

ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS

Inspired by the music album 'Ordinary Superpowers'

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“Morning! Time to get up,” a shrill voice announces.

“Argh, umm, yeah, ok...” I reply in a sleepy, reluctant state.

“Jay, you’re going to be late again! Never mind mumbling and getting lost in the covers, C’mom!” reaffirms my agitated mum.

“Uh, mornings are the worst!” I complain for the third morning in a row.

Unable to let go of the duvet, and still clutching the ends, I drape the striped print to form myself a royal cape and scramble out of bed, standing as straight as a soggy, brown banana.

“OK mum, I’m up!” I shout, signaling defeat.

Sliding across the room like a majestic slug, looking out the window, I see a lightning bolt cross the sky. Only it looked less like a lightning bolt and more like, well... me!

Rubbing my eyes to check they’re working properly, I blink and look outside the window again. There is nothing in the skyline now, apart from the stationary castle on the hill that I would often climb up to on sunny days and bank holidays.

Clutching my royal cape, my imagination wonders whether my sleepy slug servants would be in the castle on this cold winter’s morning? In getting carried away with my usual day dreams, my face’s faint reflection in the glass reminds me to shape up. I probably should brush my messy hair and get a move on.



"Bye mum. See you later!" I say, making my way out of the door.

"Are you sure you don't want me to take you?" mum questions, her brow furrowed in concern.

I scrunch my face up, "Chill out! School's two minutes away and I'm in year five now." I have got this totally covered.

"I know, but I'm your mother and I do worry, you know," comes mum's helpless reply.

"I'll be fine. See ya!" I shout over my shoulder as I move along the pathway and gain pace, feeling faster than the speed of light.

Turning the corner of the street I look back at the house expecting to see mum doing her usual mum things; Waving goodbye whilst sobbing over her grown-up child, checking the hanging basket, or picking up litter blown into the garden. The last thing I expected to see when I look back is a ten-year-old the same height, wearing the same uniform, and with the same mousy brown hair, as me!

What on earth was going on? Mum is waving to this other 'me'; the me that I'd beaten not only in distance, but time. How had I run so fast that I had left even myself behind to eat dust? It is in this very moment that I realise that this is going to be no ordinary day.



I begin my usual day dreaming...

I imagine splashing in the waves of the deepest ocean, arm wrestling an octopus and swimming with dolphins, then racing with cheetahs and swinging from the highest branches with the monkeys. And how great would it be to actually moonwalk on the actual moon!

A typical school day would find me sitting at my desk using a pen to prop up my tilted head, making a trickle of saliva to form a gloopy oasis of drool in one corner of my mouth. I love to stare out of the window and release these wonderous thoughts, gazing into the wilderness of the playing fields beyond. The grassy wonderland outside is a constant tease, a reminder that there is a whole wide world out there just waiting to be explored. It is only when the distant, swirling sounds of chatter about numeracy, pencils and rulers gets closer, that I snap out of my thoughts. My head would jolt to attention as I get sucked into the real world from my floaty fantasies. Miss Hagan's big, blue, widened eyes inches away from my own brown, startled irises.

"Earth to Jay! Lunch is in T minus 10 minutes so can we get a move on, Lovey?"

Ordinarily, Miss Hagan would easily kick start my reality into motion, but not today. I wouldn't even make it to school.

As I snap out of my daydreams about school, I find questions buzzing round my head. I had managed to run so quick that I left a past self further down the road. Who would have thought that lightning bolt I saw out of my bedroom window first thing this morning, could have actually been me? There was only one way to find out...



With my heart pounding ferociously in my chest, I start off on another supersonic sprint down the street, throwing off my backpack and letting it crash to the ground. Could this really work?

I close my eyes for a moment, searching for some locked away, super power, then jump with all my might towards the crisp, blue sky. A sudden cool wind begins blasting on my face and I have a feeling of complete weightlessness. I risk a quick peek to see what happened and open my eyes.

Woah! Am I actually flying?

Zooming through the air now I can see my house get smaller and smaller. I take a deep breath in to keep the bursting excitement inside as I whoosh through a big, fluffy cloud. This is amazing!

The temperature rises as I feel the warmth of the sun beating down on me. I feel so alive and so free! Navigating my way through the sky feels effortless, but I need to stop somewhere. I need time to think and take it all in. I must get myself a plan of action.



Holding my arms out I slice easily through the air and swoop down, dipping below the clouds to find a familiar landmark to rest upon. Nothing could have prepared me for the view I got; a giant Ferris wheel, a gherkin shaped building, and a huge glass triangle piercing the skyline. I notice a big clock next to a river reading quarter to nine, letting me know school would be starting soon.

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Flying on along the road running beside the stunning big clock, I spot an open-topped, red bus and I land clumsily into it. Thrown into an empty seat, I shake my head to get my bearings and look around to see wide-eyed, stunned tourists frozen with their cameras and a tour guide, all now looking at me. The guide in surprise at my arrival, drops his microphone to stare at me, open-mouthed, as the tourists take pictures of my wind-swept face.

