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Superman red son comic

© 2025 FANDOM, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Superman Red Son was published in April of 2003 and upon its release, received high critical praise. The book challenged the notion of what Superman was and was done through a simple, "What if?" storyline. Basically, Superman Red Son asked the question, "What if Superman was found and raised in the Soviet Union rather than the United States?" The book picks up in the 1950's. In this timeline, the world is very similar to how our history has shown it to be. The difference is that Superman is not a citizen of the United States. He is a citizen of the Soviet Union. The difference between this Superman and the Superman we know is that this one supports Communism. Much like normal continuity, the main antagonist to Superman is Lex Luthor. However, in this story, Luthor is a highly intelligent scientist under the employment of S.T.A.R. Labs. Oh, and he is also married to Lois Lane. Superman Red Son beginning At the request of a C.I.A. agent, Lex Luthor is asked to find a way to destroy the main weapon of the Soviet Union, Superman. He accepts and immediately begins working to collect genetic information about his enemy. To do this, he causes the satellite, Sputnik 2 to come crashing down upon Metropolis. Just before it could hit the ground, Superman, as predicted, arrives and stops the machine from killing innocents. With the genetic information found on Sputnik, Luthor creates a genetic copy of Superman. This, like normal continuity, is Bizarro. With his clone complete, he sends him on an ill-fated mission to destroy the Man of Steel. Their battle was long, damaging and costly and at its end, Bizarro sacrifices himself to save millions of people. He is forced to do this after the two inadvertently launch a nuclear missile. Shortly after these events at a diplomatic party, Superman meets Wonder Woman, who is immediately taken back by Superman. Before anything can develop between the two, and after spotting the illegitimate son of Stalin, Superman flees the party. As we will learn, Roslov was upset with Superman because his arrival forced a rewriting of power that saw Superman as a succession plan and not him. So that he may rise to power, Roslov poisons Stalin, ultimately resulting in his death. Even with his father dead, it was Superman who rose to power. United States chaos By the late 1970's the United States, unlike the Soviet Union is on the verge of imploding. At the head of the successful Soviet Union is, of course, Superman, who by now has become more of an invasion figurehead instead of a hero. Furious with what is going on in the world, and still hell-bent on destroying Superman, Lex Luthor creates a plan to shrink Moscow. While this may seem like a reasonable plan, his partner, Brainiac has other ideas and shrinks Stalingrad instead. Superman sets out and retrieves both Brainiac and the city. Sadly, for the inhabitants of the city, Brainiac is unable to set things right and like the Oompa Loompas, they remain small. Brainiac is then sent to become a brainless follower of Superman. Luthor enlists the help of Batman, who joins forces with both him and Pyotr Roslov. The trio captures Wonder Woman and uses her as a lure for Superman. Upon his arrival, the three "zap" him of all his power. Now powerless, Superman implores Wonder Woman to break free of her capture and destroy the generators that hold his power. Fearing for his future, Batman kills himself, Pyotr is turned into a brainless robot and Wonder Woman leaves angry with Superman. This happens because, at his release, he does not pay any mind to the injuries she sustained while helping him. Luthor once again attempts to bring down Superman. However, like the times before, he is unsuccessful. President Luthor At this point, Luthor is elected President and Jimmy Olsen Vice President. As President, Luthor is able to bring prosperity back to the United States. With the United States functioning, he lets Jimmy Olsen know that he has created a plan to force Superman to attack and invade the country. Superman does exactly this. He attacks and defeats the Green Lantern Marine Corps, as well as claims the United States East Coast. To rally other countries to their cause, Lois Luthor visits the Amazon Empire. While there she requests that Wonder Woman and her people join them. Even with the strength of the Amazonians at their side, they are no match for Superman. With so many fallen to his might, Superman is confronted by Lois. She gives him a note from Lex that reads, "Why don't you just put the whole world in a bottle, Superman?" Superman realizes the error of his way and orders Brainiac to end the invasion of the United States. Unfortunately, instead of stopping the invasion, Brainiac turns