

# EDGAR ALLAN POE

THE BELLS AND OTHER  
POEMS

**Edgar Poe**  
**The Bells and Other Poems**

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The Bells and Other Poems:*

# Содержание

THE BELLS	4
EULALIE – A SONG	10
ANNABEL LEE	12
SONNET – SILENCE	14
THE RAVEN	15
TO ONE IN PARADISE	22
LENORE	24
DREAMS	26
TO HELEN	28
THE HAUNTED PALACE	31
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	33

# Edgar Allan Poe

## The Bells and Other Poems

### THE BELLS

#### I

Hear the sledges with the bells —  
Silver bells!  
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!  
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy air of night!  
While the stars, that oversprinkle  
All the heavens, seem to twinkle  
With a crystalline delight;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort if Runic rhyme,  
To the tintinabulation that so musically wells  
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells, —  
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

## II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,  
Golden bells!  
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!  
Through the balmy air of night  
How they ring out their delight!  
From the molten golden-notes,  
And all in tune,  
What a liquid ditty floats  
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats  
On the moon!  
Oh, from out the sounding cells,  
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!  
How it swells!  
How it dwells  
On the Future! how it tells  
Of the rapture that impels  
To the swinging and the ringing  
Of the bells, bells, bells,  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells —  
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

### III

Hear the loud alarum bells —  
Brazen bells!  
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!  
In the startled ear of night  
How they scream out their affright!  
Too much horrified to speak  
They can only shriek, shriek,  
Out of tune,  
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,  
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,  
Leaping higher, higher, higher,  
With a desperate desire,  
And a resolute endeavour.  
Now – now to sit or never,  
By the side of the pale-faced moon.  
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!  
What a tale their terror tells  
Of Despair!  
How they clang, and clash, and roar!  
What a horror they outpour  
On the bosom of the palpitating air!  
Yet the ear it fully knows,  
By the twanging,  
And the clanging,

How the danger ebbs and flows:  
Yet the ear distinctly tells,  
In the jangling,  
And the wrangling,  
How the danger sinks and swells,  
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells —  
Of the bells —  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
Bells, bells, bells —  
In the clamour and the clangour of the bells!

#### IV

Hear the tolling of the bells —  
Iron bells!  
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!  
In the silence of the night,  
How we shiver with affright  
At the melancholy menace of their tone!  
For every sound that floats  
From the rust within their throats  
Is a groan.  
And the people — ah, the people —  
They that dwell up in the steeple,  
All alone,  
And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,

In that muffled monotone,  
Feel a glory in so rolling  
On the human heart a stone —  
They are neither man nor woman —  
They are neither brute nor human —  
They are Ghouls:  
And their king it is who tolls;  
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,  
Rolls

A paean from the bells!  
And his merry bosom swells  
With the paean of the bells!  
And he dances, and he yells;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the paean of the bells —  
Of the bells:  
Keeping time, time, time,  
In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
To the throbbing of the bells  
Of the bells, bells, bells —  
To the sobbing of the bells;  
Keeping time, time, time,  
As he knells, knells, knells,  
In a happy Runic rhyme,  
To the rolling of the bells —  
Of the bells, bells, bells:  
To the tolling of the bells,  
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells —

Bells, bells, bells —

To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

# EULALIE – A SONG

I dwelt alone  
In a world of moan,  
And my soul was a stagnant tide,  
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my blushing bride —  
Till the yellow-haired young Eulalie became my smiling  
bride.

Ah, less – less bright  
The stars of the night  
Than the eyes of the radiant girl!  
And never a flake  
That the vapour can make  
With the moon-tints of purple and pearl,  
Can vie with the modest Eulalie's most unregarded curl —  
Can compare with the bright-eyed Eulalie's most humble and  
careless curl.

Now doubt – now Pain  
Come never again,  
For her soul gives me sigh for sigh,  
And all day long  
Shines, bright and strong,  
Astarté within the sky,  
While ever to her dear Eulalie upturns her matron eye —

While ever to her young Eulalie upturns her violet eye.

# ANNABEL LEE

It was many and many a year ago,  
In a kingdom by the sea,  
That a maiden there lived whom you may know  
By the name of Annabel Lee;  
And this maiden she lived with no other thought  
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,  
In this kingdom by the sea;  
But we loved with a love which was more than love —  
I and my Annabel Lee;  
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven  
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,  
In this kingdom by the sea,  
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling  
My beautiful Annabel Lee;  
So that her highborn kinsmen came  
And bore her away from me,  
To shut her up in a sepulchre  
In this kingdom by the sea.

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 cloud by night,  
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

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.

