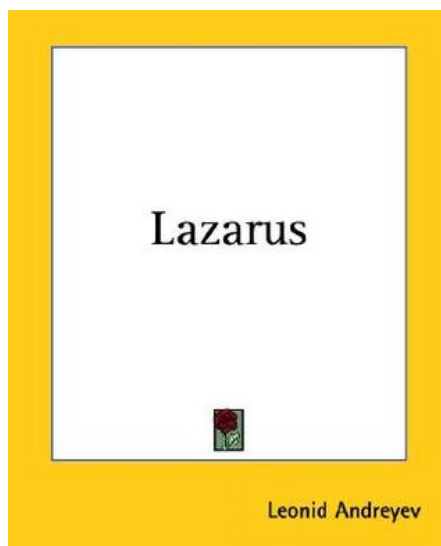




Lazarus

Leonid Andreyev

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And when the scarlet, flattened globe would lower, Lazarus would set out for the desert and walk straight toward the sun, as though striving to reach it. He always walked straight toward the sun and those who tried to follow him and to spy upon what he was doing at night in the desert, retained in their memory the black silhouette of a tall stout man against the red background of an enormous flattened disc.

Lazarus Details

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From Reader Review Lazarus for online ebook

David says

Lazarus is an interesting take on the familiar biblical story from the Gospel of John. It follows Lazarus in his life after death after life. Something is not quite right with him precisely because some things are better left unknown. Short and sweet and best of all, it's another free gem on Google books (limited funds have been keeping me there and I've been doing just fine). My edition includes a short story called the Gentleman from San Francisco by Ivan Bunin which is a nice satire on the leisurely class.

Andy says

WOW, I was very impressed by this story. It is the last story in the March, 1927 issue of Weird Tales magazine. By far it was the best story in the issue. Andreyev is an author I have been curious to read for a while now, and this story has been reprinted five times. This is a dark, gloomy, Gothic story, far ahead of it's time, full of cosmic horror imagery. Written in 1906, this was published two years before Hodgson's "The House on the Borderland," which also feels ahead of it's time, and which came to mind while reading this.

Lazarus is brought back from the dead, but he's not the same, neither is anyone who comes in contact with him. They all become infected by his knowledge of the meaninglessness of our existence in the scale of the universe.

Ivana Books Are Magic says

I'm struggling to find words to describe this one. You all know the biblical story of Lazarus, right? Well, this version is nothing like it. Moreover, Lazarus (the short story) is unlike anything I've ever read before. Never have I read a tale that was so disturbing and twisted, and yet at the same time so brilliant and sensible. It's insane and it's amazing, it's an embodiment of darkness chained with words. This tale of Lazarus was so utterly convincing, that I felt that I couldn't have stopped reading it even if I tried. I've read dark, sinister and depressive tales before, but never have I read something similar.

Moreover, reading this story felt completely unlike to reading any other story. I couldn't create a space between myself and the story, a space that almost always exists. You know how usually when you are reading a story, even if you're immersed into it, you can still reflect on it? There is that mental space you as reader posses, a private space that allows you to ponder the work you're reading. That space vanished when I started reading this story. It was as if I was captured in the story itself. What a compelling read it was! The writing is amazingly powerful and painfully precise. Every sentence carries extra weight until you feel completely overwhelmed. Lazarus is without a doubt one of the best short stories that I have ever read.

I'm not sure how to label this one, if label is indeed needed. I'm inclined to call it philosophical/psychological horror story. I don't think the word horror is too strong a word to use, and I'm not afraid to admit that this tale scared me. Not in it caught me by the surprise kind of way. No, this is the kind of story that will lay terror in your soul. I'm not a fan of horror, but I do like horror mixed with other genres. This story has certainly impressed me deeply.

As the story opens, you feel that something isn't quite right but as it progresses, you witness as Lazarus becomes the embodiment of human greatest fear- the nothingness. Lazarus returns from his grave a changed man. As the story evolves it becomes obvious how changed he really is. At first others don't really notice it, this change in Lazarus, instead they're happy he has returned, but then one of them asks a terrible question. Soon Lazarus becomes a living curse, as the emptiness of his gaze dries the life energy from others and drives people into insanity. I would say there is a lot of symbolism in this story.

