



*Pride and Revenge in Edgar Allan Poe's Short story
"The Cask of Amontillado"*

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Abstract

This research aims to explain the complicated interplay between the ideas of pride and revenge in Joe Edgar's famous literary work, "The Cask of Amontillado". Pride, as a human emotion, is widely considered as the most heinous of sins, because of its relationship with the original sin of Adam and Eve, which led to their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Therefore, exploring the theme of pride and its disastrous consequences in Edgar's work holds significant academic merit. In the famous narrative The Cask of Amontillado which written by the well-known author Edgar Allan Poe, the theme of revenge is manifested through the sinful actions of Montresor and Fortunato. The latter, in his arrogance, regularly insults Montresor, who then endeavors to revenge himself. The story reveals the cunning manipulation of Fortunato's pride, leading him to his eventual death, with the lure of tasting Amontillado from an imaginary cask. The masterful portrayal of human weaknesses and the consequences of unrestrained pride make this story a timeless classic in the kingdom of literature. The human desire for revenge has long been a powerful force driving actions throughout history. Countless battles have been waged, and wars have been fought, all in the name of seeking revenge. The Cask of Amontillado serves as a main example of how one's pride can be useful to fulfill another's demonic designs for revenge. Montresor exploits Fortunato's sense of superiority to exact his dark, vengeful desires, showcasing the intricate and often unpredictable nature of human motivation.

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المخلص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى شرح التفاعل المعقد بين فكرتي الكبرياء والانتقام في العمل الأدبي الشهير لجو إدغار "برميل أمونتيلاادو". الكبرياء، كعاطفة إنسانية، يعتبر على نطاق واسع أبشع الخطايا، بسبب علاقته بالخطيئة الأصلية لآدم وحواء، والتي أدت إلى طردهما من جنة عدن. لذلك، فإن استكشاف موضوع الفخر وعواقبه الكارثية في أعمال إدغار يحمل ميزة أكاديمية كبيرة. في الرواية الشهيرة "برميل أمونتيلاادو" التي كتبها المؤلف المعروف إدغار آلان بو، يتجلى موضوع الانتقام من خلال الأفعال الخاطئة لمونتريسور وفورتوناتو. هذا الأخير، في غطرسته، يهين بانتظام مونتريسور، الذي يحاول بعد ذلك الانتقام لنفسه. تكشف القصة عن التلاعب الماكر بكبرياء فورتوناتو، مما أدى به إلى وفاته في نهاية المطاف، مع إغراء تذوق أمونتيلاادو من برميل وهمي. إن التصوير المتقن لنقاط الضعف البشرية وعواقب الكبرياء غير المقيد يجعل هذه القصة كلاسيكية خالدة في مملكة الأدب. لقد كانت الرغبة البشرية في الانتقام منذ فترة طويلة قوة مؤثرة تدفع الأفعال عبر التاريخ. لقد اندلعت معارك لا حصر لها، وقامت حروب، كل ذلك باسم الانتقام. يعد Cask of Amontillado بمثابة مثال رئيسي على كيف يمكن أن يكون كبرياء المرء مفيداً لتحقيق مخططات شيطانية أخرى للانتقام. يستغل مونتريسور شعور فورتوناتو بالتفوق ليحقق رغباته المظلمة والانتقامية، ويعرض الطبيعة المعقدة وغير المتوقعة في كثير من الأحيان للدوافع البشرية.

Introduction

Pride can be regarded as a detrimental sentiment when it generates an overblown sense of self-importance or haughtiness. In the event that persons are excessively proud of themselves, they may tend to assume that they are superior to others, which can ultimately result in strife. The history of pride is a convoluted and extensive one, dating back several centuries. Pride, frequently viewed as a transgression, has been condemned by many religious beliefs. It is an emotion that has been present throughout history and has been conceptualized in diverse ways by different cultures and societies. Pride can be understood as a multifaceted emotion that can be both positive and negative, depending on the situation and the degree of intensity. While some persons view pride as an essential component of self-esteem, other persons regard it as an undesirable trait that can lead to conceit and self-centeredness (Dillon 11).