Ignoring the flashes of light raining down on me, I compose myself and my thoughts turn to the time and place. Where was I? The place did look rather familiar to me. The time on the giant clock read 8.45, that's five minutes since I had left the house. And the place I recalled, after a recent theatre weekend with dad, seemed quite clearly to be London!

I remember the train taking two hours, which had felt like pretty much forever, and now it had just taken me five minutes!

Five minutes to London? Amazing! I am so excited as the reality of my superpowers sinks in. The question is, where shall I go to next?



There is only one destination that springs straight to my mind.

Ever since learning in school of Pharaohs being buried with treasure and underground passageways decorated in gold, I have to visit Egypt with all its splendour and mystery... Except, I'm thinking this time, I'm going to take the lit-up pathway of the stars. The stars are always out but you can't always see them.

Leaping from my seat with all the power I can muster, leaving behind a startled London bus tour, I head for the sky. Shooting upwards towards a universe of unknown, I zoom through what is a brilliant, blue sky. Quickly, the blue turns to a cold black as the moon, stars and a whole host of beautiful orbs burst into light. Riding down the star lit highway of space, I can't believe how close and vivid the planets are. I can see the craters on the moon, the red mass of Mars and the incredible rings around Saturn. I almost lose myself in the amazement of this flip-side of our world up here, so caught up am I in the vast, dwarfing display.

Looking down at the gorgeous globe that is earth, I head down towards the lush, green-blue warmth that I know so well. As I head through the atmosphere, I see the life-giving River of the Nile that I've read so many stories about. Landing clumsily once more (I really need to sort out my landing style) I end up in a mess on the floor.

Quickly, I get to my feet and wipe the sand off my clothes. Wow, sand! I must have made it to the desert, I realise. Looking up, the sun creeps up behind the Great Sphinx of Giza. Standing wide eyed I take in a panoramic view. Several pyramids fill the sky line and my mind starts racing, imagining what stories would have taken place here.

Following my heart, I run past lines of tourists to get close to one of the greatest Wonders of the World before coming to a sudden halt.

Standing in the middle of a bustling crowd of people, I'm overcome by the scale of the iconic figures that surround me. My senses are bombarded with unfamiliar smells and languages and chattering accents. The Egyptian pyramids loom grandly before me and I suddenly feel very small.

Taking in every detail of the giant tomb, my eyes catch sight of a strange-looking man stood away from the hustle of the people. He looks so out of place that I cannot help but stare. He doesn't have the same thin, flowing, cool clothes that everybody else is wearing, which seems more than a little odd to me. In fact, he's wearing a thick, dark tweed suit and resting heavily on a light-coloured walking stick as he walks along looking very nervous and very shifty. The shine in his dark, black hair carries through to his greasy, pencil moustache that shakes as he turns his head frantically.

What is he looking for? I can't take my eyes off him!

Shimmying left to right, as if he's getting into the greatest hide and seek spot the world has ever known, the man takes one last look around, no doubt to check nobody is watching him and disappears through a small crack in the brickwork. But I was watching him.

Slowly but surely, I duck under the security ropes that keep people from making their own adventures around this ancient wonder. Nobody was going to stop me today. I make a dart for the same gap that the man had suspiciously vanished into, checking too that nobody was looking.



Inside it is dark and very narrow. Passageways thread and wind intricately, having been carved out so many centuries ago. I suddenly feel very claustrophobic. As I start to turn back I hear a faint sound. Somebody or something is mumbling in the distance. I lean in, desperately trying to stretch my ears. I hear voices now saying something about treasure. I start to tip-toe towards the sound.

"A-haaa!" echoes across the passageway as I see the man with a fine torch-light picking up what looks to be a square diamond. "Bingo," his voice is big and boomy. "One down, three to go!" He sounds to me just like an English country gentleman.

"Yeah, that big rock thingy in Australia next, right?"

I jump out of my own skin as a lady I hadn't spotted earlier, just feet away, begins talking. The lady seems like she is from a whole different world than the man, though dressed in the same dark, tweed suit and speaking English. Her voice is vacant, hair unkempt and her body language suggests she doesn't know, or even care, why she is here.

"Yes, Martha. Now be a help and lead the way out of this stuffy old place. I hate dust and I'm thirsty!" demands the man.

Pressed against the wall, wishing to sink in to it, I wait for the pair to walk down an opposite passageway. Brushing the sweat from my face, I make my way outside, tip-toeing the whole way, then freeing myself through the same crack in the brickwork.

I take a moment as the Egyptian sun radiates against my skin and adjust my eyes to the sudden brightness. I did not have a good feeling about this. Something just did not feel right and I couldn't quite put my finger on it.

Who were the people in the pyramid? What were they up to and, more importantly, which way to Australia?

