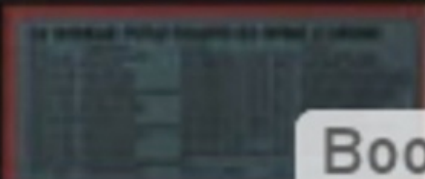
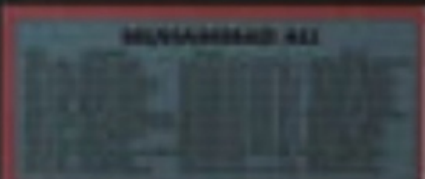


Emmenay

# MUHAMMAD ALI

# The Black Superman

*The legend of Muhammad Ali (Cassius Clay)*



BookRix-Edition

Sports

MUHAMMAD NAVEED AHMED (Emmenay)

# **The Black Superman**

To The Champ Himself

## PROLOGUE:

### DANCE MUHAMMAD ALI, DANCE!

Glide like a butterfly, sting like a bee,  
The world shan't forget you Muhammad Ali,  
Thirty one years since you met Smokin' Joe,  
In less than five years you retired that foe.  
You fought for a cause, your fists and feet showed,  
The shuffle, the flurries, the techniques that glowed.  
The rapier like repartee of pre-fight encounters,  
The razor like sharpness of your jabs on contenders.  
You proved to one and all that you were a champion,  
Inside and outside the ring, of the world, not one nation.  
You still inspire many to believe in what they have,  
And faith in God Almighty be steadfast and brave.  
Your magic in the ring no one can reproduce,  
Your aura outside it inspires many a muse.  
O Muhammad Ali, Champ of the Millennium,  
May God be with you and whatever your ambition.  
You gave us so much, your wizardry in the ring,  
Fifteen rounds of delight, the echoes still ring.  
Dance Muhammad Ali, nothing can stop you,  
Not Parkinson or anything for God is with you.  
Dance Muhammad Ali and let the flame rekindle,  
The dying torch of boxing, let's see it rumble.  
Dance Muhammad Ali, O that we could see,  
Another one like you, but how can it be?  
Dance Muhammad Ali and **boma ye**\* impostors,  
We wait Muhammad Ali for your true successor.  
Till that day dawns, you must dance Muhammad Ali,  
For, in your past fights do our hearts find glee.  
Dance Muhammad Ali and let them all find,  
That you were incomparable, one of a kind.  
You shook Joe Frazier, you swept away Norton,  
You annihilated them all in a very neat fashion.  
Big George Foreman, they said, he would kill you,  
But you struck him like lightning with stunning precision.  
Giant after giant the world threw in your way,  
But you whipped them all with pomp show and play.  
Today those who know you pray a special prayer,  
May you Muhammad Ali live long, forever and ever.

**\*Boma ye: Meaning kill him in Congo language**

## (1) THE BLACK SUPERMAN

This saga began during the second world war,  
The world's best boxer was born at last.  
Everyone had seen Rocky, Louis and Ray,  
But they still had to see the feats of Clay.  
At two he knocked out his mum's teeth,  
It is now famous as the Champ's first feat.  
When he was eighteen he was sent to Rome,  
His fists and feet brought the gold to his home.  
After this triumph he turned himself pro,  
All the pretenders had now to go.  
A bully named Liston, an awesome Big Bear,  
Was then sitting on the champion's chair.  
But now the Lip had come to claim his own,  
And push aside Liston from what was his throne.  
The world was shocked to see that a boy,  
Had challenged Sonny, Liston the feared guy.  
What they didn't see was the Louisville Lip,  
Had spring-like fists and wing-like feet.  
So the stage was set for the great big fight,  
Everyone was sitting on their seats, airtight.  
Ring-a-ding-ding, the first round began,  
The 'Lip' dared the 'Bear': Catch me if you can.  
With that came the stings: zip-zip-zip-zip-zip,  
The result was a gash above the 'Bear's' lip.  
Similarly went rounds two, three and four,  
Liston appeared to be falling on the floor.  
When round four was about to finish,  
The 'Bear' rubbed some drug so that the 'bee' diminish.  
The liniment crept slowly into the challenger's eyes,  
And he looked like a baby that suddenly cries.  
He knew the 'Bear' had done something, not in the book,  
So that he could win by hook or by crook.  
Somehow the 'Lip' managed to survive round five,  
And now he decided to skin the 'Bear' alive.  
He even taunted him: So you called me your meat,  
Now see how I force you to eat your own feast.  
He danced, he shuffled, he hit lefts and rights,  
As he had predicted, he was carrying the whole fight.  
One and all were spellbound as it became clear,  
That Sonny Liston's reign was drawing near.

