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# King Chemo

by Brian Guehring

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Characters:

KEVIN- a ten year old boy under going chemotherapy  
MELISSA-a ten year old girl under going chemotherapy  
DOCTOR- female hemotologist/oncologist  
also plays:ICE QUEEN, DR. STRANGEGLOVE, ZYBOX, COUNTESS, AGENT 7  
NURSE- male R.N.  
also plays: PUPPET MAN, IGOR, QWICKBERT, NOSFERATU, AGENT Y

Setting:

MONDAY: Scene 1- the torture chamber of the Ice Queen  
Scene 2 -Melissa's hospital room  
Scene 3 -the evil laboratory of Dr. StrangeGlove  
TUESDAY: Scene 4-Melissa's hospital room  
Scene 5- the bizarre atmosphere of planet Wuwomp  
Scene 6- Kevin's hospital room  
WEDNESDAY:Scene 7-Melissa's hospital room  
Scene 8- the creepy vampire lair of the Countess  
THURSDAY:Scene 9- Kevin's hospital room  
Scene 10- the high tech secret agent command center  
NEXT FRIDAY: Scene 11-Kevin's hospital room

The hospital settings are anteseptic, metallic, and shiny with harsh, white lighting.  
The fantasy settings are colorful, darker, and imaginative.

Transitions between scenes during the same day should be as quick as possible.

King Chemo is the recipient of the  
1997 Southwest Theatre Association (SWTA)  
Children's New Script Award

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## MONDAY

(Monday, Scene 1: Super-hero music fades up as lights reveal an icy prison-like torture chamber {remarkably also slightly resembling a hospital room}. A shiny icy substance covers all furniture. KEVIN is trapped in the room)

KEVIN (in a recorded voice-over)

Welcome back to "THE ADVENTURES OF INVINCIBLE BOY, Defender of Youth." When we last left our hero {a normal boy in appearance, but born of superhuman strength, agility, and intelligence}, he had just been captured by his evil arch enemy, the Ice Queen

(The ICE QUEEN enters wearing an ice-blue villainess costume {slightly resembling pastel blue hospital scrubs})

{the famous rising figure skating star who tragically crashed through thin ice transforming her into a villainess with an ice heart} and her devoted lackey, Puppet Man

(PUPPET MAN enters wearing a marionette outfit {also remarkably resembling hospital scrubs})

{the famous championship rock climber who was caught in an trecherous avalanche changing herm into a brainless, spineless sidekick}.

KEVIN (live)

So, we meet again Ice Queen.

ICE QUEEN

Yes, Invincible Boy, and this time there is no escape.

KEVIN

Don't be so sure.

ICE QUEEN

Puppet boy, get our prisoner a glass of ice water.

PUPPET MAN

Yes, your iciness.

(PUPPET MAN goes to get a glass of water)

ICE QUEEN

I want you to feel welcome in my ice castle. Is it cold enough for you?

KEVIN

You can't freeze me, Ice Witch.

ICE QUEEN

We'll lower the temperature more and see, won't we?

KEVIN

You'll never keep me here, you Frozen Freakazoid.

(PUPPET MAN returns with water and ICE QUEEN trips him sending the water into KEVIN's face)

ICE QUEEN

Did that sting? Your pathetic powers are no match for me.

KEVIN

I'll enjoy seeing you sweat in a hot jail cell.

ICE QUEEN

You should really give up that heroism thing. Its so passé. You should really join our side.

KEVIN

Join you? Doing what?

ICE QUEEN

To eliminate fun, imagination, and everything that bring happiness. To create a world where pain, seriousness, and logic dominate the world. To establish a planet where only the Ice Queen will rule.

KEVIN

How do you plan to accomplish this?

ICE QUEEN

By stealing toys, freezing amusement parks, and making boring television. If all else fails, we'll kill all the happy people.

(PUPPET MAN laughs evilly)

Why are you laughing in my presence?

PUPPET MAN

My Queen, it was an evil laugh, not a happy laugh.

ICE QUEEN

I don't care.

(ICE QUEEN pulls PUPPET MAN's string so PUPPET MAN slaps himself)

PUPPET MAN

Sorry.

