

<http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/spip.php?article3325>



FRANKENSTEIN RELOADED

- Archives du Blog - Espace international - Classe euro anglais -



Date de mise en ligne : dimanche 7 mai 2017

Copyright © Lycée George-Sand La Châtre - Tous droits réservés

[http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L282xH400/_frankenstein_s_monster_by_sbsiceland-d5wm6be-17823.jpg] </img10405|center>

As a homage to Mary Shelley's iconic novel, the 1^o euro students were asked to write a short story which would feature the creation of a "human" being from scraps, bits, spare parts, odds and sods, much in the style of mad scientist Victor Frankenstein's ill-fated experiment. Then they voted for the best stories, which you will find reprinted below

First prize, category " native writers " :

THE PATH TO MADNESS, by Anna and Andrea

The Path to Madness
the diary of Sean Richardson

15th day of December, 1918

It is finally the big day. It has been a good few weeks since I learnt the grand news : the disease which has been plaguing my brain for the past year, and which had prevented me from taking part in the war, could be cured. I was against it at first, as the method used would be to replace the affected part of my brain with another person's ; but my wife convinced me otherwise as this is the last opportunity I have.

I shall soon be departing for the hospital, so these are the last few moments where I shall be fully myself. I have been told that the surgery will last a while and that its chances of success are slim, but I agree with my dear Beth : I would rather die in the process of fighting this illness than endure the suffering that not obtaining a remedy would give me.

It is half-past eight as I write this, and my head is throbbing after the operation which concluded four hours ago. I fear that I will not be able to stay awake much longer, as my lungs are weak from being unconscious for so long,

rendering me breathless after every movement. There is a nurse by my side, who will be staying in our household for the next week or so in order to check my blood pressure and make sure that my body is still in good health. Ah, she is pressing for me to rest - I shall retire to my bed now and attempt to compose my mind to sleep ; which, due to my tired state, shall not be a hard deed to accomplish.

16th day of December, 1918

Last night, I found myself disturbed by the strangest dream. The majority of it has slipped from my mind, but the little that I can remember was most peculiar : I could have sworn that I saw some kind of ditch or trench being dug into the ground by frantic and trembling hands, with faint shouts coming from all around me. There were people, yet I could not recognise any facial features ; whether this be from my bad memory or not, I couldn't say.

I am going to attempt to go about my day as normal, hopefully I shall succeed.

I can barely keep my hand steady as I write these words. It is late at night, and throughout the day, my mind was plagued with the most bizarre visions - could I even refer to them as visions ? They almost felt like memories, despite me not being able to recall any events related to them.

They were triggered by random occurrences, which usually would not bother me in the slightest : early this afternoon I was walking down the path in front of my home, and a pothole in the road suddenly turned into what seemed to be a pit in the soil, almost as if a bomb had been dropped there. What's more, the engine of any car that drove past me seemed to be amplified, resembling that of a tank.

It is most strange ; almost as if images of the past war are being projected in front of me. What I fail to comprehend is why. I am aware that the donor of my operation was a soldier during the war, but surely sharing someone's memory is something that you would find in fiction ! How can a situation such as this even be possible ?

17th day of December, 1918

After the images that disturbed my slumber last night, my nurse has forced me to stay in my bed and rest for the morning. But alas, I am not tired - quite the opposite, in fact. Therefore, I shall retell the events of my dreams, as my mind is too restless to possibly embrace sleep at this point.

The first image I encountered was a bright light, almost as if the sun had descended and was illuminating everything even more than it already does so. Then, the light began to fade, and my eyes could make out blurred surroundings : damp soil was sticking to the thick boots on my feet, and once again I was surrounded by a flurry of faceless people, who seemed to be rushing towards something. What that something was remains unknown to me.

