

THE RAVEN:
HOW EDGAR LOST LENORE

Written by
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Based on the poem, *The Raven*, by Edgar Allen Poe

FADE IN:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

EDGAR (V.O.)

Once upon a midnight dreary, while
I pondered, weak and weary, over
many a quaint and curious volume of
forgotten lore - while I nodded,
nearly napping, suddenly there came
a tapping, as of someone gently
rapping, rapping at my chamber
door.

Edgar is perusing several different books in a restless manner, pulling volumes from large book shelves that line the wall, strewing them haphazardly about the room as he goes.

CUT TO:

EXT. LENORE'S HOME - A VICTORIAN DOOR - DAY

Someone is knocking on the door and it begins to open.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

Edgar rouses absently from his books upon hearing the light tapping on the door.

EDGAR

(muttering)

'Tis some visitor tapping at my
chamber door - only this and
nothing more.

EDGAR (V.O.)

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in
the bleak December; and each
separate dying ember wrought its
ghost upon the floor. Eagerly I
wished the morrow; - vainly I had
sought to borrow from my books
surcease from sorrow - sorrow for
the lost Lenore -

Edgar goes back to his books. The room is filled with shadows at strange angles made by the firelight, creepy. Edgar rubs his eyes, shifts his weight and sighs, restless - not finding the solace in his books that he wanted.

EDGAR (V.O.)
- for the rare and radiant maiden
whom the angels name Lenore -
nameless here forevermore.

CUT TO:

EXT. LENORE'S HOME - A VICTORIAN DOOR - DAY

A radiant, smiling Lenore opens the door - we see it is Edgar knocking.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

The fire jumps in the hearth and the curtains rustle - Edgar is suddenly spooked, eyes wide.

CUT TO:

INT. LENORE'S HOME - INDISTINCT BLUR OF THE PARLOUR - DAY

Suddenly a hand with a bloodied knife comes up into the frame as if stabbing.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

Edgar straightens up, sighs, squares his shoulders and moves to open the door.

EDGAR
Sir, or Madam, truly your
forgiveness I implore; but the fact
is I was napping, and so gently you
came rapping, and so faintly you
came tapping, tapping at my chamber
door that I scarce was sure I heard
you -

Edgar opens the door wide and finds nobody there. He leans out into the night.

EXT. EDGAR'S HOME - NIGHT

Edgar steps out the door and walks cautiously to peer around the corner of the house into the empty street beyond.

Finding nothing there, Edgar turns around and looks into the darkness in the other direction. A single lamp post throws dim light on the scene.

EDGAR
(whispering hoarsely)
Lenore?

WHISPER
(a faint repeating echo)
Lenore!

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

Edgar quickly goes back inside and closes the door. He takes a drink from an old pewter mug and reaches again for one of his books. A louder tapping startles him somewhat.

EDGAR
Surely ... surely that is something
at my window lattice; let me see
then what thereat is, and this
mystery explore - let my heart be
still a moment and this mystery
explore - 'tis the wind and nothing
more!

Edgar flings open the window shutter and a stately raven steps in with a great flutter. He flies silently across the room and perches on a bust of Pallas above the chamber door. He fixes Edgar with a hard stare.

EDGAR (V.O.)
Then this ebony bird beguiling my
sad fancy into smiling, by the
grave and stern decorum of the
countenance it wore -

Edgar looks questioningly from bird, to window and back again. He shakes his head slightly and smiles.

EDGAR
Though thy crest be shorn and
shaven, thou, art sure no craven,
ghastly grim and ancient Raven
wandering from the nightly shore -
tell me what thy lordly name is on
the night's Plutonian shore!

THE RAVEN
(voice of Gilbert Winston)
Nevermore.

Edgar stands looking at the bird incredulous, speechless - his face becomes puzzled, He seems to be trying to remember something as the scene fades.

FADE TO:

INT. LAVISH LONDON DINING CLUB - EARLY EVENING

Edgar is standing in a bright, fashionable dining club at a bar with a couple of friends drinking sherry. They are resplendent in smart tuxedos with tails. Edgar turns to see Lenore coming in the door with several of her friends, including Gilbert Winston - also known as 'The Golden Boy'. Edgar approaches them and bends over Lenore's hand.

LENORE

Edgar! How truly lovely to see you!
You will come and sit with us,
won't you?

EDGAR

Lenore, my dear - you've blinded us
all with your radiance once again!

