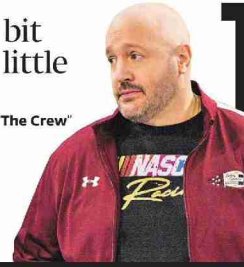




DRAMA DEPARTMENT
 Josh Lucas (left) will star opposite Rose Rollins in the Spectrum drama series "Long Slow Exhale," according to Deadline. He'll play a university athletic director.

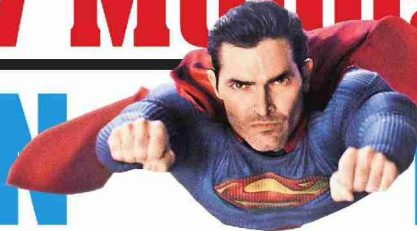
"You don't have to sculpt a joke or end a bit right before the commercial. It makes it a little bit easier that way."

— Kevin James (right) on not having rigid episodic time restrictions on his Netflix sitcom "The Crew"



TV Monday

RETURN FLIGHT



Now they're married on The CW's "Superman & Lois"

By LAUREN SARNER

IT'S a bird, it's a plane, it's Tyler Hoechlin!
 The "Teen Wolf" star dons the famous red cape to play the latest incarnation of Clark Kent/Superman in the new CW series "Superman & Lois."

"I feel like I understand a lot about Clark and Superman. Obviously not the powers, I wish I knew what it was like to fly — that would be great," Hoechlin, 33, told The Post.

"But he does the right thing when there's no reason other than 'Why not?' My folks raised us that way. I know you don't have to do the right thing all the time — but it doesn't make sense to me why you wouldn't. That's something about him that I connect to. And his eternal optimism."

"I grew up a romantic, then I became a cynic in my twenties and then realized that sucks," he said. "I enjoy waking up in the morning and hoping that we will get there. Wherever 'there' is that we're hoping...so I appreciate that about him."

Premiering Tuesday, Feb. 23 (8

p.m.), the series is a more mature take on the famous story. The pilot's opening showcases all the familiar beats — Clark's arrival on Earth as a baby and his idyllic childhood in Smallville; his move to Metropolis as a young man and his job at the Daily Planet; meeting and falling for scrappy journalist Lois Lane (Elizabeth Tulloch, "Grimm"). But after catching up to his adult life, the series goes to its main story in following

Clark and Lois after they've already been married for years and are parents to two teen boys.

"It's really not a show about Superman, it's about a husband and a wife who are parents and the husband happens to be Superman," said Hoechlin. "It's interesting when you look at how someone that the world sees as this iconic figure — what does he look like to his children? Because Dad is always embarrassing. It's fun to

play with that and see who they really are in those more intimate moments, when they're not playing this character for the world."

In addition to "Teen Wolf" (2011-2017) and "7th Heaven" (2003-2007), Hoechlin appeared in movies including the '80s period piece "Everybody Wants Some!!" Although "Superman & Lois" is not his first time playing Superman — his rendition of the character has been around since

2016, appearing in The CW's other DC shows such as "Supergirl," "Arrow," and "The Flash" — "Superman & Lois" marks the first time that he's gotten his own show.

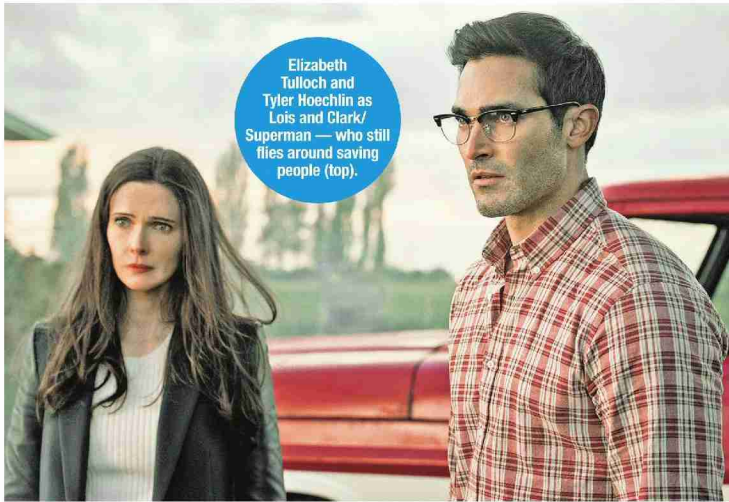
"Every once in a while I have that moment where it hits you, I'm wearing a cape today, that's what I'm doing at work. I am wearing a cape today!"

Before taking up acting, Hoechlin was on his way to a pro baseball career until an injury caused him to pivot to Hollywood. He said it taught him persistence, which he's brought to his current career ("baseball is a game of failure and so is this business — you take a lot of swings and only get a few hits").

For that reason, he said he hasn't seen past onscreen Supermen such as Henry Cavill, Tom Welling, Brandon Routh, Dean Cain or Christopher Reeve.

"[My exposure to other Supermen] was very little if I'm being completely honest," he said. "I was playing baseball competitively and working as an actor from the time I was young. I had other interests, but not many that I could put much time into."

"I've intentionally stayed away [from Superman since getting the role]," he said. "I've found it more beneficial to have an impulse and trust it without the hesitation of, 'Oh, so-and-so already did that.' It makes it easier to just go do my thing without overthinking it. Since it wasn't something that I grew up so close to, it allows me to play it without that pressure."



Elizabeth Tulloch and Tyler Hoechlin as Lois and Clark/Superman — who still flies around saving people (top).

ALI KHAN WHAT I'M WATCHING

"Kitchen Crash." The host of the show, Jeff Mauro, and I go way back. In 2004 we teamed up to pitch our food show. As the years have gone by we have both supported each other... working on and appearing in each other's shows. "The Bachelor." I swear to God it's my wife's thing but I totally get sucked in while she watches. I like to say I'm a casual viewer but OMG, when Heather Martin showed up, I was losing it."

— Khan hosts "Spring Baking Championship," back 9 p.m. Monday on Food Network



NO REASON TO FROWN

Billie Piper's darkly comic British series, "I Hate Suzie," which streams on HBO Max, has been renewed for a second season. Piper (right) plays actress Suzie Pickles, whose life is upended when her cell phone is hacked. It airs in the UK on Sky Atlantic.