But then, one of these figures approached me, acknowledging my presence. Unlike the others, his features were not blurred : he was wearing what looked like a soldier's uniform, and in his right hand held a firearm. His auburn hair, which appeared to be hastily cut short, was partially hidden underneath a helmet, and his dark eyes were fixed on me. At first, I thought that he meant to speak with me - which, in a way, is what he did - but I was not expecting his words to be so harsh and cutting.

"You," is the first thing he said, his eyes narrowing and his voice filled with what sounded like hatred. "Why are you here ? You shouldn't be here."

"How do you mean ?" was the only response I could muster. Despite being in a dream, I felt afraid of this man : the

FRANKENSTEIN RELOADED

shivers running down my spine felt so real, and my heartbeat was so loud I felt as though it might burst.

The hand in which he wasn't holding the gun found its way to my neck, gripping tightly as he snarled, "It is thanks to me that you are alive. It is my brain that has allowed you to live this long. It is all thanks to me, and yet, I am dead." He paused for a moment, glaring in a way that made even my soul feel exposed.

"Why ?!" he screamed. "There is nothing special about you. You might as well be DEAD !"

After that exclamation, I felt my vision start to fade into white, and I found myself once again in my bedroom. I sat up hurriedly, my forehead coated with a cold dew, my breath sharp and rushed.

And now, here I lie, my hand trying desperately to stay steady as I write this journal entry, my thoughts occupied by the terrifying events that have haunted my dreams.

It is now the early evening of the same day, and I am once again resting beneath the thick covers on my bed, worn out after my exploits of this afternoon.

As soon as my nurse had allowed me to stand, I had dressed and left the house, making my way to our town's library. People must have thought me crazy as I walked : I had covered my ears with the palms of my hands in order to ignore the cars driving past, desperately trying to avoid the visions that I had suffered the day before.

Once I had arrived, I immediately paced towards one of the many rows of books, above which was a wooden sign with "War Archives" painted on it in black. As the war only ended a month ago, people have been submitting their loved ones' journals to the library in order to show the soldiers' struggles in the trenches. What's more, on the wall could be found a long list of men from this area who fought for our country ; it was that that I was heading towards.

My eyes scanned the list of names, searching for one who would maybe ring a bell in my mind. And there, I saw it : Lloyd John Osborn. I have no idea what brought my gaze to this name, but it somehow managed to captivate my mind.

And then, what I had been trying so hard to avoid came to me once more : another memory that was not one of my own, but this one was for more vivid than the others.

I found myself on the ground, covered in dirt and mud, my clothes - which had turned into a soldier's uniform - ripped and worn beyond repair. I perceived a name badge pinned to my left breast pocket : on it was not written my own, but, to my surprise, that of Lloyd John Osborn. A searing pain could be felt in my lower back, and as I reached around to feel it, my hand grasped what seemed to be a piece of shrapnel lodged in my spine ; I noticed in horror that when I tried to stand, I could not : I, or rather Lloyd, was paralyzed.

Suddenly, I was screaming. I couldn't stop, so it must have been part of the memory. For a short moment I wondered why - and then I perceived a tank rolling slowly but surely towards my body... and it did not seem to be stopping.

Before my mind could fully process the events that were happening, a sharp pain made its way across my chest and legs, and a crunching sound invaded my hearing. And then, darkness - I was back in the library, almost as if nothing had happened.

18th day of December, 1918

After the events of the past few days, I have realised that I cannot keep on living this way. If my life is to be plagued with painful memories that are not my own, and dreams of a man who would remind me of how worthless I am, then I might as well end it.

Beth, my beautiful and darling wife, I am sorry. I cannot bear to put you through the pain of watching my mind deteriorate over time.

In an hour's time, I shall walk into the middle of the road outside my house, where cars drive by frequently. I shall die

there, in a way so similar to Lloyd. I feel as though that is appropriate.

After all, why must I live while he rots in the ground ?

Like he said, I might as well be dead.

SEAN RICHARDSON, BELOVED HUSBAND & FRIEND

16 AUGUST 1890 - 18 DECEMBER 1918