

Eynsham News “Complete the Story” Competition: Honourable Mentions – 1

September 2018

I knew the risks when I agreed to do this. At least, I thought I did. No matter how much preparation you do, how many nights you lie awake thinking of all the possible outcomes, you never really know what will happen until the moment you put the plan into action. I am at that moment now. My feet are on the stairs, and I'm watching them move up the dusty wooden slats, feeling disconnected from what I'm doing as if I'm at home watching this on TV. Maybe my brain is relieving me from the sense of being in control, because I can't turn back now, even if I wanted to – it's already too late.

My hand stretches out and grasps the door-handle, trembling slightly. I turn the knob and push the door open . . .

Once I entered the room, I was forced to regain my senses. Inside, the room was coated in a thick layer of putrid yellow goo. I gagged and was about to turn back when a low rumbling growl broke the silence. I need to turn back but my terror held me tight and didn't let me. Too late. Whatever it was, was already on me, knocking me to the ground and trying to claw my face with its huge gnarled talons. Quick thinking, I reached behind my back and swung out my broadsword, thrusting it up at the beast, making contact as the creature exploded in a puff of purple smoke. I jumped up and held my sword tight, preparing myself for whatever was to come next...

15 minutes later, 5 creatures down and already I was exhausted. Pausing for a moment in a dusty, dark corridor, I noticed a vent in the low ceiling. I swiped at it with my sword and it clattered to the floor revealing a black hole. Crawling in the vents would give me a huge advantage. Footsteps. And getting louder too. As quickly as my aching arms would let me, I scrambled up into the vent and lay there, panting like a dog. A second later, I looked down to see the beast stalking down the corridor beneath me. For once, I could get a good look at the huge creature. They were like oversized wolves but down their backs were a row of deep purple scales. Suddenly, the wolf thing bared its teeth and shot off down the corridor making rough barking noises. A second later there were two surprising sounds and the barking stopped. I lay there in silence wondering who could have taken out the beast so quickly. I continued to ponder until I decided it was time to go.

I began to think about the treasure I had been promised when I entered the building. It had to be somewhere around here. Occasionally I thought I could see it glistening gold at the end of the tunnel – yes, I was still traveling in the vent, shuffling awkwardly along. I’d been doing so for about 15 minutes until then and was contemplating giving up. But the thought of the glistening treasure kept me going. Suddenly, quicker than you could say “rhubarb” the panels beneath me gave way and sent me tumbling out of the vent onto the floor. And just by pure luck, the room I fell into was the treasure room. Except... there was no treasure! But there WAS a smirking knight with a chest under her arm. She must have been the mysterious killer from earlier. “Sorry mate, but I got here first,” she said, grinning from ear to ear. I just stood there, gawping. My whole day had been a waste of time. She walked off triumphantly and as if the game was mocking me, the words “GAME OVER” popped up in front of me. I sighed and took off my virtual reality headset, sending me back. Back to real life. Just in time for my mum to call upstairs: “Jim, dinner’s ready!” I sighed again and plodded downstairs. What a boring day!

– Santi Ospina (13)

Eynsham News “Complete the Story” Competition: Honourable Mentions – 2

September 2018

Psycho

I knew the risks when I agreed to do this. At least, I thought I did. No matter how much preparation you do, how many nights you lie awake thinking of all the possible outcomes, you never really know what will happen until the moment you put the plan into action. I am at that moment now. My feet are on the stairs, and I'm watching them move up the dusty wooden slats, feeling disconnected from what I'm doing as if I'm at home watching this on TV. Maybe my brain is relieving me from the sense of being in control, because I can't turn back now, even if I wanted to – it's already too late.

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‘CUT. ...That was very good George love. Just a bit more Larry Olivier and a bit less Larry Grayson and we'll be there ...Ruddy Hell Moira. Didn't you notice he'd changed his shoes? Take him back to wardrobe and we shall go again when he has the right ones on.’

Saucy Little minx. Enough of the ‘George love’. It's ‘Mr Ransom’ to you duckie. Why does she care about what shoes I'm wearing? This is hardly a major production. Fat chance with the money they are paying me. Leo said this was an opportunity not to be missed. So I had prepared myself for a starring role and what am I given? A walk on part with no lines and an axe in my head at the end. An Art-house remake he said. There's me sharing a dingy little cubicle with all sorts of mucky paraphernalia. Don't they know I am a star and all this worry about a pair of blessed shoes. Got to keep them happy I suppose. Do my stuff and then get taken home to those sweet young maidens who look after me. They know who I am.

‘Yes those are the shoes Moira. I wore them earlier and damned uncomfortable they are too. Let's go and get it over with.’

‘That's it George love... Moira, make sure he's got them on the right feet this time. OK then let's go again... Take five. Action.’

Up the stairs we go ‘Now is the winter of our discontent, made glori—’

‘CUT... George love. I know you wish to relive one of your greatest roles, but could you please not say it out loud’.

‘Don’t you patronise me, I’ll have you directing traffic.’

‘Crikey now he thinks we’re making Z cars. Is it too late to try again for Anthony Le Clerc? Let’s have just one more go. Everyone back where you were... Yes George love, at the bottom of the staircase... Take six. Action’

Next time Leo comes to visit I shall tell him that I no longer need his services. Putting me up for that bundle of rubbish was too much. I am an actor, not a spear carrier. My audience needs me and here they are always appreciative as I rehearse for my next master class. Who knows? A knighthood might be in the offing.

– Donald Coleman (88)
