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Author Stephen King writes about two different kinds of prisons in his novella “ Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption”: the literal Shawshank Prison—the place of protagonist Andy Dufresne’s incarceration—and the prison of the human spirit. Throughout his novella, King suggests that people can be held captive by things worse than prison walls. Hope can be as dangerous as resigning oneself to their fate in “ Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption. ” Writer-director Frank Darabont helps make these distinctions even clearer in his 1994 film adaptation of the novella, *The Shawshank Redemption*.

Yet while Darabont’s film builds on the same philosophical and psychological territory of King’s novella, there are several unique differences between the story and the film. The differences from page to screen call into question the motivations and agendas of certain characters, while other differences are so subtle that they might pass by without anyone noticing. First and foremost, there are obvious parallels between King’s novella and the Alexandre Dumas novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Both stories follow a central character that has been falsely imprisoned, forms friendships within prison, and later stages a daring escape.

After both characters escape, they exact revenge on those who did them wrong. While it goes unmentioned in the novella, *The Count of Monte Cristo* is referenced by name in the film itself, making the viewer well aware of its inspirations as well as Darabont’s intentions. The main similarity between the novella and the film is that they are both narrated by Red, played by Morgan Freeman in the film. Red is a man who can get things for inmates, calling himself “ a regular Neiman-Marcus” (King 5).

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Red's style of speech is identical in both the novella and the film: it is familiar and conversational, as though he is talking directly to the audience. It is interesting, however, that both stories focus on Andy Dufresne yet are told from an observer's point of view. Both the reader and the viewer are essentially asked to trust Red's account of what happens. When Red is approached by Andy, it is to get him a rock-hammer. Red doesn't know what to make of the request at first: " You could plant an item like that rock-hammer in somebody's skull," I remarked.

However, the rock-hammer becomes an integral part of both the novella and the film, serving as the item that brings both Andy and Red together. Red's ability to get a rock-hammer is the beginning of what will be a three-decade friendship. Darabont, however, uses the rock-hammer to more dramatic ends in the film. As in the novella, Andy hides the rock hammer in his copy of The Bible. Darabont, however, uses its presence to elicit suspense. He adds a scene where the warden (played by Bob Gunton) arrives in Andy's prison cell to confiscate contraband.

It is a tense sequence for a number of reasons. The warden picks up the Bible and approves that he is reading it. Ironically, he never opens it up (he would discover the rock-hammer) and tells Andy: " Salvation lies within. " In Andy's case, it actually does. Upon a repeat viewing, the scene is a doubly tense sequence in that, had the warden removed the poster of from the wall, he would have discovered the tunnel Andy has been burrowing out. The posters, including the novella's namesake Rita Hayworth, conceal the truth. The posters themselves are different between the novella and the film.

In the story, Andy has posters of Jayne Mansfield, Linda Ronstadt, Hazel Court, and Rita Hayworth; in the film, he has posters of Marilyn Monroe, Raquel Welch, and Rita Hayworth. Darabont's use of the posters can be seen as one way of marking the passage of time. There are several rock-hammers in the novella, whereas it is revealed in the film that Andy only used one, which Red comments was "damn near worn down to the nub." The escape tunnel is also alluded to in the book a number of times, while it remains a mystery until the very end of the film version. In fact, Andy's work on the tunnel is treated differently by King and Darabont.

A major difference between the novella and film is Darabont's decision to isolate the characters. In the film, Andy is able to work on the tunnel without a cellmate noticing. However, in the novella, Andy is briefly given a cellmate—a Native American named Normaden. This character is temporary, but is used to hint at Andy's real intentions: "I was glad to go, me. Bad draft in that cell. All the time cold. He don't let nobody touch his things. That's okay. Nice man, never made fun. But big draft." (King 45) Normaden in the novella is used to hint at Andy's work, whereas his presence would be completely unnecessary in the film.

There are a number of different wardens and head guards throughout the novella. The last warden in the novella, Norton, is the most significant. He begins a much-lauded program called "Inside-Out." Red speaks of it as though the reader knows this program already: "You may have read about ["Inside-Out"] some sixteen or seventeen years back; it was even written up in Newsweek." (King 47) In fact, Red's reference reminds the reader of just

how intimate his storytelling has become. He recounts everything as though the reader is already familiar with the world of the story.

