

THE DARK OFFENDER

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A quiet suburban neighborhood on Halloween night. Children in playful costumes with bags of candy run past a city sign that reads: OAKVILLE. Glowing jack-o-lanterns shine on the patios and doorsteps of the neighborhood homes.

Running down the street in a caped superhero costume is a young and energetic BOY about the age of five. In his hand he carries an orange plastic bucket shaped as a pumpkin. Sticking out of the bucket are some rolled up comic books.

The boy charges around the neighborhood while yelling various super-hero catch phrases.

BOY

Gotta stop the bad guys! I will
save you! To the rescue! Up, up and
away!

The boy stops at the front of a walkway to a home as some OLDER KIDS dressed as ghouls, skeletons and ghosts emerge from trick-or-treating. He glares at the older kids as they pass by as if they were evil-doers from his favorite superhero stories. The older kids don't seem to notice him at all.

From off screen the boy's FATHER, calls to his son.

FATHER (O.S.)

William! WILLIAM! Slow down!

The father runs in slightly winded. He is about the age of forty. He arrives at where YOUNG WILLIAM is waiting and leans over with his hands on his knees to catch his breath.

FATHER (CONT'D)

You're going too fast for me son! I
can't keep up with you!

YOUNG WILLIAM

(matter-of-factly)
Sorry Dad. I was flying.

FATHER

I noticed. How did I ever end up
having a super-hero for a son?

YOUNG WILLIAM

You're very lucky!

FATHER

I certainly am.

The father stands to his full height and turns to face the house at which they've stopped.

The home is a large Victorian house. It's one of the oldest in the neighborhood. It is dimly lit, and elaborately decorated for Halloween with ghosts, spiders and cobwebs. Children in Halloween costumes run away from the home having just trick or treated.

Young William stares up at the home with a look of anxiety and apprehension. In one hand he clutches his small orange candy bucket. With the other hand he clings tightly to the hand of his father.

William's father looks down at his son and notices the strained expression on his face.

FATHER (CONT'D)

Alright! You ready for some trick or treating?

Young William looks up at his father and opens his mouth as if to speak but remains silent. The brave super-hero we saw only moments ago has now reverted to his five-year-old self.

Playful screams and laughter echo in the Halloween night as William and his father look towards the front of the house.

A few TRICK OR TREATERS having just been to home run out from the yard.

TRICK OR TREATER

Oh man! Look at all the candy!

William watches the children run down the street longingly. He looks down at his own candy bucket. Except for the comic books it is empty. He fiddles with the handle on his plastic bucket.

The father puts his hand on his son's shoulder and waits patiently.

William looks up at his father.

YOUNG WILLIAM

I WANT to...I'm just...

William doesn't finish his sentence.

The father bends down to talk to his son face to face.

FATHER

(encouraging)

C'mon Will! You've been looking forward to trick or treating for weeks! Halloween is for kids just like you! It's not THAT scary!

YOUNG WILLIAM

but...it's so dark over there...

FATHER

Dark?!

William's father smiles wisely, stands straight and looks up at the house.

Some jack-o-lanterns flicker in the dark. The wind blows causing some hanging decorations of ghosts and monsters to sail in the breeze.

He looks back at his son with a sly grin on his face.

FATHER (CONT'D)

DARK?! Look at you!

William appears confused. He watches his father reach into his candy bucket and pull out one of his super-hero comic books.

The father turns to a page with a super-hero dressed much like William fighting evil villains. He shows his son the page.

FATHER (CONT'D)

William! You don't need to be afraid of the dark! You're a superhero! The dark should be afraid of YOU!

Young William takes a minute to look at himself and let the words sink in. He looks down at his costume which includes cape, gloves, and utility belt.

A look of steely determination appears on his face similar to the glare he gave the older kids. He looks up at his father with a smile and with newfound courage.

The father smiles proudly at his son. He opens the gate.

FATHER (CONT'D)

I might need you to hold my hand though...

William takes his father's hand and the two begin walking towards the door of the old house.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - AFTERNOON

WILLIAM ROYAL now a grown adult of twenty-nine, is behind the counter of a "Twenty-nine Flavors" ice cream shop.

As an employee he is dressed in an apron and a white dress shirt with colored strips. A bow tie sits on his collar. On his head he wears a paper hat. Pinned to his chest, a name tag bearing his name.

The noisy shop is full of children waiting in line. William is busy at work, scooping ice cream with a tired expression on his face.

Also behind the counter is another EMPLOYEE in the same uniform struggling terribly to settle down a rowdy group of young teenagers.

A CHILD approaches William at the counter and begins looking at the various ice cream choices, becoming very indecisive.

INDECISIVE CHILD

I'll have...um...razzle-dazzle?

William begins to scoop ice cream.

INDECISIVE CHILD (CONT'D)

No...boson-berry sherbet?

William scoops some sherbet ice cream.

INDECISIVE CHILD (CONT'D)

Wait! I changed my mind!

William sighs, stops scooping the ice cream and rests his hands on the counter to await the child's decision.

The employee at the other end of the counter grows frustrated listening to the child.

EMPLOYEE

C'mon kid, pick a horse!

Un-phased, the child continues.

INDECISIVE CHILD (O.S.)

Um...mango ripple? ...cool guava twist? ...coconut flavorburst...

A LARGE STOUT MAN runs in from the back of the store. He is wearing a white shirt and black slacks. On his chest he wears a nametag which reads: BURT MELVIN MANAGER. He approaches William with a sense of urgency.

MR. MELVIN

Will! Will!

The overweight manager pants heavily, putting his hand on William's shoulder to brace himself.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)

Will, we got trouble! I need you to stay a couple extra hours today!

WILLIAM

What? Mr. Melvin how come?

MR. MELVIN

It's a disaster Will! The ice cream truck broke down at the edge of town! I called a tow truck, but they'll take hours, and the refrigeration system can only last so long! Do you understand what this means?! All that ice cream... And I was driving our experimental flavor today! "Atomic Boonie-Pepper Supreme!"

Across the room the other employee interjects.

EMPLOYEE

"Atomic Boonie-Pepper Supreme!"
That is SO awesome! I mean, whoever heard of HOT ice cream?

Mr. Melvin pays him no attention and continues talking to William.

MR. MELVIN

I came back for my car. I've got to save those delicious flavors! It's up to me Will! Our customers are depending on me!

William looks around the room at the customers in the store. A bunch of loud and rowdy kids eat ice cream, spilling on the tables. The teenagers throw crumpled napkins at each other.

WILLIAM

Yeah, they seem really broken up about it.

MR. MELVIN

Will, I know your shift is ending,
but I need you stay on!

William puts the ice cream scooper down and looks at Mr. Melvin.

WILLIAM

Mr. Melvin I have to go to school
today!

MR. MELVIN

Please Will! You're the best
employee I have! What if there is a
problem? What if upper management
shows up? You're the only one I
trust to run things while I'm gone!
I can't leave Kirby here all on his
own!

William and Mr. Melvin look towards the other end of the counter where the other employee KIRBY is being pelted with various ice cream toppings from the teenagers in the store. The children laugh as Kirby tries awkwardly to shield himself from the flying Gummi-Bears and M&Ms.

KIRBY

Ow! Hey! Knock it off you
little...! I know where you live!

Mr. Melvin looks at William with desperation.

William opens his mouth as if to protest. A door chime rings as more customers enter the store. William breathes a deep sigh of frustrated acceptance.

Gleeful, Mr. Melvin pats William on the back with an overly powerful slap which causes William to stumble forward slightly.

MR. MELVIN

Son, I knew I could count on you!
That's why you're my assistant
manager!

WILLIAM

Yes sir. Thank you sir.

Mr. Melvin rushes out the back door.

MR. MELVIN

Hold together ice cream! I'm
coming!

William stares off into space for a moment. He looks down at his scooper which is stuck in the middle of some ice cream. The indecisive child still stands on the other side of the counter peering through at him.

WILLIAM

You figure out what you want?

INDECISIVE CHILD

Yup! Chocolate!

William takes his scooper and starts scooping the ice cream.

WILLIAM

What kind of a cone do you want it on?

INDECISIVE CHILD

Cone? Hmmm...

INT. VEHICLE - LATE AFTERNOON

Mr. Melvin is driving down an empty road in an old car. In the front seat are numerous paper cups, bags, and wrappers all bearing the name of a fast food burger establishment.

With one hand Melvin steers the car. With the other he stuffs his face with an enormous dripping hamburger. The car radio plays an over-dramatic love song from the late 60's or 70's. Melvin chews his oversized bite with a smile as he stares lovingly at his burger, barbecue sauce smeared on the side of his mouth.

Through the windshield the converted motor home ICE CREAM TRUCK is seen parked at the side of the road under the shade of some trees.

Melvin pulls his car over. He gets out and walks towards the ice cream truck.

Still no tow truck. He enters the broken down vehicle.

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK (CONT.)

The ice cream truck is empty and quiet except for the quiet hum of the refrigeration system. Inside is a counter filled with cartons and cartons of ice cream.

Mr. Melvin sets his hamburger down on the counter. He opens one of the hatches and peers inside. His eyes light up and a goofy smile spreads across his face. He breathes deep the aroma.

MR. MELVIN

Atomic Boonie-Pepper Supreme! Don't worry baby, daddy's here.

Mr. Melvin struggles to remove the large tub of ice cream. His eyes clench tight and beads of perspiration form on his forehead.

From behind, a hand wearing a dark black glove clasps over Mr. Melvin's mouth. With muffled screams, Mr. Melvin's eyes widen in fright.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

The shop is empty, William and Kirby are preparing to close.

Kirby is mopping the floor while William is wiping the counter. William's rag cleans a section of the counter leaving a reflective shine.

William gazes at his reflection in the counter with a vacant expression on his face.

KIRBY

Hey man, thanks for helping me with all those kids.

William continues to stare at his image. Kirby doesn't realize that William isn't hearing him.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

I mean, the Gummi-Bears I don't mind so much, but those shell-covered chocolates can really sting! I think I'm going to have welts in the morning...Look at this...does this look like it's going to bruise?

Kirby lifts up the front of his shirt to expose his pasty-white skin. It's only now that he realizes William isn't paying attention.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Hey! Will! Are you even listening to me?

William snaps out of his trance-like state and looks at Kirby who's still holding up the front of his shirt.

WILLIAM

Huh? What?

KIRBY

Oh, perfect. I'm over here having a bona fide medical crisis and you're not even paying attention to me!

WILLIAM

I'm sorry Kirby, I guess I kinda zoned out there for a minute.

KIRBY

Yeah, yeah.

Kirby goes back to mopping the floor. William begins to address his thoughts.

WILLIAM

Hey Kirby...when you were a kid, you didn't dream of working in an ice cream shop did you?

KIRBY

Will, nobody dreams of working in an ice cream shop.

WILLIAM

I mean, where did you see yourself as an adult? What did you want to do with your life?

Kirby leans on his mop, looking at William.

KIRBY

For reals?

WILLIAM

Yeah, you must've had some type of dream as a child.

KIRBY

Yeah...

WILLIAM

What was it?

KIRBY

Promise you won't laugh?

WILLIAM

Of course.

Kirby looks off into the distance with a gleam of excitement in his eyes. A smile spreads across his face.

KIRBY
I wanted to be, a middle school
guidance counselor!

There is a long awkward pause. William struggles to keep a
straight face.

WILLIAM
Oh... Wow...

KIRBY
I know, it's stupid.

Kirby wipes a spot on the floor with his mop.

WILLIAM
No, it's just, I didn't think you
liked kids.

KIRBY
What are you talking about? I love
working with kids!

WILLIAM
You just got beat up by a group of
them an hour ago.

KIRBY
That was different. They just
haven't had the chance to get to
know me. Give me a few visits with
them and I can mold their
minds...put them on the path to
success!

WILLIAM
Uh huh...but why a guidance
counselor?

KIRBY
C'mon, you remember what school was
like. Teachers just waiting for you
to screw up...bullies picking on
you...getting stuffed into garbage
cans or duct-taped to trees...

Kirby clenches his fist in the air as he imagines his dream
job.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
I'd like to be there to say, "hey
man, it doesn't matter how many
tests you fail, or how many atomic
wedgies you're given."
(MORE)

KIRBY (CONT'D)

At the end of the day, you can hold your head high knowing that no one has a higher "Stargate Defender" score than you!"

Kirby looks back at William, snapping back to reality.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Kids just gotta feel good about themselves, you know what I mean?

William nods his head and smiles, surprised at his friend.

WILLIAM

Y'know, in a strange Kirby sort of way, that's kind of noble of you.

KIRBY

Well, sometimes I think about what my life could've been like with a good guidance counselor.

Kirby goes back to mopping the floor. William takes a moment to ponder Kirby's childhood dream.

WILLIAM

Kirby the guidance counselor.

KIRBY

I was also going to marry Catherine Zeta-Jones but then I fell into this whole ice cream thing, and that's worked out for me too.

William shakes his head and laughs. As he continues to clean a phone buzzes on the counter. He glances at the phone but goes back to his work.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Is that your phone ringing?

WILLIAM

It's just Mom. She wants me to bring home some Mint chocolate chip.

KIRBY

Is it new?

WILLIAM

Mint chocolate chip?

KIRBY

Your phone! Is it new?

WILLIAM

Oh. Yeah. The old one died.

KIRBY

Throw it over, lemme see.

William tosses his phone. Kirby catches it and juggles it awkwardly before grasping it firmly in his hands.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Nice! How's the camera on this thing?

Kirby makes grotesque faces and takes his picture with the phone. William turns away from Kirby a little disgusted.

WILLIAM

Ah, not bad I guess.

William focuses on cleaning the counters while Kirby lifts up his shirt and takes photos of his pasty stomach.

Footsteps are heard in the distance.

Instinctively, William and Kirby stop what they're doing and give each other knowing looks. Kirby looks thrilled and excited, while William looks wide-eyed and nervous.

KIRBY

AWE! She's coming!

EXT. ICE CREAM SHOP (CONT.)

A woman's high-heels click on the pavement as she walks down the sidewalk. The slender legs of a woman arrive at the ice cream shop's entrance. A door chime sounds as the woman enters.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP (CONT.)

William and Kirby stare in complete fascination as SARINA a beautiful and captivating woman in her mid 20s enters the store. The room brightens.

She is dressed in office attire, wearing a black skirt and a white button down blouse which shows off her figure. On her face she wears black-rimmed eye glasses which give her an intellectual look without taking away from her sex appeal. She is talking on a cell phone.

SARINA

(into phone)

I liked the first one, but I don't think it really matches the image we're trying to sell. (beat) Alright, rework the draft and I'll look at it in the morning.

Sarina lowers her cell phone and approaches the ice cream counter.

SARINA (CONT'D)

(sweetly)

Good evening William!

WILLIAM

(nervously)

Sarina, hi! Strawberry-Vanilla Swirl? With sprinkles?

SARINA

Yes please. It's so good of you to remember.

WILLIAM

Well, I know it's your favorite.

SARINA

You're so sweet!

KIRBY

Oh Will remembers everything!

SARINA

He does?

WILLIAM

(nervous)

Ha, um no.

KIRBY

Once we were at this comic book convention-

WILLIAM

Thanks Kirby!

KIRBY

-and there was this "Captain Awesome" trivia contest-

WILLIAM

Thanks Kirby!

KIRBY

(points to William)
First prize. Right there. The guy's
like the Encyclopedia Britannica of
comic books.

WILLIAM

THANK YOU, KIRBY.

SARINA

(to William)
-laughs- Awww William, I bet you
were such a cute kid!

KIRBY

(confused)
This was just last year-

WILLIAM

HEY, Sarina, how is that...
office... thing you're working at?

SARINA

Oh you know, it's work. I get tired
marketing for the same old
companies.

WILLIAM

Yeah...

William stares dreamily at Sarina as she talks.

SARINA

Just once I'd really like to
represent something meaningful.
Something that matters. Something
real.

WILLIAM

Uh huh.

Kirby is bored as Sarina talks about her job. He looks down
at William's phone in his hands and gets an idea.

SARINA

And you know, it doesn't have to be
something big or some huge contract
or anything. I just want to sell
something that makes a difference.

WILLIAM

Sure.

Kirby looks through the phone trying to line up a photo of Sarina. He takes a picture of her and laughs to himself. He sneaks closer to get a better shot.

