

Introduction

In the fields of literature and the film industry villains are considered the evil characters. Depending on the context where a villain is being used they can also be referred to as the bad people, the heavy or black hats. The villains play the role of the main antagonist, and in case the villain is a woman, they are at times referred to as the villainess. Villains are believed to have negative effects on the other characters in the play or film. A villain is defined as "a cruelly malicious person who is involved in or devoted to wickedness or crime; scoundrel; or a character in a play, novel, or the like, who constitutes an important evil agency in the plot" (random house, 2010).

Analysis

Despite the difference in the times, the two works were written it is clear that the two works do share some similarities in the roles of their characters as well as the themes they represent. 'The Cask of Amontillado' has two main characters, who are human but in 'watchmen', there are many characters portrayed as superheroes or super humans. This is the main difference between the two stories settings although the acts and themes represented are mainly the same. In 'The Cask of Amontillado', the main characters are Montresor, the villain and Fortunato, the victim. On the other hand, 'watchmen' has six main characters; the comedian, doctor Manhattan, Nite Owl, Ozymandias, Rorschach, and Silk Spectre. All these characters play different roles and some of them act as both the villain and victim in order to progress the theme and plot of the story, as we shall see below.

In 'the Watchmen', the role of villains is played by superheroes. In this case, the main villain is Adrian Veidt (Ozymandias). Believed to be the smartest man on the planet Ozymandias realizes that there is a huge possibility of there being a nuclear warfare between the United States and the Soviet Union. To prevent this, Ozymandias designs a plan to fake an alien invasion on New York City that will annihilate half of the city's population. To achieve this Ozymandias turns into a villain, he murders Edward Blake (the comedian), one of two government-sanctioned superheroes. Rorschach uncovers a plot to kill the superheroes and he embarks on a plan to warn them. When Ozymandias discovers this he frames doctor Manhattan for causing cancer on former superheroes, frames Rorschach for murdering Moloch, and fakes an assassination attempt on him to remove any suspicions of his wrongdoing. These issues are later uncovered but it is too late to save New York City since the attack has already started. On the other hand 'The Cask of Amontillado' tells us the story of how Montresor decides to revenge a series of wrongs done on him by Fortunato, the latest being an intolerable insult. Thus, Montresor designs a plot to deceive Fortunato to test some wine he has from Spain whether it is original. Falling in to the trap Fortunato agrees not knowing that Montresor wishes to revenge. Montresor leads him into his palace where he puts his plan in to effect and he succeeds in killing Fortunato and thus avenging himself.

In both story plots, we realize the villains have committed murderous acts. However, it is surprising to note that the reasons for the villains committing these acts are different and that they arouse different emotions in us. In the first case of 'The Cask of Amontillado', the villain does this to avenge himself although we are not sure if Fortunato wronged him since Montresor is the narrator and there is no one to agree to or oppose his accusations. On top of this, it is unethical for Montresor to avenge himself like this (taking the law into his own hands). On the other hand, in the 'Watchmen', the reason for Ozymandias to commit his acts is to a certain degree acceptable. Ozymandias has realized that there is an imminent nuclear warfare, that will annihilate all humankind. Seeing no other option he decides to plan an attack on New York and blame it on aliens

in order to bring the two super-powers together to fight a common enemy and thus avoid the war. Thus, the actions he took to prevent this plan from being known are in a way 'ethically acceptable'.

Conclusion

It is clear from the two works above that the role of villains in literature, film or fiction can be used for different purposes. In the first case the villain can represent true vices within our societies like in the case of 'The Cask of Amontillado', on the other side it can be used to represent weaknesses within our societies or communities we live in like in the case of 'the Watchmen'. Whichever way it is used the role of villains is important since it makes it possible for the reader or the viewer to see another dimension of a phenomenon that probably would not have been present if the role of the villain was not used.