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# HORROR ADDICTS GUIDE TO LIFE 2

A guide written by Horror Addicts, for Horror Addicts.

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*Free excerpt from Horror Addicts Guide to Life 2*

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## Scary Shadows in “The Red Room”

by Kieran Judge

H. G. Wells might be more known for his Science-Fiction novels, such as *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds*, but some of his short stories might as well have been written by H. P. Lovecraft. “The Red Room” is a straight-up ghost story in the same vein as M. R. James. It’s a little gem of a story, and I’d like to share some of my thoughts as to what makes it such a delight.

“The Red Room” details the protagonist taking up a challenge of sorts to stay in a cursed castle bedroom overnight. The opening sets this up nicely in what might now seem a cliché. The opening line that, “I can assure you,” said I, “that it will take a very tangible ghost to frighten me,” is reminiscent of Jack Torrance in Kubrick’s *The Shining* saying, “That’s not going to happen to me,” when Ullman speaks of the previous caretaker going insane.

This single line perfectly sets up the beginning of the character’s arc (from skeptic to believer), tells us the genre of the story (supernatural), and the character of the protagonist. His skepticism is reinforced when he says, “I half suspected the old people were trying to enhance the spiritual terrors of their house,” He is, “Abbreviated and broadened to an impossible sturdiness in the queer old mirror at the end of the room.” He sees himself as a rock, immovable against anything that passes his way. However, the mirror has changed his appearance and just as he sees himself to be a rock in a storm, his faith is soon to be changed.

The protagonist’s disbelief in ghosts is due to a fear of age and dying. It is said that he is twenty-eight. This is in contrast to the three elderly people who apparently live in the castle. This fear of their age presents itself when the protagonist remarks, “There is, to my mind, something inhuman in senility.” Age removes human qualities, and so something very old is to be seen as disgusting, or feared. Spirits, dead for many years, must be terrifying to him.

As the protagonist leaves the group for the room, they are described as, “Dark against

the firelight,” which is one of the many allusions to shadows peppered throughout the opening. This further links them to the spirits that will eventually come to haunt our protagonist. Just a little later the protagonist himself expands on this idea, even remarking, “Their very existence, thought I, is spectral.”

To read more, go to: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09YNF5QM3>

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Do you love the horror genre? Do you look at horror as a lifestyle? Do the "norms" not understand your love of the macabre? Despair no longer, my friend, for within your grasp is a book written by those who look at horror as a way of life, just like you. This is your guide to living a horror addict's life.

Our month-by-month almanac with important dates, movie lists, puzzles, crafts, articles, and recipes will guarantee your whole year is occupied with delightful horror activities. Don't miss our monster guide with articles about vampires, zombies, ghosts, and some creatures that just can't be categorized. Enjoy interviews with creators of horror content and hear perspectives from different cultures and backgrounds. Read stories of real hauntings, nightmares, and vile vacations.

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