SARINA

I don't know. The other day I signed on to do some PR work for one of the candidates for mayor. We're having a rally at the community college in a few days. We're trying to reach young voters. Do you think that's a noble cause?

Kirby overzealously tip toes across the room closer to Sarina and William. His efforts at stealth are terribly obvious.

Kirby peers up from behind the ice cream counter like a hunter searching for prey. With the camera phone he snaps a picture of Sarina then ducks back behind the counter.

Looking at the screen he admires his photography.

Sarina continues to ramble.

Behind the counter, Kirby crawls until he is directly in front of Sarina and beside William.

He sits behind the counter with his face pressed against the glass like a military soldier awaiting a tense moment in combat.

SARINA (CONT'D)

(rambling)

...I do think the city's taken a turn for the worse lately. Oakville isn't really what it used to be. There's a lot of twisted people out there...

Through the glass counter Kirby has a view of Sarina and her low-neck blouse.

He slowly raises the camera phone trying to get a shot down Sarina's shirt.

SARINA (CONT'D)

...Maybe I could market for the city...invite more tourism... Maybe that would help... What do you think William?

Sarina's question awakens William from his trance.

WILLIAM

Oh! Um, well...that sounds good...
I mean, I think...I...

As William searches for a response he notices Kirby crouched behind the counter in his attempt to photograph Sarina's cleavage.

Frightened that Sarina will see his delinquent friend, William reacts by kicking Kirby behind the counter.

KIRBY

OW!!

Kirby jumps from the kick and stands up from behind the counter holding his side.

Sarina looks at Kirby with some confusion.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Oww...wwwow! Wow! These are some stubborn ice cream spills back here...wow! (beat) Wow!

Kirby grabs a wash rag from the counter and walks back to his mop on the other side of the shop.

William looks back at Sarina who is awaiting his response to her question.

WILLIAM

Sarina, you... You can do anything you want. You're smart, you're talented, no matter what you're doing with you're life, you'll be making a difference.

SARINA

William Royal! That's so sweet of you!

WILLIAM

I'm just being honest.

SARINA

Thank you.

WILLIAM

You're welcome.

There is a long awkward pause. Sarina stares at William, waiting.

KIRBY

-cough-

William and Sarina look to see Kirby at the other end of the shop staring at them with his mop in hand. He clears his throat and returns to mopping the floor.

WILLIAM

Well, um, I gotta finish up here...

SARINA

Right. I should be going. Thanks for the ice cream William.

WILLIAM

Yeah, bye-

The chime of the door sounds as Sarina leaves the shop.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

-bye Sarina.

William heaves a deep sigh.

KIRBY

(plane crashing noises)

EEEEERRRRRRRRRRROOOOOOOOOOOOWWWWW
 WWWWKKKKKKKKABOOM!!

Kirby makes the flight of a plane with his hand and imitates a massive plane crash. He waves his fingers like the flames off burning wreckage.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

(fire and explosion
 noises)

Oh the humanity!

(more disaster noises)

William turns away frustrated.

INT. ROYAL HOUSE - EVENING

William comes through the front door of his home carrying a carton of ice cream in one hand and holding a stack of mail under his chin. He places his keys on a nearby table and walks into the kitchen. He calls to his mother.

WILLIAM

Mom, I'm home!

He places the ice cream in the freezer door and sits down to look through the mail.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I brought you your ice cream!

William sifts through the envelopes and tosses them aside on the kitchen table.

MRS. ROYAL a short, kindly woman close to the age of 60 walks into the kitchen.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Mint chocolate chip. Just like you asked. It's in the freezer.

MRS. ROYAL
Oh wonderful!

Mrs. Royal grabs a spoon, hurries over to the freezer and removes the carton of ice cream. She sits down at the table next to William and begins to eat out of the carton.

MRS. ROYAL (CONT'D)
So? How was your day?

William continues to look through the newly arrived mail.

WILLIAM
It was fine.

MRS. ROYAL
How was work?

WILLIAM
I scoop ice cream all day. There's really not much to it.

MRS. ROYAL
Did you have any interesting customers?

WILLIAM
No.

MRS. ROYAL
Well didn't anything exciting happen?

WILLIAM
Well, Kirby got ambushed by a bloodthirsty gang of seventh graders.

MRS. ROYAL
Oh! You're kidding! Is he alright?

WILLIAM
 Mom, no. It wasn't a big deal. I
 was kidding.

MRS. ROYAL
 Oh.

Mrs. Royal takes another long spoonful of ice cream while she
 studies William.

MRS. ROYAL (CONT'D)
 So...how was school?

WILLIAM
 I didn't go.

MRS. ROYAL
 You didn't go?!

WILLIAM
 Mr. Melvin needed me to stay a few
 extra hours.

MRS. ROYAL
 Son! You've got to go to school!
 What if this affects your grade?

WILLIAM
 Mom, they don't even take
 attendance.

MRS. ROYAL
 But you could've missed something
 important! Now you're behind!

WILLIAM
 Mom, it's community college. Trust
 me, it's fine.

MRS. ROYAL
 Should I write you a note to give
 to your teacher?

WILLIAM
 -sigh- No, Mom.

Mrs. Royal looks at her son with the concern of a mother.

MRS. ROYAL
 I just want you to progress.

WILLIAM
 I know.

MRS. ROYAL
I want you to feel successful.

WILLIAM
I know.

MRS. ROYAL
I want you to feel good about
yourself.

WILLIAM
Yes, Mom. I know.

MRS. ROYAL
The most important thing in my life
is your happiness.

William sighs heavily. He is weary from the speech he has heard a hundred times.

WILLIAM
Ok Mom. Thank you. I'm fine.

MRS. ROYAL
Alright, alright.

Mrs. Royal puts her spoon in the sink and places the ice cream back in the freezer. She turns around to face William.

MRS. ROYAL (CONT'D)
You know I'm very proud of you.
You've been a real help to me ever
since your father passed away.

WILLIAM
Yeah, OK.

Mrs. Royal walks over to her son and gives him a motherly kiss on the cheek. William remains seated at the table begrudgingly.

MRS. ROYAL
Why did Mr. Melvin ask you to stay
anyway?

WILLIAM
I don't know. The truck broke down.

Mrs. Royal pats her son on the back with pride.

MRS. ROYAL
Well! You ARE the assistant
manager!

Mrs. Royal exits the kitchen.

WILLIAM
(to himself)
Yeah. I'm the assistant manager.

INT. WILLIAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

William's bedroom is the room of a child that never grew up. The walls of William's bedroom are plastered with movie posters and comic book superheroes. On the bookshelves are stacks of comic books. A framed photo shows a younger William with his now deceased father.

Next to the photo is a funeral program with a picture of William's father and the words printed at the bottom of the page: Willard Frank Royal 1950-2009.

An old TV sits loosely on a chair in the corner of the room. Some video games are scattered around the floor.

William is lying on a small twin bed that is much too small for his adult body. He is holding his new cell phone.

He stares longingly at the screen of the phone which displays a photo of Sarina which Kirby had secretly taken in the ice cream shop. His expression is one of unrequited love.

The moment is interrupted when music begins to scream from the cell phone.

William's face loses its adoring expression.

The picture of Sarina is replaced by one of Kirby's grotesque self portraits. The words "incoming call" and the name "Kirby" are at the bottom of the screen.

William is confused and disgusted by the image on the screen of Kirby and his pasty white belly. He answers the call.

WILLIAM
Kirby! What did you do to my phone?

KIRBY
Dude! Are you watching this??

WILLIAM
Watching what?

KIRBY
Flip on the news man, this is awesome!

William turns on his old beat up television. As the image brightens a REPORTER'S voice comes through the speakers.

REPORTER

Still no explanation as to what motivated this bizarre attack on an ice cream truck here in Oakville.

William's jaw drops as he stares at the TV screen. Behind the talking reporter is a large ice cream truck.

Sitting on the ground by one of the tires is Mr. Melvin huddled under a paramedic's blanket. In the darkness, police and ambulance lights flash.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

I have here local businessman Burt Melvin, who was victim in this senseless and seemingly random act of violence.

CUT TO:

EXT. OAKVILLE NEWS REPORT - NIGHT (CONT.)

REPORTER

Mr. Melvin, please tell us what happened.

MR. MELVIN

It was terrible! My truck broke down... I had to save the ice cream! I was alone... And he... He got me! I was tied up...and then... Then...

(-sobs-)

REPORTER

I know this must be difficult for you Mr. Melvin. Please, continue.

MR. MELVIN

He...he ate my sandwich!

Mr. Melvin erupts into a frenzy of sobs and tears.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)

...all the ice cream has melted...

REPORTER

Who tied you up? Who melted all the ice cream?

MR. MELVIN

(-sobs-)

It was so dark...he came out from
nowhere...

REPORTER

Please, Mr. Melvin, who? Who is
responsible for this? Can you
describe him?

Mr. Melvin takes the microphone out of the reporter's hands
and glares into the camera.

MR. MELVIN

He was like a shadow! It was a
SHADOW MAN!

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAM'S BEDROOM (CONT.)

William stares transfixed at the television screen. Kirby's
voice comes through the phone still pressed to William's ear.

KIRBY

Isn't this awesome?! Mr. Melvin's
totally famous! Hello? Dude, you
there?

REPORTER

Mayoral candidate Dan Neely had
this to say following news of the
incident:

The news coverage cuts to video footage of DAN NEELY, a man
in his mid to late 30s wearing a business suit and tie. He is
surrounded by reporters and microphones. Sarina is standing
beside him.

WILLIAM

(into phone)

Yeah, hey I'll call you back.

William lowers his phone and continues to stare at the TV
screen. Dan Neely speaks, while Sarina nods her head in
approval.

DAN NEELY

This is exactly the type of crisis
our growing city is facing. Random
attacks on average citizens.

CUT TO:

EXT. OAKVILLE NEWS REPORT - NIGHT (CONT.)

DAN NEELY

Our city's law enforcement is in need of an overhaul. Our police force just isn't cutting it. It's embarrassing. Unless sweeping changes are made we can fully expect to see more of these types of crimes. Halloween is just around the corner. Are our children safe on the streets at night? When I'm mayor, I'll put an end to crime. The people of Oakville deserve better. With your votes, I intend to give it to you.

The news feed returns to the reporter at the scene of the crime. Mr. Melvin sits in the background by the ice cream truck, still wrapped in his blanket and drinking a bottled water. And officer offers him a doughnut from a box. Mr. Melvin takes one. The officer turns to leave, but Mr. Melvin motions for him to stop and to leave the entire doughnut box.

REPORTER

Authorities are baffled as to the cause of this heinous crime and appear to have no leads as to the identity of the mysterious "Shadow Man." Police have issued a report advocating caution on the streets, particularly on Halloween night. Reporting live for channel 2 news time, I'm Janine O'Reilly.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAM'S BEDROOM (CONT.)

William stands motionless in his room, digesting what he's seen on TV.

EXT. ROYAL HOUSE - MORNING

William in his driveway, starts the engine of his little motorized scooter and begins riding to work.

Driving through Oakville he sees children walking and biking to school. Homes have put up Halloween decorations. Election signs for local office sit on lawns and on street corners.

William walks through the ice cream shop door.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - MORNING (CONT.)

Kirby is standing on a step stool hanging Halloween decorations on the walls. He turns to see William entering the store.

KIRBY
Morning Will! Hey did you -whoa!

Kirby loses his balance from off the step stool and tumbles to the ground.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
I'm ok!

William approaches the ice cream counter and observes a newspaper clipping taped to the glass. The headline reads: "SHADOW ATTACKS ICE CREAM MAN!" In the center of the clipping is an awkward photo of Mr. Melvin from the previous night's news report.

Kirby picks himself up from off the floor and walks to where William is looking at the article.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Isn't this awesome! I can't believe Mr. Melvin is in the newspaper. I've never been in the newspaper! Well actually, do police blotters count? That's not really the same thing though...

WILLIAM
Where is Mr. Melvin?

KIRBY
He's in "his office."

William looks towards the rear of the store at a closed door. A nameplate is taped on to a supply closet door that reads: Burt Melvin Manager.

WILLIAM
What's he doing in there?

KIRBY
He's been on the phone all morning. Somebody from upper management I think. They probably want to give him a raise for making the nightly news!

The door at the end of the store bursts open. Mr. Melvin rushes out of the office agitated.

MR. MELVIN

Will! Where have you been?

William looks at his watch and then back at Mr. Melvin.

WILLIAM

I've been right here Mr. Melvin.

MR. MELVIN

This is terrible! I just got off the phone with the higher ups.

KIRBY

I knew it! Big promotion, huh boss?

Mr. Melvin glares at Kirby.

MR. MELVIN

They're furious!

WILLIAM

Sir?

MR. MELVIN

They blame us for the loss of a truck's worth of ice cream.

WILLIAM

But sir, it's not your fault-

MR. MELVIN

That's not the way they see it! I never should have left the truck alone! If he hadn't snuck up on me I'd have showed that Shadow Man a thing or two!

KIRBY

Oh who cares?! What are they gonna do?

MR. MELVIN

They'll close us down, that's what!

WILLIAM

Are you serious?

MR. MELVIN

They're holding us responsible for the lost inventory. If we don't meet the cost of our expenses...

WILLIAM

How are we going to make that much money without all that ice cream?

MR. MELVIN

We're going to work our butts off! Starting with you two on the truck for Halloween!

WILLIAM

Wait, what?

KIRBY

Working the truck on Halloween?! You gotta be kidding me!

MR. MELVIN

What choice do we have? Think about it! Who are our biggest customers?

WILLIAM

Kids.

MR. MELVIN

Kids.

KIRBY

But sir-

MR. MELVIN

And who will be out trick or treating all night long?

Kirby looks down in dismay and nods his head in reluctance.

KIRBY

Kids.

MR. MELVIN

You DO like kids don't you Kirby?

KIRBY

Yeah...I love working with kids.

Mr. Melvin turns towards his office, and sees the newspaper clipping with his own embarrassing photo taped to the counter. He tears it off the glass and shakes it in his hand.

MR. MELVIN

What is this?!

KIRBY

It's good publicity!

Mr. Melvin crumples the newspaper article and walks towards his office. Before going inside he turns and barks one final command to his employees.

MR. MELVIN

And it's Halloween! I expect both of you to be in costumes!

Mr. Melvin storms into his supply closet office and slams the door. William and Kirby look at each other. Kirby smiles with excitement like a child on his birthday.

KIRBY

Did he say costumes?!

INT. ROYAL HOME

Mrs. Royal is in the kitchen carving a smiley-faced jack-o-lantern that looks like it's on Prozac. William walks through the house searching for something.

WILLIAM

Mom? What ever happened to my black boots?

MRS. ROYAL

Those old things? Why on earth would you need them? You're not thinking of joining the military are you?

WILLIAM

It's for Halloween. For my costume.

Mrs. Royal stops carving her pumpkin and turns to William excited.

MRS. ROYAL

Oh! You're going trick or treating? How fun! Which one of your little friends are you going with? Is it that nice Kirby boy from work?

WILLIAM

No Mom, it's not like that.

MRS. ROYAL

Or maybe that nice Johnson boy from down the street... What's his name?

WILLIAM

Billy? Billy Johnson? Mom, he's nine!

MRS. ROYAL

Well I can't be expected to keep track of all your friends.

WILLIAM

It's for work. I'm working on Halloween, and Mr. Melvin wants us in costumes.

MRS. ROYAL

Oh! Well I wish you'd told me sooner...maybe I can still sew you something...

William shakes his head half laughing to himself.

WILLIAM

It's alright Mom. I just need the boots. Do you know where they are?

Mrs. Royal flips her wrist and turns back to her pumpkin carving.

MRS. ROYAL

Oh, I think I threw them out into the garage somewhere.

WILLIAM

Thanks Mom.

INT. GARAGE

The garage is completely black until William pulls a string on a light to reveal a garage piled to the ceiling with boxes, discarded items and an endless supply of junk.

WILLIAM

Huh...

William sorts through dusty boxes looking for his boots. He opens a box and stops to look at its contents.

Inside are old pieces of paper with scribbled crayon drawings on them. One has a child's drawing of a superhero flying in the air. The messy words: "William Age 5" written at the bottom of the page.

