

Natalie Romeo
LIT313
Comic Script- "Superpowers"

PAGE 1 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Wide shot of the school. The mood is gloomy; the sky is dark and cloudy.

AYA (thought): Hi. I'm Aya. This is my school, unfortunately. 'Boring' Middle School. Sorry I mean, Borden Middle School.

Panel 2. Inside the Classroom. Aya is sitting at her desk amongst other classmates; next to her is her best friend, Taylor. They are all looking down at textbooks.

Panel 3. Close up on same shot; just Aya and Taylor.

AYA (thought): This is my best friend, Taylor. She really is the best and has always been there for me. And luckily, we're about to go to lunch.

Panel 4. Wide shot of the classroom. Students looking up at the clock.

TEACHER: (OP) Time for lunch, everyone!

Page 2 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Lunch room; lunch table with just Aya and Taylor sitting together. Aya has her bento box open in front of her. Taylor looks at it fondly while holding a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Panel 2. Same shot, but Chrissy and 3 other girls come up behind them looking meanly down at the bento box.

CHRISSY: EW what IS that?? It's all so random! And is that FISH??

SFX: snicker (from other girls)

Panel 3. Aya's face reddens and is looking frustrated and upset down at her food.

AYA (weak): It's called a bento box.

AYA (thought): That's Chrissy. She's the head bully and the meanest girl I've ever met.

Panel 4. Girls laugh and walk away. Taylor is looking nervously over at Aya.

TAYLOR: I'm sorry, I should have said something, I just froze up! I can't stand the way they treat you it's not fair! I think that looks really good.

AYA (weak): You can have it, Taylor.

Page 3 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Same shot from page 1, first panel: outside the school. This time, a car is parked outside. The sun has come out and the mood is bright and happy.

AYA (thought): Finally, school is over. It's obviously my favorite time of the day, but especially because my grandma Yeo always comes to pick me up!

Panel 2. Aya inside the car with Yeo, both smiling.

YEO: Aya! How was your day, my child?

Panel 3. Same shot. Aya leans in to hug Yeo.

AYA: Better now that I'm with you! Come on, let's get out of here!

Panel 4. Wide shot of Yeo's car driving away into the sunshine.

Page 4 (5 panels)

Panel 1. At Yeo's house, outside in her Zen Garden. The sky is bright and sunny. The garden is beautiful and green with plenty of bushes and plants growing. There is a mini shrine with a small stone walkway leading up to it. Next to that is a small koi pond.

AYA (thought): This is Yeo's Zen Garden. Yeo is the ancestor of Buddhist nuns and is very serious about Buddhism herself. I love coming here. It always makes me feel calm.

Panel 2. Yeo and Aya sitting together on a little bench, shaded by a big tree.

YEO: You seem a bit more quiet than usual today, Aya. What is troubling you?

AYA: I don't know. I just had another rough day at school, that's all. I don't really want to talk about it.

Panel 3. Yeo and Aya are now sitting cross-legged on stones in the grass. Their eyes are closed.

YEO: Then we do not have to talk about it. We can meditate. Come, sit.

AYA (thought): This is what Yeo calls "zazen". It basically means sitting still and meditating, which I always find a bit tricky. My mind is always wandering. But not Yeo. She's always so calm and controlled.

Panel 4. Same shot. Yeo's eyes are still closed but Aya's are open and looking over at Yeo.

YEO: The Buddhists teach us that we are in charge of our own destiny. We have the power to change our own minds. When you learn to be fully enlightened, you can even have the power to change your circumstances. You can have super powers!

AYA: Super powers?? Like a super hero? Yeo, that sounds a little silly, don't you think?

Panel 5. Wide shot of the two of them sitting together on the ground. Sun is shining.

YEO: As the Buddhists say, "We cannot always change circumstances, but we can always change our minds."

AYA (thought): I have a feeling Yeo knows about the girls at school. Even though I never told her. She's wise like that.

Page 5 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Aya's bedroom. It is dark and there is a small bedside lamp on. She is sitting on her bed, legs crossed in "zazen" and eyes closed.

