

The symbolism in a rose for emily

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The Symbolism in “ A Rose for Emily” “ I want the best you have... I want arsenic. ” Emily was purchasing rat poison. Did she really have rats? Or did she poison her husband Homer Barron? William Faulkner used a few ciphers in “ A Rose for Emily” to get his readers to explore their imagination. It is an extremely suspenseful, on the edge of your seat, story with a shocking ending. It is a short story about an old woman who loses her father and eventually her husband; she is the talk of the town and after she dies, everyone realizes exactly how insane she was.

Faulkner uses many symbols that have meanings of their own and also for something else. “ A Rose for Emily” has numerous symbols. Some more important than the others, a minor symbol would include her father’s whip. It symbolizes his control and dominance over her. It was as if he was fighting off all the men in Emily’s life with his whip. It may also suggest that he is incredibly strict with her and didn’t want her to have much of a social life. When Emily’s dad died, Emily was devastated; she did not want to leave his body. Shortly after, Emily took comfort in a man named Homer Barron.

The death of Emily’s father left her miserable, when Homer left town for a few days, she thought she might lose him like she did her father. When he returned home, everything went downhill. “ And that was the last we saw of Homer Barron and of Miss. Emily for sometime. ” A slightly more important symbol would be the old, creepy house where Miss. Emily lived. The house symbolized a mystery; the whole town thought Miss. Emily was bizarre and that house just added to their suspicion. The house had a distinct smell. It was a kind of rotting smell, as if something, or maybe someone, had died in there and was never disposed of properly.

It got so bad the mayor, along with a couple other residents of the town, snuck onto the property and put deodorizer on her front lawn. After Emily's death, the towns people were finally able to explore the house. What they found was astonishing. Everything seemed somewhat normal up until they got to the locked door. The men broke it down and found a room that looked as if to be prepared for a wedding covered completely with an inch or two of dust. When they turned around, they found a decomposing body! The last symbol was definitely the most important.

Next to the body was a long gray hair. To some it might not mean anything; but to other intellectual readers, it might have great importance. If you look deeper into it, Emily had long gray hair, she was tremendously insane, and bought rat poison that would "kill anything up to an elephant." Could she have killed Homer? Could that long gray hair symbolize Emily going up to the room at night and cuddling up with Homer's dead body? Faulkner leaves it up to us to decide. He uses the power of symbolism to test our mind and really make us think about what we are reading.

The symbols in this story make it what it is, a fine piece of literature. Faulkner really puts the power of symbolism to work in "A Rose for Emily." In this story, through the use of symbolism, Emily is exposed as the true crazy person that Faulkner met to portray her as. If you put your mind to work, Emily may have used arsenic to murder her husband, kept his body locked up in a barricaded room, and slept with his rotting corps night after night. Symbolism can make or break a story; in this case it made "A Rose for Emily" great. It constantly tests the mind and keeps the reader guessing what will happen next.