Catapulting around the planet like a boomerang, I set out to look for Australia.

I've always been fascinated by maps. I could stand motionless for hours following the borders of each Continent or Country, each time being surprised about the whereabouts of places I'd heard about in class or on the television.

Australia should be quite easy to find because it seems to be at the end of the world in a long-forgotten spot. Besides, I had always thought the island's outline looks a lot like...

'Aha, Scooby Doo, there you are,' I mutter to myself, spotting the familiar outline.

Just in time too, as I am starting to get a little dizzy. I head for the centre and wish for good luck.

I land in a heap of orange dust, with a little more practiced grace than I had previously, and brush myself down. Dry heat becomes a reality.

The floor below me is a bright orange sand that could be mistaken for rust and by the look of the trees, it looks as though rain has never poured so dry and thin they looked.

In the far, barren distance, I see signs of life inside the shop of a colourful, small village. What will I find there? I can't help feel that it will be less, 'beach dudes and kangaroos' than unknown barbaric tribes.

Will I find the rock? Or indeed, meet the strange couple I saw in the Egyptian pyramid? Will I see a kangaroo, or will I end up as tribe stew?



Sneaking up to the sides of the village I jump into a bush as I hear footsteps get closer. The footsteps soon subside to a sweeping noise. It sounds like something big and heavy is being pulled along. What could have been dragged on the floor, to make that noise, I worry?

My heart begins to thud loudly in my chest. As my mind runs into over drive, I feel a hairy, giant spider's leg brush up against my arm. Panicking, I leap out of the bush screaming, into the face of what I can only assume will be my last few moments alive and run straight into the sweeping noise. My face gets planted into the stomach of a giant man.

"You ok, mate?" his voice resonates. I stand frozen, catching my breath, fearful for my life.

"Last bus to Ayres Rock leaves in fifteen minutes, c'mon," he chimes, sweeping me down the path with his broom.

"Ah, the rock. Yes!" I reply, "Thank you." My eyes flick to his name badge, before I add "...Steve!"

"Bye!" I shout, as I start to run towards the bus.

Jumping on the bus just before the doors close, I swing over the chairs trying to get to the back seat before I freeze and stand stock still. It was them! The strange man with the same thick, heavy, tweed jacket and glistening, more than ever, black shiny hair and moustache. Not forgetting Martha, his tired, unkempt, disheveled-looking lady friend sat next to each other on the back seat of the coach. They stare at me and I feel as though they are reading every secret within my soul, as I wait for the chase, and eventual capture, into a hunter's net. As the audio crackles through the speakers of the bus, informing us about the history of the hallowed rock, I break their gaze and sit down in a vacant seat.



After what seems like a life-time of keeping my nerve, the bus stops and empties creating a crowd of wowed and amazed faces. In the far off distance, the sun beams illuminate the giant, beautiful, red rock for a moment while the world stops until...

"Hey, stop that bus! That's our only way back!" shouts our panicked driver. I look around, searching for the strange couple, but they have vanished.

Instantly I start a super-sonic run towards the bus and jump on to the roof, holding on to the edges of the front window for dear life. Looking down into the window I see the strange man laughing manically and maneuvering the bus off-road towards the magnificent rock.



After twenty minutes of sweaty, heart-racing bus-clutching, we make it to the face of the stunning rock in all her splendour. The man takes out a map and directs Martha to reach into a discreet gap rock face and pulls out another square diamond.

"That's two out of four!" the man snorts and leaps with blistering joy. "The day has come. Eternal power will be mine!" he bellows, as he shakes with mad laughter and delirium.

I had seen him laugh in this way before, earlier in Egypt. Something was very wrong with this strange man.

As they head back to the bus, I pray they don't see me clutching to the roof with my head down. Luckily, they were too occupied with their new diamond and the next task at hand.

"Ok, next we face the icy chill of Antarctica. Step on the gas, let's get back to the machine," commands the strange man to Martha.

More questions are building now. What machine? Who are these people? How did they get here and so quickly? What are they doing and what is eternal pow...

Before I finish these questions which are racing through my mind, the bus engine revs and screams through the desert as I hold on for the ride of my life and I use all my energy to cling on. We power on through the dusty desert, zipping and zooming across the sandy grains.

A sudden loud, "Eeeeeeeeeeeh!" screech, signals the end of a heart-racing journey and the bus skids to a dead stop.

The man jumps out of the driver's door and without missing a beat, points down to the sand.

"There!" he bellows at his companion, "It should be right there. Start digging, woman. All this orange sand has probably covered it. Get a move on!" he complains as the feeble woman simply falls onto her hands and knees, sweeping away at the sand as the man does little to help.

"Aha! I see it. I found it, Martha," The slimy man points to where Martha's now orange hands had just swiped away and revealed the edge of a silver disc. The time machine.