Gilbert rolls his eyes and offers to shake Edgar's hand. They shake hands politely, and Lenore gives Gilbert a pointed look.

GILBERT

(annoyed)

Edgar, old chap! Do find us a
decent table, there's a good lad!
We've a great lot of friends with
us this evening.

Edgar quickly finds a large table near the dance floor. As everyone is getting settled, he whisks Lenore off for a waltz. The music swells and they take a spectacular turn around the floor. They become breathless, the attraction between them is very obvious.

EDGAR

Lenore ... Lenore my darling. You
simply must allow me to speak to
your father - marry me, my love - I
cannot stand to live without you
another day!

Lenore sighs as Edgar continues to steer her effortlessly around the dance floor.

LENORE

(blushing consternation)
 Oh Edgar! My heart would like
 nothing better - but I really don't
 think papa would ever consent to my
 marrying a poor poet. I must do my
 family duty and marry well, Edgar,
 no matter how I might feel about
 it. You do understand, don't you?

EDGAR

But Lenore ... I love you so ...

LENORE

(petulantly)
 Can't we just enjoy the evening,
 and the time together? Honestly,
 all this marriage talk is beginning
 to give me the vapors!

The music ends and they come to a stop. Edgar sighs heavily
 and bows slightly.

EDGAR

Of course, my dear - but I will
 wish to broach the subject again in
 the near future.

Edgar escorts Lenore back to the table and the evening ensues
 as a brief musical collage. It is obvious that Edgar is
 competing with Gilbert for Lenore's affections. She is coy
 and pretends not to notice. The evening begins to wind down
 as patrons start to leave.

GILBERT

Shall we repair to my drawing room,
 everyone? We can carry on the
 evening's celebrations there
 without interruption or mishap.

LENORE

I'm a bit parched, Gilbert. Edgar,
 would you be a dear and fetch me a
 class of punch from the bar?

EDGAR

But of course, Lenore - I shan't be
 but a moment.

Edgar gets up and goes to the bar to order punch for Lenore.
 As he is waiting, he turns and sees Lenore, Gilbert and their
 friends going out the door.

Lenore stops to take off one of her gloves to show a large, shining diamond engagement ring to one of her friends, who squeals with delight and hugs her in congratulations.

The scene zooms in on Edgar's surprised face. He is frozen to the spot, just now realizing he's been sitting with an engagement party all evening. He catches sight of Gilbert with a cruel smirk on his face. Lenore takes his arm and he turns in a cocky manner to walk out the door without a backward glance. A waiter comes up to Edgar then, presenting him with the huge bill their table has left behind and demanding that he pay it.

The scene behind Edgar transitions back to the library in a blur.

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

EDGAR

(muttering)

Other friends have flown before -
on the morrow he will leave me, as
my hopes have flown before.

THE RAVEN

(voice of Gilbert Winston)

Nevermore.

EDGAR

Doubtless what it utters is its
only stock and store caught from
some unhappy master whom unmerciful
disaster followed fast and followed
faster til his songs one burden
bore - till the dirges of his hope
that melancholy burden bore of
'never ... nevermore'.

EDGAR (V.O.)

But the Raven still beguiling all
my fancy into smiling, straight I
wheeled a cushioned seat in front
of bird and bust and door; then,
upon the velvet sinking, I betook
myself to linking fancy unto fancy,
thinking what this ominous bird of
yore - what this grim, ungainly,
ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of
your meant in croaking,
'Nevermore'.

Edgar looks up at the Raven thoughtfully, and smiles again slightly. He sighs resignedly and pulls a chair over in front of the door to sit down, arms crossed over his chest.

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON DINING CLUB - LATE NIGHT

We see the cruel smirk on Gilbert's face as he turns to leave the dining club with Lenore on his arm.

The scene zooms in close and transitions on their interlinked arms from the dining club to a church altar where they are getting married.

CUT TO:

INT. HUGE VICTORIAN CHURCH

The scene zooms out from Gilbert and Lenore's interlinked arms. They are now standing at an altar in wedding clothes. Edgar looks on as Gilbert and Lenore are married.

FADE TO:

EXT. ON THE WIDE CHURCH STEPS

Edgar stands stiff and solemn, being jostled but far removed from the celebrating crowd of people around him. Gilbert and Lenore rush past, not noticing him, the crowd throwing rice over the couple as is the custom. A stricken look comes across Edgar's face as he realizes Lenore is out of his reach forever. He doesn't bother to brush off the grains of rice getting caught in his hair.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

EDGAR

Wretch! Thy God hath lent thee - by
these angels he hath sent thee
respite - respite and nepenthe from
thy memories of Lenore; quaff, oh
quaff this kind nepenthe and forget
this lost Lenore!

