



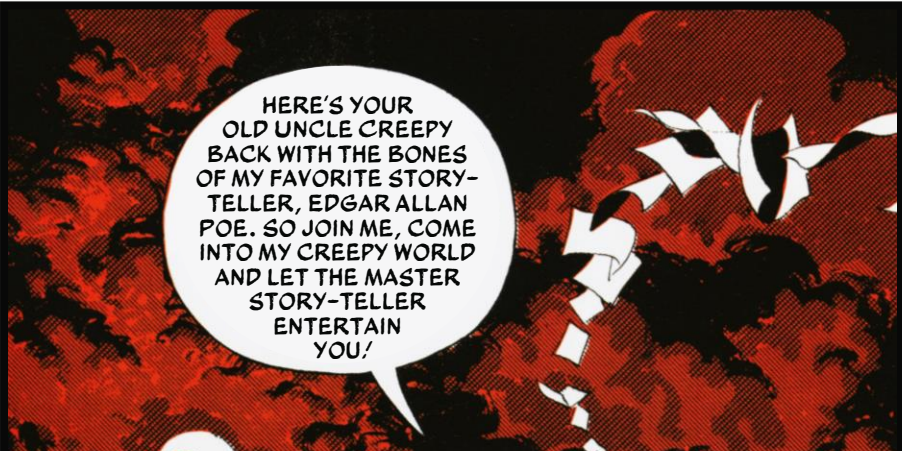
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Edgar Allan Poe's original texts edited by J. Gerald Kennedy for *The Portable Edgar Allan Poe*, published by Penguin Books. 2006.

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Black & white and color illustrations by Bernie Wrightson. 1971, 2015.

Music from the motion picture *Creepshow* composed and conducted by John Harrison. 1982.





APPROVAL OR SEAL OF
THE COMICS CODE
AUTHORITY.

EACH ISSUE'S
STORY WERE
PRODUCED BY ME—
THE SO-CALLED HOST
CHARACTER, UNCLE
CREEPY.







TALES OF MYSTERY & IMAGINATION

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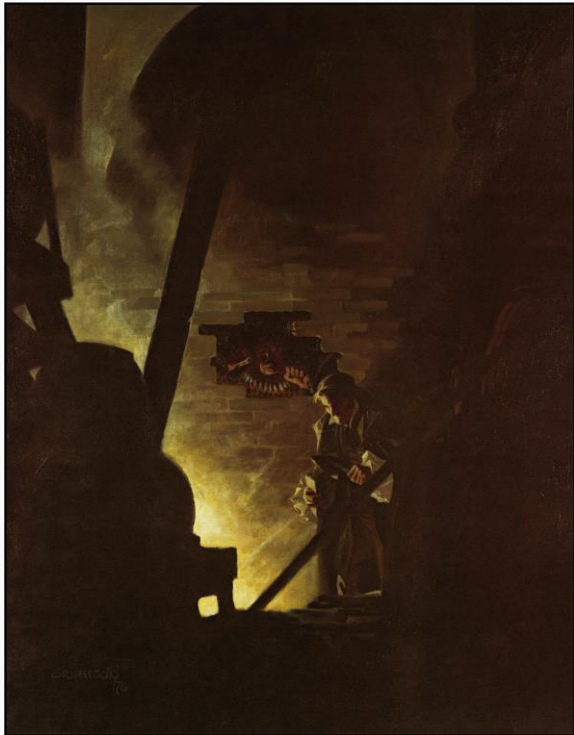
THE EDGAR ALLAN POE PORTFOLIO

He suffered as few did, living a life filled with a continuing series of misfortunes that, like the stories he told, are almost beyond belief. Orphaned at the age of three, he was adopted by a man who never came to care for him and subsequently removed him from his rightful inheritance. His academic career was abruptly ended by

expulsions at both the University of Virginia and West Point Military Academy. His controversial marriage to his thirteen year old cousin was probably never consummated. After a decade of illness, she died at the age of twenty-four. After losing several jobs as editor of men's publications, he even failed at committing suicide.

But it is not the dismal side of Edgar Allan Poe's life which we have come to honor. The man's literary contributions are his legacy. He has been called everything from America's greatest writer to the father of the detective story. Today, more than 150 years after his death, his complete works are still in print by dozens of publishers. His images of horror and the macabre have been graphically embellished by some of the world's most famous illustrators, including Gustave Doré, Arthur Rackham, Harry Clarke, and a cotemporary artist who happened to be born in the same city Edgar Allan Poe

died in—Bernie Wrightson. “In late 1975 I agreed to do a portfolio of eight paintings illustrating some of the stories of Edgar Allan Poe. I had always liked Poe, his stories were some of my earliest reading material. Originally when I was approached to do a portfolio, I toyed with the idea of doing *Frankenstein*. However, the more thought I gave to it, *Frankenstein* merited a complete book—a far more complete treatment than can be given in a portfolio. A Poe Portfolio might be just the thing. At the time, I wanted to develop my painting and with Poe, I could use all of the black paint in the world.”





"Mementos is a favorite of mine—I really like it. About five years ago, I had this smaller version of a similar scene with just one head on a wooden fence. It is based on a guy in Wisconsin, who was the inspiration for dozens of psychopathic murder stories in movies and books in the 1950's."

