

## John Mirath Backstory

**Species:** Psychoactive-generated demon

**Sex:** ♂

**Age:** Some time in his 40's

**Height:** 6ft 0in

**Weight:** 197lbs

**Siblings:** Donnie (2 years younger) and Charles (8 years younger)

**Clothing:** Black, sharply-tailored suit with tangerine orange lapels, tie, and cuff links.

**Possessions:** Sceptre for controlling and directing his power. Changes appearance depending on who's holding it. When the gorilla holds it, it grows flowers that last for seconds at a time, attract hummingbirds that feed from it, and the flowers die to be replaced with new flowers. When John holds it as a demon, long and ebony with a curved orange handle. When John holds it in his ordinary human state, it looks like a weather-worn stick.

John Mirath already has a character analysis that covers his life story from birth to his current age, and predicting the rest of his life. This analysis only covers his life as a demon.

Regarding John as a demon, he is very much an amped-up version of the reckless, confident John, with a strong enough sense of theatre to give him sparkle.

Mostly.

### Trust & Confidence

*(newborn)*

By the time he had reached his 40s, John had established a drug empire with his brother, Donnie. He regularly quality-tested the drugs that he and Donnie bought and sold, and for a long time nothing particularly out of the ordinary happened, outside of the usual variations that came with trying drugs of varying quality.

Then, with no apparent warning, John began to experience black-outs, only to find that on coming down, he had done terrible damage to whatever room he had taken the drug in, badly enough that he had injured himself. For weeks, he ended trips with bruises, grazes, cuts, and scratches. John routinely tested the drugs alone so had no witnesses to see what had happened, so assumed that he had simply become violent while under the effects.

That was, until one day when he took LSD and remained lucid. He discovered that while he had indeed been trashing his flat, he was also metamorphosing during these times: while under the effects, he developed horns and wings, felt incredible reserves of power

inside him, and when he looked in the mirror, saw that his clothes had changed to become smart, sharp, and very dapper indeed.

During his drug trips, he was temporarily becoming a demon.

On further reflection, he realised that he had been turning for some time but had been far too out of his mind to recognise it for what it was.

## **Freedom & Self-Determination**

*(toddlerhood)*

At first he believed himself to be the only person capable of turning into a demon. Later he would wonder about whether or not this was true, but for now he simply wanted to take his new body for a test-drive. Or three.

Becoming a demon should have come with a feeling of invincibility, but John's immediate recognition of the fact that he had been injuring himself as a demon the whole time, meant that he knew he certainly was not invincible.

As soon as John overcame the worst of his power incontinence and gain at least rudimentary control over his body, he was able to take stock of what was happening to him.

He began to test the parameters of his power. What happened if he took higher doses, for example? He took a high dose, and disconnected with reality.

He found himself in a very strange environment. 'Strange' means that he was on a small floating island, with a waterfall that flowed very slowly upwards into a yellow and pink sky, and in the company of a fluorescent orange gorilla who looked none too impressed, holding a sceptre.

Perhaps John would have been wary of being so close to a wild animal if it hadn't spoken. It grudgingly told him that it was glad he had come to his senses enough to talk as he had been smashing up the place for a while. It gave him the sceptre and told him to use it to control his power.

When he left the trippy realm he found that he still had the sceptre. Even when he wasn't in his demonic state, it would be there. Later he would show it to Donnie and Charles. Only they would be able to see and touch it. To everybody else, it was invisible and intangible.

One thing was certain for John: he was thrilled to have had such a drastic power upgrade!

## **Ambition**

*(young childhood)*

John experimented with some of the other powers that he could feel himself capable of. In addition to hitting things incredibly hard and using his sceptre to hit things at longer range, he had an innate ability to tweak others' perception so that they either didn't care that they could see his demonic attributes or (if he enforced it more strongly) he looked like a regular human, to make others see and hear static to either obscure, or highlight, anything he chose, and to teleport short distances. Among his less fantastical abilities was an especially flamboyant gift of the gab.

As exciting as John's new power was, it didn't take long for him to catch up to the practical implications of it. If drugs could do this to him, then Donnie had to know. John suspected that Donnie - a natural skeptic - would think he was crazy if he told him what was happening, so he showed him instead.

One night, while John was away in another city, Charles unwittingly offered John a way to start the conversation. Charles had procured a ouija board and invited Donnie over to play with it. John's brothers' use of the ouija board called to him, and he answered the call by appearing to them.

