

Two Places at Once

What can i do?

You've been so busy for so long -- graduate classes, that prestigious internship, the job you're holding down to pay the rent, tutoring for extra cash to send home for your little brother -- that the people who know you (you don't know that you'd call them friends - you don't really have time to socialize) joke that even if you don't sleep, you'd have to be two places at once most of the time.

They're absolutely right.

While you're working the job, you're doing your term paper at home; while you stay late working on the new research assignment at your internship, you're... well, also working on ANOTHER research assignment for your internship, just somewhere else in the building.

Sometimes your memories get a little... jumbled, and sometimes you lose track of everything you're supposed to be working on, but generally it works out, especially since you started writing yourself reminder notes and leaving them on the fridge or on your computer screen at the office.

The only thing is, the handwriting on those different notes isn't very... similar.

(1-2 dice)

Work on two projects at once, as long as neither of them is too difficult and you're nowhere near each other -- sit through a seminar while you're filing old information at one of your jobs. Alternately (and a little trickier) look up some information you need down in Archives for a meeting you're having Upstairs at the same time.

(3-4 dice)

Need to defend yourself? It's a lot easier when you can kick someone from four different directions at the same time.

Need to get away? It's pretty hard for someone to catch you when they (or you) don't know which 'you' to chase.

Need to go into serious research mode? You're your own team of assistants.

(5-6 dice)

Looking for someone or something? It's a lot easier to find them when you can knock on the door of every single apartment in the whole building at the same time... or when a younger you can look for them two years ago, or an older you can look for them next week.

Fighting back? You're a one-woman army, with some of you providing the smackdown while others run in with first aid kits and extra hand grenades.

How does it break me?

Fight — Sometimes, things get to be too much, you know? You just want to hit something -- just hit it and hit it and hit it and hit it until the constant pounding of your fists turned into a drumroll... the beat of raindrops on a tin roof, the fall of a thousand arrows... one pair of fists multiplied a half-dozen, a dozen, a hundred, a thousand times until you're lost in stormy tossed sea of your own anger.

Flight — The danger is too much; even if there were a thousand of you, you'd never be able to face the horror before you and you just need to run -- all of you needs to run, run away, run in as many different directions at once, so that there's no possible way that anyone could catch you... no way they could catch all of you, or even know where you went. No way anyone could know where each and every one of you went; no way anyone -- even you -- could ever find all of you again.

How do I change?

It's hard to focus, isn't it, when you're do so many different things? Still, it's double, double, double the brain power; multiplied mental acuity, maybe out to infinity, the way that no other person can be. You look at the other people around you -- sad little people, trapped in their sad little single-serving lives; only ever able to see through one set of eyes, live one set of days...

... if only there were a way to help them all...

What am I becoming?

Eventually, you start to feel so bad for all the denizens and nightmares and mortals out there in the world -- there's so much they want, and only one set of hands to make it happen. You can help them -- you can be everywhere at once, if you really really want to, and every single one of you can solve a problem.

In fact, there's really no way that those pathetic little creatures could ever manage without you -- no way they could know better than you, right? Two heads are better than one? Dearie you have NO idea. They should let you take care of it... take care of them... take care of ALL of them... take care of everything... you know best, you know everything, and they HAD BETTER LISTEN TO YOU.

You are the Busybody.

Comic Book Allies ((crappy name, but I can't think of anything else))

What can I do?

All those heroes, protagonists, and anti-heroes from the comics that you've been staring at ever since you could read? Well, apparently they're paying you back for all the attention you gave them over the years, and have started to spend a LOT more time with you. They walk (or float) alongside, giving you advice, making observations -- sometimes, just chatting.

It's disconcerting when they just want to chat. Captain America shouldn't have to bring up the weather to keep the conversation going, y'know?

But it's not like you're hearing voices -- you know you're not crazy -- you can see them, and you can tell that having them around makes other people a little nervous, so they must be able to see them too.

And they don't just talk... if you ask, they DO things for you. Favors, you know. The kind of stuff only someone like that could do.

You have to be careful what you ask for, though... they don't see everything in black and white, but four colors doesn't provide a lot more nuance than that, does it?