Panel 2. Closer shot of Aya with her eyes closed.

AYA (thought): Maybe Yeo is right. Maybe if I meditate hard enough, I can make Chrissy and the others stop bullying me.

Panel 3. Same shot of Aya sitting on her bed. Her eyes are squeezed shut. There is a little thought bubble above her to indicate her imagining. She pictures herself happily walking away with Taylor with Chrissy and the other girls in the back. Here, she is happier and carefree.

Panel 4. Wider shot of Aya sitting on her bed with her eyes shut. She has a smile on her face, looking at peace.

Page 6 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Aya, Taylor, Chrissy, and a bunch of other girls are in the gym locker room, getting ready for gym class. They are all wearing various athletic-style clothing. Aya is wearing awkwardly long shorts and an oversized t-shirt, looking uncomfortable. Taylor is wearing something similar. Chrissy and her posse are all wearing variations of short shorts with cropped tank tops.

AYA (thought): I hate gym class more than anything. They make us wear awkward, ugly clothes and play games involving teams and balls. I can't think of anything less fun.

Panel 2. In the gym. The gym teacher is standing in front of all the students.

TEACHER: Okay, everyone. Tommy and Chrissy are your team captains for dodgeball today. Pick your teams.

Panel 3. A boy stands with a group of students while Chrissy stands near her friends and some other students. Aya and Taylor are the only ones without a team.

CHRISSY: Ugh. I guess Taylor.

TEACHER: Go to Tommy's team, Aya.

AYA (thought): Of course, I'm the last one picked. And this means Chrissy gets to throw dodgeballs at me! I hate it here.

Panel 4. Wide shot of the gym. The students are on opposite sides of the gym in their respective teams. Aya is looking over at Chrissy, squinting. Chrissy is talking animatedly with her friends. Taylor gives Aya a small wave from the other end of the room. Everyone is holding a dodgeball.

TEACHER: (not in frame) Play safe, everyone!

Page 7 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Wide shot of the gym. It is chaos. Students are all running around playing dodgeball. Balls are flying everywhere. Chrissy is holding hers up with a mischievous look on her face. Aya is running in the opposite direction from Chrissy. Taylor is standing, looking scared and just watching.

Panel 2. A ball hits Aya's head from behind. She is on the ground with a hand to her head.

SFX: ZOOM. BONK.

TEACHER: Chrissy, let's be a little safer!

CHRISSEY: Sorry, coach! Her big head was in the way! (To her friends) Do they not teach them how to run in China??

Panel 3. Taylor runs over to Aya and helps her up.

TAYLOR: She's not from China! Aya's Japanese and she was born in America just like you! (To Aya) Come on, Aya. She's just jealous.

Panel 4. Taylor and Aya walking out of the gym. Taylor's arm is around Aya. Aya has her phone out.

AYA: (in her phone) Yeo, can you come get me?

Page 8 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Same shot as page 3 panel 1: the outside of the school with the car parked out front. The sky is dark and gloomy. It is a little rainy.

Panel 2. Closer shot of the outside of the school. Aya and Taylor side-hug each other.

AYA: Thanks for sticking up for me, Taylor. I wish I could just do it myself.

TAYLOR: What are friends for?

Panel 3. Aya inside the car with Yeo. Yeo looks over at Aya. Aya is looking down at her lap.

YEO: That girl has such a light. Now, why do you look so sad, my child?

Panel 4. The car driving away.

YEO (OP): I know what we must do.

Page 9 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Same shot from page 4, panel 1. Wide shot of the Zen Garden: it is beautiful sunny weather and Aya and Yeo are sitting on the bench together.

Panel 2. Close up of Aya and Yeo together.

AYA: I just can't take it anymore, Yeo! I'm tired of them treating me like trash but I don't know how to stop it!

Panel 3. Aya looking over at Yeo. Yeo's eyes are closed.

AYA: Yeo, do you understand? Are you listening?

Panel 4. Yeo is humming and mumbling in Japanese, it is nondescript.

Page 10 (4 panels)

Panel 1. Same shot as page 9, with Aya and Yeo on the bench. Yeo is speaking aloud to Aya now. She is holding Aya's hands. They are turned to face each other.

