

Where:

A Waiting Room next to the auditorium where auditions are being held for *Team: Superhero*, America's favorite contest based, reality tv, superhero show.

When:

Tomorrow - just a slightly different tomorrow than the one you or I will experience.

Who:

**Toneboy** can create destructive soundwaves matched to specific objects. He is 17 and eager, hyper. One might even say annoying - his costume should be brightly colored and possibly a bit baggy, like his mother had a hand in making it.

**The Tyromancer** wears black, a costume on the gothic side. In his 30s, he is on the cusp of looking foolish and knows it. He is on the chubby side and his costume is a bit too tight. However, there is a determination to him that burns brightly and undeniable. He can tell the future from cheese.

**BrightStar** carries herself with poise and confidence. Her costume is tasteful, alluring and features an exploding star. She wears sunglasses to keep the power of the sun from emerging from her eyes. She has a weak spot for men who need protection from themselves, but grows bored with such men easily. She is here against her better judgment and primarily because her mother insisted.

**Steel** is a tall, broad heavily muscled man with short-cropped gray hair and a steely look in his eyes. His quick temper, sense of righteousness and inability to be politic has cost him every superhero job he has ever held. His costume is highly form fitting, a gun-metal gray with swatches of primary colors.

*The Tyromancer, BrightStar & Steel sit, uncomfortably, in harsh plastic chairs. ToneBoy paces around the room, full of 17 year old hyper energy and certainty. The Tyromancer is reading an old, leather covered tome that looks both ancient and magically powerful. There is a Jansport backpack at his feet. BrightStar is idly flipping through a physics journal. STEEL stares, steely, at nothing while working one of those coil spring handgrips to strengthen your grip. Muzak plays. From offstage, come occasional explosions, bangs, winds, thunder, clatter of metal, bullets bouncing, and small bursts of applause. A commanding and deep voice booms through the Muzak and announces:*

VOICE (V.O.)

Audition Team Green Prime, report to the auditorium. Green prime to the auditorium for your audition.

*The Muzak resumes. All four superheroes take a look at a slip of paper, even though they know they are Yellow Gamma, they look anyway on the off chance that the tickets have changed designation.*

TONEBOY

Gotta be soon, right, soon? I mean they been through so many teams I know there were lots of us trying out today I mean of course there are lots of us I mean who, what kind of superhero would you be if you didn't come and audition for this, right?

STEEL

Employed.

BRIGHTSTAR

Good one.

STEEL

Thanks.

TONEBOY

Oh but come on guys . . .

*BrightStar turns her head toward ToneBoy and clears her throat.*

TONEBOY (Continued)

I mean, guys and girls. I mean . . . oh just come on this is Team Superhero the number one rated reality contest tv show for superheroes. We win this and we get our own SuperBase, first crack at all natural emergencies in the northern hemisphere and we are backup to the JLA, the new one, what was it, the Supeheroes Association of Mutantdom, SAM, and the freakin' X-Men in case of planet-wide alien invasion. Plus the deals you can get we'll be set for life. Did you see how the Digger Twins got that contract for Revlon and Mystery Man is doing the commercials for Jameson's and

*Throughout this, The Tyromancer grows bored, closes his book heavily - dust billows from it. Putting it into his backpack, he retrieves a smaller bag of black velvet. He holds this close to his chest, closes his eyes in concentration.*

TONEBOY (Continued)

And anyway can you believe that Psion and Focus are both judging this series. I mean, Psion and Focus are the coolest I can't believe I'll get to meet them. Huh. Hey, should we be practicing or something I mean it's going to be a tough competition and with Psion especially he's so into teamwork. I was reading the article about him in GQ and he said that teamwork is the core of the apple - without it there is no fruit. Deep.

STEEL

You talk a lot.

BRIGHTSTAR

That was less clever and more, well. Obvious.

*The Tyromancer has pulled out a huge chunk of gorgonzola cheese, heavily veined with mold and smelly. He examines it intently. Then breaks into laughter. The other three all stare at him.*

THE TYROMANCER

Sorry. Sorry, was just curious to know how he would deal with an actual alien invasion.

