

Edgar Allan Poe. From "The Cask of Amontillado"

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth side the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavoured to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I [Montresor] said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed, it is very damp. Once more let me implore you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

Define Each Word

catacomb: _____

Amontillado: _____

fetter: _____

astound: _____

implore: _____

Write the Correct Word from the Vocabulary

1. Shannon Miller _____ the judges with her amazing gymnastics feats on the balance beam.
2. Beneath the castle, the prisoners were _____ securely to the walls of the dungeon.
3. Several popes, martyrs, and early Christians are buried in the _____ beneath Rome.
4. It is unlikely that Kris Jenner has ever _____ Kim Kardashian not to appear on a reality show.
5. After reading Poe’s classic short story, the class gave Ms. Ridley a bottle of _____ as a birthday present.

Comprehension and Discussion: Answer Each Question in Complete Sentences

1. In the passage, what does the narrator [Montresor] actually do to Fortunato?

2. What does the narrator describe in paragraph 1? What mood is created and what words help to create that mood?

