

## THE ROLE OF DETAILS IN EDGAR ALLAN POE STORY “THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER”

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Nowadays the role of a detail in literature, in writer's works is huge. For the definite details, authors make a real picture, atmosphere of by describing a place or person. A landscape (mostly), a portrait, an objects and an interior act as a detail.

The aim of our research is to find details and to study the role of symbols and details in Edgar Allan Poe story “The fall of the house of Usher”.

**Material and methods.** The material of our study is the “dreadful” story by Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) “The fall of the house of Usher” (1839). During the research we have come to the conclusion that the story by E.A. Poe is filled with a great number of details, the use of which is aimed at the making a special atmosphere and a whole picture of the story. We have used comparative and psychological methods.

**Results and their discussion.** A detail is the main author's helper for the creating a whole picture. If you pay attention on details, you can understand what has been happening in a character's soul, emotional coloration of the work, the reasons of thoughts and doings and you can even learn which the finale will be and how the work will end. In Edgar Allan Poe story “The fall of the house of Usher” details are key instruments for creating physiological state of both narrator and Roderick Usher. Just details help to create psychological types and reveal the reasons of Usher's behavior. As Russian classic F.M. Dostoevsky said: “There's one exactly feature at Edgar Poe, which distinguish him from all other writers and it make his abrupt feature: it's a power of imagination... There is such feature in his capability of imagination, which we won't see at anybody: it's the power of details... In Poe's stories you see all the details of presented figure or event so bright as if you convince of his opportunity” [1, p. 34].

Thus, we can pick out several groups of details in the story: details, reflecting inner world of the characters and details, reflecting characters' and objects' appearance, creating the atmosphere of the story and subject details and abstract details.

Dominant details of the work which create a special atmosphere are the house (inner and outside state), the nature, the weather and the portrait. As Edmund Burke considered, “the sources of beauty for poet are three spheres of being: a nature, an art and the world of people relationship which is taken in relatively narrow aspect.” [2, p. 92].

The dominant details branch out the other details: the tarn, the fissure, the song, the epigraph and the picture. Just for these microdetails we may see the whole work.

The weather belongs to abstract details and it reflects an inner world. It creates a special atmosphere for a reader in order to help to try the feelings which the narrator feels (the beginning of the story). At the beginning of the work the weather is calm but depressing, gloomy and frightening. The description of the trees, the tarn and the sky scare the character and it ushers in the condition close to the feeling of horror: "... and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down – but with a shudder even more thrilling than before – upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows" [3, p. 126]. As a consequence a word "superstition" arises in his consciousness but in a bad sense (meaning) of the word, boding something bad, spiteful, and dangerous. During the work the weather and the nature symbolize a horror reigning in Usher's soul. Usually the weather is reflection of the protagonist's feelings and mood, but here the weather fully reflects Roderick Usher with all his fears and depressing thoughts. At the end of the story the storm is beginning and it's so dark in the street that even the moon can't be seen. It's a peal in Usher's soul and the weather exactly impacts that has been happening with him at that moment. Here we can compare the weather in the beginning and in the end of the story and we can confront it with Roderick Usher's inner state: in the beginning of the work "the weather" is gloomy and depressing but calm, that is symbolize "stable" fear in Usher's soul; in the end of the work a heavy storm is beginning and is becoming so dark, that even the moon can't be seen – a "peak" of Usher's fear as a result of which he dies. After Roderick's death, who died because of his fear, a light of blood-red moon (the symbol of death) dispels darkness. Thus, the weather became a peculiar symbol of Roderick Usher's inner world. A key moment in the nature is a tarn, which is located under the brink, near the house. Usually tarn is a symbol of calmness. Here the tarn is black and lurid, so it's a reflection of a fear and anxiety.

The next universal detail which can be referred to all groups is the house. We'd like to stress that the house not only creates this threatening and repulsive atmosphere but also as the weather reflects Usher's inner state. The house is full of oppositions as moss and mustiness are symbols of neglect and abandonment. But in this work as if Roderick himself stresses by these plants that the house is "alive" and firm. So on the one hand the plants make it neglected but on the other hand plants make it "alive"; the distribution of the stones which make the picture of "survivor house" and in opposition to it a dilapidation and barely perceptible fissure which goes through the whole house and not visible for the "simple" eyes. The manor is a symbol of

Roderick Usher himself but the fissure in the house is Usher's fear which has been gradually killed him. In this case like with the nature in the beginning of the story the fissure is barely perceptible but it exist and it destroy the house; in the end of the story the fissure destroy the house (because of the storm which was the incitement for it) as the fear kill Roderick Usher.

Usher believed greatly in his family curse, he believed that there is an evil spirit in the house for who his sister has become ill and who will come soon for him. And an evil spirit really existed but not like in Usher's imagination. The detail which symbolizes very subtly and characterizes Roderick Usher is a song-ballad which he is singing to the narrator: a king is identifying with Usher. A hero was attacked by evil spirits both in the song and in our story. But evil spirits in the song is a literal sense but in Usher's house evil spirits are a fear in Roderick's head. Also the ending of the song is very symbolic: "A hideous throng rushes out forever, / And laugh – but smile no more" [3, p. 133]. A laugh without smile means sarcasm, wicked irony. Here, to our point, author laughs softly at Usher and he even derides his silly baseless fear. And as the narrator mentions: "... an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion had, by dint of long sufferance, he said obtained over his spirit – an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence" [3, p. 130].

One more important detail is a picture which Roderick Usher painted and which symbolize his "soul disease": "A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walks, smooth, white, and without interruption or device" [3, p.131]. If we look deeper on it, we can suppose that white walks (or just walls) are usual phenomenon for hospitals and mental hospitals and an immensely long tunnel without interruptions or device is a place without exit. Here we can make a conclusion that Usher had got off the wit hopelessly and he can't find an exit from his own thoughts and fears, he can't get off his own head.

**Conclusion.** Thus, we had concluded that the role of a detail in fiction is huge. A detail helps to expose images and characters' inner state; it exposes concealed psychology and strengthens psychological perception of the story.

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