Another drawing shows a house with windows and trees. At the top of the page is a sun with a smiley face. In the center are three stick figures holding hands. Under the stick figures are the words: "Dad, Mom, Me."

The box holds other drawings and keepsakes. William reaches into the box removing a photo. The photo contains the image of a childhood William on Halloween. He is dressed as a superhero. Beside him in the photo is his father.

William stands motionless staring at the photo under the single light hanging in an otherwise dark garage.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP

William rushes into the ice cream shop with a large brown bag under his arm.

MR. MELVIN
You're late Will!

WILLIAM
I know, sorry Mr. Melvin. I was coming from school.

MR. MELVIN
Well you better hurry up! Kirby's already waiting on the truck. Did you bring a costume?

WILLIAM
Yes sir. I have it right here.

William pats the bag under his arm.

MR. MELVIN
Good.

Mr. Melvin places a hand on William's shoulder.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
Now remember, under no circumstances are you to leave the truck unattended.

WILLIAM
I understand.

William walks towards the back door of the store.

MR. MELVIN
And William?

William looks at his superior.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
Don't let Kirby do anything stupid.

William smiles.

WILLIAM
I won't sir.

EXT. PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

William walks aboard the ice cream truck. Kirby jumps out with his arms raised to reveal his costume.

KIRBY
Taa daa!!

William takes a moment to look at Kirby's clothing. He is wearing a blue hockey helmet, spandex and large clunky wrist bands.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
I'm Kevin Flynn! You know, from Tron!

WILLIAM
Right.

KIRBY
Look, I even got the disc!

Kirby holds up a Frisbee painted with blue streaks.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Where's your costume?

WILLIAM
I'll change in a little bit. Let's get moving. It'll be dark soon.

INT. /EXT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - DUSK

William and Kirby drive through the streets in the ice cream truck as children trick or treat.

Children line up outside the truck. William and Kirby talk as they serve ice cream.

WILLIAM
Batman has issues. The guy is unstable. Plus he has nearly endless resources because of his fortune. So of course he can spend all his time fighting crime.

KIRBY

What about Superman? He's not rich. He has that job at the Daily Planet.

WILLIAM

Yeah, but he doesn't need it. He's Superman. He doesn't even have to eat if he doesn't want to. So he doesn't count.

KIRBY

Spider-Man then. Spider-Man has a real job AND a normal life.

WILLIAM

Yeah, but he couldn't do both either. He retired from being a superhero and moved to Oregon in the "Spectacular Spider-Man" issue two-twenty-nine.

KIRBY

Two-twenty-nine?!?! Can you believe this guy?!

Kirby looks at one of the kids he is serving ice cream to, as if looking for support.

The CHILD watches the conversation and listens closely, but appears unsure of what Kirby and William are talking about.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

I can't believe you're seriously citing that story arc when it's right in the middle of the clone saga! C'mon! He didn't stay retired anyway!

WILLIAM

Yeah, but his life was still screwed up. All I'm saying is you can't be a superhero AND have a normal life. At least it hasn't been done yet.

Kirby serves an ice cream cone to the last child standing in line. He shakes his head and looks at William.

KIRBY

When are you going to put on your costume?

William looks out at the street. The sun is setting and the neighborhood is filling with trick or treaters.

WILLIAM

I guess I'd better do it now before
we get any busier.

William picks up his brown bag and walks towards the back of the converted motor home ice cream truck.

Kirby rests his arms on the counter. He looks down at the child who is still licking his ice cream cone and watching Kirby.

Kirby shakes his head as if he and the child share the same sentiment.

KIRBY

-Humph!- Two-twenty-nine!

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK BATHROOM (CONT.)

William shuts the bathroom door behind him and places his large brown bag on the toilet next to him. He reaches into the bag and sorts through the contents.

William looks up and sees his reflection looking back at him in the mirror. He pauses and stares at himself.

INT. /EXT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - DUSK

Kirby reaches out from the truck serving ice cream to a child outside.

As the child scampers away 4 TEENAGE GANG MEMBERS gather outside the ice cream truck.

GANG MEMBER 1

What are YOU supposed to be?

Kirby raises his head to see the group of troubled teens looking back at him.

GANG LEADER

Check out that spandex! He looks
like a turd!

KIRBY

A turd? I'm the heroic Kevin Flynn
of Tron!

(MORE)

KIRBY (CONT'D)

I don't expect kids of your generation to appreciate the classic works of Lisberger, it was before your time...but a turd? That doesn't even make sense-

GANG LEADER

You still look like a turd.

Kirby becomes intimidated by the street gang.

KIRBY

Can I get you something?

GANG MEMBER 1

Why would we want your ice cream?

KIRBY

Um...because it's a delicious and savory delight?

GANG MEMBER 2

Your mom's a delight!

The teenagers all erupt into obnoxious laughter. Kirby shifts his weight nervously.

KIRBY

Really? Mom jokes now?

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK BATHROOM (CONT.)

William changes into his Halloween costume. He puts on a pair of red sweat pants. Reaching into his bag he pulls out a pair of black boots and a set of gloves.

INT. /EXT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - DUSK (CONT.)

Sitting behind the counter Kirby continues to be the victim of the verbal abuse of the group of teenagers.

GANG LEADER

Think about it genius! Who buys ice cream in October? And why would we want to pay for ice cream when we can get Halloween candy for free?

The teenagers laugh.

KIRBY

Well...you guys are a little old to be trick or treating... And you're not wearing any costumes...

The teenagers laugh again.

GANG LEADER

Who said anything about trick or treating?

KIRBY

Wha? You mean...You're bag-snatchers?! Dude, that's so wrong!

More laughter.

GANG MEMBER 1

Hey, it's not our fault if those kids can't hold onto their candy.

More laughter.

KIRBY

C'mon guys, I'm sure you can find another way to have fun on Halloween.

One of the teenagers removes an egg from his jacket pocket. Another reveals some rolls of toilet paper, while yet another shakes a can of spray paint.

A devious smile spreads across the face of the pack's leader. He tosses the egg up and down in the air.

GANG LEADER

You're right. There are plenty of ways to have fun.

KIRBY

Oh no.

As the roars of laughter continue, Kirby ducks down behind the ice cream truck counter.

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - EARLY EVENING

The bathroom door opens. William's legs step out the door wearing his large black boots.

At the other end of the truck Kirby is pinned down from the attack of the teenage boys outside.

Eggs fly into the truck and splatter on impact, leaving their residue to drip down the walls. Toilet paper streams down the truck window.

Kirby sits crouched behind the counter, and jumps up to fling a scoop of ice cream out towards his assailants before ducking back down.

Kirby, pressed low to the floor for cover, sees William's black boots, and then raises his gaze to see all of William's costume.

William wears red sweat pants, and a large red jacket buttoned all the way up. Over his pants he wears baggy black shorts with a bright red belt. His hands sit firmly on his hips, covered in big black gloves. A long black cape with red lining underneath flows over his shoulders. Over his head he wears a red handkerchief with holes for his eyes as a mask. A black fedora with a red band crowns William's head.

Kirby stares up at William, his breath taken and awestruck as William stands in heroic splendor.

KIRBY
(in awe)
WOW!

William steps into the center of the truck.

WILLIAM
Kirby? What's going on?

An egg shoots past William's face and explodes against the wall behind him.

KIRBY
GET DOWN!

Kirby grabs hold of William's arm and pulls him down to the floor. The volley of eggs continue to scream through the window.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
This is bad man! Our defenses are broken! We're really taking a pounding! I'm not sure how much longer we can hold out! And I'm almost out of ammo!

WILLIAM
Ammo?

Kirby holds up an ice cream scooper and a nearly empty bucket of ice cream.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Rocky Road?

KIRBY
I figured it would do the most
damage.

William and Kirby duck as a steady flow of eggs break against the walls. Raw broken eggs pile up on the floor of the truck.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
What do we do?

WILLIAM
Maybe if we just sit tight they'll
get bored and move on.

KIRBY
This is no time to sit and wait! We
gotta act!

The constant barrage of eggs suddenly ceases. William and Kirby look at each other unsure of what to do next.

Slowly they raise themselves from off the floor and peer through the glass counter's sneeze guard that's has the remnants of shaving cream and toilet paper. In the dark of night, the teenage hoodlums are nowhere to be seen. The streets are eerily quiet.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Where'd they go?

William strains his eyes to see through the darkness. Some voices are heard way down the street. Looking in the distance William sees two young CHILDREN walking under a street light. Both are carrying bags of candy. The children walk past the street light and disappear into the shadows.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
William?

WILLIAM
Wait...wait...

William keeps his stare on the street light at the end of the road. The street light remains static until the group of hoodlum teenagers appear. The gang moves stealthily past the light and into the shadows after the two children.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Oh no.

KIRBY
Bag-snatchers.

WILLIAM
We have to do something.

KIRBY
Yeah? But, I thought we're not
supposed to leave the truck...

William eyes narrow behind the red mask that hides his face.

WILLIAM
It's Halloween Kirby. It's supposed
to be a day for kids.

EXT. NIEGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

William and Kirby move through the darkened streets. Kirby is especially enjoying himself moving from bush to bush as if some sort of secret agent. Under his breath he sings something like the theme song from "Mission: Impossible."

KIRBY
(singing theme music)
DUH cha DUH cha DUH DUH, DUH cha
DUH cha DUH DUH, DO-DO-DOOOO, etc.

William and Kirby crouch behind a car parked on the side of the road.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
This is so awesome!

WILLIAM
Look! There they are!

Down the road, the gang members move closer to where the two young children walk on the sidewalk.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
We need a plan.

Kirby takes a moment to think.

KIRBY
Ok, I'll distract them, and you get
the kids out of here.

WILLIAM
What are you going to do?

KIRBY

I'll just try to reason with them.
Talk some sense into them.

WILLIAM

I don't think that's going to work.

KIRBY

Hey, this is me we're talking
about! I know how to connect with
today's troubled youth.

William stares at his friend with utter disbelief.

WILLIAM

Kirby?

KIRBY

It'll be fine. Let's do this.

The gang of teenagers take off running towards the children.
William realizes he's out of time.

WILLIAM

Ok, let's go.

Kirby runs out into the street. William moves carefully
behind cars, trees, and shadows.

Standing in the center of the road, Kirby raises his hands
and shouts to the teenagers.

KIRBY

Please, please, my friends, this is
not the answer! The sweetness of
candy acquired in such a way will
evade you!

The group of teenage punks turn to look at Kirby preaching in
the middle of the road.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

What troubled pasts from your
childhood memories haunt you so,
that you must project your pain
onto others?

The members of the street gang look at each other with
confused expressions and begin walking towards Kirby.

William scurries from one place of hiding to the next, moving
past the group of distracted teenagers.

The teens surround Kirby in the street.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

I know you're angry and confused. I understand. I was your age once.

William reaches the end of the block. From behind a car he looks at the group of teenagers surrounding Kirby.

With eggs and toilet paper in hand, the circle around him grows tighter.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

I think we'll all gain a better appreciation about ourselves if we just sit down and really talk about what we're feeling.

The group of teenagers stand emotionless.

POP POP POP POP

William winces at the sound of a dozen eggs pelting Kirby's flesh. He turns and runs down the street to go after the children.

The gang turn their heads and see William running away. They give chase.

William rushes down the street. He enters a church parking lot and catches his breath, resting behind a building wall.

A child's whimper startles him. He whirls around to see the two children he had been looking for.

William approaches the children. There is a GIRL about the age of 10 and a young BOY about the age of 6. Both are wearing Halloween costumes and hold bags of candy.

The two children sit huddled together. They become more frightened as William draws nearer.

WILLIAM

It's ok. I'm here to help.

Footsteps echo from the darkness of the street. The voices of the pursuing bag-snatchers can be heard.

GANG MEMBER 1

Where'd they go?!

GANG MEMBER 2

They were right here a minute ago!

The children's eyes grow wide in terror.

William holds his finger to his lips.

WILLIAM
Shhhh...It'll be alright.

GANG LEADER
C'mon! They must've gone further
down the road!

The footsteps fade into the shadows.

William waits until he is sure the bag-snatchers are gone.

WILLIAM
You OK?

The boy buries his face into his sister. She is dressed as Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. She is nervous, holding in her tears.

GIRL
We shouldn't have stayed out so
late. We just wanted to do a few
more houses.

WILLIAM
It's alright, you're safe now.

GIRL
They chased us all the way down the
street... They just kept yelling at
us...screaming at us..."we're gonna
get your candy, we're gonna get
your candy!"

Seeing how frightened the children are, William tries to calm them down.

WILLIAM
What are your names?

GIRL
KATIE. This is my little brother
WILL. He's six.

William shifts his focus to the boy huddled in his sister's lap. William repeats the name.

WILLIAM
Will?

Katie nods.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 Alright, let's get you two out of here. If we stay in the shadows, hopefully they won't see us.

KATIE
 He's afraid of the dark.

William looks at the frightened boy, his face still hidden in his sister's arms.

WILLIAM
 Hey Will, it's going to be OK.

The boy remains motionless. In his hands he clutches a small trick or treating bag.

William looks at the boy's Halloween costume. He's dressed as a comic book superhero.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 There's nothing to be afraid of Will. We're superheroes. Trust me...The dark isn't scary. The dark is afraid of us.

The boy raises his head and looks at William dressed in his mask, hat, and cape.

WILL
 Are you here to save us from the bad guys?

William opens his mouth to speak, while looking at the two children staring back at him.

WILLIAM
 Yeah. -ahem-

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 (with superhero authority)
 Yes. Yes I am.

The boy turns back to his sister.

WILL
 Don't worry Katie. We'll be alright. He's a superhero.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

William and the two children peer out into the street. Both sides of the road appear deserted.

The children ask William questions as they walk down the sidewalk. William humors them with his answers.

WILL
Did you always want to be a superhero when you grew up?

WILLIAM
Actually, yeah. I did.

WILL
Is fighting bad guys hard?

WILLIAM
Are you kidding? The bad guys are scared of me! I terrify evil! I offend the darkness!

WILL
Do you have any super powers?

WILLIAM
Uh...well, someone once told me I remember things really well...

KATIE
That's not much of a super power.

WILLIAM
It's not?

The expression on Katie's face is one of uncertain disbelief. She stops walking and looks at William in his mask and cape.

KATIE
Are you really a superhero?

William smiles at Katie and looks down at her brother beaming up at him. He turns back to Katie who still stares at him inquisitively.

WILLIAM
Hey, someone's got to save you from the bad guys. Every town needs a superhero, right?

William continues walking down the street. Katie's face becomes more serious. She calls after William.

KATIE
Who is the "Shadow Man?"

William stops and looks back at the little girl dressed as Dorothy.

WILLIAM

Excuse me?

KATIE

After they chased us...when we were hiding...I heard them talking. They said they needed to get our candy and take it to the Shadow Man.

WILLIAM

The Shadow Man? You sure?

KATIE

That's what they said.

WILL

Is he a bad guy?

William ponders the new information.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Kirby walks back up the road. He is wrapped in toilet paper and covered in raw egg yolks. He mumbles to himself as he trudges up the street.

KIRBY

(under breath)

Dirty rotten kids. (heavy breathing) How are they supposed to resolve their issues if they won't even talk about them?

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

William and the two children round the corner of a neighborhood street. They stop and stare, astonished at what lay before them.

WILL

Wow!

KATIE

Oh my...

WILLIAM

What happened?

The neighborhood street has been ransacked. Toilet paper hangs over houses and trees, strewn about everywhere. Cars parked on the road are greased with eggs and shaving cream.

Halloween decorations are torn down, and jack o lanterns have been smashed.

At the end of the block is a gang of about 12 individuals wearing ski masks and throwing toilet paper and eggs at a house.

The little boy hides behind William while Katie looks nervously in his direction.

WILL

Are you going to stop the bad guys?

William takes a moment to digest the scene before him. He turns to the children.

WILLIAM

Go find a hiding spot. Hurry!

The children hurry behind a tree in front of a house.

William heads towards the gang of street thugs, trying to investigate.

Katie and her brother peek out from their hiding place.

KATIE

Do you think he'll be alright?

WILL

Shhh! He's a professional!

The gang of ski-mask wearing punks laugh as they continue their vandalism. A few of them throw eggs at a house.

William stands in the shadows to the side of the house, inching closer to the street gang.

