

Summary response: the masque of the red death

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Module The Masque of the Red Death SUMMARY Red Death is a disease portrayed as quite dangerous to the population of a fictional nation. Red Death wipes out its victims quite quickly and in a gruesome manner. Prince Prospero is however, not that perturbed by the disease's seemingly speedy spread (Poe 3). He orders a lockdown of the whole palace so as to prevent the disease from reaching him. The prince hides for a long time from the dying masses but finally organizes a celebration and invites guests. Before the celebrations he paints the rooms of his quarters with different colors from east to west with the last room bearing black color and red windows. In this last and seventh room is a clock which makes a very loud noise at the top of every hour. The noise is so loud that it makes all those in attendance to stop their celebrations.

The guests roam about all the rooms except the last one. The rest of the rooms are so magnificent that they trigger a dreamland feeling (Poe 4). A new guest later arrives at midnight dressed in very unique attire and covered in a mask that resembles a corpse. This guest has visible blood spots on his face and the prince is not amused by the supposed humor. Owing to fear in the guests, no one dares to prevent the guest from entering all the rooms. Prospero rushes and catches up with him in the seventh room that is painted black and has red windows. On tackling him the prince dies while the rest of the guests come to the rescue. On checking the costume, they find no one and they all die (Poe 10). The Red Death has finally penetrated the palace.

RESPONSE

In the story are various symbolic elements that converge to convey

meanings both literal and allegorical. Death (in form of the Red Death) comes out as powerful over humans regardless of status in the society. Death also infiltrates even the most fortified of buildings regardless of whether those present are in celebrations or not. Arrogance and lack of empathy on others come out as costly attitudes which Prospero harbors. Instead of finding a solution for the poor masses he conceals himself from them leaving them at the mercy of the Red Death disease. He finally makes a fatal mistake by throwing a ball which offers the disease room to permeate his residence. He is instantly killed by the very disease that he had thought was for the poor and would not reach him. This portrays the essence of not ignoring the plight of the less fortunate since in one way or the other their suffering will also affect the fortunate.

On the other hand, the order of painting the rooms and their colors from east to west represent the cycle of life where the sun rises from the east and sets in the west, and it is in the westernmost room that Prospero and all other guests died. This seventh room has also been portrayed as one that instills fear in all the guests just as humans do death. The clock's rhythmic playing of sounds followed by silence symbolizes the constant reminder to humans that death is beckoning and that with every passing sound one nears their end.

Work Cited

Poe, Edgar A. The Masque of the Red Death. 1842.