Short Story Comparison: A Cask Of Amontillado And A Rose For Emily

Say you see someone you know drive by while you're walking home from work and they ask if you need a ride. Little do you know, the person driving is seeking revenge and before you know it, you're in this person's car and they kill you. In the story "A Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe, Fortunato is well past drunk, but Montresor decided to give him more wine while they were on their way to Amontillado. Montresor ends up shackling Fortunato and locking him up leaving him trapped for many years. Fortunato died because no one knew he was trapped or in trouble because no one sought to think Montresor would seek revenge. When loved ones die no matter how close one may have been, it's sad and people react in a variety of different ways. Many people cry many get angry, and others may just want to keep the body forever like Emily. In the short story "A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner, Emily takes her father's death brutally and her significant other's death, but decided to keep the dead people's bodies.

The theme for the short story "A Rose for Emily" is the theme of death. Death is shown in several ways within this short story. William Faulkner started the story off with Emily's death, "When Miss Emily Grierson died…" (Faulkner 168). He also mentions the death of Emily's father and how Emily grieved and handled it. While reading, it is noticeable that she had handled his death quite terribly and began to enter the stage of denial, "…dressed as usual and with no trace of grief on her face" (Faulkner 171). Emily couldn't bear to accept the fact her father had died, so instead, she declared him still alive, "She told them that her father was not dead" (Faulkner 171). The author included that after the passing of her father, the people in her town convinced her that she needed to get rid of her father's body, like it should have been disposed of in the first place. Death is a heavy subject for Emily in this story, almost as if she was drowning it in.

The theme for the short story "A Cask of Amontillado" is the theme of death just as "A Rose for Emily". Edgar Allan Poe uses death for this story because Montresor had planned out how Fortunato would die and how he would get his revenge. The quote, "For the half of a century no mortal had disturbed them, in pace requiescat!" (Poe 19), refers to death by comparing how Fortunato was locked up for nearly fifty years and died. He was bothered by the fact that no one had noticed he was missing or had been trapped there for those long years, "…he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation." (Poe 14).

In both short stories mentioned, "A Rose for Emily" and "The Cask of Amontillado", the authors show imagery several times throughout the stories. William Faulkner uses an example of imagery when he describes Emily's house. He wrote, "It was a big, squarish frame house that had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies in the heavily lightsome style of the seventies, set on what had once been our most select street." (Faulkner 168). Faulkner wanted the readers to be able to imagine what Emily's house looked like. As for Edgar Allan Poe's short story, he uses an example of imagery to describe the vault and walls. He wrote, "Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris." (Poe 17). He wanted the readers to be able to imagine what the vault may have looked like and the walls in it also. As another example of imagery, Poe writes, "He had on a tight-fitting-parti-striped dressed, and his head was surmounted by the

conical cap and bells.” (Poe 14). He wanted the readers to be able to imagine what Fortunato was wearing as they read the text, just as Faulkner did.

The authors of both stories also used several examples of symbolism. William Faulkner uses Emily’s hair as an indication of time and emotions as an example of symbolism, “When we saw her again, her hair was cut short…” (Faulkner 171). He was showing how over time people could notice that Emily was getting sick. He also wrote, “When we next saw Miss Emily, she had grown fat and her hair was turning grey.” (Faulkner 174). Faulkner wanted to include this because he wanted readers to know that Emily was weakening and getting old and would eventually pass over time, “During the next few years it grew grayer and grayer until it attained an even pepper-and-salt iron-gray, when it ceased turning.” (Faulkner 174). Edgar Allan Poe didn’t use symbolism as much as William Faulkner did, but he did use it while he was describing Montresor wearing a black mask, “Putting on a mask of black silk…” (Poe 15). The black mask represented evil and death in the short story “A Cask for Amontillado”.

In conclusion, death is a common theme in a large percentage of short stories and poems, including the ones mentioned. To add more information, authors tend to relate their stories to their own lives. Reading further into research from both authors, they both explain how they related these stories to their own lives and used details from what happened to them. William Faulkner showed death surrounding Emily’s life and Poe used death as a relation to the desire for revenge. In personal opinions, imagery and symbolism are used to help readers understand the text better and visualize what something looks like to bring more interest to the writing. To add on, symbolism was also used where Faulkner used Emily’s hair as a symbol and how Poe used the black mask Montresor wore as a symbol.