

Punching Bag  
by  
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FADE IN:

INT. INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

SERIES OF SHOTS-

A pair of SCIENTISTS mill about lab tables. One uses an eyedropper on a specimen. A huge vine grows out of the table.

The two nod and write results on clipboards.

A MALE ASTRONAUT with bug eyes runs in a spherical room, never moving, but the ship moves around him.

A FEMALE SCIENTIST with snake skin taps a small window on one side.

He turns to her and smiles.

She smiles back.

He pushes a button in front of him and the door WHOOSHES open.

She enters and both begin to disrobe.

Another ASTRONAUT takes a space walk, when an asteroid ZOOMS by him and toward Earth.

                          ASTRONAUT (ON RADIO)  
                          Mayday! Mayday! Come in NASA, we  
                          have showers headed for home.

INT. CAPE CANAVERAL - DAY

The NASA control room is abuzz with activity. SCIENTISTS runaround everywhere, yelling at one another.

                          SCIENTIST 1  
                          What the hell are we gonna do? That  
                          thing is the size of an ocean  
                          liner!

                          SCIENTIST 2  
                          I have no idea, it's touching down  
                          in five minutes.

A door at the back of the room swings open. In walks COMMANDER RICK TAVERS, a no-nonsense military man.

COMM. TAVERS  
Call the White Knight.

The room goes silent.

SCIENTIST 2  
Are you sure sir?

COMM. TAVERS  
Push that damn button, son.

The scientist reaches under a command console and pushes a red button.

EXT. AVALON - DAY

Establishing shot: A huge white castle a la the Playboy Mansion.

INT. AVALON - CONTINUOUS

The WHITE KNIGHT, mid 30s, sits in an easy chair, in a smoking jacket, as his civilian alter-ego Elford Huges. He puffs a pipe and reads a leather-bound book.

An alarm sounds throughout the house.

WHITE KNIGHT  
Jeeves, ready my horse.

The White Knight pushes a button on his chair, and opens a trap door from the floor. He slides down into it.

We hold on the back of the chair, which has a swastika on it.

We see the book fall to the floor; it's Mein Kampf

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

A white POLICE OFFICER has stopped a BLACK MAN. The officer has his gun drawn.

BLACK MAN  
My ID is in the glove box. I'm  
going to reach for it now.

POLICE OFFICER  
Boy, don't you move, or I'll blow  
your...

The policeman trails off as he sees the White Knight, in a glistening alabaster suit of armor SHOOT past on a robotic steed.

POLICE OFFICER (SOFTLY) (CONT'D)  
 ...Head off...

While the officer is distracted, the man guns his car and drives away. The policeman continues to look on.

EXT. OUTER SPACE

The meteor hurtles towards Earth, catching fire in the atmosphere.

EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS

The White Knight draws a futuristic-looking lance.

INTERCUT  
 The meteor grows closer.

The Knight zooms towards it.

Meteor.

The Knight lowers his helmet.

Meteor.

The Knight narrows his eyes.

The Knight and the meteor collide.

FADE TO WHITE:

EXT. CAPE CANAVERAL- DAY

A Hispanic NEWS REPORTER interviews a de-helmeted White Knight.

REPORTER  
 And how were you able to stop the meteor?

WHITE KNIGHT  
 Well, it was simple. My superior brain size allowed me to intercept its trajectory and disarm it with my laser lance.

The reporter rolls her eyes.

REPORTER

And why were you called in to stop this disaster?

WHITE KNIGHT

Well, those eggheads at NASA got no idea what they're doing. I know the Jews sent this meteor, and they're not doing the proper monitoring --

The reporter cuts him off quickly.

REPORTER

I think that might be all we have time for today.

WHITE KNIGHT

I'm just saying there's a reason most superheroes are white...

The broadcast cuts to a commercial for a laser waffle iron, and we reveal that the broadcast is on a television in...

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE - DAY

WALTER, late teens, chunky, wearing a dumb hat, eats a chocolate bar. ANDRE WINTERS, thin, ashy, awkward, rips bong.

He scoffs, and smoke leaks out of his mouth.

ANDRE

That's some bullshit. I can't believe they let a Nazi be a superhero.

WALTER

It's not like they could stop him.

ANDRE

Right, but it's about the principle and shit.

A police scanner next to the TV crackles.

DISPATCH (ON RADIO)

We have a six-sixteen at the seven-eleven on eighth and fourteenth. Three armed suspects. Requesting backup.

