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The Raven

By Richard Matheson

Someone help us!

Giddap!

- It's the fourth door, upstairs.

- Yes, sir.

Come on.

No!

Not my daughter! Mercy!

Give us room.

Stay there. Come on.

Not her!

- Break it down.

- Yes, sir.

Baltimore Police!

Give me some light.

Oh, no.

- It's empty.

- That's impossible.

We heard a door lock.

Damn it, the window!

It's nailed shut.

Dear God.

Phylum Chordata...

Subphylum Vertebrata.

With kittens...

The ways of God in nature,
as in providence, are not our ways.

Lovely to see you all again.

Hello, Reagan. Did you miss me?

I'm naturally delighted
to be back in Baltimore,
but in all honesty

I'm feeling a bit under the weather.

However, it has been said that
what brandy cannot cure has no cure.

So what say you to a snifter
for an old, ailing friend?

I'm sorry. What?

Nothing.

I can assume, then,
that you're out of brandy?

- We've got many bottles back there.

- So it's a question of finances.

I don't mean to shock you, Poe,
but we haven't seen you in a while.

Last time you were here,
well, things got rather ugly.
Been back in town only a few days
to find quite shockingly,
I seem to have exhausted
any sort of credit I once had.
Fine, fine. If it's money you want...
Try not to shit yourself.
That's real.
Spot these sailors a round, too,
on me.
Christ, man, now what?
That'll just about
cover the last tab.
Are you really gonna be this cruel?
The "Patriot" is publishing a review
tomorrow. Ill be ush by dawn.
If the paper publishes
anything you write,
you come back tomorrow,
I'll buy you the shot.
Tomorrow?
Tomorrow I might be dead.
Or you might be.
- I'll risk it.
- How's this?
I get a drink for any man here
who recognizes me
or one of my poems.
Better get to the door
before I split your head open.
My head is already split open,
you overgrown mouth-breather.
So show me some respect
or I'll give you a personal tour.
I'm an internationally lauded poet.
That's why you've got no money.
- I am Poe.
- That's what I said.
Not poor, mouth-breather! Poe!
Poe! Edgar Allan Poe!
Does it ring a bell?!
No.
A drink to any man in this room

who can finish this line!

"Quoth the Raven..."

- Piss off!

- By IP Daley!

"Quoth the Raven"!

- "Nevermore!"

- Hah! Hah!

It is a very favourite poem.

Hive la France!

Slobs!

Philistines!

You wouldn't recognise
an authentic American literary voice
if it hissed in one ear
and slithered out the other.

We know it hurts to pick
your teeth up with broke fingers.
Is that your imagination's limit,
you mental oyster?

I can conjure a multitude
of more exquisite torments.

Your eyeballs dissolving
in a teaspoon of lye!

Your tongue torn from your throat
with a blacksmith's tongs!

An enema of boiling tar!

A testicle impaled on a kebab skewer!

Get out, you shit!

Slowly. Here.

Put her down.

She's just a girl.

What kind of monster would do this?

Katherine LaForte, 36.

Her daughter Anna, 12.

She was strangled.

She's so young.

He was a large man.

By the extent of his grip, over eight
inches from thumb to forefinger.

You agree someone

locked the door from the inside?

Absolutely. We heard the door lock
as we arrived.

And by the time you broke down

the door, the murderer was gone.
Not a trace.
The window was closed
when you came into the room?
Not just closed, nailed shut.
Tell me, how does such a large man
escape so quickly
from a room in which the door
has been locked from the inside...
and the window nailed shut?
I'm not sure, but the mayor
wants results this time, Inspector.
Question the neighbours.
I want a list of all the men
who visited these premises.
Yes, sir.
A lock... triggered by a spring.
But the nail had...
Cut, mid-shaft.
I checked the window ten times
and never found a spring.
I wouldn't have found it either
except...
What is it?
This crime is familiar to me.
Giddap!
Whoa!
Not again, Mr. Poe.
Christ.
Good morning, Percy.
Contrary to precedent, Captain
Hamilton, I've no intention...
..of asking for money.
What do you want, Poe?
I've come back to town
for your daughter.
- Over my dead body.
- Is that an option?
Poe, please.
You know I find you as revolting
as some of your stupid stories.
Some, but not all.
You look lovely today.
Get out, Poe,

before I shoot you where you sit.
And risk splattering blood and brains
over your daughter's fine silk dress?
- Out.
- Is an invitation...
...to the costume ball
out of the question?
- Father, don't.
- Sorry, Charles.
- See you at the track.
- See you, Edgar.
Giddap!
Another abject humiliation.
Please! Mercy!
I have children!
Why are you doing this? Why?!
I'm only a critic!
Aaaaarghhh!
Good morning. "Baltimore Patriot."
Mr. Poe! Your clothes.
Just beating the mudslingers to it.
Fortitude, Ivan, fortitude.
I'm afraid you might need
more than this, Mr. Poe.
- Why?
- It's a crime, a terrible crime.
Out with it, man. What is it?
Did that marsupial of an editor
dare to change my review again?
I told him not to touch it.
I told him, Mr. Poe.
Where's my review? Where is it?
What has he done?
He said there was no more room
in the layout.
No more room? No more room?
Pray tell, what fine twat
did he deem more worthy?
Longfellow!
Longfellow?!
Longfellow!
Where is it?
- Where is what?
- The trash bin.