GANG LEADER

No, no, if you're gonna go for the glass, an egg just isn't going to cut it!

The ski masked thug picks up a rock and throws it at the house. The sound of glass breaking reverberates through the night air. William jumps at the sound.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)

See? Like that!

The group laughs.

Some of the members wrap a tree in toilet paper. Another sprays canned paint up and down a picket fence.

One of the punks rolls up his ski mask halfway to drink from a canned beverage before crushing it and tossing it aside.

William stands ready at the edge of the house.

WILLIAM

Here we go...

Mustering up his courage, he takes a few deep breaths, preparing to charge out to face the vandals.

William is about to act when another ski masked gang member runs towards the rest of the group.

GANG MEMBER 3

Hey guys! The Shadow Man is here!

GANG MEMBER 1

Sweet!

One of the thugs throws one last egg at the house.

GANG LEADER

It's about time!

William watches from his vantage point. The group moves down the street. Curious, he follows being careful not to be seen.

Parked up the road is a fancy black luxury car with tinted windows. A man dressed entirely in black stands beside the vehicle. The tails of his long trench coat hang by his sides.

He wears black gloves, ski-mask, and huge dark goggles. His clothing completely covers his body so that no inch of his skin can be seen. The menacing figure stands motionless as the group approaches.

The gang whispers amongst themselves.

William crouches behind some garbage cans at the side of the road not far from the black car and the gang of vandals.

The leader of the street gang rolls up his ski-mask and reveals his face. He is the same punk that harassed Kirby earlier.

He approaches the silent man dressed in black.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)

Hey Shadow Man! We did everything you asked... Man, we tore this place up! Did you...bring the money?

The Shadow Man remains motionless, staring at the group. The gang leader becomes less sure of himself.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)
(-ahem-) We used all the paint and toilet paper you gave us...We threw a ton of eggs...

The gang leader trails off.

More silence from the Shadow Man.

Some of the members of the group bring forward bags and bags of Halloween candy and lay it on the ground next to their leader.

The leader of the gang motions towards the bags of candy.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)
Look at all the bags of candy we snatched!

The Shadow Man lowers his head to look at the bags of candy lying on the asphalt.

William tries to get a better view from behind the garbage cans, but he accidentally nudges one of the cans too roughly.

He stares in horror as the metal lid of the garbage can slides off and hurls towards the ground.

CRASH!! -Crash- -Crash-

All is silent except for the loud crash and its echo.

The Shadow Man jerks his head in William's direction.

The gang of ski-mask wearing thugs turn around.

William stands by the garbage cans, plainly visible for all to see.

The Shadow Man tilts his head as if wondering who William is. Without uttering a word he jabs his hand forward pointing at William.

The gang of vandals charge towards William.

The Shadow Man opens the back passenger door of the mysterious black car and climbs in, leaving the bags of candy in the street.

William stares panicked at the ski-masks charging towards him.

The black vehicle drives away.

WILLIAM
(nervously)
Uh, oh boy...

William runs back past the neighborhood houses as the pursuers chase after him.

He trips over a sprinkler head on a lawn and falls to the ground.

The gang member closest behind him trips over William and goes tumbling forward.

Still on the ground, William sees some jack-o-lanterns that line the walkway of the house.

He picks up a jack-o-lantern and smashes it onto the head of the fallen gang member.

More street punks in ski-masks come racing towards him.

He picks himself up and runs.

The gang member with the pumpkin stuck on his head waddles across the lawn blinded.

He smacks into three other vandals that are chasing after William.

They all come toppling to the ground.

William runs across a few more lawns.

More vandals close behind.

William flails his arms in the air and screams.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT (CONT.)

From a distance Katie and her brother observe William screaming as he runs from the street gang.

Katie looks at her little brother.

KATIE

Are you sure he knows what he's
doing?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT (CONT.)

William sees his assailants gaining ground.

He runs behind a tree.

A vandal reaches the tree on the opposite side.

The two circle the tree as William decides whether to move
left or right.

More gang members come running across the lawn.

William runs in the opposite direction.

He grabs a garden hose from a large wheel at the side of the
house as he passes by.

The garden hose wheel spins. William pulls the hose with him,
moving across the lawn.

Vandals trip over the hose stretched across the grass.

William runs a circle around a couple more of the masked
thugs, tripping them with the hose.

He swings the garden hose around over his head while more
street punks try to surround him. The metal sprinkler adapter
attached to the end of the hose whistles as it swings in the
air.

William swings the garden hose at one of his attackers.

The metal adapter and hose hits the gang member hard in the
side of the face.

The gang member drops to the ground holding his face.

The rest of the street punks look at their fallen comrade and
then at William in astonishment.

Still holding the garden hose, William is just as astonished.

He looks at the fallen gang member still on the ground.

William winces.

WILLIAM
Oh! Wow! Hey, sorry!

Angered, the gang encircles William.

William swings the garden hose, trying to keep them at a distance.

One of them grabs the end of the swinging garden hose.

He charges towards William.

PLUNK!

Something hits the teenage punk in the forehead.

Surprised, everyone looks towards the ground to see the object.

A Frisbee with blue streaks rolls to a stop.

William and the gang members look towards the street.

Kirby, still in costume, stands proudly, uttering a line from his character's movie.

KIRBY
Games? You want games? I'll give
you games!

One of the teenage vandals lifts up his ski-mask to get a better look. It's the leader of the gang.

GANG LEADER
The turd?

Kirby raises his arms and motions towards his costume.

KIRBY
Ok really, how to you get "turd"
from this?!

GANG LEADER
(annoyed)
Get him!

Some of the masked teenagers surrounding William start marching towards Kirby.

Kirby loses his confidence at the sight of his approaching attackers.

KIRBY

Oh...maybe I should have thought
this through...

Kirby runs from the hoodlums.

They follow in pursuit.

William tries to fend off his remaining attackers by swinging
the garden hose.

The vandals chasing Kirby catch up to him and push him
against a car.

The circle around William gets tighter.

William looks into the eyes of the gang leader.

The masked gang members appear ready to strike.

William prepares himself to fight back.

WOOO-WOOO-WOOO-WOOO

Sirens break through the tension.

Everyone looks at the end of the street where a couple police
cars come screaming around the corner, lights flashing.

The masked gang members take off running at the sight of the
police.

Kirby trips one of them causing the vandal to stumble.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Yeah that's what I thought!

The police cars continue down the street.

A van with the words "Channel 2 News Time" on the side
follows close behind.

Kirby picks up his Frisbee from off the ground.

He looks around for William.

William approaches the tree that Katie and her brother hide
behind. He crouches on his knee.

WILLIAM

You kids alright?

WILL

WOW! That was so cool!

KATIE
I can't believe you fought all
those bad guys!

WILLIAM
Yeah, neither can I.

WILL
I TOLD you he was a superhero!

KATIE
Weren't you scared?

William looks at Katie's brother and smiles.

WILLIAM
Hey, I'm a superhero. I'm the dark-
offender, remember? The darkness is
afraid of ME!

Lights flash and police radio chatters from the road. Across
the street a reporter stands by the news van trying to ready
a shot.

William looks in that direction before turning back to the
two children.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Listen, I gotta go. The police are
here now, they'll make sure you get
home ok.

The children look up as William stands to his full height.
He tips his fedora hat, and runs back out into the street,
his cape flowing behind him.

Young Will calls after him as the caped crusader fades into
the shadows.

WILL
Thank you!

William disappears into the night. Kirby races after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD TELEVISION NEWS REPORT - (CONT.)

Reporter Janine O' Reilly stands in the vandalized
neighborhood. Behind her police lights flash.

O' REILLY

Halloween night in Oakville was tormented today by a rash of what police are calling neighborhood street gangs.

The news coverage cuts to video of graffiti, toilet papered houses, and the bags of stolen candy lying in the street.

O' REILLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Vandals wearing ski-masks took to the streets and were responsible for acts of graffiti and destruction as well as the theft of numerous bags of Halloween candy.

A police officer drags a handcuffed juvenile towards the back of a police car. The delinquent yells at the camera.

GANG LEADER

It wasn't our fault! The Shadow Man told us to do it! He said he'd pay us! He's the guy you want! The Shadow Man!

The police officer pushes the thug into the back of the squad car and slams the door. He continues to yell behind the glass.

More images of the vandalism as the reporter talks. Some smashed pumpkin on a porch. Handcuffed hoodlums are walked by policemen.

O' REILLY (O.S.)

Vandalism. Theft. Destruction of property. Is this merely the act of troubled teens, or was the mysterious "Shadow Man" involved? While police have several suspects in custody, there are no clues to the whereabouts of this infamous Shadow Man.

A police officer evades an interview for the report.

OFFICER

We can neither confirm nor deny the presence of a "Shadow Man" here tonight.

O' REILLY (O.S.)

And what of the children who trick or treat in these neighborhoods?

The video cuts to Katie and her brother standing on the street. Beside them the reporter crouches, holding a microphone towards them.

KATIE

It was scary. They kept chasing us, and yelling at us. They said they were going to take our candy and give it to the Shadow Man.

O' REILLY

Did you see the Shadow Man?

KATIE

Yes. He was big, and had a black mask on his face. But he ran away when he saw the DARK OFFENDER.

O' REILLY

The Dark Offender?

WILL

He's a superhero! He offends darkness!

The coverage cuts to captured footage of William in costume running down the street, Kirby awkwardly following after him.

O' REILLY (O.S.)

And who is this heroic protector of Halloween seen here? -This "offender of darkness." A concerned parent? A simple bystander? ...a superhero?

The video cuts back to Katie and her brother.

KATIE

He saved us. He kept us safe.

O' REILLY

(humoring the children)
So, the Dark Offender is a superhero?

KATIE

Yep! Every town needs a superhero right?

Cuts back to reporter walking down the neighborhood.

O' REILLY

While authorities continue to look for leads as to the cause of tonight's events, citizens of Oakville can sleep a little easier knowing that the police have made multiple arrests, and that there might just be a "superhero" protecting the streets. Reporting live from the streets of Oakville, I'm Janine O' Reilly: Channel 2 News Time.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

William and Kirby stand and stare. William sighs. Kirby throws his arms up in the air in frustration.

KIRBY

Maybe no one will notice.

The ice cream truck has been ransacked. It is covered in graffiti, toilet paper, shaving cream and egg goo.

WILLIAM

Mr. Melvin's gonna kill me.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - MORNING

William and Kirby stand in the back room of the store as Mr. Melvin scolds them.

MR. MELVIN

What were you thinking? How could you have left the truck all alone? You abandoned your post!

KIRBY

I wouldn't say abandoned...

MR. MELVIN

Oh no?

Mr. Melvin holds up the morning newspaper which displays a photo of Kirby and the Dark Offender fleeing the scene from last night.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)

Is that not you?

KIRBY

Oh wow! Page six!

Kirby reaches for the paper. Mr. Melvin pulls it away from out of his reach.

MR. MELVIN

You have to protect! Stand your ground!

KIRBY

There were soooo many of them...

MR. MELVIN

Man up son! You had a job to do! Instead you're off trick-or-treating with some grown man in a cape!

KIRBY

Well, at least it's good publicity.

MR. MELVIN

I don't need any more of THIS kind of publicity! We're barely staying afloat here! Do you know how much money we just lost in damages?!

Mr. Melvin turns to William.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)

And where were you during all of this?

Confused, William looks again at the newspaper photo of both Kirby and him running from the scene in costume.

WILLIAM

Mr. Melvin, I was-

KIRBY

Will was looking for the police! He was trying to get help!

William is puzzled by Kirby's sudden interruption. He tries again to clarify.

WILLIAM

Mr. Melvin, that's me-

KIRBY

That's just Will, being a good assistant manager! He gave a statement to the police, but they had their hands full trying to deal with the Shadow Man.

William looks at Kirby with an expression of annoyed confusion. Mr. Melvin becomes somber.

MR. MELVIN
The Shadow Man...

His words are laced with fear as he recalls his prior experience with the villain.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
Who is that man? What does he want?
And why does it always affect my
business?!

KIRBY
Maybe he likes ice cream.

Kirby's remark wakes Mr. Melvin from his thoughts.

MR. MELVIN
There won't be any ice cream left
at this rate! Get out there and
sell some cones.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP

William and Kirby leave Mr. Melvin and go back to work at the counter.

WILLIAM
What is wrong with you?

KIRBY
What? I thought I handled that
pretty well!

WILLIAM
Why did you tell him I wasn't with
you?

KIRBY
Will! C'mon! You can't reveal your
secret identity!

WILLIAM
It was Halloween. It was just a
costume.

Not listening, Kirby begins to cut out the article from the newspaper.

KIRBY

It would be better if you had a secret lair though...

WILLIAM

Kirby. We work in an ice cream shop. I'm not a superhero. This isn't a comic book.

Kirby takes the freshly cut newspaper clipping and tapes it to the front of the ice cream counter. He stands back proudly to admire his work.

KIRBY

Do you think I could be your sidekick?

With no remaining patience, William turns to his oblivious coworker.

WILLIAM

Kirby! It was a costume! That's all. It wasn't real. This is who I am.

KIRBY

No!

Kirby walks over to the counter and places his hands on either side of William's face.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

THIS...is your TRUE mask!

William swats Kirby's hands away.

WILLIAM

Knock it off!

KIRBY

Well why not Will? I mean look!

Kirby tears the newspaper photo from off the counter and holds it up for William to see.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

We're in the newspaper! You did some real good last night! People are actually calling you a superhero! This is what we always dreamed about as kids! What's stopping you doing it again?

WILLIAM

What am I supposed to do? Run around town in a mask and cape? We live in the suburbs! There isn't even any real crime here! This town doesn't need a superhero!

Kirby slams the newspaper clipping on the counter.

KIRBY

Tell that to the kids.

William looks at the article before him. Included in the article is a photo of the two children he helped the night before.

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DAY

Students are going to and from classes. William and Kirby are walking across the community college campus handing out coupons for the ice cream shop.

WILLIAM

I don't know Kirby, I think I may end up being a bachelor for life.

KIRBY

What about Sarina? She's smart, beautiful, talented...

WILLIAM

That's the problem. She's TOO smart. Too beautiful. Too talented. What's she going to want with a guy who works at an ice cream shop?

KIRBY

I bet she'd like the Dark Offender.

WILLIAM

Will you give it a rest Kirby?

KIRBY

Hear me out! I have the perfect plan! Between the two of us we know everything there is to know about being a superhero. We'll get some gadgets, practice your hand to hand combat... I could train you!

William shakes his head and brushes off Kirby's pleas.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

It's what we've always wanted! You could live the dream man! Just think...a real life superhero!

William and Kirby approach a group of three or four socially awkward COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS talking amongst themselves.

STUDENT 1

I was totally pwning with my new broadsword, but then my teacher was all like "you can't play StarCraft in class."

The students laugh.

STUDENT 2

He thought it was StarCraft? There are no broadswords in StarCraft! What an idiot!

More geek laughter.

The attention turns to William and Kirby as they hand out coupons.

WILLIAM

Hey guys, two for the price of one deals going on.

STUDENT 1

I'm lactose intolerant.

A FEMALE STUDENT in the group takes a coupon and eyes Kirby and William with a carnivorous stare.

FEMALE STUDENT

(boldly)

Can I get both of you for the price of one?

The students laugh again. William roles his eyes. Kirby appears nervous.

The female student steps closer and gently caresses her sides in a "sultry" manner.

FEMALE STUDENT (CONT'D)

I'd love a little...mmm...fudge ripple!

William and Kirby look at each other confused by her innuendo.

WILLIAM

What does that even- Nevermind. Do you happen to know if there is a rally going on today?

STUDENT 2

(pointing)

Yeah some mayor guy is speaking on the other side of campus.

WILLIAM

Thanks.

The female student stands close to William and Kirby, and places a hand on each of their sides, pressing them together.

FEMALE STUDENT

You sure you wouldn't rather stay here? I could go for a banana split.

Kirby fidgets nervously. William winces.

WILLIAM

Uh, no... We really must be going. But thank you. It's been... enchanting.

The two turn away from the group of students and begin a hasty retreat.

STUDENT 1

(to female student)

He called you an enchantress!

STUDENT 2

That means you're beautiful AND you can do spells!

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE (CONT.)

William and Kirby make their way through a crowd of people listening to mayor candidate Dan Neely speak. Standing to the side of him is Sarina.