Andre brightens.

ANDRE  
This is it. Ima go.

WALTER  
Nah, pass me that bong. Get the next one.

Andre passes the bong.

ANDRE  
You're such a bitch, Wall-Ter. You ain't never wanna do shit.

WALTER  
Nigga, you too high to go fight crime.

ANDRE  
Bitch, I'm maintaining my secret identity.

Andre gets up and starts riffling through a bag on the floor.

ANDRE (CONT'D)  
By day, I'm stoned out of his mind Andre Winters, but by night, I'm Stone Wall.

Andre Pulls out a makeshift superhero suit made of pots and sheet metal.

WALTER  
Nigga, it's 2:30 in the afternoon.

ANDRE  
It's a figure of speech.

Walter grabs the bong from Andre. He smashes it over his head. Andre doesn't flinch.

ANDRE (CONT'D)  
Bitch, you broke your bong.

WALTER  
It's yours, don't worry about it.

Walter looks up, but Andre is already gone.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE

Three robbers, all black, all wearing panty-hose, led by JEROME, his nine hand shaking, stand in front of a CLERK.

JEROME

I done told you, man. Just shut the fuck up and we gon' get through this.

CLERK

I know the drill. I've been robbed like forty times. I've just never actually seen anyone use panty-hose before.

Jerome's jaw tightens.

CLERK (CONT'D)

Do you have the bags with the dollar signs on them too?

One of the other robbers moves the bag (a shopping bag with a dollar sign scribbled on in sharpie) behind his back.

JEROME

Man, just shut yo' damn mouth and fill the bag or we gon' have to shoot you.

CLERK

I'm going, I'm going. It's just pretty funny.

The clerk takes one of his own bags and opens the register.

ANDRE (O.C.) (WHITE VOICE)

Halt, citizen!

The whole store ignores him.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Andre, in his costume, stands in the doorway. The sidewalk in front of the apartments next door is cordoned off, with a sign reading "WET CEMENT" but WORKERS are packing everything up.

ANDRE

Man, this some bullshit.

He enters the store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

ANDRE

Guys, that's some weak ass shit. At least say something when I try to make a dramatic entrance.

Everyone turns to look at Andre. They all laugh.

JEROME (LAUGHING)

What the hell are you supposed to be?

CLERK

He's like a gay tin man!

Andre frowns. He drops the voice/

ANDRE

First, that's homophobic. It's 2016. Second, I'm saving you. And third, I'm Stone Wall. The superhero.

JEROME

Nigga, get yo aluminum siding ass out of here. The Hood ain't got no superheroes.

ANDRE (WHITE VOICE)

It does now.

He drops the voice again.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Wait... Jerome, is that you?

JEROME

Yeah, nigga, who's askin'?

ANDRE

It's me, Andre, from Carl Lucas

Middle School. Remember?

Jerome does.

JEROME

Oh shit! Nigga, what you doin'? You look like you skinned a robot.

ANDRE

You know, I'm just tryina do that hero thing, get me some of that paper. What about you?

Jerome pulls the gun on Andre.

JEROME

Kinda the opposite.

Jerome empties the clip on Andre. The bullets pierce the metal, but it does nothing.

ANDRE

Yeah, that's not gon' work.

JEROME

Fuck, right, you got that whole invulnerable skin shit goin' on.

ANDRE

That's me.

The clerk has finished loading the bag. Jerome grabs it. He runs past Andre and PUSHES him, hard.

Andre stumbles.

JEROME

You still a bitch, tho.

Jerome and the other robbers exit the store as Andre tries to get his balance. He follows them.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Jerome and the thieves are halfway down the block. Andre runs after them, but gets slower and slower as he goes.

Andre looks down: he's caught in the cement.

ANDRE

God Damn, this some bullshit!

Andre pulls at the cement, stuck.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

The sun is beginning to set. Andre has been in the same position for hours. He's stopped pulling, as the cement has dried.

BERNICE, but for now, A LARGE WOMAN, dressed to the nines, comes out of the apartment building.

She stops to look at Andre.

He looks back.

She walks around him and continues on.

ANDRE

You gotta be kidding me.

He looks at her with contempt as she goes, then turns back to see SHEENA BLOUNT, sixteen, hair in pigtails standing right in front of him.

SHEENA

You stuck?

ANDRE

Nah, I'm just chillin'.