That is where all this brain-sucking,
soul-warping fish wrap should be put!
That's lovely, Eddy.
A real show of adjectival fireworks
from the great Poe himself.
Not only do you refuse
to print my review of Longfellow,
but you run
his third-rate poem instead!
- People like Longfellow.
- Editors like you tell them to.
Have you no soul, Henry?
Does the artistic enrichment
of your readers mean nothing to you?
Artistic enrichment?
You've got some gall, barging
into my office and lecturing me
when all you do
is criticize others' work!
Not true. Not true at all.
You called Emerson
a "sad, festering literary whore".
Because he is precisely that.
Is honesty now a vice, or do you
prefer that jaded hack, Griswold,
fawning over some steaming mound
of hackneyed tripe?
- Doesn't think much of YOUR stuff.
- He's an intellectual nonentity.
He's a buffoon, which is probably why
he's so at home here with you.
Aw, you're out of control.
I'm broke.
Then try writing
another "Tell-Tale Heart".
People love blood. They love death.
If I couldn't churn out a "Tell-Tale
Heart" or a "Pit and the Pendulum,
I'd indenture
my very soul to the devil.
You've got to publish my review.
I'm desperate.
I need stories. Gripping stories.
I've got nothing left.

I've used up all my tricks.
Try laying off the liquor and
tinctures. it's rotting your brain.
I only drink occasionally,
to be social,
to alleviate my shyness.
And the tinctures
are purely therapeutic.
A slight palliative against the chill
of an orphan's despair.

- Write me something I can sell.

- You're a real bastard, Henry.

Why are you doing this?!

Why?!

What have I done?!

Please!

No!

Aargh!

Agh! Argh!

Aaaargh!

AAARGHH!

Consider, Carl, if you will,
the human heart.

This small chamber,
a vacancy,
where gases are wed to uids
and all the secrets and mysteries
of our species are hidden.

ls)

Write another "Tell-Tale Heart".

You think you're so clever,
don't you?

Miss Hamilton.

"The angels,

"not half so happy in heaven,

"Went envying her and me -

"Yes - that was the reason,

"as all men know,

In this kingdom by the sea,

"That the wind

came out of the clouds by night

"Chilling and killing

my Annabel Lee."

Continue.

"But our love...
it was stronger by far than the love
"Of those who were older than we -
"Of many far wiser than we -
"And neither the angels
in heaven above,
"Nor the demons
down under the sea,
"Can ever dissever my soul
from the soul
"Of the beautiful Annabel Lee."

Do you like it?

I think that it is the most romantic
thing I've ever read.

So, I had to hear about your stunt
all afternoon.

I wanted to see if I could get that
vein on the side of his neck
to finally explode.

I think Father has begun to suspect.

Yes, and I consider it my duty

to wrestle you away
from that gun-toting Philistine.

And into the arms of you,
of all people?

- Who better?

- Then why antagonize him?

I can't help it.

I despise people who despise me.

Edgar, we need to talk.

- What is Carl eating?

- A heart.

- A human heart?

- Mm-hm.

- How in heaven did you come by it?

- An admirer works at the morgue.

I was searching for inspiration.

So tell me again exactly...

how much... money you made
from your self-proclaimed
world-famous poem about that bird?

Raven. \$9. But did I mention
that it's world-famous?

Edgar... Edgar.

We can't go on like this.

Emily, what do you want?

I want you to get up off your knees
unless you intend to use
that position for another purpose.

The imagination reels
with possibilities.

But what did you have in mind
specifically?

A proposal.

You mean marriage?

It's not such a horrible thought.

People still do it from time to time.

- Really? When?

- When they're in love, I suppose.

If I were in love with that person,
would I think about her all the time?

Most likely.

And would I spend
every waking moment
desiring to smother the other
with affection?

It has been described as such.

Emily, you are my greatest -
and only - inspiration.

Emily Hamilton,
will you be my wife?

Yes.

I love you.

You ridiculous man.

Now, what do we do about
your dear, dear, gun-toting father'?

I've been thinking about that.

We'll tell him at my birthday ball,
in front of all of Baltimore.

If I were a better man,
I'd forbid it.

- But you're not.

- I know.

I found some possibilities
for you, Inspector.

All are gruesome, if you ask me.

"A careful search soon
brought to light the hidden spring.

"I pressed it,
and, satisfied with the discovery,
"forbore to upraise the sash."

That's it.

Edgar Allan Poe.

Find the Raven, never flitting
still is sitting, still is sitting
On that pallid bust of Pallas
just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming
of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him steaming
throws his shadow on the oor;
My soul from out that shadow
that lies oating on the oor
Shall be lifted...

nevermore.

Who's next?

It's called

"The Buttery and the Bee".

An exquisite title, Mrs. Bradley.

"The buttery to her brother bee
did sing a song of spring.

"Come, listen to my ode of thee,
thou honey-making thing..."

Stop, please.

It's terrible. I suspected it was.

"Thou honey-making thing"?

- I attempted to rhyme the lyric.

- You've succeeded.

