

1.The Boy in the Striped Pajamas

Bruno is not happy. His family has just moved because his father was sent to work in a special “farm” in Out-With. Bruno’s parents tell him to stay at home because it’s not safe outside. He is bored and stares at the ceiling in his room. One day, he decides to leave the house so he won’t go crazy. He meets Shmuel, a skinny boy in striped pajamas standing behind a fence. They quickly become friends. Bruno learns that they share the same birthday. He has many questions for Shmuel.

He asks Shmuel, “Why are you wearing a yellow star on your arm?” Is that a game?”

Shmuel shrugs his shoulders and says. “They say I’m Jewish and that’s the way it plays here.”

“There are thousands of people behind the fence, all wearing the yellow star,” Shmuel goes on saying.

Bruno thinks it is unfair. “I wish that I lived behind the fence so I had friends to play with, too,” he says.

Bruno feels unhappy in his new home. It seems that no one smiles in this city. He doesn’t have anybody to talk to besides his sister, Gretel, and their tutor. The tutor tells the children they are better than Jewish people. He says that the Jewish aren’t really people at all. Gretel agrees, but Bruno doesn’t believe this. He thinks his friend Shmuel is just the same as him.

One day, Bruno comes home and finds Shmuel in his kitchen. A soldier brought Shmuel there to clean the house for Bruno’s father’s birthday. Bruno sits down at the table and has some chicken. He offers Shmuel some food because he looks hungry.

“Did you just steal that chicken?” the soldier walks in and shouts.

Shmuel explains that Bruno is his friend and he gave him the chicken. However, Bruno turns his back on Shmuel because he is scared of the soldier.

The soldier turns to Shmuel and says, “We will have a discussion about what happens to boys who steals.” Shmuel’s face looks beat-up the next time Bruno sees him. Bruno feels guilty and says sorry. Shmuel forgives him and they shake hands through the fence. Bruno then tells Shmuel that his family is moving soon. Shmuel looks sad because he won’t have anyone to talk to. They put their heads together and think of a solution. Bruno will sneak into the farm, so they can play together before he leaves.

The next day, Shmuel gives Bruno the same striped pajamas so nobody will know. Bruno always imagines happy smiles would be playing games together inside. Instead, everyone looks horribly sad. Right at the moment, the boys are grabbed by soldiers and taken to a warm room with lots of people. The door is closed and the room gets very dark. Bruno and Shmuel are scared, so they hold hands. A day later, Bruno’s father goes looking for him. All he can find is Bruno’s clothes on the ground outside the fence.

2.Fankenstein

Robert Walton is the captain of a ship. He is traveling to the North Pole. The mission is interrupted by seas full of ice that is too thick to pass through. There, Walton meets Victor Frankenstein. Victor is very weak. He comes aboard Walton's ship, where Walton nurses him back to health. Victor then tells Walton the fantastic tale of the monster he created.

Victor is a happy young man. He goes to university to study chemistry. There, he becomes convinced that he has found the secret of life. With this new knowledge, Victor tries to create a creature out of old body parts he steals. Then, one night, Victor brings the creature to life. Victor steps back as the monster sits up and moans. He is horrified by the monster's appearance. When the monster gives him a big sign, Victor runs away and wanders the streets in regret. After a while, he returns to his apartment and finds the monster missing.

After a few days, there is still no sign of the monster. Then, Victor learns that his youngest brother, William, has been murdered. Victor rushes home. As he walks through the woods where William was killed, he sees the monster, Victor becomes convinced that it is the monster that killed his brother. Victor now wants to confront the monster.

They eventually meet face to face. The monster admits to the murder of William, because he wanted to hurt Victor for abandoning him. The monster explains that he tried to be good, but he still wasn't accepted by people. Finally, the monster asks Victor to make a female partner. Out of sympathy, Victor starts making the female creature. While making it, he cannot help but think it is a mistake. He believes two of them will be a disaster for human beings. Victor gets scared and destroys his work. The monster, seeing this from the window, swears to take revenge.

The monster starts his revenge by killing Victor's best friend, Henry. Victor is worried about his new wife, Elizabeth. After Henry's death, he is afraid of what the monster might do to her. Victor sends Elizabeth away so she won't be in danger. However, the monster targets her and murders her. Victor's father then dies of grief. Victor is now at rock bottom and devotes the rest of his life to finding and killing the monster.

Victor chases the monster to the North Pole but loses him. It is at this point that Walton finds him. Victor's condition is poor though, and he dies soon after finishing his story. Walton later finds the monster weeping over Victor's body. The monster says that he is lonely, depressed, angry, and full of regret. He goes on to say now that his creator is dead, he too can end his suffering. The monster then takes off for the most remote place in the world to die.

3.Rip Van Winkle

In 1700s America, when England still controls the colonies, there lives a man named Rip Van Winkle. Although Rip is a farmer, and has a family to support, he dislikes getting his hands dirty. Rip prefers instead to travel the roads, study the local Dutch people, and live a carefree life.