KIRBY

(noticing Sarina)

So that's why we're out here handing out coupons!

WILLIAM

Shh!

Dan Neely speaks from a raised platform. He is charismatic and talks of his desire to make improvements to Oakville. Sarina stands off to the side, mouthing the words of his prepared speech and following along.

DAN NEELY

Oakville has always been a peaceful town. A quiet town. A community of good, hard working people like yourselves. People with hopes and dreams and visions of a better tomorrow.

Kirby looks around the crowd. William is staring longingly at Sarina. Others in the crowd appear to be taking in the speaker's words.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

But our city is in peril. You know it, and I know it. An uncharacteristic crime rate is on the rise. People are no longer feeling safe in the streets. You've seen the papers and the reports. Our current city leadership has failed us. Why just the other night, a masked hero in a cape felt compelled to take to the streets himself to fight this wave of evil.

Excited by the reference, Kirby begins applauding loudly. The rest of the crowd has no response.

KIRBY

(clapping)

YEAH!!!

DAN NEELY

When I am elected mayor, I'll see to it that we apply more of our resources to stopping this sudden outburst of crime. I will make it my first priority, to see to it that the residents of Oakville are safe and protected. You have that as my promise. Thank you.

The crowd applauds and as Neely waves to the audience. He smiles a politician's smile and makes a grand salute to the crowd with just his index finger before walking away from the platform.

Kirby turns to Will excited, as the crowd begins to disperse.

KIRBY

Hey! Did you hear that? First the newspaper and now this! You're practically famous!

William nods his head, his gaze still fixated on Sarina who is locked in conversation with Neely.

WILLIAM

He's a pretty good speaker isn't he?

William watches from their spot in the crowd as Neely slides an arm around Sarina and gives her a subtle embrace.

KIRBY

I'd vote for him. He seems like he has a pretty good handle on things.

William continues to stare.

WILLIAM

Yeah.

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE (CONT.)

William sheepishly approaches the platform on where Sarina has been working for the rally. She turns and sees him. He gives her a shy wave of the hand.

SARINA

William!

She hurries over to meet him where he and Kirby stand. She is glowing with excitement.

SARINA (CONT'D)

I'm so glad you came!

KIRBY

We take our city government very seriously.

SARINA

What did you think of the speech?

WILLIAM

I-

KIRBY

Will liked the part about the guy in the cape. The Dark Offender.

SARINA

Oh really?

WILLIAM

Well-

KIRBY

Oh yeah. Will is a big fan of the guy. Just today he was telling me how he hopes we'll see more of him.

Frustrated William tries to speak for himself.

WILLIAM

I never-

SARINA

Oh I hope so!

William is visibly surprised. Kirby smiles smugly and gives a light punch to William's side as if to say "I told you so."

WILLIAM

You do?

SARINA

Oh of course! Everyone is going nuts over the guy!

WILLIAM

They are?

SARINA

And his appearance the other night really helped to support what we've been saying all along-that crime has become a major issue in our town.

WILLIAM

Really?

A subtle smile appears on William's face as he takes it all in.

SARINA

Yeah! It's been great! It's all kind of exciting isn't it? For the first time in a long time, I've actually been enjoying my job! Do you think we'll see him again?

From the platform Dan Neely stands among some people in suits and calls to Sarina.

DAN NEELY

Sarina dear! Come on over here!
There's some people I want you to
meet.

Sarina looks at the candidate and then turns back to William.

SARINA

I have to go.

As she moves quickly back to her work she turns and calls
over her shoulder.

SARINA (CONT'D)

It's good to see you William!

William watches as Sarina rejoins the other members of the
rally.

WILLIAM

Kirby...tell me more about this
plan.

INT. GARAGE

William and Kirby stand in the Royal's garage. The clutter
has been pushed aside to make room for some old weights and
exercise equipment.

William surveys all of the machines and weights.

WILLIAM

Am I really that out of shape?

KIRBY

We'll get to that later. There's
more important stuff we need to go
over first.

WILLIAM

Like what?

KIRBY

Well we gotta work on your voice
and some of the dramatics.

William looks skeptical.

WILLIAM

My voice?

KIRBY
Yeah, yeah. It needs to be
more...y'know... Heroic!

William doesn't look convinced.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
C'mon, give it a try.

Kirby waves his hands across an invisible landscape.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Imagine! You've just arrived at the
scene of a bank robbery! People are
in danger! The criminals appear
vicious! You make your grand
entrance and you say...?

An awkward pause as Kirby waits for William to respond.
William shakes his head unsure of all of this.

WILLIAM
Stop robbing this bank?

KIRBY
No! No! No!

Kirby is already frustrated. He begins coaching him like a
movie director coaching an actor.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Look! Think about your motivation!
These guys are dangerous! People's
lives are at stake! You need to
convince everyone that you are a
hero. You are here to take control
of this situation.

WILLIAM
(louder)
STOP ROBBING THIS BANK!

KIRBY
Ok. Ok. Closer. But the words are
all wrong. Superheroes usually have
more catchy phrases.

WILLIAM
What if I said "stop evil doers?"

KIRBY
Ooh! That's good! That's good!

WILLIAM
 (heroically)
 Stop evil doers!

KIRBY
 Good! Now build off that!

WILLIAM
 Release those captive civilians!

KIRBY
 Yes! Keep going! Keep going!

WILLIAM
 Unhand that stolen loot!

KIRBY
 Good!

WILLIAM
 Um...

KIRBY
 Reference your superhero name. It's
 critical that you always mention
 your name, otherwise the press
 might start calling you something
 else.

WILLIAM
 Oh, right.
 (dramatically)
 You cannot escape the Dark
 Offender!

KIRBY
 Bigger. Move your arms.

William stands taller and raises his arms.

WILLIAM
 (louder)
 The Dark Offender!!

KIRBY
 More. "Dark Of-FENDER!"

WILLIAM
 Offender!

KIRBY
 Of-FENDER!

WILLIAM
Offender!!

KIRBY
Use your diaphragm.

William and Kirby shake their fists in the air as they practice their dramatic emphasis.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Of-FENDER!

WILLIAM
Of-FENDER!!!

KIRBY
Good, now hit me.

WILLIAM
What?

KIRBY
Hit me! C'mon you can't hesitate during the real thing.

WILLIAM
Kirby, no! I can't-

KIRBY
Let's go hero! C'mon! Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee!

WILLIAM
I'm not going to hit you.

Kirby tries to motivate his friend.

KIRBY
C'mon ice cream man! Can't take the heat?

William ignores Kirby's remarks.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Maybe you'll never be anything more than a community college student.

WILLIAM
(annoyed)
Kirby!

KIRBY
What's the matter? Didn't your dad ever teach you to fight?

William delivers a swift blow to Kirby's abdomen. Kirby keels over and his eyes widen with the sudden impact.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
(gasping)
Ohh! That was good!

WILLIAM
You alright?

Kirby continues to struggle to catch his breath.

KIRBY
Ohh...yeah... Nice shot. You... You look tired. Let's take five.

A door opens and Mrs. Royal emerges from the kitchen carrying a tray in her hands.

MRS. ROYAL
Hey boys! Would you like some snacks? I made cookies!

William and Kirby stop and realize that they are no longer alone.

WILLIAM
Mom, we're kind of in the middle of something.

KIRBY
Actually...

Kirby looks at the tray of cookies.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
I'd love some.

Kirby moves over to Mrs. Royal and takes a cookie.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Ooh! They're still hot!

MRS. ROYAL
You boys having a fun time?

Kirby takes handfuls and handfuls of cookies from Mrs. Royal's tray.

WILLIAM
Yes Mom...

MRS. ROYAL
What are you playing?

KIRBY
(mouth full of cookies)
It's kind of a secret.

Mrs. Royal gets excited and smiles.

MRS. ROYAL
(as if to children)
Oh! A secret! How exciting!

William sighs.

MRS. ROYAL (CONT'D)
Well I better leave you two boys to
it then!

Mrs. Royal places the tray of cookies on a chair and exits
back into the kitchen.

KIRBY
Thanks Mrs. Royal!

William watches as Kirby munches on his cookies.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Oh. Did you want some?

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

William and Kirby stand in the middle of the small suburban
town's main street. A few residents walk town the sidewalks.
William carries a backpack.

WILLIAM
I don't feel right about this.

KIRBY
Nonsense. This is exactly how
Superman got started.

WILLIAM
No. It isn't even remotely close to
how Superman got started.

KIRBY
Look. We need to get you some
practice. We gotta start making a
name for yourself. It's a win-win.
Trust me.

WILLIAM
Superman never mugged anybody.

KIRBY

Ok, first of all, I'M the one doing the mugging. You just come to the rescue.

WILLIAM

This is a stupid idea.

KIRBY

This is a great idea! Now I'm going to go find a victim. You find a phone booth or something to presto-change-o. When you hear the screaming, come to the rescue.

WILLIAM

But-

KIRBY

Go.

WILLIAM

But-

KIRBY

Go!

Kirby sends William away to prepare himself.

Kirby begins to survey the scene for a potential mugging victim. He pans his gaze from one of the street to the other.

He sees a couple of young children coming out of a store.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Too easy.

He notices a young woman jogging down the road.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

She's carrying mace.

He spots an old lady hobbling down the sidewalk.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

That's just mean.

His gaze settles on a large BURLY MAN just standing on a street corner.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Perfect.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

William frantically hurries down the street looking for a phone booth.

WILLIAM

Phone booth...phone booth...

His eyes dart from one passersby to the next, each of them talking on a cell phone.

Finally he stops at a clothing boutique and rushes inside.

Women in the store look puzzled as William rushes into a changing room.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

Kirby watches the large man standing on the street corner. The man notices and the two make eye contact. Kirby takes a deep breath and begins his march towards his mugging "victim."

Kirby's stuffs his fist into his jacket pocket and makes a gun shape.

The man walks towards Kirby.

The two meet in the sidewalk.

Kirby opens his mouth to speak.

BURLY MAN

Give me your wallet!

Kirby is taken back.

KIRBY

What?

BURLY MAN

You heard me.

The burly man opens his jacket slightly to reveal a pistol tucked under his belt.

KIRBY
Wait, you're mugging me?! Ha! This
is too perfect!

CUT TO:

INT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE CHANGING ROOM

William is struggling to change into his superhero costume.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

BURLY MAN
C'mon, hurry up!

Kirby empties his pockets. The mugger looks at the meager amount.

BURLY MAN (CONT'D)
This is it?!

Kirby looks around to see if William has returned yet.

KIRBY
Uh...I think I have something in my
coat. Hang on...

CUT TO:

INT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE CHANGING ROOM

William carefully places his red mask over his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

Kirby's mugger turns away and begins to walk away.

KIRBY
Wait! Wait! My watch! You want my
watch right?

The mugger turns and stares at Kirby trying to figure out what is going on.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE CHANGING ROOM

William drapes his cape over his shoulders and puts the finishing touches on his costume. He opens the changing room door with force and emerges triumphantly.

WILLIAM

AH-HA!

Women in the store stop what they are doing and stare.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

Kirby's mugger looks at his new watch wrapped around his wrist.

Kirby continues to look around waiting for the Dark Offender to make his appearance.

The mugger turns as if to leave and Kirby stops him again.

KIRBY

Um, wait! Y'know, this jacket is actually worth something.

Kirby begins to remove his jacket. A look of complete confusion rests on the mugger's face.

CUT TO:

INT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE CHANGING ROOM

William stands in the clothing boutique dressed as the Dark Offender. Some of the store workers rush up to him.

FASHIONISTA 1

Oh I just love the colors!

William relaxes his dramatic triumphant pose.

FASHIONISTA 2

And the way this cape falls off your shoulders is just heavenly!

FASHIONISTA 1

But we must do something about these shoddy second-hand fabrics!

William looks down at his wardrobe.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

Kirby's mugger, now wearing Kirby's jacket and watch turns to leave yet again. Kirby continues to stall for time.

KIRBY

Wait!

The mugger turns around again.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

You know, as fate would have it...I'm kind of experiencing a sort of Stockholm syndrome here.

The mugger stares at Kirby with disbelief.

BURLY MAN

What?

KIRBY

Are you doing anything later?

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

William is running down the sidewalk. His cape flows behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE

Kirby stalls.

KIRBY

Y'know...it's just a lonely world out there, and I was thinking-

BURLY MAN

What is wrong with you?!

William runs down the sidewalk and finally arrives at the scene.

Kirby mutters under his breath.

KIRBY

Finally!

WILLIAM

It is I! The Dark Offender! I will save you from this menace!

KIRBY

(poorly acted)

Oh Dark Offender! I am so glad you are here!

WILLIAM

(to mugger)

Is this man troubling you good sir?

BURLY MAN

Yeah! He won't let me leave! He won't shut up!

William turns to face Kirby.

WILLIAM

Prepare yourself fiend! You've exploited your last victim!

KIRBY

Uh no. You don't understand.

William raises his fists in combat.

WILLIAM

Ah-HA!

KIRBY

No! Wait! He robbed me!

WILLIAM

Don't blame the innocent for your crimes evildoer!

KIRBY

No! Tell him!

Kirby looks to the mugger for support. The mugger stares back at the two of them.

BURLY MAN

This is getting too weird for me.

The mugger walks away as William prances around Kirby with his fists in the air.

WILLIAM
Don't try to resist you scoundrel!
You're no match for the Dark
Offender!

Kirby continues to protest.

KIRBY
Wait. Just hold on a second!

WILLIAM
You will pay for your crimes!

KIRBY
No! Stop!

William lowers his voice so that only Kirby can hear his break from character.

WILLIAM
Hey this is going pretty well! Ok,
now just like we practiced.

A woman's scream interrupts the moment. William and Kirby look of in the direction of the sound.

WOMAN (O.S.)
He took my purse!

William looks back at Kirby and finally realizes what is happening.

KIRBY
NOW will you stop him?

William rushes after the burly man who is escaping with the woman's purse.

He follows him across the street.

He catches up to him and pushes him from behind. The mugger falls to the ground and lands violently. His gun skids across the pavement.

William quickly takes the mugger's wrist and uses a zip-tie to secure him to a metal street sign post.

The mugger pulls at the zip-tie to no avail.

A police car pulls up from around the corner.

Kirby arrives excitedly.

The police take the mugger into custody.

William and Kirby excitedly high five.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- 1) EXT. TOWN - DAY - The Dark Offender stops some teenagers from tagging a wall with spray paint.
- 2) EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY - The Dark Offender stops some schoolyard bullies. Kirby watches happily. The children who are now free from the wrath of bullies cheer.
- 3) INT. GARAGE - Kirby coaches William as he exercises and struggles to bench press some heavy weights.
- 4) EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT - The Dark Offender prevents some thieves from breaking a car window.
- 5) INT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE - The Fashionistas take measurements of the Dark Offender and prepare to sew him a new costume.
- 6) EXT. - DAY - The Dark Offender saves a cat stuck in a tree for a small child.
- 7) INT. GARAGE - Kirby paints William's motorized scooter to reflect his alter ego. Not paying attention, he sprays paint all over the garage.
- 8) EXT. TOWN - DAY - Armed with a black slingshot, The Dark Offender thwarts a thief robbing a convenience store.
- 9) INT. CLOTHING BOUTIQUE - The fashionistas reveal a mannequin sporting a fresh new costume for the Dark Offender. The Dark Offender reacts positively.
- 10) INT. GARAGE - Kirby spots William as he again struggles to bench press a heavy barbell. William's mom enters the garage with cookies and Kirby abandons William who struggles mightily under the weight.
- 11) EXT. TOWN - DAY - The Dark Offender wearing his new professionally made costume, stops a shoplifter outside a store.
- 12) EXT. TOWN - NEWS REPORT - Janine O' Reilly gives a news report about the Dark Offender's heroics.
- 13) Newspaper clippings and headlines depict the triumphs of the Dark Offender.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Dan Neely holds a newspaper in his hands with a headline featuring the Dark Offender.

DAN NEELY
I love this guy!

He looks up from his paper and continues his conversation with Sarina who stands on the other side of his desk holding a manila folder.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)
Look at this!

Neely stands up and reads from the newspaper article.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)
"...when asked why he chose to begin his crusade against terror, the Dark Offender replied, 'this town has had more than it's fair share of criminal activity as of late. I do my part to combat crime, because I can. But we all must do our part to reclaim our city from evil. Citizens, businessmen, and politicians.'"