- BERNIE WRIGHTSON, 1979







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- BERNIE WRIGHTSON, 1979





**WHAT IS YOUR
DEEPEST FEAR?**

1. YOUR AUDIENCE'S RESPONSES WILL APPEAR HERE. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CHANGE THE FONT, COLOUR ETC. THIS TEXT DISAPPEARS AFTER STARTING YOUR SESSION AND SLIDESHOW.

2. YOUR AUDIENCE'S RESPONSES WILL APPEAR HERE. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CHANGE THE FONT, COLOUR ETC. THIS TEXT DISAPPEARS AFTER STARTING YOUR SESSION AND SLIDESHOW.

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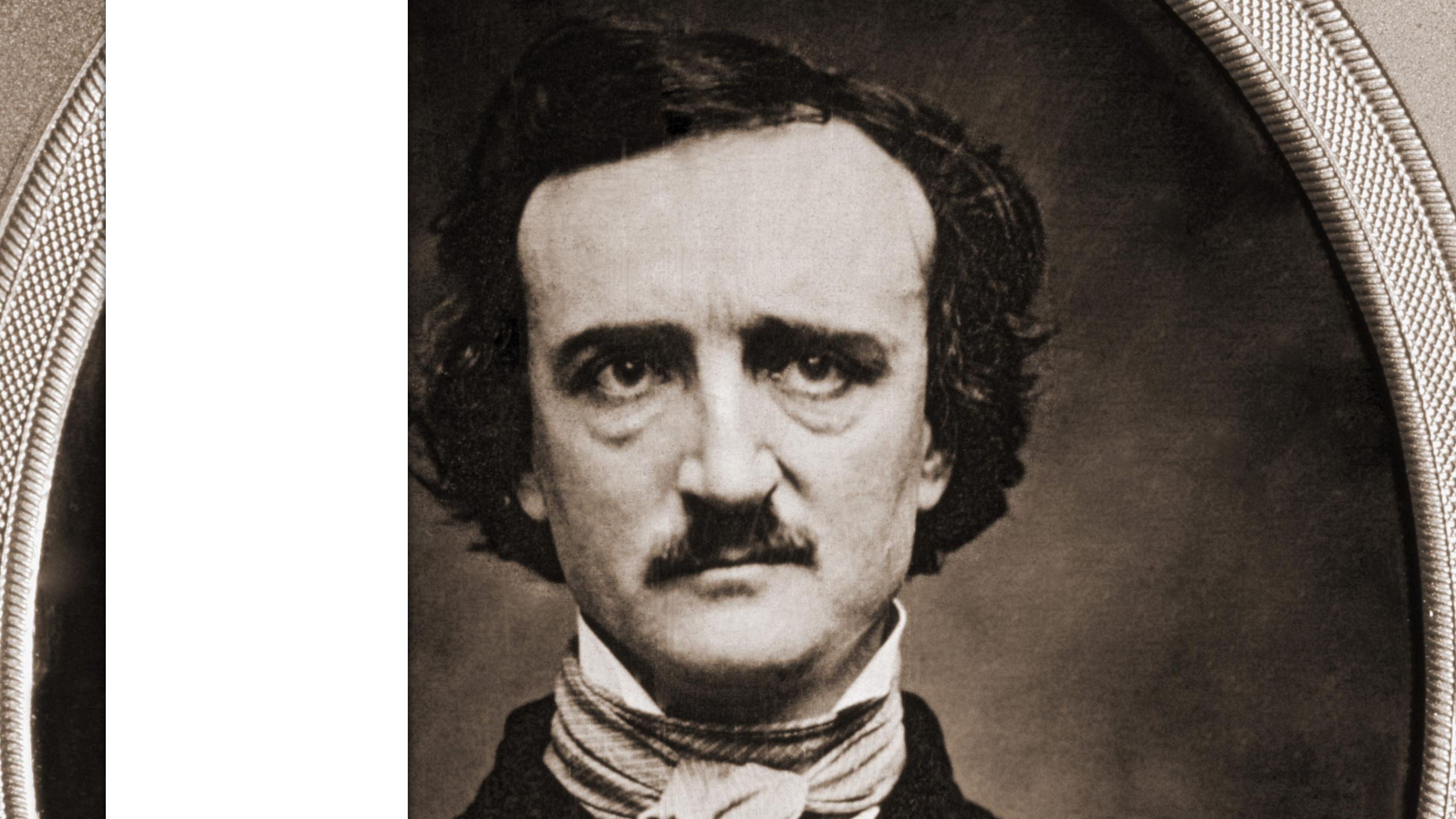
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TXT The applicable explanations will be inserted after you have started a session.
Twitter It is possible to move, resize and modify the appearance of this text box.



