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A Note from the Past

by Richard Rewell

“It was a foul malevolent night. I was very much aware of what I was doing as I guided my car through the town and the deluge that challenged me to zig-zig around the rivers and lakes of rainwater that swamped the streets. I thought it ironic that I was listening to the Doors singing “Riders on The Storm” their melodious sounds being snuffed out by intermittent thunderclaps.

I was still fully aware of parking the car, extricating myself from it and then being assaulted by the rain as it slapped me in the face while I waded across the submerged tarmac illuminated by the flickering street lights of the hospital car park that had become a lake. I glanced down at my feet. They were gone, sunk in twenty centimetres of black shimmering cold water.

I approached the hospital entrance aware and amazed at the luminescent blue lightning jabbing at its roof. I entered the building and then the world went black.

I was still aware of things as I strode down the corridor, although unnerved by the shouting of those scrabbling up and down the corridor trying to retrieve the power and hearing someone shout.

“The generator’s blown.”

I heard a kid crying and at this point I began to lose it. Awareness gone. There was a gigantic deafening thunderclap and I crashed into the queue of those needing help, some sitting, some on makeshift crutches, some on mobile beds. Many sobbing. Some dead.

A hand in the darkness grabbed my arm, "Please help me." it said.

"Sorry. I'm not a doctor" I replied.

The light blazed on stunning all of us in the corridor and a Germanic looking nurse barked at me

"This way."

We all screamed at the next thunderclap. The building shook, the lights went out and I lost it. I became a robot.

I vaguely remember the screams in a dimly lit room. I was told later I ran, without being told for a portable lamp, and my face was expressionless as I assisted a nurse to rig up the plasma bags. We stood in blood as well as water that had burst up from the floor while some dripped from the ceiling. I was told to go into another room and I simply put my arms out unprompted by the nurse as she dressed me in 'Scrubs'. We returned to the first room where I looked upwards. I did not want to see what was going on around me. I was aware of nothing. I was like a machine and on reflection not a very good one. I was not working.

The thunder continued I am told. But I just stood there. Choosing to see nothing, hear nothing and touch nothing. A broken robot. Unaware that the roof to half of the hospital had blown away and that my car was no more. Guess it floated down to the sea with all the others in our town.

Then the robot in me evaporated, and I was aware again. Aware of the sound that the little wriggling human made, and I began to laugh as the nurse handed me my newly born son."

These words were written by my great grandfather one of the first in Britain to witness the beginning of the end. For now, we live safely, for how long we don't know but things have changed since great grandfather's day. You see I sit here in Herstmonciux at the water's edge overlooking the bay where Eastbourne once stood. Back in 2019 why didn't they believe in Global Warming.