The juxtaposition

of the beauty of nature

with the whores

of our recently mechanized society,

reducing brother bee to nothing more

than a "honey-making thing",

a meaningless cog

bound for destruction

within the machine of nature.

It's brilliant, Mrs. Bradley!

It's terrifying, but it's brilliant.

I'm so sorry to interrupt.

- Someone's here to see you.

- Excellent. Who?

Mr. Poe?

Barbarian with a badge.

What's going on?

- Why is hair attracted to a magnet?

- What?

Soot is merely carbon residue
from coal and wood.

Am I under arrest?

I'm Detective Fields.

Please, sit down, Mr. Poe.

Yes, the infamous Detective Fields.

Am I under arrest?

No. Not as yet.

Then I'd rather stand.

It makes it easier to leave.

I am...

I'm a reader of your work.

I admit my admirers have gone
to great lengths to meet me.

I didn't say I was an admirer.

And yet you read them.

The night before last a girl
and her mother were found murdered,
the daughter lodged in a chimney,
the mother's head nearly severed
with a straight razor.

The killer ed through a window
in which a lock was feigned
with a nail sawn in half.

Does any of this
sound familiar to you, Mr. Poe?

But you're talking about my story.

A work of fiction.

I'm afraid I'm not.

According to various witnesses,
you were seen drunk two nights ago
in a tavern near the harbour.

What time did you leave?

I don't remember.

My leaving was... involuntary.

Do you actually think
that I murdered these people?

May I see your hand?

Which one?

Either will do.
Perhaps with the aid of accomplices
such a scenario
might be conceivable,
however improbable.
Yet what cannot be disputed
is the fact that your imagination
has inspired a horrendous crime.
Am I to be charged, then?
Is imagination now a felony?
Come!
Inspector, can I have a word?
This is Henry Maddux,
editor of the "Baltimore Patriot".
He was brought in
to identify the body.
His name is... I mean, was...
Gris... Griswold.
- Ludwig Griswold.
- He worked for you?
- Freelance writer.
- What things did he write?
Some poetry. Mostly criticism.
You know, the easy stuff.
Did he have a relationship
with Edgar Allan Poe'?
Of course. They hated each other.
Had a vicious feud a year ago.
Sold a lot of papers.
- How long have you known Mr. Poe?
- Edgar? Well, the past ten years.
You published his story,
"The Murders in the Rue Morgue".
He wrote that several years back
in Philadelphia.
I reprinted it
a couple of times here.
People love the gory ones.
So they do.
Edgar isn't a suspect,
is he, Inspector?
At this point everyone is a suspect,
Mr. Maddux.
Forgive me.

I know there is a darkness
to Edgar, but...
they're all up in here.
Every woman he's ever loved
has died in his arms.
I believe that God gave him a spark
of genius and quenched it in misery.
But as far as something like this...
The only thing he's ever killed
is a bottle of brandy.
Thank you for your time, sir.
This may come
as a shock to you, Mr. Poe,
but we are in dire need
of your unwholesome expertise.
I really hadn't imagined
the counterweight to be... so large.
We have reason to believe
you knew the victim.

- Really?

- If you would?

I don't believe I know him.

Then perhaps
this will jar your memory.

"Never has
the perfunctoriness of plot
"been so mechanized and twisted
by soulless contrivance..."

- Griswold.

- So you do know him.

Yes.

We traded barbs, as in words -
not actual weapons of any sort -
as writers do to sell
a few newspapers.

"The Pit and the Pendulum",
when was it published?

'42. "Tales of Ratiocination.

Are there other stories
in the collection?

- Many.

- Specifically about murder?

I'm afraid so.

As unfortunate as this is,

you may be uniquely qualified
to cast light on our killer.

There is logic
underlying these deaths.

Do you think this comes
from a logical mind'?

A man who carves
a human being in half
doesn't come from a place of logic.

- Then from where?

- Mental disease. Obsession.
Passion.

I believe the killer is taunting us.
He wants us to know
he's gonna strike again.

What do you make of this?

- It was covering the victim's face.

- "The Masque of the Red Death."

What is it?

The quote from the story mentions
Prospero, a character I created
to symbolize man's arrogance even
when confronted with certain death.

Prospero hosts a costume ball
where Death comes in disguise.

Charles Hamilton is hosting
a ball tomorrow night at the museum.

"And one by one
dropped the revellers

"in the blood-bedewed halls
of their revel,"

If "The Masque of the Red Death"
is his next intended story,
we must use this opportunity
to capture this man at your ball.

Too harsh. I want something older.

"And Darkness and Decay..."

Six cases should be enough.

"And Darkness and Decay
and the Red Death

"held illimitable dominion over all."

So this gentleman dresses up
like a... what? Like a...

The figure was shrouded head to foot

in the habiliments of the grave.

Like a corpse, or a skeleton?

Then, at the stroke of midnight,

he comes in and kills everybody?

Poe is a damn viper.

I ordered him away from Emily.

- New he's trying to

- Sir...

The similarities

are too coincidental.

I'm asking you again.

Allow me to have my men scattered

about your ball, in costume,

so we can hopefully

catch this monster.

I'll hire extra security myself,

but I will not have this turned into

a policeman's ball.

Understood?