(1-2 dice) Your spandex-clad friends give you a modest, immediate advantage. Maybe Spidey trips someone up, or Bats points out someone on your six, or you get a light puff of super-breath at the right moment... A word of advice from Doctor Strange or Professor X never really goes amiss either. Sometimes, just the fact they're there seems to make people nervous and puts them on the defensive.

(3-4 dice) Someone super strong can do a lot of heavy lifting for you, and obviously any one of those caped crusaders can mess a guy up if they need to, or carry you out of harm's way if they don't. It's what they do.

(5-6 dice) Don't tug on Superman's cape. You know what it is, when The Thing faces off on the Hulk, or the Avengers try to arrest the X-men (again)? Messy, that's what it is. Big, and missy, and likely to leave a city block very, very flat.

How does it break me?

Fight — Are you kidding me? Fighting is what these guys are all about. When you've got Bats constantly asking you to "let me bring these punks to justice", or Tony Stark warming up the ol' gauntlets, or god forbid Frank Castle giving you advice? It gets into your head and heats up your blood and pretty soon it's CLOBBERIN' TIME. And you've always wanted to fight alongside your heroes...

Flight — It's one thing to see the violence done on the page and drawn by Cassaday, but it's someone else entirely to see it happening right in your face, or to get some blood splattered on you when Logan goes to town. Things start to go that place that's mostly black and white, where the only color is red, and you want nothing more than to run as far away as you can from this little Frank Miller mindjob -- maybe even outrun your special friends for a little while.

How do I change?

It starts when you have problems telling the difference between the people out of the comics and the people who aren't. Maybe someone starts coloring your special friends in using way more than four colors, or (worse) maybe the rest of the world starts to look a lot more like THEM. I mean, if everyone's starting to look the same, and you know SOME of them are just people out of your comics... maybe everyone is. Maybe you're the only real person left.

The flip side of it -- what are you doing to your heroic icons? Maybe the Dark Knight can handle being ordered to kill one bad man... he'll do some soul-searching, but he'll be okay, right? But if you keep exposing these characters to this complicated reality, it starts to stain them -- to seep into them. Pretty soon Parker's shooting heroin in his crappy little apartment... you catch Clark getting drunk and threatening the patrons at the local bar -- maybe Master Wayne finally gives into the urges he's been repressing for so long and buys himself a little Boy Wonder on the street corner. Can the heroes you know really exist in your world? How much of that is your fault?

What am I becoming?

Eventually, you can't tell the comics from the real world -- when you boil it all down, everything is just four colors, right? If you can order around the Man of Steel and Valhalla's first son... what real challenge could the rest of this Mad little City be? Just need to get everything done up in that same art style -- get everyone saying the things you put into their word bubbles, and you'll finally have the control you've always wanted -- you can finally make the world the way it should be. No pesky shades of gray -- just four colors, all the way. You are the Colorist.

Unleashing the Silent Devil

What can I do?

You make people do things they think they shouldn't -- the things they wouldn't -- the things they DON'T because some pesky, pointless thing in their head says that it's "wrong." You are the exterminator for everyone's annoying little Jimminy Cricket. People might say you turn them into sociopaths. Eh. Labels.

It's fairly easy to get people to act on what they want to do when there's some desire on their part and only a flimsy barrier in the way of them going for it. They just need to... forget about that little barrier in their head for awhile, and voila.

Sometimes, that nasty little thing they want to do is buried really deep, or blocked behind a very big, very substantial wall -- but that's all right. It'll take a little more work to bring that beastie into the light, but you have a sense that it's there, and a pretty good idea what it is -- you can coax it into the light... everything wants to be free, right?

(1-2 dice) "Let" someone (one or two people) do something they're pretty inclined to do anyway. A professional knee-breaker putting a bullet into the head of another guy in the room who happens to be sleeping with his sister? The only thing in the way of that is not wanting their boss to get mad: Piece of cake. If you're not actually looking to release the beast, maybe all you need to know is what the beast is -- you can get a pretty good idea at this level.

(3-4 dice) Remove the barrier that keeps someone from doing something they'll seriously regret later. Maybe a husband beats up his wife for criticizing his driving last week, or a guy shoots his boss for not giving him a bonus check last year. You can spread this kind of pain out among a pretty good-sized group of people -- need a nasty little bar fight? Piece of cake. Also, if you're digging around in just one person's head, you can get a REAL good idea what their worst impulses are.

