

## **Static**

\*Static Shock is an American animated television series based on the Milestone Media/DC Comics superhero Static. It premiered on September 23, 2000. The show revolves around Virgil Hawkins, an American boy of African descent, who uses the secret identity of Static after exposure to a mutagen gas during a gang fight gave him electromagnetic powers.

## **Ebon**

I stared into towering darkness  
becoming familiar with the blurred  
outlines of pine and oak spires.  
Stone heels pressing sap  
from flooded Maple leaves.  
Pitchfork branches scratching  
“Wind” into dusty vinyl.

I stumbled over roots of trees;  
of mushrooms and molds; of vultures,  
crows, jackals and cannibals.  
Time and again catching myself  
on swollen acrobat wrists. Rag doll  
fingers contorting with each fall.

I found myself among felled trees  
snapped like frozen switches.  
An African figurine dusted with salt and smoke.  
Melancholy airbrushed over a sadist’s smirk.  
Vagabond fingernails scraping the steel handle  
of a scalpel: sharp, unstained, and upright.

### **Professor Menace (aka Alzheimer's Gift)**

My stethoscope is a knotted noose slung over hickory shoulders. My pen light is a blazing torch. I am a Halloween phantom shrouded by a lab coat, floating through sterile hospital wards. The aroma of bleach wafting from scented plug-ins perfuming empty corridors. Ebony mares trample tiny death behind me, nurse aids and custodians mounted on their naked backs. We strike terror in rural hallways, bashing down doors, brandishing broom stick rifles and insulin daggers. Lantern wicks hush infant sparks. Muffled whispers tip toe from mounds of clothes in a narrow closet. "Here nigger, nigger" calls are occasionally interrupted by cackling laughter echoing from itchy lung caverns, shattering glass and erratic pistol firing. When I slid her door open, skin whiter than infirmary sheets greeted me. 92 years of wisdom leaked through a fragile, porous clothe. Her face strained, as if she was trying to grasp any morsel of memory that had not yet given up on her. "What are you, the KKK?" she probed, grabbing a handful of contained childhood racism, all the awkwardness of her teenage years, a pinch of the sarcasm that ended her first marriage, and the breath from her daughter, both pre-doctor, blue bottom ass slap and standing behind her now, staring at floor patterns. Am I?

## Virgil

12 year old bones are damp  
gunpowder marrow buried in Song Dynasty  
ceramic. They need solar flares,

marshmallow kisses, and  
harpist fingers twirling down goose bump hide skin  
to keep from fracturing.

By the time lip balm fades  
from saline cheeks, bones galvanize.  
Skulls are forged in 8th grade Algebra.

Luminescent orange occiputs  
are struck onto laminate wood anvils,  
dipped in the sweat pooling

under origami arms, then branded  
with the blacksmith's stamp. Cast iron skulls  
are too heavy to lift

from mouth warping curses  
carved onto hand-me-down desks. Not seasoned  
enough to withstand fried chicken

and watermelon jokes  
in gerrymandered AP classrooms  
or segregated football games

in church parking lots  
against older, bigger, and whiter  
high school kids.

## **Hotstreak**

Bullet slinging pros  
wedge dynamite barrels into bursting  
rib scaffolding.

They hollow human caverns  
sculpting mongoose fangs from mesenteric stalactites.  
Barely high enough

for a diamondback to slither into,  
coil around pulmonary arteries and bronchi,  
and rattle into a collapsing throat.

Pros don't stalk their prey  
peering through tinted windows of idle Oldsmobiles anymore.  
They turn 3<sup>rd</sup> period lunch

into the "Call of Duty" Airport Massacre.  
Sampled sounds from a Chick-fil-A day mixtape:  
screaming children on a detached

county fair ride,  
jalopies harmonizing their engine misfiring  
to the conductor's trigger

finger tap, clattering shell casings  
like tossing nickels onto strip club stages,  
tombstone murmurs,

thoughts and prayers.

## **Mask and cape**

It was an arduous journey, traveling this  
patchwork bridge. Piles of scaffolding  
scattered across uneven pavement on an  
unpainted hazardous highway. “Do Not Enter”

signs tossed in like a 3 year old’s dumped out  
toy box. Two ton soda cans were tethered  
to the back of idle concrete mixers, tabs un-popped,  
solitary bubbles dissipating in congealed syrup.

Pigeons eyeballed passersby, their drooping jowls  
jamming bandaged wings, hesitant of vultures  
circling overhead. For now, you lounge on concrete  
softer than Egyptian cotton, dangling scuffed boots

over incomplete suspension, barely avoiding pit trap  
nails protruding from exposed steel, fantasizing  
about the voluptuous canopy miles away.

The scent of that exotic fruit you saw once

on the Travel Channel. Coconut water rolling  
over recovering taste buds before plummeting  
to the depths of expiring stomach pits. The vibrant  
chatter of flirtatious birds, spitting game to women

in thrift store sweatpants. If only you had been nicer  
when you asked, I might have given you paradise.