Kal, you've lost so much since I first met you...

I'm Superman. I can do anything.

Except, apparently, face your fear.

Earthlings die. You know that.

Diana, haven't seen you in months. What brings you to the farm?

The vain hope that you're not still here.

They were your parents, Cl—Kal, and she was your wife. Don't call them "Earthlings."

Hear me out, I—

I have work to do, Diana. Here, things grow.

Really?

Excerpt, apparently, face your fear.
YOU'RE SPOOKING THE ANIMALS.

AT LEAST I PROVOKED A REACTION IN SOMETHING.

KAL, HE'S OUT OF CONTROL.

I TRIED TO TELL THEM THAT TEN YEARS AGO.

I'M NOT INTERESTED.

I SEE. DO YOU LIVE IN NOTHING BUT LIES?

LISTEN TO ME, DAMN IT! I'VE COME WITH NEWS ... FROM THE OUTSIDE. BAD NEWS. IT'S SHAKEN THE WORLD.

AND THEY DIDN'T LISTEN. I KNOW. STOP PUNISHING THEM.
HERE ARE TWO WORDS. SEE IF THEY SOUND FAMILIAR.

TRUTH AND JUSTICE.

YOU CAN'T HAVE COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN THEM.

JUST SEE FOR YOURSELF. SEE WHAT HE HAS LET HAPPEN TO THE WORLD. THAT'S ALL I ASK.

AND STEEL YOURSELF.
PARALIZADO POR LA NOTICIA DE MAGOG...

WIR HABEN Gelernt das MAGOG Uns Gefährdet hat...

FEROCÍ BRUTALIDAD DI MAGOG...

FEROCÍ BRUTALIDAD DI MAGOG...

INCONCEIVABLE TRAGEDIA STRUCK...

...MAGOG...

...AMÉRICAIN AU NOM DE MAGOG...

...EL MUNDO FUE SHOCKEADO POR HORRIBLES ACTOS...
FIGHT BEGAN IN THE AMERICAN CITY OF ST. LOIS, WHERE MAGOG AND HIS JUSTICE BATTALION DESCENDED UPON THE WEATHERED PARASITE.

WITNESSES CHARACTERIZED THE PARASITE AS FEARFUL.

BATTLE RAGED TO THE WHEATFIELDS OF KANSAS.

CLAIM HIS PLEAS FOR MERCY WERE IGNORED.

SPECULATE THAT TRAGEDY MIGHT HAVE BEEN AVERTED HAD MAGOG RELENTED.

PARASITE UNLEASHED A DESPERATE SALVO TOWARDS THE NUCLEAR-POWERED CAPTAIN ATOM. THESE FINAL WORDS BELONGED TO WKEY’S ON-SITE CAMERAMAN.

OH, MY GOD! THE PARASITE HAD SPLIT CAPTAIN ATOM OPEN.

HE’S SPLIT HIM OPEN.

ONLOOKERS STAGGERED—but yet, not surprised—by the savagery of Magog’s attack.

MAGOG—ONE OF THE NEW BREED OF HEROES, KNOWN TO MANY AS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPERMAN’S FAREWELL TO EARTH.
EARLY REPORTS INDICATE IMMEDIATE CASUALTIES NUMBERING CLOSE TO A MILLION AS THE DYING ATOM'S RADIOACTIVE ENERGY SWEPT HUNDREDS OF KILOMETERS. 

...RENDERING THE ENTIRE STATE OF KANSAS--AS WELL AS PARTS OF NEBRASKA, IOWA, AND MISSOURI--AN IRRADIATED WASTELAND.

THOUGH MAGOG'S COMRADES HAVE SINCE PREVENTED FURTHER SPREAD OF THE NUCLEAR BLIGHT, THE TOTAL LOSS OF AMERICA'S BREADBASKET--

THE SOLE SURVIVORS OF THE INCIDENT--COULD NOT BE REACHED FOR--

MAGOG--ALONG WITH THE METAL MAN ALLOY--

THE SOLE SURVIVORS OF THE INCIDENT--COULD NOT BE REACHED FOR--

THE STERILIZATION OF ITS AGRARIAN CULTURE--HAS THROWN WORLD ECONOMY INTO NEAR-COLLAPSE IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL FAMINE.

...KAL, PLEASE, OUR GENERATION TAKES ITS LEAD FROM YOU. WE ALWAYS HAVE.

YOU MUST FACE THIS. IF YOU DON'T, NEITHER WILL THE REST OF US--AND IT JUST GOES ON.
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FROM HERE.

GO BACK TO YOUR ISLAND, DIANA.

YOU'RE SAFE THERE.
“...NEITHER WILL THE REST OF US...”

THOSE WHO, A DECADE PREVIOUS, FELT THE CRUSH OF SUPERMAN'S GREATEST AND MOST NECESSARY FAILING...

...HIS INABILITY TO PERCEIVE HIMSELF AS THE INSPIRATION HE IS.

