ЗАКАРПАТСЬКИЙ УГОРСЬКИЙ ІНСТИТУТ ІМЕНІ ФЕРЕНЦА РАКОЦІ ІІ
II. RÁKÓCZI FERENC KÁRPÁTALJAI MAGYAR FŐISKOLA

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« АМЕРИКАНСЬКА ЛІТЕРАТУРА ДРУГОЇ ПОЛОВИНИ 19 СТОЛІТТЯ »
(ПОСІБНИК)

(для студентів 4-го курсу спеціальності «014 Середня освіта (Мова і література англійська))

A 19. SZÁZAD MÁSODIK FELÉNEK AMERIKAI IRODALMA "
(Főiskolai jegyzet)

Перший (бакалаврський) / Alapképzés (BA)
(ступінь вищої освіти /a felsőoktatás szintje)

01 Освіта/Педагогіка / *01 Oktatás/Pedagógia*
(галузь знань / képzési ág)

"Середня освіта (Мова і література англійська)"
"Középfokú oktatás (angol nyelv és irodalom)"
(освітня програма / képzési program)

Берегове / Beregszász
2023 р. / 2023

Навчальний посібник «Американська література другої половини 19 століття» (частина 2) являє собою продовження посібника «Зарубіжна (американська) література» (частина 1) і рекомендований студентам 4-го курсу спеціальності «014 Середня освіта (Мова і література англійська)» Закарпатського угорського інституту імені Ференца Ракоці ІІ. Матеріал посібника охоплює найважливіші літературні віхи американської літератури другої половини 19 століття. В ньому подається матеріал лекцій з навчальної дисципліни, який може бути використаний студентами для опрацювання теоретичного матеріалу і підготовки до семінарських занять. Також, до занять додаються хрестоматійні матеріали.

Затверджено до використання у навчальному процесі
на засіданні кафедри філології ЗУІ ім. Ф.Ракоці ІІ
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Az Amerikai irodalom (2. rész) jegyzet, a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola IV. éves angol nyelv és irodalom szakos hallgatóinak készült, az Amerikai irodalom c. tantárgy alaposabb tanulmányozásának és elsajátításának megkönnyítése céljából.

Az adott főiskolai jegyzet a 19. század második felének legfontosabb irodalomtörténeti mérföldköveit mutatja be. Megtalálhatóak benne az előadások jegyzetei és a kötelező, elemzésre szánt eredeti szövegek megfelelő részei.

Az "Amerikai irodalom II." című tantárgy segédanyagának szánjuk.

Az oktatási folyamatban történő felhasználását jóváhagyta
a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola
Filológia Tanszéke
(2023. augusztus 21., 95 számú jegyzőkönyv).

Megjelentetésre javasolta a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola
Minőségbiztosítási Tanácsa
(_____, _____. számú jegyzőkönyv).

Elektronikus formában (PDF fájlformátumban) történő kiadásra javasolta
a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola Tudományos Tanácsa
(_____, _____. számú jegyzőkönyv).

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Amerikai irodalom a 19. század második felében

Tartalom

Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Walt Whitman is now considered one of the greatest American poets of all time, but his work was not so well-loved when it first debuted.

Walter 'Walt' Whitman was an influential American poet of the 19th century, and a figure of more than a little controversy. As a transcendentalist, he held views that weren't necessarily popular at his time, and his poetry, namely *Leaves of Grass*, was met with a good deal of criticism when it was first published in 1855. Whitman's own brother George considered it not worth reading. Clearly, the critics were wrong.

His Life

Walt Whitman was born into a large, poor family in 1819 in New York State. At age 11, he stopped formal schooling and went to work to support his family. He held various office jobs, worked for a printer and eventually became a journalist and teacher, though no occupation would suit him as well as poet.

The Journalist, 1844

Worked for several different newspapers. Wrote short fiction from 1841-1848. Themes and techniques borrowed from Poe and Hawthorne.

The Brooklyn *Eagle*

1846-1848. Becomes chief editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*, a post he holds from March 5, 1846 to January 18, 1848. In May 1848, Whitman is fired because of his political conflict with those of the publisher. A “free soil” or “locofoco” Democrat, Whitman opposes the expansion of slavery into new territories.

Locofoco Party

In U.S. history,the locofocos were a radical wing of the Democratic Party, organized in New York City in 1835. Made up primarily of workingmen and reformers, the Locofocos were opposed to state banks, monopolies, paper money, tariffs, and generally any financial policies that seemed to themantidemocratic and conducive to special privilege. The Locofocos received their name (which was later derisively applied by political opponents to all Democrats) when party regulars in New York turned off the gas lights to oust the radicals from a Tammany Hall nominating meeting. The radicals responded by lighting candles with

the new self-igniting friction matches known as locofocos, and proceeded to nominate their own slate.

"Pulp Fiction"

Franklin Evans, 1842 - Temperance novel.Sold 20,000 copies, more than any other work Whitman published in his lifetime

Influences: Literature and Music

a) Italian opera: "Were it not for the opera, I could never have written *Leaves of Grass."*
b) Shakespeare, especially *Richard III.* Whitman saw Junius Brutus Booth (father of John Wilkes Booth) perform.
c) The Bible

Whitman loved the bel canto style of opera. Bel canto consists of long passages of simple melody alternating with outbursts of elaborate vocal scrollwork, which turns the voice into a complex wind instrument. The desired effect was to heighten the dramatic meaning and significance of the words through attention to pitch, dynamics, melody, and rhythm. This highly emotional and intense use of the human voice was in Whitman's view the highest form of art. His favorite singer: Marietta Alboni (in NY 1852-1853). Her work influenced the aria of the mockingbird in "Out of the Cradle endlessly Rocking" and the carol of the hermit thrush in "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." These 2 poems employ a recitative-aria structured modeled on Italian operatic style.