*He laughs more.*

BRIGHTSTAR

The future?

THE TYROMANCER

Yeah.

STEEL

Steel hungry.

BRIGHTSTAR

Cheese?

THE TYROMANCER

Well. Yes.

TONEBOY

God that smells. Smells like my Aunt Rosie's socks after she's been walking up and down the Boardwalk all day on a hot summer . . . hey just what to you mean how he would deal with an actual alien invasion. Who's "he?" Me?

THE TYROMANCER

Yes. Never mind. It's not something you really want to know about.

BRIGHTSTAR

Cheese?

*A loud explosion from off-stage and then.*

VOICE (V.O.)

Audition Team Green Beta, report to the auditorium. Green beta to the auditorium.

*All four look at their slips.*

BRIGHTSTAR

Cheese?

THE TYROMANCER

Cheese. Yes. It's called tyromancy and I'm The Tyromancer so it stands to reason.

BRIGHTSTAR

Cheese?

THE TYROMANCER

Look, it's got a long history, ok. Right back to Philandius of Crete and through the Middle Ages and they say that John Dee used it and respected Alchemists everywhere understand the power of-

BRIGHTSTAR

Cheese.

THE TYROMANCER

Yes. Yes, ok. Yes. The power of cheese. Sounds silly doesn't but . . .

*He closes his eyes in concentration, his lips whisper a silent invocation and he breaks open the cheese then opens his eyes and stares at the mold.*

THE TYROMANCER (Continued)

Ahh, you are here . . . because of your . . . mother. Your mother . . . Ravenwing!

BRIGHTSTAR

So what, easy enough to figure-

TONEBOY

Ohmigod your mom is Ravenwing she's my absolutely favorite ever and she's your mom ohmigod can you get me an autographed picture of her I would she's so smart and beautiful and like an angel when she flies I can't believe--

THE TYROMANCER

And I see . . . here . . .

*He traces a vein of mold with his finger.*

THE TYROMANCER (Continued)

She told you, when you were six, a birthday party . . . she'd been drinking a little too much hadn't she and she announced in front of all your friends and their parents that--

BRIGHTSTAR

Enough. Ok. Just. Drop it.

STEEL

That ain't the future. Thought you told the future.

TONEBOY

I mean, Ravenwing was just about, no, *is* just about the perfectest among us and I can't believe it took those idiots at the JLA all this time to put her in charge but now that she is-

BRIGHTSTAR

She's just about insufferable *is* what she is and that's before the vodka. Bitch *is* what she is after.

THE TYROMANCER

Can do past too. As well as look into the hearts of your enemies and sense their plans.

STEEL

That's good. Plus snacks. Steel like cheesy snacks.

TONEBOY

Vodka? Bitch. No. Don't believe it. You're just jealous I bet.

*BrightStar begins to slide her glasses down her face.*

BRIGHTSTAR

Careful when talking about things you don't understand, boy.

STEEL

Oh, Steel get it. BrightStar. The glasses. You going to fry him? Like what's his name from Xmen . . . Cyclops.

BRIGHTSTAR

No. Not like Cyclops. An entirely different mechanism. Entirely different physics.

STEEL

But still, frying things right?

BRIGHTSTAR

It's not frying, the physics of it are . . .

*She trails off as the three men look at her. Silence.*

BRIGHTSTAR (Continued)

Yeah.

STEEL

Better wait till after the audition though, audition teams have to be four.

*BrightStar raises her glasses.*

BRIGHTSTAR

Wasn't, wouldn't. Not really.

*Pause. From off stage the sound of crashing and ray-guns. The Tyromancer puts his cheese away.*

THE TYROMANCER

Hey, sorry about that. Just got carried away. Tends to happen when people make fun of . . . you know.

BRIGHTSTAR

The power of cheese.

THE TYROMANCER

Yeah.

*They laugh. He extends his hand.*

THE TYROMANCER (Continued)

Actually, I'm Ted.