THE SHOCK OF SEEING SUPERMAN SUDDENLY ABANDON HIS NEVER-ENDING BATTLE TOOK AN IMMEASURABLE TOLL ON HIS CONTEMPORARIES, HIS PEERS.

SOME, THEIR SPIRIT STRIPPED, CHOSE SUPERMAN'S PATH AND RETIRED.

OTHERS, UNABLE TO TURN THEIR BACKS COMPLETELY ON THE WORLD THEY KNOW, CONTINUE TO USE THEIR SPECIAL ABILITIES TO CHAMPION ORDER...

...THOUGH IN SOME MOST CLANDESTINE WAYS.
IN THE TIME OF SUPERMAN'S ABSENCE, KEYSTONE CITY HAS BECOME A UTOPIA-- A PROTECTORATE RELENTLESSLY PATROLLED BY A GALE FORCE ONCE HUMAN.

"NO ONE SEES HIM...NO ONE HEARS HIM. HE RUNS A LONELY RACE...BUT ALL WHO LIVE HERE HAVE FELT HIS PRESENCE.

"HE IS EVERYWHERE AT ONCE... A GUARDIAN ANGEL WHO RIGHTS EVEN THE MOST HARMLESS OF WROGNES WITH LIGHTNING SPEED.

"HE LIVES BETWEEN THE TICKS OF A SECOND.

"HE IS THE FLASH."
“ANOTHER OF YESTERDAY’S GUARDIANS HAS SINCE CLAIMED THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AS HIS AERIE.

“SOME CALL HIM A SAVIOR... OTHERS, AN ENVIRONMENTAL TERRORIST. HE IS FEARED, AND JUSTLY, BY THOSE WHO WOULD DEPRIVE THE BEASTS AND BIRDS OF THEIR SANCTUARY.

“HIS NAME IS HAWKMAN.”
"YET ANOTHER TAKES HIS REFUGE HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH'S SURFACE... HIS SELF-MADE EMERALD CITY TWINKLING IN THE NIGHT SKY LIKE A VERDANT STAR.

"THERE, GREEN LANTERN COMMANDS A LONELY THRONE... EVER VIGILANT, EVER WAITING FOR SIGNS OF THREATS EXTRATERRESTRIAL.

"HE WaITS STiLL."
We have lost ourselves in ancient civilizations and future times. And what of those who weren't gods? I seem to remember another...one who made his home in Gotham City...

What has become of the Batman?

“THE GODS OF YESTERYEAR NO LONGER WALK AMONG THE HUMANS, NORMAN MCCAY. INSTEAD, CUED BY SUPERMAN'S SURRENDER, THEY JOURNEY APART...DIVORCED FROM THE COMMON MEN WHOM THEY ONCE SO GLADLY SERVED.”

“They have lost themselves in ancient civilizations and future times.”

“They have left humanity to its own fate.”

AH...
BATMAN HAS HIS CITY UNDER CONTROL...
YES! YOU'RE AN ANGEL! THAT MAKES YOU A MESSENGER OF HOPE!

AT NO TIME DID I PROMISE YOU HOPE...!

A GREATER POWER SENT YOU! YOUR VERY EXISTENCE IS A TESTIMONY TO FAITH!

YOU MEAN THAT ALL YOU HAVE TO TELL ME IS THAT THOSE WHO COULD SAVE US WON'T?

"AND THE THIRD PART OF THE TREES WAS BURNED UP... AND ALL GREEN GRASS WAS BURNED UP!

"AND THE SUN AND THE AIR WERE DARKENED!"

THAT'S WHAT WESLEY SAW! THE DESTRUCTION OF KANSAS WAS TRULY THE BEGINNINGS OF THE END...!

FOR THOSE WHO CALL THEMSELVES HEROES NOW SHARE A SILENT GUILT!

LOOK AROUND US!

THEY'RE WORSE THAN BEFORE! THEY'RE NOT ACTING OUT OF BOREDOM! THEY'RE ACTING WITH ABANDON!
BEFORE KANSAS, THEY AT LEAST HAD SOME GRASP OF RESPONSIBILITY!

NOW THEY HAVEN'T EVEN THAT!

NOTHING MATTERS! THEY'RE FOLLOWING MAGOG'S RECKLESS LEAD -- AND THEY'RE OUT OF CONTROL!

WONDER WOMAN WAS RIGHT! THE MADNESS WILL GO ON--
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

IF ANY OF US ARE TO SURVIVE... ANY OF US... NOW MORE THAN EVER...

...WE NEED HOPE!
And suddenly...

...there was a wind.

No. Not a wind. A blur of motion... bending the steel of their weapons...
...and changing the very course of the mighty river below.

Even before the bystanders freed themselves from the cablecar, they knew. We all did.

We knew...and remembered.

LOOK!

UP IN THE SKY!
He had not turned his back on us.

He stands in the sky... faith rewarded.

He is returned... and--

--dear God.

The threat of armageddon hasn't ended.

It's just begun...