Mr. John

“Seven Floors” - Dino Buzzati

Reflection Questions

1 - What was your main feeling after reading this story?

My main feeling after reading this story is confused. Because through the story, the clinic is only described that as the number of floors decrease, patients in this clinic are closer to death. However, Corte is very afraid and collapsed every time he heard that he needs to move down although the nurses told him that he is just because of some inconveniency which is not due to his health conditions and his emotion is the part that I cannot understand. Considering if I am Corte, I won’t feel very desperate when I was asked to move down because of other issues since I knew that I will go back to floor 7 although I may be a little bit panic when I am told to move down every time.

2 - What do you think the ending means?

I think it means that Corte died. According to the description of the clinic provided by the stranger Corte met on floor 7, the stranger said “Where you see the shades lowered, it means someone has just died in there. Don’t you see that all the shutters are open on the other floors?” At the end of the story, Corte saw the room turn dark, shades were lowering and the sunlight was blocked, is a symbol of his death.

3 - Was it easy to predict what would happen in the story? Why? If some aspects are predictable, do you feel that has a positive or a negative impact on the story?

Actually, it is easy to predict what would happen in the story. After the young woman and stranger describe the relationship between different states of the patients’ health condition and the number of floors and Corte is very nervous about moving downwards, I think to make the novel more thrill I will also write that he was forced to move downwards every time which seem to be desperate to him.

4 - List three adjectives that you think work together to describe the **protagonist** (the central character, whose point of view we often share) Giuseppe Corte very well.

Stubborn, neurotic, convincible.

Stubborn and neurotic: he thought that moving downwards must be bad and he was desperate when hearing the news. He cannot make himself think of some privilege of moving downwards and think positively.

Convincible: when hearing the news that he needs to move downwards because of external factors, he acts like he has no choice but to accept the result. However, he could convince the nurses to move other patients down if he is very sensitive to the number of floors.

5 - On page 2, Mr. Corte speaks to another patient who says “the dying are on the first floor. There’s nothing for the doctors to do down there. The priest is the only one who works. And of course . . . . ” This character is making an **implication** (suggesting something without saying it directly). What is he implying? Why doesn’t he say it directly?

I think he is implying that the priest was there because he wanted to pray for the dead. He doesn’t say this directly because this is ominous, especially for patients and also Corte interrupt him.

6 - Why do you think, in this story, the healthiest are on the top floor and the sickest are on the bottom floor?

Because by separating the patients using their level of health condition, the patients at good health conditions are hardly to be affected by the patients that are dying. Also, the healthiest are on the top because in architecture, the top is better lit and more suitable for healthy people, which gives them more hope and make them feel pleasant for a quick recovery.

7 - Do you think there is anything humorous in this story? Explain.

Yes. In the sentence “I confess,” said Giuseppe Corte, smiling to show that he was no baby, “I confess that I don’t like this move at all.” Corte was convinced to move downwards but he actually didn’t agree with the nurse.

8 - Some stories work as **allegories**. In an allegory, the entire story is symbolic of something else, and conveys a message about the world. Do you think this might be an allegory? If so, what is it an allegory *for*: what is its message?

I think this can be an allegory. Because for Corte, actually he gave himself great mental note and that’s why his condition became worse and worse. He thought that he would go up, but he was put down every time. I think this is a hint of his destiny that he cannot betray. Also, the destiny controlled him by letting him caught progressively worse mental problems after he was asked to move down and at last he died because of his afraid, and the result is just what he is afraid.