"You know, I do think my driving's is getting better, actually," he gloats to nobody in particular, "Oh do come along, Martha. I don't see what takes you so long," he despairs, as Martha attempts to wipe herself down and clean off her dirtied hands.

"Yes, Sir!" Martha replies, clearly still frazzled from the terrifying desert drive.

"It's just under there. Give it another good wipe and set the date. It'll take us three weeks to get to the south pole so set it to the fifth."

"Of this month. No need to tell me, sir. I know all four crystals have to be collected in the same day."

Martha obediently continues to swipe her hands in the sand to adjust something and I watch the strange couple step on to a metal circle and as they do so, start to spin really fast.

“Four crystals, eternal power and a time machine. Wow!” I say out loud, giving myself away.

“Hey, kid!” the man snarls, glaring up at me, as I clutch to the bus for protection, but it’s too late, they are swallowed into the floor and as quick as lightning, vanish.

“Woooo! That was close!” I pant as I turn over on to my back and gather my thoughts and breath.

If the man is after eternal power, I’m pretty sure he won’t be using it for good. He didn’t exactly seem like a good and kind man to me.

I have to do something. I can’t let him get that chance and it’s going to have to be me that stops him!



Running with the speed of a super-charged cheetah I head for the coast. As the sea creeps into view I slow down to get my bearings whilst taking in the turquoise waters and white sandy beach.

'Port Lincoln,' a solitary wooden sign reads.

Standing on a hill overlooking the sea, now was as good a time as any to test my swimming skills. Diving off the tall rocky cliff into the air I feel myself flying in slow motion for a few seconds before splashing into the water. I'm immersed, surrounded by the beautiful blue and green. I hold my breath and push water back with my hands and feet. I feel the warm glow of the sun through the refreshing splashing waves and I'm breathing just like a fish would.

Developing temporary gills and super strength in my arms and legs, I allow myself to push my way through the underwater streets. The amount of life under the watery cover is immense and I'm jetting through thousands of giant, shiny fish. I do somersaults and backflips chasing the fish round and round and make friends with some seals when I see them.

In the distance I spot wide eyes that leave you powerless, a warning tail that strikes fear into the bravest of the brave. Three hundred sharp, serrated, deadly teeth. A single bite would be fatal. It's a shark, I panic, and swim left and right ending up exactly back where I started in haze of confusion

Face to face with the shark it prises open its terrifying mouth to reveal hundreds of jagged edges. I close my eyes. Not able to look at the impending doom ahead, I hear and feel an almighty snap as the shark sends shockwaves into the water.



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Fish are swimming in such a panic and such big numbers that I'm being thrown around like a discarded wrapper in the wind.

Unable to see anything I push with all my might, to escape the crazy, devastating, shark attack. I'm swimming and swimming and swimming when all of a sudden, the crazy variety of life and speed under the sea has turned into an empty blue city.

I can no longer feel the warm heat of the sun but the cold ice as if the sun had never existed. It is so cold. Looking up to the sky to check to see if I'm even still a part of the same world, I sigh inwardly with relief as I see the sun shimmering in the distance. But the sky has turned a dark, ominous blue and I no longer feel like I have a part to play in this world that I am in.

I soar to the top of the water to break through the ocean's veil in an attempt to make sense of where I am. My head splashes through to fresh air again at long last as I breathe in the icy fresh oxygen and gain my breath back. I brush my messy, wet hair back from out of my face to gain some vision, the wind is so strong my eyes hurt from the sheer chill.

I wipe them and now I see huge blocks of ice, like I have never seen in my life. They look like white mountain sculptures.

I'm nearly there! I must be getting close to Antarctica. Nowhere else can feel this cold, surely?

Now to get to the island and stop this evil man in his tracks before he gets the third diamond. Into the next adventure I go.

Pushing through the dense, freezing water I make my way to the ice passing royal penguins and big blubbery animals as I go. Exhilarated at meeting these wonderful creatures and finally making it to Antarctica, I whoosh through the water into the sky.





Rising up, I brace myself for a slippery landing on the white floor below, but as I come crashing down the floor swallows my feet. Who would have thought that the ice would be so easy to walk on? I had expected to be doing an Olympic routine to get my balance.

Antarctica! I had made it! I look around for signs for the south pole, a village to ask at or maybe a bus to take me there. But there is nothing and nobody. The emptiness is vast, and I start to feel small and alone with only the chilly wind as company. Running in an upset panic, tears well up and the temperature freezes my eyes shut as I fall to the floor in defeat.

How did I get myself into this situation? Yesterday I was shopping for trainers and today I'm alone at the bottom of the earth. It's only then that I remember that today is no ordinary day. I've been given superpowers and I'm going to make today count.

Leaping to my feet I start a mighty run and take off. I shoot ice out of my wrists like laser beams and jump onto each blast like an ice skater. Flying through the snowy mountains in a crystal blaze, taking in the magic of the landscape, I hear a buzzing sound getting louder and louder.

