

**The Raven by** [**Edgar Allan Poe**](http://www.heise.de/ix/raven/Literature/Authors/poe/life.html)

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| horizontal space | 1 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 some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  5 ‘'Tis some visitor,' I muttered, `tapping at my chamber door -  Only this, and nothing more.'  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  10 From my books surcease of sorrow - sorrow for the lost Lenore -  For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels named Lenore -  Nameless here for evermore.  And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain  Thrilled me - filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before; 15 So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating  ‘'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door -  Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door; -  This it is, and nothing more,'  Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer, 20 `Sir,' said I, `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' - here I opened wide the door; -  Darkness there, and nothing more.  25 Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,  Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;  But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness gave no token,  And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, `Lenore!'  This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, `Lenore!'  30 Merely this and nothing more.  Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,  Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.  `Surely,' said I, `surely that is something at my window lattice;  Let me see then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore - 35 Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore; -  'Tis the wind and nothing more!'  Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,  In there stepped a stately raven of the saintly days of yore.  Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;  40 But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door -  Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door -  Perched, and sat, and nothing more.  Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,  By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore, 45 `Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou,' I said, `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!'  Quoth the raven, `Nevermore.'  Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly, 50 Though its answer little meaning - little relevancy bore;  For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being  Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door -  Bird or beast above the sculptured bust above his chamber door,  With such name as `Nevermore.'  55 But the raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only,  That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.  Nothing further then he uttered - not a feather then he fluttered -  Till I scarcely more than muttered `Other friends have flown before -  On the morrow he will leave me, as my hopes have flown before.' 60 Then the bird said, `Nevermore.'  Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,  `Doubtless,' said I, `what it utters is its only stock and store,  Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful disaster  Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore - 65 Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy burden bore  Of "Never-nevermore."'  But the raven still beguiling all my sad soul 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  70 Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore -  What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore  Meant in croaking `Nevermore.'  This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing  To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core; 75 This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining  On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,  But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,  *She* shall press, ah, nevermore!  Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer 80 Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.  `Wretch,' I cried, `thy God hath lent thee - by these angels he has sent thee  Respite - respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!  Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!'  Quoth the raven, `Nevermore.'  85 `Prophet!' said I, `thing of evil! - prophet still, if bird or devil! -  Whether tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,  Desolate yet all undaunted, on 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!'  90 Quoth the raven, `Nevermore.'  `Prophet!' said I, `thing of evil! - 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 a sainted maiden whom the angels named Lenore - 95 Clasp a rare and radiant maiden, whom the angels named Lenore?'  Quoth the raven, `Nevermore.'  `Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!' I shrieked upstarting -  `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! 100 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!'  Quoth the raven, `Nevermore.'  And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting  On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door; 105 And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,  And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;  And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor  Shall be lifted - nevermore! | horizontal space |
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