

Cask of amontillado – literary elements of foreshadowing

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When the tunnels come to a dead end, Montresor chains Fortunato and buries him in the catacombs. The literary elements of foreshadowing, symbolism, and irony help to create a tale of horror or found in the short story "The Cask of Amontillado" written by Edgar Allan Poe. To build suspense in the story, Poe often employs foreshadowing. For example, when Fortunato says, "I shall not die of a cough" (Poe 66). Montresor replies, "Mat rue" (Poe 66), because he knows that Fortunato will in fact die from dehydration and starvation in the crypt.

He foreshadows future events by employing the topic of death into the conversation. On the other hand, Montresor's description of his family's coat of arms also symbolizes future events. The shield features a human foot crushing a tenacious serpent. In this image, the foot represents Montresor and the serpent represents Fortunato. Although Fortunato has hurt Montresor with biting insults, Montresor will ultimately crush him. The conversation about Masons also foreshadows Fortunato's demise. "Are not of the masons?" "Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes." "You? Impossible! A mason?" "A mason," I replied. "A sign," he said. "It is this," answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my robe" (Poe 68). When he declares that he is a "mason" by showing his trowel, he means that he is a literal stonemason and that he constructs things out of stones and mortar, namely Fortunato's grave. Poe's use of symbolism describes each character. "The man wore motley. He had on a tight fitting predestined dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him, that thought should never have done wringing his hand" (Poe 63). His face covered in a black silk mask, Montresor symbolizes hidden things.

In this case, the mask symbolizes Mentor's hidden thoughts to kill Fortunato. On the other hand, Fortunato dons the motley costume of the court fool, who gets literally and tragically fooled by Mentor's masked motley eyes. The color schemes here represent the irony of Fortune's death sentence. Using symbolism such as the setting of the dark and dank catacombs, Poe uses the gloomy environment to symbolize death and horrible things to come. "We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors" (Poe 66).

The bones in the catacomb symbolize that Fortunato would soon be one of them. Using irony, Poe further uses literary elements to create a tale of horror. Using dramatic irony, Poe reveals the path of death that Fortunato is heading to. Fortunato is heading towards death but ironically does not even question the suspicious Montresors until the last moment. "It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt of my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation" (Poe 63).

Fortunato doesn't know what will happen to himself but both the audience and Montresors knows that the story will end with Fortune's death. Another example of irony is the situational irony of Fortune's name. "He had a weak point—this of rotundity—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine" (Poe 63). Fortunato, Italian for "the fortunate one," ironically means that he

exact opposite in this story, representing situational irony. Instead of the fortunate one, Fortunate comes the unfortunate one, dying from the hands of Mentors.