Suddenly, a helicopter flies out from behind a mountain and disappears into the valleys again. My brain makes a quick decision for me. Maybe they can show me the way, I think, as I head towards it. It must be going somewhere useful after all.

Shooting out Ice like a spider spins a web, I ski down each shoot at a rapid rate to catch up to the helicopter. I turn into the valley just in time to see the helicopter lose control and crash to the ground into a giant explosion. Whoa! It was immense and my first thought was whether there was anybody in danger and could I, with my new super powers, save them?



I fly over and slow down to see if there is any sign of life in the wreckage, when suddenly I see *them* walk casually through the smoke and on to safety. Martha is clutching her hair with wide, shocked eyes and the strange man is simply brushing his coat as if nothing has just happened.

“Three miles to the flag now. Here take my bags,” uttered the man, throwing two bags in Martha’s direction, knocking her off her feet. “That third diamond was too easy. At the mouth of the cave? Ha! And as an added bonus, I just got to crash that little helicopter for fun.”

For fun? This guy must be a spy or an evil villain or maybe just have a few screws loose, I think to myself. Ok so, wow! I must be three miles from the south pole flag! Using the smoke from the explosion as camouflage I speed off into the lead.

Racing the strange couple to the unknown, I find a silver building in the middle of nowhere with an American flag outside. It looks like a plane hangar but with no plane in sight. I peer closely at it wondering what on earth this could possibly be for before remembering why I was there in the first place. I have to move quickly.

I start to climb the large, freezing pole to reach the flag and wonder what they could possibly want with it.

Maybe the stars on it actually controlled the real stars in the sky? My imagination kicks off into overdrive once more. Maybe the stripes could slice the planet into strips? Maybe the flag itself had actual powers? My mind continued to race. In a day where nothing was going to be ordinary, anything was surely possible.

“Why am I waiting? You should be great at carrying bags with all the practice I have given you,” the strange man’s voice curses as I hear him draw nearer.

Footsteps are getting closer and closer as I hide myself in the waving flag.

“Fine! I’ll set up the time machine while you crawl your way here. Why must I do everything myself?”

The man starts wiping away snow from the base of the flag pole I’m clinging on to, to reveal the metal circle I saw in Australia.

"I'll get my hands cold and I'll set the date and time," the man moans as he turns the dials on the machine.

"I'm almost looking forward to sweating in the Amazon at this rate," he mumbles to nobody in particular.

As Martha throws the bags down in a huff, my grip loosens and sends a loud squeak down the flag pole.

"Hey, boss..." Martha pants out of breath, pointing up at the flag, "There's the kid from Ayres Rock!"

They both leap to climb the flag pole to clamber up and snatch me into capture; firstly the man, followed right behind by Martha. I break into a cold sweat and my heart beats faster, but he is a slow climber and Martha has the man's backside in her face.



Snarling and reaching for my leg I hear distant shouts of, "Nooooo!" as I jump off the pole and onto the circular time machine. The world starts spinning round and round as I see the sky turn pink and people begin to zoom past me at the speed of light. I was exactly at the same spot I had been before, only the sky wrapped me up in fluffy white clouds against a peach sky.

Alone, again, but this time with a sense of power and purpose. Shaking off the dizziness of my journey I have got to make a move. I have one last chance to stop this evil man from getting all the diamonds and eternal power.

Last stop? The Amazon.

Skidding, whooshing, and sliding through the white snowy plains, I make it to the edge of Antarctica, looking out to the sea. 'Which way to the Amazon?' I ponder as I catch my breath. A sea lion stares at me for about ten seconds and jumps into the water.

Just as I catch my breath, the majestic sea creature surfaces, laying on his back, motionless on top of the water before another slides next to it and does the same. More and more sea mammals all rise to the surface laying on their backs. In seconds there's a bridge made of fish stretching out over the horizon. I take the first step onto the neatly laid fish bridge and gaining pace I notice that there are whales and all kinds of other fish out in front.



It seems to go on and on as if it would never end as I burst into a supersonic dash into forever. I run into the lightest blue skies and my cold chills are replaced with a blazing heat and my lungs fill up with thick, hot oxygen. Running through a rainbow I see the first land I've seen for miles and miles and my heart bursts with excitement.

Leaping to the shore, I look back out to the sea, taking in the splashing of the fish as they go back to their daily, water filled lives. Turning around I see mountains with houses on the side, cable cars reaching up to the sky and a great statue on a hill.

Beautiful landscapes, vibrant colours, carnival music, the smell of spicy food and the most wondrous, dominating statue – I have made it to Brazil.

Running at light speed through the bustling city, I leap into the sky to dive into the wilderness of the Amazon.

Crashing through the dense treetops, I say goodbye to the light of the world I know and greet the darkness of the rainforest. I land like a mess on the floor and sit upright, despite finding it unbearably hot and humid, I conjure up the biggest smile of my life.