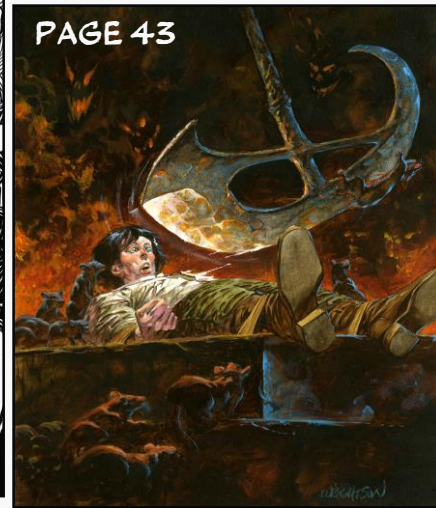
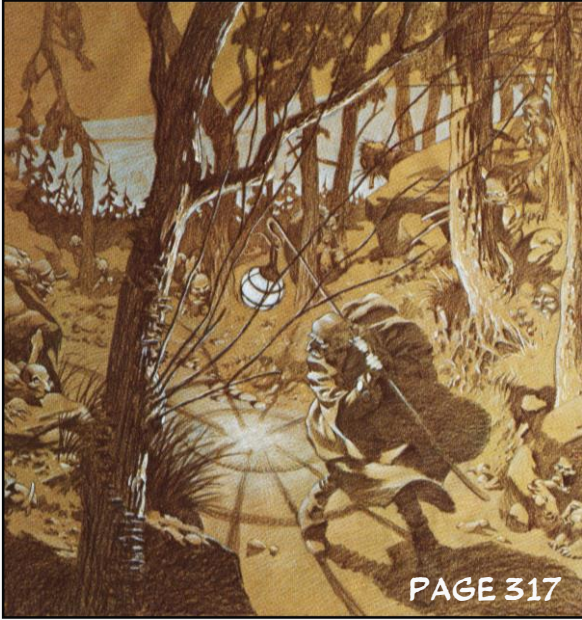


IN NOVEMBER OF 1848,
POE WAS TAKEN TO A
PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO BY
A "FRIEND" WHO LOOKED
AFTER HIM FOLLOWING AN
OVERDOSE OF LAUDANUM.
THE RESULTING IMAGE
SHOWS POE LOOKING AS
UNWELL AS HE WAS, WITH
LARGE BAGS UNDER HIS
EYES AND A SHADOW CAST
ACROSS THE FACE THAT
GIVES HIM A SUNKEN,
HOLLOW APPEARANCE.
THOUGH IT IS SAID TO BE
HIS WORST LIKENESS, THIS
PORTRAIT OF POE IS THE
ONE MOST OFTEN
PUBLISHED AND THE ONE
THAT REINFORCES THE
POPULAR IMAGE OF HIM.



Tales of Mystery and Imagination

EDGAR ALLAN POE



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| 192 | The Black Cat |
| 43 | The Pit and the Pendulum |
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| 151 | The Oval Portrait |
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- Suggested:*
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| III | Ligeia |
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The MASQUE of the RED DEATH

In January 1842, a devastating event destroyed Poe's tranquil home life: His young wife, Virginia Clemm, suffered a massive pulmonary hemorrhage while singing at the piano. Seriously ill for weeks, she seemed to recover, yet relapses confirmed that Virginia, like Poe's mother, had been stricken with consumption. "The Masque of the Red Death," which represents fatal contagion as an unexpected intruder, was first published in *Graham's Magazine*, May 1842.

It is an undisputed masterpiece in the genre of short-story writing and one of Poe's most unusual efforts. Note the complete absence of that Poe trademark the first-person narrator, and the use of allegory. The tale is dreamlike, and its language is more opulent and purely descriptive than any of Poe's other stories. The title of the story is a variant of the Black Death, or bubonic plague, which killed three quarters of the population of Europe and Asia in just 20 years during the fourteenth century.










COLORS



Use Poe's descriptions of the seven rooms on pages 38-42 to determine what each of the rooms symbolizes. Write your findings on the board, matching the marker color to the unique color of the room.





THE BLACK CAT



“THE BLACK CAT” WAS FIRST published in the *United States Saturday Post*, August 19, 1843. Between 1841 and 1843, Poe turned out some of his finest work, including “The Black Cat,” a tale that treats the subject of perversity as mental illness in a way unsurpassed by any other writer. There are no known sources for the story; however, we do know that Poe owned a black cat. Poe may have drawn on two old superstitions. One, from the Egyptians, held the cat as sacred; whoever killed a cat, even by accident, was punished by death. In the Middle Ages, the black cat was considered to be Satan’s favorite form when he was abroad in the world, and witches used such cats as “familiar” spirits. The cat’s name, Pluto, is also likely an allusion to the

ancient Roman god, who ruled the dark underworld of Hades. Poe’s tale was an immediate success—so much so that the following year parodies were published by other writers. The most notable use of the story, however, is in Richard Wright’s *Native Son*, where a cat owned by a character named Bigger is said to have the eyes of justice. The ending of Wright’s novel—where a cat poised on Bigger’s shoulders points him out as a murderer—is also remarkably similar to Poe’s conclusion. Until Stuart Gordon’s excellent adaptation in 2007, the only film to use the tale’s plot was D.W. Griffith’s *Avenging Conscience* (1914). Universal’s 1934 and 1941 films of *The Black Cat* have practically nothing in common with Poe other than their titles.



