

The human experience

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The climax revealed the total alienation of the individual that resulted in horror. Emily gave herself the only roses, "faded rose color upon the rose-shaded lights", the irony explicit in this. The "single strand of iron-gray hair" set her apart, as did the horrific scene in the bedroom. Shirley Jackson pursued similar themes, with a different style, but led the reader to recognize similar horrific conclusions.

The Lottery (Jackson, 1948): With a contrasting narrative style, using the objective, detached observer, Jackson built up to a horrific climax in a society that refused to abandon the past and the destructive traditions that again, isolated and destroyed the individual. A further contrast exists in the chronological report of one day's events, but the involvement of all society in perpetuating the action suggested a similar complex idea. The similarity in style is the foreshadowing "Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones.." and in the use of symbolism, like Faulkner. The ancient, battered black wooden box metaphorically represented the past and destructive traditions. Reluctance to let go was expressed by Old Man Warner: "Nothing but trouble in that", (Jackson), just as Emily held on. Colors, class status, and characterization were present in both pieces, and the dialogue vividly expressed attitudes to the 'victim'. Jackson's title is ironic; her opening suggested a positive experience, "The morning... was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day". In contrast to Jackson's build-up, the mounting tension, ambivalent feelings that all was not as it appeared, Faulkner immediately alerted us to Emily's status as an "outsider", an alienated anachronism.