This is amazing! I'm surrounded with the most incredible wildlife I have ever seen, it's like a whole other world in here. Under the canopy of treetops, keeping the rainforest a secret from rest of the planet, my senses are in overload. Getting to my feet, I seem to scare a lizard hiding in a tree as it suddenly scarpers and disappears into the background, where I can just about still make out its eyes in the thickness of the wood, matching its body with the background. Sometimes we don't realise the magic we possess.



Everywhere around me, vivid colours are jumping and crawling, running and flying, dancing in the greatest show I've ever seen. I get caught up in the marvel of the rainforest and thoughts go back to the reason I am here.

Hearing human voices, I swing up to the mid branches of a tree and stay frozen to listen in on their plans as they get closer.

The language is alien to me and peering down it is not the couple, but a family with painted faces and wearing feathers.

One parent is carrying some rope and two children are carrying paddles fresh from a boat trip. 'This must be an indigenous tribe,' I think to myself as I crouch, frozen, waiting for them to pass, scared of what I didn't know.

Inspired by the brilliant monkeys of the rainforest, I swing from tree to tree searching for any sign of the strange couple. After the family have moved on and along their way, I decide swinging through the trees might be great fun and I continue like Tarzan zipping and hurling from tree to tree, branch to branch before quickly realising I am making little progress on my hunt, my reason for being here in the first place, to find the couple and prevent them from getting the diamond.

The paddles from the family I had just seen, set my mind thinking. If I were an evil, power-crazed bad guy in the largest tropical rain forest in the world, I'd be... In the river! Of course! Piranhas, snakes, electric eels, and crocodiles. Bad guys love danger, I considered.

Charging through the forest, flashing colours fly by, new smells flutter and sweat seeps from every pore. Seeing the opening in the trees ahead and the light illuminating the river I stop on the banks to compose myself.

Searching the glistening, sun-lit river for signs of life, I hear a whip in the air and a sharp pain in the top of my back. Reaching my arm around to feel the pain between my shoulder blades, my fingers find a small dart and I pull it out, looking all around me in curiosity and wonder.

What on earth was this?

I vaguely remember reading that you can make poisoned darts from the toxic waste of Amazonian frogs. Clearly somebody doesn't want me here.

Looking around I see no signs of anybody anywhere, but I'm not too keen to meet the dart owner, so I start to make a move. When just this morning I could have ran a marathon in seconds, I'm now struggling to place my feet one in front of the other.

Colours are whirling, I'm getting dizzy and my legs can't hold my body any longer. I hit the earthy floor of the forest. There must have been something in that dart to numb my body but I won't give up. I'm still awake, just, and I will fight the feeling.

My eyes are getting heavy now as even the darkness of my eyelids rotate in my vision as I lay helpless on the floor and fall into a deep sleep.



Waking up to a loud buzzing noise and an industrial commotion underneath me, I'm sat in a reclining chair with hand rests. My hands and feet are held together with rope and there's a round window to the left of me with the shutter down. In a dreamy daze I look around to make sense of my surroundings and search for a familiar face.

Unfortunately, I find one.

It's Martha. As our eyes meet she gets up to sit in the empty chair next to mine.

"Sir, we have an awake, meddling child here wondering where he is," cackles Martha, as she pulls the window shutter up.

"Ok, move over Martha. I'll do the talking, thank you," replies the smartly dressed, greasy man getting up slowly from his seat.



I glance at the window and we're just below the clouds with giant mountains underneath us. We're on a plane!

As I stare wide eyed at the stunning but deadly looking mountains below, Martha gets replaced by the man.

"So, kid," snarls the man with his eyes, searching the truth out of mine, "What do you know about Adannya's diamond?"

"Who's diamond? I, I was on my way to school and I was running really fast when..." I fumbled before being interrupted.

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“Don’t play dumb with me. Who sent you?” The man snapped whilst looking for the answer in my eyes refusing to blink.

I just sat there scared, surprised, and silent, gesturing confusion with my face and shrugging my shoulders unknowingly.

After what felt like a lifetime of hearing only the buzzing and purring of the plane’s engine, the man starts a deep, evil laugh.

“Martha!” shouts the evil, laughing man, “looks like we have a fool, in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

Martha looks blankly, “Why? Er, where should you be, sir?”

The man’s laugh stops immediately.

“Not me, you idiot” hisses the man as he turns back and points to me. Turning his gaze back in my direction again he gets out a map.

“Fasten your seat belt, kid. Here’s the story of how I’m going to become the most powerful man of all time”

“4000 years ago, an African king seemed to have eternal powers ruling the land for 200 years, outliving his kingdom. On his eldest daughter’s 10th birthday the king had a visitor in his chambers, as if the visitor landed from the sky. The visitor gave the king a choice between giving up his long-living superpowers or never seeing his daughter again.