Neely looks up excitedly at Sarina.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)
He's practically giving my campaign speech for me!

Sarina smiles and opens the folder in her hands.

SARINA
That's not all!

Sarina tilts the folder so that Neely can see the report in her hands.

Neely moves beside Sarina.

SARINA (CONT'D)
Ever since he's started appearing in the news, the numbers have been growing in support of your revamped law enforcement program.

Neely leans in close to Sarina to get a better look at the report in her hands.

SARINA (CONT'D)

He's brought this issue to the forefront of everyone's mind. People are finally realizing what a problem it's become, and voters are clearly siding-

Sarina's sentence skips a beat as she looks up from the report to see Neely standing so close to her.

SARINA (CONT'D)

-with you.

Neely smiles at Sarina for a long moment. He oozes charm.

DAN NEELY

Well! It would seem I'm having all kinds of good fortune.

Sarina nervously takes a small step backwards from Neely whose charisma emanates like only a politician's can.

SARINA

Yes...it would appear so Mr. Neely.

Neely steps forward to match her movements.

DAN NEELY

Call me Dan. "Mr. Neely" is so formal, don't you think?

Sarina continues to move slowly backwards as Neely continues forward.

SARINA

Dan...

DAN NEELY

So, Sarina... What course of action do you suggest now?

SARINA

Well...I think if this trend continues...

DAN NEELY

Yes...?

Sarina's movements reach their end as her back lands against the wall by the door to Neely's office.

Neely stands over her.

SARINA

If this trend continues...I think you'll be very happy on election day.

Neely moves even closer, his voice speaking in subtle tones.

DAN NEELY

Very happy, hmm?

Sarina looks up at him, his gaze resting firmly upon her. She falls under his spell. Her reply is but a whisper.

SARINA

Yes...

Neely moves in. Their lips draw ever nearer.

DAN NEELY

Well then, I guess I better hope that this Offender character continues to make headlines.

Sarina's eyes widen. In an instant she awakens from trance-like seduction.

She pulls away from Neely, and quickly side steps from out of his reach.

SARINA

Yes.

(still nervous)

Yes! That would be ideal!

She reaches for the door behind her and swings it open.

SARINA (CONT'D)

In fact, I'm going to get to work on that right now!

Dan Neely sits on the corner of his desk with his arms crossed and a suave smile on his face.

DAN NEELY

Oh good. But it's already late. You should go on home.

SARINA

Oh no. It's ok. I've still got time.

Sarina hastily makes her exit. The door to Neely's office closes behind her.

In the hall she pauses outside the door to take a deep sigh.

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE - NIGHT

The streets of Oakville are empty and under the cover of nightfall. From the darkness some voices are heard. A gang of THIEVES dressed in dark clothes and ski masks emerge and make their way into the city.

CUT TO:

William dressed as the Dark Offender sits on a rooftop surveying the downtown area. Kirby lays on the roof looking at the stars.

KIRBY

How's that new costume working out?

WILLIAM

It's great! It still takes me a while to change into it though. I need to learn to put it on faster.

KIRBY

You gotta start wearing it under your street clothes. Y'know...like Superman.

WILLIAM

Won't that get kind of warm?

KIRBY

Crimes in progress aren't going to wait for you to find a changing room dude.

WILLIAM

I suppose that's true.

Kirby stares deep into the universe and begins to wax philosophical.

KIRBY

Do you think there's another dimension out there with another Dark Offender?

WILLIAM

You mean like in DC Comics "Crisis on Infinite Earths"?

KIRBY

I was thinking more like the Marvel multiverse, but yeah basically.

WILLIAM

I dunno. I've never been to one.

KIRBY

I wonder which one we are.

WILLIAM

What do you mean?

KIRBY

All these dimensions have the same people in them, but none of them are exactly the same.

Kirby continues excitedly.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

In one timeline you probably wear blue. In another you might never become the Dark Offender at all. And in another you might be defeated by an arch nemesis and die a violent and horrible death!

William turns his head and stares at Kirby who is clearly enjoying the idea too much.

WILLIAM

Thanks for the vote of confidence.

KIRBY

Oh. I mean...

WILLIAM

I could do without the violent and horrible death.

KIRBY

Of course. Right. Those are just the other timelines. Probably.

WILLIAM

Probably?

KIRBY

Well you have been stopping bigger and bigger crimes lately. And the Shadow Man is kind of an arch nemesis.

WILLIAM

Kirby, you're the one who pushed me to do this superhero thing. I thought you'd have a little more faith in me than that.

KIRBY

It's just in the comics, there always comes that moment when the hero dies at the clutches of his greatest nemesis! I mean, the hero always comes back to life later, but that's generally the way these things work.

William stares out into the city below and stands slowly. Kirby's voice trails off in the background.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

So I guess you wouldn't have to really die. At least, not permanently. Just sort of die partially. Y'know...mostly dead.

William stands motionless at the edge of the building, staring intently into the city below.

Kirby leans over and looks at his friend.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Will?

WILLIAM

Something isn't right.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE - NIGHT

Sarina pulls her coat over herself as she exits her office building. Except for a few street lights, the town is covered in shadow. She walks hurriedly down the sidewalk.

The sound of glass breaking echoes in the night. Sarina stops and looks around nervously.

She shakes her head and continues onward, convincing herself that her fears are all in her mind. Her step hastens.

Sarina rounds a corner and finds herself in the midst of a group of THIEVES dressed in black. Broken glass crunches beneath her feet as she halts in surprise.

The thieves are in the middle of bringing stolen goods through a broken store window.

The thieves immediately see Sarina and begin positioning themselves around her.

Sarina attempts to talk her way out of the situation. She looks around for an escape. There is none. She removes one of her high heeled shoes and prepares to use it as a weapon. The thieves move closer.

CRASH!

Everyone looks in the direction of the sound of a trash can tipping over. There is a moment of tension.

The noise of an angry feline screeches.

The thieves smirk and return their attention to Sarina.

With a sudden spark the street light above them bursts and plunges them all into darkness.

Sarina backs into a wall not sure of what is going on.

Shadows battle each other in the night. Voices struggle with each other.

A body falls backwards over a pile of stolen goods and flees the scene.

The silhouettes of the Dark Offender and thieves continue to fight in the darkness of night. The Dark Offender loses his hat with a blow from his attacker.

Sarina watches in suspense.

The thieves are repelled and escape into the night leaving the stolen goods and Sarina behind. The Dark Offender disappears from sight.

Sarina runs out into the street calling after him.

SARINA

Wait!

She picks up the Dark Offender's hat from off the ground.

She holds the hat gently between her fingers and gazes at it with some fascination.

She smiles deviously and whirls around with the sudden realization that the Dark Offender is standing just behind her.

The Dark Offender stands tall in the dim light of night. His costume is slightly scuffed from the battle but remains intact except for the fedora in Sarina's hands.

Sarina talks to him as a school girl with a crush.

SARINA (CONT'D)
It's you! Hi.

DARK OFFENDER
Are you alright? Are you hurt?

SARINA
I'm fine. I'm good.

Sarina moves closer to the Dark Offender.

SARINA (CONT'D)
That was amazing! You really are a hero!

DARK OFFENDER
I'm just trying to help.

Sarina inches closer. She reaches up and touches the front of his costume.

SARINA
Thank you.

The two stand within inches of each other. Sarina looks longingly into her hero's eyes. Clinging to the hat with both hands she raises it slightly so that rests on the Dark Offender's chest.

SARINA (CONT'D)
I found your hat.

William continues to gaze back at Sarina.

Slowly Sarina places the fedora back onto the Dark Offender's head.

DARK OFFENDER
Thank you.

The moment lingers.

SARINA
What you're doing...it's...amazing!
You're really making a difference.

William replies with a suave sort of confidence never displayed by him before.

DARK OFFENDER

Am I?

SARINA

The people are all talking about it! You're getting them excited about keeping our town safe! Everyone loves you!

DARK OFFENDER

Everyone?

Sarina blushes and turns away. She looks down and smiles to herself.

SARINA

Yes...

She stares off into the distance, her eyes sparkling.

SARINA (CONT'D)

You're doing something that matters! You're helping people...making them smile. It's having a positive impact on everyone. On all of us.

She breaks from her thoughts and laughs to herself slightly.

SARINA (CONT'D)

You're even helping me with my job.

Sarina turns back around as she speaks.

SARINA (CONT'D)

You know if you ever want a PR rep in your corner or to do some marketing of your own-

She sees nothing but the empty street. The Dark Offender is gone.

Sarina smiles to herself.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - MORNING

Mr. Melvin and Kirby stand hunched over and stare intently through the glass at a bucket of red ice cream.

MR. MELVIN

There it is son. Atomic Boonie-Pepper Supreme! Hot ice cream.
(MORE)

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
Made from the hottest peppers
imported from Guam.

KIRBY
Wow!

MR. MELVIN
Get a good look. This new flavor of
ours is going to turn business
around and make corporate think
twice about ever shutting us down!

Kirby stares in wonder at the ice cream and then stands and
looks at Mr. Melvin.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
This stuff is so hot, it'll light
your hair on fire with just one
lick! Brave souls will come from
all over to try it. But few will be
able to handle its power.

KIRBY
But you can handle it right? What's
it taste like?

Mr. Melvin shifts his weight nervously.

MR. MELVIN
What? Yes! Of course I can handle
it! Pssh! I'm the manager!

Kirby waits for the remaining response to his question.

KIRBY
And?

MR. MELVIN
And it tastes like...burning! Like
the very fires of hell!

Kirby returns his gaze to the bucket of red ice cream.

KIRBY
Cool!

The door chimes and William enters the store wearing several
layers of clothes including a jacket buttoned up to very top.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Will! Check it out! The new flavor!

MR. MELVIN
Will! Good! You're here!

Melvin looks up and down at William's wardrobe.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
What're you all bundled up for?

WILLIAM
Uh, just trying to stay warm. You know. Ice cream shop.

William and Kirby exchange knowing glances.

MR. MELVIN
Well is for the best. Listen, we have a freezer full of ice cream dating back to who knows when. Our inventory is a mess! I need you boys to go through it all and label everything that we can't serve to the public.

WILLIAM
Shouldn't we just throw them out? Why bother labeling them?

MR. MELVIN
You think I'm going to let all that ice cream go to waste?!

Mr. Melvin pats his stomach.

MR. MELVIN (CONT'D)
You just label anything that's past expiration and I'll give it a good home.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP FREEZER

William and Kirby stand in a walk-in freezer moving tubs of ice cream from one shelf to the next, labeling expired cartons as they go.

KIRBY
That is so cool! How many of them where there?

William lets a smile escape as he relates the previous night's events.

WILLIAM
Oh I dunno. Maybe four. Five tops.

KIRBY

Five! Man, I should have come with you! Next time you have to let me watch the action.

WILLIAM

Someone needed to call the police.

KIRBY

You ARE the police! By the time they finally showed up you were all long gone. All that was left was the broken window and a pile of stolen electronics.

WILLIAM

I got lucky. I think I surprised them more than anything else. I'm just glad Sarina was okay.

Kirby shakes his head and laughs.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

What?

KIRBY

Oh c'mon man! Don't you see it?

William looks at Kirby with some confusion.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

You saved her! The damsel in distress! The Dark Offender is totally a legit hero now! She's like your Lois Lane! Your Mary Jane Watson!

William can't help smiling as he entertains the boyish fantasy.

WILLIAM

You think?

KIRBY

Oh for sure! But you should have kissed her. Next time you have to kiss her.

WILLIAM

No I don't think... Really?

KIRBY

You're not going to get a better opportunity than that. You totally should have kissed her.

William is mesmerized by the thought of it all.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

That's the way it works man. The superhero saves the girl, and the girl falls for the superhero. I mean, they never fall for the boring, mild-mannered alter ego.

William's fantasy ends with Kirby's words.

WILLIAM

Never? Couldn't I just tell her that I'm the Dark Offender?

KIRBY

(frantically)

Oh no! Are you kidding? We've been through this! You can never reveal your secret identity! It's the cardinal rule of superheroes! That's like superhero 101! If people know who you are, you won't be able to continue fighting crime as a superhero. They might even arrest you for all your vigilante justice. Besides you'll put your loved ones at risk!

WILLIAM

At risk from what? We live in the suburbs! There can't be any real danger.

The door chime rings as someone enters the shop.

SARINA (O.S.)

Hello? Is anyone here?

William and Kirby share looks of anticipation.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP (CONT.)

Sarina stands at the ice cream counter looking at the various flavors on the menu. Kirby emerges from the back.

SARINA
Oh hello! Is William here? I was
hoping to speak with him.

Kirby stares at her as if questioning her intentions.

KIRBY
(slowly)
Yeah. He's in the back.

The two stand in awkward silence.

SARINA
May I speak with him?

Kirby's eyes continue to analyze Sarina.

KIRBY
Yeah...Go ahead.

Sarina walks through the back of the ice cream shop. Kirby makes military gestures with his fingers to indicate that he's keeping his eyes on her.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP FREEZER (CONT.)

Sarina stands in the doorway to the walk-in freezer. Her persona holds a special glow.

William with his back turned to the doorway, is crouching over a tub of ice cream.

SARINA
Well! I had quite the evening last
night!

William rises and faces Sarina.

WILLIAM
You did?

Sarina walks boldly into the freezer.

SARINA
It was incredible! I was saved-

She walks up to William, her excitement still peaked from the previous evening.

SARINA (CONT'D)
-from a team of villains, by a
superhero.

WILLIAM

You were?

Sarina nods.

SARINA

Mhmm. The Dark Offender.

WILLIAM

You saw him?

SARINA

He was amazing! You should have seen him!

Sarina looks off into the distance as she relives the experience.

SARINA (CONT'D)

He came out of nowhere! He rescued me from my attackers! He was so brave!

William becomes eager as he listens to Sarina's enthusiasm.

WILLIAM

Yeah?

SARINA

And then we stood there in the moonlight. Just the two of us. We shared this "moment."

William tries to contain his excitement.

SARINA (CONT'D)

I wonder who he really is beneath that mask.

William's heart takes courage. He opens his mouth to speak as Sarina turns back towards him.

SARINA (CONT'D)

I bet he's handsome. Smart. Strong. And brave. He seems like he has it all.

William's mouth closes. His expression changes.

SARINA (CONT'D)

You know, I've spent forever looking for a man like that but I was starting to think he didn't exist. But then he showed up. He's perfect William!

William's eyes widen and a sudden rush of anxiety rushes over him.

Sarina notices William's troubled expression.

SARINA (CONT'D)

William? Are you alright? Is something wrong?

William fidgets nervously.

WILLIAM

Oh yeah. I'm fine. -ahem- Everything's fine.

Sarina examines William closely.

SARINA

Are you sure? You look sort of pale.

She reaches her hand up and places it on William's forehead. William protests timidly.

WILLIAM

No, really...I'm...

SARINA

My goodness! William you feel kind of warm. Are you coming down with something?

WILLIAM

-ahem- No, no. It's just... y'know...a warm day is all.

SARINA

William, we're in a freezer.

WILLIAM

Well...yes...but...

Sarina observes William's layered clothing. Sarina pokes William's chest.

SARINA

What have you got under there? You look like you're about to go explore Siberia!

WILLIAM

Nothing! It's just...y'know... Ice cream shop! It's cold!

SARINA

You've got way too many layers on! It's no wonder you're overheated. You need to loosen up that collar a little.

She reaches her hands up and begins to unbutton the top buttons of William's jacket.

William quickly brings his hands to his neck and holds the buttons in place.

WILLIAM

No no! It's fine! I'm fine!

William's sudden movements cause Sarina to jump slightly. Unsure of herself, her hands lower to her sides.

William maintains his death-grip hold on the collar of his jacket.

Sarina's eyes study William trying to figure him out.

SARINA

Alright. Well, I should be going. I need to prepare for the election.

Sarina turns and begins to exit the freezer. William calls after her.

WILLIAM

Sarina?

She stops and turns around.

SARINA

Yes?

WILLIAM

I'm really glad you're safe.

SARINA

Thank you William.

WILLIAM

And...

William chooses his words carefully.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I'm glad you found someone who makes you happy.

