

How can I blend fantasy and reality? I have always been interested in fantasy. It began when I was just a child and my most favorite activity was watching cartoons. I enjoyed reading fan stories and playing games with the worlds that were created on screen. To better dissect this idea, I will analyze the psychological and philosophical perspectives of “fantasy versus reality.” Through investigation, writing, story creation, and artwork I hope to make a stronger connection between imagined worlds and the throes of reality.

“Reality” is roughly defined as the special realm that can be perceived by a person’s five senses—touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell. Reality is mostly based on the idea of the self and how the self interacts with its surrounding. This pulls into question the idea of self-awareness and the ego. Jung, the father of analytical psychology, describes “the self” as the personality being split into two parts—Number One and Number Two. Number One is the personality that remains in the ordinary everyday world and is what one presents as the consciousness. Whereas, Number Two is known as what connects one’s being to God. It is a separate piece of the mind that has a stronger connection to instinct and decision-making. This piece of the mind is also referred to as the “sub-conscious” and the “unconscious.” From another psychological perspective, Robert A Wicklund describes “the self” merely as vessel for conformity and a port for social feedback to better assimilate oneself into the surrounding environment.

Of course with reality comes the denial of a bad reality and creation of a fantasy. A fine way to create a new reality is to redefine oneself. This can be done through alter egos and made up personas. “Fantasy” is defined psychologically as the realm of thought between the conscious and the unconscious that cannot be perceived through bodily senses. It is often what is also described as the imaginary. When pushed to an extreme, a fantasy can take hold of a person and keep them from actually succeeding in life because, in their minds, they already have success. This can be linked to the common anxiety disorders known as “derealization” and “depersonalization.” Daily fantasies debated by Freud and Klein, are a representation of mental defense mechanisms and leftover primal instincts that are no longer applicable. However, these fantasies can mask a person’s life and be a means of escaping problematic aspects.

The allure of fantasy can be incredibly powerful. It represents ideas of grandeur that many wish for and an escape from the more bland aspects of life. Fantasy can be overwhelming when not taken in moderation; however, having a little fantasy in one’s life can give one something to aspire to and inspire creativity. It is important to keep fantasies, because without fantasies the human race would not be able to imagine new ways to accomplish tasks. Fantasy can inspire one to make something real. When a person has more fantasy in his/her life they begin to build a visual library and, therefore, can be more creative to design and imagine things more easily. The following list is a cast of my imagined characters who compose my storyline...

Skuluran (Skully)

Skuluran is a persona of mine. I created him back in 2008 when I was just beginning my transition from 8th grade to high school. During this time, I was going through periods of depersonalization. Depersonalization is a psychological symptom of an anxiety disorder, where one does not accept their reflection to be their own and experiences a detachment from one's personality and emotions. I subconsciously created Skuluran to help me cope with my own reflection and anchor myself to a fantastical personality with which I could aspire to. Skuluran has a classic hero personality; he begins his journey with everything he could want—he has a high status in his order, a fiancée, friends and family, and a war has just ended, begging for a time of peace. However, when he touches and helps a mysterious mystical woman who fell from the stars named Sitara, he is accused of spiritual contamination and is executed. When his friends bring him back to life he begins a journey of revenge and rebellion. While he was dead, the ruling powers turned the continent into misery and Skuluran feels it is his duty to help the people of the land revolutionize and take vengeance. Skuluran is strong and courageous, if not a little hot-headed at times. He is serious when he needs to be and can keep his focus on what needs to be done. Skuluran travels to continent with his best friend Sekel, sister Idalia, and the mysterious Sitara. Along his journey he encounters his lost mentor, Ink, and his sister, Feather. Together, they fight evil until Ink betrays them and joins with the evil rulers, Ciar and Tiresias. As Skuluran goes on he finds love with Sitara and, together, they fight Ciar and Tiresias, finally ending the misery of the land. Together, they attempt to rebuild and bring about a new renaissance for their home.

This is a classical story structure for a Joseph Campbell-esque tale with the main character being an Aristotelian tragic hero. I find a lot in this character—love, friends, adventure, and a dark side..all aspects that I hope to have and be able to cope with in a beneficial manner.

Sitara (the morning star)

Sitara is our mystical romantic interest. She represents my ideal love life. She is somewhat naïve, but still has a strength that cannot be matched. Her past is completely forgotten and she only wishes to live in the present. She is only haunted by the one unfortunate act of seeing and aiding in Skuluran's execution and, since then, she has dedicated herself to helping him with his endeavors. She is loyal to her friends and is always willing to learn; she has a thirst for knowledge about the new world that she finds herself in.

Sekel (he who laughs)

Sekel is my idea of a true best friend. He is someone who has playful rivalries, but is still kind. He is willing to help with anything. He tells you what he needs and is totally honest. He has an insane sense of humor and never takes anything seriously. He is always attempting to cheer everyone up and is a laughable goof.

Idalia (noble/behold the sun)

Idalia is the den mother of the group. When her parents were lost in a fire her brother carried her to the “Order of Aether” social branch headquarters for help. Ever since they began their training as order members she took to being protective of her brother and friends; when Skuluran was executed she was the instigator to find a way to resurrect him. She stands as a strong emotional support of the group and is often very serious. She can be brutally honest, but can still say things in a manner that seems very soft. Idalia represents many of my female friends who all tend to hold the nurturing personality that I have given her.

Ciar

Ciar represents everything that I detest. He is rude, arrogant, and mysterious. He has complete control and an unending hunger for nothing less than complete dominion of the continent. He was originally a criminal who managed to get very lucky and now stands to control much more than one person should be allowed. Not only this, he has secretly gained great mystical powers through sacrificing innocent civilians. He directly puts the public in danger for his own self-interest. He is dark and powerful, existing more as an entity than an actual person in the eyes of everyone around him.

Hika

Hika is a kind gentle woman of noble birth. She is the daughter to the military leader of the “Order of Aether.” When she was a young child, her father, Izo, arranged her marriage to

Skuluran, in order to become the new leader to the military branch of the “Order of Aether.” She represents a more romantic part of my life, as the love that I want to find in life, but seemingly cannot.

Ink

Ink used to be the old leader of the spiritual branch but he was exiled for attempting a demonic ritual. He exchanged his soul for knowledge and, in doing so, he put many at risk. Despite his relatively young age, he is wise beyond his years. He can be loud and obnoxious, but much of what he says maintains an air of wisdom. Ink represents the mentor figures in my life, many of them wise and older than myself yet still playful and exuberant.

Niylo

Niylo is unexplainable. He is the insane Prince of the Saarosian Islands and double agent in the “Order of Aether.” I’m still not very sure where he came from when I began to write this story, but I believe his creation was due to a lack of mental capacity on my end. He appeared in my sketchbook with my style of drawing during a period where I was very sick and had been sleeping for most of the day. He came with a character description and personality traits but I don’t actually remember creating the character. Nonetheless, he has found a special place in my heart and I have changed very little about him since his creation.