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## **Gothic Aspects In The Raven, The Fall Of The House Of Usher, The Tell Tale Heart, The Bells, Annabel Lee And The Black Cat**

Throughout Poe's life, many challenges have been thrown at him, causing him to fall into a deep depression. He was born in 1809, and his mother sadly passed away 2 years later in 1811. Poe was adopted by the Allen family after her death, but his siblings stayed with different families. While he lived with the Allens, he went to good schools and lived in a welcoming community. Edgar was a good student, but when he entered college he started heavily drinking, and this led to him going into debt. He dropped out of school quickly. Poe married his wife at the extremely young age of thirteen. She passed away at 24 years old.

In order to cope with his troubles, Poe turned to writing short stories and poetry. His work went around quickly, but not all of it was praised. Newspapers quickly rejected his stories. It took years for him to get a job, but in 1835 he finally scored a spot as an editor for a newspaper because of his story, *The Manuscript Found In A Bottle*. 5 years later he started working for *Graham's Magazine*. Because of his stories included in the magazine, it became much more popular. He made the stories interactive with the readers. For example, he challenged readers to send in cryptograms after reading his mystery story, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*. He chose to solve each and every one of them. In 1842, Poe left the company because he wanted to start his own. However, this was a major mistake. His magazine *The Stylus* failed terribly. Because of this, Poe was, yet again, jobless. He published booklets with his stories and poems, but they weren't sold enough. His story *The Gold Bug* got him \$100 in prize money. He sold 300,000 copies, but it still was not enough for him to make a living. In 1845 he became an editor for *The Broadway Journal*, but it went bankrupt a year after he was hired. In 1847, his wife's health was quickly fading. She passed 10 days after Poe's birthday. This caused Poe to become severely stressed, and he could barely function.

His last year was 1849. He was rushed to the hospital after being found at *Gunner's Hall*, and he died 4 days after making it there on October 7th. However, no one knows exactly how he died, and it is still a mystery to this day. Many say he died from alcohol, but other conspiracies are that he had rabies or he was attacked. However, Poe brought us many amazing stories deep from his brain. Some popular stories or poems he wrote are *The Raven*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Tell-Tale Heart*, *The Bells*, *Annabel Lee*, and *The Black Cat*.

*The Raven* tells about a raven visiting a grieving man, and talking to him until he descends into complete madness. This work was written after the death of his wife. The raven is meant to represent 'mournful and never-ending remembrance,' according to Poe. The main conflict in the text is really in the narrator's mind, after seeming to argue with the raven when in reality he is fighting with himself. Poe most likely wrote this text in order to cope with his pain and suffering after losing his loved one.

*The Fall of the House of Usher* is a twisted story about a man whose fear leads him to destroying everything. He fears that his sister's seizures will quickly lead to her death, so he took things into his own hands and buried her alive. His family and his entire house fell apart.

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The theory of Poe's reasoning to write this story is that it was based off of events he heard passing around through his town. This supposedly happened in the 1800s, before Poe was born. The story is basically about two lovers that died in their own home, locked in an embrace. Their skeletons were found and the house soon turned to dust. This is very similar to Poe's story, and the darkness of the original tale could be what led him to write *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

*The Tell-Tale Heart* is yet another dark story by the famous Poe. It follows the narrator, claiming to be a sane man, as he murders an old man with a 'vulture eye.' Since his murder was calculated, he hid his body under floorboards to hide him from the police. However, once the police were onto him his lips became loose, and he confessed his wrongdoings. Poe may have wrote this text to let readers explore the darker side of the human mind, since he already knew what it was like.

*Annabel Lee* is a poem about the death of a beautiful woman which the narrator was in love with from a young age. Like some of his other texts, it connects to his own experiences with the death of his wife. In the poem, the narrator is so madly in love with Annabel that "angels are envious." This was the last complete poem written by Poe. Annabel Lee is killed by a sea wind that gives her a deadly chill. The sea symbolizes loneliness and emptiness. She is placed in a tomb, which represents death. Poe was clearly traumatized by his loved one's death, which is why so many of his works are about the death of a treasured woman.

Finally, *The Black Cat* is a story about a crazy alcoholic drawn mad by his addiction. This causes him to kill his cats, and eventually his wife. The black cats can symbolize the narrator's soul, which is dark and decaying. The story also involves the death of a cherished woman, which obviously relates to the death of Poe's own wife. Poe also struggled with alcohol. He also took opiums, which can cause users to suffer from delusions. The narrator in this story suffered from this, since peaceful cats drove him to insanity.

In conclusion, Poe wrote these dark, gothic texts in order to cope with the struggles in his life. Not many things went right in his life, so he turned to writing in order to let all of his pain and grief out, and in the end it led to his success. Edgar Allan Poe is looked at as one of the world's greatest authors, and he is still praised as such today. Not many dared to go down the path Poe did, since back in his day not many writers found success. Poe's notebook was his safe place, and we cherish him for not giving up on his twisted tales.