What happens when a man faces nothingness? Asking certain questions can drive people crazy, and yet sometimes we can't resist asking them. We cannot deny experiences, even if they are deeply traumatic, perhaps especially if they are deeply traumatic. We cannot change reality with wishful thinking. Sometimes we shape our reality into terrible things. The story of Lazarus is deeply disturbing and chillingly pessimistic tale. It's a void turned into words. A black hole threatening to devour its reader, but somehow most of all- it's brilliant literature.

An atomic force of pessimism directed at your brain. Sinister. Magnetic. Majestic. Magical. Unforgettable. Unique. One of the kind.

Depressive. Depressive doesn't even cover it. (WARNING : Do not read if you're depressed or feeling low, it has a potency THAT might throw someone over the edge).

...and yet so masterfully written, so stubborn, so precise in its narrative. The most unique tale I have ever read. This is something else!

Edgar Trevizo says

¡Hermosa historia! profunda, misteriosa, con un delicado gusto de silencio a lo largo de sus frases, los hechos, las descripciones y el "allá". De esos libros que sólo tienen la falla de no ser mucho más largos...

Marts (Thinker) says

So Lazarus died and is raised after being in the grave for three days, but have you ever wondered what the man's life was like after his resurrection?

Andreyev gives a bit of insight into what may have occurred after Lazarus's return to life... I love his imagination here and I'd recommend it to anyone seeking a rather short but entertaining read...

Schedex says

Die Fragilität des Willens zum Leben

Leonid Andreyevs Erzählung Lazarus setzt dort ein, wo es eigentlich schon zu Ende geht. Nachdem Andreyevs Lazarus (mit leichter Latenz) am vierten Tage wiederauferstanden ist, scheint die personifizierte Apokalypse unaufhaltbar zu sein. Der sich infolge entwickelnde narrative Sog schwankt dabei gleichermaßen zwischen Unergründlichkeit und intensiver Brutalität; Lazarus, dessen Augen das Immerwährende erblicken konnten/mussten, ist als „geläuterter“ Advokat der Sinnlosigkeit zurückgekehrt. Die Konsequenz der Erkenntnis dessen, welches eigentlich nicht zur subjektivierten Apperzeption bestimmt

ist – nämlich des Jenseits von Menschheit und Ordnung – zwingt die diesseitige Einfalt unvermittelt in die Knie. Die Konfrontation mit der unverständlich bedrohlich wirkenden Miene Lazarus‘ genügt bereits; schließlich ist es nichts anderes als die bittere Wahrheit, die sich in den Augen des Wiederauferstandenen in all ihrer Inkompressibilität widerspiegelt. Als fragil und nichtig erscheinen daher die irdischen Bemühungen und Ziele, die, einmal ihre Bedeutung verloren, ihren einstigen Status als (kümmerliche) Grundfesten aller Existenz einbüßen.

Mit Arthur Schopenhauer, dem „Vater des Pessimismus“ und Andrejevs philosophischem Vorbild, ausgedrückt, stirbt der Wille zum Leben ab und mündet unweigerlich in der Aberkennung weltlicher Werte und damit auch im Selbstmord. Weder Stoizismus (hier in Form der Figur des Aurelius als ideellem Erben Marc Aurels auftretend), noch Epikureismus können dieser Einsicht etwas Tröstliches entgegensetzen.

Eadweard says

One of the best short stories I have ever read.

Javi Molina says

Hay cosas que los vivos nunca deberíamos saber.

Andrejev especula lo que acontece con Lázaros después de su resurrección. Imagina lo que hay después de la muerte, la respuesta es nada, un infinito vacío donde todo acaba justo al empezar. ¿Que es la brevedad de la vida frente al infinito?. Esta es la respuesta que Lazaro conoce al morir y por la cual su vuelta al mundo de los vivos no podría ser más amarga. Consciente de la futilidad de la vida vagabundea por el desierto sin ser capaz de sentir o interesarse nunca más por nada.

