

White story about the black cat

Literature



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Introduction

As described by many critics and literary writers, Edgar Allan Poe is, without a doubt, one of the most influential writers, critics, poets and editors in America history and well-known in the world of literature. With his ' Gothic' style in writings, as many of his works, ' The Black Cat' is considered as one of the best of his works. Poe's Biography Edgar Allan Poe, who is famous for his great work in literature, was born in Boston on 19th of January 1809.

Poe's father left the family in 1810 and his mother died the following year. After he lost both of his parents at a very young age, he and his sister were raised by John Allan in Virginia. When he was 6, he went to school in England for five years and learned Latin and French as well as math and history there. In 1826 he went to the University of Virginia but because of his bad addictions like alcohol and gambling he became in debt and had to quit school.

In 1827, he moved to Boston and enlisted to Army. His first collection of poems, Tamerlane, and Other Poems, was published that year. In 1829, he published a second collection entitled Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems. After 2 years in army, Poe moved to Maryland to live with his Aunt and her daughter, Virginia. Poe began to sell short stories and, in 1835, he became the editor of the Southern Literary Messenger in Richmond. One year later he married his thirteen-year-old cousin, Virginia. Over the next ten years, Poe edit several literary journals and during these years he established himself as a poet, a short story writer and an editor. He published some of his best-known stories and poems, including ' The Fall of the House of Usher,' ' The Tell-Tale Heart,' ' The Murders in the Rue Morgue,'
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and 'The Raven.' In 1847, Poe's wife passed away from tuberculosis and after Virginia's death, Poe's chronic alcohol abuse and depression worsened. On October 3, 1849, he was found in a state of semi-consciousness, he died four days later of 'acute congestion of the brain.' Evidence by medical practitioners who reopened the case has shown that Poe may have been suffering from rabies. After his death a contemporary of him said, 'This death was almost a suicide, a suicide prepared for a long time.'

Plot Analysis

Exposition At the beginning of the story we learn that the narrator is going to die tomorrow, and he wants to tell us his story which is going to be ugly.

Conflict The narrator 'loves' animals and so does his wife. They have many animals, and one of them is our narrator's favorite a cat named Pluto. He begins to drink and starts to abuse everyone, even animals, except Pluto.

Rising action Day by day, the narrator thinks that his lovely Pluto started to avoid him, so one day when he is drunk he decides to kill Pluto, cuts its eye out, hangs it from a tree. Now he's a cat murderer, and his happy home seems to be more nightmarish.

Climax After he murdered the cat in the morning, fire breaks out while the narrator's sleeping and somehow, he, his wife and their servant manage to escape but now they're in poverty.

Falling action A new black cat appears in the story very looks like Pluto but this one has white spot on its chest. We don't know whether this cat is the evil version Pluto or not. In this stage he is getting worse and worse. Also, we learn that he's writing from a felon's cell. **Denouement** One day, the new cat follows the narrator on the stairs and he raised an axe to kill it, but he is

stopped by his wife and in rage he ended up killing his wife with an axe, after then, he hides his wife within the cellar walls.

The cat seems to have fled, and the narrator sleeps peacefully for the first time in a long time. After a while, the police finally come to search the house. The narrator thinks that they have no chance to find the narrator's wife. Resolution As the police are about to leave the house for good, the narrator takes his cane and raps on the cellar wall to boast about the construction of the house. At that moment, a cat's meow is heard by police and when they open the wall they find the narrator's wife, along with the black cat with white spot on its chest. Therefore, the narrator ended up in jail. Narration First Person Unreliable. The unreliability of the narrator is made known from the first lines when he tries to explain to the readers that he is not mad. He states, " Mad indeed would I be to expect it, in a case where my very senses reject their own evidence. Yet, mad am I not and very surely do I not dream.' Even though he tries to claim his sanity, later then, he accepts that alcohol made his judgment unclear and he started to act violently and abusive. The narrator also describes the events in detail, but what he describes might not be true. For example, at the end of the novel, the narrator thinks that the second black cat is a monster and describes the meow as, " A wailing shriek, half of horror and half of triumph, such as might have arisen only out of hell." This shows that the narrator might not be hundred percent sure what happened because, probably it was just a ' meow'. Setting The exact time in the story ' The Black Cat' by Edgar Allan Poe is unknown but we can assume that it's around 1840s. Where does the story start is also unknown at first but as the story develop, he introduces

