

Adventures of a Wimpy Superhero

Friday 1st January

I have decided to become a superhero. I'm tired of reading comics and watching films and imagining being a crime-fighter. I want to get out there and actually become one. I just need a name and a costume.

And some crime, obviously. I'm not sure how much we get around here. According to the local paper, someone dumped a fridge in a car park near the hospital. I'm pretty sure that counts as crime.

Saturday 2nd January

I've examined my comic collection and I've noticed that loads of the best superheroes are based on animals. All I've got to do now is find one that hasn't been done.

Bats.

Cats.

Spiders.

Raccoons.

Hamsters.

That's it. Brilliant! Hamsters haven't been done yet. I'll be Hamsterman.



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Now I need to find a way to give myself the powers of a hamster.

I could get a hamster to bite me. But would it need to be a radioactive one? I could microwave one until it was radioactive, then make it bite me.

It would probably just go hard rather than radioactive in the microwave, though. Like pizza does.

Having thought about it, I'm not even sure what hamster powers would even be. I could store things in my cheeks. Would that help me fight crime?

Sunday 3rd January

Okay, forget hamsters. I'll get some powers first. I can think of a name and costume afterwards.

Super strength would be a good power. I could definitely stop criminals with that. According to my comics, the best way to get super strength is to expose yourself to radiation. So I just need to find a nuclear power plant, steal some radioactive waste, rub it on myself and wait for my muscles to grow.

Later . . .

It turns out that radioactive waste gives you cancer rather than super strength. Glad I checked that first.

I could achieve super strength by going to the gym

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every day. But it costs thirty quid a month and you have to sign up for a year.

I think I'll focus on developing super intelligence instead.

Monday 4th January

At school today I told my best friend Henry about my plan to become a superhero and he got really excited. He held his arms out and ran around the playground pretending to fly. This is a serious attempt to wipe out crime, not a childish game. I hope I can get some more mature friends when I'm a real-life hero.

During lunch I tried to tell Sienna Michaels and her friends about it to see if it would impress them. But they all got important texts and had to look at their phones. That always happens when I try to talk to them.

I didn't really care anyway, because I'm a mysterious loner. Loads of us superheroes are like that. Our powers are a gift and a curse that mean we can never commit to human friendships.

Sienna will probably really fancy my heroic alter ego but I won't be able to tell her it's me and it will be really cool and tragic.

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Later ...

Writing that last bit just gave me an amazing idea for my name and costume. I'll be The Loner. Pretty cool, eh? And it doesn't really matter what powers I end up getting, because the name would fit with any of them.

Later still ...

Okay, I have an identity. Now I need an origin story. All good superheroes have origin stories.

I'm not the last of a race of superbeings exiled to Earth. But we did have to move house when Dad's company relocated ... I've never been experimented on by a secret government organization. But I had a flu jab once, and I'm pretty sure the government were behind that ... Neither of my parents have been killed by gangsters yet. But our car got keyed outside Nandos once. Dad had just had an argument with a man in a tracksuit over the Peri-Peri sauce. This could make a good origin story if I put it all together:

Exiled from Watford at an early age, forced to watch his dad's car being vandalized and subjected to painful inoculations, young Josh Walker dedicated his life to fighting crime. Whoever you are, whatever your problem,

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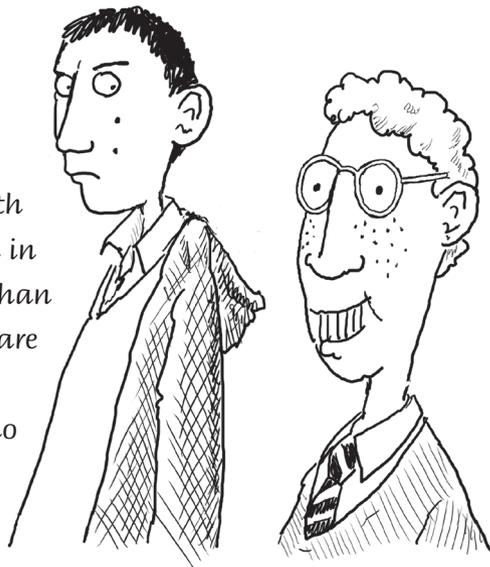
you can count on The Loner, the world's greatest crime-fighter.

Tuesday 5th January

Bad news. Henry has decided to become my crime-fighting sidekick. I tried to explain I was called The Loner, which meant I couldn't have a sidekick, but he wouldn't listen. He's decided to call himself The Ginger Ninja. Loads of people at school tease him for having ginger hair, so I think he's trying to turn it into a positive.

There are so many reasons this identity is a bad idea. For a start, superhero identities are meant to be secret. Henry is one of only five gingers in our school, so it will be really easy for everyone to guess who he is.

More importantly, he doesn't know any martial arts at all. He only chose ninja because it rhymes with ginger. He's the only person in our class who's even worse than me in the gym. Once Mr Ware made us climb a rope and Henry was the only one who



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couldn't manage it. Even I got halfway up before Shane and Kieran started swinging it to try and shake me off. I can't have a crime-fighting partner who can't even climb a rope. How are we meant to scale buildings when we're chasing criminals?

I'm going to put my foot down tomorrow and tell Henry he can't join me in the fight against evil.

Wednesday 6th January

Henry brought his Ginger Ninja costume into school today, and it was quite detailed, so I didn't have the heart to tell him he couldn't be my sidekick.

I guess I'll just have to carry him if we're scaling walls.

Henry got his mum to make his costume last night, which **totally** missed the point of secret identities. If she sees the Ginger Ninja fighting crime on the news, she'll know it's him. It's a good costume, though. It's made from Day-Glo orange Lycra with the initials 'G N' on the front. It will strike fear into the hearts of criminals, as well as making it safer for Henry to cross the road at night.

At the risk of revealing my own secret identity, I've agreed to let Henry's mum make my costume. I've designed a black Lycra body suit with a big yellow