Literary Acquaintances: Edgar Allan Poe, William Cullen Bryant, Henry David Thoreau, Friends at Pfaff's Restaurant ("Bohemians")(1859-1862), Elihu Vedder, E.C. Stedman, Ada Clare, Henry Clapp

Whitman on Poe: "I have seen Poe--met him: he impressed me very favorably; was dark, quiet, handsome--southern from top to toe: languid, tired out, it is true, but altogether ingratiating." (Traubel, from *Whitman in his Own Time*, 252)

Alcott and Thoreau visited Whitman in 1856

Alcott: Ocotber 4, 1856. I have been to see Walt Whitman. . . A nondescript, he is not so easily described, nor seen to be described. Broad-shouldered, rouge-fleshed, Bacchus-browed, bearded like a satyr, and rank, he wears his man-Bloomer in defiance of everybody, having these as everything else after his own fashion, and for example to all men hereafter. Red flannel undershirt, open-breasted, exposing his brawny neck; striped calico jacket over this, the collar Byroneal, with coarse cloth overalls buttoned to it; cowhide boots; a heavy round-about, with huge outside pockets and buttons to match; and a slouched hat, for house and street alike. Eyes gray, unimaginative, cautious yet sagacious; his voice deep, sharp,

tender sometimes and almost melting. When talking will recline upon the couch at length, pillowing his head upon his bended arm, and informing you naively how lazy he is, and slow. Listens well. … He has never been sick, he says, nor taken medicine, nor sinned, and so is quite innocent of repentance and man's fall.

Bet, 1859-62, Whitman was often at Pfaff's, a gathering spot for New York Bohemians who disdained bourgeois conventions. His "Out of the Cradle" was first published in publisher Henry Clapp's weekly *Saturday Press.*

Whitman in 1854

His friend Dr. Maurice Bucke called this "the Christ likeness" in which the poet as seer begins to emerge in *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman would write, "I am the man, I suffer'd, I was there."

Leaves Of Grass

Whitman began work on the poems that would later comprise ***Leaves of Grass***, including the famous *Song of Myself,* as early as 1850. Whitman's style of poetry was unique for his time; he wrote in **free verse**, or poetry without meter or rhyme. As meter and rhyme are what people often use to distinguish poetry from prose, it was often hard for some readers to recognize *Leaves of Grass* as poetry at all!

Leaves of Grass, 1855

Twelve poems, including

- "Song of Myself"
- "I Sing the Body Electric"
- "The Sleepers"

Only 795 copies printed.

Family tradition says that Whitman set some of the type for this edition. Though now it's considered essential American literature, the highly sensual nature of *Leaves of Grass*, along with its unusual form, made it pretty unpopular at the time it was first published. Though no one knows for certain, most scholars assume that Whitman was either gay or bisexual, and his explicit descriptions of physical pleasure in the book were highly offensive to many. Readers were said to have thrown the book immediately into the fire after reading it.

Like most transcendentalist works, *Leaves of Grass* explores the relationship between man and nature and the value of the mind and spirit. Transcendentalism placed great value on the self, and in Book 1 of *Leaves of Grass*, entitled ***Inscriptions***, the first poem is actually titled ***One's-Self I Sing***.

One's-Self I Sing

'One's-self I sing, a simple separate person,
Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.
Of physiology from top to toe I sing,
Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the Muse, I say
the Form complete is worthier far,
The Female equally with the Male I sing.
Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,
Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine,
The Modern Man I sing.'

It's interesting to note that this poem specifically mentions the body (physiology) and not just the mind or the spirit. This is one of the more tame examples of Whitman's emphasis on the physical. Though *Leaves of Grass* is his most well-known work, Whitman did publish **other collections of poetry** during his time, such as *Franklin Evans*, *Drum Taps* and *Democratic Vistas*, a politically themed collection of letters and essays.

Like many transcendentalists of his time, Whitman strongly opposed slavery, though scholars believe that he still held many of the common racial prejudices of his day.

Whitman's Themes

- Transcendent power of love, brotherhood, and comradeship
- Imaginative projection into others' lives
- Optimistic faith in democracy and equality
- Belief in regenerative and illustrative powers of nature and its value as a teacher
- Equivalence of body and soul and the unabashed exaltation of the body and sexuality

Whitman's Poetic Techniques

- Free verse: lack of metrical regularity and conventional rhyme
- Use of repeated images, symbols, phrases, and grammatical units
- Use of enumerations and catalogs
- Use of anaphora (initial repetition) in lines and "Epanaphora" (each line hangs by a loop from the line before it)
- Contrast and parallelism in paired lines

Whitman's Use of Language

- Idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation.
- Words used for their sounds as much as their sense; foreign languages

- Use of language from several disciplines
- The sciences: anatomy, astronomy, botany (especially the flora and fauna of America)
- Businesses and professions, such as carpentry
- Military and war terms; nautical terms

Whitman's Influence

Despite the controversial nature of his work, Whitman's legacy on American poetry is hard to overstate. One of his contemporaries, a British woman named **Mary Costelloe**, said, 'you cannot really understand America without Walt Whitman, without *Leaves of Grass*,' and Ezra Pound said that Walt Whitman, 'IS America.'

Harold Bloom, one of the most important literary critics of the present day, has this to say about Whitman:

> *'If you are American, then Walt Whitman is your imaginative father and mother, even if, like myself, you have never composed a line of verse. You can nominate a fair number of literary works as candidates for the secular Scripture of the United States. They might include Melville's Moby-Dick, Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and Emerson's two series of Essays and The Conduct of Life. None of those, not even Emerson's, are as central as the first edition of Leaves of Grass.'*

Reviews: Praise

Ralph Waldo Emerson, letter to Whitman, 21 July 1855:

> *"I find [Leaves of Grass] the most extraordinary piece of wit & wisdom that America has yet contributed. . . . I greet you at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere, for such a start."*

It's not uncommon for a work of literature to receive poor reception when it's initially published, but go on to receive greater acclaim in the years to come, but the complete 180 in attitude with regards to *Leaves of Grass* seems pretty extreme. We'd like to say that Whitman handled the praise with humility, but there are reports that he viewed himself as a Christ-like figure in poetry-

Early Editions of *Leaves of Grass*

1855 - Self-published the first edition

1856 - Added new poems and revised old ones.

1860 - Began grouping poems thematically; includes "A Child's Reminiscence," which will become "Out of the Cradle, Endlessly Rocking"

1867 - Incorporates *Drum-Taps* (1865), including "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" and "O Captain, My Captain"

Leaves of Grass, 1860

146 new poems added to the 32 poems of the second edition, including "I hear America singing"

Enfans d'Adam section, 15 poems on "amativeness" or love for women, and *Calamus,* 32 poems on "adhesiveness" or love between men

Civil War

After his brother is wounded at Fredericksburg (1862), Whitman goes to Washington to care for him and stays for nearly 3 years, visiting the wounded, writing letters, and keeping up their spirits.