SHEENA

Okay, later.

Sheena starts to walk away.

ANDRE

Wait, wait, hold on.

Sheena stops.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Ain't I seen you before?

SHEENA

Yeah, we went to the same high school... When you still went to high school.

ANDRE

Right. I had to focus more on my hero work.

SHEENA

How's that going?

Sheena looks at his feet.

ANDRE

It's got its ups and downs. Can you help me out of here?

SHEENA

Sure, I gotta go get my brother and Thomas.

ANDRE

Word, thanks...

He trails off.

SHEENA

Sheena Blount.

Sheena walks back into the building.

ANDRE

I'm Andre.

SHEENA

I know.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Andre still hasn't moved. Sheena comes out.

ANDRE

It's about time. Where's your brother.

SHEENA

He's coming. Hold on.

PROFESSOR OCTAVIUS BLOUNT, a light-skinned man in his early 30s' wearing an ankh over a tweed jacket struggles out of the apartment with a large box.

THOMAS GETTIER, a white skinny nerd in his early 20s, wearing a black glove saunters out after him.

Octavius drops the box next to Andre.

OCTAVIUS

You didn't tell me this thing was so big.

Thomas opens the box and pulls out a small tuning fork with his gloved hand.

THOMAS  
I didn't say big, I just said  
heavy.

Thomas takes the fork and strikes the concrete. It  
immediately shatters.

Andre steps out of it.

ANDRE  
Thanks.

Thomas places the fork in his pocket, and it's weight forces  
him to the ground. He picks the fork back up with the glove.

THOMAS  
No problem.

Thomas puts out his left hand for Andre to shake, which he  
awkwardly does.

THOMAS (CONT'D)  
Dr. Thomas Gettier, Professor of  
Media Studies at the community college.

ANDRE  
Thank's, I'm --

THOMAS  
Andre Winters, the boy with  
bulletproof skin. I know. This man  
behind me is my colleague Professor  
Octavius Blount, from the Divinity  
Department.

Octavius nods.

ANDRE  
You teach Media Studies?

THOMAS  
I found applied physics a little  
beneath me.

OCTAVIUS  
Do you want to come in for dinner?

They're talking about you on the news.

Andre brightens.

ANDRE  
Sounds great!

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The four (Andre in his plainclothes) gather around a television, each eating some chicken fried steak. The reporter from earlier sits at an anchor desk.

REPORTER (ON TV)

And it seems the hero known as  
Punching Bag failed to apprehend  
the robbers.

ANDRE

Stone Wall! I'm Stone Wall!

OCTAVIUS

I think it may be too late for  
that. Once the media brands you,  
it's over.

THOMAS

Just be grateful they didn't give  
you the word Black before your  
name. Black Current, Black Thunder,  
Black Racer, that's a disturbing  
pattern.

OCTAVIUS

And they're all electricity  
superheroes too. Did the night  
shift at the battery factory get  
hit with a gamma bomb?

No answer.

THOMAS

What about you Andre? How did you  
get your power?

ANDRE

I don't know. As long as I can  
remember, nothing has ever hurt me.

SHEENA

And are you super strong too, or  
something?

Andre rubs the back of his head.

ANDRE

Nah, it's just the skin thing.

SHEENA

That suuuuucks!

ANDRE  
I'm working on it.

OCTAVIUS  
Have you checked if you were magic yet?

ANDRE  
How do I do that?

OCTAVIUS  
If you gotta ask, you ain't magic.

THOMAS  
Magic isn't real, Octavius. How many times have we been over this?

OCTAVIUS  
You just say that cuz white people can't do magic. It's a Black and Asian thing.

THOMAS  
What about Merlin?

OCTAVIUS  
Propaganda to describe men from the East in the 12th century.

THOMAS  
Druids?

OCTAVIUS  
Aliens.

THOMAS  
Harry Potter?

OCTAVIUS  
Bitch, that's a kid's book... written by aliens.

Thomas slams his hand on the table.

THOMAS  
Then how come no one's ever seen any magic?

OCTAVIUS  
Just cuz they're not telling you about it doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

Sheena gestures to Andre to go into the other room.

He nods and follows.

THOMAS

You're an academic, Octavius, how can you believe that?

OCTAVIUS

I'm so close to cracking it, I can almost taste it.

THOMAS

Oh yeah? Fifty bucks says you can't do one magic thing this week.

