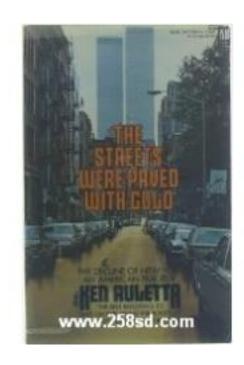
The streets were paved with gold



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Chapter One

The

Rotting Apple

PRINCE PROSPERO was an indefatigable, some might say an imper-

br >vious man. The plague of the \"Red Death\" had entered the homes

br >of half his minions, causing rapid bleeding and sudden death. But

br >Prince Prospero remained undaunted. As told by Edgar Allan Poe

br >in The Masque of the Red Death, the Prince blithely summoned a

thousand of his heartiest knights and dames and retreated to a

here they would defy the contagion.

br > A lofty wall stood between them and the populace, its gates

br >made of iron and, as an extra precaution, sealed with sturdy bolts.

br >There was no need to step outside the palace:

br >pliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori,

there were

ballet-dancersi¼Œ there were musiciansi¾Œ there was Beautyi¼Œ wine. All these and security were within. Without was the br> Gaiety prevailed. For six monthsi¼Œ they partied and danced to the br> music of a full orchestrai¼Œ waltzed freely through the seven brightly paused to listen to the chimes from the giant br> ebony clocki¼Œ ignored the bright sun which was tamed by thicki¼Œ Prospero was con- Prospero was con-
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