One Wounded Soldier's View

"Every Sunday there were half a dozen old roosters who would come into my ward and preach and pray and sing to us, while we were swearing to ourselves all the time, and wishing the blamed old fools would go away. Walt Whitman's funny stories, and his pipes and tobaccos, were worth more than all the preachers and tracts in Christendom."

Whitman and Lincoln

Whitman saw Lincoln often, but the two never met face to face.

"When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd"

"O Captain, My Captain" These are Whitman's elegies to Lincoln.

Walt Whitman, Civil Servant

1862, Clerk at the Paymaster's Office

1865. 1 January. Becomes a clerk at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a post he enjoys.

Fired in May because Secretary of the Interior James Harlan sees *Leaves of Grass* in Whitman's desk drawer and denounces it as immoral.

The Good Gray Poet

May 1865. Whitman's friend William Douglas O'Connor secures him a job at the Attorney General's office, a post he holds until he leaves after he suffers a stroke in 1873.

O'Connor publishes *The Good Gray Poet: A Vindication* (1866), the beginning of a shift in Whitman's public persona and popularity.

Later Editions of *Leaves of Grass*

1872 Includes 120-page "annex," *A Passage to India*

1881-1882 The firm of James R. Osgood discontinues publishing *Leaves of Grass* after it is banned in Boston; Whitman takes the copies and binds and sells them himself.

1888-1889 *Leaves of Grass* (Birthday Edition) is the first pocket-sized version.

1891-92 "Deathbed Edition"

In 1884, Whitman purchases a house at 328 Mickle Street, Camden, New Jersey, for $1750. It is the first house he has ever owned.

The Poet at Home

Whitman would allow no one to pick up his papers, saying that whatever he wanted surfaced sooner or later. Whitman died on 26 March 1892 at about 6:30 p.m. and is buried in the tomb that he had designed.

Summary

Walt Whitman was a highly influential American poet and a key member of the transcendentalist movement, along with contemporaries Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. Despite his humble beginnings, Whitman went on to write one of the most defining works of American poetry to date, *Leaves of Grass*. Though the sexuality of the book, and Whitman's own suspected sexual preferences, made *Leaves of Grass* controversial for the time, scholars and critics now consider it essential American reading.

Leaves of Grass

A spiritual autobiography. Expanded and revised 9 times throughout Whitman's life. It "tells the story of an enchanted observer who says who he is at every opportunity and claims what he loves by naming it."

Poetic Devices of Whitman

Alliteration

Assonance

Imagery

Onomatopoeia

Catalog

Personification

Metaphor

Consonance

Parallel structure

Repetition

Anaphora

Cadence

Informal or slang; invented words

Tone

Alliteration

It is used to create musical effects and to establish mood.

From "Song of Myself #1"

"I celebrate myself, and sing myself,

And what I assume you shall assume,

For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you."

Assonance

From "Song of Myself #1"

"I l<u>oa</u>f and invite my s<u>ou</u>l,

I l<u>ea</u>n and loaf at my <u>ea</u>se observing a sp<u>ea</u>r of summer grass."

Consonance: The repetition of like consonant sounds in the middle and end of words.

Alliteration, Consonance, and Assonance are used to create musical effects and to establish Mood and tone.

Imagery

The use of language to evoke a mental picture or a concrete sensation of a person, place, thing, or idea.

"Alone far in the wilds and mountains I hunt,

Wandering amazed at my own lightness and glee,

In the late afternoon choosing a safe spot to pass the night,

Kindling a fire and broiling the fresh-killed game,

Falling asleep on the gathered leaves with my dog and gun by my side."

Leaves of Grass #10

Onomatopoeia

The use of words whose sound imitates or suggests its meaning like buzz, bang, pow, zoom, clomp, etc. This form of imagery appeals to the sense of hearing.

"The runaway slave

came to my house and

stopp'd outside,/ I heard

his motions crackling the

twigs of the woodpile…"

Catalog

A list of people, things, or events. Whitman uses long, descriptive lists to express "the voice of America."

"I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,/ Those of mechanics…The carpenter singing…The mason singing…The boatman singing…The wood-cutter's song…"

It's All in the Way It's Written

Parallel Structure: The repetition of words or phrases that have similar grammatical structure

From “Song of Myself #33”

“…I am the hounded slave, I wince at the bite of the dogs,…

I clutch the rails of the fence, my gore dribs..”

Cadence: The natural, rhythmic rise and fall of language as it is normally spoken. It is not written to a particular, predictable meter of language.

Free Verse: Poetry that does not conform to a regular meter or rhyme scheme.

Walt Whitman was the first American poet to use free verse. A Style All His Own

Tone: A writer’s attitude toward a given subject. Tone is determined through a study of words and descriptions used by the author.

Tone is dependent upon diction and style.

“The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains of my gab and loitering./ I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,/ I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world” (“Song of Myself #52”).

Whitman used “chunky language” to enlarge the possibilities of American poetry.

He used slang words or invented words like “Yawp” to reflect the depth of heart he hoped to express.

In repetition he trumpeted America as a land of greatness, diversity, passion, and optimism. He wrote of a great America.

Insciptions (1855)

I Hear America Singing

I HEAR America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deck-hand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,

The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work,
or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young
fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs

Leaves of Grass (1855)

Song of Myself

16

I am of old and young, of the foolish as much as the wise,
Regardless of others, ever regardful of others,
Maternal as well as paternal, a child as well as a man,
Stuff'd with the stuff that is coarse and stuff'd with the stuff that
is fine,
One of the Nation of many nations, the smallest the same and the
largest the same,
A Southerner soon as a Northerner, a planter nonchalant and
hospitable down by the Oconee I live,
A Yankee bound my own way ready for trade, my joints the
limberest joints on earth and the sternest joints on
earth,
A Kentuckian walking the vale of the Elkhorn in my deer-skin
leggings, a Louisianian or Georgian,
A boatman over lakes or bays or along coasts, a Hoosier, Badger,
Buckeye;
At home on Kanadian snow-shoes or up in the bush, or with
fishermen off Newfoundland,
At home in the fleet of ice-boats, sailing with the rest and tack-
ing,
At home on the hills of Vermont or in the woods of Maine, or the
Texan ranch,

Comrade of Californians, comrade of free North-Westerners, (loving their big proportions,)
Comrade of raftsmen and coalmen, comrade of all who shake hands and welcome to drink and meat,
A learner with the simplest, a teacher of the thoughtfullest,
A novice beginning yet experient of myriads of seasons,
Of every hue and caste am I, of every rank and religion,
A farmer, mechanic, artist, gentleman, sailor, quaker,
Prisoner, fancy-man, rowdy, lawyer, physician, priest.

