

(SUPERHEROES FROM WALL STREET)







J.A. SEBASTIN

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Chapter 1 **A NEW WAY**

NE DAY, I WILL FLY LIKE A BIRD WITH NO LIMITS, SOARING ACROSS THE universe, smelling the scent of the Milky Way. First, my hope in myself needs to be strengthened and my WORD will make it happen. My inspirations and passions are like those of every human who dreamed to be immortal. Every soul has died trying to be a genius, an aberrant, a mystical legend, a superhero; to be rich, to have eternal happiness, or to be efficacious, a celebrity in movies, hailed as glorious by the world, for all ages and for all time. Yet all of these desires waned when I realized that I am still a human with faded flesh, a broken spirit, and a weak heart. But it is not my fault, being the product of this world's fragile knowledge and teachings.

My search started at a very young age. I asked myself why a common man, with his mighty strength, couldn't be a superhero. Since then, I have been in a constant search to make sci-fi characters real in this world. I am on a search to perform miracles, such as those heard of only in myths, and to lead an exemplary life with no failures. I am on a search to make philosophy a part of life for prosaic people. To begin, I am called Oliver J. Oscar, named after the great Oscar Shrine family. I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My father was a general in the U.S. Marines. He died a hero in the Gulf War. He fought for his country and saved countless innocent lives before he died. Did you hear what I said? He was a real hero; he believed that being a Marine was a burden and he placed his life in the hands of the galaxy. He is my superhero, now and forever.

My father was a big fan of Superman. He was also the one who influenced me and taught me to be brave, powerful and compassionate like a real Superman. We would sit up late at night, with his green teacup in his hand and he tucked me in my furry white blanket, talking about superheroes. We would discuss their adventures, missions, mighty strengths, powers, blessings and curses for hours. We watched superhero movies, and he read me all the superhero comics he could find. I enjoyed each and every discussion. We often had debates over certain aspects of being a superhero, and he patiently listened to my doubts and answered my never-ending questions. All of my father's teachings made me feel active and alive, like there was a special purpose in life for me. I loved my father so much, and because of him, I started to explore the origins of the lives of superheroes. I then started to uncover the truth about them.

After my father's death, my mother raised me. She was a really wonderful lady and the best mom that one could ever hope for. But she was not like my father and me. She didn't believe in superheroes, and she was very religious - a true Christian. Her superheroes were God and Jesus. She went to church every day and conducted Bible studies during the week with her friends. She wanted to steer me away from the fantasy of a superhero search and the craziness she thought it would lead to in my mind. She spent all of her time trying to make me religious. I do believe in God, but I didn't agree with the way she viewed the world. My mother was not named after a Greek god, like Aphrodite, Athena, or Hera; she was just called Olivia Oscar. My mom is the messenger of light and prays for me every day so that I may be enlightened to walk in God's way. With her soft hands on my head, she asks God to shower me with his wisdom, and I do feel something running through me when she touches my head, but I can't wholly accept her view. Every day I search for a way to make a mortal man into a superhero, and this is often the only thought running through my mind. I often just sit and think about this very deeply. But with my thoughts wandering, I would find myself ending up critiquing and analyzing the characters of 'superheroes' characters, such as why didn't they teach common men and women how to be strong and become the master of one's own fate? Were they jealous? Is that why they kept all the secrets to themselves?

Well, at this time you might be wondering where I am now. I am sitting in an office on Wall Street, the very place where the concept of money was born and nursed. My superhero suit, which I made for myself, is a chairman and CEO suit. There is no cape or mask or wings or frills. It's just a blue suit and blue shirt with a tie wagging around my neck like a dog's tail, telling the world that I dress for success. My life has changed now and I know the rules. I sometimes bend them, but I never break them. I have made a difference to the people around me and they are also learning, practicing, mastering, and living the lessons and truth I have learned in my life and tried to pass on to them.

It takes only a little time, even less than a second, to understand who you are, why you are here, the very purpose of life. But in order to understand the concept of life in less than a second, we have to first open our eyes, ears, minds, and listen, observe and think. If we do this, we will find wisdom, and all the answers will appear.

