

Midnight not  
completed my goal of  
writing during



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Midnight KeysParody of "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan PoeWritten by

Amanda FrantzTrue! -drowsy -very, very dreadfully drowsy I had been and

am; but why will you say that I am tired? The darkness of night had peaked

my energy -not destroyed- not dulled it. With this energy came great

motivation, the motivation to finish a task using whatever means possible.

How, then, am I tired? Hearken! And observe my motivation and how healthy

-how energetic I am as I tell you the whole story. It is impossible to say why I

did not work by day. Reason there was none. Excuse there was none.

I wanted to write, just to have the experience, but I had never progressed on

it. I had never put the thought into a chapter or two, and by the time July was

over, I had not completed my goal of writing during the Summer months. I

think it was the time! yes, it was this! It was the middle of August, a time for

procrastination. A time for the park, and travel, and air conditioning, not for

writing. Whenever I thought of my unfinished draft I was overcome with guilt,

and so I dedicated my nights to storytelling. Now this is the point. You'd

think I'd be tired.

Tired people don't choose to work. But you should have seen me. You should

have seen how quietly I fashioned my narrative into existence, as to not

disturb other members of the house. I was never more patient than the week

in which I wrote my tale.

Every night, around midnight, once I was certain that my family was asleep, I would rise from my bed and walk to the door, and I closed it -oh so gently!

And then, once I had cautiously closed the door, I would step across my room

quietly, quietly so no one would hear as I approached my computer. Oh, you

would have laughed at how carefully I moved! I moved slowly -very, very slowly, and with great precision I would pull out a wooden stool from under my desk. It took me several minutes to move across my room to the point where I could see the green flashing of my computer's power button, and so softly I pressed it. Ha! If I had been tired, would I have been this precise? And then, once I had pulled out my precious document, I would write, being the only noise in the house (for the keys echoed a familiar tapping as they were pressed) - and I wrote until I was satisfied with my work. And I did this for seven long nights -every night just around midnight -but I found that by morning I was always upset with what I had wrote; for I could never make the dialogue as fluid as I had hoped. And every morning, just after breakfast, I would continue to spend my summer days relaxing, just to put the work on myself for later.

I would act just as I normally would, so you see, no one would have suspected that at night I was surrounded by the familiar tapping of keyboard keys. Upon the eighth night I was more careful than before, as it was my final night to complete the project. With only a handful of words left to record, I had never felt so energetic, -so lively. I could barely express how proud I was. To think that in an hour, there I would be, with ten pages written of my own story, and no one had heard me the entire time. I practically danced to my computer; and perhaps someone had heard me; for I heard footsteps on the floor above. Now you may think that I would've hesitated - but no.

My door was already closed and all I had to do was turn on my monitor, (for I had kept the computer on, to save my time each night) and I knew that I was

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too close to give up now, I was only five-hundred words away from my goal. I was about to finish the last paragraph when my foot hit the side of the wall, alarming someone overhead, and I heard footsteps get closer to the stairs. I stood still and said nothing. For several minutes I did not move, nor did I hear the footsteps return to the bed where they came from. They were at the stairs, waiting patiently, just as patient as I had been those seven long nights.

Suddenly I heard a soft groan, and I knew it was the gentle creaking from ancient wooden stairs. It wasn't a natural groan, -oh, no! - it was the groan of footsteps on the staircase directly next to my room. Many weekend mornings, when all the world slept, I heard those same slow footsteps as they came downstairs. Downstairs! Oh, the terrible noise it made, echoing through the house, distracting me from my task. I say I knew it well. I needed to continue writing, but I knew that with one subtle noise the footsteps would move from the top few steps, and continue to go downstairs. Even if they had assured himself with "It is only a cricket chirping through an open window" -or "It is merely the wind blowing through," he would still have to come down that staircase to close the window in question. And so, I stayed silent, staring at my keyboard in guilt, my mind tugging me to complete an unfinished sentence.

Once I had waited a long time, very patiently, without hearing movement, I continued typing, at first very softly, but once assured that I would not be disturbed, I threw out words quickly. So quickly that, along with the pounding of my nervous fingers on small, plastic keys, I heard one foot land against a stair, just as swiftly as how I began typing. And then another upon another, until the footsteps were halfway down the stairs.