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;  
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes  
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;  
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side  
Of my darling – my darling – my life and my bride,  
In her sepulchre there by the sea,  
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

# SONNET – SILENCE

There are some qualities – some incorporate things,  
That have a double life, which thus is made  
A type of that twin entity which springs  
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.  
There is a two-fold *Silence*– sea and shore —  
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,  
Newly with grass o'ergrown; some solemn graces,  
Some human memories and tearful lore,  
Render him terrorless: his name's "No More."  
He is the corporate Silence: dread him not!  
No power hath he of evil in himself;  
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot!)  
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,  
That haunteth the lone regions where hath trod  
No foot of man), commend thyself to God!

# THE RAVEN

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 some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.  
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door

—

Only this, and nothing more."

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 books surcease of sorrow – sorrow for the lost  
Lenore —

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name  
Lenore —

Nameless here for evermore.

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,

"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door —  
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door; —  
This it is, and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,  
"Sir," said I, "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," — here I opened wide  
the door; —

Darkness there, and nothing more.

Deep into that 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,  
"Lenore!"

This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word,  
"Lenore!" —

Merely this, and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me  
burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.

"Surely," said I, "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."

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;  
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,  
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure  
no craven,

Ghastly grim and ancient raven wandering from the Nightly  
shore —

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian  
shore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

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 blest 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 the 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, "other friends have flown  
before —

On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have flown  
before."

Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,  
"Doubtless," said I, "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'."

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,  
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."

This 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,  
*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.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee – by these angels  
he hath sent thee

Respite – respite and nepenthe, from thy memories of  
Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost  
Lenore!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "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!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "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,  
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore

—  
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign in parting, bird or fiend," I shrieked,  
upstarting —

"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!"

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

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 – nevermore!

# TO ONE IN PARADISE

Thou wast all that to me, love,  
For which my soul did pine —  
A green isle in the sea, love,  
A fountain and a shrine,  
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,  
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!  
Ah, starry Hope! that didst arise  
But to be overcast!  
A voice from out the Future cries,  
"On! on!" – but o'er the Past  
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies  
Mute, motionless, aghast!

For, alas! alas! with me  
The light of Life is o'er!  
"No more – no more – no more – "  
(Such language holds the solemn sea  
To the sands upon the shore)  
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree  
Or the stricken eagle soar!

And all my days are trances,

And all my nightly dreams  
Are where thy grey eye glances,  
And where thy footstep gleams —  
In what ethereal dances,  
By what eternal streams.

# LENORE

Ah, broken is the golden bowl! the spirit flown forever!  
Let the bell toll! – a saintly soul floats on the Stygian river;  
And, Guy de Vere, hast *thou* no tear? – weep now or  
nevermore!

See! on yon drear and rigid bier low lies thy love, Lenore!  
Come! let the burial rite be read – the funeral song be sung!

---

An anthem for the queenliest dead that ever died so young —  
A dirge for her the doubly dead in that she died so young.

"Wretches! ye loved her for her wealth and hated her for her  
pride.

And when she fell in feeble health, ye blessed her – that she  
died!

How *shall* the ritual, then, be read? – the requiem how be  
sung

By you – by yours, the evil eye, – by yours, the slanderous  
tongue

That did to death the innocence that died, and died so  
young?"

*Peccavimus*; but rave not thus! and let a Sabbath song  
Go up to God so solemnly the dead may feel no wrong  
The sweet Lenore hath "gone before," with Hope, that flew

beside,

Leaving thee wild for the dear child that should have been  
thy bride —

For her, the fair and *debonair*, that now so lowly lies,

The life upon her yellow hair but not within her eyes —

The life still there, upon her hair – the death upon her eyes.

"Avaunt! avaunt! from fiends below, the indignant ghost is  
riven —

From Hell unto a high estate far up within the Heaven —

From grief and groan, to a golden throne, beside the King of  
Heaven!

Let no bell toll, then, – lest her soul, amid its hallowed mirth,  
Should catch the note as it doth float up from the damnèd  
Earth!

And I! – to-night my heart is light! – no dirge will I upraise,  
But waft the angel on her flight with a Paean of old days!"