YEO: If you want to change your circumstances, you must change your mind. This is what Buddhism teaches us. You must believe in the powers of Buddhism and they will guide you to happiness.

Panel 2. Same shot. Aya turns to face front, looking frustrated. Yeo is facing her.

AYA: But Yeo, how can I change my mind? What will that even do? They'll still be mean no matter what!

YEO: I will teach you everything you need to become powerful against these bullies. You will overcome them and they will receive their karmic reward.

Panel 3. Wider shot, Aya is sitting on the bench still. Yeo has stood up and is in a powerful stance. She has a slight glow around her. Aya looks over at Yeo in wonder.

YEO: We will practice, train, and prepare for your powers to emerge. And when you are ready, enlightenment will arrive and these girls will no longer bother you.

AYA: I hope you're right, Yeo.

Page 11. (5 Panels)

Panel 1. Wide shot of the Zen Garden. Aya and Yeo are standing up near the bench. The sun is shining. Aya looking over at Yeo.

YEO: We begin with the three pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment. We must prepare the mind to receive these teachings. We must practice daily to strengthen the mind.

Panel 2. Closer shot of Aya and Yeo sitting on the grass cross-legged, eyes closed. They are holding hands.

YEO: And only once you reach true enlightenment will you become one with the Buddha...

Panel 3. Same shot in the Zen Garden. Yeo helping Aya balance in a yoga "tree" pose.

YEO: ...Then there are the 5 strengths in Buddhism: faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Once you reach your full potential, you will receive all of these strengths...

Panel 4. Closer shot. Aya and Yeo are sitting on their knees facing each other, their hands are in prayer. Yeo's eyes are closed, Aya's are open and she is looking at Yeo, unsure.

YEO: ...Amongst the powers of Buddhism are the abilities to know the circumstances of all people's lives, the power of judging people's levels of understanding and discerning the superiority or inferiority of all people.

AYA: So, you're saying I'll suddenly know why Chrissy hates me so much? Yeah right, Yeo.

Panel 5. Wide shot of Yeo and Aya in the Zen Garden. Both are sitting on their knees with hands in prayer and eyes closed. They are facing outward.

YEO: Aya, we cannot always change circumstances, but we can always change our minds. Once you reach your fullest potential, you will have superpowers!

Page 12. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Aya's bedroom. It is daylight, but raining. Aya is sitting up on her bed, cross-legged.

AYA (thought): I lied to my mom and told her I was sick so that I could stay home today. I just really can't face Chrissy today. I'm too tired.

Panel 2. Closer shot of Aya on the bed. She is sitting zazen, with her hands in a circle with fingertips touching. Her eyes are closed.

AYA (thought): I'm trying to practice what Yeo taught me, but I'm just too frustrated. How am I supposed to get "superpowers"??

Panel 3. Close shot of Aya's phone on the nightstand ringing. It shows "Taylor".

Panel 4. Aya on the phone with Taylor. Same shot of her sitting cross-legged on her bed.

AYA: Hey, Taylor.

TAYLOR (phone): Aya! I really missed you at school. I got your homework for you! Are you doing ok??

AYA (response): Yeah, I'll be ok Taylor, thanks. I'm just not feeling myself today.

TAYLOR (phone): I'm here for you, Aya!

Page 13. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Aya and Yeo are back in the Zen Garden. It is a partly cloudy day. They are both on the grass sitting zazen, facing forward and their eyes are closed.

Panel 2. Closer shot of them sitting. Yeo's eyes are closed but Aya's are now open.

AYA: Yeo, I lied to my mom. I said I was sick so she would let me stay home from school today. I don't wanna go back! I hate it there! I hate the bullies!

Panel 3. Same shot. Yeo is now facing Aya and has her hands on her shoulders.

YEO: Aya, all is well, do not worry. You should not feel inferior to them. You are on the path to enlightenment.

Panel 4. Closer shot with Yeo looking over at Aya, they are side by side. Aya is looking forward, eyes wide open. She has the same slight glow around her that Yeo had before. It's like a lightbulb went off in her head.