MASTERS OF HORROR

The Black Cat is a short film written and directed by Stuart Gordon. It was first broadcast on Showtime's *Masters of Horror* series in 2007. The story has Edgar Allan Poe (Jeffrey Combs) suffering from writer's block and short on cash. Poe is tormented by a black cat that will either destroy his life or inspire him to write one of his most famous stories. Poe's "The Black Cat" is woven into the film's plot along with real happenings and details from the writer's life. Watch for Harry Clarke's classic illustrations in the opening credits as well as brief appearances from Rufus Griswold (Christopher Heyerdahl) in the first tavern scene and during the funeral scene. Also try to connect some of the added historical content in Gordon's script to Kennedy's biography of Poe in the "Introduction" of our textbook.

EDGAR ALLAN POE
Reading Comprehension 1

Introduction, The Masque of the Red Death, & The Black Cat





HELLO THERE,
KIDDIES. YOUR OLD
UNCLE CREEPY
HAS A RIDDLE FOR
YOU...

I HEARD THIS
ONE AT A MAD TEA-
PARTY: WHY IS A RAVEN
LIKE A WRITING-
DESK?

WELL, BOYS
AND GHOULS. I'M
WAITING... ANY
GUESSES?

THE PIT & THE PENDULUM

First published in *The Gift*, 1842, this has always been one of Poe's most-read tales, a skillful exercise in suspense with an undercurrent of something much more complex than most readers fully understand, although they may sense it.

The Spanish Inquisition was independent of the medieval Inquisition, which began in 1233. Established by Ferdinand V and Isabella in 1478 with the reluctant approval of Pope Sixtus IV, the latter inquisition was entirely controlled by the Spanish kings. It was begun to discover and punish converted Jews and Muslims who were not true believers. The notorious Inquisition of 1483 reputedly saw two thousand persons burned at the stake. Like the Communist hysteria in the American fifties, the original purpose of the Inquisition was soon overshadowed by political witch-hunting. The Spanish Inquisition was not abolished until 1820.

THE PREMATURE BURIAL

As we'll see here and in several other tales, Poe had a fascination with live burial. One reason may have been his apparent fear of the dark. Susan Weiss, who knew Poe in his later years, said that a friend of hers who had gone to school with Poe spoke of "his timidity in regard to being alone at night, and his belief in and fear of the supernatural. She had heard Poe say that the most horrible thing he could imagine as a boy was to feel an ice-cold hand laid upon his face in a pitch-dark room when alone at night; or to awaken in semi-darkness and see an evil face gazing close into his own; and

that these fancies had so haunted him that he would often keep his head under the bed-covering until nearly suffocated" (29). While rather farfetched today, premature burial did occur occasionally in Poe's day, although not to the extent one would think after reading his tales on the subject. Some instances are recorded in George Alfred Walker's *Gatherings from Grave Yards* (1839) [reprinted by Arno Press, 1977], apparently due to a lack of sophisticated medical equipment. The "Premature Burial" was filmed in 1962 by Roger Corman, with elements of "Berenice" added to the script.





“Wrightson’s 1976 painting for Poe’s ‘The Premature Burial’ shows the interred dream-narrator struggling out of the earth, flesh crusted, fingers clawed, mouth agape, eyes strabismic. It is altogether wonderful. One can see the scream.”

~ **HARLAN ELLISON, 1979**





EDGAR ALLAN POE
Reading Comprehension 2

The Pit and the Pendulum and The Premature Burial

Berenice



First published in the *Southern Literary Messenger*, March 1835, “Berenice” is a strange, morbid, and gruesome tale. Apparently even Poe felt it was a bit too much, for he took out four rather graphic paragraphs. Even so, the magazine received complaints about the subject matter, and in a letter to the editor Poe admitted that the “subject is far too horrible...The tale originated in a bet that I could produce nothing effective on a subject so singular, provided I treat it seriously...I allow that it approaches the very verge of bad taste” (qtd. in Peithman 31). Like the narrator of “The Premature Burial,” Berenice also suffers from a form of catalepsy, a trancelike state in which the muscles are rigid for long periods. Without sophisticated medical equipment, catalepsy was often mistaken for death, and the victim was sometimes buried while still alive.



The Oval PORTRAIT

First published as “Life in Death” in *Graham’s Magazine*, April 1842, the story was shortened considerably for its second appearance, with a new title, in the *Broadway Journal*, April 26, 1845. The central theme here is similar to Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “The Birthmark” (1843), but the concept of a painting having an intimate connection with a person’s being is an ancient one, part of the belief that a representation of a living being “captures the spirit” of the original. Another famous story of this type is Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891).

Some critics have interpreted this tale as Poe’s subconscious restaging of his own marriage, for Virginia understood little about her husband’s literary talents. In Poe’s story the wife seems jealous of her husband’s painting.

THE DARK EYE IS A 1995 COMPUTER GAME BY THE SOFTWARE COMPANY INSCAPE. IT FEATURES COMBINED 3-D GRAPHICS, CLAY ANIMATION, AND VIDEO SEGMENTS. ALSO NOTABLE WAS THE USE OF AUTHOR WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS AS A VOICE ACTOR: BURROUGHS PROVIDED NOT ONLY THE VOICE FOR THE CHARACTER OF EDWIN, BUT ALSO VOICEOVERS OF TWO SLIDE-SHOW SEQUENCES ILLUSTRATING THE SHORT STORY "THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH" AND THE POEM "ANNABEL LEE."