I've seen the effects

of this man's determination.

If he has chosen your gathering to...

You will not destroy an evening

Baltimore looks forward to each year.

Then I insist my officers be present.

Fine. Just make sure

they scrape the shit off their boots.

Who was Prospero?

He was the host of the ball.

And the first to die.

She's so wonderfully full of life.

- I've been reading...

- What's he doing here?

- He's with me. We were just leaving.

- Captain.

Just proving how easy it is

to penetrate the breach.

I presume the police are here

to keep me out.

Mr. Fields, if Mr. Poe

is a part of your investigation...

Mr. Poe has a unique perspective

on aspects of this crime.

Why? Is the killer an alcoholic,

an opium addict and atheist?

An atheist?

You misconstrue me, sir.

Poe, you stay away from my daughter.

Father, I've decided to change
my costume for the ball tomorrow.

No.

Mr. Fields, I'm happy to indulge
your request for security,
but if t see him tomorrow night,
you'll have to protect him from me.

Why do we need security?

My writing has become
the inspiration to an actual killer.
Quite gruesome, really.

If I'd known my work had
a morbid effect on people,
I'd have devoted more time
to eroticism.

You're a vile little man.

As I said, we were just leaving.

- Yes.

- Percy, show this man to the door.

Mrs. Bradley, could you join me
in the other room?

What is going on?

Emily.

We should reconsider
our announcement.

- Why? Are you backing out?

- No, never.

If your father sees me there,
he may have me shot.

And a depraved killer
may be on the guest list.

It's a bit much for one night,
don't you think?

I think it sounds thrilling.

Does it? Why?

How else should Edgar Allan Poe
commit himself to eternal love
other than under threat of death?

The Grim Reaper. A ghost.

The Headless Horseman, if you like.

He should be easy to spot.
Elderidge, take some of these men
and patrol the back.

Sir.

You must be selling a lot of
newspapers. Two murders in a week.
Circulation has indeed improved,
despite unfortunate events.

Time for a piss.

- May I have this dance?

- Father.

Not now.

I'm not sure what's troubling you,
but your future happiness
means more to me

than I could possibly describe.

I really hope you feel that way
at the end of the evening.

Whatever this is about,

I need you to be more social.

It is an important gathering
for me and for us.

Father, I know what's expected.

Excuse me! Please.

Please, step aside.

Step aside!

Fields' men aren't causing
any trouble?

No, sir.

What of Poe? Any sign of him?

Not so far.

A glass of wine, sir?

You look just stunning, my dear.

Nevermore.

"..Can ever dissever my soul
from the soul

"Of the..."

I'm sorry, I'm waiting for someone.

"Of the beautiful Annabel... Lee."

You dance passionately, sir.

If I could, I would dance with you
throughout time.

- I love you, Edgar.

- And I you.

You really are a reckless girl...
...to dance with a stranger
with a mask,
with a murderer in our midst.
Speaking of which...
Courage, Edgar.
It's happening! This way.
Oh, Edgar!
Emily!
Agh!
He told me you'd ordered it
for the party.
- Who? Who ordered it?
- I'm supposed to deliver this.
My daughter. He has her.
- Percy! Seal off this building!
- Find her!
Come on!
"I challenge the brilliant
detective mind of Edgar Allan Poe.
"A game of wits
with Emily's life in the balance.
"You will immortalize for the
exquisite pleasure of your readers
this, your very own
'Descent into the Maelstrom',
"which shall appear in serial form
in the 'Baltimore Patriot'.
"Know that I will kill again,
and on that new corpse
"I will leave you clues
that will lead to Emily.
"If I do not read a vivid
accounting of this convergence
"of fact and fiction,
then dear Emily will die.
"Your only hope
is to imagine a way to save her.
"I dare you to try to conceive
of the painstaking care
"I have taken to secure her
"and the elegant means
leading inexorably to her end.
"Are you up to the task, Mr. Poe?

"Are you even capable of imagining
"the means to save
your beloved's life?
"Or shall this tale end
as all your stories do,
"with Madness, Sin and Horror
the soul of the plot?"
Your men are right. I've killed her.
We must assume
Miss Hamilton is still alive.
Why must we assume that? Because
it's more convenient to do so?
Why am I to blame?
Where were all these officers
last night?!
Where were you?!
He told you he was coming!
Mr. Poe, listen to me.
This killer is methodical.
He will keep her alive
to keep you involved.
It's part of his game and that's
the logic that will trap him.
It's the facts of this case
that give us the advantage.
Did you tell your people to
familiarize themselves with my face?
They'll see it every hour
till my daughter is returned to me.
Mr. Hamilton, I'm very sorry.
As well you should be!
She was taken under your watch.
- Sir, if you would please...
- What the hell is HE doing here?
- Bastard!
- Hey!
Arrest him. It's his fault.
There is plenty of fault
to be passed around.
I'm sure you understand
what I mean by that, Mr. Hamilton.
Mr. Poe here is our only connection
to the man who has your daughter.
I suggest you remember that.