The irony of appearing as a demon to two people testing out a ouija board was not lost on him, but it scared Donnie half to death. However, just to reduce the impact of this, John made sure to impose his cloaking ability as fully as he could on Charles. Charles, being John's brother, could still see through the cloak to an extent, but although he could see, he barely found the capacity within himself to care.

John spent the evening with them so that Donnie could test what he was seeing out for himself and decide for himself whether or not to believe what he was seeing. John obligingly allowed Donnie to keep a handful of his loose feathers, take photographs and video footage of him, and take those away to look at for himself.

Donnie came back to John in his own time to challenge him about John's demonic appearance. By this time John was in human form again and they could talk about it without John's excess energy getting in the way.

They agreed to test out John's demonism - scientifically, and Donnie prepared a plan to test out all the variables he could think of. The results were as follows:

Acid (LSD)	Optimal results. Very energetic and impulsive, but ultimately lucid and in control of power
Alcohol	Disrupts ability to use powers accurately or effectively when combined with other

	<p>drugs.</p> <p>When used alone, disrupts his ability to cloak his demonic appearance</p> <p>If he drinks without having taken anything else, his sceptre becomes visible to people other than him and his brothers</p>
Amphetamines (speed)	As for methamphetamine
Amyl Nitrate (poppers)	Effect lasts seconds so doesn't use
Anabolic steroids	Better stamina, but tends to use other drugs, not this one
Benzodiazepines (tranquilizers)	Makes time slow down for John. He sees everything else happening extra fast
Cannabis	<p>Either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Chilled demon</li> <li>2. Paranoid, territorial demon</li> </ol>
Cocaine	Never keeps still, endless whirr of wings, very strong and hyper. Very chatty and aggressive.
Ecstasy	Horny, hyper, and friendly
Heroin	Tends to end in a bad trip but can enhance John's stamina
Ketamine	John experiences everything as blurs and motion. Becomes a babbling, nonsensical wreck
Laughing gas	Effect lasts for seconds so doesn't use
Magic mushrooms	Becomes very similar to the acid demon but is very likely to slip into the hippie realm and be stuck there until he comes down
Mescaline	Always slips into the hippie realm. He is stuck there until he comes down
Methamphetamine	Predatory, unconcerned with consequences, reckless.
Tobacco	Didn't consider it worth his while to test

This helped to appraise them of the extent, and limits, of John's power.

For further information and the results of Donnie and John's experiments, see "The Donnie Files".

## **Productivity**

*(older childhood)*

It also prompted their curiosity over the prospect of teamwork, and whether or not Donnie and Charles could turn demon too. Charles ruled himself out from the start, as power did not appeal to him. Donnie experimented, and found that he was indeed capable of turning into a demon.

As a demon, Donnie was as uncontrolled at first as John had been, and John instinctively felt a need to vanquish Donnie. But he did not. Instead he helped Donnie through the worst of it, and gave him the benefit of the doubt until Donnie was able to develop control. By the end of all this, John was still in control of the household but now he had a more powerful, more flexible second-in-command.

All of this information was helpful to John, but he wanted to refine his powers to make the very best of them. With his new desire to talk, he began to seek a way of impressing people with his snappy words just as much as with his suit. John had never been terribly interested in literature, but now he found himself wishing that he could throw out classic lines to impress. The problem was, he didn't know any.

He did his best to read some of the classics and to watch some movies, but they didn't really hook him in enough for him to keep his attention on them. Even listening to them as audiobooks or having the movies on over dinner didn't last for that long. With that said, he watched and read enough to be able to quote a handful of famous lines if he wanted to.

With his new-found polish, he could impress, and that helped him to secure the cooperation of others when more peaceful communication was needed. When he needed to fight, he was only too happy to threaten his sparring partner verbally. Talking to people to hook their attention while making static appear all around him was a favourite.

As he had more trips, John came to experience the sensations of phantom feelings that his horns and wings were still in place.

Planning and exercising his powers for 'fun' or practice is one thing, but John's powers and position are substantial enough that actually using them for real would be an important step. The stakes were high enough that John had to be sure that they would be as effective as he thought they would be. The consequences of over-estimating himself could be serious.

John hadn't forgotten those injuries he had sustained while being in black-out and didn't want to fail at a crucial moment. A discussion with Donnie led to a unanimous decision: that they would introduce Demon John to the criminal underworld by 'testing' him on a lesser drug lord first.

