

The Raven
By
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Based on:
Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Raven'

FADE IN:

INT. THEODORE'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

THEODORE, 40's, wearing a silk smoking jacket over stripped pajamas, sits hunched over an oak desk littered with dusty books tattered by time. Surrounded by countless bookshelves he reads through an open book in front of him as his eyes flutter and his head dips downward.

His eyes snap open as he raises his head and peers out the window across from the desk of his 90th floor library. A faint glow from the city below outlines the horizon of the nearly endless midnight sky.

He rubs his unshaven face with his hand as he glances around the daunting forest of bookshelves dimly lit from the single lamp on his desk. His attention returns to the book on the desk in front of him as he turns the page.

A GENTLE TAPPING quietly echoes through the room. Theodore continues to read through his book.

As the GENTLE RAPPING cuts through the silence, Theodore glances at his door momentarily before he flips the page and continues to read.

The RAPPING from the door fills the room as Theodore stands from his desk.

THEODORE
(muttering)
'Tis some visitor tapping at my
chamber door?

He wearily shuffles across the room toward the door.

THEODORE
Only this, and nothing more.

As he nears the door the walls fade away and the room floods with light.

EXT. LENORE'S RUINED HOME - DUSK

Theodore stands in the smoldering remains of the farm house. Wearing a thick fur coat he looks around the wall-less home exposed to the baron, wind torn fields covered in snow.

The smoldering remains CRACKLE as red embers snap from their resting place and land on charred floor. Their faint red

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glow brightens drastically before they fade into a ghostly wisp of smoke.

Theodore covers his eyes with his hands as he drops to his knees.

INT. THEODORE'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Theodore peaks through his fingers and glances around the dimly lit room. He quietly crawls back to his desk where he picks up his silver pocket watch which is resting on an open book. The title of the article reads, 'erasum doleo amor'.

He opens the watch.

On the right, the hands on the clock read 12:15, on the left a picture of the beautiful LENORE, early 30's, poses with a smile in a beautiful white dress.

He snaps the watch shut and holds it tightly in his hands, pressing it against his chest.

A subtle GENTLE RATTLE catches his attention as he peers around his desk toward the window.

The purple silk curtains dance in the draft. As they flutter, the base of the curtains lick forward in a come-hither motion before being whipped back, smothered within itself.

He glances down at his tightly clenched fist pressed against his chest as he slowly rises to his feet.

THEODORE

'Tis some visitor entreating
entrance at my chamber door.

He looks toward the door.

THEODORE

Some late visitor entreating
entrance at my chamber door.

He steps toward the door.

THEODORE

This it is, and nothing more.

He stops in his tracks and glances around the empty room. He drops his hands from his chest and places the watch back onto the desk before walking toward the door with confidence. The watch snaps open as it's placed on the desk.

(CONTINUED)

THEODORE

Sir... or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore, but that 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.

He reaches for the door, unlocking it he opens the door and walks through.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THEODORE'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

The moon lit hall remains empty as he steps into it. He glances down the long hall.

His face becomes flush as the look of confidence fades quickly.

He turns his head slowly toward the window at the end of the hall.

EXT. LENORE'S HOME - EVENING

Lenore's home sits alone in the snow covered field, consumed in an inferno of dancing, CRACKLING flames.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THEODORE'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Theodore steps back and quickly looks down the opposite direction.

EXT. LENORE'S HOME - EVENING

Theodore is standing outside the engulfed home as the house CRASHES and SPLITS as it collapses.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THEODORE'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

A sweat covered Theodore, BREATHING HEAVILY, steps back into the doorway.

THEODORE

(whisper)

Lenore...

He stands motionless in the hall.

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THEODORE
 (echo)
 Lenore...

Theodore quickly steps back into his room and slams the door.

INT. THEODORE'S CHAMBER
 [PLEASEINSERT\PRERENDERUNICODE{Å}INTOPREAMBLE] NIGHT

He rests his back against the door as he controls his breathing and wipes the sweat from his brow. When a LOUD TAPPING ON GLASS booms through the room.

THEODORE
 (shocked)
 Surely...

Theodore straightens out and steps away from the door.

THEODORE
 Surely, that is something at my
 window lattice...

Theodore storms across the room toward the window.

