A Comparison of Two Short Stories

The purpose of this essay is to compare and contrast two short stories. The first story is “The Interlopers”, written by Saki (H. H. Munro) and “The Machine that Won the War”, written by Issac Asimov. Although the two stories have many differences they also have some aspects in common.

The two stories take place in vastly different settings. “The Interlopers” takes place in a Slovakian forest in the distant past. There is snow everywhere and it is densely packed with trees. A main character, George Znaeym, tells you this by saying, “Your men will find you dead under a fallen beach tree.” While “The Interlopers” is cold and woody, “The Machine that Won the War” takes place in the future of Earth. The men in the story are sitting in a warm, dark building. Outside the people are celebrating with fireworks and parades.

Although both short stories deal with conflict in the forms of battles, they are different types of battles. In “The Interlopers” George and Ulrich, the second main character, fight over an empty piece of forest that both accuse the other of stealing. “The Machine that Won the War”, however, is fighting aliens in a war. Lamar Swift tells you this by saying, “It's hard to remember when we weren't at war with Deneb, it almost seems against nature to look at the stars without anxiety.”

The last aspect is the ending of both short stories. “The Interlopers” ends in a very ironic way. George and Ulrich become friends, and when they think they will be saved by their men, the shadows they see turn out to be wolves. In “The Machine that Won the War” the men talk about how the war was won. Two men think it was Multivac, a giant computer, but the third man said, “A machine did win the war, a very simple device, one I used every time I had a particularly hard decision to make.” He then flipped a coin.

These two stories have a lot of differences, but they also have some common features. Some of the similarities are: the value of friendship, ironic endings, and the conflict of war. They also have differences as in the type of conflict and the time period.
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