He also didn't want to tip anybody off about his secret vulnerability. As far as anyone else was concerned, he wanted them to believe he was invincible.

He was victorious in his attack on his first mark. Buoyed up by this, he attacked the biggest in the area. He won that fight too.

With the lion's share of the power, John ran the criminal underground with Donnie at his side. New drug lords who tried to take a slice of the pie often wondered quite what it was about this man that meant he got the power. He didn't seem quite aggressive enough to be in such a rarefied position. But those who challenged him tended to get visited by the demon.

### **Child to Adult Transition**

*(adolescence)*

John's development up to this point has essentially been an adolescence for him, so there is nothing to add in this section that hasn't already been discussed above.

### **Closeness in Relationships**

*(young adulthood)*

It took John a while to overcome his strong bias towards megalomania that came with becoming a demon. It's lonely at the top, and no matter how powerful John became he would still benefit from others.

Given the source of John's power - drugs - level-headedness has never been Demon John's strong suit. That's where Donnie comes in. Donnie's analytical mind is the perfect foil for Demon John's extreme extraversion and aggression.

Donnie has always been in John's shadow, and as a demon, John's shadow got all the longer and more imposing. At the time of writing Donnie continues to be his brother's helper and assistant in the Mirath empire, but Donnie has an independent streak and may yet choose to leave the empire.

However, John's demonhood has huge potential to make their drug empire all the more lucrative, and so far Donnie has chosen to remain by John's side.

As far as affiliations with anybody else goes, John is highly unlikely ever to find another working partner. He continues to seek status and dominance over intimacy with others, so it is only his brother who gets to see past that. They know each other too well and Donnie is too wily (and tenacious when he sees a profit to be made).

Donnie occasionally warns John against using his ability to turn into a demon too often. By his best guess, it must be taxing, or worse, dangerous, for a human body to undergo the changes that Demon John goes through, so he sometimes tries to discourage John. John however, is extremely dismissive of this and tends to mock Donnie for even suggesting it.

Donnie continues to bring this up periodically in the hope that, despite John's derision, he will listen. It is unlikely that John will, however.

### **Passing on Responsibilities**

*(older adulthood)*

As time went by, John spent so much time as a demon - and not ageing during that time - that by the time he reached 40, the cumulative effect of John's trips started to become obvious. He and his brothers began to notice how much younger he looked than them.

This was at odds with Donnie's assumption that John was working his body too hard and would start to look haggard as he reached and surpassed 40.

During his time reading the classics, John came across *The Picture Of Dorian Gray*. This situation reminded him of that and for a while, the possibility that he was transferring his age to something (or someone?) else preyed on his mind.

### **End of Life**

*(old age)*

Demons are hard to kill, and John is no exception. He does however, have a few weaknesses:

- Holy water. Water that has been blessed at some time in the past tends to turn up in all sorts of places. For example, in a cheap pint of beer. Thankfully, holy water doesn't bless other water that it comes into contact with, it's just very potent so cannot effectively be diluted. The blessing however, does have a half-life. Holy water won't kill John but he instinctively dislikes it and coming into contact with him makes him feel rather ill and out of sorts.
- Ageing. John doesn't age while he's in demon form but continues to age as normal while in human form. Neither he nor the Miraths know this however, as it is not something Donnie has developed a test for and John doesn't know it intuitively.

- Injury. John can be injured, although he is extremely durable. No matter how badly he is injured, he will heal. He heals faster than a human, however even a fairly non-serious graze or bruise will take around 12 hours to heal.
- Mental instability. His mind has not changed to accommodate his new immortality. Despite becoming more gregarious, prone to showing off, and generally hyper-active while in demon form, he still has the mind of a living creature that expects to live for a little under a century, like normal humans.
- Tranquilizers. Being shot with tranquilizers would incapacitate him for a while.

John continues to be a powerful figure in the criminal underworld of his native city, with Donnie by his side. He is happy in his position of 'king of the castle' and Donnie remains a stable figure at his side, and an entertaining and comforting foil. Whether John will ever meet his maker is difficult to tell, but it seems likely that he will lead a long - a very long - life yet.

### **Credits**

Based on theory by:

Erikson, E., (1951) 'Childhood and Society', W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. chapter 7.

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~Hayley, The Character Consultancy