After twenty-four hours the visitor returned for his decision, again appearing as if it could walk through walls, fall from thin air. The king agreed to give up his eternal powers to keep his daughter safe and locked his powers inside the visitor’s diamond. The visitor broke the diamond into four quarters and hid all four parts in different countries and continents around the world.

The first was in Egypt, the second in Australia, the third in Antarctica and the fourth piece in the Amazon rain forest. All four places create a diamond shape from space...or on a world map, here look at this.” The man points enthusiastically to his map.



“All diamond pieces must be collected and put together again to be placed onto the king’s bronze statue in a single day. The statue itself is at the foot of Mount Nyiragongo in the Congo, one of the world’s most dangerous volcanoes. When the completed diamond is in the hand’s of the king, the volcano shall erupt with the great power of fifty volcanoes. This is when I place my hands on the diamond and get given everlasting superpowers!” The man shouts in triumph.

Lowering his raised hands from the air and collecting himself, he smiles at me and shrugs his shoulders, “I thought you might like to watch the king getting re-crowned,” he says with a crazy look in his eyes.

“This has taken me thirty years of searching for clues and uncovering bits of ancient manuscript and now we are finally here”

“We actually are, sir, it’s time for landing” mumbled Martha lazily “Time to fasten your seat belt”

Sitting there for the whole story in total shock and silence, I take in every detail of the crazy man’s story. Could it be true? it must be. The last twenty-four hours have been like no other. In a single day your whole world can change. You can either sit back and watch it fall apart or stand up and do something about it. I wasn’t going out without a fight, I’m going to stop this crazy deluded man from causing a disaster.

The strange couple fasten their seat belts as the small plane begins its downward swerve towards a hidden runway. The huge, bubbling, red, steaming volcano gets closer and closer as the plane nose dives and crashes into the runway.

Racing towards the end of the small runway, cut out in the wilderness of the Congo, the plane halts with a mighty force. The doors of the plane are flung open and locals flood the plane in seconds.

“The boy’s over there!” the man shouts, pointing in my direction.

Two of the locals place me on to a wooden stretcher and carry me out of the plane, bobbing into the grassy unknown. Looking up to the sky I see the angry volcano reach into forever, dwarfing everyone and everything around it. Steam hisses and lava bubbles, The sound matches the suffocating thick air as if the volcano knows what is in store.

After being carried through nature’s green obstacle course I get put down onto the ground with a harsh thud. The locals disappear and leave me out here all alone, as I search for an escape route and something to cut the rope off my hands. But my search is in vain because in the next moment the strange couple appear from the grassy path.

“Oh hello kiddo, so glad you could make it. Welcome to my kingdom. They shall not take my powers like they did 4000 years ago. It is I King Kolo, ready to take back the powers that are rightfully mine so that I may rule the world,” the man’s voice bellows, gathering in madness.

As each word is uttered in a dark excitement, so too does the sky as it gets darker and the wind blows like a tornado circling in the sky.

King Kolo lifts a velvet bag upwards, reaching for the heavens.

“I’ve brought back the diamond, it’s all in here Niyragongo, all four pieces”

Clutching at the bag for dear life, King Kolo crouches down and dusts off a bronze statue of himself with his hands reaching out. One by one, he carefully takes the diamond pieces and places them into the hands of the statue shaking as he does so.



As he takes out the last piece, holding it tightly in his hand as if embracing it like an old friend and places it into the statues’ hands. The statue turns black and the sky follows, the wind is rushing, and thick black smoke fills the sky. The bubbling lava gets louder.

“It’s mine, all mine! I have returned to rule over every living, breathing thing on the planet”
King Kolo shouts into the sky.

At that very moment the volcano erupts, exploding deadly, fiery, red storms miles high into the sky and lava overspills trailing down. The red, hot liquid races down the mountain towards us as quick as a lightning bolt, giving us minutes, if not seconds, to escape.

I scrunch up my face and squeeze my eyes really tight, thinking about snapping the rope around my hands and feet.

They break within milliseconds, how had I forgotten that today was not an ordinary day? I could do anything my mind would allow. I could fly to safety and forget this nightmare in seconds but that would still leave King 'Mad Man' to rule the planet. The lava is getting so close and so hot I have seconds to do something, anything. What should I do?

Then I remember the lizard that changed its colours to become almost invisible in the amazon. Just like a chameleon, I wish myself invisible and dash to the bronze statue to pick up the diamond pieces darting past the crazed king. I clutch the diamonds in my sweaty palms but one of the diamond pieces falls back into the statue causing a metallic clink.

"Oh no you don't!" snarls King Kolo grabbing my wrist and stopping me in my place, waiting for the lava to engulf me.

"Diamonds don't just float like that, you little brat," Kolo curses. "I've not waited 4000 years to have a freak like you ruin me here now!"