What is Gothic Literature?

“I maintain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul—that I deduced this terror only from its legitimate sources and urged it only to its legitimate results,”

Poe wrote in the preface to *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840). The word Gothic originally referred to the Goths, an early Germanic tribe, then came to signify “germanic,” then “medieval.” The first gothic stories were set in the middle ages. The locale was often a gloomy castle furnished with dungeons, subterranean passages, and sliding panels; the typical story focused on the sufferings imposed on an innocent heroine by a cruel and lustful villain, and made bountiful use of ghosts, mysterious disappearances, and other sensational and supernatural occurrences. Gothic writers opened up to fiction the realm of the irrational and of the perverse impulses and nightmarish terrors that lie beneath the orderly surface of the civilized mind. More recently, “Gothic” has been extended to works which lack the exotic setting of the earlier romances, but develop a brooding atmosphere of gloom and terror, represent events that are uncanny or macabre or ultra-violent, and often deal with aberrant psychological states. The nightmarish realm of uncanny terror, violence, and cruelty opened by the early Gothic novels continues to be explored by writers of horror fiction such as Stephen King and Anne Rice, and by the writers and directors of horror films. *Vincent* is a 1982 stop-motion short horror film written, designed, and directed by Tim Burton. It is narrated by Vincent Price, a lifelong idol and inspiration for Burton. What Gothic elements does Burton use to achieve *Vincent*’s pseudo classic horror film look?

“The Haunted Palace” was first published by itself in the *Baltimore American Museum*, April 1839—five months before it appeared in “The Fall of the House of Usher.” The poem very possibly suggested the tale.

THE HAUNTED PALACE

I.

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought’s dominion—
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair!

A
B
A
B
C
D
C
D

II.

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow;
(This—all this—was in the olden

Why do you think Poe began his poem with slant rhymes and would proceed to use them throughout “The Haunted Palace”?

Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odor went away.

III.

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne, where sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,

A word of Greek origin, meaning “born to the purple,” or “of royal blood.” Porphyry was a purple dye prepared from mollusks and reserved only for the royal family. The O.E.D. cites Poe for the first use of this form of the word.

**In one of his letters,
Poe writes, “By the
Haunted Palace I mean
to imply a mind
haunted by phantoms—
a disordered brain.”
Read the poem again,
focusing on each stanza
as an allegorical
representation of the
human head and mind.
How does the poem
now suggest the
development of madness
in a poet?**

In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

V.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch’s high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And, round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

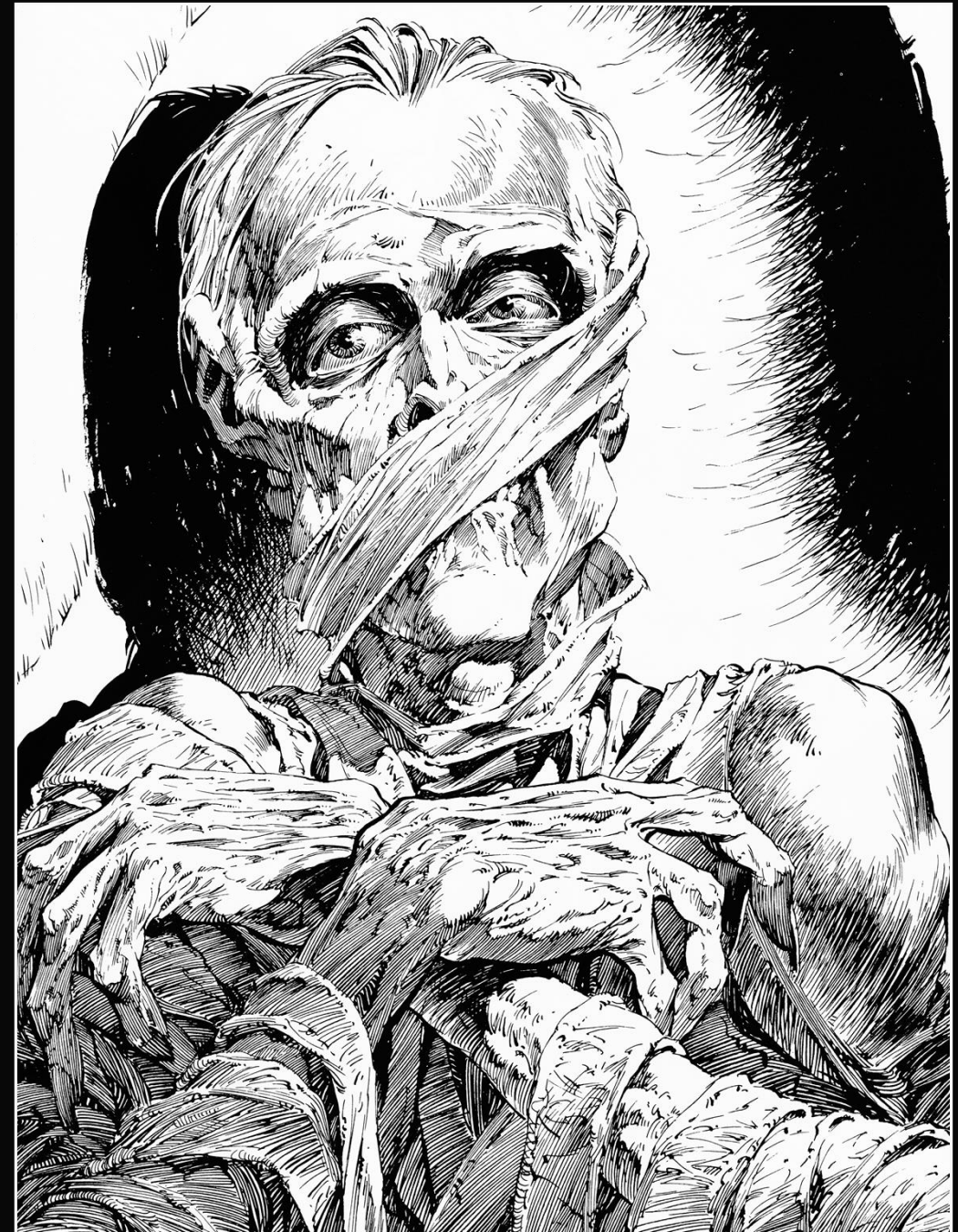
VI.