ICE QUEEN

I could use you, Invincible Boy. Your superhuman strength, agility, and intelligence would help us. What do you say, partners?

KEVIN

Never.

ICE QUEEN

Maybe we can change your mind. Puppet Man, give him "the pill."

(PUPPET MAN brings out a pill)

PUPPET MAN

This will help you cool off.

KEVIN

I won't take it.

ICE QUEEN

I think you will.

(ICE QUEEN opens a drawer and dry ice smoke falls out as she selects a torture device {resembling a stethoscope}. ICE QUEEN places the torture device on KEVIN's back)

KEVIN

AAAAHHHHH!

(PUPPET MAN drops pill in the shivering KEVIN's open mouth)

ICE QUEEN

So sorry, was that cold for you?

PUPPET MAN

This should answer any more questions you have about the plan of attack.

(PUPPET MAN hands him a pamphlet)

KEVIN (reading)

"Coldbloodedness and You: How an Emotionless Existence Increases Longevity." I'll never join you.

ICE QUEEN

Then we have no choice but to kill you.

KEVIN  
You can't.

ICE QUEEN  
Do you think you are strong enough to resist?

KEVIN  
I've trained three times a day, eat lots of superheroes power snacks, and spend five hours each day on video fight simulation.

PUPPET MAN  
(to DOCTOR)  
He trains more than you do.

KEVIN  
Would you like to be tortured or just put to death quickly?

ICE QUEEN  
Neither. Puppet Man, begin the ice treatment.

PUPPET MAN  
As you wish, your coldness.

KEVIN  
You can never defeat me. I am Invincible Boy, Defender of Youth!

ICE QUEEN  
You won't be for much longer.  
(PUPPET MAN attaches a torture device {somewhat resembling an IV} on KEVIN's arm.  
KEVIN braces himself for the pain)  
This treatment will slowly replace your blood cells with ice crystals. Later we'll replace your bones with icicles and your spinal fluid with ice water. You have four days to either join our side or permanently become Icicle Boy.

KEVIN  
I'm strong enough to resist you.

ICE QUEEN  
We'll see. For now, sit back and chill, Invincible Boy. We'll be back soon to start with your bones and spinal fluid.

PUPPET MAN  
Ready for your next prisoner? The new girl?  
(PUPPET MAN hands ICE QUEEN a folder)

ICE QUEEN  
Yes, the potential Polar Princess. Very logical and serious already. Let's go.  
(ICE QUEEN and PUPPET MAN begin to leave as KEVIN begins to take out IV)

Oh, and Invincible Boy, I know what you are thinking, and I suggest that you don't take it out. Your body will go into immediate withdrawal, and you'll die now instead of Friday. Think about my offer, Invincible Boy.  
(ICE QUEEN and PUPPET MAN leave. KEVIN stands with his icy IV )

KEVIN  
Four days to escape this fiendish imprisonment and to save that poor girl. First I must avoid my ice surgery, then I must find the girl. The adventures of Invincible Boy, Defender of Youth have begun again!  
(KEVIN exits with IV to dramatic fanfare)

(Monday, Scene 2: The fantasy music fades into a sound collage of a hospital. Lights reveal a small room very similar to the set of the last scene, but now clearly a hospital room. {Note: the blocking during the first part of this scene parallels the blocking of the previous scene}. MELISSA is sitting in her room as NURSE and DOCTOR enter)

MELISSA  
Good morning.  
DOCTOR  
Good morning, Melissa. How are you doing today?  
MELISSA  
Pretty good.  
NURSE  
Melissa, would you like a glass of ice water?  
MELISSA  
Yes, please.  
(NURSE goes to get a glass of water)  
DOCTOR  
Make sure you don't trip this time.  
NURSE  
I'll be extra careful not to spill it again.  
DOCTOR  
Melissa, we want you to be as comfortable as possible here. Is the room temperature OK?  
MELISSA  
It's fine.  
DOCTOR  
Good.  
(NURSE hands MELISSA drink)  
MELISSA  
Thank you.  
DOCTOR  
We are about to start the treatment, but remember I can't do this alone. I need your help.  
MELISSA and DOCTOR  
Partners.  
NURSE  
This is to help you so you won't get nauseated.  
(Handing MELISSA a pill)  
MELISSA  
Zofran?  
(NURSE nods and MELISSA swallows pill)  
DOCTOR  
Now I'm just going to check your breathing. I'm sorry but this might be cold.  
(DOCTOR uses stethoscope to check MELISSA's breathing)  
NURSE  
We brought you another pamphlet.  
(NURSE hands MELISSA a pamphlet)  
MELISSA  
"Chemotherapy and You: How a Nutritious Diet Aids Treatment." Thanks.  
(MELISSA adds new pamphlets to her hoard of information.)