Para el resto de personas el solo hecho de mirarle a los ojos les hace participe de este conocimiento convirtiéndoles por tanto en seres amorales e indolentes.

Similar a los personajes de Lovecraft los cuales se vuelven locos al atisbar los abismos del horror cósmico, los coetáneos de Lazaro pierden las ganas de vivir. Con esto Andrejev nos quiere enseñar, tal vez, lo futil que es intentar atisbar a este vacío, y que la vida es mucho más rica y profunda sin este conocimiento del cual deberíamos ser ajenos.

David says

One of my all time favorite short stories. Andrejev provides a chilling answer to the question of what happened to Lazarus after his resurrection. Dark fiction at its finest.

Amalie says

I read number of books by Leonid Andrejev and they all are disturbing, dark, and controversial?— but brilliant, he's a powerful prosaist! So I ended up reading more short stories. He sounds like an atheist in search of God.

This story explores aftermath of the famous Biblical event: resurrection of Lazarus - and is one the profoundly chilling works of fiction like *The Turn of the Screw*.

It's deeply depressingly beautiful and like some sort of aesthetic horror. I just don't have the words to explain.

Choko says

*** 5+++++++***

This story....!!!! How can everyone not have read it???? How had I not read it until now? Why had I never heard about it before? This was so beautifully painful, so deeply emotional, so prosaically profound! I KNEW what the author slowly and simply unveiled in front of us. I KNEW the emptiness and horror in Lazarus's eyes! I SAW the horror of the 3 days of death. And I am one of the lucky ones who fights ceaselessly and refuses to have the life leached out of me every day, every second, every moment.... Because I KNOW, I have experienced in every fiber of my being, the contrast of darkest depravity and enlightened euphoria, ugliness and beauty, utter despair and boundless hope!!! And I have been blessed to be one of those who can still rejoice in the heat and light of the Sun, be enchanted by the simple innocence of children, and appreciate the privilege of BEING! I have been and still am one of the walking wounded. I recognize Lazarus and those who have survived the unsurvivable.

"... 'Now he was grave and silent; neither he himself jested nor did he laugh at the jests of others; and the words he spoke occasionally were simple, ordinary and necessary words—words as much devoid of sense and depth as are the sounds with which an animal expresses pain and pleasure, thirst and hunger. Such words a man may speak all his life and no one would ever know the sorrows and joys that dwelt within him.' ..."

I know. I see. I recognize. But most of all, I feel grateful that something in my emotional makeup has let me be deeply marred, but not decimated. I feel the joy and sun and love. I stayed human...

This review is not a review. **This is my way of saying thanks to an author long gone, as well as those who keep his work still in print.** A thanks for understanding that some events in our lives are not erasable. The wounds heal, sometimes there are no visible scars. But the pain is something we are faced with every single moment, every day, and for some of us, as well as those who look into our eyes and love us, it is soul-destroying. I don't know what is that thing, which helps some move on, open their hearts and senses back to life, while some only continue to exist, but I am beyond grateful that I have found IT, just as Aurelius. IT has gifted me with the ability to truly appreciate every ray of sunshine, bathe in the colors of life while always knowing the grays, as well as the fortitude to weather the tempests always finding their way on the horizon... My words are weak and I cannot express all that I want to say, but I want to express my infinite gratitude to all! And I want to thank those who crisscross their paths with mine. I thank you all who have been with me, patient and loving, on this winding, harsh, and thankless road! You are all KNOWN and tattooed on my heart.

I read this story and I cried. Lazarus has been brought back from the dead and by Jesus of all people. Hurrah for Lazarus! Now he has to survive the rest of his returned life with all the trauma of death stamped on his body, mind and soul. The Lazarus of before is no longer. The parts that have returned are not enough. And

although his survival is and is seen as a miracle, what would his daily life do to all around him? If you have ever known or loved, or just wondered about those who have lived through wars, torture, or other "unsurvivable" situations, this short story is a must!!! **You have to read this!!!!**

READ IT!!!!