himself to readers as a man who experienced terrifying things and at the end we understand that he is now in a cell waiting for his execution.

The incidents he had are set at his home and in a tavern and he is putting down these events on paper in his prison cell. Characters: Narrator: Prisoner scheduled for execution. His loathing of a cat he once loved leads to his commission of a capital crime. Narrator's Wife: Woman of agreeable disposition who likes animals and obtains many pets for her husband. First Black Cat: Cat named Pluto that loves the narrator but irritates him when it follows him everywhere. Second Black Cat: Cat that resembles the first black cat and may be a reincarnation of the latter or, so the narrator may think. Policemen: Officers who investigate the happenings at the home of the narrator. Servant: Person working in the narrator's household. Tone "The Black Cat" have multiple tones that change time to time. Sometimes, it's ironic and irreverent and sometimes dark and mocking.

Ironic and Irreverent In the exposition, the narrator states that he proposes to retell 'mere household events' that seem to him 'little but horror' while to others they will 'seem less terrible than baroque.' The narrator states that he grew more irritable with his wife and 'at length I even offered her personal violence.' When he attempts killing the second cat, the narrator's wife intervenes, and he ironically narrates, 'Goaded by this interference into a rage more than demoniacal, I withdrew my arm from her grasp and buried the axe in her brain.' In the next paragraph, the narrator's tone is irreverently calm as he describes how he set about with 'deliberation' to conceal his dastardly deed. **Dark and Mocking** After, he murders his wife, the narrator reflects 'The guilt of my dark deed disturbed me but little.' He adds, <https://assignbuster.com/white-story-about-the-black-cat/>

' I looked upon my future felicity as finally secure." When the police arrive unexpectedly, the narrator asserts that he is ' Secure in the inscrutability of my place of concealment, I felt no embarrassment whatever.' As the police depart, he tells them, ' Gentlemen, I am delighted to have allayed your suspicions. I wish you all health and a little more courtesy.

Taunting them, he says, ' By the way, gentlemen, this is a very well-constructed house..." Symbols The first black cat(Pluto): The name comes from, Roman mythology, the Ruler of the Underworld and Dead. The cat with white spot: Even though the narrator doesn't reveal it directly, but he is likely to dislike this cat because of his resemblance to Pluto. Also, he hated this cat because it reminded him what he had done to Pluto. He believes that the white spot on the cat is changing in appearance to look like the gallows supports the narrator's growing guilt over his sin. Foreshadowing The narrator's scheduled execution on the gallows is foreshadowed first by the narrator's hanging of Pluto, next by the outline of the dead cat on the wall, and finally by the outline of the gallows on the white spot of the second black cat. Also, " I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others." foreshadows that this might have a negative impact on others later in the story. Imagery Poe uses words and phrases to create mental images for the reader. This helps readers to experience his writings more realistically and visualize easily.