I resist any thing better than my own diversity,
Breathe the air but leave plenty after me,
And am not stuck up, and am in my place.

(The moth and the fish-eggs are in their place,
The bright suns I see and the dark suns I cannot see are in their place,
The palpable is in its place and the impalpable is in its place.)

Leaves of Grass (1855)

There was a Child Went Forth

THERE was a child went forth every day;
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became;
And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part of the day, or for many years, or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,
And grass, and white and red morning-glories, and white and red clover, and the song of the phoebe-bird,
And the Third-month lambs, and the sow's pink-faint litter, and the mare's foal, and the cow's calf,
And the noisy brood of the barn-yard, or by the mire of the pond-side,

And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below there—and the beautiful curious liquid,
And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads—all became part of him.

The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-month became part of him;
Winter-grain sprouts, and those of the light-yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the garden,
And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms, and the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and the commonest weeds by the road;
And the old drunkard staggering home from the out-house of the tavern, whence he had lately risen,
And the school-mistress that pass'd on her way to the school,
And the friendly boys that pass'd—and the quarrelsome boys,
And the tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls—and the barefoot negro boy and girl,
And all the changes of city and country, wherever he went.

His own parents,
He that had father'd him, and she that had conceiv'd him in her womb, and birth'd him,
They gave this child more of themselves than that;
They gave him afterward every day—they became part of him.

The mother at home, quietly placing the dishes on the supper-table;
The mother with mild words—clean her cap and gown, a wholesome odor falling off her person and clothes as she walks by;
The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean, anger'd, unjust;
The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure,
The family usages, the language, the company, the furniture—the yearning and swelling heart,
Affection that will not be gainsay'd—the sense of what is real—the thought if, after all, it should prove unreal,
The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-time—the curious whether and how,
Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all flashes and specks?

Men and women crowding fast in the streets—if they are not flashes and specks, what are they?

The streets themselves, and the façades of houses, and goods in the windows,

Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd wharves—the huge crossing at the ferries,

The village on the highland, seen from afar at sunset—the river between,

Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on roofs and gables of white or brown, three miles off,

The schooner near by, sleepily dropping down the tide—the little boat slack-tow'd astern,

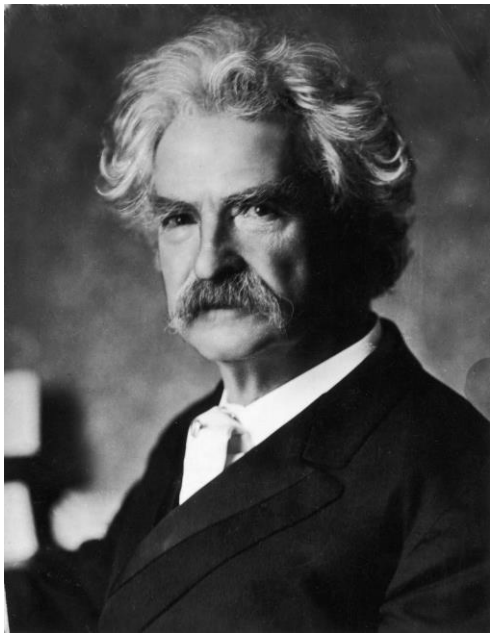
The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken crests, slapping,

The strata of color'd clouds, the long bar of maroon-tint, away solitary by itself—the spread of purity it lies motionless in,

The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the fragrance of salt marsh and shore mud;

These became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will always go forth every day.

Mark Twain (1835 – 1910)



His Life

Mark Twain, a writer who is often considered the first truly American voice in this country's literary history, was a man of many adventures.

In his lifetime Twain could have, at various times, considered himself an author, an **essayist**, a humorist, a journalist, a master riverboat pilot, an entrepreneur, an inventor, a public speaker and controversial personality, a son, a brother, a father and a husband.

Most celebrated now for his novels *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*,

Twain's use of authenticity in voice and **writing style** created for him and the world a new kind of writing - writing that revealed to the reader the gritty, and sometimes uncomfortable, reality of 19th-century life in a changing America.

Early Years

'Mark Twain' was not the author's given name at birth. This little boy was actually born **Samuel Clemens**. The year was 1835, and young Samuel joined a mother and father and five siblings in a small village in Missouri. When he was only four, the family moved to Hannibal, Missouri, a very busy town of about a thousand people. While the move may seem like an unimportant detail, Hannibal became incredibly special to this little boy.

The town, situated on the Mississippi River, was bustling with steamboat business, minstrel shows, tradesmen and visiting performance troupes. Pretty much anything a curious little boy could want, little Samuel had. At some point along the way, though, Samuel saw a different side of this little playground. He witnessed a significant amount of violence in disputes among townspeople and also in the locals' treatment of slaves - by the age of ten he had already witnessed two deaths.

Think about it: Missouri would be one of the 15 slave states when the Civil War broke out in 1861, so at the time, slave ownership and trade was an active facet of the economy.

On the one hand, little Samuel had this bright little childhood filled with the kind of adventure and wonder that you read about in books. On the other hand, he knew firsthand about the darkness that lay beneath.

Sadly, little Samuel lost his father, a lawyer and a judge, to pneumonia when the boy was only twelve years old. His mother and four surviving siblings grew desperate and became nearly destitute. So, his great American childhood abruptly over, he quit school to begin a lifetime of work.

His first job was an apprentice printer at a newspaper at which he worked in exchange for a small amount of food. His second job, at the age of 15, was working for his brother Orion at the Hannibal Western Union as a printer, writer and editor. So began his writing life.

Life as a Writer

At the age of 17, little Samuel took off. He left his job at his brother's paper and spent three years traveling and working as a printer hired day-by-day. In 1856, he boarded a steamboat in Cincinnati intending to go to New Orleans. Along the route, he informally studied with the steamboat's pilot, whose intelligence and acuity on the water impressed Samuel. Ultimately, he stayed on as an apprentice pilot, eventually fulfilling a childhood dream and earning his own pilot's license. Back then, riverboat pilots were powerful, respected and rich. For Samuel, who spent his entire childhood watching from the shore, this turn of events was exciting.

