

No one knows his real name.
Let's call him "Mr. Awesome".

Mr. Awesome gets up at 5AM.
He's not tired; he's ready to go.
He goes out on the porch and stares out at the rising sun.
The sky's straggling oranges, reds, blues, greys, purples, everything.
The air feels soft and easy.
His porch is covered by a wood shingle roof.
Big green happy maples and oaks frame his view of the rocky beach.

Mr. Awesome takes a sip of iced tea.
He lights his first cigarette of the day.
If you or I were to smoke cigarettes, we'd feel kind of crappy all the time, and our breathe would be tobacco, and our fingers too, and we'd grow cancers faster and overburden our poor hearts; we'd smell like ashtrays and get all kinds of flack.
None of this applies to Mr. Awesome.
Somehow, smoking really makes no difference to his body, his appearance, his odor. How? It's part of being awesome.
If Mr. Awesome feels like having a few cigarettes with his iced tea while gazing meditatively out at the brightening waves, then he will, since he can with impunity.

Mr. Awesome's wife shows up looking curvy, satisfied, and relaxed in only a long white, billowy, halfway-buttoned blouse. Mr. Awesome is happily married. It is now 6:30AM. She walks up from behind and rests her thin forearms on his broad shoulders. He's perfectly poised on a little bench pulled up to the front of the porch wall. Off to one side on the wood-plank wall sit a pack of cigarettes, a lighter, and ash tray. On the other side is a mason jar with iced tea, ice cubes floating cool in the top quarter with a lemon wedge bent in its center. I know that many of us can't even really get away with caffeinated tea anymore. We have to sip decaf iced tea without any cigarettes. So it may seem crazy to think that what he's doing is OK. But, again, this is related to his awesomeness, which we clearly lack — at least to the enviable degree he overflows with the magic stuff.

His beautiful, sweet-smelling, soft-skinned wife kisses the back of his neck. He slides the long fingers of one strong hand into her lithe fingers. How well they knit together! How much sense it all makes!

With a pensive nod towards the whooshing surf, he follows his wife into the kitchen. It is time for breakfast. They have organic sweet potatoes and collard greens with pasture-raised eggs. He continues to sip his iced tea, which, though very strong, will not in any way jangle his nerves or disturb his sleep. They talk and laugh like normal people, even though they are actually much more awesome than other people are. His wife is smaller than him. He is well-muscled, but not particularly tall or broad. I'd call him "athletic". His wife is too, but of course she has all these womanly curves. I suppose before too long they'll start reproducing. That will go well too, I'm sure. You may think a comment like that a little ironic, or spiteful; or that I'm somehow mocking them and their powerful awesomeness. That's not so! I'm just trying to tell you what kind of a world they comprise.

His wife wears her hair long, rolling, flowing, overwhelming almost. He wears his full but trimmed. His wife is happy and laughs with delight when he makes a funny observation about the seagulls who floated into view that morning. He can't help but share the giggle, now that

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she's gotten going. And so they laugh. Their kitchen is all-natural wood and filled with bright carefree summermorning sunshine.

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After they've finished their breakfast and tidied their kitchen back into catalog-cleanliness, he heads up to his study. From now until 1PM, he will write awesome. What will he write? Well, you know about Shakespeare, you know about Einstein, you know about Tolstoy; you know about Gödel; you know about Spinoza, Plato, Euclid? Something like that, but all together, and shot through with Mozart tumbled-after by Beethoven and Bach. I cannot really describe how good it is; it is all quite beyond me; all super classical; and of course much more encompassing than this list of famous longdead Old Western heroes (please don't hold your narrator's incomplete educations against Mr. Awesome). Plus, it isn't just literature, science, and math with a musical soul. It is also useful. It can run computers, but not just computers; it also works as a human philosophy, as a way to connect our experience to a set of insights and principles that guide us to truly better ways of thinking and acting, both individually (ie: towards individual salvation from empty nihilism-/romanticism-carousels) and as groups (ie: towards group-living that is win-win, that allows everyone to live happy, productive, and wise and in harmony with themselves and the world). You could say he's a great genius, but I prefer to stay by what we've already established: he is awesome; this incredibly beautiful and yet still practicable artistry of his is really just another flowering of that, of his awesomeness.

Am I really impressed with him? I mean, he's awesome.

At 1PM, he and his beautiful wife (who's spent the morning painting melodic poems more potent than any siren's wail and more helpful than any preacher's salvation*) eat a delicious cold pasta dish (spelt noodles tossed with cooked green beans, raw tomatoes, fresh herbs, and olive oil) and share a very fine Bordeaux. They indulge a little in the soothing thrill of the wine and hang out in rocking chairs on the porch, rocking back and forth, chatting, laughing, and otherwise tossing the time about as if it were a red balloon. Around 2:30PM, however, they stretch and take a walk down to the water's edge. Tossing their clothes to one side, they leap into the frothing rolling archways of the shimmering sea. It's true that most of us cannot mix lunch, wine, and swimming parties and expect good results. However, for them, it really doesn't matter. They can get away with most anything. Their bodies are beyond hearty. They're perfectly free to splash about, swim, laugh at the bright bold day — whatever they want to do.

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Oh, but now it is 4PM: time to get serious. They get dried off and go into the secret lair in their basement. To be briefed. Crime fighting takes place from 4PM to 8PM. I know they say that crime doesn't rest and you have to be ready to deal with situations at all times — particularly if your job is to stop troublemakers from troubling everybody. But, again, it makes no sense to apply this logic to people so amazingly awesome as these two.

You know like Batman? How he fights bad guys with swiftness and strength? That's kind of awesome, but real awesomeness is different. It goes like this: there's a problem in the world and the Awesomes melt into the dangerzone and cool everything way down. Is the incident occurring right at 4PM their time? Of course not! But bending time is no harder than cooling everything way down. They go to the where/when of the trouble, they calm everything down, and they make the people who are doing bad things notice that they don't want that kind of a life anymore, so they stop. Batman may stop the Joker; he may get the Joker imprisoned; he may neutralize the Joker. But the Awesomes would cool the Joker's anger, his pain, his greed, his mania; they would cool everything down until the Joker saw that he was so very bored by carrying on like a crazy jerk all the time. And that would be the end of the Joker qua super villain and the beginning of the Joker qua pleasant, thoughtful, generally helpful citizen of the world.

Of course, the Joker is a fictional character. The Awesomes address real people with real problems: murderers, rapists, crime lords, corrupt politicians — even that mild-to-medium incompetence mixed with self-indulgence that to some degree mars all our lives: even that they can push against, even there can they insert their magic calm.

So that's the story of Mr. & Mrs. Awesome. They do what they want, but what they want is much more good than bad. They do what they can, and that's a lot.

In the evenings and weekends, they goof off, socialize, take walks, and so on.

[Editor's Note: *more helpful than any preacher's salvation
See "Razor-Back Woman" on John Stewart's 1969 album *California Bloodlines*.]