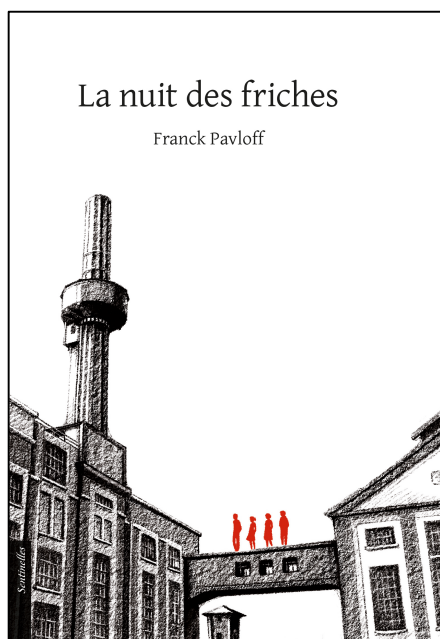


BROWNFIELD NIGHT



Genre(s):

- Short story
- Noir fiction

Keywords:

- Social diversity and mixing
- Lynching
- Conversion of industrial wastelands

Audience: suitable for all audiences; fans of politically-engaged fiction such as *Brown Morning* or *La Nuit du second tour* [Second Round Election Night].

Rights sold abroad: /

Concept

After a life on the move, he returns to the small city of his youth, but his mere presence makes the past rear its ugly head.

Universe and references

- In the same vein as *Brown Morning* (25 translations) by the same author
- Ken Loach films
- The rise of nationalism in Europe

Pitch

An industrial wasteland along a canal somewhere in France with gutted walls looming like gigantic memories.

All around it: homes and retirees. Inside: squatters and lost souls.

When a man arrives one day and wakes up sleeping demons, their world is plunged into violence, blood, and tragedy.

Author

A seasoned traveler, **Franck Pavloff** published his first “Noir series” novel in 1993. Twenty-five more would follow including youth fiction novels. **His short story *Brown Morning*, which was published in 1999, was a worldwide success with nearly 2 million copies sold in France and 25 translations.**

At a glance

- Short story
- Word count: 56,000 characters including spaces
- Available material in English: this presentation (including an overview of the work’s characteristics) and a translated excerpt

Excerpt

The girl was in the drafty hallway for her last pee of the evening – the old Alsatian had made them an herbal hot toddy with ten times more water than alcohol and the mixture didn't take long to go through her system – when the window pane exploded. She bit her tongue until she could taste blood, but did not cry out. She understood immediately. For the last few days, a strange tension has been prowling: light touches, misplaced objects, silhouettes, the bad breath of a smoky bar... Tina has bummed around enough in her short life to know that when she feels that threat, she needs to be ready. Earlier, she had put all of her belongings into a bag, as though she knew.

[...]

The woman with the lavender-colored eyes stays calm. It is finally time and there will be no going back. The road to love opens up. The old Alsatian clenches his fists; he's spent his whole life resisting men in uniforms and by God, he's not about to surrender now. The red-headed girl sharpens her voice and her Laguiole knife. But where is the man? Where has he gone?

With his leather jacket pulled up around his fragile neck, he is already above them and has already forced open the submarine door that leads to the top of the chimney via a new staircase. He adjusts his sniper rifle between the disjointed bricks. His face is carved from the sharp ice of a mountain lake and his eyes are merciless.

He goes back down to them and gently squeezes the arm of the girl who yells from the rooftops of Illkirch-Graffenstaden that the man will never surrender, that she was the first to see him dancing one December night along the tramway rails while the city's inhabitants slept in their houses like shrouds, that he is a Prince more alive than a humming hive in spring, and that she shits on the shadows moving around below.

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