

The Raven
By: Edgar Allan Poe
Adaptation By: Robert Gagnon

Characters:

Man-
The Raven-
Narrator-
Sound FX
Lighting
Camera



Scene

Narrator: Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping, As of someone
gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door. (Pause)

Man: (in seat) 'Tis some visitor, tapping at my chamber door; only
this, and nothing more.

Narrator: Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,
and each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow; vainly I had sought to borrow from my book
surcease of sorrow, sorrow for the lost Lenore, for the rare and radiant
maiden whom the angels name Lenore, Nameless here forevermore. And the
silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain Thrilled me---
filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before; So that now, to
still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating, (Pause)

Man: (in A Scared and Excited Tone of Voice) 'Tis some visitor
entreating entrance at my chamber door, some late visitor entreating
entrance at my chamber door. This it is, and nothing more.

Narrator: Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
(Pause)

Man: Sir, (Pause) (Stands)

Narrator: said I (Pause)

Man: (Walks towards Door places head upon Door as if to hear something)
or madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the 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. (Pause)

Narrator: Here I opened wide the door

(Man opens Door)

Narrator: Darkness there, and nothing more. Deep into the darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before; But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token, And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, (Pause)

Man: (Whisper) Lenore

Narrator: This I whispered and an echo murmured back the word (whisper) "Lenore" Merely this, and nothing more. Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning, soon again I heard a tapping, something louder than before, (Pause)

Man: (Fearful Voice) Surely (Pause)

Narrator: said I.

Man: surely, that is something at my window lattice.
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore.
Let my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore.
'Tis the wind, and nothing more.

(Walks to Window and proceeds to Open Shutter)

Narrator: Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter, in there stepped a stately raven, of the saintly days of yore.
(ENTER RAVEN Man stumbles back)

Narrator: Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he; But with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door. Perched upon a bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door, Perched, and sat, and nothing more. Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling, by the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore, (Pause)

Man: Though thy crest be shorn and shaven thou, (Pause)

Narrator: I said (*Pause*)

Man: (*Happy Voice*) art sure no craven, Ghastly, grim, and ancient raven, wandering from the nightly shore. Tell me what the lordly name is on the Night's plutonian shore.

Narrator: Quoth the raven,

Raven: Nevermore.

(LIGHTNING AND THUNDER)

(Man blankly looks to the open shutter and falls back into his seat)

Narrator: Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly, Though its answer little meaning, little relevancy bore; For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door, Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door, With such name as "Nevermore." But the raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only that one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour. Nothing further then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered; till I scarcely more than muttered, (*Pause*)

Man: (looks at the raven angrily) Other friends have flown before; on the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have flown before.

Narrator: Then the bird said,

Raven: Nevermore.

(LIGHTNING AND THUNDER)

Narrator: Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken, (*Pause*)

Man: Doubtless, (looks sad to his book in hand) (*Pause*)

Narrator: said I, (*Pause*)

Man: 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 that melancholy burden bore of "Never---nevermore."

Narrator: But the raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,

(Man turns seat)

Narrator: Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore --
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore." Thus I sat engaged in guessing, but no
syllable expressing To the fowl, whose fiery eyes now burned into my
bosom's core; This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease
reclining On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated
o'er, But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating o'er

(Man gets Angry)

Narrator: *She* shall press, ah, nevermore! Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer Swung by seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor. (Pause)

Man: (Angry Voice) (YELLS and Points to the Raven) Wretch, (Pause)

Narrator: I cried,

Man: thy God hath lent thee -- by these angels he hath sent thee respite---respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, O quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!

Narrator: Quoth the raven.

Raven: Nevermore.

(LIGHTNING AND THUNDER)

Man: (*Speak faster*) Prophet! (*Pause*)

Narrator: said I,

Man: thing of evil!--prophet still, if bird or devil!
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?--tell me--tell me I implore!

Narrator: Quoth the raven.

Raven: Nevermore.

(LIGHTNING AND THUNDER)

Man: (*Fastest*) Prophet! (Man gets out of his Chair) (*Pause*)

Narrator: said I,

Man: thing of evil--prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that heaven that bends above us--by that God we both adore--
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if, within the distant Aidenn, (*Slow*)
It shall clasp a sainted maiden, whom the angels name Lenore---
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden, whom the angels name Lenore?

Narrator: Quoth the raven.

Raven: Nevermore.

(LIGHTNING AND THUNDER)

Man: (Yells out) Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!
(*Pause*)

Narrator: I shrieked, upstarting--

(Man goes Crazy)

Man: 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 thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!

Narrator: Quoth the raven.

Raven: Nevermore

(LIGHTNING AND THUNDER)

Narrator: And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is
sitting On the 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 lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted

(Man Falls and the raven Comes over, Covers the man)

Raven: (Looks at audience) Nevermore. *(Quiet)*

...FIN...