I see the world differently now. I see all the waves passing around me, the electromagnetic fields, the patterns of light and all of the energy that exists in this hyperspace. At this moment, everyone can experience one singular idea and concept: the truth, which exists in the superhero realm. Unfortunately, the realm has been misunderstood throughout the years due to philosophical doctrines, religions, cults, fantasy stories, scientific theories, evolutionary misconceptions, cultural and patriotic practices. But my goal is to make every son and daughter, all made of atoms and molecules, a better race, a singular race filled with happiness, peace, immortality and abundance. That is the goal in life. I believe that, at this point in my life, I have found it in myself and now is the time to share the good message. When did this actually begin? How did I find it? What inspired me? Who pointed me in the right direction towards the single answer that could define our existence?

It all started when I was a child. Every kid should have a city and state name and I do. Yes, I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It is a beautiful city filled with fresh air that filled me with wondrous thoughts. Fresh air is very important, because it is harder to get these days due to our environmental pollution. My street name is called Wall Street, but it's not the financial capital or international money-laundering center; it's a street in a neighborhood filled with families who believed in the idea of superheroes and dreamed to one day be like them. They veered away from other ideas the world tried to teach us; ours was a fun fantasy neighborhood. My father's family grew up here and our house name is called 'Krypton'. This is the home where I was born. My mom is from a different neighborhood, where they believed in God and the values of this country, a heavenly neighborhood filled with angels' voices to give directions and church bells chiming to tell the time. My dad always teases mom about her neighborhood, because she did not use the wall clock in our home to check the time, but rather depended on the rusted church bells ringing.

The church bells in my life mean a lot, because on my parents wedding day, the bell ringer was so drunk that he forgot to ring the bell. He had fallen asleep in the bell room, with his pants around his ankles, and did not ring the bell as my father took out the wedding ring and was about to place it on my mother's hand. My father didn't know the rules of church bell practices, so as he was pulling my mother's hand to put the ring on her finger, she was pulling back from him. My father was in a panic because he assumed she didn't like him, and his face grew pale as he asked her, "Olivia, why are you doing this to me now?" The people in the congregation started to whisper, and the priest peeped out over his glasses and, looking at my father, said, "Son, have patience. We are working on it." The priest ordered the altar boys to check the bell ringer, and my mom explained through her tears, "They have to ring the bell for us to exchange rings." My father gave a deep sigh of relief as he realized that he hadn't lost my mother after all. He said wittily, "If by chance I take you on a honeymoon to Paris, don't put the church bell in your pockets and carry the bell ringer in your luggage."

They found the bell ringer, who was drunk and had locked the bell room from the inside so no one could get in. My father's friends decided

CHAPTER 1

to shoot bullets in the air instead of the traditional church bell. Standing outside of the church, his friends began shooting and bullets flew up into the air like fire tongues. My mother and father exchanged rings and the priest, who was angry about the chaos the bell ringer had caused, said, "Amen to this wonderful couple." My father's first words to my mother after the wedding were, "When God's children make a mistake, only a Superman can fix it." Bing! This, of course, made my mother's face pale as she asked him to stop. My mother was a gentle woman, but when faced with conflictions regarding her faith, she would become very upset.

Seriously, what happened to the bell ringer? He had fallen asleep in the bell room, like a little baby. How did they wake him? They broke down the room and woke him with a water hose. They showered him for ages like a great waterfall, with strong jets of water. The priest was disappointed with the bell ringer, because not only did he forget to do his job and turn up drunk during a wedding ceremony, but this time he had gotten himself high on cocaine and moonshine.

So, my parents' married life started with a funny bell-ringing story, and beliefs were put on trial. Nevertheless, they were the happiest couple I've ever known. They loved each other so much. The one thing that tied them together was their common belief: they loved good and hated evil, in the same way that Superman and Jesus acted upon good and evil. But Jesus forgave the people who committed crimes, while Superman reprimanded them. My whole family believed in a supernatural world, one with both God and superheroes in it, with divine power that could create and protect the good while crushing evil. So I am a product of superheroes and God combined: two book-ends of the world's hyper-beliefs.

My parents started their life together in my father's home on Wall Street. My father got time off from the Marines and worked as an assistant manager at a local bank while my mother stayed at home and took care of the household. Accepting of their differences in beliefs, they were very happy. When my father came home late after work, with his shirt and pants disheveled and wrinkled, he would sit quietly on our brown couch and not move from there. My mom would return from church with a sense of rejuvenation about her. She would mix fresh drinks for my father, all the while sharing her experiences and revelations from her time at church. My father would patiently listen to her talk while waiting for her to finish his drink. He would drink a few sips and say, "Olivia, you have been going to church your entire life. Why don't any of your Gods-say, Jesus, his father, the Holy Spirit, or at least Jesus's disciples-come and visit you?" My mother, bending down and removing my father's shoes, would say, "Why don't any of your fantasy heroes—say, Superman, Spider-man, Batman, Thor, or at least Iron Man with that metal suit—come and knock at our door?"