on and attacks Superman with Kryptonite. This attack, of course, was unsuccessful and Superman launches Brainiac and his ship into space. With so much Kryptonite poisoning, the world believes Superman to be dead. With no leader, the Soviet Union falls into utter chaos. Luckily, the country is brought back under control by a group of resistance fighters called Batmen. With the Soviet under control, Luthor brings about worldwide peace and prosperity. Clark Kent Eventually, after a thousand years Luthor dies. Unbeknownst to anyone in attendance, the thought dead Superman arrives. This time, rather than appearing his trademark costume, he arrives in a suit and glasses. The book concludes with Superman walking off into the sunset not as a leader but as a commoner. Both thought-provoking and interesting Superman Red Son has firmly planted itself as an all-time great read. As the ultimate "What if?" comic, Superman Red Son is a gentle reminder to be thankful that Superman is a citizen of the United States and nowhere else. Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. The first part starts in the 1950s, and sets up the board and the pieces. The world is nearly identical to our own to begin with, but starts diverging rapidly as the Soviet Union unveils its newest asset. Superman, upsetting the Cold War and turning the nuclear arms race into a super-being arms race Gallery Earth-30; Earth 30; Earth-1598 Superman: Red Son (Volume 1) Superman: Red Son is an Elseworlds comic published in 2003. The three issue miniseries was written by Mark Millar with art by Dave Johnson and tells the story of what would happen if Superman had landed in the Soviet Union instead of America. It was nominated for an Eisner Award. Synopsis Red Son Rising The first part starts in the 1950s, and sets up the board and the pieces. The world is nearly identical to our own to begin with, but starts diverging rapidly as the Soviet Union unveils its newest asset. Superman, upsetting the Cold War and turning the nuclear arms race into a super-being arms race. At this point Superman is a newcomer in Stalin's inner circle. He's kind-hearted and just, and also dedicated to the cause of communism. When possible, he spends his time detecting and preventing accidents around the USSR. His opposing number is the American Lex Luthor, a legitimate scientist at the employ of S.T.A.R. Labs and a super-genius who is very well aware of his intellect and has very little regard for lesser minds. He is married to Lois Lane. At the behest of his CIA contact, Agent Olsen, he begins attempts to destroy Superman. In order to collect genetic material for his first attempt, Luthor causes Sputnik 2 to plummet towards Metropolis. As Luthor predicted, Superman arrives in time to divert its course. In the process, he meets Lois Luthor, and though there is immediate romantic tension between them, they do not pursue their mutual attraction as Lois is married. In a nod to the mainstream continuity, the story makes mention of a best-selling fictional work which depicts Superman and Lois involved in a romance. The satellite is retrieved by the United States government and Luthor uses the traces found on it to create a Bizarro clone of Superman. Meanwhile, Superman meets Wonder Woman at a diplomatic party. She becomes rather smitten by Superman, but he is forced to leave when he spots Pyotr Roslov, Chief of the NKVD and Stalin's illegitimate son, who is drunk and extremely disgrundled. Pyotr is angry at everything, especially at Superman, whose arrival has rewritten the Soviet Union's power structure, turned his father's attention away from him and putting a stop to his chances of advancement. Having had to shoot a dissident couple before their own son's eyes for printing anti-Superman propaganda, Pyotr snapped and arranged Stalin's poisoning, which in turn has caused him horrible guilt, though not enough to confess. Stalin dies from cyanide poisoning, but Superman initially declines the leadership of the Party. Meanwhile, Luthor's clone is finished and engages Superman. The duel is inconclusive on its own, but causes an accidental nuclear missile launch at Great Britain. The clone, which has been made too much like Superman, sacrifices himself to save millions, although Superman's visible heroism and the accidental nuclear missile launch coupled with damage in London resulting in high civilian casualties apparently lead to an irrevocable breach in Anglo-American relations. Horrified at the implication that Superman is more intelligent than himself after losing a chess game to the clone, Luthor murders his research staff before leaving S.T.A.R Labs and founding Luthorcorp, dedicating his life to destroying Superman. Lois is nigh-abandoned and longs for Superman. Superman himself tries to put this all out of his mind, but a chance meeting with Lana