

The Mackerel Man Theme Song, Version Two

by  
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The Mackerel Man Theme Song, Version Two - 1.

BLACKNESS

ANNOUNCER (OVER P.A.)

And now, ladies and gentlemen, it's the moment you've all been waiting for. It's time for that funky, fishy superhero with a flavor all his own. Ladies and gentlemen, won't you give a nice, big round of applause for . . . Mackerel Man!

LIGHTS UP

*Lights reveal a microphone on a stand at down center.*

*MACKEREL MAN leaps onto the stage and crosses to the mike. He wears a stylized fish costume that conceals his identity, and he carries a guitar. He is a superhero, and he is not a relaxing presence. In point of fact, he is oppressively gung ho.*

*Except where noted, MACKEREL MAN speaks and sings everything into the microphone.*

*I wrote the expected AUDIENCE responses into the script below. If the AUDIENCE does not respond as MACKEREL MAN expects, he should run with whatever he gets. A consummate egotist like MACKEREL MAN cannot be dismayed by a mere lack of audience response.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(ad lib. over applause)*

Yes! Yes! Give it up! Sock it to me! I hear you, but I don't believe you! Now we're talking! Woo!

*(applause ends)*

Give me an "M"!

AUDIENCE

"M"?

MACKEREL MAN

That was weak! C'mon, now, give me an "M" like you mean it!

AUDIENCE

"M"!

MACKEREL MAN

Almost acceptable. I want my "M" red hot! Now give me an "M"!

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AUDIENCE

"M"!

MACKEREL MAN

Excellent! Give me another "M"!

AUDIENCE

"M"!

MACKEREL MAN

Superb! We got an "M" and we got an "M". What's that stand for?

AUDIENCE

*(uncertain)*

Mackerel Man?

MACKEREL MAN

Mackerel Man! That's right, folks. Thank you, sir. Always glad to see someone paying attention.

Well, it's great to be with you tonight, folks. I want to thank all of you for coming out to hear my brand new theme song, "The Mackerel Man Theme Song, Version Two."

Unfortunately, my intern, Mackerel Boy, could not be with me here tonight. He does this fantastic harmony part on the chorus. Confidentially, folks, at this very moment Mackerel Boy is out on a hot date with this incredible blonde chick. Absolutely incredible. Stacked out to here. So let's not cry too hard for him, OK, guys? Heh, heh, heh. That Mackerel Boy is one slick fish with the ladies, let me tell you.

But the good news, folks, is that I got my landlord Gary with me. If it wasn't for Gary, "The Mackerel Man Theme Song" would still be at version one.

*(shading his eyes)*

Where are you, Gary? Come up on stage here for a minute. Come on up, they won't bite. Let's give Gary a round of applause, whaddya say, guys?

*GARY leaves his seat in the audience and joins MACKEREL MAN on stage. They shake hands. He waves shyly to the AUDIENCE in response to their applause. The whole thing looks like a guest arriving on Letterman.*

*GARY is in his late twenties or early thirties. He wears a work shirt and jeans. He is somewhat shy.*

*GARY joining him on stage is obviously a spur-of-the-moment idea on MACKEREL MAN's part, since GARY doesn't have a microphone or anything to do on stage. GARY spends the remainder of the show adrift next to MACKEREL MAN, mostly ignored by him and reacting to MACKEREL MAN's outrageousness.*

MACKEREL MAN

You know, folks, when people ask me what I love about being a superhero, I always tell them that, most of all, I love my public. I totally love you guys. Don't get me wrong, dealing with the public isn't all fun and games. When you're a superhero, the public is always testing you. You just have to get used to it. It comes with the territory. The superhero territory, that is.

You would not believe some of these people, folks. Some people get a thrill out of asking these totally rude questions. You know, questions like, "Hey, Mackerel Man, if you're a superhero, then what's your superpower?"

Actually, let's clear this up right now. What's my superpower, huh? Anybody here heard of a superhero named "Batman?" Anyone? I see you nodding there. Wonderful. He's a close, personal friend of mine, a sweetheart of a guy. A real class act, too. He gets a lot more press than me, but he's not stuck up about it, not one bit. Not like some other superheroes I know, naming no names.