Father responded, "Well, an eye for an eye. Why don't you believe that superheroes exist, Olivia?"

"They don't exist, it's just a myth!" was my mother's reply.

"It's the same as God. No one has seen him, but people believe in him," my father would snap back.

"Why don't you call yourself a superhero? You're always reading these comics and watching movies about them, just like a kid."

"Why should I call myself one?" My father sounded resigned, as though he didn't believe he deserved the title.

"You served and protected the country from our enemies. In my eyes, you are a superhero," my mother said warmly.

"Yes, true, you could call me a hero, but not a superhero," my father conceded.

At that point, my father didn't know how to answer my mother because his thoughts were hanging in limbo. I am not like my father. I do have answers for all questions; to me, a person who does good deeds should be called a god. A superhero is defined as an extraordinary person with powers such as flying, stopping a train, or being able to climb a building like a monkey. These individuals are able to do unexpected things at unexpected times, and essentially they are indestructible.

Though my parents loved to debate and talk a lot about their different perspectives, they spent their nights surrounded with love. If my dad had really had the strength of a superhero, he would have killed my mom by the morning with his strength while making love. But she woke up every day, unharmed. My father really was just a human under the sun and grounded by gravitational force.

During their time together, they continued their debates, arguing their beliefs. One day, my mother asked my father what he found inspiring about superheroes.

Father: In this world of injustice, evil and pain, I knew there had to be people who could help. That's when I started to believe in superheroes. I chose to follow Superman, my personal icon and hero, and I started to explore more about him in books, comics and movies.

Mother: Why don't you believe in God?

Father: No one has seen him. He has never helped anyone; he just watches people dying. I am better than God. In times of war I saved innocent people. I was able to help my friends.

Mother: How about Moses? He saved his people from the Egyptians.

Father: That may be true—a cult created by some fancy rabbi who wanted their fringes to be longer and shinier than other clans and people. Even if it did happen, Moses only saved his people once, and the story has been in the wind for about three thousand years, so why did the same God or Moses not save the Jews from the Holocaust? It was the Russians

CHAPTER 2 MY EARLY DAYS

HE EARLY DAYS OF MY CHILDHOOD, SPENT WITH MY FATHER, WERE splendid. He was so involved with his beliefs about superheroes that he considered himself almost like Jor-El and me as Kal-El. My father wanted only the best for me in this world. His wish for me was that I would grow into a man who would make a difference in this world and restore peace. He talked to me about it constantly, and I wondered, "Why can't he do it? Why is he waiting for me?" Now I understand that he wanted me to take the credit. He wanted me to experience true success. He would call me his "Only Great Boy" or his "Rock." But the fact is, he never had a real nickname for me until reality knocked on his door one evening as he was filling out my play school application form.

On a winter evening, wearing a T-shirt and night pants, a glass of wine on the table next to him, my father carefully filled out my application for preschool. He sipped wine every time he filled in a column on the form, and when he came across the column labeled "Nickname," he put down his wine and stared at it hard, thinking very deeply. He had no idea what to write and slowly took his eyes from the form and asked my mother for help. My mother was in the kitchen, busy making a potpie and soup, but upon hearing this, she stopped working on dinner and came to help my father. She was also confounded by the question, and after a few minutes she suggested names like "Honey," "Sweetie," or "Teddy." My father closed his eyes and shook his head a couple of times, then took a deep breath and told her, "Those are words for girls, puppies, or homemade fancy-pants boys." It was then that my father realized the importance of a name and a nickname, knowing it would create a harbinger effect. He decided that evening that I should have the best one.

Yet my father did not know what to do. He is not a linguistic specialist, but he chose the best nickname in this world for me. He wrote down the name Kal-El. He drank the whole glass of wine in one gulp, called my mother in from the kitchen, and told her that he had found their son's nickname. My mom was excited and rushed over to check the form. That's when she saw the name. Her face grew red and hotter than the potpie in the oven—and she said, "There are a billion words in this world. Why did you pick this one?" My father got up to retrieve some wine from the cellar and, before heading downstairs, said, "It is true, Kal-El is not from this Earth. He was picked far from this galaxy, so this is what is best. It is the best a father can do for his son." I was in the bedroom watching cartoons, and mom started on her dogma and thesis about names and their meanings. My father filled his glass with wine, as he was enjoying their conversation. He grinned at her and then proceeded to ask my mother if he could question her on her ideas.