The Inside-Out program is meant to rehabilitate prisoners by having them repair bridges and dig storm-drains. The inmates are forced to work for extremely low wages. Norton's program is so good, in fact, that it undercuts other companies, who eventually have to bribe the warden in order to secure jobs. In the novella, these bribes are important because it is what establishes Andy's importance to Norton. Norton needs his bribe money laundered, which Andy (having worked as a banker) has proven he can do. In the movie, Norton's embezzlements and such are not as central to the storyline as they are in the novella. They are merely alluded to.

Guards come and go, but in the movie, the guard Byron Hadley (Clancy Brown) remains the central authority figure throughout the film. The choice to make Hadley the central figure is a smart one. Darabont's choice to do so makes him more menacing and gives Andy another antagonist to face. In the novella, Hadley is presented as a cynical man. Of Hadley, Red says "if you gave him a cool drink of apple cider, he'd think about vinegar" (King 32). In the film, Hadley is much more murderous. Still, Darabont uses the same rooftop sequence where Andy offers to help him with his inheritance tax—and, in doing so, ingratiates himself with his cellmates.

It is important to both the novella and the film; it reveals more shades of both Andy and Hadley's characters. The arrival of Tommy Williams is integral to both the novella and the film version. In the book, Tommy reveals the identity of the man who most likely murdered Andy's wife and her lover.

While Andy, like everyone else, claims that they are innocent, it is jarring when the identity of the killer is introduced. In the film, Darabont uses flashbacks to further reveal this, while the reader is limited to Tommy's words in the novella. We have almost forgotten what Andy was convicted of.

In fact, both versions sidestep the truth of the matter. The reader and the viewer never question whether Andy is guilty. It is not important to the plot until now—however, once the possibility of a real killer arrives, Andy is given motivation he didn't have before. " He said it was as if Tommy had produced a key which fit a cage in the back of his mind, a cage like his own cell. Only instead of holding a man, that cage held a tiger, and that tiger's name was Hope. Williams produced the key that unlocked the cage and the tiger was out, willy-nilly, to roam his brain. (King 52)

Norton doesn't want to lose the money-laundering services of Andy, so he engineers a plot to keep him there. Norton makes a deal with Tommy to stay in a minimum-security prison, Cashman. Andy, of course, discovers the warden's plans and threatens to stop his " extra-curricular activities," referring to the money laundering. However, in the film, the warden does not want to encourage Andy, so he has Tommy shot dead by Hadley. The passage of time is similar in both the novella and the film. There are few things to mark that time has passed.

There are mentions of the years (which are different in the novella and the film) but very little to call out the passage of time. In the movie, director Darabont features a repeating motif: a parole hearing for Red. As the parole hearing happens every ten years, we are told, it is clearer that these parole

hearings separate the decades. The parole hearings also provide depth of character for Red that is absent from the novella. For the first two decades, he tells the parole board what he wants them to hear. The scenes serve to show how desperate Red is to convince the parole board that he has been rehabilitated and leave Shawshank prison.

However, it is not until the final parole board hearing that he realizes that he is not as wise or experienced as he thought he was. He is defeated; his spirit has been broken. In the end, Darabont's version shows that having one's spirit broken, just like Andy's following Tommy's murder, is the only way out of the prison. When he asked if he has been rehabilitated, Red comments on the word "rehabilitated" itself: "I know what you think it means. Me, I think it's a made-up word, a politician's word.

A word so young fellas like you can wear a suit and tie and have a job. He is finally approved for parole. Having one's spirit broken in "The Shank" is just about the only way to get out of the prison itself—in both the novella and the film. Red comments: "Call it a sense of equanimity, or a feeling of inner peace, maybe even a constant and unwavering faith that someday the long nightmare would end." (King 46) The ending is also a little more ambiguous in the novella. Once Andy exacts revenge on Norton, the warden resigns; in the film, he commits suicide. Also, once Red decides to follow Andy to Zihuatanejo in the novella, King ends his story.

Darabont goes the extra mile to show them meeting on the beach—a fittingly happy ending for an otherwise difficult trial for both characters. Both King and Darabont explore the prisons of life and the means through which

to escape them. The human spirit can be broken, but it can lead to transcendence. The film version is a good complement to the novel, adding depth and gravity to King's characters. Shawshank Prison is a place of transformation in both the novella and the film, allowing the characters to work their way out, finally emerging into freedom as different men—changed forever.