

# Reading Evidence Option 5

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## Watchmen

### Summary

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In Chapter 11, Rorschach and Dan arrive at Adrian's HQ. Adrian is prepared for their arrival, and once they get there, he explains to them his plans to save the world. He has set into motion a series of nuclear events to destroy the world. Adrian confesses that he did murder Blake because Blake became aware of his plans. To keep suspicion away from himself, Adrian devised attacks to make it appear that some enemy was out to murder the former Watchmen. Rorschach and Nite Owl are not powerful or smart enough to stop Ozymandias, and the nuclear destruction starts. The final chapter of Watchmen opens with scenes of murdered citizens in New York City. Adrian has made it appear that an alien is responsible for the attacks. Jon transports himself and Laurie to Adrian's hideout and the two confront Adrian. Adrian tricks Jon into one of his machines, and he uses energy to dismantle Jon. However, Jon is able to restructure himself as he did in the past. Meanwhile, the news reports on the television claim that cities around the globe are uniting in the face of destruction to save themselves from alien attack. Adrian is happy that he has been able to get people to unite, and Jon agrees that this is important. The others want to turn Adrian in to the authorities; however, Jon says that the key to keeping peace is remaining silent. Rorschach didn't agree, so Jon kills him and leaves, a reporter takes Rorschach's journal and writes a piece on it.

### Quotes

"The morality of my activities escapes me."

Dr. Manhattan, Chapter 4

Dr. Manhattan's transformation into a superhuman strips him of his moral compass. He no longer sees events or actions as morally right or wrong—he sees only facts and logic. That's not very helpful in the long run. The United States government relies on Dr. Manhattan to protect the country from nuclear attack, but he feels no moral obligation to fulfill his duty. It also provides an interesting angle to his character as you see the way that Adrian manipulated him for so long.

"One more body amongst foundations makes little difference."

Rorschach, Chapter 12

Rorschach doesn't intend to keep the truth about New York's "alien invasion" a secret. He has always said he refuses to compromise his moral principles, but he also knows not everyone follows the same moral code. What he is saying is that he is so fundamentally rigid in his beliefs.

that he can not compromise at all on this one last thing. He always believed truth

## **Identities Freewrite**

As masked crime fighters, all of Watchmen's main characters have dual identities. In some cases the alter egos are the personalities each vigilante wishes they had in "real" life. Dan, for example, feels more confident and powerful when he's dressed as Nite Owl. When he snaps on his utility belt, he no longer worries about nuclear war or unrequited love. Rorschach, whose vigilante work often ends in violence, is better equipped to acknowledge and address the evils of society when he disappears behind his mask. We see him merge with the mask when the only real time we see him vulnerable and scared is when the police take off his mask.

Rorschach eventually comes to find himself identifying more with his vigilante persona than his everyday self, which is why the persona of Rorschach supersedes that of Walter Kovacs to become his primary identity.

## **Questions**

What is Adrian's Plan to unite humanity?

What does his plan say about the fundamental nature of humanity?

Will humanity always need a scapegoat to not tear itself apart?