

THE HERO'S RETURN

part one

CAOMUS LABS.

METROPOLIS.

KRYPTONIAN
REGENERATION
EXPERIMENT
DAY: 284.
SUBJECT:
KON-EL.

SUPERVISING
ATTENDANTS:
DUBBILEX,
SERLING
ROUETTE.

I TRY, AS
I ALWAYS DO,
TO BLOCK OUT
HIS SCREAMS
OF PAIN.

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SUPERBOY created by JERRY SIEGEL. By special arrangement with the JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY.
SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER.
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FOR TEN MONTHS, I HAVE WATCHED KON ENDURE AN AGONIZING INFUSION OF SOLAR RADIATION.

METROPOLIS HAS SPENT A YEAR UNDER AN IMPENETRABLE DOME.

SERLING, POWER DOWN THE EMISSIONS ARRAY.

AS WITH ALL THE METAHUMANS TRAPPED IN THE CITY, KON, A CLONE OF THE KRYPTONIAN SUPERMAN, HAS LOST HIS POWERS.

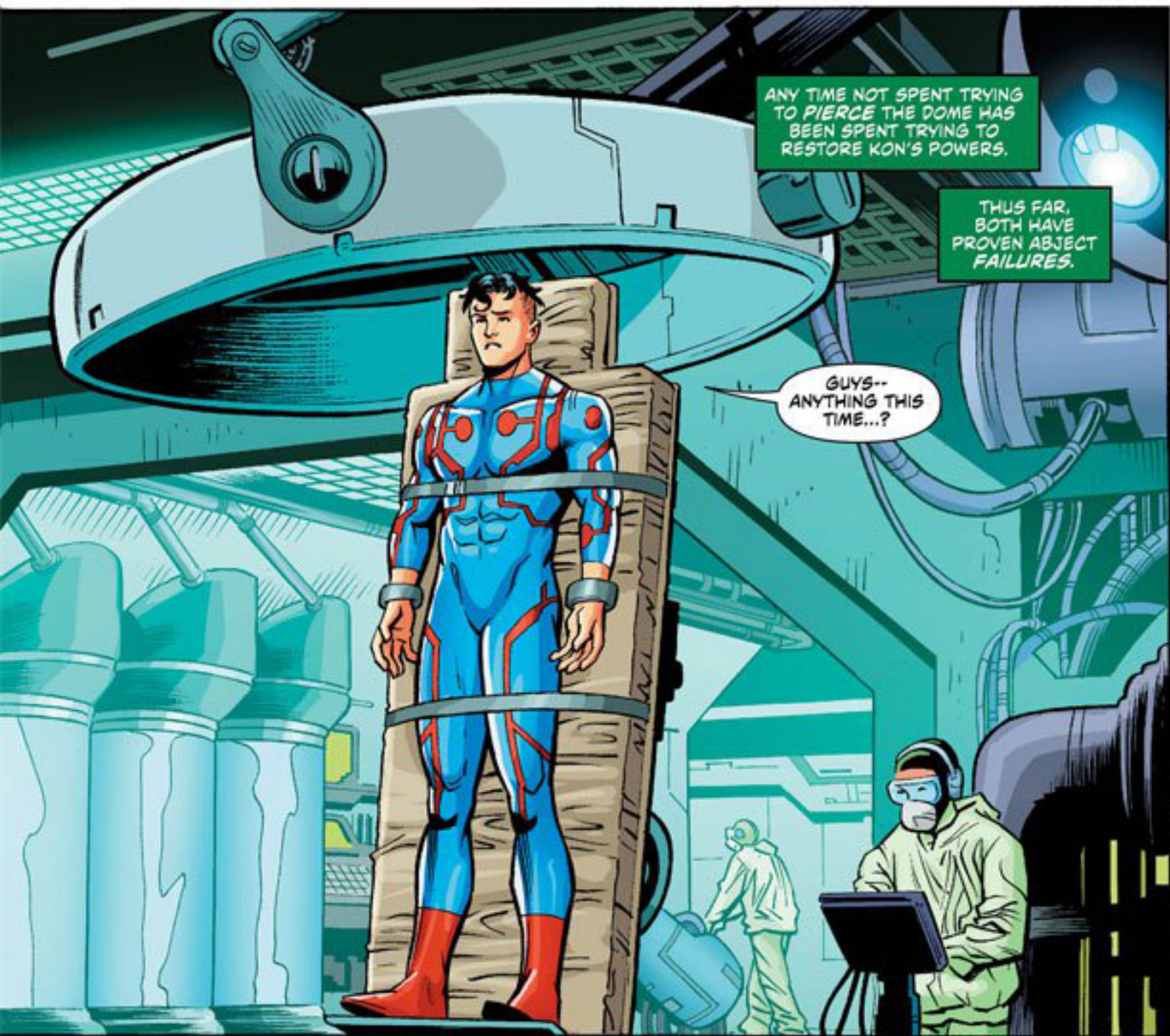


SUCH HOPE IN HIS HOARSE VOICE... SUCH NEED...

NO, KON. I'M SORRY. ALL OF YOUR READINGS ARE NOMINAL.

THE SOLAR RADIATION EXACTLY MIMICS THE SUN'S ENERGY THAT YOUR CELLS ABSORB.

THE ANSWER DOES NOT LIE IN YOU, KON, IT LIES WITH THE DOME.



ANY TIME NOT SPENT TRYING TO PIERCE THE DOME HAS BEEN SPENT TRYING TO RESTORE KON'S POWERS.

THUS FAR, BOTH HAVE PROVEN SUBJECT FAILURES.

GUYS-- ANYTHING THIS TIME...?

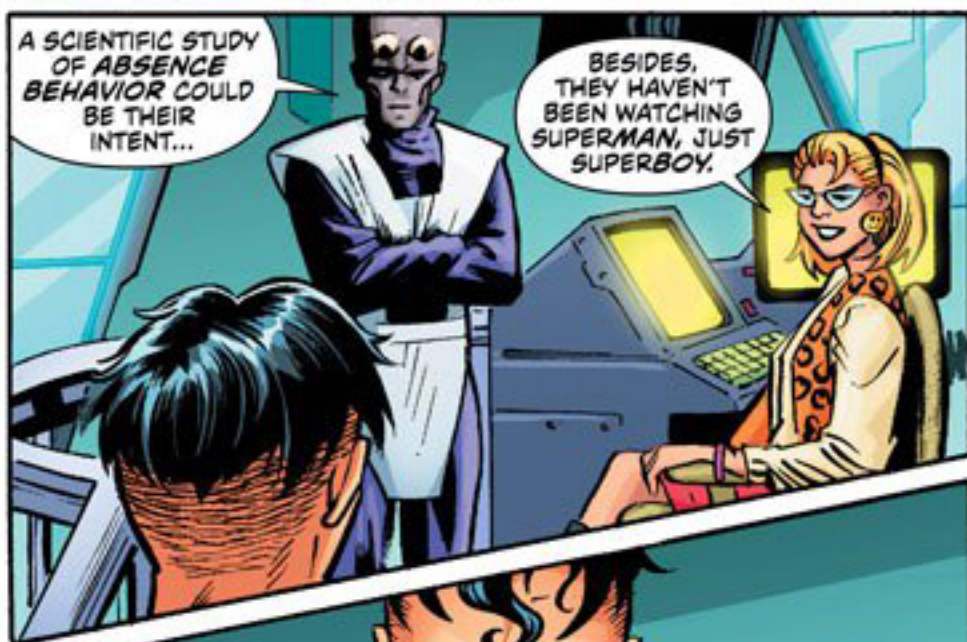


BUT YOU HAVE NO ANSWERS FOR THAT EITHER...



SOME. NOT ENOUGH.