Ramona Arsene says

"The lines of thy eyebrows and forehead are quite, quite interesting: they are like ruins of strange palaces, buried in ashes after an earthquake."

Sidharth Vardhan says

"And surrounded by Darkness and Empty Waste, Man trembled hopelessly before the dread of the Infinite."

This is the reason why read short stories. Simply amazing!

'Lazarus' as you know is the code name of plan that Sherlock Holmes (my enemy) used to survive fall and fake his death only to show up alive later. I know! he cheated, right?

It is coincidentally also the name of a person in Genesis, who was brought back to life three days after his death by Jesus, who himself was yet another person who came back to life three days after his death. This is problem with good people. They just can't just make their mind!

The miracle that brought Lazarus back to life seems to have been proven inefficient - for though he is now living, he still isn't 'alive' like he was before.

"death had left upon his face and body the effect of an artist's unfinished sketch seen through a thin glass."

It must be some sort of divine omission by Jesus when the messiah didn't took away the memory of afterlife, a memory that is enough to suck the life of all meaning and happiness leaving behind emptiness and agony:

"Now he was grave and silent; neither he himself jested nor did he laugh at the jests of others; and the words he spoke occasionally were simple, ordinary and necessary words—words as much devoid of sense and depth as are the sounds with which an animal expresses pain and pleasure, thirst and hunger. Such words a man may speak all his life and no one would ever know the sorrows and joys that dwelt within him."

He won't tell anyone what he saw. Indifferent to all the joys and cares of the world, he is happy spending his time gazing listlessly at the sun, ultimate source of all life - perhaps seeking its warmth, or just questioning the the cruelty it indulges in by creating life. Sidebar: The Lazarus in 'The Testament of Mary by Colm Tóibín' too showed similar nervousness and confusion.

Lazzaus is like an allegory of all those who have suffered the insufferable misfortunes - wars, concentration camps, nuclear bombs, radiation to name a few big ones. Can a survivor ever recover from suffering that such memories cause? Or is 'survivor' a mere relative term when it comes to such incidences? A soldier who was sent on a mission to Chernobyl after the nuclear disaster refereed to this story in describing his experience in 'Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster by Svetlana Alexievich' which is how I discovered it.

Anyways, Lazarus' story isn't limited to his own suffering. He fills everyone who dares to see him or talk to him with this emptiness and anguish and they are all reduced to similar waiting for the death. It is as if he is wearing death like bridegroom's dress he always had on, like an expression on his face, darkness black eyes and the sad stoic attitude which proved contagious.

"the man who fell under his inscrutable gaze could no longer feel the sun, nor hear the fountain, nor recognise his native sky. Sometimes he would cry bitterly, sometimes tear his hair in despair and madly call for help; but generally it happened that the men thus stricken by the gaze of Lazarus began to fade away listlessly and quietly and pass into a slow death lasting many long years. They died in the presence of everybody, colourless, haggard and gloomy, like trees withering on rocky ground. Those who screamed in madness sometimes came back to life; but the others, never."

The wisdom of saints was no shield against the darkness of his eyes. Love of lovers survived being shown the face of death but it lost all its beautiful colors. It isn't Lazzarus' fault that they are suffering but they all blame him.

It is just the metaphor I was searching for, being reading about lots man-made tragedies these days. Should one try to avoid knowledge that can cause depression? Ignorance is the bliss - and there are things knowing which makes life difficult, I guess many people will prefer ignorance. (to quote a respectable serial killer Culverton Smith, "Opt-in ignorance. It makes the world go round.").

Not all people who look into Lazarus' eyes are equally affected. Children in their innocence aren't affected by the infinite that shows in his face at all.