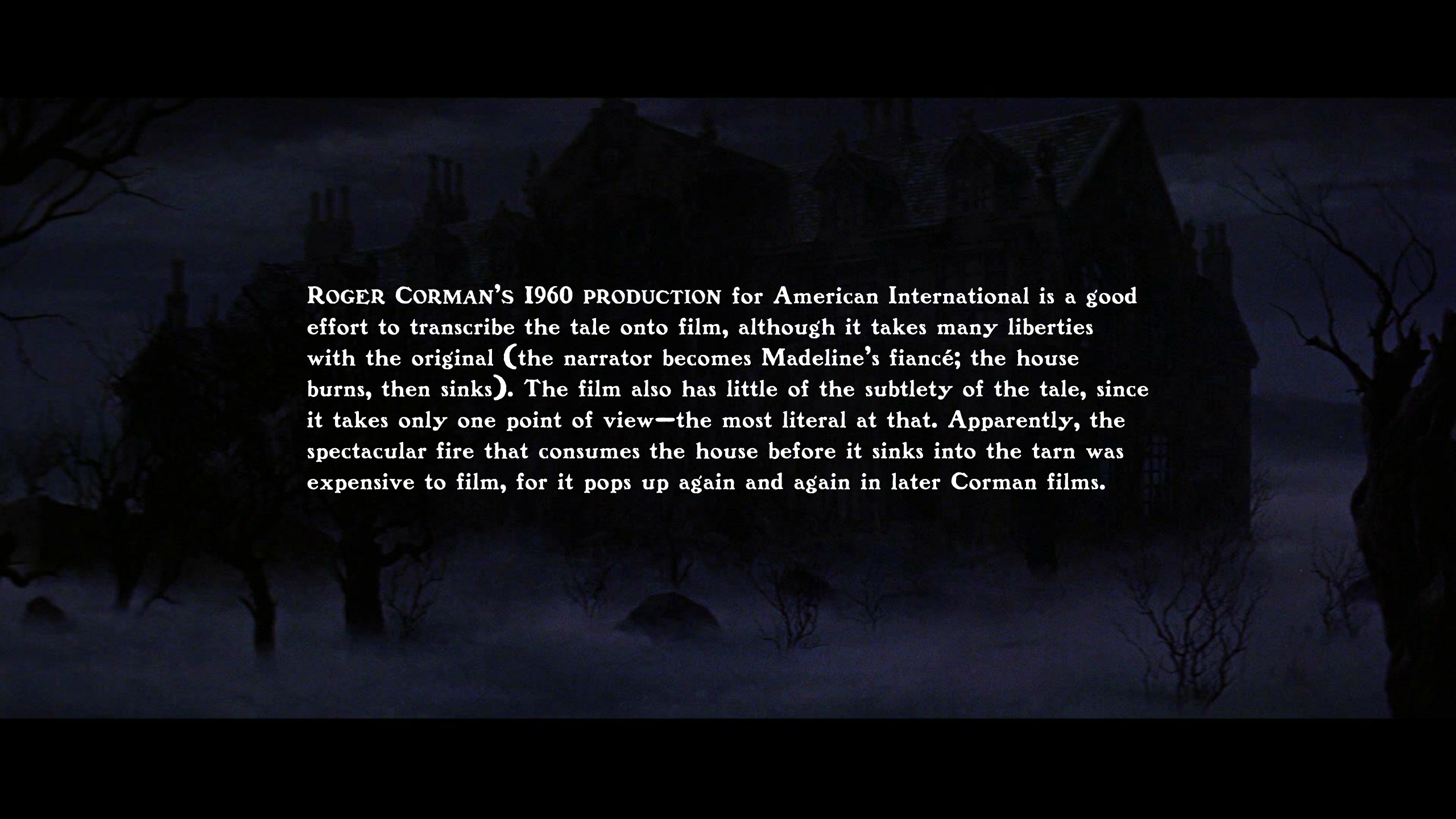
And travellers now within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