So you know what Batman's superpower is? He doesn't fly. He doesn't shoot lasers out of his eyes. He doesn't eat dirt or anything weird like that. Folks, I can tell you all about Batman's superpower. You know why? It's the same as my superpower. That's right: I've got the same superpower as Batman. How you like them apples, huh?

So what's my superpower? I'll tell you. It's no big secret. My superpower is guts. Yeah, you heard me. Guts. Courage. Resolve. Gumption. Intestinal fortitude. The Right Stuff. I laugh at danger.

*MACKEREL MAN starts getting worked up.*

MACKEREL MAN

Let's break it down, folks. It's a simple fact: I rock the house, and I rock it early and often. I am hardcore. I am money. I am the bomb. When the going gets tough, the tough get going, but you know who gets the tough going? Me. I get the job done right the first time, on time, every time. I foil the villain. I get the girl. I utilize my potential to its fullest extent. I can kick ass with or without taking names. My badassery knows no bounds.

I am fully self-actualized. I am one hundred and ten percent, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year. You strand me on a desert island with a penknife and a monkey, and three days later I've chopped down a tree with the penknife, carved myself a canoe, and paddled me and my monkey to victory. Who is the tower of crime-fighting power? I am the tower of crime-fighting power. Who does it better? Nobody does it better. Who am I? I am Mackerel Man!

*MACKEREL MAN strikes a pose. The AUDIENCE goes wild.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(over applause)*

Thank you. Thank you very much. Whew. That's harder than it looks, believe me.

Another thing people always want to know is, "Hey, Mackerel Man, how come you wear that weird fish costume with the mask and everything?"

Folks, fighting crime is dangerous work. Mackerel Man has many powerful enemies. Should my true identity ever become known, my friends and loved ones could be taken hostage, tortured, or even killed in terrible, terrible ways in an effort to put me, Mackerel Man, in a compromising position *vis-à-vis* my own security. So, in a way, this costume is for your protection too. That's why the only person who knows my true identity is my main man Gary here, and that puts him in just a vast amount of personal jeopardy. Truly a brave man. Let's give Gary another round of applause, c'mon guys.

*This is news to GARY. He is terrified.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(grinning)*

Ah, don't worry, Gary. I got your back.

*GARY is not comforted. MACKEREL MAN is oblivious.*

MACKEREL MAN

Also, the Mackerel Man costume provides me with what's known in the marketing world as "brand differentiation." Brand differentiation. I see you nodding. You're in marketing, right, sweetheart? You like that brand differentiation, don't you? You look pretty smart to me. I like those smart girls. Come back to my dressing room after the show. You can give me some marketing tips. Heh, heh, heh.

Brand differentiation, folks! When people see me at the scene of a crime, they know immediately I'm not some schlepp. It's obvious at a glance that I am Mackerel Man.

I'm not some freakazoid supervillain. I'm definitely not a henchman.

Listen, folks, without the costume, I would get mistaken for a supervillain all the time. With the costume, though: no chance. As of right now, the only supervillain who even remotely resembles me is the Black Trout, and even there the difference is dead simple to detect. Not simple enough for some policemen I know, but it's perfectly obvious to anyone who isn't trying to spy out the difference through the hole in his donut. So if there's any cops out there tonight, I love ya, guys, but here's a hint: he's a trout, I'm a mackerel. I would very much appreciate it if you take a second look before you start shooting, OK?

Actually, the Black Trout is pretty ticked about the confusion there, too. So, really, the whole thing would be funny if it wasn't such a hassle for me.

*MACKEREL MAN checks the tuning of his guitar.*

MACKEREL MAN

So this is the Mackerel Man theme song. Two months ago, the Black Trout came out with his theme song, and that was a big hit with the techno people, even though the whole song was a complete rip-off of "Safety Dance." So, for a long time, I was against the idea of writing a theme song for myself.

