

# Running With the Devil

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Rated: PG

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Summary: In response to Kerth Challenge #8, Tempus arrives in Metropolis at the same time a familiar villain is making his own mark on Metropolis.

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The streets of Metropolis were filled with the everyday hustle and bustle that sent a thrill down the spine of a twenty-second century time traveler such as himself. He spotted the street he was looking for and smiled to himself. He had read so many stories and seen all the holograms on the nefarious villains of this century. It sent a rush of adrenaline through him as he heard the sirens wailing and he realized one of his most admired villains would be arriving any moment.

Lex Luthor held the remote control to the explosives that had been planted along the street in his palm, salivating over the anticipated destruction that was to come. His thumb hovered over the red button, and he felt the intoxicating euphoria as his adrenaline pulsed, anticipating what was to come. He heard the sirens grow closer and his thumb moved closer to the red trigger button.

"Steady... not too soon..." Nigel ordered as he held up a finger.

Lex looked over, seeing the police car and prison van roll over a manhole cover just a few feet away, and his thumb rested against the button. He looked at Nigel for confirmation.

"Now!"

Lex grinned as he jammed his thumb against the red button and felt a rumble from the explosion a few feet away. The patrol car flew up into the fiery inferno and sent the patrol car flying through the air as the prisoner van behind it crashed through a bench before smashing into a brick wall.

Lex quickly exited the van he and Nigel had been seated in and ran toward the crash, tucking the tranquilizer gun into his jacket as he tugged the ball cap over his face to prevent him from being recognized by passersby. Nigel approached on the other side of the van, aiming his own tranquilizer at the guard seated in the passenger seat. A simultaneous whistle escaped each tranquilizer gun as the guards were knocked out.

"He looked like he needed a rest," Lex remarked with a sly chuckle.

"Yes, he'll have an awful headache when he wakes up," Nigel agreed.

"And so, will you," an unfamiliar voice spoke up as he watched his trusted friend Nigel collapse to the ground.

"You imbecile! Do you have any idea what you've done!" Lex hissed out in fury.

"Saved you from falling into your own demise and eventual betrayal." The man stepped forward, smoothing a hand through his light brown hair.

"You're going to have me behind bars at this rate," Lex fumed as he made his way toward the back of the prisoner van.

"Ah, ah, ah," the man countered as he held up the tranquilizer in his hand and aimed it at the door.

Lex growled under his breath, jerking the door open.

"Who's the clown?" Rollie Vale asked, pointing to the man with the tranquilizer trained on him.

"Someone of no importance," Lex sneered.

"Indeed," the stranger let out a chuckle just before striking

Vale in the chest with a tranquilizer.

Lex turned on the stranger, his eyes dark black with fury as he reached over to grab the stranger by the collar before he lit into him "You have no idea who you're dealing with you meddling fool. Do you have any idea what you've done? I needed Vale to take me to where he has stashed my supply of Kryptonite."

"Yes, the mysterious location of the Kryptonite does need to be revealed, doesn't it?" The stranger reached over to pull up Vale's sleeve and opened a latch on the robotic arm. Inside a familiar green glow emitted, and the stranger pulled the Kryptonite out of Vale's secret compartment.

"My Excalibur," Lex breathed out, staring at the stranger suspiciously. "Who are you? How did you...?"

"How did I know Vale was hiding the Kryptonite in his robotic arm?" The stranger gave a mocking laugh. "Please Lex I learned about that back in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The history of robotics. Metallo's reign and the radioactive power supply were a snore, but I did pick up a few things."

"What are you babbling about?" Lex growled irritably.

"Well, I'm from the future, Lex. How else do you think I was able to predict the precise moment that you would step into the plans for betrayal and slip into your own demise? How else do you think I would know that Nigel over here was set to sell this Kryptonite," he tossed the green meteorite in the air, "to the highest bidder and leave you to your own devices?"

"Who are you?" Lex asked again, growing more and more irritable with the stranger and his evasiveness.

"I believe it's time to go." The stranger pointed to the bridge where several patrol cars were driving over to where Lex had the getaway van parked.

"Name." Lex demanded.

"Tempus." A grin washed over his face. "Now, about this plan for Lois Lane..."

THE END