Who was he calling a freak? He was a fine one to talk. With a flick of my wrist I throw the three diamonds behind me and the King lets go of my invisible wrists to chase after them. The lava, now inches in front of me and milliseconds away, heating my body to near combustion, leaves me no other choice. I turn around with my invisibility fading and my breath running out. I have to run for my life.



Three steps in, the evil King Kolo reaches out for my foot and I get slammed to the ground and hit the deck like a heavy rock.

The world becomes an instant blur. I see one of the diamond pieces an outreached hand away, they turn into two, then three. Suddenly I'm lying in a pool of diamonds.

The shiny diamonds all sparkle, and the light is so blinding, then there's a big flash of brilliant, white light. The day's crazy events all float around my brain like I'm watching my life being played back on a screen; The flying through space, the flashing of the cameras on the London bus, the deserts of Egypt, the impressive Ayres rock. Swimming through the sea, the chill of Antarctica, the bridge of fish that reached to Brazil, the Amazon rain forest. The unbelievable story of King Kolo and Adannya's diamond, the wilderness of the Congo and the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo.

The story plays out in my mind going around and round on constant replay when suddenly the screen's blur becomes crystal clear.

The diamonds shine brighter than ever, and I see the flashing white light close-up.

BAM!

My eyes open wide.

I'M AWAKE.

"Morning! Time to get up," a shrill voice announces.

"What?" I reply in confusion.

"C'mon Jay, you heard. Time to get up!" reaffirms my agitated mum.

"But, but, you should be an evil king and, and..." I start, but get cut off.

"I will be if you don't get up," my mum quickly interrupts.

Throwing the covers off and getting to my feet, I scratch my head and look in the mirror. I didn't look like a super hero, and I didn't smell like one either! I look out of the window, to see that familiar castle on the hill. Yesterday couldn't of been a dream, it felt so real. I can't let today be just another day.

"Mum!" I shout pleading, "Please tell me today will be an adventure."

"You've got PE after dinner!" She shouts, confusion in her voice, clearly not sure what I mean. Staring in the mirror, I try to will myself invisible. It's useless.

"Ooh Jay, is this yours?" My mum asks, making me jump. "I found it in yesterday's blazer pocket." Mum hands over an ancient, crinkled, yellow map, just like the one in my dream.

"Er, yes, yeah I..."

"Jay! Quick, turn around," my mum interrupts, "Oh, you missed it."

"Missed what?" I ask

"I, well, I think I saw a shooting star in the sky. But it kind of looked like...you!"



ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS

Original Lyrics by Marc Winstanley

IF I HAD SUPERPOWERS FOR ONE DAY
I WOULD SWIM THE SEAS AND THEN I'D FLY AWAY
EVERYONE'S A HERO IN DISGUISE OK
WE'VE ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS

IF I HAD SUPERPOWERS I WOULD READ MINDS
I'D LOOK INTO THE FUTURE, I'D BE STOPPING ALL THE CRIMES
GOTTA BE SUPER FAST AND PICK UP THE SIGNS
THEN I'D MAKE MORE POWERS, WON'T GET LEFT BEHIND
FLYING SO HIGH TO GET WHAT I CAN FIND
I'M INVINCIBLE (HEY) NO TIME TO BE UNKIND
JUST IMAGINE SUPERPOWERS I WOULD STOP TIME
COS FUNNY THINGS WOULD HAPPEN SO NOW STOP, REWIND

IF I HAD SUPERPOWERS FOR ONE DAY
I WOULD SWIM THE SEAS AND THEN I'D FLY AWAY
EVERYONE'S A HERO IN DISGUISE OK
WE'VE ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS

TO SHOOT ICE OUT LIKE A LASER BEAM
I WOULD GO ICE SKATING IN A REAL LIFE DREAM
SINGING AND A RAINBOW CRYSTAL BLAST
POUR THE UNIVERSE INTO A TINY GLASS
RIDE A STORM RIGHT ACROSS THE LAND
TO ERASE THE PAST WITH A WAVE OF HAND
I'D BE CLIMBING WALLS LIKE MY HAMSTER CAN
WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES I'M SUPERMAN, I'M SUPERMAN

IF I HAD SUPERPOWERS FOR ONE DAY
I WOULD SWIM THE SEAS AND THEN I'D FLY AWAY
EVERYONE'S A HERO IN DISGUISE OK
WE'VE ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS

HEY HEY ORDINARY HEY HEY SUPER POWERS
HEY HEY ORDINARY HEY HEY SUPER POWERS

IF I HAD SUPERPOWERS FOR ONE DAY
I WOULD SWIM THE SEAS AND THEN I'D FLY AWAY
EVERYONE'S A HERO IN DISGUISE OK
WE'VE ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS



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The music album that inspired the story
'ORDINARY SUPERPOWERS' can be streamed/downloaded
on all the usual sites inc. Spotify, iTunes and Google Play etc.

All songs, including lyrics, can be found on the
'BIG DOG music production' YOUTUBE channel
Featuring three song versions - Class, solo and instrumental