

THE CONJURE MAN



Hoodoo Conjurer



WRITTEN & CREATED BY JOHN WILKEY

SYNOPSIS: There is an urban legend known as The Conjure Man. He once was an escaped slave named Frimbo that was rescued by a conjure woman named Perpetua. When they are discovered, she is killed but passes all of her power on to him. He goes on to fight alongside the Seminole Indians as a soldier. He lives throughout history, playing various roles and fighting countless battles, until modern day. Now, he is watching over his descendants, trying to live quietly in the inner city. He ends up tangling with Uncle Aaron, a sinister preacher and his inner circle, The Apostles. Taking on his youngest descendant as an apprentice, The Conjure Man squares off against a rising gang element secretly controlled by his nemesis, eventually summoning an army of vengeful spirits from the ocean deep to fight alongside him.

Frimbo believes the spirit of his true love, Perpetua, guides him but he has had many loves. Marie Laveaux, infamous Creole practitioner of Voodoo, was one and was more than his match. Eventually, he settled down and had a family. A tragedy occurred and Frimbo adopted a transient life.

During this time, the legend of The Conjure Man took root as he appeared across the American landscape, combating racial injustice and evil witchcraft equally.

Though he's never claimed to be one, a hoodoo doctor is a trickster who subverts white dominance through apparent acceptance of his or her assigned role, while "driven by a mocking wit that subverts white authority and destroys white illusions of superiority." In this story, white is not a skin color. In fact, it is the absence of color. Black is all colors. Hoodoo is the means to beat white on its own terms, while elevating black. The Conjure Man bring fear to the haves and hope to the have nots.

CHARACTERS

THE CONJURE MAN/FRIMBO: The Conjure Man is rarely seen. Most people do not know they are even in his presence. These traits have been used to describe his appearance over many years:

- Red flannel coat.
- Wild, unkempt hair.
- A small bag full of goopher dust hanging around his neck. Goopher dust is taken from graveyards and used in conjuring.
- Large, black leather pouch, containing items such as a small Bible, amulets and spearheads.
- A leather whip.
- A tattoo of Jesus Christ over his heart.
- Eyes of varying colors
- Buddhist prayer beads.

Frimbo works as a maintenance man at Ellen Dixon Charter. He seems eccentric and aloof to those who notice him. His hair is wild and unkempt. Yet, there is something regal about him. His eyes are a striking blue color. His age is hard to determine at a glance. As a man of few words, it is easy to project wisdom on him. Yet, the speed and agility in his movement belongs to a much younger man. When he does speak, it is often to no one at all, or at least it seems that way.

Frimbo arrived here by slave ship, like so many of his ancestors. However, he almost did not make it. While others were tossing themselves overboard in order to die free men, Frimbo was stopped from joining them by a spirit he would later meet in the form of Perpetua. She convinced him of his fate as a warrior, destined to fight battle after battle against injustice. Evil spirits, even Death itself, would try to claim him but never succeed. He would be trained by Seminole Indians in Florida, where he would gain additional abilities based in Cuban Santeria.

From the Harlem Renaissance to the Civil Rights era, the legend of The Conjure Man would grow, until one day, when Frimbo leaves the fight behind and starts a family. Inspired by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he believes in a bright future. When tragedy strikes both his family and King, The Conjure Man emerges once more.

From South Central L.A. to Charlottesville, Frimbo's work is never done, until news reaches him that his family, his descendants, live on in a beleaguered and crime-ridden city on the East Coast. So, he travels there, finds work as a maintenance man, and sets up shop as the city's new protector, The Conjure Man.

PERPETUA: Perpetua is a benevolent spirit from West Africa who has followed Frimbo to America and taken the form of a beautiful conjure woman. She guides escaped slaves to freedom and treats them with root medicine. When she encounters Frimbo again, the two fall in love and attempt to remain in hiding. The lovers are eventually discovered and Perpetua is killed. Before returning to the spirit world, she gifts Frimbo with immortality. In his moments of need, she appears to him.

LEROY: Leroy is a sophomore at Ellen Dixon Charter School, in the inner city.. He is regarded as the weird kid, partly because he is quiet and studious but mostly because of his obsession with hoodoo and his Haitian roots. He operates a website that sells voodoo charms and spells.