EDGAR (V.O.)

Quoth the Raven ...

THE RAVEN (V.O.)
 (voice of Gilbert Winston)
 Nevermore.

CUT TO:

EXT. LENORE'S HOME - A VICTORIAN DOOR - DAY

A radiant, smiling Lenore opens the door and bids Edgar to come in.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

EDGAR
 (pleading)
 Prophet! Thing of evil! Prophet
 still, if bird or devil! Whether
 tempter sent, or whether tempest
 tossed thee here ashore, desolate
 yet all undaunted, in this desert
 land enchanted - on this home by
 horror haunted - tell me truly, I
 implore! Is there - *is* there balm
 in Gilead? Tell me - tell me I
 implore!

EDGAR (V.O.)
 Quoth the Raven ...

THE RAVEN (V.O.)
 (voice of Gilbert Winston)
 Nevermore.

CUT TO:

INT. LENORE'S HOME - THE PARLOUR - DAY

Lenore is pouring out tea for Edgar, Gilbert and herself. There are sweets on the little table, and they look to be having a pleasant conversation.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

EDGAR
 (incensed)
 Prophet! Thing of evil!
 (MORE)

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Prophet still, if bird or devil! By
that heaven that bends above us -
by that God we both adore - tell
this soul with sorrow laden if,
within the distant Aidenn, it shall
clasp the sainted maiden whom the
angels name Lenore - clasp a rare
and radiant maiden whom the angels
name Lenore.

EDGAR (V.O.)

Quoth the Raven ...

THE RAVEN (V.O.)

(voice of Gilbert Winston)

Nevermore.

CUT TO:

INT. LENORE'S HOME - THE PARLOUR - DAY

The tea things are all in disarray, broken and scattered.
There is blood splattered everywhere and we see the bloody,
dripping knife in the air making a stabbing motion.

CUT TO:

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

EDGAR

(raging)

Be that word our sign of parting,
bird or fiend! Get thee back into
the tempest and the night's
Plutonian shore! Leave no black
plume as a token of that lie thy
soul hath spoken! Leave my
loneliness unbroken - quit the bust
above my door! Take thy beak from
out my heart, and take thy form
from off my door!

EDGAR (V.O.)

Quoth the Raven ...

THE RAVEN (V.O.)

(voice of Gilbert Winston)

Nevermore.

CUT TO:

INT. LENORE'S HOME - THE PARLOUR - DAY

Edgar stands in the middle of the parlour observing the grisly scene before him. Gilbert lies bleeding on the floor - a look of fear and surprise on his face - and his eyes are empty. Lenore is on the sofa, face down, with blood dripping to the floor. The delicate little tea table is overturned and the tea things are strewn about.

Edgar holds the dripping knife, and runs his other hand over his face, smearing the blood splatters there. He stops and looks at his hand, surprised and beginning to panic as realization washes over him.

The scene zooms into one of his panicked eyes and the transition zooms out to find Edgar horrified back in his library.

INT. EDGAR'S VICTORIAN HOME LIBRARY - NIGHT

The scene zooms out of Edgar's panicked eye, back to the library where he is crumpled on the floor against a wall with a look of horror on his face.

EDGAR (V.O.)

And the Raven, never flitting,
still is sitting, still is sitting
on the pallid bust of Pallas just
above my chamber door; and his eyes
have all the seeming of a demons
that is dreaming, and the lamp-
light o'er him streaming casts his
shadow on the floor.

Edgar totally snaps, throwing things and overturning the table in the library, having just remembered that he lost Lenore by killing her and her husband when he was invited to their home for tea. He stops abruptly and looks down at the shadow of the Raven cast in stark relief on the floor.

We begin to hear faint voices from outside and pounding on the door.

EXT. EDGAR'S HOME - NIGHT

EDGAR (V.O.)

And my soul from out that shadow
that lies floating on the floor
shall be lifted ... nevermore.

As the scene pans up and away from the face of a police constable in front of the house, we see several policemen trying to break down the door. There is a paddy wagon from the local asylum parked out in front of the house. We see the shadowy figure of Edgar stealing out the back gate and into the darkness.

The voices and pounding on the door begin to fade as we move up and away into the night.

FADE TO BLACK.