Through my shock, I could do nothing but continue writing, the same key tapping that had summoned footsteps to walk down the stairwell, -the same tapping that I had to endure as I wrote out ten pages of words, none of which necessarily sounded as good as I had hoped. And have I not told you what you mistake for drowsiness is unfathomable energy? -now, I say, I bounded from my desk, nearly slamming my computer's power button, and raced to my bed, opening my door on my way there. In my panic, I could still barely hear the soft tapping of computer keys, along with the sound of my heart pounding like a drum. Even through the noise roaring in my ears, I kept still, motionless, barely breathing, pretending to be asleep under a blanket that had been chilled by air-conditioning. Meantime the footsteps seemed to thunder as they made their first step on the floor in my hallway.

The noise of the footsteps seems to get louder and louder every moment! In the silence of midnight, feet pounding and familiar keys tapping rang through ears! The noise grew louder, louder! When the footsteps came to a stop, I saw two eyes, staring out of the dark, staring at me, ensuring that I was asleep. Oh, how the eyes taunted me! So calm, during the night, not hearing the dreaded sounds that I did, for they were the cause of them! Not caring that they had kept me from my goal, not knowing how long I had worked for it! Those horrid footsteps, -those wretched eyes! They would never understand the torture they had caused me! Deterring me from my goal, and ringing so rudely through my ears! Just as I was about to beg the eyes to be gone, they took a sharp turn and I heard soft footsteps journey up to where they belonged, hearing that nervous groaning of stairs yet again. But still I had a few sentences to finish, which I would have to find a way to

complete without startling anyone sleeping atop me. Now that they were upstairs, the footsteps would haunt me no more. If you think I'd be tired, even after all of this, you'd think that no longer once I described how much time I spent in completing those final words. With not wanting to risk anything by using my computer, I quietly got my phone, and as the night continued I worked silently.

First of all I downloaded a document onto my phone, and I patiently waited for it to load. A clock's minute hand seemed to move faster than the words loading up on my screen. And then, I typed, -so well that no one would know that it was typed hastily on midnight keys. I had made sure that my final words were perfect, -no grammatical issues -the best vocabulary, all words flowing and beautiful to read.

When I was done with my chapter it was two o'clock -still dark as midnight. As the clock rang at the hour, I typed my very last word. I sat back in relief, -for what else are you supposed to do after writing three-thousand words? I looked over it all, knowing that each and every word was one that I had written. I read the story in my mind, a little voice congratulating me. But, in my moment of triumph, I noticed something. While the quantity of words was sufficient, the quality was questionable.

Seeing the word count rise had satisfied me, without looking at how my paragraphs were pieced together. Choppy sentences; unrealistic dialogue; lacking vocabulary; there wasn't much to be proud of besides the very beginning and end. My head ached at how horribly it had all turned out, for all of the effort I had put in, but also for how long I had endured the sound of

the computer keys. Thousands of little taps, small and subtle, but once repeated for several minutes, they were enough to drive someone insane. I tried to get that noise out of my head by focusing on finishing to read the story, yet the sound increased -and what could I do? A soft press turned into a loud pounding in my head. I read through the hundreds of words left to go, attempting to rid myself of the midnight keys forever. What could I do? Why would it not leave me? I got up, and paced around the room, but the tapping increased. Oh God! What could I do? I foamed- I raved -I swore! I stared at each word on my phone's screen, wanting to scream! Not only was I plagued with a bad story for spending my nights thoughtlessly writing, I was cursed by the gentle and familiar sound of keyboard keys.

What was once gentle grew louder- louder -louder! And still I couldn't stop reading, and the noise would not mute! Could the rest of the world not hear this sound? Almighty God! -no, no! They heard! -or, they would have, if not for the rest of the world being peacefully asleep, just as I could have been if I hadn't written this treachery! This monstrosity! And now I wished I had slept, even if I hadn't written what I had. No, it would be much better that way. It had caused me this, and anything was better than this agony! Anything was more tolerable than this derision! I felt like I was going to scream! I couldn't take it, the tapping grew, -louder! -louder! -louder! " Be gone!" I shrieked, " bedevil me no more! I admit I was wrong! Writing a story cannot be done by midnight keys!"