DOCTOR  
Do you have any questions about the pamphlets we gave you last time?

MELISSA  
I don't think so. I knew most of the information already. The one on clinical trials was pretty interesting, but the general one about cancer was so simple. I think it would be more appropriate for a younger age group.

DOCTOR  
I'll take a note of that.

MELISSA  
So what's going to happen today?

DOCTOR  
Let's look and see what tests you're scheduled for....

MELISSA  
Oh, I'm scheduled for a bone marrow test and a spinal tap to make sure the cancer cells haven't come back. I just wanted to know when the tests are.

NURSE  
You're scheduled for 2:00 this afternoon. We're going to begin your IV now so we can start your chemotherapy soon.  
(NURSE begins hooking up her IV to her infusaport)

DOCTOR  
Have you been eating well?

MELISSA  
Yes, ma'am. Three balanced meals each day, no salty or fatty foods, lots of fluids, and only healthy snacks.

NURSE  
(to DOCTOR)  
She eats better than you do.

MELISSA  
Would you like a rice cake or some soybeans?

DOCTOR  
No thank you. Is there anything you need?  
(MELISSA shakes her head. DOCTOR and NURSE begin to leave)

We'll be back shortly to begin the treatment.

MELISSA  
Should I buzz the call button to remind you?

DOCTOR  
Only if we aren't here by 2:05.

NURSE  
I'll get Kevin so we can start his tests.  
(NURSE and DOCTOR exit. MELISSA starts to read pamphlet. KEVIN sneaks into the room and sees MELISSA)

KEVIN  
Hey! Don't read that!

MELISSA  
What are you doing in my room?  
(KEVIN rushes and takes the pamphlet away from her and starts jumping up and down on

the pamphlet)

Don't believe a word in this. KEVIN

What are you doing? MELISSA

I'm destroying the evil propaganda from the Ice Queen. She gives it to everyone.  
(KEVIN shows MELISSA his pamphlet) KEVIN

What are you talking about? MELISSA

I'm saving you from the evil villainess who wants to destroy us!  
(KEVIN rips up the pamphlets) KEVIN

You're ripping up pamphlets on nutrition. MELISSA

You can thank me later. KEVIN  
(KEVIN throws pamphlets in trash)

Who are you? MELISSA

Who am I? Who are you? KEVIN

No, who are you? MELISSA

Who are you? KEVIN

I asked first. MELISSA

I asked second. KEVIN

(Off-Stage) NURSE

Kevin! KEVIN

Shhhh!  
(KEVIN grabs MELISSA and both hide behind partition. NURSE enters and looks around.  
NURSE can't find KEVIN or MELISSA)

Kevin? Melissa? NURSE  
(NURSE exits. KEVIN and MELISSA come out from behind the partition)

What are you doing in my room, Kevin? MELISSA

Playing a game with the nurse, Melissa. Don't worry he thinks its lots of fun. So what brings you here? KEVIN

Considering this is the cancer floor of a hospital, it's probably a safe bet I have cancer. MELISSA

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KEVIN  
Sassy. I like that. When were you diagnosed?

MELISSA  
That's none of your business.

KEVIN  
You must be a rookie. You see, I've been doing this for over a year now. I'm the king of chemotherapy. If you have any questions, just ask me. I've helped a lot of young kids get through chemotherapy.

MELISSA  
How do you help?

KEVIN  
I fill them in on what's really going on. For instance,...  
(KEVIN goes to the hall to check for signs of the doctor)  
You have to watch out for the "doctor".