In the Miami arena, under a waxing moon,  
A 'Big Bear' was prancing to a stinging bee's tune.  
After this round the feared Sonny kneeled,  
And acknowledged before all that his fate was sealed.  
The decision echoed: Clay is the new king:  
But now the Lip declared the big thing.  
I am not Cassius Clay, not a slave anymore,  
But a Muslim and a free man through Islam's door.  
He said his new name would be Muhammad Ali,  
And a champ who can't be whipped by any big bully.  
All his detractors called him a crazy fella,  
Could not see him as a servant of Allah.  
But brag what they may, what he said was done,  
He was the new ruler of the heavyweight kingdom.  
He was superb, fantastic, agile and trim,  
Drawing more crowds than a super-hit film.  
None could destroy him, not even Ku-klux-klan,  
Because Allah was with the 'Black Superman'.

## (2) THIS AINT NO JIVE

Rumble young man, rumble, was the roar of the slogan,  
When the Black Superman landed in London.  
He came to display his skills against Henry Cooper,  
Whose left hook was described as 'Henry's Hammer'.  
But the 'Lip' promised the world to knock him out in five,  
And also predicted that it 'wouldn't be no jive.'  
Then came the night for which all Britain longed,  
The stadium was full as more crowds thronged.  
Everyone was there, the common and the cream,  
Focussed from Buckingham were the eyes of the queen.  
The atmosphere was tense as a relaxed Muhammad Ali,  
Came to break the myth of the white hope's legitimacy.  
As the opening bell of the scheduled rounds clanged,  
On Henry Cooper's face sharp jabs banged.  
The grace and style of Ali was too much for the Briton,  
He appeared bewildered with a foe in constant motion.  
It was all Ali from round one to round four,  
Henry Cooper's 'Hammer' was not able to score.  
Many at the ringside were screaming with frenzy,  
Encouraging Cooper to finish the 'Stinging Bee'.  
In response to their yells, Ali swung his head,  
Magnificent his smile, he was the champ in red.  
Now, Cooper got the chance and landed his big hook,

And down went the 'Lip' like a tree that had been shook.  
He got up and walked to his corner in a daze.  
In the minute that followed his head cleared the maze.  
Round five saw Cooper charging wildly,  
In a bid to hit again the fully recovered Ali.  
Now the scene changed into a scene of deadly fury,  
Ali's razor punch opened a cut on Henry.  
The more Cooper charged, the more he got hit,  
Blood gushing out, as the gash widened and split.  
Circling majestically around his battered foe,  
Muhammad Ali looked bigger than his ego.  
The ease with which he was hitting Cooper that night,  
Made the referee step in and stop the short-lived fight.  
Henry's face was drenched in his own blood,  
To prolong the contest would have been absurd.  
So Ali fulfilled his prediction once more,  
Even though he fell on the canvas in round four.  
His fifth round whipping of the British champ that night,  
Proved once again that he was the best of those who fight.  
Beating the British champion in front of his own people,  
Muhammad Ali looked simply invincible.  
Many before him boxed but no one came near him,  
Neither Louis, or Johnson, or Gentleman Jim.

### (3) THE FIGHT OF THE CENTURY: ALI VS FRAZIER-1

Most of the world thought that Muhammad Ali was finished,  
The year was 1971 and his dazzling skills looked diminished.

It was in 1967 that he was stripped of his heavyweight title,  
And was forced to quit boxing for supporting Vietnam's struggle.

Racist Americans -- they wanted to see him killed in war,  
As in the ring, there was none, who could give him a scar.

So, for almost four years the world's real champion,  
Was stripped of his boxing licence and denied basic freedom.

Let me name a few of the opponents whom he annihilated,  
Liston, Cooper, Patterson and Terrell, all were battered.

