

"the masque of the  
red death" by edgar  
allen poe vs. "a rose  
for emily" by willia...



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## **“ The Masque of the Red Death” by Edgar Allen Poe vs. “ A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner Essay Sample**

Most notably recognized for their strange and bizarre stories, both Edgar Allen Poe and William Faulkner wrote several disturbing narratives. As such, it is not surprising to find that Poe’s story, “ The Masque of the Red Death,” and Faulkner’s tale, “ A Rose for Emily,” have much in common. Among their numerous similarities, the most apparent comparison is the theme of death in both plots.

Foremost, in “ the Masque of the Red Death,” the country had been exposed to the bubonic plague. Victims of the plague died an untimely death. Prince Prospero, in an attempt to defend himself from the epidemic, locked the gates so no one could leave or enter his premises. At the night of the masquerade, the guests of the prince found themselves in a hall of seven linked room, each devoted to a single solid color. Once the guests made their way through the blue, purple, green, orange, white, and violet rooms, they came to an eerie black room with blood-red windows. The seven chambers in castle represented one’s journey through life; moving from east to west, just as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, so did the guests metaphorically travel from birth to death. Coincidentally enough, the last and black room, symbolizing death, was also the room the guests feared the most, in the same sense the guests also feared death.

Meanwhile, Faulkner had described the Grierson house with such dull and gloomy details that resulted in a dreary and colorless image of the residence. Not to mention, in “ A Rose for Emily,” there were several direct references

to death. For example, the funeral setting, the death of Emily's father, the purchase of arsenic, and the murder of Homer. Miss Emily was the eldest and most traditional woman in town. Though, because she was generally unsociable and kept to herself, with just Tobe to take care of the household, she had ultimately imprisoned herself in her loneliness and was, in a sense, the death of the town. When Miss Emily's father had passed away, Emily refused to accept the fact and kept her father unburied and in the house for three days. After losing such a close and homely-family figure, Emily's loneliness only grew. So, when Homer had started driving her around town in the yellow car everyday, Emily had only wanted him to stay with her forever. As a result, Emily felt that the only way she could do so was by killing him and keeping for as long as she lived.

Both storylines in "The Masque of the Red Death" and "A Rose for Emily" had a common allegory about death. In "The Masque of the Red Death," Poe emphasized the idea that no one, no matter how rich, can escape death. On the other hand, in "A Rose for Emily," Faulkner pointed out that one cannot hold onto the dead in hopes of feeling less abandoned. Both authors conveyed their central ideas through several references to death in their stories; for Poe, he had symbolized death through Prince Prospero's seventh, black room, while Faulkner had included several deaths in the plot and described Emily and her house with such melancholy connotations.