

The fall of the house of usher essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* is a short story which makes the reader feel fear, depression and guilt from the very first page and up to the final scene.

Having read the story up to the end, it seems that Usher and his sister are the most depressive people in the house and a simple guest, Usher's friend who arrived becomes deeply depressed too because of the general conditions and mood in the house.

However, looking at the situation from another angle, it is possible to see that depressed and gloomy atmosphere in the house is much exaggerated because of the pessimistic vision of life by the narrator personally.

Therefore, having read a story attentively, it is possible to doubt the events which took place there and try to consider the situation from another point of view.

The Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher* is a story about Usher and his family. The house is depicted as the symbol of the atmosphere and relations in the family. From the very beginning the house is shown as the place that gives " a sense of insufferable gloom" and " natural images of the desolate or terrible" (Poe, 2000, p. 1264).

The narrator sees " the blank walls... with an utter depression of soul... after-dream of the reveler upon opium" (Poe, 2000, p. 1264).

Describing the house, the protagonist sees " iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart", and " barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof

of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn” (Poe, 2000, p. 1265).

All these descriptions create the gloomy mood before the reader gets acquainted with those who live in the house. Therefore, seeing the health problems the inhabitants of the house have, the reader takes it for granted that the atmosphere in the house is depressive.

Reading of the books, listening to the music and even watching the paintings, in a word, everything the inhabitants of the house do puts the reader to consider the whole situation as depressive because of Usher and his sister.

However, if one takes a closer reading and considers the first lines of the story, everything may be changed.

“ During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of evening drew on” (Poe, 2000, p. 1264) is the first part from the Poe’s The Fall of the House of Usher.

Have not seen the house, have not experienced the doom atmosphere there, the protagonist is already depressed. Therefore, this scene makes a reader doubt the events which took place in the story.

Hinzpeter (2012) makes an offer that “ the first-person-narrator may have suffered from depression or some other sort of causeless melancholy from

the very beginning and was therefore easily influenced by the gothic setting” (p. 10).

So, it may be concluded that the gothic setting makes the narrator discuss simple life of people who do not communicate with the outside world due to their diseases as a depressive and criminal. The events which happened in the story may be an imagination of the narrator.

However, one detail makes the reader doubt this statement, the “ perceptible fissure” which is not too big at the beginning, and then the fissures are too big at the end and they cause the house fall.

Hinzpeter, K. (2012). Unreliable Narration in Poe’s ‘ The Fall of the House of Usher’ - The Narrative Creation of Horror. New York: GRIN Verlag.

Poe, E. (2000). The fall of the house of Usher. In R. Bausch & R. V. Cassill (Eds.), The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction (pp. 1264-1277). New York: W. W. Norton.