

Zombies

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Skin shelling at the seams, eyes crusted to slits, zombies walk. Memories reduced to rot, brain squelched against the walls of thin skulls, zombies walk. With a single aspiration, a lone silent prayer for human flesh, to clench the thick material between their decayed teeth, zombies walk.

A reanimated marionette governed by the deteriorated brains of the puppet itself. Fascinated and longing subconsciously for brains as their own shrivel to nothing but hope. In times of catastrophe, hope and despair were synonymous.

Agnes' elder sister was reanimated almost as soon as the apocalypse started, the early months of 2012. She wasn't weak nor strong, knowledgeable nor idiotic, just susceptible. Zombies weren't like they appeared in films; they lurked with sad expressions blanketing their spoilt-rotten intentions. Zombies weren't dying, they weren't at the stage of undead; rather they roamed moribund, almost lifeless.

The air loomed thick in Agnes' lungs, the atmosphere of broken breaths and electrical whirs resided heavily on the smell and taste of the oxygen. Each time she'd inhale, it was as though her lungs were cutting short. Each breath panged her chest. Unlike her elder sister, Agnes was not infected with the contagion.

Today, the 17th February, 2015 was just like any other Wednesday. School loomed over the aura of a peaceful morning. The once positive demeanour the sky bragged was overshadowed by the extreme feeling of melancholy. In school there lurked zombies who'd flood the hallways into a labyrinth. The feeling of being so lost voided the young girl to oblivion. The feeling of isolated solitude brought Agnes to the realisation of how lonely she'd really become. Agnes was far more of a demure girl than her sister.

Betrys, commonly known as, 'Betrrix_plaque36' was the polar opposite of her younger sister. Not only did the four-year age gap tear the two apart, but the sole difference between them was their values in life. Agnes gratified herself with literature, and simple doodling in her sketchbook, whereas her elder sister was simply appeased by brains.

The sibling rivalry between the two girls, who had vowed to stay by each other's sides, was toxic and sickening. Nothing brought an ache to Agnes' gut like watching her sister with her crowd of obnoxious friends. Agnes didn't know their names. She wouldn't bother to bat an eye, but when she would, she could tell immediately that they were all zombies. Drooling over their brains, paying no attention to the zombies around them, as they infatuated themselves with the brain in their hands.

Agnes soon realised that she'd been staring at the group when her sister broke her from her trance with a voice that rang cacophonously in her ears: "Making stories up in your head of us, are you Nessa?"

There was a twinge in Agnes' gut at the mention of the nickname Betrys once said so lovingly, before 2012, before Betrys turned into a zombie.

"You see life differently, Nessa. What made you so crazy?" Her eyes finally reverted from their gazeless gaze on the bloodied and mauled. Agnes herself couldn't help but stay silent, immobilised at the cruel tone of her dear elder sister.

"Is it actually true that she thinks we're some sort of zombies?" The rat-nosed shorter girl whispered, using Betrys as some sort of shield.

"Y'know that she's gone a bit insane as of late," Betrys chorused, falling back into the sea of her friends boastfully. "Just how loopy are you, Nessa?" she teased, watching as her little sister's gaze faltered.

She strutted forwards again, coming closer and closer to her sister. Agnes froze, trying her best to shake off the premonition of disaster that clogged the back of her throat like an anchor dragging along the sand.

Betrys' hand projected outwards to snatch the bag that hung over one of Agnes' shoulders. Betrys hastily unzipped the three separate compartments, watching the contents of her sister's bag drop onto the floor. A scrappy notebook stuck out like a sore thumb. Betrys immediately dived for it.

With the scrappy notebook in her hands, her face lit up cruelly. As she turned over the first few pages, the crude facade she hid beneath faltered, and her jaw hung. The notebook dropped to the ground, as quickly as it had been swooped up.

"You're a psycho," Betrys quivered. The rat-nosed girl quickly cowered for her friend's protection, holding her hands together, enclosed near her face.

As if almost on cue, the school's bell chimed its sad song, signifying the final seconds of break time. Agnes dropped to the floor to swoop everything back into her bag, and Betrys and her henchmen retreated to their classes.

English was never a poor class for Agnes. Metaphors, similes, hyperboles; she'd hit the nail on the head. It was easy to get entranced in her own special world, especially when she set the rules. There were no brains, no zombies; just basketball, and camping outback.

Metaphor is a funny word, it's a ray of sunshine on the tip of your nose, something that maybe you can't see, but you can always feel. Of course, there's always something lacking in a metaphor; depth. No matter how long you try to prolong it, there's a tiny nick that can't be explained.

Though they're zombies, it's undeniable that they are living, breathing humans.

Though they're brains, it's undeniable that they have a motherboard, speaker and a screen.

Human, phone; addiction.

Zombie, brain; addiction.