Brutal Imagination
by Jacoby Cochran

My Name is Zero.

I was created in the brutal imagination of the cosmos... From the moments humanity woke up they have feared the darkness. It makes sense if you think about it. The unknown often sprouts fright and terror. But It is also quite sad when you think about it. To make sense of the abyss we projected our monsters and demons, plagues and curses, fright and terror onto the darkness. It was in this basic anxiety that I began to take form. You see when an anxiety simmers long enough eventually it will grow flesh and walk outside of your body. I am that flesh. anxiety made actual, paranoia personified. In the beginning I was neutral, dissuaded, over time empathetic, understanding, even accommodating. but now a world obsessed with darkness and blackness to hide from itself is unrecognizable.

now the anxious world needs no greater villain than a trickster, master manipulator, prince of Darkness. Somehow a biological bias became a bottomless bayou for the worse of ourselves never coming to terms with our primordial fear. Now Dark bodies are the stand inn.

My name is Zero! But my essence is from a long history of great deception. You know my transatlantic track record, my lynch mob lineage. When called on I am your trickster, master manipulator, wizard of dark magic with just few tricks, turning household items into guns. A shapeshifter transforming 12 and 17 year old boys & girls into thousand year old beasts and ghouls.

I’ve travelled the known world and met my maker, my demise, my rebirth, while recycling these old tricks. And you know what I have learned. At every corner darkness remains the most oppressed, the most vilified, the most likely to be seen as zero. Look around it’s not hard to spot. Everywhere you turn its the light vs the dark. Light Luke vs dark darth. Every wicked witch from the West to east Salem wedded to black as judgement. Voldemort mastered the dark arts. Scar was darker than Mufasa. Check Hulu. Dagger emits a white light of hope as cloak grows blackened phantom limbs and haunts the heart with despair. Even death in all it’s naturalness became your caricature sketched in black hood and sickle. Must I continue. It doesn’t take a “Black Mirror” to see me. Open your eyes and you will see me.

I’ve been astroprojected out of thin air in Union South Carolina and plastered over raw flesh from Oakland to Cleveland. I have been stopped, frisked, and choked out in Staten Island and snuffed out in Waller county. I have swallowed 16 shots in under 16 seconds on Chicago side streets. I have been told I am ugly and advertised lightening cream from Nairobi to mumbai. Yes darkness celebrated worldwide on futbol pitch for profit, they call us King James and queen
bees, long as we bring said profit. but when darkness makes waves & paddles across oceans of water and sand, too close to shores in refuge called alien. Then Caged for profit. Don’t forget I have been shamed in folklore, made evil queen in fantasy, I am the boogie man in every bedtime story, the character whose heart is always black as night.

But hell isn’t that what a good villain does. Doesn’t a good villain only exist to reveal the hero. To be dominated, demoralized, and defeated. Is that what we have made of the darkness.

Nothing more than to be dominated demoralized and defeated.. This is the problem, humanity never dealt with its real fear. Even those who reached to the stars for answers stigmatized the darkness as it constantly revealed back at us that we are in fact not the center of the universe.

I am tired of being your trope, figment, a mistaken identity. I am tired of being the comic book villain covered in deaths shadows living as a remixed sample. This anxiety has me present at every locked door, dirty look, every lash, every underhanded you’re cute for a dark girl, every pseudo science justification. Inferior, Savage, Slave, Criminal, Terrorist, GangBanger are the wingless birds that pluck away at me as I remain chained to the boulder of your naive binary logic. How quickly humanity forgets it was the darkness that birthed it not the fire.

for my entire existence I have been shackled to this role and I am tired. Its exhausting, the shackles and the waiting. Waiting for My only desire to be realized and I freed from this existence. Free me and yourselves from this paranoia. Free a world that has you questioning the magic in melanin. Has you using dark as synonymous for fear. You must let go of this anxiety which has consumed us All. All I want for you is to redefine the darkness realign with the darkness we were born in the darkness. The damage has been done And for long enough I have remained silent, but it is clear you can not evolve if you do tear down these systems that require the light to be at war with the dark. remember the sun has never been at war with the dark sky. They are one in the same. You are the children of the sun and the dark sky. End the war inside of you and let me go. (Repeat)