Out of the way.
We will reconvene in two hours.
Until then, I want every street
in Baltimore manned. Understood?
Yes, sir.
Lord help my poor soul.
Oh. Oh, Lord.
Wait. No. No...
Wait... Please...
Help! Let me out!
Let me out of here!
No, stop! Stop!
Shut it, Emily,
or I'll shut it for you.
OK.
OK. I'm sorry.
Sorry.
The human body is to be revered.
We must at all times be respectful
and remember that a cadaver
is more than a mere learning tool.
We shall examine the lungs.
This man is an alleged victim
of consumption.
Professor'? What is it?
Dear God.
She could be a prostitute,
the way she's painted up.
Did you open this?
Were your hands clean?
Yes. I don't believe
I left that smudge, Inspector.
She must have fought him
or scratched him.
She didn't fight him.
There are no wounds on her wrists.
It can't be her blood, Inspector.
He came at her from behind.
Strangled.
Another of your stories?
Mr. Poe, I asked
is this another of your stories?
"The Mystery of Marie Roget."
It's a sailing knot.

It's a bowline knot, to be exact.
Just as it was in the story.
All right. Then what of it?
Who was she?
She was a girl...
who worked in the stores in Paris
near the Quais.
She drowned. There was no mention
of blood on her hands.
He added that detail.
You must write it now. Every detail.
The knot, her dress, her hands.
Her eyes. Her end.
Her smile portended nothing.
Her innocence was the first part
of her soul to die.
And while it happened,
he stood still,
watching to fully enjoy
the dreadful metamorphosis
from a life full of hope
to death without purpose.
Mr. Poe.
I've been, erm...
I'm sorry to disturb you but...
I was a little concerned
about your...
- My progress?
- Yes.
I feel as if I've gone from author
to character in one of my tales.
As trapped and bedevilled as any of
the hapless bastards I ever created.
I can appreciate that.
Regardless of what
you think of me, Fields,
I am a master of my art,
and I will not fail her.
I know that.
Look, I... I think I was overly harsh
with you the other day,
and for that I'd like to apologise.
My wife was singing at the piano
when she first coughed up blood.

I prepared myself for the worst,
but Virginia seemed to recover,
and foolishly I succumbed to hope.
But by year's end
the blood came again...
and again.
Great effusions of blood.
Raging fevers, her sheets spattered
with crimson, drenched with sweat.
I often thought I could hear
the sound of darkness
as it stole across the horizon
rushing towards me.
But here I...
I was overwhelmed
by a sorrow so poignant,
when she finally died I felt
in all candour a great release.
But it was supplanted by the return
of that dark and morbid melancholy
that followed me like a black dog...
all my life...
until I met Emily.
Time is running out, Inspector.
Do you really believe
she's still alive?
I'm sure of it.
ls)
ls)
Magnificent.
Poe, you have done it again.
The invention is... breath-taking.
The line of truth and fiction
has never been so...
SO...
I'm not sure about your headline.
Henry, you will not change one word.
Fine. Ivan? Ivan...
Reset page one immediately.
..melancholy that's followed me
like a black dog all my life.
I love you, Edgar.
Fields!
- The blood, Poe, it's fake!

- The blood?

The prostitute. She's no prostitute.

It's stage blood. She's an actress.

- The blood on the hands. "Macbeth."

- Exactly.

Poe's like the hangman, the bastard,
making money off the dead.

Get your paper!

About a serial killer on the loose!

Cantrell is at the theater.

All the exits are secured.

The Imperial, I'm assuming.

My mother's playhouse.

The victim was still in her costume,
which suggests she was abducted
directly from the theater.

We'll find her.

I would gladly give my life for hers,
Mr. Fields.

I know you would.

Out, damned spot. Out, I say!

One, two...

...then, 'its time to do it!

Hell is murky!

Who are you?

Police. I have a warrant
to search these premises.

What for? There's a show on!

- Bring all stagehands now.

- They have to man the ropes.

First Lady Macbeth takes a powder,
and now you bastards...

Ten seconds.

Put out your hands.

Ladies and gentlemen,
the play will resume shortly.

Please take your seats.

You, step forth.

Take off the gloves.

- Is this your entire crew?

- Yes.

- Are you sure?

- I am.

Count them again.

What are you doin'?!
We've got seven minutes
before the act change.

- You, where are you from?

- Liverpool.

Got three days' shore leave
to make extra scratch.

- So if you don't mind, please...

- Read it.

It's "Macbeth". I know the play.

- Someone's missing.

- Who?

- Maurice.

- Where is he?

I don't know, but nobody's allowed
to leave until the show is over.

He's here.

If any of them try to leave,
shoot them.

Yes, sir.

...put on your nightgown...

You there, come out. Show yourself.

Stop!

Show yourself!

I will kill you!

I have a pistol aimed on you.

Come out now. Put your hands
where I can see them or I will fire.

Don't shoot me!

I'm in the play!

You're all right.

You stay here, OK?

- What happened?

- My pistol, I lost it.

- I saw him.

- Damn it.

- Seal the doors! He's here!

- Yes, sir!

The missing stagehand,
what was his name?

Maurice.

Hey! Where do the crew
keep their things?

We have lockers downstairs.

