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Masque of the Red Death and the Seven Colored Rooms

The seven colored rooms, they are not just a simple rooms meaning nothing; they are containing multiple important meanings to this story.

The seven colored room are the rooms that the Prince Prospero held his masquerade to entertain the people within the walls. The Prince and his guests believe that they can hide from the Red Death by locking themselves away from the suffering of the rest of the world. “A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts”. Each room had a same color of walls, decoration, and stained glasses like green wall, green decoration, and green windows “To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened”, but only the last seventh room had a black velvet wall and red windows “But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood color”

In the story “Masque of the Red Death” each room with different colors corresponds to a different stage in a person’s life, which its color suggests. The first clue is that the rooms are arranged from east to west from the first blue colored room to the last black room with red stained glasses; obviously representing death. Usually the direction “east” is the direction

associated with beginnings, and birth, because the sun rises in the east. The direction “west” which is the direction of the sunset is usually associated with and representing endings and death. So the each room is representing the each stage of the life and the last black and red room is the death, which is unavoidable and everyone will have in the end of their life.

The blue room, which is the first of the all rooms and it is located most east in seven rooms, it is representing birth and happiness which is the first step of the life. The color blue suggests the "unknown" from which a human being comes into the world. The next room is purple, a color with the combination of blue (birth) and red which is associated with life and intensity, it is suggesting the beginnings of growth which is the step after the birth in steps of life. Green, which is the next color of the seven rooms, is suggesting the "spring" of life which is the youth and teen. Next color orange is representing the summer and autumn of life because after the youth; you will get mature as a person and becomes full. White, the fifth color is suggesting age and getting old like if you think of white hair, and bones. Violet which is the color combination of purple and blue, or purple and grey which is a dark shadowy color, and represents darkness, illness, and near to the end of life. And the last room which is the color black, obviously, is death. Also there is no red rooms in those seven rooms, this is possibly because the author Edgar Allan Poe did not wanted to use the color red for a good meaning, as you can think red will be better color than purple which represents growth, instead he used the color red for the last black rooms' window and to represent fear, blood, and death which will go good with the color black in the meanings of the color, and will give more impacts to the reader with combination of color black and red rather than just going with by only black everywhere. Also the colors red and black is representing the “Red Death” so you can think the red is representing the red death (disease) and black is representing the death after caught by the red

death. “The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease, were the incidents of half an hour.” So the last room can be think by two way, first is that it is simply showing the last stage of life “death”, and second way is that it is showing the Red and Death (black) which is the way of dying when you got the disease “Red Death”.

Now another very interesting thing about the allegorical reading of the seven rooms are that it gives an added meaning to other bits of the story. The fact that the revelers don't go into the black room because they think the room is creepy and eerie, this indicates their fear of death (you don't actually need to give a meaning to each room to figure this allegory out) “black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes, was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all”. But besides that, think about that the Red Death walks from the blue room to the black room, east to west, it goes through the Stages of persons' life, and the Red Death is leading from birth to the death at end. Prince Prospero follows that course when he chases it: he runs from the blue room to the black room, and where he dies. “through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him.” His followers also rush into the last black room, which is the room of death to unmask the Red Death, and also die. So the course the characters run through in the last is both literally and metaphorically the course from their life to death.

Allegory has a strong position on this Edger Allen Poe's story “Masque of the Red Death”. Almost everything in the story tells us that there is no way to escape from the “death”,

no matter what we do. Even the title itself is a play on words because it is no coincidence that “masque” and the similar sounding “mask” are both relevant to the story, actually it was first published as “Mask of the Red Death” but it was changed to “Masque” after because in my opinion the Word Mask was too straight to the story and “Masque” shifts the point more to the Masquerade which is the point of the story and makes more interesting.

Both words imply that disguises and hidden abbeys cannot defend a person from the inevitable, and also together with the seven rooms it is telling us that “Death” is something we cannot escape and comes to all of us equally.

Works Cited

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