

Process Analysis

A story of two children who follow a ritual that brings them to a ghost-town version of the city they live in
⇒ metal statues replace people ⇒ Zetsumi no tomodachi style.

Main characters are in high school ⇒ G.I. they hear a stupid story or urban legend of away to enter an alternate dimension and get annoyed when the only conversations in school are about the legend. Their plan to dispel the legend is to announce to everyone that they're going to follow the ritual and when they come back to school the next day, everyone will see it's fake. They follow the ritual and are brought into an alternate dimension where everyone turned to metal statues by a plague.

Alternate world: (Journal)

there was a plague, similar to influenza, where people would get sick, have fevers, recover, and move on. A week after recovery, they would turn into these metallic statues. The statues aren't contagious and are practically invisible. The last city was signed two years ago. Animals and insects have completely disappeared. The statues distort all forms of communication.

Alternate world notes:

- School has local overgrown garden for food.
- All "best-before" dates are set 1 year from the present.
- the city is completely clean, almost like a utopia
- every shelf is perfectly stocked, everything's fresh and symmetrically placed.
- all magazines are completely blank - excluding a title.
- all calendars match normal time, as well as confirm that they didn't time-travel.

Movement of statues

- each statue has a initial movement range of 2 meters.
- All statues move towards the protagonist when they're asleep.
- Only the protagonist's respective statue counterparts have free range of movement
- the counterparts will move towards the protagonist while they sleep and will always be able to reach the protagonist in 4 hours from when they sleep
- All statues are in a crying/saddened face except the counterparts
- the counterparts are grinning

Main Fears (Consistent)

- effects of sleep-deprivation
- loneliness
- "what happens if a statue touches me?"
- "what happens if my counterpart touches me?"
- "what if we can't leave?"

Character Names:

Andraste (Andraste) \Rightarrow Celtic war goddess, \Rightarrow practically the same as every other god I've written, mentally stronger than the male lead, is the source of the more important survival ideas.

Ziusdra (Ziusdra) \Rightarrow Last king of Mesopotamia before the flood, \Rightarrow comes from *Flowers of Stone* but weaker mentally. Is strong academically but not practically. People call him Zius as a nickname, which he hates.

Both characters are friends before the ritual and are equally set up with it being the only thing people talk about. They make a agreement to attempt the ritual with the idea of disproving it.

Ritual Details:

- Night
- in an old building (School I been there for 120 years, was originally a church).
- 3 candles arranged in a triangle
- A Stone with Ama-gi (𒀭𒌆𒌆𒌆) carved into it, placed in the centre of the triangle. *Amiform, Sumerian word for Freedom.*
- "O Sun God Pushan, Strip us of our sins and bring us into the free world." *

→ Ritual was started online initially as a joke. One grade 9 student tried it, they went missing for a month. It became global news. When the child was found, his left arm and right eye were severed. He said he had tried the ritual, but doesn't really remember what happened or where he was during the month he went missing.

* Pushan is a sun god associated with (among other things) *Journeys and Roads*

→ The reappearance of the child gained popularity at the same time as the rumor, which only increased the popularity of the subject.

→ The main reason that the protagonists don't believe in the ritual was due to the fact that it mixed Mesopotamian and Hindu mythology. *"They didn't even try when creating this story. They could've at least made the inscription for it in Sanskrit"*

→ The ritual gained popularity due to the child returning after performing it. *Since he returned*, there must be a way to come back.

→ The initial post specified that there was no way back, which only served to increase skepticism when they realize that information *can't* be known or true.

Adapting to the world:

- The first time they wake up, there's no statues. They wake up to everything being eerily quiet. They explore the school first. On the stairs of the main hallway, they find a girl's statue with a Journal at her feet. They read the Journal and find that the Statueman was caused by a flu virus. The last entry of the Journal was two years ago (2018).

- Further exploration proves that they did not time travel (Calendar). They find the school garden intact, and that becomes their main food supply.

- They go to sleep in a hall with a couple of statues, when they wake up, all statues are facing them, with crying faces and extended arms. They haven't really moved from their original position.

- They explore the town further and find that every store, drug-store or grocery-store has every product placed neatly and has an expiry date set one year in the future (2021).

- The streets are completely clean, there's no garbage on the ground or in garbage bins. Alleyways aren't dirty whatsoever. Everything just like a Utopia.

- Main characters begin to fear certain things like what happens if they can't get back.

- They go back to the school to go to sleep, only managing to sleep for four hours before waking up.

- When they wake up, they see their counterpart statues staring down at them, grinning. Their counterparts can move freely while they sleep. This begins a fear of "what happens if my counterpart touches me."

- They end up only sleeping for four hours at a time, which has them enter a sleep-cycle (one sleeps while the other stays awake), as well as slowly introduce sleep-deprivation.

Ending:

- they wake up one day to their counterparts kneeling around them, terrified, they run away. A few days later, they begin to hallucinate due to sleep-loss.

- they hallucinate that they made it back to their own world. People can't see them or interact with them, so the main characters assume they're ghosts. They hallucinate people talking about their disappearance and death. They see candles and wreaths by their lockers. They even get word of funeral services for them. Andrae's funeral is first, so they attend her's.

- At the funeral, they see two people they don't recognize that seem completely terrified by the people around them. They make eye contact with the protagonists, so the protagonists feel oddly compelled not to move.

- It is then revealed that the main characters were already touched by their counterparts and turned into statues. The people they didn't recognize were people who performed the ritual, and the protagonists have become the new counterpart statues.