



Shadow

Poe, Edgar Allan

Published: 1835

Categorie(s): Fiction, Horror, Short Stories

Source: <http://en.wikisource.org>

About Poe:

Edgar Allan Poe was an American poet, short story writer, playwright, editor, critic, essayist and one of the leaders of the American Romantic Movement. Best known for his tales of the macabre and mystery, Poe was one of the early American practitioners of the short story and a progenitor of detective fiction and crime fiction. He is also credited with contributing to the emergent science fiction genre. Poe died at the age of 40. The cause of his death is undetermined and has been attributed to alcohol, drugs, cholera, rabies, suicide (although likely to be mistaken with his suicide attempt in the previous year), tuberculosis, heart disease, brain congestion and other agents. Source: Wikipedia

Also available on Feedbooks for Poe:

- *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843)
- *The Raven* (1845)
- *The Fall of the House of Usher* (1839)
- *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841)
- *The Pit and the Pendulum* (1842)
- *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840)
- *The Cask of Amontillado* (1846)
- *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842)
- *The Black Cat* (1842)
- *The Purloined Letter* (1844)

Note: This book is brought to you by Feedbooks

<http://www.feedbooks.com>

Strictly for personal use, do not use this file for commercial purposes.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the Shadow:
Psalm of David.

YE who read are still among the living; but I who write shall have long since gone my way into the region of shadows. For indeed strange things shall happen, and secret things be known, and many centuries shall pass away, ere these memorials be seen of men. And, when seen, there will be some to disbelieve, and some to doubt, and yet a few who will find much to ponder upon in the characters here graven with a stylus of iron.

The year had been a year of terror, and of feelings more intense than terror for which there is no name upon the earth. For many prodigies and signs had taken place, and far and wide, over sea and land, the black wings of the Pestilence were spread abroad. To those, nevertheless, cunning in the stars, it was not unknown that the heavens wore an aspect of ill; and to me, the Greek Oinos, among others, it was evident that now had arrived the alternation of that seven hundred and ninety-fourth year when, at the entrance of Aries, the planet Jupiter is conjoined with the red ring of the terrible Saturnus. The peculiar spirit of the skies, if I mistake not greatly, made itself manifest, not only in the physical orb of the earth, but in the souls, imaginations, and meditations of mankind.

Over some flasks of the red Chian wine, within the walls of a noble hall, in a dim city called Ptolemais, we sat, at night, a company of seven. And to our chamber there was no entrance save by a lofty door of brass: and the door was fashioned by the artisan Corinnos, and, being of rare workmanship, was fastened from within. Black draperies, likewise, in the gloomy room, shut out from our view the moon, the lurid stars, and the peopleless streets- but the boding and the memory of Evil they would not be so excluded. There were things around us and about of which I can render no distinct account- things material and spiritual- heaviness in the atmosphere- a sense of suffocation- anxiety- and, above all, that terrible state of existence which the nervous experience when the senses are keenly living and awake, and meanwhile the powers of thought lie dormant. A dead weight hung upon us. It hung upon our limbs- upon the household furniture- upon the goblets from which we drank; and all things were depressed, and borne down thereby- all things save only the flames of the seven lamps which illumined our revel. Uprearing themselves in tall slender lines of light, they thus remained burning all pallid and motionless; and in the mirror which their lustre formed upon the round table of ebony at which we sat, each of us there assembled beheld the pallor of his own countenance, and the unquiet

glare in the downcast eyes of his companions. Yet we laughed and were merry in our proper way- which was hysterical; and sang the songs of Anacreon- which are madness; and drank deeply- although the purple wine reminded us of blood. For there was yet another tenant of our chamber in the person of young Zoilus. Dead, and at full length he lay, enshrouded; the genius and the demon of the scene. Alas! he bore no portion in our mirth, save that his countenance, distorted with the plague, and his eyes, in which Death had but half extinguished the fire of the pestilence, seemed to take such interest in our merriment as the dead may haply take in the merriment of those who are to die. But although I, Oinos, felt that the eyes of the departed were upon me, still I forced myself not to perceive the bitterness of their expression, and gazing down steadily into the depths of the ebony mirror, sang with a loud and sonorous voice the songs of the son of Teios. But gradually my songs they ceased, and their echoes, rolling afar off among the sable draperies of the chamber, became weak, and undistinguishable, and so faded away. And lo! from among those sable draperies where the sounds of the song departed, there came forth a dark and undefined shadow- a shadow such as the moon, when low in heaven, might fashion from the figure of a man: but it was the shadow neither of man nor of God, nor of any familiar thing. And quivering awhile among the draperies of the room, it at length rested in full view upon the surface of the door of brass. But the shadow was vague, and formless, and indefinite, and was the shadow neither of man nor of God- neither God of Greece, nor God of Chaldaea, nor any Egyptian God. And the shadow rested upon the brazen doorway, and under the arch of the entablature of the door, and moved not, nor spoke any word, but there became stationary and remained. And the door whereupon the shadow rested was, if I remember aright, over against the feet of the young Zoilus enshrouded. But we, the seven there assembled, having seen the shadow as it came out from among the draperies, dared not steadily behold it, but cast down our eyes, and gazed continually into the depths of the mirror of ebony. And at length I, Oinos, speaking some low words, demanded of the shadow its dwelling and its appellation. And the shadow answered, "I am SHADOW, and my dwelling is near to the Catacombs of Ptolemais, and hard by those dim plains of Helusion which border upon the foul Charonian canal." And then did we, the seven, start from our seats in horror, and stand trembling, and shuddering, and aghast, for the tones in the voice of the shadow were not the tones of any one being, but of a multitude of beings, and, varying in their cadences from syllable to syllable fell dusky upon

our ears in the well-remembered and familiar accents of many thousand departed friends.

Loved this book ?
Similar users also downloaded

Edgar Allan Poe

A Tale of the Ragged Mountains

Edgar Allan Poe

Never Bet the Devil Your Head

Edgar Allan Poe

The Devil in the Belfry

Edgar Allan Poe

The Angel of the Odd

Edgar Allan Poe

The Thousand-and-Second Tale of Scheherazade

Edgar Allan Poe

A Predicament

Edgar Allan Poe

Mesmeric Revelation

Edgar Allan Poe

The Gold-Bug

Edgar Allan Poe

The Black Cat

"The Black Cat" is a short story by Edgar Allan Poe. It was first published in the August 19, 1843, edition of The Saturday Evening Post. It is a study of the psychology of guilt, often paired in analysis with Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart". In both, a murderer carefully conceals his crime and believes himself unassailable, but eventually breaks down and reveals himself, impelled by a nagging reminder of his guilt.

Edgar Allan Poe

The Assniation



www.feedbooks.com
Food for the mind