

Final assessment

The weathered stones that made up the wall were green with age as moss and lichen slowly encased the rock. The stones had once made up a grand tower at the corner of a castle wall but the rest of the castle was lost long ago. This curved stone wall was all that remained the rest had all been stolen for other castles or swallowed back to the earth by the great forest. The towers curving walls were relatively intact apart from the archway that allowed entry within. It had been torn open to make the arch wider and taller; this had been done a long time ago as moss had regrown over the rubble. The stones that had escaped the moss had distinct tool markings. But no they weren't tool markings rather scratches or more accurately, claw marks!

The roof of the tower had long time rotted away leaving it open to the sky. Leading to the roof spiraled a rough stone staircase that in parts had lost its balustrade. Even a few of the steps had broken and lay on the floor of the tower after falling. The most interesting part of the tower was the immense stone monolith; it sat directly in the middle of the tower. No growth of moss lichen or any form of life grew in a three meter radius of the stone. The stone monolith was decorated designs made by swirling symbols and the rock had veins of what looked like silver running up and down its surface.

When the moon reached its highest point on the sky, light shone down upon the monolith. The strange thing was the rock was completely bathed in light and there were no shadows being cast towards yet there was a mysterious darkness. It looked vaguely humanoid but there was a wolfish head. An elongated snout and pointed ears on its head. The hand that could be seen looked as if it had claws on it, rather dangerously sharp. A tail curled out from the base of the spine, bushy in its shape. The legs of the shadow looked relatively normal apart from the paws that were at their base.

After a few minutes of being bathed in the light of the moon the veins of silver and gold began to glow, and then the shadow began to move, animating itself with a shudder. The shadow then began to peel off the stone with wisps of black smoke. It took form into a horrific creature made of the black mist. Features more evident now, the paws made no contact with the ground but barely hovered over the hard stone floor, the tail also came curling out of the mist. Even as the features became more obvious the still seemed to be misty in appearance with no clear details. Next the arms came out with their claws like sharp wisps of mist. The chest and head came next; the snout and ears were one of the last of the features to appear. The ears without warning snapped open igniting a deep red glow like fire; at the same time swirling symbols made intricate designs appeared. The symbols could be seen decorating the forearms; the back and chest; and also the outer side of the legs.

As it began to move forward, walking just above the ground towards the archway leading out of the tower no sound was made. The creature had to stoop slightly under the archway, but once out it came back to full height. Walking into the tree line it walked towards a tree making no effort to avoid it. The beast just walked through a tree, the mist breaking on the tree like water breaks on rocks on a river, it then reformed. A crackling snap sound ensued as the tree slowly turned from its rich browns and greens to mottled hues of grey. The rough bark had turned to a smooth stone; it had crept like a disease

starting at the point of first contact with the black mist. All along the outer skin crawled the same spiraling symbols as the monolith had on it.

The creature walked its straight path through the forest walking towards something. Any living thing the black mist touched turned to stone just like the tree had. At one point a bird had blindly flown through the mist turning to stone almost as soon as it exited the blackness. Instead of falling like you might expect it floated there frozen in a single moment, the wings outstretched as if it was gliding on the wind. But there was no wind on this night just the cold crisp air hanging still in its deathly stillness. They say death freezes you in a single moment; cements you to everything around you, the air, and the ground, everything you touch. That's what the bird was now frozen in a single fragment of time. In death...

A trail of stone shrubs and trees like a bread crumb trail of where the monster had gone so far. When the creature emerged from the trees it found its path blocked by a cascading river. It seemed to almost cringe away from the water, in fear. The eyes frantically tried to look for a crossing somewhere along the river but none were seen in the darkness. With a silent snort it grudgingly followed near the river's edge but kept far enough away from any splashes of water.

Trudging along the river masked some sounds of the night but the sights. A dull fiery glow amongst the trees had caught the attention of the creature. The cunning mind knew where there was fire, there were usually humans. Now ever cautious, it made an effort to not let itself brush against any trees or shrubs, because now was the time to hunt.

Reaching the edge of a campsite it stood frozen still, looking onwards to the two unwary campers joking around the dying fire. They both collapsed to the ground laughing at a joke one of them had told. At this moment the creature chose to strike. At clawed fist outstretched, the swirling symbols grew brighter till they illuminated the campsite, with its two little tents within a clearing, in a dull red glow. The campers had turned at this point trying to see who was there but could only see the symbols. As the campers sat there on the ground they both thought to themselves that you never truly see death coming. The last sight either of them saw as the creature stepped towards the light so that only the thing they saw was the open palm stretched outwards letting inky tendrils snake out. The struck directly at their chests and seemed to impale where the heart should be. Tendrils withdrawing back to the open palm, the campers turned to stone starting with their hearts; for that was the place that had been impaled by the mist.

Walking forwards now the creature had returned to its normal self, no longer illuminating the clearing. It seemed to go down to one knee just in front of the new stone statues, yet it still never touched the ground. Two hands outstretched it picked up the new stone men with no effort. I suppose we never will know if shadows have muscles to lift heavy objects such as life size statues or whether they are just magical.

Reflective commentary:

In my reflective commentary I will be looking at how I created this horror comedy creative writing piece. I will be looking at my characters, setting and language and how and why I chose them. As well as what genres have influenced me in writing this.

Characters: I started with my character before writing the narrative and thinking on what he is. It had started out as a shadow on a wall that would pull unsuspecting people into the wall to become shadows as well. The idea of shadow monsters came from the horror genre where dark things are evil and scary. I then changed it so that the creature started as a shadow and then became a monster of black mist, and this stuck close to my original plan. I wasn't sure what the creature was going to look like so I thought of a forest setting and it gave me an idea of a wolf man hybrid a bit like a werewolf and this came from the horror genre. I decided to give the power to turn living things to stone as I found it quite funny being killed and getting stuck in one position for all time; I got this idea from medusa in Greek mythology.

Setting: With the setting I chose a kind of dark cold setting to reflect on my creature and was influenced by horror again, as horror settings often happen at night, whilst it's cold and often with a full moon to add a chilliness to the scene. The ruined tower was influenced by the fantasy genre, old magical and mossy ruins. The campsite in the story was also influenced by the horror genre as horror stories can often have a campsite in them where the characters or victims are usually staying in the story.

Language: A lot of the language I used in this story is heavily influenced by the horror genre, such as dark and gloomy language like "shadows" and "eerie mist". I also used language to create a cold chilling atmosphere of the forest I did this to make the story fit better into the horror genre. To create fear of the monster I used dark and eerie language and this would also make the story fit well into the horror genre.

Conclusion: A lot of my story was influenced by the horror genre which gave me many of my ideas for the character that was based upon a werewolf and the setting of ruins in the forest. My language was heavily influenced when describing my characters and setting as it added atmosphere and made the reader feel fear and worry.

References:

Prejudice and the zombies, by Jane Austen, 2010

My Sister The Serial Killer, by Oyinkan Braithwaite