Here. Poe!
Fields, up here.
What is that?
Looks like a piece of fish.
That is a human tongue.
What does it mean?
Wait. Yes. "The Facts
in the Case of M Valdemar."
A man's suspended
between life and death by mesmerism.
A living corpse who can only speak
via the vibrations of his tongue.
It's a bit of burlesque.
But the tongue wasn't severed.
Mr. Poe! Sir,
there's been an accident.
Put your backs into it!
Come on! Keep it going!
We're gonna need more!
The fire's not going
to put itself out! Come on!
Jack, get all those people
back from the building!
Please, step back! Move back!
It's not safe. Get back, sir.
Everybody, get back!
A damnation on earth.
Hell's brimstone his food,
consumed from birth, in solitude.
Let's go, men! Move it, move it!
The windows were shattered first.
I don't think it was an accident.
I'm certain you're correct.
Sir, we also found this.
I'll take it if it's not yours.
He's stuck with us since we got here.
I can tell from the sound
of his voice he's mine.
Thank you, Officer.
Why are you doing this to me?
Please let me out.
I can't.
Yes, you can.
You can.

Please.

I'm so cold.

Why are you doing it?

Please don't let me die in here.

Miss Hamilton...

No! No! No!

Mr. Poe.

I'm afraid I found myself
without lodgings.

Yes, I heard.

I don't mean to impose.

Oh, yes, of course.

Forgive me, please. Come in.

It appears to Baltimore I've become
one of the very demons I conceived.

- The fire was intentional.

- Yes, I heard.

The town is angry.

The mayor wants results.

Another set of unsolved murders?

Is that it?

He was inc-hes away.

If I hadn't drapped my weapon

Perhaps.

But we have made some headway.

According to theater records, the
sailor's name is Maurice Robichaux.

Does that mean anything to you?

No.

Cantrell and I made some inquiries
at the docks.

He was signed on to a trading vessel
which made port five days ago.

The start of the murders.

And, like many sailors,

he took employment in the theater,
working the backstage riggings.

But, as we know,

he wasn't there today.

Everything down to our entrance
was prearranged.

Look, it may be arduous,

but I've learned, in order

to find a needle in a haystack,

you have to go through the hay.

- These ship's records I think...

- Ship's records?

I must remind you, Mr. Poe,
every detail here is essential.

Tell me, are you not piqued
by your abject failure
to ferret out this assassin?
Your reputation is at stake.
Look at me.

Four people are dead!
An angel breaks on the rack
of some depraved beast,
but this clerk squints over his
eyeshades at ledgers and timetables!

Is this a fucking joke?!

What else should we do?!

Run around all of Baltimore
screaming out her name?!

Now, please, think.

Start with the sailor.

Have you ever written
anything about a sailor'?

No.

Did you speak with the ship captain?

- I did.

- And?

Robichaux was a valued crewman.

Well liked.

Had a family back home.

- Where?

- In France.

Nmes.

- Anything?

- No.

Yes. Possibly. Who knows?

You see, what I keep asking myself
is... why Baltimore?

The Fortunato had docked
in ports around the world.

- The what?

- All over the world.

- The name of the ship, say it again.

- Fortunato.

"The thousand injuries of Fortunato
I had borne as I best could."

What is that?

The first sentence of

"The Cask of Amontillado.

- Go on.

- A story I wrote about revenge.

A man kills his rival by walling him
up. Fortunato is entombed alive.

- Where?

- In the catacombs of a palazzo.

- The story is set in Italy.

- There are no catacombs here.

No, but there are tunnels
underneath the city.

Tunnels?

The waterworks.

You are looking for anything that
would indicate recently laid masonry.

We will be timing this.

I will blow my whistle as such...

We will then shout her name in unison
from all areas of the tunnels.

Emily!

There'll be a pause
often seconds of absolute silence
when we will listen
for the smallest sound.

Anything to indicate movement
from behind the walls.

If an officer detects something,
he will blow his whistle
and we will examine the wall
at that point.

- Are we clear?

- Yes, sir.

Then move out.

Emily!

Emily!

Emily!

Shh!

Emily!

Emily!

EMILY!

Over here.

They're down here.

The mortar's a different color.

Look.

Hold that.

Here. Stand back.

What is it? Do you have hen'?

- Give me that.

- What is it, Inspector?

- Keep digging.

- Yes, sir.

Halt!

Aaarghhh!

Get the doctor.

"Do not bemoan the sailor's life.

"He was always sure to die anyway.

"But his demise did serve a purpose
of leaving you clues.

"Godspeed, Poe.

Emily weakens by the hour,

"both physically and spiritually."

I will kill him.

No matter how this ends,

I will kill this perversion of a man.

"Godspeed"?

Even his prose is barbaric.

Why dress him up like Miss Hamilton?

For the thrill of watching me suffer.

Here, John. Bring the light closer.

I think I've found something.

What is that?

Help me turn him over.

I think we've found

our missing sailor.

It's a sextant.

Natural choice for a seaman,

I suppose.

My brother, he went to sea.

A lot of men,

they get these in the Orient.

This notch in the esh is fresh.

It's still clotted.

The killer did this.

Think it was part of the struggle?