Perhaps due to the excessive moisture present in the cellar, it is reasonable that the deceptive rationalizations which the protagonist relished in imposing upon his adversary may have ultimately taken root within his own psyche. However, if that is indeed the case, it appears to

have had no negative impact on his fifty years of peaceful existence, as the account is not a deathbed confession but rather a triumph of sorts. It is evident that the story, *The Cask of Amontillado*, first published in November 1846. It is characterized by a self-indulgent and narcissistic preoccupation (Punter 182). The famous proverb "revenge is a dish best served cold" (Lyga 77). It is commonly used to describe an ideal revenge. This is because seeking revenge is often fueled by intense emotions such as anger and frustration. However, when carried out with a calm and calculated approach, it can be much more effective. Revenge is typically sought after someone has been wronged, be it emotionally, physically, or by taking something valuable away from some persons. Nevertheless, if people act impulsively out of anger, they are more prone to committing mistakes. persons actions will be motivated by irrational feelings rather than rational thinking, which may result in poor decision-making.

Edgar Allan Poe, born in Boston, was the offspring of itinerant performers. Tragically, he was left an orphan before he had even reached the age of three, his fate subsequently falling into the hands of John Allan, a prosperous merchant from Richmond. In the company of the Allan, he resided in both the United States and England, where he was educated and nurtured. In 1826, Poe register at the University of Virginia, but his presence there was cut short due to a bitter quarrel with Allan. Additionally, he faced a mounting debt caused by his gambling habits. Leaving the university, he then spent a period in the United States Army before being granted a position in West Point. Sadly, he was eventually expelled, having failed to fulfill his obligations. Through these tumultuous experiences, Poe's life was changed, and he went on to become one of the most famous authors of the nineteenth century (Sova 3).

The Cask of Amontillado serves as the beating heart within the lifeless corpse, ensconced within the coffin. Montresor, in accordance with his own familial pride, has honored Fortunato by granting him the pride of place in the wine cellar. He has interred not only Fortunato, but also his wealth. However, the certainty of his triumph remains uncertain: as he places the final stone, his heart grew sick (Punter 182). It is crucial to acknowledge that revenge is not a recommended course of action as it can often lead to a vicious cycle of revenge. While it may bring temporary satisfaction, the long-term consequences can be detrimental to all parties involved. Therefore, it is essential to approach the situation

with a rational decision and consider all possible outcomes before taking any actions. One way to achieve a level-headed approach is to seek the advice of a trusted confidant. By discussing the matter with someone who can offer objective insights, people can gain a new perspective and consider alternative solutions. It is also helpful to take some time to reflect and process personal emotions before making any decisions. Another critical factor to consider is the legality of the revenge. People must ensure that their actions do not violate any laws and that people do not engage in any illegal activities. This is especially important as revenge actions can have severe legal consequences that may impact individuals' future.

While revenge may seem like a tempting solution, it is vital to approach the matter with caution and logic. By taking a calm and rational approach, seeking advice, reflecting on personal emotions, and considering the legality of personal actions, people can make informed decisions that will lead to the best possible results for all parties involved. It is uncommon for people to engage in actions that ultimately bring individuals more harm than the person against whom people seek revenge. Consequently, it is often recommended that one refrains from taking immediate retaliatory measures. The reason behind this counsel lies in the fact that by allowing time to elapse, persons can allow their emotions to dissipate. This cooling-down period can enable one to approach the situation with greater clarity and rationality, ultimately leading to more favorable results.

