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Opening extract from
Kenny Wright Superhero

Written by
James Patterson

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I AM STAINLEZZ STEEL



ROBBERY IN PROGRESS





ASSISTANCE
NEEDED!!!

WHILE YOU WERE DREAMING ABOUT
THE NEW XBOX YOU JUST MIGHT
GET FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY...

...I WAS RESCUING A
FAMILY FROM THE
FREEZING COLD IN
ANACOSTIA PARK.

ARE YOU THE
STAINLESS
STEEL?

I AIN'T THE
EASTER
BUNNY, KID.

AND BEFORE YOUR ALARM
CLOCK WAS EVEN THINKING
ABOUT GOING OFF...

...I WAS OVER ON U
STREET, SAVING
ONE OF A CAT'S
NINE LIVES.

NO PROB.

MEOW.

I HAVE A COMIC BOOK
NAMED AFTER ME AND A
TRACK ON KANNE'S LATEST
MIXTAPE IS DEDICATED TO
ME, AND ONE MOVIE...

FEEL STEEL

COMING SOON!

CREATED BY KENNY WRIGHT

SO FAR...

I'VE TAKEN DOWN
GENERAL ZOD
TWICE, DEFEATED
LOKI AT
HAND-TO-HAND
COMBAT, AND
BEATEN DARTH
VADER AT CHESS.

CHECKMATE,
VADER!

THAT'S IT. I'M
MOVING TO A
GALAXY FAR, FAR
AWAY. I'M OUT!



MY NAME
IS

STAINLESS STEEL!!!



CUT
THAT
LIGHT
OUT!

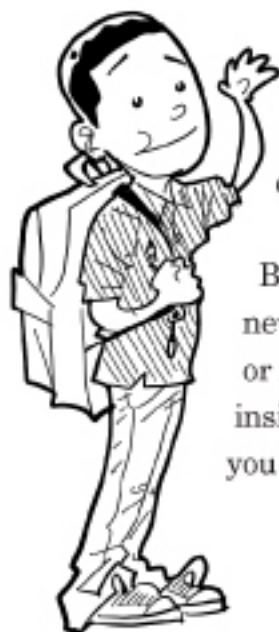
THE REAL ME

Today I, Stainlezz Steel, am officially bugged out. Today's my first day at Union Middle School, and the truth is, I'm a little scared.

Don't laugh. My school is way worse than your school. Believe that.

In real life, I am mild-mannered, easy-to-get-along-with Kenny Wright. And as you may have figured out by now, Stainlezz Steel only exists in my crazy mixed-up imagination.

Superheroes aren't real. I know that. But you show me a kid who says he never wished he could fly like Superman, or run like the Flash, or mess around inside Iron Man's supersuit...and I'll show you a kid who's lying through his grill.



That's why I made up Stainlezz Steel. Inside my head, I mean. Because I have about as much chance of being a superhero as a turtle has of winning a hundred-yard dash. And the only battles I ever win are on the chessboard.

Not like Steel.

It doesn't help that my stubborn-as-a-donkey Grandma Hope insists on walking me to school, either. (I call her G-ma for short. She calls me Kenneth, for long, but you can just call me Kenny.)

I explained to G-ma that I'm in sixth grade now. It's straight-up embarrassing to show up with your granny on the first day. Everyone thinks I'm kind of a geek to begin with. Well... maybe not a *geek-geek*, but I'm definitely not "that dude." You know that dude; the ladies love him, and the fellas want to be him. But try explaining that to G-ma. She may not be hard of hearing, but she can definitely be hard of listening, if you know what I mean. And she has an opinion about EVERYTHING.

And don't get me wrong. I've got mad respect for G-ma. She takes good care of me, and I try to do the same for her. She also makes the best peach upside-down cake you ever tasted.



It's just that I'm crazy nervous about starting middle school. Like, throw-up-on-my-shoes nervous. Kids like me can get stomped down pretty quick at a place like Union Middle.

But G-ma doesn't notice. On the real, for a little old lady, she has a lot of heart. She's fearless. Sometimes I think she may be a champion MMA prizefighter at night. Hey, it's possible. She just keeps walking on down Martin Luther King Avenue, talking to me about grades and high expectations, while I try to hold on to my breakfast and figure out how I'm going to make it through the first day.

Times like these, I could use a little less Kenny and a lot more Steel.