

Friends and family have advised me to write this essay while sleeping. Apparently, some of my finest moments have come in the middle of the night. I wouldn't know. I was asleep.

As a sleeptalker and sleepwalker, I live a double life. I'm like a superhero in that sense. High school student by day, action figure by night. Somniloquy is the term for talking aloud while sleeping. Somnambulism refers to walking or performing acts while asleep. Both are usually benign conditions, which is true in my case. Perhaps my superhero name should be Somnambula! Catchy, right?

According to reliable sources, I have made a peanut butter sandwich in my sleep. Sans bread, but hey, fewer carbs! During a recent episode, I was overheard rehearsing my role in a school play while still out cold. I was cast as a Hispanic sex hotline operator. Luckily no one within earshot spoke Spanish...

But my night moves are not all fun and games. Another one stems from my work at a crisis hotline in downtown Chicago. It's a serious job, and I have been trained to take calls from people in myriad forms of distress and danger. Some of those situations are replayed in the wee hours, as I instruct my bedroom furniture to "put down the knife" or "go to the homeless shelter at Fullerton and Clark."

I am a big hit at summer camp. Cabin mates marvel as I deftly navigate my way through a pitch-black cabin to turn on a bathroom faucet, grab a toothbrush, and then vigorously brush my forehead. Yes, that leaves a mark.

As a somnambulist, I am in good literary and celebrity company. The sleepwalking scene (Act V, Scene 1) from William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*(1606) is one of the most famous in all of literature. "Friends" actress Jennifer Aniston is rumored to be a chronic sleepwalker (according to the internet, so it *must* be true). I've always said Jennifer and I have a lot in common.

In the early 1900's, Sigmund Freud suggested a relationship between sleepwalking and fulfilling unconscious sexual desires. *Of course he did.* Well, sadly, I have nothing that exciting to reveal from my somnambulism. I *can* report a few startled guinea pigs that didn't appreciate my nocturnal cage raid when I spread their hay around my bedroom floor.

I've thought about using this "affliction" as an excuse for petty theft from my sister's closet, or late night Snickerdoodle binges. But alas, those crimes were executed with intent, and I accept full responsibility. No somnambulist bailout here.

Some worry I could injure myself, or others unintentionally. Luckily, I'm a passive walker, so nobody's been hurt by my occasional random utterances or late night wanderings. I like to believe I am just working through things. It's hard to be a teenager today, and there are simply not enough daytime hours to get everything sorted. I guess I am the ultimate multi-tasker. I quite literally take the concept of honing my skillsets so seriously that "I can do them in my sleep."

So if you want to add a "Somnambulist" to your campus community, who am I to stop you? That being said, I am hopeful this essay won't diminish my appeal as a great college roommate. After all, who wouldn't want to room with a superhero?