Even Karl Mildenberger of Germany tasted defeat,  
And the likes of Cleveland Williams were rocked off their feet.

The last contender who challenged Ali for his throne,  
Was robust Zora Folley but he was slower than a drone.

Thus, when the racists of the U.S. found that Ali couldn't be beaten,  
In the ring by anyone, they attacked his Muslim religion.

They lowered the standards of induction into the military,  
And wanted the boxing champion to join the U.S. army.

These racists refused to call the champ as Muhammad Ali,  
Insisting he was still Cassius Clay, a braggart and a phoney.

But the man who knew how to fight back and defend,  
Said, after embracing Islam, he would never ever bend.

To the whims and desires of all merciless butchers,  
Who were killing the Vietnamese calling themselves as soldiers.

Thus, Ali refused to join the army remaining steadfast and firm.  
And from 1967 to late 1970 he stuck to his own terms.

He sacrificed his prime boxing years for the sake of his beliefs,  
And by doing so he gained from God more spiritual relief.

In the meantime the racists prepared a bum\* called Joe Frazier,  
And after a few fights, they made him their favourite fighter.

They prepared this slugger by programming his heart and mind,  
So that he may be able to tackle Ali, the relentless yet kind.

As part of this new plan, there was a title elimination bout,  
And Jimmy Ellis and Joe Frazier matched each other's clout.

Ellis was a good technical fighter but did not have the grit,  
Nor the power and endurance to withstand Joe's left fist.

After beating Ellis though Frazier came to be known,  
As the new world champion and was given Ali's crown.

Yet, there were some experts who knew, who the real champ was,  
And they rallied and struggled a lot for Ali's just cause.

At last in the autumn of 1970, Ali was given a chance,  
He was made to fight Jerry Quarry, a dummy who couldn't dance.

On October 22nd that year the whole boxing world watched,  
How Ali vanquished Quarry, who was, in three rounds stopped.

Then came the Argentine brawler called Oscar Bonavena,  
Who had once taken Smokin' Joe close to hell in the arena.

In the first fight with Frazier, Oscar floored him twice,  
After mauled him badly and cutting him down to size.

Even though Joe won the rematch clash with Oscar,  
Ali was certain of 'killing' the 'bull' like a matador.

In November 1970 they clashed at Madison Square Garden,  
And after 15 tough rounds Ali fulfilled his prediction.

For, in the pre-fight interview, Oscar had boasted a lot,  
But within three minutes of round 15, was floored thrice and lost.

But after having seen the skills and style of Ali,  
The vanquished Argentine greeted him respectfully.

The bull as he was known, Oscar announced on air,  
That Ali was the real champion and beyond compare.

After this, Frazier agreed for the "Fight Of The Century",  
And on March 8, 1970, got into the ring against Ali.

Even though a boxer called Buster Mathis had also whipped Joe,  
The racist experts of boxing claimed he was the better foe.

Predictions were made and the news spread around the world,  
That the "Fight Of The Century" was a fight for the real gold.

And as all seats were sold out at Madison Square Garden,  
Ali and Frazier clashed to decide the real champion.

From rounds one to four Ali battered Frazier at will,  
Even though he had lost some of his previous speed and skill.

Frazier was flustered and frustrated at the start of round five,  
That those who knew about boxing saw he was not a special guy.

Then, as some eyewitnesses say, a written paper was given,  
To Muhammad Ali and the fight scene changed its pattern.

The sharp and hard-hitting Ali went to lie on the ropes,  
As Frazier charged wildly and rekindled his lost hopes.

Yet, despite his wild charging and his aimless punch throwing,  
Frazier's admirers found that he was just not 'smokin'.

And even though on the ropes Ali out-punched the so-called champ,



Proving to all his detractors he was still the people's champ.

Frazier hit him with low blows, a lot, below the belt,  
But Ali made fun of him and neatly with him dealt.

All impartial observers who had converged there on that night,  
Saw that despite Frazier's best Ali was ahead in the fight.

However, all those men and women who wanted Ali to lose,  
Gave most of the rounds to Joe though he looked like a blown-up fuse.