OCTAVIUS

You're on. Pick it, anything.

Thomas considers this for a second.

THOMAS

Okay, Dave died downstairs and no one has come to pick him up yet.

Raise him from the dead.

OCTAVIUS

Dave the crackhead?

THOMAS

That's Dave.

OCTAVIUS

You want the first magic thing I ever do to be raising a drug addict from the grave?

THOMAS

If you can't do it...

Octavius stands.

OCTAVIUS

My ancestors are descended from a race of Egyptian kings! I'm more magic than Harry Goddamn Houdini! You watch me! Dave the crackhead, I hope you haven't made yourself comfortable in Hell, because you have an appointment in the land of the living!

INT. SHEENA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sheena's walls are covered in superhero posters. She sits on her bed.

Andre looks around, unsure where to sit. He settles for a chair near her desk on the other side of the room.

ANDRE

Do they get like this every night?

SHEENA

Mostly.

ANDRE

If Thomas is so smart, what's he doing here?

Sheena looks at the door as if to check for Thomas, satisfied, she turns back.

SHEENA

He's not a real doctor.

ANDRE

What?

SHEENA

He spent ten years in college, smoking weed, and now he lives on our couch. Octavius got him the job at the college.

ANDRE

Shit.

SHEENA

Yeah. So what about you, Punching Bag? Why do you want to be a superhero?

ANDRE

Why not? I got the powers.

SHEENA

Yeah, but superheroes ain't from the ghetto.

ANDRE

The first ones were. White people stole superheroes from us, like Jazz, and the Blues, and rock and roll, and hip-hop, and probably EDM.

SHEENA  
Let me be your sidekick.

ANDRE  
What? No. Why the hell would I do that? You ain't got any powers.

SHEENA  
Yeah... but I...

Andre's flip-phone rings. He picks it up.

ANDRE  
What's good? Beat. What? Beat. I'll be there.

Andre hangs up the phone.

SHEENA  
What's going on?

ANDRE  
Jerome and his boys out celebrating at Johnny Deathray's. Ima bring 'em in.

SHEENA  
Let me come.

ANDRE  
No. I got no time for wanna-bes.

Andre dashes out the door.

SHEENA  
Yeah, and what the hell are you?

EXT. JOHNNY DEATHRAY'S - NIGHT

A seedy club with a cheap neon ray gun for a sign. The LINE is out the door, and Walter waits outside pensively.

Andre (in costume) approaches him.

ANDRE  
Thanks for the info, kid.

They dap up.

WALTER  
No problem, fam. I saw you on the news, this shit is for real!  
(MORE)

WALTER (CONT'D)

You just gotta remember to take ya  
boy Walt up witchu.

ANDRE

Always.

Andre walks towards the door, but the BOUNCER stops him.

BOUNCER

Where you think you goin', Go-Bot?

ANDRE (WHITE VOICE)

My name is Stone Wall, and I need  
entrance to your establishment to  
apprehend a criminal syndicate.

The bouncer smiles.

BOUNCER

Lil nigga, even if you was old  
enough to come in here, I can't let  
you come in wearing that washboard.

You look like you in Fat Albert's Junk yard Gang. Run along.

A DRUNK GIRL from the line recognizes Andre.

DRUNK GIRL

Hey, I know that nigga. He from the  
news! Punching Bag.

The rest of the line seems to recognize him as well.

LINE (CHANTING)

Punching Bag, Punching Bag,  
Punching Bag!

DRUNK GIRL

Let him in!

The bouncer frowns.

BOUNCER

Yo, shut the fuck up. I am not  
letting this kid into the club.

Walter gets an idea.

WALTER

Hold on a second. How about this.

You punch him in the face as hard as you can. If he gets up,  
you let him in, if not I'll drag him home.

The line loves this. The chant changes.

LINE (CHANTING)  
Knock him out! Knock him out!

Andre frowns.

ANDRE  
Damn, you niggas fickle.

The bouncer shrugs.

BOUNCER  
Okay, but you best not come back  
here with no lawyer or nothing.

The Drunk girl and many others take out their phones.

The bouncer winds up his punch.

He HITS Andre with a hell of a punch and knocks him into the street.

A car ZOOMS by, and runs over Andre.

LINE  
Ooh!

Andre lays still on the ground for a second: is this it?

He slowly rises to his feet.

The line goes crazy.

BOUNCER  
Okay, go on in, lil nigga.

