

The Advocate, USA

Every Trans Person Apparently Has Villainous Superpowers

To some conservatives, adultery and sexual assault are OK if the right people are doing it. But being trans — well, that's always a sin that trumps everything else.

By Brynn Tannehill

January 25 2018 5:44 AM EST

I had an epiphany yesterday when Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council announced that the [president gets a “mulligan”](#) for everything he's done in his life: Being transgender has granted superpowers that I never fully realized I had. Or, at the least, supervillain superpowers.

For instance, I can sin more easily and more powerfully, than anyone else on Earth! Being transgender is so powerful, it's totally unforgivable, and that's saying a lot. [Pussy grabbing?](#) Totally fine. [Sexually assaulting teen girls?](#) Not a problem. [Cheating on your wife with porn stars](#) and paying them hush money? You're good to go. Shooting someone in the middle of Fifth Avenue is [probably OK too](#).

But being transgender? Completely unforgivable. No matter how many orphans I save from burning buildings or how much time I spend in church, I'm still a supervillain.

Part of my superpower is that I make it look easy, like Superman picking up a bus. Most people have to work really hard to sin hard enough not to be forgiven. But me? I can sin more and harder just by getting up in the morning than any religiously conservative Republican can in the course of 70 years. Heck, for me, the act of breathing is worse than someone else starting a nuclear war.

Speaking of which, every supervillain with powers has to be able to use them for purposes of destruction, right? Which is why I was kind of bummed out when Popeman™ said my powers of transness were more dangerous than nuclear weapons. Apparently I'm totally underachieving! I have no idea how to activate my trans powers to obliterate all human life on Earth.

He did leave a clue, however. Somehow I emanate rays that make people everywhere forget what gender they are [and then forget to procreate](#). Until Popeman let this slip, I had no idea that my powers are enough to neutralize the collective libido of every horny teenager and 20-something on earth. Which, in retrospect, is actually kind of amazing.

In fact, he hinted that my [trans powers are enough to destroy God](#) or his entire plan for the universe. This is a total head rush. Seriously, I can't get my kid to remember to do her

homework consistently, but I can destroy God and the universe? There's some serious untapped supervillain potential that I need to tap into.

Plus, why am I dragging myself into work every day at 6 a.m. through rush hour traffic when I could just do the supervillain thing and tell everyone, "Give me a billion dollars and make me supreme world leader, or I'll destroy the universe." I'm pretty sure that's the supervillain thing to do.

Given this sort of untapped power, though, why do I keep getting accused of piddly, mundane plots? Like stealing kids and [making them transgender](#). Pfft. You're thinking of [fairy powers](#). Why would I bother with those when I could be starting Ragnarök instead? Tricking teens into thinking it's cool to be trans? I'm not sure how to make working in a cubicle and fiddling with spreadsheets look trendy, but I'm trying. Sometimes we have "wear your jeans to work-Fridays." Does that count?

All this power can be exhausting, though. Sometimes I've thought about retiring and becoming an ex-supervillain, because the whole "[redeemed bad guy](#)" thing is such a popular character arc. Plus, a lot of people keep asking, "Have you ever tried not being transgender?" with the implication that if I somehow wasn't trans, everything would be fine.

But then I remember, of course I tried not being trans. For like 35 years. It didn't work out. Not that I'm trying that hard anymore, for a lot of reasons, though. First, I'd have to give up all these Godlike superpowers. Besides, there are plenty of tragic heroes and villains who never find a cure and end up accepting that their powers are simply a part of who they are. That's a cool character arc as well. At the end of the day, Bruce Banner is still the Hulk, and the Hulk is still Bruce Banner. You can't really separate the two, and as it turns out, they kind of need each other.

Second, no one has come up with a "detransifying ray" or a shot that takes away all these transgender superpowers. Even if I wanted to lose all my transgender superpowers, I don't think it's scientifically possible.

Another major downside to the whole ex-supervillain thing is [that redemption is usually fatal](#) to the villain. Not sure I'm ready for that one yet. Although enough time in D.C. traffic might change my mind.

Still, Tony Perkins's mulligan for President Trump offers a glimmer of hope. I'm now certain that if I ran for president on a "no abortion and no civil rights for queers" platform, he would give me, a pass too. Plus, I'd get the same deal as the last guy — world domination, a billion dollars, and a free pass to destroy the planet.

What more could a supervillain ask for?

BRYNN TANNEHILL is a former naval aviator who currently serves on the boards of SPARTA and the Trans United Fund. She has nearly 300 published articles across a dozen platforms. She lives in Northern Virginia with her wife and three children.

<https://www.advocate.com/commentary/2018/1/25/every-trans-person-apparently-has-villainous-superpowers>