MELISSA  
Why? She's been very nice to me.

KEVIN  
Acting nice to you, but in reality she is pure....  
(NURSE opens door and KEVIN and IV dive behind curtain)

NURSE  
I'm sorry to disturb you, Melissa, but you haven't seen Kevin, have you?

MELISSA  
Who?

NURSE  
I guess not. If you had met Kevin, you'd remember. I'm sure you'll meet him soon. He's another leukemia patient. Thanks anyway.  
(NURSE exits)

KEVIN  
Hey, thanks. You're alright.

MELISSA  
What is the doctor really?

KEVIN  
Pure Evil. She won't be able to hide it for much longer if you watch closely.

MELISSA  
Kevin, not all doctors are mean.

KEVIN  
Not all doctors. Just her.

MELISSA  
Why would she be mean to me?

KEVIN  
Because you're a leukemia patient.

MELISSA  
She's mean to all leukemia patients?

KEVIN  
Yes. You see, only the really special kids get leukemia. The few, the proud, the leukemia kids. It's actually a great honor to be chosen for chemo.

MELISSA  
Chemotherapy is an honor?

KEVIN  
No. Chemo is terrible. The honor is being chosen. It means you were too strong to be broken through the usual means.

MELISSA  
Who wants to break us?

KEVIN  
The Powers that Be.

(KEVIN pulls out his charts and maps)

KEVIN(cont'd)  
See, there is someone out there trying to control us Earth children. Obviously the entire hospital staff is in on the plan. I'm not sure who's behind it yet, but I think its the "doctor".

MELISSA  
And why do they want to control us?

KEVIN  
Not sure. Probably for world domination.

MELISSA  
Why are you telling me?

KEVIN  
My mission is to discover who they really are and save the world's children from their evil plots.

MELISSA  
Oh.

(Going back to her journal)

KEVIN  
What are you doing? Don't bother doing any homework. Just tell your teachers you were too tired to finish. They won't say anything.

MELISSA  
It's my health journal, not homework.

KEVIN  
Good, because school is the number one way the Powers that Be try and control kids.

MELISSA  
How do they use school?

KEVIN  
To brainwash us.

MELISSA  
And how do you fight this?

KEVIN  
I think for myself. That really frustrates my teacher.

MELISSA  
I believe it.

KEVIN  
They tried to break me by making me repeat the 2nd grade, but I was too smart for them. I still didn't learn anything.

MELISSA  
How do the Powers that Be use leukemia?

KEVIN  
Because they can't control me through school, they're trying chemicals. It won't work though. They can't control this mind.

MELISSA

Kevin, this may be a crazy idea, but have you ever considered the possibility that the chemotherapy is to stop the cancer?

KEVIN

Melissa, Melissa, Melissa. You are so young and naive. I can tell I have a lot to teach you about the real world. I'm not sick. They made this cancer thing up.

(NURSE enters as KEVIN hides again)

NURSE

I'm sorry, Melissa. I thought I heard something.

(NURSE exits and KEVIN re-emerges)

MELISSA

They didn't make cancer up.

KEVIN

They did.

(KEVIN pulls out a chair for a witness stand)

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I'm here to prove that leukemia doesn't exist. I would like to call an "alleged" leukemia patient to the stand. Miss Melissa, do you sweat to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you Elvis?

(KEVIN swears MELISSA in using a bedpan.)

MELISSA

Sure.

(MELISSA sits in chair)

KEVIN

Now Miss Melissa, does your cancer hurt like a broken bone?

MELISSA

No.

KEVIN

Do you get a fever like you do when you get the flu?

MELISSA

I did.

KEVIN

But do you now?

MELISSA

No.

KEVIN

Ah-ha! Why are you still in the hospital, then?

(Before MELISSA can answer)

Melissa, can they show you an X-Ray and point out the leukemia?

MELISSA

Not an x-ray. But they have tests. They can extract a sample of bone marrow from your hip and determine if you have leukemia.

KEVIN

What does bone marrow even look like?

MELISSA

I don't know. I've never seen it.

KEVIN

MmmHmmm, then how do you know if your bone marrow has leukemia?

MELISSA  
They show you the test results.

KEVIN  
Which are what? Photos? Numbers? Charts? Graphs?

MELISSA  
They show you the number of cancer cells.

KEVIN  
Numbers? Could they make up these numbers?

MELISSA  
They wouldn't...

KEVIN  
Only answer the question, ma'am. Could they make up these numbers?

MELISSA  
Well yeah, but...

KEVIN  
(Cutting her off)  
Ah, ha! Now, ma'am, is leukemia contagious?

MELISSA  
No.

KEVIN  
Then how did you get it?

MELISSA  
They don't know yet how people get leukemia.

KEVIN  
Because it doesn't exist? Ladies and gentlemen, I rest my case.

MELISSA  
Why did I get leukemia then?

KEVIN  
Look you're going to have to be quicker than this if you are going to hang with me. They are trying to control all of us children.

MELISSA  
Why was I given cancer, then? I'm a good student. According to you "Powers that Be" are already dominating me.

KEVIN  
You're probably a control case.  
(Pause)

MELISSA  
You're weird.

KEVIN  
At least keep a close eye on the "doctor".

MELISSA  
Why should I?

KEVIN  
Will it hurt you? No. And on the off chance that once again I'm right which I always am so you better get used to it, it could save your life.

MELISSA  
Fine. I'll watch her.

(NURSE enters quietly wearing gloves)

KEVIN

Keep an eye on the nurse, too. I'm still not sure about him.

(NURSE clears throat. KEVIN hits the floor to hide behind the bed, but his IV is still clearly visible.)

NURSE

Hoarding all the IV's, Melissa? Kevin, you can come out now.

KEVIN(In a high pitched voice)

He's not here.

NURSE

Kevin, your bone marrow test and spinal tap are scheduled for right now.

(DOCTOR enters taking off her gloves)

DOCTOR

We might as well move on to the next patient, if we can't...

NURSE

We just found him.

DOCTOR

You can't just avoid these procedures, Kevin. Not taking the tests won't change whether you are in remission or not. I know a transplant is scary idea, but you have to take these tests.

KEVIN

Why?

DOCTOR

To determine if the cancer has come back.

KEVIN

You'll try and give me a transplant no matter what your little experiments say.

DOCTOR

No, if you're in remission, no transplant. Trust me.

KEVIN

Why?

(the DOCTOR's pager goes off)

DOCTOR

Kevin, I can't argue now.

NURSE

Should we reschedule Kevin's tests for 3:00?

DOCTOR

I guess we'll have to. Melissa, we'll do your bone marrow test and spinal tap at 2. And Kevin we'll do them at 3. And don't make the entire hospital staff come find you, next time, Kevin.

(DOCTOR exits)

NURSE

If I don't have to look for you at 3:00, I'll bring you the nintendo, Kevin.

KEVIN

Really?

(NURSE nods and exits)

Were you watching? The "doctor" is evil.

MELISSA

She is not. And even you can't think that our nurse is mean.

KEVIN  
It's either a trick or he's been brainwashed. Either way the doctor wants to use me as a guinea pig for her evil experiments.

MELISSA  
They aren't experiments. It's treatment to fight the cancer.

KEVIN  
Then why are the "doctor" and nurse are always wearing gloves?

MELISSA  
What?

KEVIN  
They always have gloves on their hands when they do procedures. It's very suspicious.

MELISSA  
It's so they don't touch the blood.

KEVIN  
Nah, they wear gloves so they won't leave any fingerprints. They don't want to leave any evidence of their experiments.

MELISSA  
You're crazy.

KEVIN  
Fine, I'll prove it to you.

MELISSA  
How?

KEVIN  
I'll take you to the mad scientist's laboratory.

MELISSA  
Where?

KEVIN  
You'll see. C'mon. And don't forget your walkie-talkie.

MELISSA  
My what?

KEVIN  
(Pointing to his IV bag)

Your walkie-talkie.  
(Using IV bag like a walkie-talkie)

Número Uno to Veggie Salad. You can't go on a stakeout without it. Over....Girls.  
(KEVIN and MELISSA exit)