Lazarenko, his childhood flame, changes things entirely. Seeing the suffering of her and her children, Superman realizes that his powers could be used for a greater good, and assumes leadership of the country in order to transform it into a utopia. Red Son Ascendant It is an alternate 1978, and the fictional world of Red Son has diverged greatly from our own. There are no references to Soviet interventions in East Germany (1953), Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968) or Afghanistan, which implies that Soviet prosperity has spread to its satellites, and mitigated the existence of dissident movements in those societies. John F. Kennedy is president of the United States, having replaced the tragically slain Richard Nixon, who won the 1960 election but was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, in 1963. Luthor has devised and executed several plans to thwart Superman, none of which have worked. Only the United States and Chile remain independent from the Soviets, and both are on the brink of collapse, while President Kennedy is forced to grant independence to Georgia, and he acknowledges that there have been similar secessionist pressures in Detroit and Texas, riots in California, and even a "communist sympathiser" terrorist attack on the White House. He has also married Marilyn Monroe, and divorced Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy in this world. By contrast, the Superman-led (Global) Soviet Union has grown without resorting to war, and has virtually eliminated poverty, disease and the like, but this has started to infringe on individual liberties, and Superman is fast becoming a Big Brother-like figure. A brain surgery technique that turns dissidents into obedient drones, or "Superman Robots," is in use. Wonder Woman and Superman have now become adventuring allies and friends, using their superpowers to save lives in addition to their ambassadorial and governing duties. Wonder Woman has fallen for Superman, but he sees her simply as a comrade, and is cheerfully oblivious to her love for him. Lois Luthor succeeds Perry White as the editor-in-chief of a failing Daily Planet, while her estranged husband feverishly works on his obsession. Luthor plans to shrink Moscow, but this fails when Brainiac, his collaborator, shrinks Stalingrad instead. Superman intervenes and retrieves both Brainiac's central processing unit and the tiny city, putting an end to the Brainiac-Luthor cooperation, although he is unable to restore Stalingrad and its inhabitants to their proper size. This becomes his one failure and a source of great guilt. Luthor's second plan involves Batman, who is revealed as the boy orphaned by Pyotr early in the story, now a grown man and the head of an anarchist terrorist network that sees the abundance forced upon the people by Superman's system as little more than oppression. Their persistent success in avoiding capture is a thorn in Superman's side. Batman joins forces with Lexcorp and with his parents' killer, Pyotr, now head of the KGB and consumed by jealousy of Superman, to attempt a coup. They capture Wonder Woman and use her as bait for Superman, hoping to sap his powers with rays that imitate the light of Superman's native sun. The plan works, but Wonder Woman breaks free and rescues Superman, although the process (which requires severing her golden lasso) seriously injures her, snapping something inside her and causing her hair to turn instantly white. Batman commits suicide to avoid capture, but not before revealing to Superman that Pyotr had a role in the plot. Pyotr is then turned into a Superman Robot. As the part ends, Luthor's third plan begins, when Luthor is given a mysterious green lantern found in an alien ship that crashed at Roswell, New Mexico. Batman has become a martyr for his cause, Brainiac is reprogrammed into Superman's aide, and the construction of a version of the Fortress of Solitude, here located in Siberia and referred to as "the Winter Palace", begins. The stage is set for the finale. Red Son Setting It is the year 2001, and the Global Soviet Union encompasses all countries except for Chile and the divided remnants of the United States of America, which underwent a disastrous civil war in 1986, after which an unnamed sixteen states seceded from the union. Within the Soviet sphere of influence there is no crime, no poverty, no unemployment, and no choice. The "Superman Robot" operation is a common punishment for dissent. Superman is committed to "winning the argument" with the US, and repeatedly refuses Brainiac's suggestions of an invasion. His sole failure remains Stalingrad, which is ravaged by a green microscopic organism bearing resemblance to a Sheep louse. Luthor runs for, and wins, the American presidency, with Jimmy Olsen as his running-mate. He has succeeded a President "Friedman", whose