BRIGHTSTAR

Brenda.

*The shake hands.*

STEEL

Alliteration. They call it. Remember Steel's old boss, The Night Lantern, used to say.

THE TYROMANCER

Huh?

STEEL

Names. Ted, Tyromancer. Brenda, BrightStar. Kid, what's your name.

TONEBOY

ToneBoy.

STEEL

Nahh, kid. Your given name.

TONEBOY

Oh. I don't like to tell people that.

STEEL

Does it begin with a T.

TONEBOY

Oh, hey yeah. It does.

STEEL

See. Alliteration.

BRIGHTSTAR

So, what's yours?

STEEL

Adam.

THE TYROMANCER

And your hero name is Steel.

STEEL

Yep.

*Long pause.*

TONEBOY

But that doesn't-

STEEL

Oh. Right. Steel think that's why Night Lantern never liked Steel.

VOICE (V.O.)

Audition Team Green Gamma, report to the auditorium. Green gamma to the auditorium.

*They all look at their tickets.  
BrightStar stands and stretches.  
The other three try very hard not  
to watch her.*

BRIGHTSTAR

God I just want to get this over and done with. So, we know I'm here because of unresolved issues with my superhero mother and fanboy over there wants to meet and impress his heroes and get a sweet advertising contract-

TONEBOY

And do good and fight injustice.

BRIGHTSTAR

Sure kid, that too. So why are you here Ted? Steel?

THE TYROMANCER

Oh, well . . . fame, fortune, adoring fans. The usual I guess.

BRIGHTSTAR

Uh-huh. And I don't believe you.

STEEL

Got fired you know. For hitting Night Lantern at the end of the mission.

TONEBOY

Night Lantern, I've heard of him. What outfit did you work for?

STEEL

The Pittsburgh franchise of Superheroes Now!

BRIGHTSTAR

I remember reading something about a rogue black hole and . . . oh. You're *that* Steel.

STEEL

Yeah. Night Lantern, he told everyone it was Steel's fault that Falcon Girl died that day. Steel wasn't able to match Night Lantern's rhetoric so Steel hit him. Steel . . . Steel loved Falcon Girl and felt her last breath on Steel's cheek as her broken body bled out all over Steel. She didn't love Steel but was good to him, nice to him and it was all Night Lantern's fault.



*Steel becomes so overcome with emotion--not quite anger and not quite regret--that he punches a fist through the wall.*

*After a moment Steel sits back down.*

STEEL (Continued)

Her last words were "oh Frenchy it's time to do the folding. Cherry tree, cherry tree." Steel never know what she meant.

*Silence underscored by cheery Muzak.*

THE TYROMANCER

I could . . .

*He begins to break out the cheese.*

THE TYROMANCER (Continued)

Try to find out. What she meant. If . . . you. Want.

*Pause.*

STEEL

Steel not sure. Maybe mystery left is better.

THE TYROMANCER

Yeah. Maybe.

*BrightStar puts a hand on Steel's shoulder. Toneboy is subdued.*

TONEBOY

I remember when my Gran'py passed away. And that was nothing like . . . hey.

*Toneboy regains a bit of his ebullience.*

TONEBOY (Continued)

If we win this we can show Night Lantern a thing or two, right? Maybe tell the world what really happened and clear your name.

*From offstage, the scream of the superhero Killer Bat echoes loud and disturbing in the air. Then an explosion and muffled cries of pain.*

BRIGHTSTAR

The boy has a point.

STEEL

Steel just want a job, chance to do things for good. That would be enough.

BRIGHTSTAR

Yeah.

VOICE (V.O.)

Er . . . Temporal Clean Up Squad please report to the auditorium five minutes ago. Temporal Clean Up Squad to the auditorium five minutes ago please.

*Time skips its tracks slightly.  
BrightStar returns to sit next to  
The Tyromancer.*

VOICE (Continued)

Audition Team Yellow Alpha, report to the auditorium. Yellow Alpha to the auditorium.