JORGE: Leroy's best friend.

GREAT GRANDMA: Leroy thinks his Great Grandma is senile, especially when she sings songs about Uncle Monday and alligators. The truth is that she shares a past with Frimbo.

UNCLE AARON: Uncle Aaron is a local pastor who is seen by many city inhabitants as a spiritual leader. He preaches God from the pulpit but raises

spirits of evil from below. He plans to poison his congregation using Communion wafers.

PAPA LEGBA: is a Haitian spirit who serves as the intermediary between the spirit world and humanity. He stands at a spiritual crossroads and gives (or denies) permission to speak with the spirits. Legba is believed to speak all human languages. In Haiti, he is the great elocutioner. Legba facilitates communication, speech, and understanding. LEGBA typically appears as an older man with a crutch, while his opposite aspect, KAIFU, appears as a young man or a demon.

THE SLAVE BREAKER: Frimbo's nemesis in the origin flashbacks.

MS. MENDES: The new head of Human Resources at Ellen Dixon Charter School, where Leroy is a student and Frimbo works as a janitor. She seems to be the only person who even acknowledges Frimbo's existence. She knows that his payroll checks get sent to Leroy's home.

CAT & ROOSTER: Frimbo's animal companions. They speak.

Every season is eight episodes. Each opening tells Frimbo's origin story in six parts.

EPISODE 1

Opening: *A slave ship is crossing the Atlantic. A storm rages, as a mutiny is abound on board the boat. The slaves are revolting but many are choosing to toss themselves overboard rather than be killed or subdued by their captors. We focus on Frimbo, who is about to do the same, when Perpetua appears before him and tells him his destiny.*

One of Uncle Aaron's soldiers, Andre, is in the ER due to extreme gastrointestinal distress. He frequently bullies Leroy, who dabbles in hoodoo. After reading of a trick that would cause his antagonist to become constipated, Leroy thinks it would be a funny prank. Unfortunately, he does not know how to undo the effects, leaving Andre near death.

Meanwhile, Frimbo has been quietly monitoring Leroy's activities while working at his school, as well as from afar. He has no choice but to intervene in order to save Andre's life. This intervention is followed by Leroy having an episode in the middle of class. He is confronted by visions of Frimbo, as an escaped slave, running from slave-breakers and being rescued by Perpetua. This turns out to be Frimbo's way of scaring Leroy and getting him to excuse himself from class.

Leroy, a wannabe conjurer, meets Frimbo, the real deal. He becomes inducted into the secret world of The Conjure Man. However, he quickly learns this world is not as supernatural as it first seems. After reprimanding Leroy for his stunt with Andre, Frimbo reveals that he makes a side living hocking roots, herbs and trinkets online. It is only when they reach Frimbo's lair, inside a row of condemned houses, that things get weird. Leroy meets Cat and Rooster, Frimbo's talking pets.

At the end of the episode, we meet our antagonist, Uncle Aaron. We learn that he has created communion wafers with goopher dust, gathered from a graveyard. This is the conjurer's primary source of power. Why is Uncle Aaron poisoning his congregation?

EPISODE 2

Opening: *Frimbo's ship arrives. Frimbo meets The Slave Breaker.*

This city belongs to Uncle Aaron. Mary Livermore, an abolitionist who spent three years on an antebellum plantation, recorded that she once encountered a conjurer-preacher known as Uncle Aaron, who exhorted believers to follow God from the pulpit, while raising evil spirits inside the walls of the church. This may or may not be the same man. Here and now, Uncle Aaron is using voodoo to control his congregation. The criminal element is also under his control. All of his power resides in his church.

At the same time we learn of Uncle Aaron's power, Frimbo begins to reveal his power to Leroy. Surprisingly, a great deal of his power also has Christian origins. The Bible is like a talisman to conjurers.

Between Uncle Aaron and The Conjure Man, there is the Chief of Police. Tension mounts in the inner city. Its citizens are caught in between. Society tells them who to blame. They are about to see a bigger picture. Frimbo will open their eyes.