First published in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, September 1839, "The Fall of the House of Usher" is possibly Poe's finest short story, as well as his most popular. Like "Ligeia," "Usher" is complex and scholars have debated over its exact meaning. The problem with coming to a consensus once again lies in Poe's multiple layers of meaning. As with "Ligeia," he wrote for a mass audience, one steeped in Gothic tales that were the mainstay of most magazines of the day. The trappings, then, are pure Gothic, but the content seems to hint at

far more. Other writers have borrowed consciously from this tale, and at least one has done so without diminishing either his own reputation or that of Poe: Ray Bradbury. In Bradbury's delightful "Usher II," from *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), we meet Mr. William Standahl, an earthly expatriate who has had a replica of Usher's house built for him on Mars. With borrowings from other tales by Poe, Bradbury brings the tale to a proper and fitting conclusion, as Standahl battles—and defeats—the enemies of the imagination.





ROGER CORMAN'S 1960 PRODUCTION for American International is a good effort to transcribe the tale onto film, although it takes many liberties with the original (the narrator becomes Madeline's fiancé; the house burns, then sinks). The film also has little of the subtlety of the tale, since it takes only one point of view—the most literal at that. Apparently, the spectacular fire that consumes the house before it sinks into the tarn was expensive to film, for it pops up again and again in later Corman films.

EDGAR ALLAN POE
Reading Comprehension 3

The Haunted Palace and The Fall of the House of Usher



THE TELL-TALE HEART



First published in the *Boston Pioneer*, January 1843, this is one of Poe's best tales, a dramatic monologue that tells of the events leading up to and following the murder of an old man both as the narrator sees them and as they really occurred. Since we view everything through the narrator's eyes, it is testimony to Poe's narrative skill that we understand completely what the narrator does not. In this tale, as in "Metzengerstein," "Ligeia," and "The Black Cat," Poe drew upon the age-old superstition of the evil eye. The person with such an eye is thought to have the power of casting spells on another, inflicting bad luck or pain of some sort. The evil eye may be unwittingly acquired, or it may be the weapon of a person possessed by the Devil. The eye in general has traditionally represented understanding and light, so, that one could interpret the narrator's irrational hatred as his fear of knowing himself for what he is, or that, because the old man knows he is insane, the narrator must rid himself of this threat to his existence.

FILMED VERSIONS OF THE STORY INCLUDE A 1928 European version directed by Charles Klein. Surprisingly, it is fairly true to the original. Brian Desmond Hurst directed a 1934 British production, also known as *A Bucket of Blood*. The best adaptation thus far is definitely a 1953 United Productions of America (UPA) animated version directed by Ted Parmelee and narrated by James Mason—a visually stunning and truly frightening film. Seen through the eyes of the nameless narrator, the surrealistic images in the film help convey his descent into madness. It was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film but lost to *Toot, Whistle, Plunk and Boom* from Walt Disney Productions. In 1994, animation historian Jerry Beck surveyed 1000 people working in the animation industry and published the results in *The 50 Greatest Cartoons: As Selected by 1,000 Animation Professionals*, in which *The Tell-Tale Heart* ranked number 24.

HOP-FROG

First published in *The Flag of Our Union*, March 1843, “Hop-Frog” is one of Poe’s most unusual tales of horror. It differs from most of the others in its third-person narration, its intricate plot, and its unrelieved black humor. Some scholars have criticized it for a lack of subtlety, but there is no doubt that the climax is still every bit as effective as Poe meant it to be.

The king is modelled in part after George IV, who was a practical joker and, in Poe’s mind, “the filthy compound of all that is bestial.” Poe satirizes the king again in “Four Beasts in One.”

Film versions include a 1910 French film directed by Henri Desfontaines, and a good portion of *The Masque of the Red Death* (1964), directed by Roger Corman. The latter is not a successful rendering of either story, although it boasts some good, moody photography and the presence of Vincent Price and Hazel Court.



HEADS-UP, CREEPY CONNOISSEURS. HAVE I GOT AN ON-LINE TREAT FOR YOU TO INDULGE YOUR APPETITES FOR CARNAGE....

JULIE TAYMOR DIRECTED AN ADAPTATION OF EDGAR ALLAN POE'S 'HOP-FROG' ENTITLED FOOL'S FIRE.

FIRST BROADCAST ON PBS IN 1992, FOOL'S FIRE CONSUMED NEARLY TWO YEARS OF PLANNING AND PRODUCTION.

THE ONLY PLACE YOU'LL FIND THIS RARE GEM IS ON MY PAL MR. QUERINO'S WEBSITE. SO, AFTER READING THE TALE, WATCH TAYMOR'S ADAPTATION—IF YOU DARE!



EDGAR ALLAN POE

Reading Comprehension 4

The Tell-Tale Heart and Hop-Frog

“Edgar Allan Poe, who, in his carelessly prodigal style, threw out the seeds from which so many of our present forms of literature have sprung, was the father of the detective tale, and covered to its limits so completely that I fail to see how his followers can find any fresh ground which they can confidently call their own.”