A funny little thing happened to Samuel. Obviously, he had to learn to navigate the muddy and sometimes cloudy waters of the Mississippi. One of the most important lessons of piloting was the necessity of testing the depth of the waters. When one reached a specific measure of depth in the water, the signal cry to others aboard was 'mark twain,' which meant, basically, that the waters were safe. Imagine that. A writer finds his name, and himself, on the riverboat. He made the decision to officially adopt the pen name as his own.

Unfortunately, the Civil War brought a halt to his time on the river because travel became quite limited.

Twain decided to take off again, spending time traveling in the U.S. and abroad, and writing various newspapers pieces that were insightful and humorous.

It was during this time that he met and married his wife Olivia (with whom he would eventually have four children).

It was also during this time that he published his first short story that gained acclaim: 'The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calavaras County.'

Works And Style

Twain was one of those guys whose life seems to follow an uncharted path. While writing for various newspapers, he fancied himself an inventor - he actually patented three inventions.

While traveling the country on the lecture circuit as a humorist speaker (and what some would now consider a kind of comedian), he schmoozed with the political and literary elite. In some places he made quite a bit of money, but he also lost money. The one constant in his life seemed to be Missouri and those memories of home. So, he decided to write about it.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, published in 1876, is a novel about a boy growing up on the Mississippi River. Tom Sawyer and his buddies get into all sorts of shenanigans. In this novel, which is said to be set in a town based on Hannibal, Missouri, we meet his sidekick, Huckleberry Finn.

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, published in 1885, is the sequel to his first novel, and is also the work that has garnered the most acclaim. Believed by many (including Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner) to be one of the greatest of all American novels, it chronicles Huck's escape from his unpleasant family situation and his subsequent travels into the South.

What makes Huckleberry Finn so unique? Its use of regional dialect and the fact that the narrator's adventures take place in Missouri and the South. In his first-person narration, Twain is able to capture the authentic voice of the narrator through realistic descriptions and vernacular (or the native dialect of a region). This is particularly notable because no author had ever given their reader such a gritty portrayal of an authentic character with less-than-romantic life problems, nor had the voice of a child been so successfully captured.

This narrator, Huck Finn, reaches out to the reader directly on the very first page of the novel: *'YOU don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth.'*

Think about this -Twain was one of the first to capture language as it was really spoken with accents, mispronunciation and - bad grammar. And - readers liked it. He became one of the first in a new school of writing called Realism. Twain purposefully broke away from the formality of Romanticism and created a kind of story that reflected the real lives of the middle

class, and in this case, the real adventures of a mischievous and thoughtful boy. Using this as a vehicle, many not-so-fun topics were weaved into the story like class, money and racism**.**

Again, it was more gritty and in-your-face than most readers had seen - and it was a hit. It also made him an incredibly controversial figure: some of the language in Huck Finn has frequently landed it on the banned book lists in the nation's public schools.

Twain's choice of setting becomes very important as well. In recalling his experiences in Hannibal as a child, he drew on all of those aspects of the region that he remembered, both good and bad. Therefore, we see the all the possibilities that river life brought along with the darker, more scary aspects of opportunism and violent racism. What all of this come together to form a real picture of this geographic location - the good, the bad and the ugly. Twain was also considered one of the first **Regionalists** (or writers who focused their works on an accurate representation of a specific region).

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer represents, in general, a significant literary departure for Twain. He toned down the large-scale social satire that characterized many of his earlier works, choosing instead to depict the sustained development of a single, central character. Twain had originally intended for the novel to follow Tom into adulthood and conclude with his return to St. Petersburg after many years away. But he was never able to get his hero out of boyhood, however, and the novel ends with its protagonist still preparing to make the transition into adult life.

Personal memories

Twain based *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* largely on his personal memories of growing up in Hannibal in the 1840s. In his preface to the novel, he states that *"[m]ost of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred"* and that the character of Tom Sawyer has a basis in *"a combination . . . of three boys whom I knew."*

Indeed, nearly every figure in the novel comes from the young Twain's village experience: Aunt Polly shares many characteristics with Twain's mother; Mary is based on Twain's sister Pamela; and Sid resembles Twain's younger brother, Henry. Huck Finn, the Widow Douglas, and even Injun Joe also have real-life counterparts, although the actual Injun Joe was more of a harmless drunk than a murderer.

Idyllic Picture

Unlike Twain's later masterpiece, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer concerns itself primarily with painting an idyllic picture of boyhood life along the Mississippi River.

Though Twain satirizes adult conventions throughout The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, he leaves untouched certain larger issues that The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn explores critically.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer never deals directly with slavery, for example, and, while the town's dislike of Injun Joe suggests a kind of small-town xenophobia (fear of foreigners or outsiders), Injun Joe's murders more than justify the town's suspicion of him. Because it avoids explicit criticism of racism, slavery, and xenophobia, the novel has largely escaped the controversy over race and language that has surrounded The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

To this day, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* remains perhaps the most popular and widely read of all Twain's works.

Tom Sawyer

When the novel begins, Tom is a mischievous child who envies Huck Finn's lazy lifestyle and freedom. As Tom's adventures proceed, however, critical moments show Tom moving away from his childhood concerns and making mature, responsible decisions. These moments include Tom's testimony at Muff Potter's trial, his saving of Becky from punishment, and his heroic navigation out of the cave. By the end of the novel, Tom is coaxing Huck into staying at the Widow Douglas's, urging his friend to accept tight collars, Sunday school, and good table manners. He is no longer a disobedient character undermining the adult order, but a defender of respectability and responsibility.

In the end, growing up for Tom means embracing social custom and sacrificing the freedoms of childhood.

Character development

Yet Tom's development isn't totally coherent. The novel jumps back and forth among several narrative strands: Tom's general misbehavior, which climaxes in the Jackson's Island adventure; his courtship of Becky, which culminates in his acceptance of blame for the book that she rips; and his struggle with Injun Joe, which ends with Tom and Huck's discovery of the treasure.

Because of the picaresque, or episodic, nature of the plot, Tom's character can seem inconsistent, as it varies depending upon his situation. Tom is a paradoxical figure in some respects—for example, he has no determinate age. Sometimes Tom shows the naïveté of a smaller child, with his interest in make-believe and superstitions. On the other hand, Tom's romantic interest in Becky and his fascination with Huck's smoking and drinking seem more the concerns of an adolescent.

