

Heroes in the Night: Inside the Real Life Superhero Movement

Tea Krulos



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Tracing the author's journey into the strange subculture of Real Life Superheroes (RLSHs), this book examines citizens who have adopted comic book–style personas and have hit the streets to fight injustice in a variety of ways. Some RLSHs concentrate on humanitarian or activist missions—helping the homeless, gathering donations for food banks, or delivering toys to children—while others actively patrol their neighborhoods looking for crime to fight. By day, these modern Clark Kents work as dishwashers, pencil pushers, and executives in Fortune 500 companies, but by night they become heroes for the people. Through historic research and extensive interviews, this work shares not only their shining, triumphant moments, but also some of their ill-advised, terrifying disasters.

The Watchman didn't arrive in a Batmobile but drove a tan, four-door Pontiac. He was in costume, of course—a trench coat, motorcycle gloves, army boots, a domino mask, and a red hooded sweatshirt emblazoned with a W logo. Journalist Tea Krulos had spoken to him over the phone but never face-to-mask. By the end of the interview, he wasn't sure if the Watchman was delightfully eccentric or completely crazy. But he was going to find out.

Heroes in the Night traces Krulos's journey into the strange subculture of Real Life Superheroes, random citizens who have adopted comic book–style personas and hit the streets to fight injustice. Some concentrate on humanitarian or activist missions—helping the homeless, gathering donations for food banks, or delivering toys to children—while others actively patrol their neighborhoods looking for crime to fight. By day, these modern Clark Kents work as dishwashers, pencil pushers, and executives in Fortune 500 companies. But by night, only the Shadow knows.

Well, the Shadow and Tea Krulos. Through historical research, extensive interviews, and many long hours walking patrol in Brooklyn, Seattle, San Diego, Minneapolis, and Vancouver, British Columbia, Krulos discovered what being a RLSH is all about. He shares not only their shining, triumphant moments but some of their ill-advised, terrifying disasters as well. It's all part of the life of a superhero. As the Watchman explains, "If everyone made little changes in what they did, gave a little more to charity, watched out for their neighbors, we wouldn't have the problems that we have."

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