Mother: What is that, James? I am sorry I was pushing you on this.

Father: Don't be, dear. I love you. (He kissed her lips gently.) I am very curious about the attitude of religious people. When I asked you your opinion about a nickname, you couldn't think of one. You could have told me something like Moses, Abram, or Joshua. Alas, you didn't know and that is fair enough. But when I came up with a name using my limited intellectual powers, you're immediately arguing over it.

Mother: I'm very much impressed that you know the characters from the Bible.

My father smiled and said, "I've heard these characters' names a million times, again and again, and it's recorded in my deepest memory. Thanks for also knowing the name Kal-El."

My mother understood and smiled at my father. Superman is well known as Superman or Clark Kent, but only very few know his real name as Kal-El.

For a while I thought that their arguments and debates were pointless, but now I realize that they listened to each other while they were talking. They not only loved each other a lot, but also respected one another, and neither of them was fully biased with their beliefs; they were both looking for eternal truth. My mother and father searching for eternal truth caused my own acumen to grow.

I began my preschool, which was a few blocks from my home. I never cried about going to preschool because I played with lots of kids and they were very nice to each other. My first friend was a boy named Judah. Since Judah's father was best friends with my father, we all spent lots of time together. We would play games like hide-and-seek; red light, green light; and many others. Judah was a good friend and very carefree. I admired him and wanted to be like him. I couldn't be, as I had too many thoughts on my mind and half the time I was disconnected from this world. Throughout my life, even when I am searching within myself, I don't express it in my face, I am clueless to everyone. The search in me runs deep and is multiplying so fast that it could occupy this universe.

I can still remember all the good times I had with Judah. He is still my best friend; forgiving, compassionate, trustworthy, and possesses great foresight. We were closer than the other kids in school. Everyone wanted to be like us. The first girl I met as a child also impacted me deeply. She was beautiful, cute, and lovable, and her name was Madison. She breezed into my life as a wind, and I can still remember the first conversation I had with her. At the time, I considered her to be just a friend. When I saw her wearing a pink hat and pink dress, tiny rose lips, and a look of innocence filled her face, I couldn't resist, and I looked into her eyes. Suddenly I was swimming in oceans of her thoughts. She smiled with her tiny lips and said, "Hi. I'm Madison. What are your names?" Judah was standing next to me, and I wanted to answer before him, so I jumped up quickly, before Judah did, and said, "My name is Oliver, Oliver J. Oscar."

Madison: "Sorry, I didn't hear that."

Me: "Oh, I am Oliver."

She smiled at me and we shook hands. Judah slowly introduced himself. We told her that Judah and I were best friends and lived in the neighborhood. Madison liked us from the very first day and asked us to be her friend. We didn't hesitate and accepted her friendship.

Very soon the three of us became really close. We would sing, play, share snacks, and paint pictures together. We were the "Three Musketeers". When our friendship started, Madison's parents became friends with my parents and with Judah's family. We all became one big neighborhood family.

Both Madison's parents loved superheroes and appreciated my father's ideas very much. Madison's family was a typical crazy family, much like the other families in the neighborhood who believed in superheroes. This made our family gatherings much more intense and frequent. Judah's family was on my mother's side: they were a very religious and a philosophical family and understood my mother's views. Our three families talked and shared ideas and discussed the world and its existence. Madison and Judah were not very interested in these conversations, so I would tune out our parents when we were together so I could play with my friends and have moments of normal reality.

Yet the isolation from our parents' conversations was only for Judah and Madison, not for me. Even when we were playing, I tried to stay close to where they were talking, whichever room they were in, or on the porch, always trying to listen to them. Their conversations were very energetic and constructive, and every day I learned something new; as facts and ideas were filling my mind, my search continued to grow. All parents should discuss ideas, as that is what makes kids interested and motivated so they will always stay connected to you, even when they are far away. If your conversation is folly, they will start to move inch by inch away from you, and one day in their lives when they are faced with isolation of place or state, they will either change to form a newfound intelligence or form the foundation of a flagitious mind. I enjoyed Judah and Madison company at school, where our parents were at a distance, so I was able to put my full mind and soul into our friendship and be happy in the way children are happy, rather than having to think about the conversations taking place around me.