EPISODE 3

Opening: *Frimbo versus The Slave Breaker*

Leroy becomes entangled with some. Uncle Aaron's influence on the police department is explored. A cabal is revealed, consisting of powerful crime bosses, the Chief of Police, and a mysterious figure. He is Papa Legba, the Haitian deity. He is a Machiavellian figure whose role in these events are initially unknown.

Frimbo comes to Leroy's rescue. After a confrontation with the city's police force, whispers about The Conjure Man grow louder. References to the urban legend fill social media. After being interrogated in a rather rough fashion, police headquarters goes dark. Kaifu, Papa Legba's younger form, appears in Frimbo's cell.

The Conjure Man disappears from holding.

EPISODE 4

Opening: *Frimbo escapes. He is rescued by Perpetua.*

A city-wide manhunt is underway. Everyone is after Frimbo. Leroy has gone missing. It is time for Frimbo to meet Papa Legba at the crossroads. Much of this episode takes place on another plane of existence. This is how Frimbo eludes everyone. For a brief moment, he is face to face with Perpetua. This is all he needs to return to his city, rescue Leroy and form a plan.

EPISODE 5

Opening: *Frimbo learns to conjure and falls in love with Perpetua.*

Frimbo visits Leroy's great-grandmother. While her family believes her singing and speaking to Frimbo is a sign of senility, it is because of their past relationship. It is revealed that she was married to Frimbo in the 1960s. Their son, Leroy's grandfather, was murdered. This is what led Frimbo to abandon any attempt to lead a normal life. Yet, 50 years later, Frimbo returned to the city, took a job as a maintenance man and attempted to live a simple life, keeping an eye on his kin. We see what triggered the latest resurgence of The Conjure Man, the true beginning of our story. `

EPISODE 6

Opening: *The death of Perpetua. The birth of The Conjure Man.*

Frimbo is outmanned and outgunned. Uncle Aaron has amassed an army and taken Leroy hostage. From the sea, Frimbo hears Perpetua's voice. Then, he begins to hear the voices of old friends. He begins to recall life before they were taken away in chains. Meanwhile, weather reports start reporting sudden hurricane-like conditions coming in to the shore. Massive waves begin to hit the beach, one after the other. All of a sudden, bodies begin to wash up. No sooner than they appear, they re-animate and begin walking toward the city until a small militia of what seem to be living, breathing West African men and women. The Conjure Man was summoned because it is time for the people of this city to witness the power of their ancestors. When the storm passes and it is finally safe to leave their homes, the oppressive spirits that plagued the community are vanquished. But this was merely a local matter, a family matter and a spark to light a fire. At season's end, The Conjure Man must return to the home of hoodoo in this country: New Orleans. There, he will learn of a larger plot to destroy all Americans, regardless of race, religion or creed.

SEASON ONE – “Inner City”

Frimbo has been working as a maintenance man at Ellen Dixon Charter School. His mission is to watch over his family and protect them from Uncle Aaron, a local pastor who is possessed by an evil spirit and secretly instigating local gang violence. Frimbo’s youngest descendant is Leroy, a teenage misfit obsessed with hoodoo and the legend of The Conjure Man. Leroy learns of Frimbo’s existence, that he is The Conjure Man, and eventually assists him in his battle against evil.

SEASON FINALE: Frimbo conjures the spirits of those who chose to take their own lives rather than be taken as slaves. Their bodies crash in waves along the shore, re-animate and make their way to the center of the city for a climactic gang war. Perpetua calls to Frimbo and tells him he must head South. He must head home.

SEASON TWO – “New Orleans”

In this season, we go deep into African religion and its roots in America. Frimbo revisits some key locales from his past, where he was held as a slave and where he lived among the Seminoles. He winds up in New Orleans and reunites with Marie Laveaux.

SEASON FINALE: We will learn about the plans that evil hoodoo has for America and what place Frimbo has in them.

SEASON THREE – “Nationwide”

Is it about color? Or is it about those who have and those who don’t? Does it matter? The real war is on the horizon. Where does Frimbo stand?

SEASON FINALE: Is Frimbo reunited with Perpetua in eternity? Or does he continue to roam the earth as The Conjure Man?