Whether or not a single course of development characterizes Tom's adventures, a single character trait—Tom's unflagging energy and thirst for adventure—propels the novel from episode to episode. Disobedient though he may be, Tom ends up as St. Petersburg's hero.

As the town gossips say, "[Tom] would be President, yet, if he escaped hanging."

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain has had a tremendous impact on the literary and educational communities. It was the excitement and unpredictability of the plot that kept readers reading, along with that not-so-proper narrator who told it as he saw it.

The ultimate message

But if we were to discuss the lasting influence this novel has had, it is the ultimate messages of friendship, independence, and an ever-growing desire for personal freedom in the novel that have left an indelible (kitörölhetetlen) mark on this country. It has also led many to believe that *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* illustrates to the reader that rugged individualism is as important an American belief as freedom for all.

Criticism

While interesting and clearly an effective element in the accurate portrayal of the people and culture of an area, the use of dialect seemed crass (durva) to many, and the frank language and inclusion of one particular racial slur led some to conclude that, in fact, the book was racist. It also led to the book being banned from schools, dropped from library shelves, and condemned in communities. Another point some critics make - Twain's depiction of Jim was too simple and stereotypical, which in and of itself presents a kind of racially charged undertone.

Controversial? Yes.

A beloved story? Yes.

Selling more copies than any other piece Twain had written, the story of this young swearing and smoking runaway gained immediate notoriety. Some thought it encouraged bad behavior, while others thought it was the first real, honest, and authentic piece of literature produced for the average working-class reader. And others, like Hemingway, felt truly that it was the one book from which all other American works of literature were born.

Huckleberry Finn - Analyis

In a larger sense, this story follows a young boy as he struggles to make sense of the world in which he lives. He witnesses racism firsthand and knows it is wrong and yet deals with the moral dilemma of helping Jim, which he feared would be considered stealing.

On some level, Huck is very aware of the social constraints around him - the general lack of universal acceptance. However, he is also, at times, struck by the fact that he may not be doing the right thing - that he perhaps should turn Jim in. But the thing that holds him back is not so much a thoughtful consideration of law or morality but rather his friendship with Jim, which he knows to be true and honest in his heart.

Through this relationship and Twain's characterization of Jim as a kind and caring family man, the reader gets the sense that it would take the less-judgmental voice of a child to reveal the hypocrisy of a society in which the ownership of other human beings was common and okay.

It's also interesting to note that Huck himself survived a period of enslavement during which his own father was his keeper. In all sorts of ways, Twain weaves a story that reveals these hypocrisies of this civilized society. Huck's father gets away with imprisoning, beating, and berating him. Where was the legal system? Was this all Huck had?

Jim finds out that he could be sold and separated forever from his family he loves so dearly - as we can see so clearly, not the right thing to do. Huck witnesses the murder of an innocent boy in a battle involving two feuding families. Quite possibly the saddest encounter for Huck.

In terms of the story, Twain really does illustrate what he views as the shaky moral foundation of this time period - and really the way people completely miss the mark and lose their sense of humanity. Huck and Jim, however, are the opposite - accepting of one another despite major differences between them. And in the end, Huck's aversion to his formal education helps to support the idea that he learned what he needed to through instinct and friendship, honest listening and caring. To him, their idea of formal schooling would have supported this not-so-accurate concept of civilization anyway.So it's clear that Huck's best moments were when he was with a friend traveling through the wilderness, and his worst moments took place inside societal structures and with so-called civilized people. Our hero is so admirable not just because we love rebels, but because we love rebels who are outsiders themselves, fighting for what is right and good.

The Mississippi River

The Mississippi River could be Twain's third main character in this novel - it's ever-present, it's ever-changing, and it's ever-complicated. If you consider the Mississippi in terms of symbolic value, you need to remember that it holds both good and bad qualities.

First, the water (which in most works of literature, in a basic sense, symbolizes rebirth) does bring our Huck and Jim away from their prisons and towards a planned freedom. Yes, in that respect it's good.

However, in many ways, it is the means by which our characters meet their greatest challenges - the robbers, the steamship, the shenanigans brought by the King and the Duke.

Story Context

Mark Twain was considered the greatest writer in the **Realism** movement in literature. Essentially a break from the lofty writings of the Romantics Realism marked a time when writing reflected the experiences of the larger, literate working-class audience.

The idea was to present people and regions in a realistic light - Twain was one of the first to weave authenticity into a story. Twain's characters speak in the novel with regional dialects - this was a deliberate break from the more formal language in Romantic literature.

'I hadn't had a bite to eat since yesterday, so Jim he got out some corn-dodgers and buttermilk, and pork and cabbage and greens - there ain't nothing in the world so good when it's cooked right - and whilst I eat my supper we talked and had a good time. . . .We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft. '

His narrator does naughty things like swear and smoke - again, topics that weren't previously included in stories - but that made for some really interested readers who, just maybe, related to his desire for freedom and rejection of formality itself. Huck lived in a world in which being a civilized child included schooling, manners, and religion, although Huck wanted nothing to do with it.

All of this brought to the general public a much more palatable kind of writing, as it was truly much more relatable. As a clear example of regionalism, a subset of American Realism, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* uses imagery, language, and relationships to show the reader what life was really like in Missouri and the South at the time.

Twain's short stories

Mark Twain spent his entire adult life writing nonfiction accounts, short stories and groundbreaking novels. Twain became known for his short, humorous sketches and clever, little stories with memorable characters.

Prior to the creation of his most famous works, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Twain gained acclaim as a short story writer.

Twain's short stories (whether widely read or not) show an equal passion and aptitude for creating simple plots that are not just exceedingly funny in **dialogue**, but also

exceptionally artful in the way they highlight moral issues at the end. In true Twain style, he maintains a fidelity to regional dialects and real people and creates for average readers both humor and fantasy and a world that questions such important social structures as money, power, class and education.

Twain's Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

It was first published in the New York *Saturday Press* in 1865. Originally titled 'Jim Smiley and his Jumping Frog', the quirky characters and original and funny storytelling earned the story an immediate readership. The story was reprinted in several other papers and magazines and eventually gained its permanent name a few months later.