YEO (OP): Soon, these girls will get their karmic reward. Your super powers will overcome them.

Page 14. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Close shot of Aya and Yeo sitting side by side, cross-legged in the grass. She is looking down at her hands, they are open palms up in front of her. Yeo's hands are still in the circle formation, fingertips touching. Yeo is looking over at Aya, knowingly.

AYA: Woah! Suddenly, I feel so much better. I feel stronger, somehow...

Panel 2. Inside, Aya's mind; there is a bubble around the frame. There is a pink tint to everything to show the change in perspective. It shows Aya in a power stance looking very strong and fearless.

Panel 3. Shot of them in the Zen Garden. Yeo has jumped to her feet. She excitedly looks over at Aya. Aya looks over at Yeo, unsure.

YEO: Yes! You did it! Your powers have emerged! You are one with Buddha!

Panel 4. Close up of Aya sitting staring at her hands in wonder. She is smiling.

AYA (thought): Maybe I *am* a superhero...

Page 15. (3 panels)

Panel 1. Aya is in her bedroom, pacing. It is nighttime and she is in her pajamas. Her hair is a mess, she is frazzled. Her bedside lamp is on.

AYA (thought): I feel so different! I don't know what it is. I feel like I can do anything! Maybe I really can defeat Chrissy and the bullies! But that's crazy, right??

Panel 2. Aya is now sitting zazen on her bed, her hands in a circle with fingertips touching. Her eyes are squeezed shut in concentration.

AYA (thought): Ok ok. I need to just relax. What would Yeo do?

Panel 3. Inside Aya's head. There is the same bubble around the frame and a pink tint to everything to show this. In her vision, Aya is tall and looming over Chrissy and the other girls. Aya has her hands on her hips and is smiling looking down at them. Chrissy and the others are looking up at Aya in fear.

AYA (thought): I feel like I should just stand up to Chrissy! I've never felt like I could before...

Page 16. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Same shot inside Aya's head, everything is pink-tinted. Aya is in a karate pose, kicking into the air. She is looking determined. Chrissy and the girls are so much smaller, looking onward in fear.

AYA (thought): It's time to see what I can do...

Panel 2. Inside Aya's head still, Aya is still in her big form. She has the glow around her. Chrissy is smaller and standing right below Aya looking up at her in fear.

Panel 3. Same shot. Aya looks confident.

AYA: I'm not scared of you anymore, Chrissy. You can't hurt me anymore.

Panel 4. Closer shot of Chrissy, appearing still so much smaller than Aya. She's looking sad and scared.

AYA: What's your problem anyway?? Why are you so mean??

Page 17. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Inside Chrissy's mind now. This is a different perspective; everything has a blue tint to it but still the same bubble around the frame to show its inside the mind. It shows Chrissy inside her house. She is sitting at the kitchen table, looking sad. Her parents are off to the distance, fighting.

Panel 2. Close up of Chrissy sitting at her kitchen table with her homework out and open. She is looking down at it with a blank expression.

MOM (OP): She was supposed to be at your house this week! I'm so busy I don't have time for this!

DAD (OP): Are you trying to say I'm any less busy?? Why don't you act like a mother for a change!

MOM (OP continued): She's your kid too!!

Panel 3. Wider shot of the kitchen. The parents are out of view. Chrissy is staring sadly at a picture on the wall of her as a child hugging her grandmother.

CHRISSEY (to herself, softly): I could really use your help right now, Gram.

Panel 4. Now out of Chrissy's head. Back to the same shot of Aya sitting on her bed, cross-legged. She is staring straight ahead, looking sad.

AYA: So *that's* why Chrissy's so mean... Maybe she's *jealous* of me? I'm feeling almost *bad* for her?? Hm, that's new.

Page 18. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Wide shot of the outside of the school. For once, the sky is blue and sunny.

Panel 2. In the hallway at school, Aya and Taylor are hugging each other in front of their lockers.

TAYLOR: I'm so happy to see you, Aya! School was so boring without you!

Panel 3. Same shot in front of lockers. Aya and Taylor are standing facing each other talking. Aya has a glow around her, but it goes unnoticed by others.

AYA: I'm glad to be back, Taylor. I'm in such a good mood today! I actually can't wait for gym class!

Panel 4. Wider shot of the hallway. Chrissy and her posse walk over to where Aya and Taylor are standing. Aya still has her glow.

TAYLOR: Ohh no...

Page 19. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Closer shot of the girls all together in front of the lockers. Chrissy is looking over at Aya sheepishly. Aya still has her glow around her and she is looking confidently back at Chrissy.

CHRISSEY: Hey, Aya. Your outfit looks really cool today. And I love the way you did your hair. I'm, um, glad you're back at school.

Panel 2. Same shot. Aya is glowing and smiling, knowingly. Taylor is looking at Chrissy in shock. Chrissy and the girls are all looking at Aya.

AYA (thought): It worked.

AYA (to Chrissy): Thanks, Chrissy. It's good to be back.

Panel 3. Aya has her arm around Taylor. They are turned to walk away from the others.

AYA: Come on, Tay. Let's get to class!

Panel 4. Shot of Chrissy watching them go. The other girls are just behind her, slightly out of frame. Aya and Taylor are in the distance walking away. Chrissy looks in awe, but does not have any anger in her face.

Page 20. (4 panels)

Panel 1. Wide shot of the Zen Garden. The sun is shining. Yeo is sitting on the little bench feeding the fish in the koi pond, but she is smiling up at Aya and Taylor. Aya and Taylor are standing watching her.

AYA: Yeo, this is my best friend, Taylor!

Panel 2. Closer shot of all three of them sitting on the bench. Aya is in the center. They are all smiling.

YEO: Welcome to the Zen Garden.

AYA (to Taylor): This is where the magic happens!

Panel 3. Same shot, just wider. All three are sitting turned toward each other, talking excitedly.

YEO (to Aya): You seem so much happier, my child.

AYA: Yeo, you would not believe what happened at school today...!

Panel 4. Wide shot of the Zen Garden. They are all sitting on the grass in zazen: legs crossed, hands in a circle position, fingertips together.

AYA (thought): So that's the story of how I got my superpowers. Taylor wanted to learn about Buddhism too. Bullies will never bother us again.

Comic Outline
Natalie Romeo

Page 1

This page introduces Aya's school setting, showing the school with a gloomy sky. Then, it shows Aya in class amongst the students. Aya also introduces her best friend Taylor here. Readers get the idea that Aya will be narrating this on the side as well as actively playing a role as a character in the story.

Page 2

This page shows Aya and Taylor in the cafeteria at lunch sitting at a table together but alone. Aya is eating from a bento box. Taylor has a simple peanut butter and jelly sandwich and looks over at Aya's lunch fondly. This is to show how much Taylor adores Aya and is a great friend. Then Chrissy, the bully is introduced and she is seen with her posse standing over Aya and Taylor making fun of her lunch. This is the first time we will see Aya get bullied by Chrissy.

Page 3

School is done for the day and the first shot shows the outside of the school with a car pulled up to it. The sky is now bright and sunny. We are introduced to Aya's grandmother Yeo and she has pulled up to pick Aya up from school. Aya explains this is her favorite part of the day because she finally gets to hang out with Yeo and escape the bullies at school. They drive to Yeo's house.

Page 4

This page is introducing Yeo's Zen Garden, where Aya explains is her favorite place but she can't explain why. She feels a sense of calm here. The two of them sit together as Yeo talks to Aya about Buddhism. Aya doesn't tell Yeo about the events of the day, though she wants to. Aya watches Yeo as she calmly sits and she looks so powerful. Yeo tries to explain to Aya about the powers that can come from Buddhism but Aya giggles, thinking there can be no real powers.

Page 5

This page shows Aya in her bedroom alone at night, sitting on her bed in "zazen" which Yeo taught her is the way Buddhists meditate. She squeezes her eyes shut and pictures finding Zen and overcoming the bullying she experiences.

Page 6

Back at school, the girls are in the gym in their gym clothes which they have to bring from home. Aya says this is beyond embarrassing, since gym is her least favorite subject anyway and she has to wear awkward gym clothes as well. The gym teacher is giving instructions and we see Chrissy and the bullies snicker at Aya; they are making fun of her gym clothes. This is an uncomfortable scene where Aya gets bullied some more.

Page 7

Bullying scene in the gym continue; Taylor tries to step in but only makes it worse. This leaves Aya running away crying. She calls Yeo to come pick her up.

Page 8

This is like the setting on page 3 with the outside of the school and Yeo's car parked out front. However, the sky is gloomy and it's raining. Aya gets in the car and is crying still. Yeo doesn't say a word, they just take off.

Page 9

They are in the Zen Garden already. The sun has come out and its beautiful weather. Aya and Yeo are sitting together on a bench by a little koi pond. Aya is explaining how she is trying to overcome these bullies and be kind but it's no use and she just wants things to be better. When she's finished, Yeo just starts reciting Buddhism quotes and Aya assumes Yeo doesn't care.

Page 10

On this page, Yeo starts to explain how Aya can harness the powers of Buddhism to overcome and defeat the bullies. We see a series of lessons and pictures of Yeo showing Aya what she should do/ how she should act in order to be stronger in the face of her bullies. This is when Yeo is at her strongest as well, and she looks glowing and powerful here.

Page 11

This continues the training montage where Yeo teaches Aya all that she knows about Buddhism. She talks about the Three Pillars of Zen (Teaching Practice and Enlightenment). She explains the 5 strengths: faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. She tells Aya "We cannot always change circumstances, but we can always change our minds." Yeo says these are called Buddhist "superpowers".

Page 12

This page shows Aya in her bedroom. She says she luckily escaped going to school because she lied and told her mother that she felt sick, but it was really so that she wouldn't have to face Chrissy. She is sitting on her bed again attempting to meditate. Taylor calls her and says she missed her at school.

Page 13

It is a few days later, Aya is back at Yeo's house. They are sitting "zazen" together. Aya confesses that she has not been at school and lied to her mom. Then, they open their eyes and Yeo tells Aya not to worry and that Chrissy and the bullies will get their karmic reward and that Aya should not feel inferior to them. This is like a light switch in Aya's mind. Suddenly, she is starting to feel the beginning of her "powers".

Page 14

This page is a continuation of Aya discovering her powers, but she doesn't know what is happening or what it means. Yeo is in awe and proud. However, these are only in Aya's mind. Yeo senses that Aya has finally understood and harnessed the powers of Buddhism.

Page 15

Aya is in her bedroom freaking out because she feels differently but more powerful. She doesn't understand what this means. She manifests and visualizes fighting and defeating Chrissy "just for fun". We see her superpowers fully developed.

Page 16

This is a continuation of Aya's internal visualization. It is shown in a different color to clarify that this is all in her mind. We see her doing karate moves. We see her physically bigger than Chrissy, looming over her with a booming voice standing up for herself. Chrissy looks scared.

Page 17

This page shows Chrissy's boring home life. We see why Chrissy might be jealous of Aya and why she bullies her. We feel a little bad for Chrissy. Aya also now understands why Chrissy was acting this way and feels compassion, which she says is a weird feeling. It is part of her newfound Buddhist powers.

Page 18

While the fighting was all in Aya's mind, her superpowers actually are real. What she visualized in her mind worked. This page is back at school and the sun is shining for once. Aya and Taylor are at their lockers hugging and talking. Aya is in a pleasant, calm mood. She is glowing. Chrissy walks up to them with her posse.

Page 19

Chrissy compliments Aya and is acting overly kind. Aya is shocked but knew that her superpowers did this. She feels proud and powerful. She kindly, neutrally responds to Chrissy and then puts her arm around Taylor and they walk away. Chrissy is seen looking at Aya in awe as she walks away, not with anger or attitude.

Page 20

This page shows Aya, Taylor, and Yeo in the Zen Garden. This is Taylor's first time here and she is amazed. Yeo then goes on to talk to the girls more about Buddhism. We see Aya explaining to Yeo what she did and how she finally feels at peace.