The bouncer stamps his hands and allows him in.

Walter tries to follow, but is stopped by the bouncer.

BOUNCER (CONT'D)  
I ain't say nothin' 'bout you,  
nigga. Back of the line.

INT. JOHNNY DEATHRAY'S - CONTINUOUS

Jerome and his posse sit at a raised table, popping bottles,  
with THREE WOMEN.

Andre approaches them.

ANDRE (WHITE VOICE)  
 Citizens, step away from these  
 criminals. They are coming with me.

He turns to Jerome.

ANDRE (WHITE VOICE) (CONT'D)  
 Party's over.

Jerome smiles.

JEROME  
 But the fat lady ain't sung yet.

Bernice!

The LARGE WOMAN from earlier comes over to the table.

JEROME (CONT'D)  
 My boi here is looking for some  
 treatment... full service.

He lays a stack of bills on the table,

JEROME (CONT'D)  
 On me.

Bernice smiles, wickedly. She grabs the money and places it  
 in her cleavage. She grips Andre and hoists him over her  
 shoulder.

ANDRE  
 Wait, where we goin'? Slow Down!  
 Man, this some bullshit!

Andre watches Jerome and his cronies each take a girl and  
 leave the club.

INT. JOHNNY DEATHRAY'S BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bernice throws Andre onto a bed in a sparsely lit room.

BERNICE  
 Let Bernice put on something a  
 little more... comfortable, but  
 she'll be right witcha.

The door slams.

Andre looks around. Whips, Chains, and a clown lamp line the  
 room.

ANDRE

Shit.

He rushes for the door, but fails to open it.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

At least I don't think I'll feel  
this.

A TAP TAP TAPPING is heard at a barred window next to the  
bed.

Andre looks towards it: it's Sheena.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Sheena!

SHEENA

Yeah, it's me.

ANDRE

You came for me.

SHEENA

That's what a good sidekick is  
supposed to do.

ANDRE

You're not my sidekick.

Sheena sighs.

SHEENA

I don't want to fake leave again,  
so I'm just going to get you out of  
here.

ANDRE

Did you get another one of Thomas'  
high-tech gadgets?

Sheena pulls out a pair of bolt cutters.

SHEENA

Kinda.

Sheena starts snapping the bars.

The door handle jiggles.

ANDRE

Sheena, hurry.

INT. HALLWAY

Bernice futzes with a key in the door.

BERNICE  
Goddamn door, always stuck.

INT. JOHNNY DEATHRAY'S BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sheena has removed all of the bars. She pulls them off of the window.

SHEENA  
Come on!

Andre climbs into the window, but his costume gets stuck.

SHEENA (CONT'D)  
Leave it!

The door creaks open.

Bernice walks into the room, but is greeted by a bed containing only Andre's old costume.

BERNICE  
Well shit!

INT. SHEENA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Andre and Sheena both sit on her bed.

ANDRE  
I can't believe I lost my costume.

SHEENA  
That thing was a piece of shit  
anyway. It didn't even make sense.

Why were you called Stone Wall if your costume was made of metal?

ANDRE  
It was a feint. I wanted people to  
think I had a super-powered costume  
when it was me all along.

Sheena cocks her head.

SHEENA  
Nigga, that's dumb. You just looked like you got dressed in a cookware department.

Andre nods to acknowledge.

ANDRE  
What am I going to do now?

SHEENA  
Now?

Sheena puts her hands on Andre's.

Andre looks at her, noticing her for the first time. He likes what he sees.

SHEENA (CONT'D)  
Now, I'm gonna train you.

An EXPLOSION is heard from somewhere below them.

Andre jerks his hands away as he springs up.

ANDRE  
What the hell was that? Did they track me here?

Sheena stands up next to him.

SHEENA  
No, that's just my brother trying to reanimate a crack head.

INT. STAIRWELL

DAVE, THE CRACK HEAD, white, lays slack against a wall on a landing between floors. Octavius bends over him, drawing chalk circles. Both are surrounded by candles.

He stops drawing and pulls out a small book from his pocket and begins reading from it.

OCTAVIUS (READING)  
By the power of Anubis, the glory  
of Osiris and all that lies  
between, rise David...

Octavius leans down and picks Dave's pocket. Finding a wallet, he opens it.

He sees a five dollar bill inside and pockets it. He continues riffling until he finds a driver's license.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
...Fallwell, rise!

