Foreshadowing and Irony in E.A Poe’s “The Cask of Amontillado”

**MOTIVATION:** Can you think of a movie where the screenwriter gives you some clues to suggest what is going to happen or who the villain in the story is? It may be the music or a facial expression from a character that gives you a clue. The screenwriter helps the viewer predict what is going to happen. Poe also gives the reader clues in his writing of what is going to happen.

**PROCEDURE:** Poe chooses the words in his story very carefully. The title of the story and the main characters’ names were not given by accident. Many times the words or phrases he used gave the reader a clue of what was to follow. He also used double meanings of words to lead to his sarcastic humor. Find textual evidence from the story for each of the requested scenarios. The choice of words can have a tremendous impact on the story. Poe’s descriptive writing and play on words is what makes his stories able to be read on many different levels.

**Foreshadowing** - Montresor smiles in Fortunato’s face as he is thinking about killing him.

Textual Evidence (sentence from story & page number):

**Irony** - Fortunato comes to the carnival dress like a fool. He is taken for a fool by going after the amontillado, which leads him to his death.

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**Irony** - Montresor comments how lucky they are to meet. By this chance meeting Montressor’s plan of revenge begins to take form. Although Fortunato looks good now, he will be dead by the end of the day.

**Irony & Foreshadowing** - It is ironic that Montresor cautions Fortunato when going down the stairs. Why? He is planning to kill him shortly. What does the descending into the catacombs foreshadow?

**Irony & Foreshadowing** – Montresor tells Fortunato to go back that his health is precious and that he will be missed if something should happen to him. Yet Montresor is plotting his death.

**Irony & Foreshadowing** – Poe shows his sarcastic humor here. It is ironic that Fortunato brings up the topic of dying. He will not die from the cough but by Montresor’s revengeful plan.
Irony – The toast to the dead around them and to Fortunato’s long life is another sarcastic play on words knowing that Fortunato’s life will be over shortly.

Irony – The motto on Montresor’s coat of arms is translated from Latin meaning: “No one injures (attacks) me with consequences” It is because of Fortunato’s insults or verbal attacks that Montresor is killing him.

Foreshadowing - He begs him to leave one last time and then states that he will leave him for good.

Irony – What does Fortunato state that means let us go back to the carnival the joke is over?

What does Montresori mean when he says “let us be gone” to Fortunato?


Fortunato’s name means Fortunate. Why is this ironic?

Montresor means my treasure. What is symbolic of this name?