- Too deliberate.
- It's a latitudinal co-ordinate.
If you mark the angle of the sun
at its highest point
it shows you how far you are
from the equator.
It's useless without longitude.
Even in the army
they teach basic navigation.
I went to West Point.
I was expelled, don't worry.
Fields, look there.
Get me a scalpel.
Here.
His tongue has been removed.
And this...
has replaced it.
What's it for?
Longitude.
Pen and paper.
He's giving us a location.
Open up! Open the door!
Where's Hamilton?
- Hamilton!
- What's happened?
We need your navigational maps
and celestial almanacs.
- Why?
- He gave us the location of Emily.
This watch is mine.
I thought I'd lost it.
- The kilter left this?
- On the dead sailor.
- In, to be more exact.
- The utter gall.
Along with
the latitudinal co-ordinates.
Incredible.
Forgive me. I have no background
in navigational techniques.
To plot an exact position,
you need three things:
a sextant, an accurate chronometer
and a celestial almanac.

The almanac tells the exact time
at which the sun hits its zenith.

- Exact noon.

- Shall I bring more?

Leave it! Please.

It's all right, Percy. Get another.

If your watch is set to Greenwich

Mean Time, you can calculate

how far east or west

of Greenwich, London you are.

Twelve... twenty-seven.

Twenty-eight, rather.

- Which one, damn it?

- Twenty-eight.

- Twelve twenty-eight, right?

- Yes.

Longitude is a measure of time

east or west.

Latitude, distance from the equator.

That's north or south.

Seventeen degrees north.

The West Indies? It can't be.

He couldn't have

transported her that far.

Here. St. Croix.

That's impossible. The Danish

West Indies is a two-week journey.

It's not an island, St. Croix.

Holy Cross.

Holy Cross!

Holy Cross Church.

That's our parish.

Giddap!

Cantrell, you and the others

around back.

Spread out. If need be, break

a window. We must get inside!

- Emily!

- Come on!

Emily!

North-west corner!

John!

Don't move, John.

Argh!

He's over here!
There! Black horse!
Steady.
- Fields?
- Get him!
Find him, Edgar! Go!
Your name!
You coward!
Who are you?!
Poe!
Poe!
The killer escaped.
My horse is gone.
What about Fields? He was shot.
He's at Doc Clements'.
What of you?
The paper goes to press
in three hours.
There was an empty grave.
It had Emily's name on it.
That was his clue.
That's why he sent us there.
Perhaps, or to kill again.
I'm sorry, Poe. This is my fault.
E should never have gone ahead
with the hall.
These were my stories.
Your daughter's love for me
is the reason another man's dead.
Go to Doc Clements.
I have one more story to write.
Edgar
for today, she's still alive.
Doctor, let me go!
Let me go!
We're running out of time!
For God's sake,
a bullet is in your chest!
Lie down and let me do my job
before you bleed to death.
The son of a bitch
is gonna kill her today.
So you cut the bullet out
and you patch me up now!

There's a bottle of whiskey
in the kitchen. Bring it here.

- What the hell is that?

- A magnet.

To find the bullet to cut it out.

Soak that pillowcase in the whiskey,
and give him the rest. He'll need it.

The gossamer white of bone
was now visible beneath
the tattered meat of her fingertips,
as Emily clawed madly
at the wooden slats of her coffin,
a desperate, drowning animal.

The din' rose around her,
the inescapable sand of an hourglass,
as her final breath of air
slipped her into the twilight
of consciousness until.

He knew now that all hope was lost.
He had failed his beloved, and
there was one last thing left to do.
One last act.

"A final desperate plea:
one life offered for another."

Oh, Mr. Poe, no... No, you can't!

- Set the print, Ivan.

- But, sir...

Do it!

You can't take it as your fault,
Mr. Poe.

Is there someone else you'd blame?
It's the killer who's to blame, sir.

- Let me read that.

- Sir, I need to...

"Poe could feel the poison
already feeding on his blood,
"as the maggots were soon to do."

Jesus, Edgar...

- Making enough money, Henry?!

- Mr. Poe, don't! Mr. Poe!

Will it sell?!

- Will it?!

- Mr. Poe!

You madman!

I'll have you thrown in jail,
you damned animal!

I'll send you to hell! Huh?! Hell!
Mr. Poe, don't. It's not worth it.
Clements!

I'm sorry, Mr. Poe. I fell asleep
waiting for you and the inspector.

- What time is it?

- Just past six, sir.

The paper's here for you.

Rather remarkable seeing that
people are stealing others' papers.

They can't print enough,
with the election today
and this horrible killing
they keep writing about.

Here's something else for you,
Mr. Poe.

"It is a masterpiece, Mr. Poe.
An epitaph worthy of your gifts."

- When did this come?

- I don't know, but before the paper.

- How do you know that?

- It was under the paper.

Impossible.

Look at the streaks in the ink.

- I don't understand.

- It's been rained on.

- It rained last night before dawn.

- But the newspaper is bone dry.

I'm not sure what...

The paper was delivered later,
after it stopped raining.

This note was written in response
to what I wrote in this newspaper.

He delivered the note
before the paper.

So he knew the story in advance.

He'd already read it.

Where's my gun?!

Damn it.

The ink.

It's printing ink.

The "Patriot".

Henry, you're gonna tell me
where she is.

Henry!

Tell me, where is sh...?

Van

Surprised?

Where is she?

Dying.

More quickly than I expected.