(5-6 dice) Strip away everything that connects a person to the rest of humanity. They take what they want, and kill who they like. The shortest path to any goal is usually over a couple dozen bodies, and that's the route this person will take. If you're looking for something with a little wider scope but less bone-chilling depth, think in terms of a big city block; you could turn Sesame Street into the '68 Chicago Riots. If you're screwing with just one person, and they don't have the beast you need? You can GIVE it to them. God help you, it might even stick.

How does it break me?

Fight — Everyone wants to hurt someone else -- that's just the kind of animals we are. In order for you to let that beast loose and knock the barricades out of the way so it can run free, you have to examine that kind of anger and hate over and over and over again. You know what they say: "Look too long into the Abyss, and the Abyss will fill you up with a white-hot rage and make you beat the ever-loving fuck out of somebody." Something like that, anyway.

Flight — Sometimes, even for you, it gets to be too much -- looking into the blackest pits of the human soul builds up like salty phlegm and bile in the back of your throat and you just need to get away, fast as you can -- get clear and hunker down in some alley somewhere where no one can see you puking your guts out.

How do I change?

Everyone's got an animal inside them and some stupid little set of rules and morals that gets in the way of tapping into that. The more you help the Real Person get out, the more it tends to happen on its own; it gets to a point where people just start forgetting about the rules that keep them from putting their neighbors head through a window whenever you come around -- it's like an aura that you have to concentrate to control.

But why should you? That thing inside these bastards? That's the truth. Why hide it?

They're all just animals.

What am I becoming?

The truth of humanity is what it is -- we're all just beasts who make ourselves sick by trying to act like something "better" than we are. We need to tap into that True Self and throw away everything that gets in the way. Strength. Anger. Power. Survival of the Fittest. Most of all, No Remorse.

You can help them. You can get EVERYONE give up the Lie, permanently, and that's just what you're going to do; help them. You are the Psycho-therapist.

Rearrange

What can i do?

Ever since you can remember, you've been able to see how things might be better arranged to serve a purpose. It's always bugged you when things were out of place, and lost efficiency is the bane of your existence.

In the end, the entire world is just one big system, really, and if it was just tweaked a little, everything would flow more smoothly.

(1-2 dice)

Small distortions of spatial relationships can improve life in so many ways. Cut off travel time by folding your path smaller. Stretch the back seat of your car so you can fit all three child seats. Elongate the dining table to fit that surprise guest. Curve a bullet's path around a corner.

(3-4 dice)

Edit the world to suit your purposes. Open a door and step through to a room two floors up. Multiply your home so that the in-laws can stay next door. Tilt the floor sideways to send attackers sliding into the wall. Look out your window and see right into the offices of the Tacks Man.

(5-6 dice)

Space is putty in your hands. Trap someone in a Mobius strip of sidewalk. Extract a bubble of space from reality to create a safe place no one can exit or enter.

Cause someone who is emotionally entangled to become distant and aloof. Become extremely close to that friend you just made on the subway. You just started a lengthy task? You're now very close to finishing. Someone arrogantly defying you? Put him in his place.

How does it break me?

Fight — The problem with people, is that they're always throwing a monkey wrench into the system. Every time you go and get it tweaked, they do something to mess things up, which requires another tweak. If they would just leave well enough alone, you could get the world sorted out right in no time, and everyone could fit into the place you've assigned them. Sometimes it just takes pounding a peg into its hole so it will do its job.

Flight — Sometimes, you realize that you're the only one who sees the big picture, and it's just too much. The world is such a mess, and there are so many tweaks that are needed before it will ever resemble the Grand Design you have in your mind. Faced with out-of-place people and things on every side, thankfully you can open your own path of escape to a sanctuary where reality has been tamed.

How do I change?

You walk a lonely road as the only one who knows the Grand Design. You work so tirelessly to bring it to pass, but like spoiled children, things keep popping out of their places. You are growing increasingly frustrated that you can't seem to make headway.

What am I becoming?

Frustration is leading to despair that the you will never see the Grand Design fulfilled. It's becoming clear that a piecemeal approach is not working. You can't rely on things to start fitting together. It's time to take on the world in big portions, and enforce the Grand Design top down.

You are the Architect.