

Nevermore

An article on "THE RAVEN" by Edgar Allan Poe

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In the ethereal tapestry of literary legends, Edgar Allan Poe stands as a chiaroscure artisan, weaving strands of darkness and light into his masterpieces. A maestro of the macabre, commonly illustrated with the ill omen black cat upon his lap and the grim, ghastly, ebony raven upon his shoulder. With ink as his medium and the human condition as his canvas, he crafted symphonies of terror and beauty that resonates in the deepest recesses of the human soul.

"The Raven" his poem, the same raven in his illustration is one of his famous masterpiece, in which, each verse is a brushstroke of despair and melancholy upon the canvas, his canvas. Through the somber rhythm of its words, Poe conjures a world cloaked in sorrow, where a nameless lone figure sitting alone in his chamber reading old books as we discover that his chamber is filled with purple silk curtains and velvet lining chairs and holds a library of old, forgotten books, it is just the house to be expected in a gothic setting building perfect atmosphere for a tale to be brewed. As the poem unfolds itself we realise the man is trying to bury his sorrow caused due to loss of love for a woman named Lenore. We as readers do not get to know who Lenore is or what happened to her. All we are left with is the man for whom love has turned into a curse, who is desperate to relief the pain of his lost Lenore. We find him hallucinating of her perfume filling the room as every other aspect of the house fills his very being with terror. Then there is a tapping on the door, this represents a spectrum of possibilities- first and foremost it is the unknown, Secondly it is the introduction of the stranger, the very concept of 'the stranger' may not be particularly bounded to a person but rather is a category of experiences. It is the beginning of the anomaly and uncertainty which shakes up the existing status quo, it fills us with both hope and dread, for the Stranger may inspire or shower us with gifts or kill us. Either way the tapping is the disruption of the serene state within the man's chamber. As he find the courage to open the door he finds himself staring into nothing but darkness as the word Lenore slips his tongue just to echo back exhibiting his desire to meet his lost Lenore. Turning back to his chamber with his soul burning, as he has created his personal hell he observes the sound of tapping louder than before coming from the window as he tries to comfort himself saying it to be the wind and steps forward to check. As he opens the window, enters the room the

ebony raven , who then flies and sits over the bust of Pallas above the man's chamber door. On seeing the raven the man starts to speak with it, drawing attention towards the man's state of mind, lonely and on the edge of sanity. One inquiring the raven for it's name "quoth the Raven Nevermore." Amused and astonished by the speaking Raven the man starts fantasizing about the raven origin maybe he is from one unlucky master who has been a victim of the cruelty of fates as all his songs ended in this one word 'Nevermore'. So the man thought.

The bird Raven in spirituality symbolizes alot, In Norse Mythology, The All Father Odin has two raven namely -Hugin and Munin , these names roughly translate to thought and memory. These birds were gifted the gift of speech by Odin, Hugin and Munin would fly though out the world bringing secret wisdom to the All Father of Aesir. Similarly here, the man expects the raven to be in possession of some secret knowledge. The Raven has perched itself above the bust of Pallas, the other name for the Greek goddess Athena (in Roman Pantheon: Minerva) who is commonly known as the goddess of wisdom , logic and reasoning. The raven places itself above the bust of Pallas symbolizes it to be greater than mortal wisdom, logic and reasoning. Another Mythology insight is when he mentions "Plutonian Shore" The Roman god Pluto (in Greek pantheon: Hades) the god of the dead and the ruler of the underworld, ravens are commonly depicted over human skeletons makes them a message of the afterlife Similar depiction of raven could be found in Irish Mythology, The Morrigan, also known as the phantom queen, is mainly associated with fate, who often takes the form of a raven. Similarly in the Hindu Mythology, Lord Shani, the God of karma, is often depicted with a raven, delivers justice depending upon one's thoughts , speech and deeds. In Global mythos, Raven is depicted to be a bird related to fate and the unseen. The perfect being to haunt one's nightmares as they could be seen as the grim messenger of fates.

These perfectly sets the tone of the poem where the man is alone in his room or depending how one may look at it, alone in his mind with nothing to occupy him but his sorrowful thoughts and memories. As the poem now progresses we find the man drifting slowly away from his rational thought, he tries to reason with the raven's existence and how it could speak as his reason ultimately fails him while the bust of Pallas, goddess of wisdom constantly looks down on him from the very beginning. As he continues to question the raven he loses his sanity with every stoic respond of "Nevermore" and as he becomes desperate he wants a different answer which is never to come, the raven with his final 'Nevermore' crushes his hopes. To this spectral echo of 'Nevermore' he succumbs to despair as grief is turned into madness. His desired to meet his rare and radiant Lenore after his death was meet with the raven's Nevermore- as death is an absolute end,

his hope is lost. This triggers in him reaction of outrage and anger reflecting the universal human feeling of wrath and grief at being denied what is most desired. Many scholars have drawn parallel between the man and Poe who also lost his wife at a young age.

Through its lyrical cadence and evocative "The Raven " becomes a meditation of human condition, a testament to the enduring power of loss and longing followed by a overwhelming sense of emptiness. In our own life the raven of thoughts and memories becomes our eternal companion and escape isn't possible as from the shadow of the raven that sits atop wisdom our souls "shall be lifted— Nevermore!