

X Marks the Spot

By Mary Potts aka Queen of the Capes
<queenofthecapes@gmail.com>

Rated G

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Summary: A certain reporter gets a map that supposedly leads to a scoop on Superman. This can only end well!

Muffled curses echoed off the walls of the Metropolis Sewage Reclamation facility, partially drowned out by the buzzing of millions, possibly billions, of mosquitoes. The determined reporter slapped at another bite, grumbled, and moved on, trying to ignore the all-pervading stench. At least it would be over, soon; the target had to be just up ahead. According to the map, the key to the biggest Superman scoop ever to be printed was just around the corner, in a spot indicated by a large, red...

...X. Odd, usually Xs on maps didn't correspond to, well, actual Xs. Someone had conveniently spray-painted an actual letter X on the wall. Below the X, wrapped in a garbage bag to protect it from the horrifying brown sludge that coated the floor, was surely the reward for this filthy and miserable quest! Tearing the bag open revealed...a newspaper.

A newspaper?! Specifically, it was an older issue of the Planet. Upon closer inspection, the headline seemed familiar, somehow. It mentioned gun-runners...ah, yes: that one. He'd gotten an award for this story, he remembered now; only, someone had crossed out his by-line and written "by Lois Lane" below it. There was also a photo taped onto the page, showing that cute but gullible intern, now older, sitting with a handsome man in glasses. Both of them were apparently blowing raspberries at the camera. Claude stared down at the picture, then down at his ruined business suit. Neither French nor English had enough swear words.

THE END