Aurelius, a renowned sculptor, is another exception showing how knowledge of sadness affects an artist. Being an artist - a true artist filled with love for life he isn't affected too much by Lazarus' company. Rather he discovers his truth. Till now he had portrayed only the beautiful things and, although admired by others, had always found them inadequate since he thought they didn't capture the beauty of things they represented. But in ugliness of Lazarus' face he discovered his mistake - that beautiful and desirable things of life are so only because of contrast provided by undesirable and ugly things around them, when accompanied by undeniable fact that their very existence is a revolt of life against tyranny of death, a revolt doomed to fail. To create art that shows only beautiful things is to lie and thus he finally made his 'true' masterpiece, the picture of longing for life in the valley of death:

"It was a thing monstrous, possessing none of the forms familiar to the eye, yet not devoid of a hint of some new unknown form. On a thin tortuous little branch, or rather an ugly likeness of one, lay crooked, strange, unsightly, shapeless heaps of something turned outside in, or something turned inside out—wild fragments which seemed to be feebly trying to get away from themselves. And, accidentally, under one of the wild projections, they noticed a wonderfully sculptured butterfly, with transparent wings, trembling as though with a weak longing to fly."

The last exception is that of emperor Augustus. But this review is already too long for a short story. Go read

the story. You can read it here.

Jason says

The single greatest short story I have ever read, with an incredibly lyrical and profound insight into death. I wish Andreyev had rewritten all the biblical stories.

Carol says

I read Pet Sematary by Stephen King when I was 22. It is on that short list of books that virtually everyone American of a certain age read in 1983 when it was first published and I've yet to meet the pet owner of that age who isn't simultaneously intimately familiar with, and terrified by, its horrible, true theme. Lazarus is an amalgam of that theme, J.K. Rowling's concept of dementors, a twisted riff on Pilate's meeting with Jesus, and the New Testament story of Lazarus, the man whom Jesus resurrected from the dead after Lazarus had spent 3 days in the grave. (If you're either unfamiliar with that story or want to brush up, it is in John 11 and Matthew 21.) I highly recommend this brilliant short story, available at <http://www.online-literature.com/leon...>, which will take you fifteen minutes, tops, to read.

Andreyev was a Russian playwright and short story writer who, according to the GR bio, was discovered by Gorky. Lazarus was first published in 1906. I'd not heard of Andreyev before today. Having read Lazarus, I now want to obtain and consume everything he ever published in short order.

For a proper, amazing review, check out the one linked below, written by Sidharth Vardhan.

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Gizem says

Ölüpte dirilmi? bir adamın hayat öyküsü anlatılmaktadır. Hikayenin intihar dürtüsüyle yaşanan Andreyev'i yansıttığı varsayılabilir. Mistik olay mitolojik kahramanlarda içerir.

Marc says

Lazarus is one of those characters from the Bible who is more symbolic than real. He serves as a vehicle for one of Christ's miracles, a sign that Jesus is no mere prophet. As such, we know little about him. He's sick and Jesus knows he's going to die, but delays visiting until after Lazarus dies. He then raises Lazarus from the dead. And that is the last we hear of Lazarus. But Andreyev takes up the tale from there. The miracle of being brought back to life turns out to be a nightmare. Death has marked Lazarus and he becomes a pariah among men. Quite a haunting tale.

Story Online here:

<http://www.online-literature.com/leonid-andreyev/1479/>

Thanks to Carol for the link and original recommendation!

Robby says

Gorgeous, horrifying, gripping prose that dives deep and does not come up for air. Lazarus is the story you wish you had written because you have felt it all your life. I have never seen the terror of death so thoughtfully laid out on the page.

Uyuyan Adam / Engin Türkgeldi says

Okumak bir yana daha önce ad?n? bile duymam?? oldu?um Leonid Andrejev'in kitab?n? kadim bir dostumun tavsiyesi üzerine ald?m. Daha ilk bölümünden beni abart?ya kaçmayan fakat zengin dili, karanl?k atmosferi, ve 3 gün 3 gece ölü kalan Lazarus'un tuhaf ve anlaml? hikayesiyle kendine ba?lad?. Zaten k?sa olan kitap bir solukta bitti. Yazar?n di?er kitaplar?n? 2015'te okumay? planl?yorum.

J. says

I feel that if i had read this in High School, or at a more impressionable age, I would have been changed, horrified, moved or shocked by this. Now, the message sort of loses its punch and does not seem that shocking or original.
