

# The black cat and the tell tale heart

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Edgar Allan Poe is an American writer best known for his poetry and short stories; mainly his darker morbid stories. Poe is the master of fear, for fear is what makes Poe unforgettable. Poe lived a sad life due to the fact those he loved died. His brother and mother died at the age of 24, and so did his beloved wife Virginia. Many say that his muse was his dead wife, because Poe once stated “The death of a beautiful woman is unquestionably the most poetical topic in the world”. Despite his many poems and short stories there are two which stand out the most due to their similarity. The Tell Tale Heart and The Black Cat have many things in common, but they also have differences. Both stories have insanity filled characters with murderous intentions. “I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever”. This sentence in The Tell-Tale Heart gives the whole ending away. This is one of the major differences between both stories. The reader already knows what’s going to happen in the end of the Tell-Tale Heart in the beginning of the story; while in The Black Cat the reader doesn’t find out well till the end. The ending was made crystal clear, Poe wrote it that way to captivate the reader and make them wonder why did the narrator choose to do this? The anticipation to find out makes the read more suspenseful. The Black Cat is written more normally; as it flows from beginning to end.

The characters start to develop more as the story goes along. Since the story is written more traditionally the reader doesn’t know the ending the story, therefore it makes the story unpredictable and full of surprises. Another difference between the two stories is who anger is focused on. In The Tell-Tale Heart anger was directed to the old-man, while in The Black Cat the

anger is focused on an animal who can't really fight back. " I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket", what Poe means by this is sometimes we direct our anger to things that normally can't fight back. As the reader continues to read they come to realization that at one point they have done this as well. Poe gets the reader emotionally involved with the exploitation of human emotion. Despite the differences the stories have, they also have many things in common with one another. They're both trademarked with Edgar Allan Poe's famous dark imagination, they're both in first person point of view. This gives the reader a taste of the main characters think and how they feel. Being able to get into the character's mind really benefits the reader and Poe always hits this spot on. The first person perspective gets the reader invested in the characters life. A big similarity between the stories is the opening. They both begin with the main character talking about themselves. They both say " I'm not mad" at the beginning of both stories. This provides the reader with the characters mentality of looking at things. The end of both the stories are insane. They make the reader think, ' what just happened ?' Poe made the ending of these two stories utterly shocking. Both main characters end up being caught in the end. At first glance, the main characters seem to have almost nothing in common; their relationship status, how they live, and their responsibilities completely different. However upon inspection the two men start to have striking similarities: both have flashback of their crime, explaining their motive and eventually confessing to their evil deeds. As both characters tell their story they lose their sanity.

Due to all these similarities, it's clear that the two characters have much more in common than believed. In *The Tell-Tale Heart*, the main character tells his story from a prison cell after killing the old man; who he lived with. He then proceeds to tell us he had no good reason for killing the man. The old man didn't do anything wrong to him and he wasn't after his money but the man did have a "vulture eye" which drove the narrator insane. The narrator plots to kill the man & ultimately does. He then feels so much guilt he thinks he keeps hearing the dead man beating heart. He grew crazier with each pounding heartbeat that he just confessed to the murder. Revealing that he had his the man disassembled corpse under the floorboards. Now, wanting to prove he's not "mad", he starts talking about the details of the murder and his reasoning for it. His insane behavior and his way of thinking is that of a crazy person! This undermines his whole trustworthiness as a narrator in the end. In "*The Black Cat*," the main character also defends the reliability of his story & sanity. He also tells his tale from a prison cell after committing the crime. However his victim is not an old man it was his wife. He explains how his wife & him were happy, and how they owned many different kinds of pets. The narrator can't explain how he started changing, but he blames it on alcohol. He also blames his evilness on his black cat who "made him kill his wife". Both *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *The Black Cat* are morbid stories about violence. They're both told by untrustable narrators who are evil. There is no doubt that Poe is the master of fear and many will continue to read his terrific stories for lifetimes to come. Works Cited" Edgar Allan Poe."