Revenge can be an exceedingly gratifying experience; however, it is vital to consider the implications before proceeding with such actions. There are several factors that must be taken into account before revenge. It is important to note that seeking revenge can often have adverse consequences, and there is a risk that individual may end up making the situation worse. It is crucial to consider how the other individual may respond to revenge and whether or not person is prepared to deal with the potential fallout. Additionally, person must evaluate the likelihood of being caught. If someone contemplating an act that could have legal ramifications, it is essential to weigh the risks and determine whether it is worth the potential consequences. In the event that one is uncertain, consider seeking the advice of a trusted confidant or professional. It is also important to note that seeking revenge can have significant emotional and psychological effects on both parties involved. Revenge can result in a never-ending cycle of harm and negativity, making it

imperative to assess the potential long-term consequences of such actions. It is crucial to remember that forgiveness and moving on from the situation may ultimately prove to be the best course of action. Therefore, before seeking revenge, one must take into account all the factors involved and make a well-informed decision based on the potential risks and benefits. In doing so, people can avoid any unintended results and ensure that they approach the situation with maturity and wisdom. Trying to act out of anger will only lead to regrets later on. It can be difficult to keep a level head when people are planning revenge against someone who has wronged with them, but it is important to remember that acting out of anger will only make things worse. If person can stay calm and think things through, person will be much more likely to come up with a solution that will get satisfaction to all parties, without causing any unnecessary trouble (Clinton and Langberg 41).

Revenge is not always the best solution. There are a few things to keep in mind if people are considering revenge. First, it is important to ask oneself if the person who wronged you really deserves the revenge. If people were truly just acting out of ignorance or misguided intentions, then it might be better to let it go. There is no need to make things worse by taking revenge. Second, consider the possible consequences of people actions. If people are planning on doing something that could get another in trouble with the law, or that could hurt the person which is taking revenge on, then it is probably not worth it. It is not worth risking individual own safety or well-being, or making the situation worse than it already is. Finally, person must think about whether or not revenge will really make soul feel better. It might feel good in the moment, but ultimately it is unlikely to solve the underlying problem or make a person feel better in the long run. It is often better to just let it go and move on with one's life (Govier introduction). Revenge is often motivated by anger, but it can also be motivated by fear, sadness, or even love. People may seek revenge in order to feel better about themselves, or to regain a sense of control. Whatever the reason, seeking revenge is often a way to try to make the world unfair place.

Revenge is frequently viewed as a method of restoring equilibrium, where a person responds to wrongdoing by retaliating against the perpetrator, thereby leveling the playing field. However, this approach is inherently flawed. Seeking revenge only serves to perpetuate the cycle of violence, as the person on whom exact revenge will feel compelled to revenge in turn, and the cycle will continue indefinitely. It is critical to

recognize that revenge is not synonymous with justice, nor is it a means of rectifying a wrong. Rather, it is a mechanism for providing immediate gratification to some persons. In the long run, however, it only exacerbates the pain and suffering that people are attempting to rectify (Ladd and Blanchfield 63). Furthermore, revenge is often a disproportionate response, as people tend to react emotionally and impulsively to perceived wrongs, rather than rationally. This can lead a person to inflict greater harm than people received, which only serves to undermine some person's moral values. Additionally, revenge is a selfish act, as it is primarily motivated by person's desire to feel better about oneself, rather than to promote the greater good. This self-centeredness is antithetical to the principles of justice and morality.

Moreover, revenge is a manifestation of a lack of forgiveness. When people seek revenge, they are refusing to forgive the person who has wronged one's, and instead individuals choosing to hold onto their anger and resentment. This can lead to a toxic cycle of negativity, where people become consumed by their desire for revenge and are unable to move on. Conversely, forgiveness allows people to let go of their negative emotions and move forward in a positive direction.