Sarina smiles, her eyes looking down at the ground as she blushes.

SARINA

Do you think I'll see him again?

William hesitates for just a moment.

WILLIAM

I hope so.

Sarina smiles a big, youthful smile and lets out a sigh. She exits the freezer leaving William standing alone surrounded by shelves of expired ice cream.

William stands in thought for a moment.

Kirby enters the freezer.

KIRBY

Well. You guys talked for a while.

His voice hints of betrayal.

WILLIAM

Yeah.

William's eyes stay fixed on the spot where Sarina left. Kirby can feel the heaviness in the room.

KIRBY

-sigh- Aww man! You told her.

William has no reaction.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

You told her you are the Dark Offender, and now the word is out.

Kirby folds his arms in frustration and leans against one of the shelves in the freezer.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

I guess it was fun while it lasted.

William doesn't move.

WILLIAM
I didn't tell her.

Kirby reacts slowly, hoping against hope.

KIRBY
You didn't?

WILLIAM
I couldn't.

Kirby silently celebrates, his fists pumping in the air.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
The guy she described...the hero she described...she only met him once. If she found out it was just me, she'd just be disappointed. Or embarrassed. Or even angry. She might never speak to me again.

William turns his head towards his friend.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I can't do that to her Kirby. I can't tell her it's me. Not yet.

INT. ROYAL HOUSE - EVENING

William sits at the kitchen table, deep in thought. He eats a spoonful of ice cream from a carton in front of him.

His mother walks in perceives that he has something on his mind.

MRS. ROYAL
Uh oh. I know that look. Something wrong?

William awakens from his trance like state.

WILLIAM
Oh, no. I was just...thinking.

Mrs. Royal looks at the ice cream carton that William is eating out of.

MRS. ROYAL
Hmm. Double chocolate fudge. Must be serious.

She grabs a spoon of her own and sits down in the chair next to him.

MRS. ROYAL (CONT'D)
What's on your mind? Is this about your career again? I told you I don't mind if you live here at home for a while longer.

She reaches her spoon into the carton and digs out a mouthful of ice cream.

WILLIAM
No, it isn't that.

Mrs. Royal analyzes her son for a moment as she swallows her ice cream.

MRS. ROYAL
What then? School? Life? No one's picking on you are they?

William brushes off her inquiries.

WILLIAM
No, it isn't anything like that.

Mrs. Royal sits and studies her son. She works the spoon in her mouth as she contemplates William's thoughts. Suddenly her eyes grow wide with excitement.

MRS. ROYAL
Is it a girl?! It's a girl isn't it!

William's eyes stay forward.

WILLIAM
I don't want to talk about it.

Mrs. Royal's excitement is like a gossipy teenager.

MRS. ROYAL
It *is* a girl! What's her name?
What's she like? When can I meet her?

Mrs. Royal scoots her chair closer to William.

WILLIAM
It's not like that.

Mrs. Royal waits for his response.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I don't think I'm what she's
looking for.

Mrs. Royal waves her hand in the air dismissing William's words.

MRS. ROYAL
Oh ridiculous! Why wouldn't she
want you? You're handsome and
charming, and you have a great job
as assistant manager.

William winces. His mother's words aren't helping.

Mrs. Royal stands and takes one last bite of ice cream.

MRS. ROYAL (CONT'D)
Do you make her happy?

William's thoughts turn back to Sarina's excitement from earlier in the day.

WILLIAM
I think so.

MRS. ROYAL
Well that's all that matters! Stop
moping around and quit analyzing
everything! Enjoy it!

Mrs. Royal puts an arm around her son and kisses the side of his head. She exits, leaving William to ponder her words.

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKVILLE - NIGHT

Sarina is leaving the office after another long day of work. Campaign posters hang on the windows of her building.

She walks under street lights, trying to stay in the lit areas of the street.

From above a shadowy figure watches.

She turns a corner onto a darkened street.

With one swoop, a figure lands directly in front of her from above.

Startled, Sarina jumps back to catch her breath. The Dark Offender stands in front of her.

SARINA
Oh! You scared me!

DARK OFFENDER
I'm sorry. You alright?

Sarina approaches the masked crusader.

SARINA
I am now.

Sarina looks around the empty city.

SARINA (CONT'D)
Are you here to stop a crime?

DARK OFFENDER
No. I just wanted to keep an eye on
you. After the other night.

Sarina stands close to the Dark Offender.

SARINA
So, we're alone.

The Dark Offender speaks with confidence.

DARK OFFENDER
(suavely)
We are indeed.

Sarina smiles seductively and gazes up into the hero's eyes.

SARINA
And what did I do to deserve having
a real life superhero watch over
me?

William struggles to remain in character despite Sarina's
advances.

DARK OFFENDER
Well, um... I have a duty to
protect all of Oakville's citizens.

Sarina moves her face closer.

SARINA
All of its citizens?

DARK OFFENDER
-ahem- Yes.

Her lips draw closer to his. Her voice becomes softer.

SARINA
I see. So I'm not special or
anything.

William's voice becomes softer to match Sarina's.

DARK OFFENDER
Oh...you're special.

Their lips draw closer. Sarina's voice is a hushed whisper.

SARINA
Am I?

DARK OFFENDER
You're very special.

Their lips meet in a perfect first kiss.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - NEXT DAY

William and Kirby are working behind the counter at the ice cream shop. An old television showing cartoons hangs from the wall in the corner.

William serves a big, heaping scoop of ice cream to Will, the young boy who was helped by the Dark Offender on Halloween night.

WILLIAM
Here ya go big guy.

WILL
Whoa!!

The boy takes the cone of ice cream and excitedly runs back to a table where his big sister is sitting.

WILL (CONT'D)
Katie! Look how much he gave me!

Kirby looks over at William who is smiling broadly.

KIRBY
You're in a good mood.

William can't help but smile.

WILLIAM
I took your advice.

KIRBY
Which advice?

William's grin widens.

WILLIAM

Y'know. Your advice about the "next time."

Kirby stares blankly for a moment, his clueless expression registering no grasp whatsoever. Finally the words sink in.

KIRBY

Oh! Ohhhhhh!! Dude!! When were you gonna tell me??

William chuckles and replaces an ice cream scoop to its place.

WILLIAM

You know, for the first time in a long time, I feel like things are finally going my way. Like everything is falling into place. I feel like I could do anything.

Kirby nods his head with each sentence.

KIRBY

Oh I totally know what you mean. I felt like that once. Turned out it was all one manic sort of sugar rush. I ate this entire giant bag of skittles see-

The cartoons on the television cut to a commercial break teasing the local nightly news.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

-and I was all over the place. Man, I had all kinds of colors coming out of me for weeks!

William becomes distracted by the news report airing on television. The news feed shows coverage of Oakville Community college and clips of the two candidates for mayor speaking.

O' REILLY (V.O.)

Tonight on a special election edition of channel 2 news time: Voters are casting their ballots tomorrow, but the outcome remains uncertain. Last minute campaign efforts by both candidates today at Oakville Community College.

William spots Sarina in the background of the video footage.

O' REILLY (V.O.)
Tune in tonight at 10 for full
coverage.

The teaser ends and the commercials continue.

William looks over at Kirby with a smile.

WILLIAM
Hey, I think I'm gonna head out
early to class. Think you can watch
the store?

Kirby grins knowingly.

KIRBY
Ah ha! I see what you're up to
there, you crazy love-monkey!

William laughs.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Go on! Get outta here!

William removes his apron and prepares to leave.

WILLIAM
Thanks Kirby.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DUSK

The community college is full of election signs and banners supporting candidates.

Inside an auditorium on one of the upper floors of the college, news reporter Janine 'O Reilly stands in a crowd of people listening to the INCUMBENT mayor speak on stage. He is middle aged, portly, bald, and not particularly charismatic.

Sarina stands to the side of the stage taking notes.

INCUMBENT
My opponent in this election would
have you believe that our city
isn't safe, and that we aren't
using our resources appropriately
to respond to crime. Let me assure
you that is simply not the case.

O' REILLY

But Mayor Brown, how to you explain the recent wave of crime that has completely overtaken Oakville?

INCUMBENT

This crime wave that you allude to is nothing more than overblown media reports and clever spin by my opponent. It doesn't exist.

O' REILLY

And what about the reports of citizens responding with vigilantism, and of the infamous Shadow Man?

The incumbent mayor becomes agitated with this line of questioning that he has clearly heard too many times.

INCUMBENT

None of it's real! Don't you get it? It's all fake! Vigilante justice? Super villains? This isn't a comic book! There is no Shadow Man!

The lights in the auditorium suddenly go dark. A slight murmur moves around the crowd. The incumbent mayor looks around confused.

A loud, distorted VOICE echoes through the auditorium.

VOICE

Mr. Mayor I'm hurt. The citizens of this town flee in terror from my wrath and you have the audacity to suggest that I don't exist?

The people in the crowd become alarmed. Some of them hurry away to the exits. Sarina looks around for the source of the voice. Janine O' Reilly holds a microphone up in the air to record audio.

VOICE (CONT'D)

Your time is up Mr. Mayor. These people are under my control! And I most certainly do exist.

The doors to the auditorium burst open and villains dressed in black ski masks enter from all sides. The crowd begins to panic. People make mad rushes for the doors.

The main door to the auditorium kicks open. The Shadow Man makes his grand entrance.

SHADOW MAN
I am the Shadow Man!

People run in fear as the Shadow Man walks down the center aisle to the podium. He is flanked by four armed guards in ski masks.

The incumbent mayor remains at the podium speechless.

The Shadow Man reaches the mayor and grabs him by the hair pulling his head back.

SHADOW MAN (CONT'D)
Still think I don't exist?

He slams the mayor's head against the podium. Remaining people in the auditorium gasp and erupt in a panic.

The Shadow man looks to the side of the auditorium and sees Sarina eyes-wide and staring back at him. Once seen, she turns and makes a dash for an exit. The Shadow man motions to his team of thugs and points at Sarina. They stop her before she can escape. They bring her back on stage to the Shadow Man who tilts his head in interest.

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DUSK

William blissfully walks through the community college campus, his backpack slung over one shoulder, and his mind preoccupied with thoughts of Sarina and their time together. He doesn't seem to notice frightened people running past him.

Finally, after several terrified passersby he begins to realize something is out of the ordinary. He tries to ask one of them what is going on. A few evade him until he manages to stop someone.

WILLIAM
Hey! What's going on?

TERRIFIED PERSON
It's the Shadow Man! He's here!
He's here!

WILLIAM
What?! Where?

William gets no further response as the terrified person takes off running again.

He scans the campus around him. He sees a rest room ahead, and dashes towards it.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DUSK

Sarina sits against a wall as her captors discuss something quietly a short distance away.

She watches the Shadow Man and begins to analyze the situation.

SARINA
(to herself)
It doesn't make sense.

Looking across the room she can see the incumbent Mayor being guarded by several of the Shadow Man's minions.

SARINA (CONT'D)
What do they want with the mayor?

She watches the Shadow Man. She calls out.

SARINA (CONT'D)
Hey!

They ignore her pleas.

SARINA (CONT'D)
Hey! What is it you want? How long
are you going to keep us here?

The Shadow Man finally takes notice. He halts his conversation and he moves towards Sarina. He places a hand over the side of her face and caresses her cheek. Sarina shudders at his touch.

SHADOW MAN
As long as is necessary my dear.

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DUSK

The Dark Offender rushes out of the men's bathroom. He surveys the campus of Oakville Community College. Despite the chaotic events it appears quiet.

He runs across the campus, flying over obstructions. He leaps atop a stone fixture in the courtyard and looks off into the distance, trying to surmise where the people were running from.

His cape billows in the wind as the group of socially awkward community college students look up at him.

STUDENT 1

Whoa! Whoa! Awesome man!

The Dark Offender looks down and notices the group of students. He recognizes them from the other day and sighs in frustration. He doesn't have time for this.

FEMALE STUDENT

Oh my!

STUDENT 1

Zorro right? You're Zorro?

STUDENT 2

No man, Zorro doesn't wear red!
He's one of those old-timey heroes
from the 30's.

STUDENT 1

You sure man? Kinda looks like
Zorro.

STUDENT 3

Is there a Comic-con in town? How
could I not have heard about it?

FEMALE STUDENT

Mmmm! I love cosplay!

STUDENT 2

No, no, Zorro has a sword.

The students all look up at the Dark Offender trying to find a sword.

STUDENT 1

Hmm...

FEMALE STUDENT

You hiding a sword in there
somewhere?

STUDENT 3

Maybe he's from an online series or
webcomic.

FEMALE STUDENT

Maybe I should frisk you.

STUDENT 2

No, I'm sure of it. He's that hero from those old radio shows... What was his name?

The Dark Offender grows increasingly impatient. He attempts to quiet the group of students.

DARK OFFENDER

Listen! I need your help-

STUDENT 2

What was he called...The Spirit? The Gray Ghost?

FEMALE STUDENT

Does he have x-ray vision? What color underwear am I wearing?

DARK OFFENDER

Students! Please-

STUDENT 3

This costume looks professional. I bet he ordered it online. Did you order it online?

STUDENT 2

He had that catch phrase... "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?"

The Dark Offender can't take it anymore. He yells loudly at the group.

DARK OFFENDER

Listen!! I am the Dark Offender! I'm trying to find where the politicians were speaking today! People are in danger!

The awkward students stare at him a moment.

STUDENT 2

They were all in the auditorium. Third floor I think.

DARK OFFENDER

Thank you!

The Dark Offender leaps off the fixture and races towards the auditorium building. The female student watches him run away, while the remaining awkward students turn to each other.

FEMALE STUDENT

Yummy!

STUDENT 1

Yeah I don't think I know him.

STUDENT 3

I think he's from an online series
or webcomic.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE AUDITORIUM

The Dark Offender bursts through some doors on the upper floor of the building. He hides behind a wall.

Using the wall as cover he kneels and peers around the corner to scout the auditorium floor. His heart races.

Towards the front of the auditorium he sees the Shadow Man. Standing with several of his men, still dressed in black and ski masks. They appear to be setting up the reporter's news camera. Reporter Janine o' Reilly is seen on the opposite side of the room. On the other end of the room sits the incumbent mayor Brown, also being held prisoner. In the back of the room, Sarina sits beside a wall under guard.

The Dark Offender makes a quick count of all the thugs in the room.

DARK OFFENDER

Sixteen...seventeen...eighteen...

His eyes pan the room where he sees six or seven additional thugs emerge from another door across the way. He returns to his cover behind the corner. He sits with his back pressed against the wall.

He sighs heavily.

DARK OFFENDER (CONT'D)

Oh boy...

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP

Young Will and Katie are laughing as Kirby regales them with various stories embellished from his youth.

KIRBY

And that's when I invented the game
of 2-square. Only we didn't call it
2-square back then.

(MORE)

KIRBY (CONT'D)

We called it "Sock-out." I'm not really sure why.

Will and Katie laugh some more.

KATIE

You didn't invent 2-square! You're making that up!

KIRBY

I'm pretty much the greatest 2-square player to ever roam the earth. Other children cowered in my presence. I was a scourge on the playground. And playgrounds were much bigger back then, so that's really saying something.

The three of them laugh as the door chime rings.

Kirby's countenance drops as he sees a familiar group of teenage gang members walk into the store.

GANG LEADER

Check it out guys, it's the turd!

Will and Katie become nervous.

KIRBY

What are you guys doing out? I thought the police had you locked up good.

GANG LEADER

Yeah turns out I have a sort of "benefactor" with one heck of a lawyer.

The other gang members laugh.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)

And see, the way I figure it, none of that would have been necessary had you not showed up that night in your little turd outfit.

The group walk forward menacingly. Will and Katie hide behind Kirby.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)

So naturally, I thought I ought to come by and say thank you.

The gang members reveal baseball bats from under their coats.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE AUDITORIUM

The Dark Offender plans his attack. He makes his way down a hallway in the building. A thug rounds the corner. The Dark Offender quickly hides in a doorway as the guard approaches.

The guard passes and the Offender strikes with a blow to the back of the head. The ski-mask wearing thug hunches forward with the blow, then turns around to face the Dark Offender.

The Dark Offender's eyes widen, his plan not off to a great start. He reaches back and takes another swing at the thug, this time connecting with his jaw.

The guard topples backward slightly, then angrily comes rushing forward at the Dark Offender.

The Dark Offender dodges the attack. The guard trips and falls through the doorway into the room behind. The Dark Offender reacting quickly to the sudden good fortune, closes the door and closes the latch on the outside. He uses one of his zip-ties to secure the latch on the door.

The angry thug pulls and bangs on the door. The Offender reacts triumphantly.

DARK OFFENDER

Ah ha!!

Five more guards in ski masks come around the corner in the hallway.

The Dark Offender's shoulders slump.

DARK OFFENDER (CONT'D)

Aw man!

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP

Kirby tells Will and Katie to hide behind the ice cream counter as the gang of bat-wielding street punks draws closer.

The kids duck behind the glass and peer out from underneath.

GANG LEADER

You know this place is pretty nice.
It's just too bad it's falling
apart.

Kirby watches in horror as the gang leader takes a swing with his bat, smashing a table in two.

The other gang members laugh at the destruction. Kirby tries to talk them back.

KIRBY

Hey now that's enough! C'mon man,
we have kids here!

More evil laughter.

GANG LEADER

Oh you hear that boys? "We have
kids here!"

The gang snorts and laughs.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)

Yeah and you're the biggest baby of
them all aren't you?

With great force, the gang leader pushes Kirby backward. Kirby topples over the ice cream counter and lands violently on the other side beside the two children.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE AUDITORIUM

The Dark Offender tired and out of breath, makes his way through the auditorium hallway. He stops and looks over his shoulder. Laying on the floor passed out are the additional guards that he somehow managed to subdue. He pauses and looks at his work. He can't understand how he emerged victorious.

He kicks open the door to the main room. The sound of the door opening echoes.

In the center of the auditorium the Shadow Man stands in front of a news camera. To his sides are the captive mayor and Sarina. Nearby is reporter Janine O' Reilly. Several of goons in ski masks are scattered across the auditorium.

Everyone turns to look at the Dark Offender.

Sarina calls out but is restrained.

SARINA

Dark!

The Shadow Man motions his men to attack. They all start moving towards the Dark Offender. They begin to surround him, ready to attack.

The Dark Offender looks around him at the group circling.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP

Kirby and the kids sit crouched behind the ice cream counter. The gang members in the shop laugh and help themselves to the toppings. The kids look to Kirby.

KIRBY

Alright listen, I'm going to keep them busy. You kids hurry and run out the door when they aren't paying attention.

KATIE

But what about you?

Kirby looks determined.

KIRBY

This is my store, my domain. I have to defend it.

The kids nod. Kirby prepares himself. He reaches across the floor and grabs one of the fallen ice cream scoopers. He clutches it in his hand and stares at it a moment before turning back to the children.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

You ready?

The children nod.

Kirby stands to his full height behind the ice cream counter. In each hand he holds an ice cream scooper like an old western cowboy would hold pistols.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

This ice cream shop isn't big enough for the both of us.

The goons with baseball bats stop their raucous behavior and face Kirby.

They stare each other down like gunslingers in a duel at high noon.

The thugs make the first move towards Kirby. Kirby slings ice cream towards them, hitting them in the chest.

The kids run from behind the counter and out the door.

Getting hit with ice cream only makes the thugs angrier.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE AUDITORIUM

The Dark Offender is battling heroically. He lays a punch to the stomach of an attacker, then quickly delivers a hook to the face of another.

The goons keep coming, and the Dark Offender delivers blow after blow, knocking back would-be attackers, and leveling them to the ground.

Reporter Janine O' Reilly films everything on her camera, obviously thrilled to be getting the story of a lifetime.

A villain grabs him from behind. The Dark Offender flips backward over his assailant landing behind him. With a kick to the back he sends the goon flying forward into another group of would-be attackers.

The battle is far more impressive than anything the Dark Offender has ever fought before. He fights with great skill and precision against numbers that far outmatch him.

The Shadow Man looks on. Sarina is wide-eyed and in shock of how the Dark Offender is possibly defeating such odds.

The last attacker is knocked unconscious. With one continuous swoop, the Dark Offender turns and whips out his slingshot, aiming it directly at the Shadow Man.

The Shadow Man takes Sarina and wraps an arm around her neck, taking her hostage.

The Dark Offender stops, keeping his weapon aimed at the Shadow Man.

SHADOW MAN

Well done! Very impressive! So glad you could join us.

DARK OFFENDER

Let her go Shadow Man!

Janine O' Reilly continues to film everything that is happening.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP

The gang members are closing in on Kirby who stands behind the counter, trying to defend himself with scoops of ice cream. The ice cream does little to slow their advances.

The door chime sounds, and in runs young Will. His sister calls after him from the doorway.

KATIE

Will no!

The young boy runs towards the gang leader and kicks him sharply in the shin. The gang leader reacts in pain.

GANG LEADER

OWW!! Argh! You little!

He grabs a hold of the young boy's arm.

Kirby comes to his defense.

KIRBY

Let him go!

Kirby scoops a load of ice cream and sends it flying towards the ruffian. The ice cream hits him squarely in the face.

The gang leader experiences sudden and excruciating pain.

GANG LEADER

AHHH! My eyes!! My eyes!!!

Everyone in the room is taken by surprise from his reaction. The gang leader falls to the floor in agony.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)

My eyes! They're burning! I'm blind!

Kirby looks down at his hand holding the ice cream scooper. He turns his head and picks up the tub that the ice cream came from. He rotates the tub until he can read the label. With a slight chuckle, he reads the words aloud to himself.

KIRBY

Atomic Boonie-Pepper Supreme!

The gang leader continues to reel in pain on the floor. The other gang members aren't sure what is happening or what to do.

Kirby stands proudly opposite them. His fists hold two scoopers filled with red ice cream.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

Anyone else want dessert?

The gang members leave their leader on the floor and flee for the exit.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE AUDITORIUM

The Shadow Man backs away slowly as he holds Sarina hostage.

SHADOW MAN

You've been a thorn in my side for some time now. You don't seem extraordinary in any way. How is it that just one man in a mask and cape can hinder my organization when the city's own police force can't even make a dent? When their own mayor can't even acknowledge I exist?

The Dark Offender remains undeterred.

DARK OFFENDER

Sarina? You alright?

In the clutches of the Shadow Man, Sarina responds.

SARINA

I'm okay.

SHADOW MAN

What happens now? You're not a cop. You going to arrest me?

The Dark Offender keeps the Shadow Man in his sights.

DARK OFFENDER

They'll be here soon enough.

The Shadow Man reaches the wall.

SHADOW MAN

Oh I don't intend on staying around that long. But I'm sure they'll love to talk with you.

The Shadow Man pushes Sarina into the Dark Offender. The Dark Offender catches her and they look up just in time to see the Shadow Man leap from the window. Sarina and the Dark Offender dash after him. They reach the open window and see the Shadow Man on the ground below, escaping into the shadows.

INT. ICE CREAM SHOP - NIGHT

William walks into the ice cream shop bewildered by what he sees. The place is a mess. Ice cream is all over the floor. Chairs and tables are overturned and broken.

Policemen are in the store taking statements from Mr. Melvin and from Katie and her little brother.

Kirby sits leaning forward in a chair, talking to the gang leader who only moments before was terrorizing them all. The gang leader sits with his hands cuffed behind his back. His face is red under the eyes where the ice cream burned him. He stares up at the ceiling, clearly annoyed by the lecture he is getting from Kirby who appears to have taken on the role of guidance counselor.

KIRBY
(to gang leader)
...this just isn't a healthy way to
express yourself. But hey,

Kirby places a hand on the shoulder of the gang member who rolls his eyes in disgust.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
I believe in you.

Kirby turns to the police officer standing nearby.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
Alright boys, go on. We're done.

The police escort the gang leader out of the building. William watches in awe. Kirby stands beside William and watches the police leave. He folds his arms and appears uncharacteristically responsible.

WILLIAM
What happened here?

KIRBY
Oh you know. Just watching the
store. Nothing I couldn't handle.

Kirby notices William's ragged appearance.

KIRBY (CONT'D)
What happened to you?

The TV in the corner plays a new report. The familiar voice of Janine O' Reilly comes on the broadcast. William and Kirby turn to see.

O' REILLY

What began today as a community gathering suddenly turned violent when the nefarious villain known as the Shadow Man and numerous members of his organization burst onto the scene. Things turned serious when hostages were taken, including none other than Oakville incumbent Mayor Brown.

The news report cuts to shaky coverage taken earlier in the evening of the Mayor being restrained by several of the Shadow Man's goons. The news coverage then quickly pans to the Shadow Man. Behind the Shadow Man is the captive Sarina.

KIRBY

Will?

O' REILLY

But before police even arrived on the scene, the city's own self-proclaimed superhero, the Dark Offender took matters into his own hands.

The news report cuts to more shaky video footage of the Dark Offender, fighting his opponents in heroic fashion.

Kirby reacts as though he's not actually sure what he's seeing.

The children Will and Katie, are infatuated with their hero.

KIRBY

Whoa! Really?

KATIE

Wow!

WILL

Aww yeah! It's the Dark Offender!

William watches his own actions on the TV. Even to him they look unreal.

The footage shows the final exchange between the Shadow Man and the Dark Offender. William watches, this time from the perspective of a third person.

SHADOW MAN

How is it that just one man in a mask and cape can hinder my organization when the city's own police force can't even make a dent?

The news replays the moment of the Shadow Man's escape. The Shadow Man pushes Sarina away. The Dark Offender catches her in his arms. The footage snaps back to the Shadow Man. He swings a leg over the windowsill.

William watches with keen interest.

The Shadow Man waves his hand in the air and makes a salute with his index finger towards the Dark Offender. He promptly disappears from the window.

William's mind contemplates what he's seen.

Kirby trying to conceal his excitement, looks around the store to see if anyone is watching him, and then congratulates William under his breath.

KIRBY

(half whisper)

Dude! That was awesome!!

The gears in William's mind are still turning. Having come to a decision, William turns to Kirby.

WILLIAM

I gotta go!

KIRBY

What? Now? C'mon you just got here!
There's so much to talk about!

William grabs his keys and hurries out the door.

WILLIAM

I gotta go! I gotta check something!

EXT. OFFICE - NIGHT

A familiar set of office buildings in downtown Oakville stand in the dark of night.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

A hand reaches over to close a desk drawer. In the drawer, the mask of the Shadow Man rests. The drawer makes a snap as it is closed.

Dan Neely sits at his desk. He looks up and is startled to see the silhouette of a man. The Dark Offender walks in from the shadows.

DAN NEELY

Dark Offender! You scared me! I thought you were the Shadow Man!

The Dark Offender is not amused.

DARK OFFENDER

Save it Neely. I know who you are.

Dan Neely's countenance changes. He smirks.

DAN NEELY

Well.

He turns around and calmly pours himself a glass of scotch from a bottle sitting on the shelf.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

(smugly)

I guess you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

DARK OFFENDER

You won't get away with this.

DAN NEELY

Oh but I already have!

Neely turns around to face the Dark Offender.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

Haven't you watched the news? You were prominently featured by the way. I'm way up in the polls! The voters are fed up with the crime in this city. By this time tomorrow I'll be mayor. And you're partly to thank for it. You played your role beautifully.

Neely holds out his glass as if offering it to the Dark Offender. The Dark Offender doesn't budge.

DARK OFFENDER

What are you talking about?

Neely pulls back the offered drink and takes a swig of it himself.

DAN NEELY

Oh don't be so modest! You're a big superhero now remember?

Neely laughs at his own joke. The Dark Offender stands his ground.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

You succeeded where the mayor and his entire incompetent police force failed!

(laughs)

The Dark Offender's eyes follow Neely as he walks around the room.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

You stopped the Shadow Man! You single-handedly fought crime! And I supported you every step of the way.

The Dark Offender lets all of Neely's words sink in.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

Oh come on, did you really think you stopped all those crimes all on your own? Without any help?

DARK OFFENDER

The police will-

DAN NEELY

The police will what?! As my first official act in office, I will be conducting a complete overhaul of the Oakville police department. I think you'll find that they will have little interest in doing anything other than what I tell them to.

William shakes his head in denial.

DARK OFFENDER

You're crazy. You're insane! I'll tell the press. I'll tell everyone who you really are.

Neely erupts suddenly in violent anger. His glass shatters as he throws it aside. He goes toe to toe with the Dark Offender, yelling in his face.

William is taken back by this sudden display.

DAN NEELY

Don't threaten me you little twit!
Who do you think is responsible for
your success? You think it's all
just good luck you always happened
to be in the right place at the
right time? You ever stop and think
about how you managed to stop all
those guys who were bigger than
you? Who outnumbered you? Where do
you think you'd be if I hadn't told
my men to let you win? To flee
before the mighty Dark Offender?!
You're where you are because of me!
You're a hero because of me! I made
you! I can destroy you!

Neely regains some composure and turns his back to the Dark Offender.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

It would be tragic if our city's
newest superhero suddenly became a
wanted vigilante fugitive. How'd
you like to rot in prison? Your
identity revealed...disgracing your
friends, your family...

Neely turns again towards the Dark Offender and needles him with a final blow to his psyche.

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)

I imagine that might make it
difficult to protect certain young
ladies...should anything...happen
to them...

William's blood boils. The Dark Offender grabs Neely by the lapels and slams him against the wall.

DARK OFFENDER

I WILL stop you!

Dan Neely smiles.

DAN NEELY

You don't have any proof. And who
are they going to believe?
(MORE)

DAN NEELY (CONT'D)
 The honorable mayor of Oakville? Or
 some loser in a cape and mask?

The Dark Offender stares him down for a moment. He releases Neely from his clutches, turns, and walks towards the office door.

He stops prior to exiting. He points at his new nemesis.

DARK OFFENDER
 This isn't over.

DAN NEELY
 No. I suppose it's just begun.

The Dark Offender exits.

INT. /EXT. ICE CREAM SHOP - DAY

Children run down an Oakville sidewalk. A newspaper vending machine holds a newspaper with a headline declaring Dan Neely the new mayor by a landslide victory.

A large crowd is gathered in and around the ice cream shop. Signs on the sidewalk read: Dark Offender at Twenty-nine Flavors Today!

The awkward community college students wait in line wearing homemade Dark Offender t-shirts.

STUDENT 1
 I can't wait to see him! Do you
 think he has super powers?

FEMALE STUDENT
 Mmm...I bet he does!

STUDENT 3
 I'm gonna ask him about his origin
 story!

The Dark Offender stands outside entertaining large groups of children and fans. Young Will and Katie stand in his midst hanging on his every word.

DARK OFFENDER
 The trick is not to let the bad
 guys see you scared. They'll try to
 make you doubt yourself. They'll
 say you aren't any good. They want
 you to believe that they have you
 beat.

(MORE)

DARK OFFENDER (CONT'D)

But the truth is, you don't have to be scared. Because the bad guys are scared of you.

Kirby stands off to the side watching with Sarina who is enjoying seeing the Dark Offender answer questions.

KIRBY

Hey, this was a good idea.

SARINA

Thank you Kirby. It just seemed like a good fit. A good promotion for both the store, and the hero.

Mr. Melvin comes running out from the ice cream shop, beside himself with joy.

MR. MELVIN

Now THIS is good publicity! Look at all the customers this guy is bringing! I gotta say, you were right! This is the best promotion I've ever agreed to!

Mr. Melvin laughs and hurries back into the shop.

Kirby looks over at the Dark Offender, and then back at Sarina who is clearly admiring the caped crusader.

Kirby clears his throat.

KIRBY

It's too bad Will isn't here to see this.

Sarina smiles as her eyes stay locked on the Dark Offender.

SARINA

Yeah. It is.

The Dark Offender fields a question from young Will.

WILL

What about the Shadow Man? Did you catch him?

The Dark Offender smiles at his little friend.

DARK OFFENDER

Not yet. But I will.
(more determined)
I will.

More and more people crowd outside the ice cream shop.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

There's a moment in every hero's story, when he finally discovers who he is. And all the darkness and all the fear- it doesn't matter anymore. But in all those stories, all the heroes have the same thing in common. They only truly become the hero, after realizing they were heroes all along.

Overhead view of Oakville.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

I don't have to be scared. I don't fear the darkness. I am a hero. The darkness should be scared of me. I am the Dark Offender!

CUT TO BLACK

THE END