Rip's wife is constantly nagging him for being too idle, so one day he decides to take a walk to get away from her. He picks up his gun and walks into the mountains with the family dog, Wolf.

Rip and Wolf walk for some time in the woods on that autumn day. As he grows tired from hiking, Rip sits down and looks at the sunset and valley below. Night is approaching, though, so Rip gets up to return home. Yet he still fears seeing his wife again. All of a sudden, Rip sees a strange man climbing some rocks below. Rip figures the man needs help, so he rushes down to see what the matter is.

Rip finds that the stranger is dressed in outdated Dutch clothing and carrying a huge keg. The man asks Rip to lend him a hand carrying the load and Rip agrees. As they walk through the woods, they reach an outcropping of large rocks. There Rip sees more people, Dutch colonists, but all dressed in an antique way, and playing old-fashioned games.

The group of old-fashioned strangers seem cartoonish to Rip. Their clothes seem too old to be real; they all have beards, and their faces seem odd. In fact, he thinks the whole scene looks like an old painting. The stranger begins pouring alcohol from his keg and they all drink, but Rip soon gets drunk and falls asleep.

After a dreamless sleep, Rip wakes up the next morning back where he sat down the day before. However, he finds his gun is rusted out, and Wolf is gone. He returns to the place where he saw the strange men the night before, but they're gone. In fact, there's a stream flowing through the area, and Rip begins to feel anxious.

Hungry, and still looking for Wolf, Rip decides to leave the mountains. When he walks into the village, he sees many people he doesn't know. Rip gets nervous and strokes his face, only to find that he now has a long beard. The village has grown into a town, too, and seems strange to Rip. When he reaches his house, he finds it is empty and crumbling.

Finally, a crowd and the town's politicians confront the confused Rip. They ask him who he votes for, but Rip has no idea what they mean. Rip asks them about his old friends, but the townspeople say his friends died in the Revolutionary War fighting the British. It turns out that Rip has been asleep for at least 20 years. Finally, Rip's grown-up daughter takes him in to live with her. Rip, once again, takes up a life of idleness and simple pleasures. People tell the tale of how Rip Van Winkle slept through the Revolutionary War and escaped having to fight. Many men look at their days of long work, and nagging wives, and feel jealous of old Rip's fate.

4.The Necklace

Beautiful Mathilde is very charming to all who know her. However, Mathilde comes from a poor family. She marries a clerk instead of a man with wealth or power. She regrets her fate in life and spends endless hours imagining how her life could've been different. Liosel, Mathilde's husband, appreciates the small things, like the supper she prepares for him. Mathilde, however, dreams of a giant feast. She lives for fancy jewels and clothing, and doesn't feel attractive without them.

One night, Liosel surprises his wife with an invitation to a formal party. He expects Mathilde to be thrilled, but instead, she begins to cry. Through tears, she tell her husband, "I don't have a dress to go to this party." Her husband decides to give her 400 francs to get a nice dress. But after Mathilde's dress is ready, she still seems sad. When her husband finds out and asks her, she cries out, "I don't have any jewels to wear. I'd rather not go to the party!" Seeing his wife's tears, Liosel suggests that Mathilde borrow a piece of jewelry from her wealthy friend, Madame Forester. Madame Forester lets Mathilde borrow a beautiful diamond necklace.

Now in her new dress and expensive jewelry, Mathilde is the most striking woman at the party. She loves the attention she gets and stays out until four in the morning. Though the night is cold, Mathilde refuses to wear her modest coat home. She and her husband walk for a while before they find an old carriage to take them home.

One they return home, Mathilde is sad that the night has ended. She looks at herself in the mirror one last time, but her face turns pale and she gasps. "I...I...I've no longer got Madame Forester's necklace!" Liosel goes out again to look for necklace everywhere. He doesn't come back until dawn but still finds nothing. They realize that they'll have to replace it. When they finally find a dead ringer for Madame Forester's necklace, it costs 36,000 francs.

Mathilde and her husband borrow money and spend their entire life savings in order to make the payment. They begin to live a life of poverty and move into an even smaller apartment. Liosel works three jobs, while Mathilde spends all her time doing heavy housework. They live a life of misery for ten years to pay back their debts. The decade also takes Mathildes' beauty. She now looks exactly like what she'd always feared people would see her as: another poor woman in rags.

One Sunday, Mathilde runs into her old friend, Madame Forester. The wealthy woman doesn't even recognize Mathilde anymore. She's surprised how different Mathilde looks. Feeling emotional, Mathilde lets the cat out of the bag. "And for the last ten years, we have been paying for it. It wasn't easy for us," Mathilde cries. At the end of her story, Madame Forester is white with shock. "Mathilde, mine was a fake. It was only worth five hundred francs!"