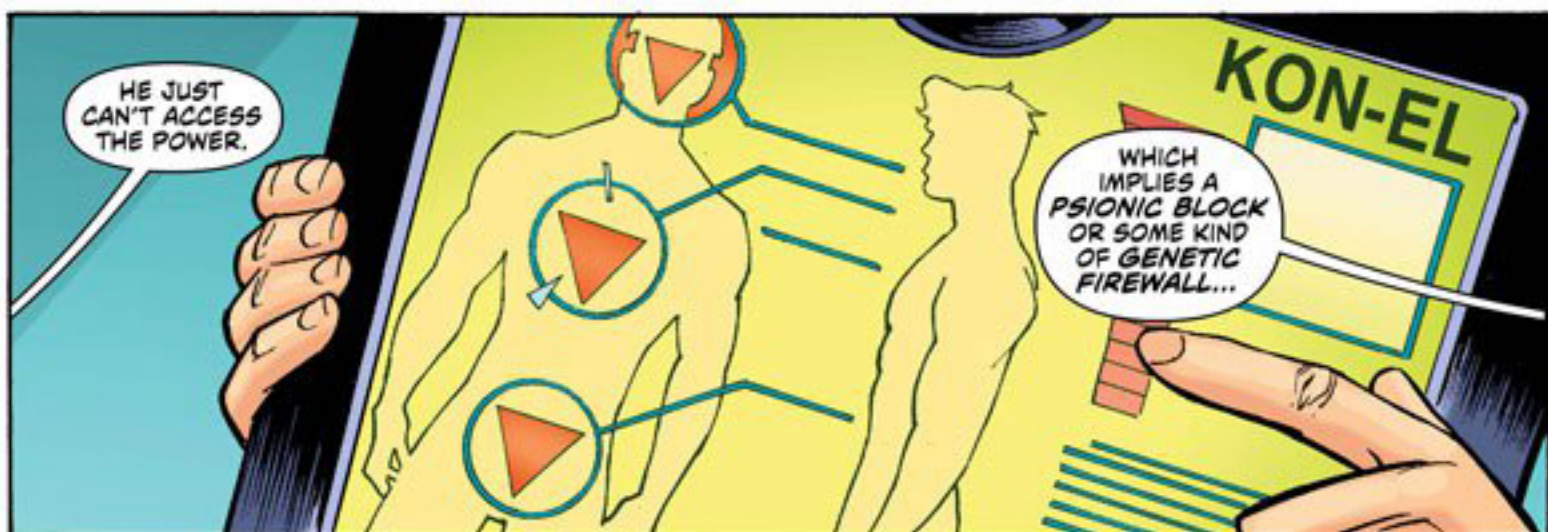
WE'VE BEEN TRAPPED A YEAR. NO ONE KNOWS IF WE'RE EVEN ON EARTH ANYMORE.





THE LATEST SCAN CORROBORATES OUR THEORIES.

HIS CELLS ARE ABSORBING THE RADIATION.



HE JUST CAN'T ACCESS THE POWER.

WHICH IMPLIES A PSIONIC BLOCK OR SOME KIND OF GENETIC FIREWALL...



BOTH OF WHICH ARE OPERATING ON LEVELS FAR BEYOND OUR KEN...

...JUST LIKE THE DOME ITSELF.

SIMULATES DAYLIGHT AND NIGHT, GENERATES ITS OWN ATMOSPHERE, WEATHER SYSTEMS... MAYBE EVEN GRAVITY, FOR ALL WE KNOW.



THERE ARE MANY WHO HAVE SUCH TECHNOLOGY...

...BRAINIAC, KRONA, DARKSEID...

...BUT IT IS UNLIKE ANY OF THEM NOT TO HAVE... GLOATED...ABOUT THEIR ACTIONS...

KON-EL IS CORRECT IN THAT ASSUMPTION.

AND IF ANYONE WOULD KNOW ABOUT THE DESIRE TO GLOAT OVER ONE'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS...