

WHO ARE YOU WITH, HUH?
By Nathaniel Garrod

A bus stop with a bench. The bench has newspaper scattered around. SKYLAR, A well dressed businessman with an attaché case walks in from stage left. He wrinkles his nose at the bench and after carefully looking at the bench to select the safest place to sit, he sits down in the middle of the bench. He whistles for a minute. He spots another fellow walk in. This young male is the definition of punk rock. His jeans are super-tight, he has chains hanging off his pants from here to Japan. His band t-shirt is ripped at the arms, and headphones are around his neck, blaring some loud and obscene band or another. This is RICHARD. He casually walks to the bench and sits down, slouching a bit.

RICHARD
Dude.

SKYLAR
Dude?

RICHARD
DUDE!

SKYLAR
[scoots over a bit, wrinkling his nose.]
Um....dude? you smell.

RICHARD
[Sniffs armpits] Nah. It's not that bad.

There is an awkward pause.

RICHARD
So....do you know when he's going to strike again?

SKYLAR
Um...what?

RICHARD
Outburst. Do you know when he's going to strike again?

SKYLAR.
What the bleep are you talking about?

RICHARD

Outburst... You KNOW he's coming to town again. What're we going to do?

SKYLAR

WE are going to do NOTHING. YOU are going to stop talking about this. I quit the [*does air quotes*] superhero [*end air quotes*] business last year.

RICHARD

But...but... Outburst!

SKYLAR

Listen kid: I QUIT the business. I QUIT for a reason. I have a FAMILY. A wife. Children. I cannot afford to be out there on the front lines every bleeping day saving this town – population of one hundred thousand people, by the way – from insane clown posse's, when I have little Jaime and William at home, waiting for my wife to bring home the groceries that MY paychecks buy. What do you do? You slack off, walking around like a bum listening to your horrid music, then at night you do what? Stop super-criminals from robbing the corner store? Grow up!

RICHARD

Dude! The Clash is awesome.

SKYLAR

[*outraged*] The Clash? Is that the best you freaking have?

JONATHAN

[*Sheepishly*] Well...I do have some Misfits.

SKYLAR

[*Shakes head in irritation*] What happened to when kids listened to good music? You know, like Elvis, Frank Sinatra, N Sync?

RICHARD

Dude! N Sync slaps!

SKYLAR

[stands up, looks to heaven with arms outstretched and mutters quietly] Why God? Why? *[Turns back to RICHARD]* You're missing the bleeping point!

Thunder rumbles in the distance.

RICHARD

[Stands up, and with irony] Tut tut, looks like rain.

SKYLAR

[Sarcastically] Thank you, Christopher Robin.

RICHARD

No problem-o!

SKYLAR

Oh, there's my bus. I have GOT to get home to my family. I hope it goes well with your whole superhero thing *[Exits stage right]*.

RICHARD

[Yells after SKYLAR] Thanks for the help! *[Storms offstage]*

The lights dim, and our third character slinks onto the stage, and tip-toes behind the bench. He's wearing all black, with a ski mask and a cheap cape that only goes just a bit below his waist. He emerges from his hiding spot behind the bench, slowly with his monologue. First we see his eyes, then his nose, and finally his mouth, as they very deliberately utter his words.

OUTBURST

Night falls,
Traffic crawls,
People rush home,
And I am slick as a comb.
I will raise hell
Angry as a noon-time bell
They won't know for hours
Then they will scream and yell
And there will be no solution within their
powers.

[Lights out]

Lights rise on stage right , and RICHARD mosey's on stage from stage right. He is clothed differently than before – his garments are more superhero-on-a-budget-esque. He is half-singing/half-humming a superhero theme on a few syllable's (da, dee, doo, dum, dun).

RICHARD

[Towards audience] Welcome to the world of a superhero! It is one o'clock in the morning, and I have witnessed three corner store robberies. [Looks both ways] I called the police in on all of them, then ran. No way I was gonna be there when the popo show. I only listen to it on the radio.

RICHARD unhooks something from his belt that looks like a police radio and turns it on. We hear static, then voices (these can be recorded).

OFFICE ONE (V.O.)

Dispatch! This is Office One. The life-sized chess pieces are missing from The George Bush Memorial Park. Repeat: The life-sized chess pieces are missing from George Bush Memorial Park.

DISPATCH OFFICER (V.O.)

Copy that. What the hell do you want us to do about it?

OFFICER ONE (V.O.)

Nothing. I'm hoping a cape hears this, and does something about it.

RICHARD gets an overly excited look on his face, like a three-year old who just learned how to flush the toilet.

DISPATCH OFFICE(V.O.)

Don't waste our time, Officer.

The radio turns to static, then RICHARD turns it off.

RICHARD

[Towards Audience] This is excellent! Imagine the possibilities! I catch the thief,

stop him, and get the chess pieces back to The George Bush Memorial Park, and I can be home by breakfast! Oh. Wait. I don't have a home. Shoot. Oh well. Still! I could be the hero!

Lights dim on the right half of the stage, and raise on the left half of the stage. We see Outburst standing there like a five year old with his hand in the cookie jar. His hands are cupped together, and he sees that he has normal sized chess pieces.

OUTBURST

By the touch of my hands,
I can earn many grands.

The rest of the stage lights up. OUTBURST moves to a more central area.

Magic shrinking powers,
They'll search town for hours!

RICHARD runs onstage somewhat out of breath.

RICHARD

[*Shocked*] Outburst? It's you?

OUTBURST

Indeed.
You arrived with great speed!

RICHARD

So, you're still talking in verse, I see.

OUTBURST

Actually, you hear.
Rhyming
Miming,
Still two timing!
But the hour draws near!

RICHARD

The hour? What hour?

OUTBURST

THE hour,
When I will get more power!

RICHARD

[*laughs*] More power? Do you even HAVE power now?

OUTBURST holds up his hands, with the chess pieces in them.

RICHARD

Are those...? No!

OUTBURST

The life sized chess pieces! [*Sniffs*]
I want some Reese's! [*Turns to run off-stage*]

SKYLAR is standing there, wearing all navy-colored clothes, with a bandana with eye holes and a very long cape that drags on the ground. In his hands, he holds a package of Reese's Piece's.

OUTBURST

Why are here?
Do you think you strike fear?
Why knock-off candy?
That is definitely not dandy!

SKYLAR

[*With anger, and slightly mocking*] Oh for bleeps sake!
You are SO fake!
If I give you a dime,
Will you stop your rhyme?

OUTBURST

You talked in verse!
See, it is not much worse
Than speaking in prose
Just it is better
Because it flows
And has no fetter.
Now can you let me by?
I need to fly
My destination
is a prime location
for a secret station!

SKYLAR

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Whatever. Get out of here. [*Steps to the side*]

OUTBURST dashes off stage left.

RICHARD

What! Why would you let that happen! We had him! We could call the police, turn him in, and be the heroes of the day!

SKYLAR

You just don't get it, do ya kid? It's not about being a hero and stopping crime. This isn't the only way to save the world. You can be something great without being dashing, daring, chivalrous, and caped.

RICHARD

Hypocrite.

SKYLAR

[Tears cape off, and pulls the bandana around his neck] These are just motifs. They make the people feel better. But you can be a hero without these things. You can help an old lady carry groceries across the street. You can rescue the kitten in the tree for the cute girl down the street. You can get a college education, and be a hero for yourself. You can be someone great without anyone ever knowing.

RICHARD

Then what's the point, if no one knows?

SKYLAR

You know. And in the end, that's all that really matters.

RICHARD

Who're you with, huh? It's us versus him, except that it seems like you've gone all weak in your old age. So maybe you're on his side. Because you let the villain go!

SKYLAR

[Buries face in hands] I give up. *[Exits stage left, disheartened]*

RICHARD

Now I've got to get down to business! I can still catch this villain! Hope is not lost quite yet!

As the lights dim, RICHARD runs offstage (left), his cape flying behind him, his left arm extended, and his head slightly bent, half sing/humming theme song as during entrance.

Lights back up.

OUTBURST runs onstage from stage right, and stops a few feet short of stage left as though there were a brick wall there.

OUTBURST

They've got me trapped
But not yet have I snapped
[holds up a small bag that has the chess pieces in it] Here I have the pieces,
Within these folded creases

RICHARD runs onstage from stage right, but has to stop to catch his breath. After a moment, he looks up to see OUTBURST staring at him awkwardly.

RICHARD

Just give it up Outburst. You've got chess pieces. Do you really think you're some great and amazing villain? You are NOT a super-villain.

SKYLAR walks on from stage right nonchalantly. He has no cape, but the bandana is back around his eyes.

SKYLAR

No. You're not.

RICHARD has an expression on your face that reads "where did you come from?"

OUTBURST

[Shocked look on face, slightly offended tone in voice] Who are you with?
[gestures to RICHARD] John Smith?

RICHARD

Hey! I'm a someone! I've done something!
I've stopped three robberies tonight!

OUTBURST

By calling police with your phone
Like any average drone!

SKYLAR

He's got a point...

RICHARD

[*Agitated*] Who are you WITH, huh?

A moment of silence while everyone ponders this question. Then RICHARD walks over to OUTBURST and slugs OUTBURST in the face. OUTBURST falls to the ground. RICHARD grabs the bag with the chess pieces.

RICHARD

I've got the chess pieces. We can call the
police, and call this one case closed.

SKYLAR

Um...how do you propose to get the pieces
back to life size?

RICHARD looks at the bag of chess pieces.

RICHARD

Oh. Shit.

SKYLAR

So you're not the hero you thought you
were, eh?

RICHARD

I guess not. I'll just have to resort rescuing
kittens, helping old ladies cross the street,
and getting a job, like you. I'll feel more
American that way, anyways.

SKYLAR

Good choice, son. Let's go home.

Lights down.

THE END.