Background And Characters

The story, which takes place in Angel's Camp, California, is basically an encounter between two men.The narrator (our first character) shows up to see Old Simon Wheeler (our second character). Basically, the narrator - who is never given a name - has been asked by a friend back east to get some information about a guy named Leonidas W. Smiley. He's told that Old Simon Wheeler will be able to help him. That's really all the reader is told about the background of the encounter. Eventually, a third character presents himself in a story - Jim Smiley.

Plot

The story narrator shows up and asks Simon Wheeler if he has any information about Leonidas W. Smiley. Instead of giving the narrator the information he asks for, Simon, a very serious and monotonous storyteller, tells him about a guy he once knew named Jim Smiley.

So, Simon talks and talks and talks and talks about Jim Smiley. Basically, Jim Smiley was a man of many schemes. In many different ways, this Jim figured out how to make money from his schemes thanks to his cleverness and, Simon notes, his undying luck. At some point, this Jim gets himself a frog that he's going to educate. Yes, educate. He figures out how to get the frog, Daniel Webster, to jump and catch flies on cue. At this point in the story, Simon does interject that he's seen it with his own eyes. The frog that he saw could do all of those things - along with jumping higher than any other frog he'd seen.Keep in mind that Simon's storytelling is what gives the situation a hint of humor and an ounce a regional color:

He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'klated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet he did learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut see him turn one summerset, or

may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most any thing and I believe him.'

And then one day a stranger arrives and inquires about the frog. Jim Smiley explains that his frog is a special frog and can jump higher than any other frog out there - any other frog in Calaveras County, in fact. So, being the schemer that he is, Jim bets the stranger $40 that his claim is true. The only catch is that the stranger does not have a frog to compete with. So, Jim, wanting to win this bet, goes out to get the stranger a frog, too.

While Jim is out, the stranger gets clever and fills Daniel Webster's mouth full of quail shots (kind of like small, heavy pellets used to shoot birds). Any thoughts as to what happens in this little contest? Well, with his money out on the table in front of him, Jim watches as his beloved Daniel Webster loses. And predictably, doesn't make it very far off the ground. Before Jim can figure out what happened, the stranger takes the money and leaves.

At his point in the narration, Old Simon Wheeler is called away for a minute - but not before he tells the narrator to sit tight because he obviously has a lot more to say. Feeling as though this might be a good opportunity to leave, the narrator, who realizes old Wheeler is just a guy who tells stories, stands up and bids Wheeler adieu at the door.

Analysis

A couple of things to notice in this story. First, there is an interesting narrative technique going on - really, a story within a story. Readers can relate to Jim Smiley and his plight to win the bet. But in a different way, readers also respond to the amusing storytelling of Sam Wheeler.

In terms of Jim Smiley, one can see a plotline similar to that of an old fable. The trickster gets tricked in the end, right? Jim is a gambler and always wins. Except here, when his undying luck fails and in his excitement to prove someone wrong, he becomes blinded to the potential of his competition (the stranger not the frog). And when he's not looking - bam, he's taken.

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend's friend, Leonidas W. Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append the result. I have a lurking suspicion that Leonidas W. Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous Jim Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some infernal reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless to me. If that was the design, it certainly succeeded.

I found Simon Wheeler dozing comfortably by the bar-room stove of the old, dilapidated tavern in the ancient mining camp of Angel's, and I noticed that he was fat and bald-headed, and had an expression of winning gentleness and simplicity upon his tranquil countenance. He roused up and gave me good-day. I told him a friend of mine had commissioned me to make some inquiries about a cherished companion of his boyhood named Leonidas W. Smiley Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley a young minister of the Gospel, who he had heard was at one time a resident of Angel's Camp. I added that, if Mr. Wheeler could tell me any thing about this Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, I would feel under many obligations to him.

Simon Wheeler backed me into a corner and blockaded me there with his chair, and then sat me down and reeled off the monotonous narrative which follows this paragraph. He never smiled, he never frowned, he never changed his voice from the gentle-flowing key to which he tuned the initial sentence, he never betrayed the slightest suspicion of enthusiasm; but all through the interminable narrative there ran a vein of impressive earnestness and sincerity, which showed me plainly that, so far from his imagining that there was any thing ridiculous or funny about his story, he regarded it as a really important matter, and admired its two heroes as men of transcendent genius in finesse. To me, the spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling, was exquisitely absurd. As I said before, I asked him to tell me what he knew of Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and he replied as follows. I let him go on in his own way, and never interrupted him once:

There was a feller here once by the name of Jim Smiley, in the winter of '49 or may be it was the spring of '50 I don't recollect exactly, somehow, though what makes me think it was one or the other is because I remember the big flume wasn't finished when he first came to the camp; but any way, he was the curiosest man about always betting on any thing that turned up

you ever see, if he could get any body to bet on the other side; and if he couldn't, he'd change sides. Any way that suited the other man would suit him any way just so's he got a bet, he was satisfied. But still he was lucky, uncommon lucky; he most always come out winner. He was always ready and laying for a chance; there couldn't be no solittry thing mentioned but that feller'd offer to bet on it, and -take any side you please, as I was just telling you. If there was a horse-race, you'd find him flush, or you'd find him busted at the end of it; if there was a dog-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a cat-fight, he'd bet on it; if there was a chicken-fight, he'd bet on it; why, if there was two birds setting on a fence, he would bet you which one would fly first; or if there was a camp-meeting, he would be there reg'lar, to bet on Parson Walker, which he judged to be the best exhorter about here, and so he was, too, and a good man. If he even seen a straddle-bug start to go anywheres, he would bet you how long it would take him to get wherever he was going to, and if you took him up, he would foller that straddle-bug to Mexico but what he would find out where he was bound for and how long he was on the road. Lots of the boys here has seen that Smiley, and can tell you about him. Why, it never made no difference to him he would bet on any thing the dangdest feller. Parson Walker's wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they warn's going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley asked how she was, and he said she was considerable better thank the Lord for his inftnit mercy and coming on so smart that, with the blessing of Providence, she'd get well yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, "Well, I'll risk two- and-a-half that she don't, any way."

Thish-yer Smiley had a mare the boys called her the fifteen- minute nag, but that was only in fun, you know, because, of course, she was faster than that and he used to win money on that horse, for all she was so slow and always had the asthma, or the distemper, or the consumption, or something of that kind. They used to give her two or three hundred yards start, and then pass her under way; but always at the fag-end of the race she'd get excited and desperate- like, and come cavorting and straddling up, and scattering her legs around limber, sometimes in the air, and sometimes out to one side amongst the fences, and kicking up m-o-r-e dust, and raising m-o-r-e racket with her coughing and sneezing and blowing her nose and always fetch up at the stand just about a neck ahead, as near as you could cipher it down.