- **ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, 1902**



Watching the DETECTIVES



When contemporary readers and audiences think about the first detective stories, images of Arthur Conan Doyle's famous sleuth, Sherlock Holmes, solving some seemingly insoluble crime most likely come to mind. In fact, it was Edgar Allan Poe who created the genre with his character C. Auguste Dupin. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" was first published in 1841, almost 50 years prior to "A Study in Scarlet" in 1887. Poe's contribution to the modern detective story stems from three basic innovations. THE FIRST is the analytical detective himself, a man who is an intellectual, a true genius (complete, as all geniuses should be, with eccentricities) whose



eccentricities) whose deductive powers allow him to seize upon almost invisible clues and thread them together into a solution. **POE'S SECOND INNOVATION** is the narrator who is as mystified as the reader by the intricacies of the plot and the actions of the detective. Often accompanying the narrator in his bewilderment is an inept police chief. **THE THIRD INNOVATION** is Poe's establishment of the focus of the detective story. It is not in the mystery itself that the author seeks to interest the reader, but rather in the successive steps whereby his analytical observer is enabled to solve a problem that might well be dismissed as beyond human elucidation.



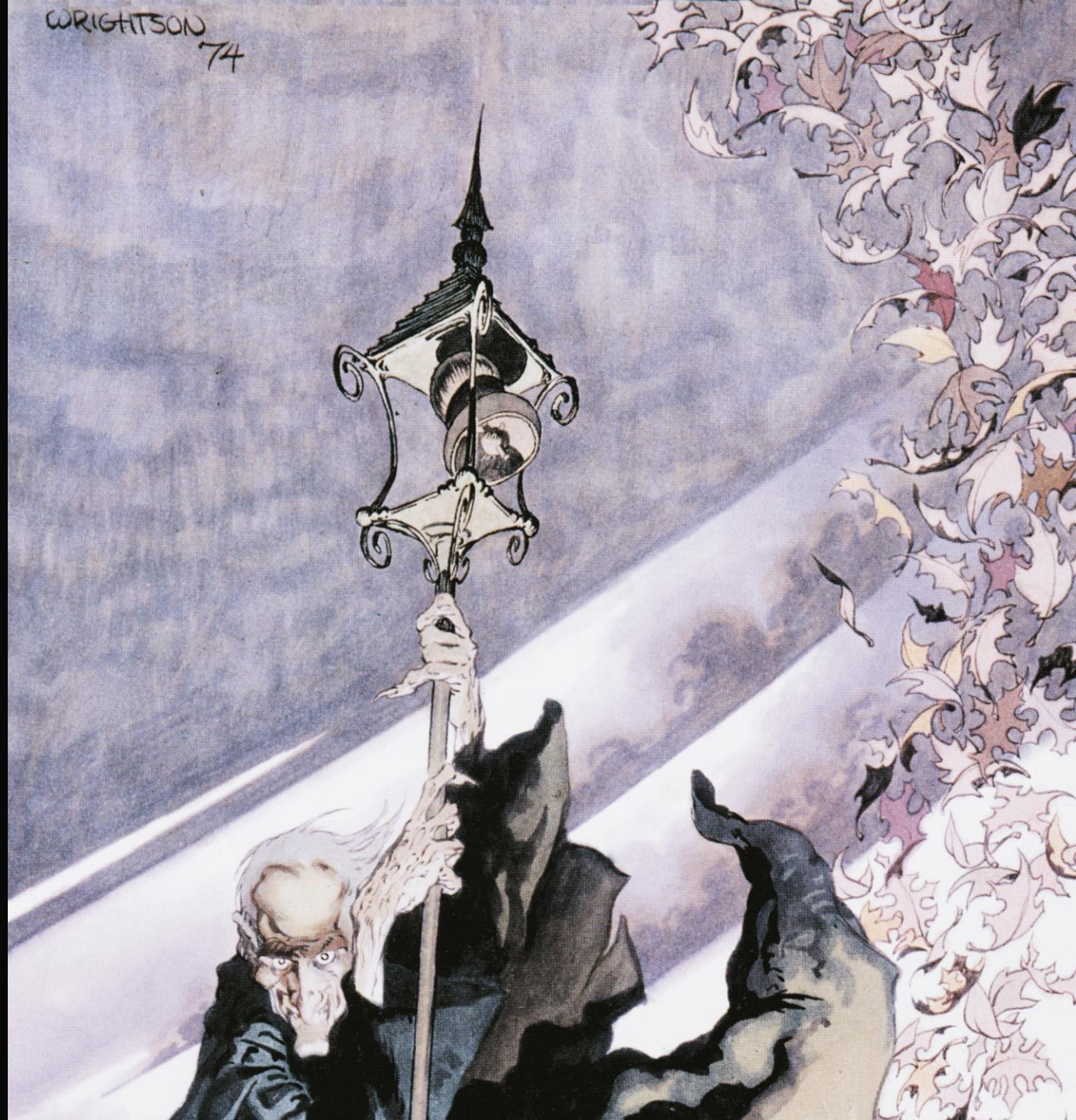
EDGAR ALLAN POE

Reading Comprehension 5

The Murders in the Rue Morgue and The Purloined Letter



WRIGHTSON
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