Every fair analyst of the "Fight of the Century",  
Slowly saw through the scheme prepared for Muhammad Ali:

That because of Ali's bravado and his fearless nature,  
The racists of the world wanted Joe to be the winner.

The racists wanted Muhammad to lose and they called all the shots,  
As the "People's Champion" was made to look distraught.

And to save his future as a professional and good boxer,  
Ali let himself look like he could not overpower Frazier.

And in the 15th round Ali even made it even more convincing,  
By getting knocked down by Joe's left hook which he threw while charging...

And thus, even though, he had won more rounds than Frazier,  
The referee and the ringside judges declared Joe as the winner.

Unexplainable things happened on that fateful March-8 night,  
As a winning Ali was compelled and forced to lose the fight.

Video footage of those gruelling 15 rounds if seen even today,  
Will make those who know boxing ponder why Ali threw the fight away.

For, as time reveals, after losing this momentous first battle,  
Ali's revoked boxing licence was given back to him sans the title.

This poet too has boxed as an amateur in his days of youth,  
And to his death day will he say that Frazier "won" due to some crook.

For except round eleven and then the fateful final round,  
Frazier had lost most of the rounds though Ali even clowned.

Perhaps the facts behind the "Fight of the Century",  
Will emerge one day and sift falsehood from reality.

And as many boxing pundits like me say Ali won the fight,  
History too will rewrite what really happened that night.

And in the rematch fight that followed Ali beat Frazier easily,  
And in their "Thrilla in Manila", consolidated his victory.

Nobody in his senses will disagree with this poet's contention,  
That in all their three bouts Ali dominated most of the action.

And Joe Frazier was stripped of all his claims to greatness,  
By losing to George Foreman who Ali knocked out senseless.

Truth cannot lie hidden forever and one day it will be proven,  
That Muhammad Ali won the fight...and lost the decision.

The decision that made Frazier as Ali's victor in the first match,  
Was nothing but a plot which the U.S. racists had hatched.

And even after more than four decades Ali is still known as the champ,  
While nobody even remembers or knows Frazier even in his training camp.

#### (4) RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

Big George Foreman was the World Heavyweight Champion,  
Towering and fearsome, as strong as a stallion.  
He had shattered the myth of old Smokin' Joe,  
By knocking him down and out, six times as we know.  
The power of his punches destroyed Kenny Norton,  
And humbled the hopes of unranked Joe Roman.  
When George swung his punches very few could stand,  
The power they carried was like the 'Big Bang'.  
It was when Ali, the 'Champ' of all time,  
Was finding it hard to match aging skills with rhyme.  
A three-and-half years' lay-off had robbed him of his prime,  
Time had taken its toll and skills were on the decline.  
The very feet that danced for 15 rounds and more,  
Were unable to shuffle beyond round four.  
Still, Ali retained some of his old glow,  
As his destruction of Norton and Frazier would show.  
The dream to regain the title kept him moving on,  
Beating guys like Bugner out of his path like pawns.  
At last Big George had to face him for the title,  
And the Louisville Lip was right across the table.  
George knew since childhood, that when Ali said something,

His words always conveyed a very clear warning.  
So when Ali said that once inside the ring,  
Foreman would learn the real meaning of boxing.  
Don King the promoter arranged their big rumble,  
That was to be fought in an African jungle.  
The world thought perhaps Ali had gone crazy,  
When he claimed he would regain all his lost glory.  
Foreman, it was known, was deadlier than Liston,  
Younger and stronger with punches packing a ton.  
When Ali could not knockout Smokin' Joe or Norton,  
How could he, they said, vanquish Foreman the awesome.  
So most of them forecast a sad end for Ali,  
They said he would be 'killed' by George like a flea.  
Ali's old some said, too slow, no power in his blows  
Beyond round three it was predicted George wouldn't prolong the show.  
But Ali was Ali, undaunted and brave,  
Insisting how he would teach Big George to behave.  
So on October 30th of 1974,  
The 'Rumble in the Jungle' held much in store.  
As the bout started Big George charged and bombed  
Trying to land his best shots but Ali remained strong.  
He was putting his well-thought plan in action,  
Raining right hand leads on Foreman with precision.  
The annihilator of Frazier and Kenny Norton,  
Was shaken when Ali hit him and commanded the situation.  
Relentlessly George charged and managed to corner Ali,  
Hitting him with all the power his haymakers could carry.  
With Ali on the ropes and Foreman landing his bombs,  
Many closed their eyes fearing the knockout gong.  
Foreman kept swinging punches but Ali kept his cool,  
And when the round ended he even disdained the stool.  
Come on George he urged daring the champion to fight,  
This was something that none expected on that night  
With tactics unchanged he charged to end the fight in two,  
Even though he did his best his wish did not come true.  
Now Ali's strategy showed he was more than the dancing master.  
Content on the ropes he taunted George to hit harder.  
Round three was a new scene as the excited crowd roared,  
Ali Bomaye, Bomaye Ali, as Foreman was getting weaker.  
For the first time in years the champ was getting hit,  
It was round three but Muhammad was strong and fit.  
In sheer disbelief the world, and George watched,  
As the Black Superman rope-a-doped and dodged.  
The fourth round was but a replay of this scene,  
Ali was on the way to fulfilling his old dream.  
Foreman was punching him with the best he had got,  
But Ali's ring wizardry was reducing it to naught.