But you know how it is. People kept telling me how much they liked the Black Trout's theme song and asking me what my theme song was. There were all these, you know, ten-year-old kids with the big eyes filling with tears and all that crap.

Eventually, I realized that if someone as evil as the Black Trout could come up with a catchy dance number like "The Black Trout Theme Song," then maybe I could create a theme song for myself. But my theme song would be a theme song for good, not evil. My theme song people could take home with them, a comfort in their darkest hours, one, tiny, shining beacon of hope in a world gone mad. Aw, yeah.

Also, it would be part of the brand differentiation thing.

*MACKEREL MAN strums a couple of chords. The tuning still sounds good.*

MACKEREL MAN

So I wrote version one of "The Mackerel Man Theme Song," and I played it for my landlord, Gary, here. And Gary had all these fantastic suggestions on how to fix it up. The man is truly an artist. I guess that's because he's more the sensitive type, and I'm more of a two-fisted crimefighter.

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Not that there's anything wrong with being sensitive, Gary.  
Don't take that the wrong way. Heh, heh, heh.

*GARY had not taken it the wrong way  
until now.*

MACKEREL MAN

So here it is, folks. I know you're going to love it.  
Ladies and gentlemen, I now present the world premiere of  
"The Mackerel Man Theme Song, Version Two!"

*Without further ado, MACKEREL MAN  
launches into his song. He plays  
loudly, simply, and with great gusto.  
GARY is embarrassed by some of the  
lyrics.*

*I include the theme song lyrics below  
for reference. See attached lead sheet  
for how to play it. Trust me, it's not  
complicated.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(singing)*

I'm Mackerel Man  
Riding round in the Mackerel Van  
Got my finger on the trigger  
Reputation's getting bigger

I fight crime  
Combat misconduct all the time  
Get some whoopass while you can  
I'm Mackerel Man

I'm Mackerel Man  
I bring the hoodlums to their knees  
Make the ladies all say, "please"  
I can eat my weight in cheese

I got pride  
The moral highground's on my side  
Got the power and the plan  
I'm Mackerel Man

I'm smarter than those clowns at M.I.T.  
I'm tougher than you were or are or ever will shall be

I'm Mackerel Man  
When the spit has hit the fan  
My fight has just began  
I'm Mackerel Man

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*MACKEREL MAN stops suddenly and points to GARY.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(to Gary)*

Harmonica solo!

GARY (OFF MIKE)

*(utterly unprepared)*

Uh, I didn't bring my harmonica.

MACKEREL MAN (OFF MIKE)

You didn't bring your harmonica?

GARY (OFF MIKE)

You told me not to!

MACKEREL MAN (OFF MIKE)

Well, do something, man! Take it to the bridge!

*GARY thinks for a moment, then starts humming atonally a cappella and snapping his fingers, all off mike. He pathetically tries to match MACKEREL MAN's gusto, finally trailing off in embarrassment. A brief, uncomfortable silence as MACKEREL MAN and GARY look at each other. Then . . . .*

MACKEREL MAN

Ladies and gentlemen, give it up for my landlord Gary!

*The AUDIENCE goes wild.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(resuming the song)*

Iiiiiiiiiii'm Mackerel Man  
Where evil lurks, I'm on the case  
Smackin' bad guys in the face  
It's like I own this whole damn place

I got style  
Ladies love my fishy smile  
I'm bigger than Duran Duran  
I'm Mackerel Man

I got more juice than a goddamn orange tree  
I grease the wheels of justice, baby;

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I sting just like a bee

I'm Mackerel Man  
From Toledo to Japan  
I'll put your soup back in the can  
I'm Mackerel Man  
I burn instead of tan  
I'm Mackerel Man  
My favorite muffin's made of bran  
I'm Mackerel Man  
I'm Mackerel Maaaaaaaaan

*MACKEREL MAN ends the song in grand style.*

MACKEREL MAN

*(spoken)*

Thank you! Thank you, America! Good night!

*MACKEREL MAN exits like a rock star.  
GARY gives a couple of shy waves and exits behind him.*

THE END