In the renowned short story, *The Cask of Amontillado*, a man who has been wronged seeks to exact revenge. Fortunato, the offender, has caused him grave offense, and the protagonist prepares a plan to administer revenge. The plan involves luring Fortunato to a secret room, under false pretenses, where he is then chained and imprisoned. The captive is further subjected to a gruesome fate as the entrance to the room is sealed off with bricks, ensuring his inevitable demise. This story serves as a classic example of the human desire for revenge and the depths that some individuals will go to in order to achieve it. The tale carries a timeless message that is applicable to many real-life scenarios, underscoring the importance of dealing with interpersonal conflicts in a constructive and non-violent manner (Garrity 115).

Montresor lives in the illusion that seeking revenge justifies killing someone, even when the perceived insults are just somewhat hurtful. On the other side, Fortunato harbors illusions about his own significance. He does not comprehend that most people find him annoying since he believes that he is a popular and esteemed individual. His sense of significance causes him to become blind. Montresor harbors a desire for his foe to endure a prolonged existence, filled with agony and distress. It

must be noted that he is more than just a perpetrator of homicide; he also derives pleasure from inflicting torment upon others. It is imperative to acknowledge this aspect of his character (Kennedy and Peebles 262). People who live in illusionary worlds may believe things that are not true, which can lead to problems. For instance, they may believe that they are perfect and never make any mistakes, which can lead to them becoming extremely defensive and unwilling to listen to constructive criticism. Additionally, they may believe that they are always right and that everyone else is wrong, which can lead to arguments and conflict.

The plot of *The Cask of Amontillado* is one of retaliation. It takes place in Italy during carnival season. Montresor and Fortunato are the main characters in the story. Montresor hates Fortunato and intends to exact an odd and sinister revenge. Fortunato is utterly ignorant of Montresor's evil intentions throughout the entire narrative. Being his buddy, Montresor lures him into his wine cellar to taste his amontillado, an expensive wine that is rare. They must walk further and deeper into the room to reach the wine, the underground network of tunnels known as the cellar, which are dim and soggy. In an attempt to pique Fortunato's interest in tasting the wine, Montresor keeps bringing up Luchesi, a rival wine expert who Fortunato does not appreciate (Garrity 115). In order to attain a comprehensive comprehension of the title, it is crucially significant to bear in mind that a Cask refers a barrel-shaped container used for storing wine, while Amontillado signifies a rare and dry Spanish sherry, which is distinguished by its pale hue and saccharine flavor (Garrity 116).

Montresor led Fortunato to cellar where he had stowed away construction materials along with a key, lock, and chain for the purpose of restraining Fortunato. He now claims that in order to appropriately dispose of his opponent, he must be the one to carry out the act. By doing so, his adversary would be aware of who was responsible for the punishment, while he, the executor, would remain anonymous. Merely this act would be enough to classify him as a psychopath and a merciless person. It is evident that Montresor's actions stem from a place of deep-seated resentment and rancor towards his victim. His desire for revenge is perverse, and he seems to take pleasure in the idea of causing harm to Fortunato (Brandon Lee and Brandon Kelly 336).

The primary topic of the story centers around the feelings of terror and dread. In opposition to the Amontillado, which symbolizes



Fortunato's skill and passion for wine, the Cask serves as a representation of a burial container. Hence, an evident route towards demise is presented by Fortunato's uncontrolled and hazardous adoration for alcohol. *The Cask of Amontillado* is the anticipated treasure that Fortunato seeks, yet what he ultimately discovers is his own death (Ray 48).

Conclusion

The Cask of Amontillado by Edgar Allan Poe is a classic example of the human desire for revenge and the depths that some persons will go to in order to achieve it. However, it is important to approach interpersonal conflicts in a constructive and non-violent manner, rather than seeking immediate revenge. Revenge may seem like a tempting solution, but it is vital to approach the matter with caution and logic. By taking a calm and rational approach, seeking advice, reflecting on one's emotions, and considering the legality of persons actions, people can make informed decisions that will lead to the best possible result for all parties involved. It is also important to acknowledge the negative consequences of seeking revenge and to strive for forgiveness and understanding in order to break the cycle of violence and create a more peaceful world.

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