

Nail-Biter Afterword

I just so happened to be reading Macbeth when I had an idea for this horror story, the opening quote seemed to fit nicely into the eerie atmosphere I was going for and the opening chapter 'Perchance to Dream' is another Shakespeare reference.

The opening chapter starts with an ominous dream as told by the protagonist, my plan was to outline the events in the story here and reconstruct them later on in the reality of the plot, using the protagonist's own description of the dream to give the reader a sense of déjà vu.

We then come to the doctor's office where I dip into some body horror aspects and convey a sense of "Abstract real-worldness" with the characteristics of the Doctor being that of a common perception of coldness and robot-like personality, rather than how a medical professional would really act in such a situation. We also get the first glimpse of something is amiss when the protagonist notices the Doctor's handwriting with "*Psy... tive*" and "*Del... sions,*" conveying "Psychoactive and Delusions" respectively.

In 'The Crimson Feast' we get another allusion to the nature of the protagonist with the restaurant being named 'Reverie' or 'Daydream', coupled with 'I've never noticed this place before.' The food ordered was based on 'Foods that best promote fingernail growth', go figure. The rest sets up the next chapter. I still wince at the whole 'peeling off the fingernail' stuff. *Shudder :0

For the next two segments I lean heavily into action and body horror, whilst repeating elements from the dream sequence from the beginning.

Originally, for the ending I was going to have the protagonist black-out or engage in some conflict and then cut to the apartment, (which was now a crime scene) sometime later. A detective would find the crumpled-up prescription (from An Unusual Case) and visit the Doctor. Here the Doctor would describe the protagonist rather condescendingly and it would have proceeded something like:

"This is one of those cases I'm gonna have nightmares about! I'm tellin' ya!" [Detective]

"I hope for your sake detective... you do not." [Doctor]

Filled with a nameless dread the detective left the doctor's office, and he could have sworn he had the most horrible taste of copper in his mouth.

As for the ending I stuck with: It was a spur of the moment deal, it leaves everything unanswered (sorry) but I may continue with this concept in future.

Influences:

A LOT OF JUNJI ITO!!! (Shiver, Smashed, Fragments of Horror, The Dissolving Classroom :P)

American Psycho – Bret Easton Ellis

Macbeth – Shakespeare

Fahrenheit 451 – Ray Bradbury

Perfect Blue – Yoshikazu Takeuchi

Life Is Strange: Dust – Emma Vieceli, Claudia Leonardi, Anrea Izzo

Help me I'm hungry – Nirvana 1987