# DREAMS

Oh! that my young life were a lasting dream!  
My spirit not awakening, till the beam  
Of an Eternity should bring the morrow.  
Yes! tho' that long dream were of hopeless sorrow,  
'Twere better than the cold reality  
Of waking life, to him whose heart must be,  
And hath been still, upon the lovely earth,  
A chaos of deep passion, from his birth.  
But should it be – that dream eternally  
Continuing – as dreams have been to me  
In my young boyhood – should it thus be given,  
'Twere folly still to hope for higher Heaven.  
For I have revell'd, when the sun was bright  
I' the summer sky, in dreams of living light  
And loveliness, – have left my very heart  
In climes of my imagining, apart  
From mine own home, with beings that have been  
Of mine own thought – what more could I have seen?  
'Twas once – and only once – and the wild hour  
From my remembrance shall not pass – some power  
Or spell had bound me – 'twas the chilly wind  
Came o'er me in the night, and left behind  
Its image on my spirit – or the moon  
Shone on my slumbers in her lofty noon

Too coldly – or the stars – howe'er it was  
That dream was as that night-wind – let it pass.  
I *have been* happy, tho' in a dream.  
I have been happy – and I love the theme:  
Dreams! in their vivid colouring of life,  
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife  
Of semblance with reality, which brings  
To the delirious eye, more lovely things  
Of Paradise and Love – and all our own!  
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath known.

# TO HELEN

[Helen was Mrs. Whitman.]

I saw thee once – once only – years ago:  
I must not say *how* many – but *not* many.  
It was a July midnight; and from out  
A full-orbed moon, that, like thine own soul, soaring,  
Sought a precipitate pathway up through heaven,  
There fell a silvery-silken veil of light,  
With quietude, and sultriness, and slumber,  
Upon the upturned faces of a thousand  
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden,  
Where no wind dared to stir, unless on tiptoe —  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses  
That gave out, in return for the love-light,  
Their odorous souls in an ecstatic death —  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of these roses  
That smiled and died in this parterre, enchanted  
By thee, and by the poetry of thy presence.

Clad all in white, upon a violet bank  
I saw thee half-reclining; while the moon  
Fell on the upturn'd faces of the roses,  
And on thine own, upturn'd – alas, in sorrow!

Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight —  
Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sorrow,) —  
That bade me pause before that garden-gate,  
To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?  
No footstep stirred: the hated world all slept,  
Save only thee and me. (Oh, Heaven! — oh, God  
How my heart beats in coupling those two words!)  
Save only thee and me. I paused — I looked —  
And in an instant all things disappeared.  
(Ah, bear in mind this garden was enchanted!)

The pearly lustre of the moon went out:  
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,  
The happy flowers and the repining trees,  
Were seen no more: the very roses' odours  
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.  
All — all expired save thee — save less than thou:  
Save only the divine light in thine eyes —  
Save but the soul in thine uplifted eyes.  
I saw but them — they were the world to me!  
I saw but them — saw only them for hours,  
Saw only them until the moon went down.  
What wild heart-histories seemed to lie enwritten  
Upon those crystalline, celestial spheres!

How dark a woe, yet how sublime a hope!  
How silently serene a sea of pride!  
How daring an ambition; yet how deep —

How fathomless a capacity for love!

But now, at length, dear Dian sank from sight,  
Into a western couch of thunder-cloud;  
And thou, a ghost, amid the entombing trees  
Didst glide away. *Only thine eyes remained;*  
They *would not* go – they never yet have gone;  
Lighting my lonely pathway home that night,  
*They* have not left me (as my hopes have) since;  
They follow me – they lead me through the years.  
They are my ministers – yet I their slave.  
Their office is to illumine and enkindle —  
My duty, *to be saved* by their bright light,  
And purified in their electric fire,  
And sanctified in their elysian fire.  
They fill, my soul with Beauty (which is Hope),  
And are far up in Heaven – the stars I kneel to  
In the sad, silent watches of my night;  
While even in the meridian glare of day  
I see them still – two sweetly scintillant  
Venuses, unextinguished by the sun!

# THE HAUNTED PALACE

In the greenest of our valleys  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace —  
Radiant palace – reared its head.  
In the monarch Thought's dominion —  
It stood there!  
Never seraph spread a pinion  
Over fabric half so fair!

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,  
On its roof did float and flow,  
(This – all this – was in the olden  
Time long ago,)  
And every gentle air that dallied,  
In that sweet day,  
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,  
A wingèd odour went away.

Wanderers in that happy valley,  
Through two luminous windows, saw  
Spirits moving musically,  
To a lute's well-tuned law,  
Round about a throne where, sitting  
(Porphyrogene!)

In state his glory well befitting,  
The ruler of the realm was seen.

And all with pearl and ruby glowing  
Was the fair palace door,  
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,  
And sparkling evermore,  
A troop of Echoes, whose sweet duty  
Was but to sing,  
In voices of surpassing beauty,  
The wit and wisdom of their king.

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,  
Assailed the monarch's high estate.  
(Ah, let us mourn! – for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him desolate!)  
And round about his home the glory  
That blushed and bloomed,

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