Anaphora To give emphasis and balance, Poe often uses anaphora in his stories. Here are boldfaced examples from ' The Black Cat': " I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others." " These events have terrified - have tortured - have destroyed me. " I blush,
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I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity.” Metaphors “ For what disease is like Alcohol!” Alcohol is a reappearing theme in Poe’s stories and he exemplifies the ill effects of alcohol, probably it’s because he experienced them personally. “ I ... drowned in wine all memory of the deed” which also clearly shows the narrator’s partiality to Alcohol. “ The socket of the lost eye presented, it is true, a frightful appearance...” Eyes are old symbols for the soul, by cutting out one of the cat’s eyes, the narrator separates his own soul in two, and destroys half of it. This metaphor reinforces the narrator’s duality, and it gives us an image of the ruin of his good half. “ The corpse ... stood erect before the eyes of the spectator” is used to emphasize the tragedy of the denouement of the cruel murder. Simile “ All black cats as witches in disguise” is used to intensify the mysterious effect of the whole story. “ Disease is like Alcohol” is for the purpose to characterize the reason of the narrator’s cruel deeds also it underlines that alcohol enslaves human mind and absorbs his soul. “ The collapse of the protagonist’s soul” is revealed through the following simile “ the spirit of PERVERSENESS as if my final and irrevocable overthrow.” Personification “ Sagacious dog” personifies the dog because “ sagacious” attributes the quality of a human. Cats also have qualities of a human “ evil, sick, twisted”

Analysis of Lexical Categories

In this story Poe uses adjectives, verbs, nouns a lot and sometimes he uses capitalized or italic words to describe the narrator’s mental state and behavior. He often uses several adjectives to modify just one noun. The adjectives he used mostly related with psychological or emotional qualities. To show the readers, how complicated and corrupted is the narrator’s mind

Poe uses adjectives. For example, " I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others." These three adjectives put side by side to describe his change. Secondly, the usage of verbs in the story have great stylistic importance. In the first paragraph, " In their consequences, these events have terrified - have tortured - have destroyed me." These verbs are ordered to describe the event's horrible effects for the narrator and show his sufferings. When the narrator did his first " atrocious" act, Poe describes it in the following example, " I took from my waistcoat-pocket a penknife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by the throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! I blush, I burn, I shudder, while I pen the damnable atrocity." In the first sentence, " took," " opened," " grasped," and " cut" are used to emphasize the quickness of his act. In the second sentence, three verbs mark up the parallel effect to show the intensity of the narrator's feelings. And lastly " Uplifting an axe, and forgetting, in my wraith, the childish dread, which had hitherto stayed personification in my hand, I aimed a blow at the animal." In this sentence, " uplift" and " aim" are dynamic while " forget" and " stay" are stative. In this case Poe uses both dynamic and static verbs to show that the narrator was out of the control of reason.

Lastly, Poe uses different nouns to refer to cats according to the narrator's mental state. The narrator called Pluto (first black cat) " him," " he," " favorite pet and playmate." When he cut one of its eye he called the cat " poor beast." Poe changed time to time how the narrator referred to Pluto to show the love of the narrator towards to Pluto was changing. When the narrator met the second cat he, first, called it " some black object" and " it"

later then, “ a great favorite” but started to dislike the cat he called it “ the creature”, “ the monster”, “ the beast”. And in this story Poe mostly uses abstract nouns like “ soul”, “ guilt”, “ damnation”, “ demon”. Analysis of Grammatical Categories For the sentence complexity, I can certainly say that Poe uses complex sentences in his stories as well as in “ The Black Cat”. “ Uplifting an axe and forgetting, in my wraith, the childish dread which had hitherto stayed my hand, I aimed, a blow at the animal which, of course, would have proved instantly fatal had it descended as I wished” is a highly complex sentence as far as the amount of clauses that it contains, because of that the amount of ideas that it expresses. For the clauses: “ Uplifting an axe” is an example of non-finite clause. “ forgetting childish dread” is a subordinate clause which followed by another clause that modifies it “ which had hitherto stayed my hand”. Poe uses subordinate clauses to demonstrate more details. There are also prepositional phrases that are used to indicate the conflicting feelings in the narrator’s mind. For example, “ with the tears streaming from my eyes” and “ with the bitterest remorse at my heart”. In conclusion, Poe uses many techniques in The Black Cat to show the complex mind of the narrator and let the readers visualize and experience the atmosphere of terror and gothic.