I learned about the basics of philosophy from Madison's father, who was a renowned professor. He was an expert on many interesting subjects, like the purpose of life, evolution, and the world's interconnectivity. There were too many ideas always floating, an ocean of doctrines, theories, and viewpoints constantly pouring out of him. Yet none of his theories gave me an answer, and I am continually searching for knowledge and truth, not just abstraction, hypothesis and presuppositions.

Our preschool life flew by quickly, and before I realized it, I was in kindergarten. All of the kids in school were from various backgrounds. I remember studying the kids around me and thinking that they looked like preprogrammed and predestined robots, always talking about cartoons, movies, zoo animals, birds, ice cream, or junk food. Judah sat next to me and we both sat in the back row, while Madison sat up front. I often felt bored and lonely in the classroom, as they taught very basic stuff that I didn't care about. Instead I would research how to be a superhero and how to make myself as strong as a superman, and ponder all the conversations that I listened to my parents have. The only happiness I found in the classroom was that I could see Madison's cute short hair swaying from left to right like a pendulum. Sometimes kids would talk to me about Superman, Batman, Spider-man, and every possible fictional character they ever saw on television or in the movies. I listened to them very carefully and realized that most of these kids were very selfish, that they wanted to be like their favorite superheroes but never thought of making all the humans on this planet like them. I tried to stay away from them and to stay with Madison and Judah. Most of the kids had their favorite superhero and would play-fight each other to prove that their superhero was the best.

Every single day after school, my friends and I would watch kids wrestle with each other, usually in friendly fights. With my crazy neighborhood and the youngsters around us, I had a very interesting childhood. But out of all the kids in the school, I liked two in particular, Nelek and Urson. These two boys did not fight with each other, but rather talked about interesting topics and I would listen to their conversations with endless fascination. They always had the best arguments. Nelek would always defend Superman and Urson would take the side of Spider-man. Nelek argued that Superman flies and circles around the Earth, almost reaching the stars. His argument was that Spider-man could never do anything like that. Urson would reply by saying that Spider-man moved quickly in populated areas, whereas Superman wasted his time going to places where no one lives. Nelek sided with Superman's strength and Urson with Spider-man's agility. This argument happened time and time again. father well, and they greeted each other and began talking. Nikifor's costume was Captain America. Being a veteran himself, my dad appreciated his costume. He told Nikifor that maybe he would be a real Captain America one day and protect our country from danger. Nikifor was a second-generation Russian American. Being a Russian in blood, and America being his homeland, he dressed up as Captain America and his parents never stopped him. If Halloween was "demon's day," according to religious people, the question that I had in my mind was, "If Halloween made Niki the Cossack wear a Captain America suit, how come I never saw a traditional Jew wearing a Santa Claus costume on Christmas Day?" It's all one world, but we have created so many differences and useless rules, and all these were created to make man a slave of the system.

I also realized that some "facts" are not actually based in truth and instead were created by a society with blind vision and narrow thoughts. It became clear to me that Halloween day, demon's day, at least was able to unite an American and a Russian, yet Christmas had no impact on uniting a Christian and a Jew.

I started to see things very differently, and I started to adjust searching with my rationale mind but with an open heart and free spirit, so that one day I would find ways to make everyone immortal and imperishable. My understanding grew, and I learned to correlate all of the events that happened around me. I was an average student in my class, and my mom wanted me to be an engineer. My dad, however, wanted me to be a commander in the Marines. I knew that either of these goals would take a lot of work. My goal was different, though.

My father inspired all of the crazy concepts of superheroes and their good deeds, but my father's life was always different from that which he believed. He was stuck between dreams and reality, but for me, they were the same thing. He assumed joining the Marines was an act of patriotism. With all his feeble-mind, using up all his strength and exhausted energy, he thought he could protect his country in a limitless universe with endless ideas. But my father is not Superman, and he could not handle all his enemies by himself. I knew that was why he wanted me to be a Marine, his patriotism had blinded him.

At my young age, my ideas and thoughts were not clouded by uncertainty. My search was not like that of all great people in history, searching for an answer and creating more trouble in this world with their current answers. This is not what I am doing. I am searching this universe with my limitless thoughts.