misrule resulted in food riots and tanks on New York's First Avenue. Whether or not this is the late economist Milton Friedman is unclear. Using his scientific expertise, massive economic capital and dictatorial powers, he returns prosperity to his country, overcoming the secession that had sundered the United States fifteen years beforehand. He remains as asocial as ever, though, and this is only a part of a larger plan to provoke Superman into invading America so that he can be destroyed, as Lois Luthor and Lucy Lane Olsen concur in the deserted offices of the long-closed Daily Planet in Metropolis. Luthor confronts Superman in the Siberian Winter Palace. In a seemingly anticlimactic moment, Brainiac yanks Luthor deep into the recesses of the Fortress to be surgically turned into yet another Superman Robot. Superman agrees that his hand has been forced, and prepares to attack. Superman takes on the East Coast, confronting and defeating the Green Lantern Marine Corps, which is led by Colonel Hal Jordan, and featuring Privates Scott, Stewart, Rayner, and Gardner. He defeats the Amazon forces commanded by a highly disillusioned Wonder Woman, and a collection of "super-menaces" that Luthor has put together over the years. Brainiac's spaceship cuts the U.S. Pacific fleet to pieces, and the two superbeings meet at the White House, where Lois Luthor waits with the last weapon, a small note written by Lex that manages to break the Comrade of Steel's resolve. It reads, "Why don't you just put the whole WORLD in a BOTTLE, Superman?" Superman orders Brainiac to end the invasion, but the robot reveals that he is not as reprogrammed as everyone thought, attacking Superman with green radiation that may be analogous to green kryptonite, given its effects on this Superman, while boasting that "eventually the entire universe" will "hum to his battery". He is shut down by Luthor, who evaded surgery (by undisclosed means) during the invasion, and is destroyed by Superman. This triggers a fail-safe self-destruct (though it is lightly implied that Luthor had planned for this to happen) and as the gravitational singularities powering Brainiac's ship threaten to explode, Superman rockets it into outer space, where it blows up. The Earth is saved, but Superman is thought to have been caught in an explosion which is said to have a kill radius of 15,000,000 miles (24,000,000 km). The epilogue follows. The Soviet Union falls into chaos, and is transformed by the Batmen. Lex Luthor goes on to integrate many of Superman's ideas into the new philosophy of "Luthorism" and form a "Global United States". This becomes the defining moment for mankind's future as it enters an unprecedented age of peace and stability. A benevolent world government is formed and maintained, and Luthor presides over a string of scientific achievements, including the cure of all known disease, and colonisation of the solar system. Lex Luthor lives for over two thousand years. At his funeral it is revealed that Superman survived and is apparently immortal, although this is unknown to Lois, who has outlived her husband. Now permanently retired from public view, he goes on to describe Luthor's descendants, culminating in Jor-L, "whose intellect exceeded that of even his beloved ancestor." Billions of years in the future, it is revealed that Earth is being torn apart by tidal stresses from its sun (which has become a red giant). Jor-L and Lara send their infant son rocketing back into the past. The final panels of the comic book depict the landing of Kal-L's timeship in a Ukrainian collective in 1938, effectively causing a predestination paradox. Issues Superman: Red Son #1 Superman: Red Son #2 Superman: Red Son #3 Notes Trivia Actor Henry Cavill cited Red Son as one of the four Superman comics that gave him inspiration and insight for portraying Superman in the film Man of Steel.[2] Links and References Superman: Red Son (ISBN 1-4012-0191-1) Elseworlds Storyline This storyline exists within an Elseworlds continuity, and as such is not a part of the mainstream DC Universe, although it may be the basis for one of the realities of the 52 Multiverse. This template will categorize articles that include it into the category "Elseworlds Storylines." Cover Gallery Mark Millar · Dave Johnson Superman: Red Son is a three-issue prestige format comic book mini-series published by DC Comics that was released under their Elseworlds imprint in April, 2003. Author Mark Millar created the comic with the premise "what if Superman had been raised in the Soviet Union?" It received critical acclaim and was nominated for the 2004 Eisner Award for best limited series. Issues Superman: Red Son #1 Superman: Red Son #2 Superman: Red Son #3 Collections Superman: Red Son (Collected) (2004)ISBN: 1-4012-0191-1

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