THEODORE
 Let me seen then! What thereat is
 and this mystery explore!

He pulls the curtain out of the way.

THEODORE
 Let my heart be still a moment and
 this mystery explore!

He throws the window open.

THEODORE
 'Tis the wind and nothing more!

As the window crashes open, NEVERMORE, 30's, leaps through the window gracefully, seductively, dancing across the room towards the door. Her movements and eyes flirt with him with every motion.

She is dressed in leather black pants, a white shirt with a black bow tie and a shiny black jacket with long coat tails. Her shiny long black hair is tied into two long braids, with a black stove pipe hat atop her head. She holds a solid black cane with silver ends.

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She makes her way up the stairs to the balcony above the door and perches herself on the bust of Pallas and glares down at Theodore.

Theodore looks her over, head to toe, a smug smile slowly emerges on his face.

THEODORE

Though thy crest be shorn and
shaven, thou art sure no craven.

He walks toward the door.

THEODORE

Ghastly grim and ancient raven
wandering from the nightly shore,
tell me what thy lordly name is on
the Night's Plutonian shore!

He stops near the base of the door and glares up at her. She looks down coldly at him.

NEVERMORE

Nevermore.

His face lights up with glee as he begins to pace slowly. Nevermore follows him with her cold gaze. He stops to look her over once again.

THEODORE

Nevermore?

She raises her cane and casts a sharp shadow across her face.

Catching the dark gaze, the smile on his face fades.

THEODORE

Other friends have flown before-

NEVERMORE

Nevermore.

Theodore slowly stumbles backwards.

THEODORE

Doubtless 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, till the dirges of his hope
and melancholy burden bore of...

The smile returns to his face.

THEODORE
'Never-nevermore'.

He turns to grab a nearby chair.

He DRAGS it in front of the door and sits in it, templeing his hands on his lap in a brooding fashion.

She lowers her cane and rests it on the floor as she leans toward Theodore.

They exchange emotionless glares.

He rubs his chest before loosening the collar of his shirt. Panic strikes his face as he sniffs the air.

Nevermore smiles an evil grin.

He stumbles from the chair.

THEODORE
Wretch!

Knocking over the chair as he backs away from the door.

THEODORE
Thy God hath lent thee by these
angels he has sent thee respite...
respite and nepenthe from thy
memories of Lenore!

He drops to his knees and clasps his hands together.

THEODORE
(begging)
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe,
and forget this lost Lenore!

NEVERMORE
Nevermore.

He leaps to his feet and points at her.

THEODORE
Prophet!

He stammers toward the door.

THEODORE
Thing of evil! Prophet still, if
bird or devil!

He swings his hand away and shakes his fist at her.

THEODORE

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?

Nevermore sits staring directly into his eyes. He lowers his arms.

THEODORE

Tell me... tell me, I implore!

She leans backwards into the shadows.

NEVERMORE

Nevermore.

He points angrily at her.

THEODORE

Prophet! Thing of evil! Prophet
still if bird or devil!

He turns and walks away from the door.

THEODORE

By the Heaven that bends above us,
by that God we both adore...

He turns to face her.

THEODORE

Tell this soul with sorrow laden
if, within the distant Aidenn, it
shall clasp a sainted maiden whom
the angels named Lenore, clasp a
rare and radiant maiden, whom the
angels named Lenore?

She drops down the bust of Pallas and leaning into the light she presses her cheek against the cheek of Pallas.

NEVERMORE

Nevermore.

He stomps toward the door.

(CONTINUED)

THEODORE

Be that word sign of parting bird
or fiend!

Maintaining eye contact he violently points to the window.

THEODORE

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 they beak from
out my heart and take thy form from
off my door!

She slowly begins to climb the statue until she is standing
atop his head.

NEVERMORE

Nevermore.

She stands in the shadow faintly lit by the distant lamp,
motionless, looming over the room, her faint red eyes glare
down as Theodore crumbles to the floor. He tries to crawl
away from her when the light behind Nevermore ignites
silhouetting her as she casts a large shadow onto the floor
beneath, engulfing Theodore where he lies. He stares
petrified by the presence of his suppressor.

THEODORE

(whisper)

Nevermore!

The shadow consumes him, the picture in the watch lays
motionless in the light from the desk lamp.

FADE OUT: