

Movie Summary – The Shawshank Redemption

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A young banker, Andy Dufresne, is convicted of the murder of two people, Linda Dufresne and Glenn Quintin—his wife and her lover, respectively. The year is 1947. Determined to defend his innocence, Andy tries his best, but the evidence is unshakeable and he is sentenced to two life sentences in the Shawshank Prison. He meets and befriends his inmate, a man called Red, who has been imprisoned in Shawshank for 20 years. Red was appearing for a parole interview, but he gets rejected, which doesn't surprise him at all. Red was called the "man who knows how to get things" and can get almost anything a prisoner could want from the outside world. Andy approaches Red after a month in captivity, requesting a rock hammer to continue his old hobby of rock collecting and shaping. Red asks him a few questions regarding his intentions, but Andy laughs them off. Red initially thinks the tool is going to be used to dig out of the prison, but when the tool does arrive, seeing its size, he laughs as well.

As one would expect from a brutal prison, Shawshank is a cruel place to be in, with merciless guards, violent outbursts, and frequent instances of sexual assault. This is also shown when Red and his friends place bets on which newcomers will have a nervous breakdown in the first night. Red bets on Andy, but an overweight newcomer is the one who breaks down. That man is then taken to the infirmary, where he passes away as the prison doctor had been out for the night. Andy, being one of the newcomers, becomes the target of incessant torture from a gang called the "The Sisters" and their leader, Bogs. To avoid this abuse, Andy searches and takes up a week-long job tarring the roof of a nearby factory. On duty, he hears the captain of the guards, Byron Hadley, complaining about an exorbitant tax on his inheritance. Andy, being the former banker he is, sees a chance here. Andy offers to help Hadley avoid taxation and in exchange, earns some protection from Bogs.

When Bogs and the sisters next attack Andy, they beat him up so badly that he is put in the infirmary. This time, however, because of the aforementioned deal, Hadley avenges his attack by beating Bogs to a pulp, to such an extent that Bogs gets transferred to a hospital. Andy had previously requested a poster of Rita Hayworth, which he finds in his cell on his return from the infirmary. The news about Andy's former job and financial knowledge spreads through the prison, and it reached the warden, a man called Norton. Norton, being an opportunist, offers Andy a position to work in the prison library where he can better help guards and, of course, Norton himself, with their financial qualms. There Andy works with an old inmate named Brooks and

takes an interest in improving the library and helping to educate his fellow inmates, writing to the Senate everyday requesting more books, until they finally cave and respond to his demands.

Brooks snaps one day and threatens to kill an inmate to avoid being paroled. Andy manages to stop him and calms him down. Red, being an old inmate himself, is able to sympathize with Brooks. Brooks has spent enough time in Shawshank to lose all notions of a normal society. He may not be able to adapt to the normal world anymore. Red says “These walls are funny. First you hate 'em, then you get used to 'em. Enough time passes, you get so you depend on them.” Eventually, Brooks is released from prison into the outside world. While it seems as though freedom is all he can ever have wanted, as expected, he is unable to adapt to a normal existence, and finds himself in a halfway house with a job he hates. After 50 years of imprisonment, and such intense hardship, adapting to a normal existence makes Brooks give up and hang himself in his room. After Norton institutes a program through which the prisoners can begin working on infrastructure outside the prison walls, he begins accepting bribes from local businesses who fear that prison labor will take away opportunities for their business. Andy hides the money away in a bank account under a fake name, helping the warden launder money for many years.

In the year 1964, a new inmate, a man named Tommy Williams arrives at Shawshank, who becomes a friend of Red and Andy. Andy helps Tommy learn and get a diploma, and it eventually gets to know that Tommy knows the person who killed Andy's wife and her lover. Seeing a way to prove his innocence, Andy informs the warden of the evidence, hoping for a second trial, but the warden needed to protect his investment. So he has Tommy killed and Andy put in solitary confinement for 2 months.

When Andy finally gets out and meets Red, he tells him about his dreams of freedom, to live in Zihuatanejo, a Mexican coastal town. Red is sure of it being an impossibility, but Andy maintains hope and tells Red that if he ever gets out of Shawshank, he should go to a place in Buxton to retrieve a package buried under an oak tree. The next day, Andy's doesn't come out for roll call, having escaped through a hole he has been digging with the rock hammer for many years. He poses as the fake person in whose name all of Norton's money has been deposited, takes the money, and flees to Mexico. He also tips the police off to Norton's shady business dealings. When the authorities go to arrest the warden, he shoots himself.

After 40 years, Red finally makes parole, and visits the place in Buxton that Andy told him about. He digs up a box full of money and a letter from Andy telling him to come to Zihuatanejo. He goes there, and the two friends are reunited.

This was the summary of the movie. We see many kinds of relationships in this movie, relationships with love, friendship, mutual benefit, and enmity. The movie depicted the vast variety of relationships in a succinct and beautiful manner. As we can see, there was nothing more than mutual benefit in the relationship between the warden Norton and Andy. On the other hand, the relationship between Andy and Red was that of mutual respect and friendship. They remained

friends for a long time, and continued to do so regardless of changing situations, which is what a truly valuable relationship should be like.