In five Ali showed he still remained,  
The king as more jabs on Foreman rained.  
Not a soul who was watching the bout ever thought,  
That Ali would have the whole world so distraught.  
By the end of round six and then seven,  
Foreman's dazed mind was floating in its heaven.  
In the closing seconds of eight, Ali came out for the kill,  
His lightning array of punches made even time stand still.  
Foreman was frustrated, gasping for every breath,  
His end was drawing nearer with every tired step.  
Then it was that Foreman was hit with two lefts and a right,  
He came down like a tree, crashing down with its might.  
He was on the canvas and did not know what happened,  
Till the referee went and told him that he had met his end.  
And so it was on that fateful dawn in Zaire,  
That the invincible George was consumed by Ali's fire.  
Joe Frazier was stunned and so was Kenny Norton,  
As they saw how Ali walked with the grace of a real champion.  
He erased forever doubts about his boxing prowess,  
'Ali, you are the greatest', he made them all confess.

## THE CHAMP'S OWN POETRY

### AFTER THE OLYMPIC VICTORY OF 1960

They say the greatest was Sugar Ray,  
But they still have to see Cassius Clay.  
He is fast and quick of feet,  
And he appears to be very neat.  
Floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee,  
Your hands can't hit what your eyes can't see.

## PREDICTING SONNY LISTON'S DOWNFALL

(a) Ali advances and Liston starts to retreat,  
If Liston goes back an inch further, he will wind up in the ringside seat.  
Ali swings with his left, Ali swings with his right,  
Look at young Ali carry the fight.  
It's a matter of time when Ali lowers the boom,  
Liston steps backwards, but there isn't enough room.  
Liston has disappeared and the cameramen are frantic,  
Wait—the radars have picked him, somewhere in the Atlantic.

Who would have thought when they came to see the fight,  
They would witness the launching of a human satellite!

(b) If you want to lose your money,  
Then gladly bet on Sonny.

AGAINST HENRY COOPER IN 1963

**This ain't no jive,  
Cooper will fall in five.**

AGAINST JOE FRAZIER IN 1971

Joe Frazier is gonna come smoking,  
And I aint gonna be joking,  
I will be pecking and poking,  
Pouring water on his smoking,  
This may shock and amaze ya,  
But I will destroy Joe Frazier.

AGAINST KEN NORTON IN 1973

It will be a left hook or a right cross,  
That will teach Norton who is the boss.  
My jaw has healed,  
His fate is sealed.

A

**AGAINST FOREMAN IN 1974**

**So George Foreman do yourself a favour,  
Stay away from my left, it cuts like a razor.**

**You were all amazed when Nixon resigned,  
Wait till I whup George Foreman's behind.**

**It was so exciting, it was such fun,**

**I saw him shadowboxing and his shadow won.**

**AGAINST JOE FRAZIER IN 1975**

**It will be a chilla and a thrilla,  
When I tame the gorilla in Manila.**

**AGAINST ERNIE TERRELL IN 1967**

**I am fighting him for he needs the money,  
After this fight his life won't be sunny.**

**\*\*\*\*\* THE END\*\*\*\*\***

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