

The cask of amontillado – montresor's untrustworthiness and mental instability



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The cask of amontillado is a short story that Edgar Allen Poe wrote in 1846.

Poe has written this particular story to be told in a first person point of view. Since Montresor is the narrator this concludes the fact that he is telling the story from his point of view. From the beginning it is clear that Montresor is an unreliable narrator. Throughout the story it is quite noticeable that Montresor is not trustworthy as a narrator, and that he has a mental instability. The very first sentence it shows that this story is going to be told by Montresor (from a first person point of view). In the first sentence of the first paragraph Montresor claims Fortunato has bestowed " thousand injuries" against him.

Even though Fortunato has supposedly insulted Montresor; Montresor never goes on to state what exactly Fortunato has done to him. Next he states that he " vowed revenge" on Fortunato. Just from the one sentence Montresor shows he has a bias for how the story happened and played out. The next sentence is Montresor talking to an unknown person, basically telling them that he is going to diverge the story to them. " You, who so well know the nature of my soul..." is how Montresor addresses this person. How he has addressed the unknown person gives the idea that it might be a priest whom he is speaking to.

If it is assumed that it is a priest, it could be interpreted as a sign of remorse. Although after reading the whole story it is quite clear that he does not regret what he has done to Fortunado. Throughout the story Montresor talks

of what he has done to Fortunado with little to no remorse in his voice. "I must not only punish, but punish with impunity" shows that Montresor knew completely well what he was about to do to his 'friend' and has not the slightest thought of not doing it.

Not only does Montresor plan to punish Fortunado but with impunity, which means without exemption. He shows the reader he has plans for his revenge but never tells the reader exactly what Fortunado has done to deserve to be punished with impunity. This alone shows that Montresor is trying to get the unknown person whom he is speaking with to sympathize with him.

Montresor antagonizes Fortunado through the whole story with the allure of the Amontillado. There are at least three occasions that Montresor talks of finding Luchesi instead of Fortunado to try the wine to authenticate it.

Montresor obviously knew that it irritated Fortunado when he spoke of having Luchesi come to authenticate the wine. This was almost like a slap in the face for Fortunado and made him want to come to the tombs even more. This move by Montresor shows how desperate he is to keep Fortunado interested in coming to the tombs. It shows how he has calculated his plan of revenge and is trying to execute his master plan. In the very last paragraph, second to last sentence Montresor states: "For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them."

"This sentence is referring to the tomb where he has entombed Fortunado to die, as well as the tomb of his other ancestors. Half of a century is at least fifty years, thus Montresor is stating that it has been over fifty years since the incident thus he could have easily forgotten what actually happened in

the tomb. Most people can not even remember what happened a year ago one hundred percent accurately, much less fifty years later. In conclusion Montresor is a very unreliable narrator. Not only has it been over fifty years since the event, but Montresor also has a bias as to what happened with Fortunado.

Montresor also clearly shows his mental instability with his lack of remorse with what he did to Fortunado. In this story of Edgar Allen Poe's it is quite noticeable that Montresor is not a trustworthy narrator and that he has a mental instability.