So I had to speed things along
and deliver the morning edition
so you could finally realise
it had to be...

none other than your humble
typesetter and biggest fan.

A drink?

You don't know how I've looked
forward to this moment, sir.

To sit here like this,

no more masks,

artist to artist.

Artist to artist.

Though I admit,

as I read your final chapter,

I felt more muse than artist.

You're mad.

Really, Mr. Poe?

You're one to talk.

Where is Emily?

Just like that?

No probing the devious twists
and turns of man's darkest motives?

No prying into the mysteries
of his conscience?

So very unlike you, Mr. Poe.

Where is she?!

Ow!

A rather disappointing denouement,
I have to say.

But that's life, isn't it?

So much less satisfying than fiction.

It's time this story comes to an end.

Very well.

Give me the gun.

You've come this far, Mr. Poe.
Are you really gonna back out now?
You know what happens next.
You wrote it, after all.
You either pull that trigger
and kill me and young Miss Emily
or you give me the gun.
She will live.
That was your solution, right?
I have to admit, I don't cry easily,
but you had me bawling like a baby.
And I've always had a fancy
for poisons.
That's how I done my dad.
The idea of drinking something
that will kill you
but having time to carry on
a conversation
is, as they say, fraught
with dramatic possibilities, right?
Listen to me.
talking about dramatic possibilities
with one of the greatest writers
of our time.
I must say, it has been a profound
honor working with you, sir.
Working with me?
I know they're your ideas.
I'm just borrowing.
Except for Valdemar's tongue.
That was me.
- Quite a subtle metaphor, I thought.
- Subtle?
It made no sense at all.
Even in the end,
I'm confronted by a plagiarist
without even the originality
to invent themselves.
I've concocted you.
I couldn't agree more.
I am your crowning achievement.
Your masterpiece.
In whose world do we each exist
right now, Edgar'?

Mine, or yours?

I don't really know the answer.

It's quite brilliant.

Well... go on, sir.

Bottoms up.

I need a carriage now!

- Inspector!

- I need a carriage.

And send a messenger
to Charles Hamilton's house.

Tell him to get to
the "Baltimore Patriot". Do it!

I will die today.

A hole of mouldering earth awaits.

It is a just end to a man
consumed by death his entire life.

Emily, take this kiss upon thy brow.

Really good stuff, sir.

A poet to the end.

I suppose this bit
is for Miss Hamilton.

Where is she?

- Where is she?

- I tell you, Mr. Poe,
I used to live for your stories,
just live for them.

When you stopped writing...

I guess I went a little nuts.

But I kept on believing,
even when you closed me out.

I still believed in your vision,
in a future where people
would stand in lines
to see the kind of things that
only people like you and I could see.

I knew you had one more in you, sir.

No one will ever forget you.

Have you ever been to France?

There's a young writer over there -
Jules Verne.

- You heard of him?

- What?

Paris...

He really reminds me of you, sir.

Where is she? You owe me!
Where is she?!

"Anything was better than this agony.
"Anything was more tolerable
than this derision.
"I could bear those hypocritical
smiles no longer."
"The Tell-Tale Heart."
She's here... She's here.
Carriage for Mr. Reynolds!
On my way in just a moment!
Goodbye, Mr. Poe.
I've enjoyed our time together.
Reynolds...
Almost...
Emily!
Emily?
Answer me.
Emily! Please, answer me!
Oh, my God.
Em" ?
Emily... Emily...
Emily.
Open your eyes.
Emily, open your eyes.
Yeah.
Oh, yeah.
Is it really you?
- I love you.
- I love you.
I'm here.
I came for you.
Okay,
Stay awake.
I have you, always.
We're going home.
- You did mean it?
- Mean what?
When you said you would marry me.
In this life and the next.
Clear the way! Clear the way!
What's wrong with you? Make way!
- Where's Poe?
- He was here a moment ago.

Poe!
Hurry!
Where is Edgar? Where is Edgar?
Now, be careful.
Go, go, go!
Sir?
You are Edgar Poe, correct?
I am.
For a few more minutes, anyway.
Are you all right?
You look a little the worse for wear.
Is there someone I can call for you?
- Reynolds.
- You want me to find Reynolds?
Does he have a first name?
No.
Tell Fields...
his last name is Reynolds.
I'm sorry, sir,
you're not making much sense.
Tell Fields.
The Lord help my poor soul.
Mr. Fields?
- I'm Dr. John Morgan.
- Doctor.
- Do you have a cause of death?
- I'm sorry, I don't.
I have a few ideas but...
As you know, he was brought in
in a very deranged state.
I'm told he was ranting.
Yes.
He kept going on and on about telling
you that your last name is Reynolds.
Is that helpful, or just gibberish?
Maybe both.
Well, thank you for your help,
Doctor.
I'd be interested in hearing
your final analysis.
Take this kiss upon thy brow,
And, in parting from you now,
Thus much let me avow -
You are not wrong, who deem

That my days have been a dream.
All that we see or seem
Is but a dream within a dream.
Mr. Reynolds, please follow me
to your carriage.

Merci pour votre aide.

Hello, Ivan.

I have burned my tomorrows
And I stand inside today
And burn my shadow away
And burn my shadow away
And burn my shadow away