The body begins to stir.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
Yes! It is all happening. The body of David Fallwell is my mental servant. Stand man, stand!

Thomas pokes his head into the stairwell.

THOMAS  
He's not rising. You touched him, and now I'm pretty sure he's releasing what's left in his bowels.

Sure enough, a squelch is heard emanating from Dave.

OCTAVIUS  
Gross.

MONTAGE

Andre does pushups, Sheena yelling at him like a drill sergeant.

He jumps rope, her throwing kitchen knives at him. They bounce off of him harmlessly.

Octavius hooks a car battery up to Dave's nipples and a cauldron. He drops a reptile claw into the pot. A POOF of smoke erupts, but nothing happens.

Andre and Sheena stand on the roof. She makes a "come here" motion with her hand. He charges her, and she uses his weight to flip him onto his back.

Octavius waves a magic wand. He yells some magic words at Dave, but still nothing happens. He gets frustrated and throws the wand at Dave. It bounces off of him and lands in a wet puddle nearby.

Andre punches a punching bag over and over again.

The bag morphs into Dave's face that Octavius slaps over and over again.

END MONTAGE

INT. SHEENA'S ROOM - DAY

The sun shines it's first light into the window.

An exhausted Sheena lays on her bed. Andre mimics her position on the floor next to the bed.

SHEENA  
How do you feel?

ANDRE  
Tired.

SHEENA  
But ready?

ANDRE  
Not really. I just feel like I  
exercised. How am I gon' beat them?

Sheena sits up.

SHEENA  
I thought you might say that. So,  
while we were training, I had  
Thomas whip something up for you.

Thomas!

Thomas pokes his head into the room. He holds up a pair of black boots.

ANDRE  
What are those for?

THOMAS  
If you put them on, and push the  
buttons on the sides, your gravity  
will be greatly increased,  
cementing you to the floor.

SHEENA  
No more getting pushed around.

Andre smiles.

ANDRE  
This is great. Thank you.

He looks at Sheena.

ANDRE (CONT'D)  
Thank both of you.

Sheena smiles.

SHEENA  
That's not all I got you.

She reaches behind her bed and pulls out the skin of the punching bag with holes cut in it.

SHEENA (CONT'D)  
I thought it was time for a new look.

Andre smiles as he takes each gift in one of his hands.

ANDRE  
All right, let's fight some fuckin' crime!

SHEENA  
Do you know where Jerome is?

ANDRE  
Hell yeah. I know where that nigga live.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Sheena, Thomas and Andre (in his new costume) all stand in the same building a few floors down.

THOMAS  
He lives here?

ANDRE  
Yeah, that nigga was always stupid, robbing the store right next to his house.

Andre knocks on the door.

JEROME'S MOM (O.C.)  
Jerome, get the damn door!

JEROME (O.C.)  
Okay mom, I'm goin'.

Jerome opens the door. He sees the three of them. He smiles.

JEROME (CONT'D)  
Back again? Nigga, how many times I gotta beat you?

ANDRE  
Not this time.

JEROME'S MOM (O.C.)  
Who is it?

Jerome looks back into the apartment.

JEROME (INTO THE APARTMENT)  
It's nobody! I'll get 'em outta  
here.

JEROME'S MOM (O.C.)  
Ok. You want fish for dinner?

JEROME (INTO THE APARTMENT)  
Nah, I'm going out!

JEROME'S MOM  
With that hussy Jessica again? I  
don't think so!

JEROME (INTO THE APARTMENT)  
Mom, fuck off. It's some guys from  
upstairs.

JEROME'S MOM (O.C.)  
Watch your mouth, you little shit,  
or ima go upside ya head.

JEROME (INTO THE APARTMENT)  
Damn, okay ma.

Jerome turns back to the group.

JEROME (CONT'D)  
Can I beat yo ass outside? She's  
cookin'.

ANDRE  
Yeah, cool.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The sidewalk is still cracked from where Thomas split it.

Thomas, Sheena and Andre stand facing Jerome. His posse have  
joined him.

ANDRE  
Okay, let's do this. No cement, no  
thicc chicks, let's go.

Andre turns on the boots.

The three advance on him.

Jerome pushes him. Andre doesn't move.

ANDRE (CONT'D)  
I done told you, not this time.

Jerome pulls out a crowbar. His boys pull out a baseball bat and a pipe.

The three take turns whaling on him. Andre bends, but he doesn't go anywhere.

JEROME  
What the fuck?

ANDRE  
Hit me all you want, the Punching  
Bag ain't moving.

Andre grabs the crowbar and tosses it aside.

He punches Jerome in the face, knocking him down.

The other two boys start to run away.

Andre pushes the button on the shoes.

He tries to take a step, but can't move his feet.

ANDRE (CONT'D)  
What the fuck? No, I was winning  
too.

Jerome gets up. He spits some blood on the ground and laughs.

JEROME  
You suck, you are the worst  
superhero ev... ack.

A hand closes around Jerome's throat.

JEROME (CHOKING) (CONT'D)  
What the...?

Dave the Crackhead holds Jerome in a choke hold.

DAVE  
Guh...

He tosses him into a parked car, setting off the alarm.

Octavius steps out from the apartment.

OCTAVIUS  
I did it.

The rest of the group fail to hear him.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
I said I did it!

They still fail to hear him.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
I said...

He gives up on talking. He picks up the crowbar from the ground and smashes the car until the alarm stops.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
That's better. I said I did it. I brought him back to life.

He turns to Thomas.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
You owe me fifty bucks.

Thomas shrugs.

ANDRE  
Don't let them get away!

The three boys run down the street.

OCTAVIUS  
Chill. I got it.

He turns to Dave.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)  
Gorrath Shubera!

Dave's eyes glow purple, and he gives chase.

He catches the posse, one in each hand, but Jerome escapes.

Dave brings them back to Octavius and drops them at his feet.

DAVE  
Guh.

OCTAVIUS  
Good boy! Great job!

DAVE

Guh!

He turns to Andre.

OCTAVIUS

So what do we do with them?

ANDRE

I guess we can just wait for the police.

OCTAVIUS

Great. I'm going to try to de-animate Dave again. It can't feel great having your soul trapped between worlds.

Octavius pulls his book out of his jacket pocket. He flips through it.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)

Here we are. Oyatello Komendi!

Dave's eyes once again glow purple. He foams at the mouth. He seizes up.

He grabs both boys by the neck again. He SQUEEZES.

Two distinct POPS are heard.

All three collapse to the floor, dead.

OCTAVIUS (CONT'D)

Right, well I didn't mean to do that. I'm not quite sure if I cast the wrong spell or if I just sacrificed all three of them to summon a minor demon... oh well.

THOMAS

All's well that end's well, I suppose.

The four share a smile.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

The four (Andre in plainclothes) sit in the same positions, eating the same stew when the news comes on.

Footage of Andre taking a punch at the club and the suspects dead bodies.

REPORTER (ON TV)

It looks as if Punching Bag has finally stopped being a Laughing Stock. After another humiliating defeat yesterday at a local nightclub, he seems to have murdered the suspects in the seven-eleven robbery case.

Octavius smiles at Andre.

REPORTER (ON TV) (CONT'D)

And while I can't say I support his methods, it is good to know that even the roughest of neighborhoods still have superhuman protectors. In other news, a meteor shower has devastated the eastern seaboard...

Thomas shuts the television.

THOMAS

Okay. That's it for me. Good night everyone.

OCTAVIUS

I hope you don't die in your sleep.

Then, I'd make you do my bidding.

THOMAS

In your dreams. You figured out necromancy. Call me once you crack alchemy; that's where the money is.

Thomas gets up and goes to his room. Octavius follows suit.

OCTAVIUS

You're just moving the goalposts. I want that fifty bucks!

Sheena turns to Andre.

SHEENA

So, can I be your sidekick?

Andre places a hand on his chin, pretending to think about it.

ANDRE

On a trial basis. We'll see how it goes.

INT. WAREHOUSE

A storeroom full of boxes. Jerome cowers behind one.

JEROME  
Fuckin' zombies man? I didn't sign  
up for this.

VOICE  
I sense your fear.

JEROME (VOICE SHAKING)  
Who's there?

Jerome pulls out his gun.

JEROME (CONT'D)  
I got my heater for ya. Come out.

VOICE  
You don't have to be afraid,

Jerome.

JEROME  
Who are you?

A shadow envelops Jerome on the floor.

VOICE  
I can give you power.

A pair of purple eyes lights up in the shadow.

Zoom in on the eyes.

JEROME  
What the fuck, no... No!

We hear a CRUNCH followed by an otherworldly gurgling.

Jerome and something else both laugh in unison.

FADE OUT.