*They all look at their tickets.*

TONEBOY

Finally in the yellows, yeah. Cool.

*He begins doing push-ups and  
jumping jacks, "shaking it out" and  
limbering up.*

TONEBOY (Continued)

Wonder what they'll throw at us. I know last year the audition teams went up against a lot of killer robots and dark creatures of Cthullu do you think it'll be the same or different this year I'm pretty sure I can take out the robots pretty easy cause they stay on the same frequencies but the Cthullu creatures have that dimensional instability thing going and it makes it hard to look onto a tone that'll do serious damage.

THE TYROMANCER

It's a girl actually. A woman. Another superhero. She loves this show and I . . . I figured if I could get on . . .

BRIGHTSTAR

Ahh.

TONEBOY

I figure maybe I could define some sonic shapes to keep 'em from fully transfiguring and then maybe Steel could hit 'em or BrightStar could flash 'em.

BRIGHTSTAR

Not that it matters any, but I don't think it's a silly reason to do this. Better than mine.

THE TYROMANCER  
She's a Sycomancer.

BRIGHTSTAR  
A what?

THE TYROMANCER  
Sycomancer. S. Y. C. O - mancer.

*The Tyromancer takes out his  
cheese.*

STEEL  
What's that?

THE TYROMANCER  
Figs.

BRIGHTSTAR  
Figs?

THE TYROMANCER  
Figs.

STEEL  
Steel like figs. What does she do with figs?

TONEBOY  
What *could* you do with figs. I mean, in a superhero way?

*Long pause.*

THE TYROMANCER  
Like what I do with . . . just, but . . . with figs.

*Brightstar laughs.*

BRIGHTSTAR  
Well, between the two of you you can have a nice little picnic and save the world at the same time.

STEEL  
Alliteration?

THE TYROMANCER  
Yeah. Susie. Susie the Sycomancer.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Audition Team Yellow Beta, report to the auditorium. Yellow Beta to the auditorium.

*They all look at their slips. Then  
The Tyromancer breaks off a small  
bit of cheese and gives one to each  
of the other superheroes.*

TONEBOY

It smells!

THE TYROMANCER

Eat it now and I'll be able to send my thoughts to you during the battle as I foretell their strategy.

TONEBOY

Can't you use a regular cheese, something good like American or Velveeta.

THE TYROMANCER

No. Has to have mold, although I can use the holes in Swiss as a last resort but they don't work as well.

*Pause*

THE TYROMANCER (Continued)

And Velveeta.

*Shudder.*

THE TYROMANCER (Continued)

Processed cheese loaf . . . *is not cheese.*

TONEBOY

Ok ok, no need to get all angry.

*He pops the cheese into his mouth, grimaces and swallows. Then . . .*

TONEBOY (Continued)

Hey, that doesn't taste half bad. Better'n it smells anyway.

BRIGHTSTAR

That's a funny superpower you got there Tyro. The power of cheese.

THE TYROMANCER

Yeah. But it'll save your butt out there in the audition match, bright eyes.

*Something passes between the four of them and they suddenly seem to be a team. From offstage the sound of wind, rain and energy weapons. A deep and alien cry of pain.*

TONEBOY

Sounds like Cthullu creature for sure.

VOICE (O.S.)

Audition Team Yellow Gamma, report to the auditorium. Yellow Gamma to the auditorium.

*Steel stands.*

STEEL  
When we win, can we call ourselves Team Falcon?

*Pause.*

BRIGHTSTAR  
Sure Steel.

THE TYROMANCER  
That's a good name.

TONEBOY  
Hey, yeah. I like that.

BRIGHTSTAR  
Ready?

STEEL  
Ready.

TONEBOY  
Check.

THE TYROMANCER  
Yeah.

TONEBOY  
Lets do it!!

*The Team drop their slips and move offstage with power and anticipation. As the lights begin to fade, The Tyromancer scurries into the room and retrieves his forgotten backpack. Puts it on over his costume and runs back out.*

*Lights out. The sound of a furious battle underscored by Muzak.*