And he had a little small bull pup, that to look at him you'd think he wan's worth a cent, but to set around and look ornery, and lay for a chance to steal something. But as soon as money was up on him, he was a different dog; his underjaw'd begin to stick out like the fo'castle of a steamboat, and his teeth would uncover, and shine savage like the furnaces. And a dog might tackle him, and bully- rag him, and bite him, and throw him over his shoulder

two or three times, and Andrew Jackson which was the name of the pup Andrew Jackson would never let on but what he was satisfied, and hadn't expected nothing else and the bets being doubled and doubled on the other side all the time, till the money was all up; and then all of a sudden he would grab that other dog jest by the j'int of his hind leg and freeze on it not chew, you understand, but only jest grip and hang on till they thronged up the sponge, if it was a year. Smiley always come out winner on that pup, till he harnessed a dog once that didn't have no hind legs, because they'd been sawed off by a circular saw, and when the thing had gone along far enough, and the money was all up, and he come to make a snatch for his pet bolt, he saw in a minute how he'd been imposed on, and how the other dog had him in the door, so to speak, and he 'peered sur- prised, and then he looked sorter discouraged-like, and didn't try no more to win the fight, and so he got shucked out bad. He give Smiley a look, as much as to say his heart was broke, and it was his fault, for putting up a dog that hadn't no hind legs for him to take bolt of, which was his main dependence in a fight, and then he limped off a piece and laid down and died. It was a good pup, was that Andrew Jackson, and would have made a name for hisself if he'd lived, for the stuff was in him, and he had genius I know it, because he hadn't had no opportunities to speak of, and it don't stand to reason that a dog could make such a fight as he could under them circumstances, if he hadn't no talent. It always makes me feel sorry when I think of that last fight of his'n, and the way it turned out.

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, and chicken cocks, and tom- cats, and all of them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'klated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he did learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut see him turn one summerset, or may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat. He got him up so in the matter of catching flies, and kept him in practice so constant, that he'd nail a fly every time as far as he could see him. Smiley said all a frog wanted was education, and he could do most any thing and I believe him. Why, I've seen him set Dan'l Webster down here on this floor Dan'l Webster was the name of the frog and sing out, "Flies, Dan'l, flies!" and quicker'n you could wink, he'd spring straight up, and snake a fly off'n the counter there, and flop down on the floor again as solid as a gob of mud, and fall to scratching the side of his head with his hind foot as indifferent as if he hadn't no idea he'd been doin' any more'n any frog might do. You never see a frog so modest and straightforward as he was, for all he was so gifted. And when it come to fair and square jumping on a dead

level, he could get over more ground at one straddle than any animal of his breed you ever see. Jumping on a dead level was his strong suit, you understand; and when it come to that, Smiley would ante up money on him as long as he had a red. Smiley was monstrous proud of his frog, and well he might be, for fellers that had traveled and been everywheres, all said he laid over any frog that ever they see.

Well, Smiley kept the beast in a little lattice box, and he used to fetch him down town sometimes and lay for a bet. One day a feller a stranger in the camp, he was come across him with his box, and says:

"What might it be that you've got in the box?"

And Smiley says, sorter indifferent like, "It might be a parrot, or it might be a canary, may be, but it an't it's only just a frog."

And the feller took it, and looked at it careful, and turned it round this way and that, and says, "H'm so 'tis. Well, what's he good for?"

"Well," Smiley says, easy and careless, "He's good enough for one thing, I should judge he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

The feller took the box again, and took another long, particular look, and give it back to Smiley, and says, very deliberate, "Well, I don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

"May be you don't," Smiley says. "May be you understand frogs, and may be you don't understand 'em; may be you've had experience, and may be you an't only a amature, as it were. Anyways, I've got my opinion, and I'll risk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in Calaveras county."

And the feller studied a minute, and then says, kinder sad like, "Well, I'm only a stranger here, and I an't got no frog; but if I had a frog, I'd bet you."

And then Smiley says, "That's all right that's all right if you'll hold my box a minute, I'll go and get you a frog." And so the feller took the box, and put up his forty dollars along with Smiley's, and set down to wait.

So he set there a good while thinking and thinking to hisself, and then he got the frog out and prized his mouth open and took a tea- spoon and filled him full of quail shot filled him pretty near up to his chin and set him on the floor. Smiley he went to the swamp and slopped around in the mud for a long time, and finally he ketched a frog, and fetched him in, and give him to this feller, and says:

"Now, if you're ready, set him alongside of Dan'l, with his fore- paws just even with Dan'l, and I'll give the word." Then he says, "One two three jump!" and him and the feller

touched up the frogs from behind, and the new frog hopped off, but Dan'l give a heave, and hysted up his shoulders so like a Frenchman, but it wan's no use he couldn't budge; he was planted as solid as an anvil, and he couldn't no more stir than if he was anchored out. Smiley was a good deal surprised, and he was disgusted too, but he didn't have no idea what the matter was, of course.

The feller took the money and started away; and when he was going out at the door, he sorter jerked his thumb over his shoulders this way at Dan'l, and says again, very deliberate, "Well, I don't see no p'ints about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

Smiley he stood scratching his head and looking down at Dan'l a long time, and at last he says, "I do wonder what in the nation that frog throw'd off for I wonder if there an't something the matter with him he 'pears to look mighty baggy, somehow." And he ketched Dan'l by the nap of the neck, and lifted him up and says, "Why, blame my cats, if he don't weigh five pound!" and turned him upside down, and he belched out a double handful of shot. And then he see how it was, and he was the maddest man he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketchd him. And-

[Here Simon Wheeler heard his name called from the front yard, and got up to see what was wanted.] And turning to me as he moved away, he said: "Just set where you are, stranger, and rest easy I an't going to be gone a second."

But, by your leave, I did not think that a continuation of the history of the enterprising vagabond Jim Smiley would be likely to afford me much information concerning the Rev. Leonidas W. Smiley, and so I started away.

At the door I met the sociable Wheeler returning, and he button- holed me and recommenced:

"Well, thish-yer Smiley had a yeller one-eyed cow that didn't have no tail, only jest a short stump like a bannanner, and "

"Oh! hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!" I muttered, good-naturedly, and bidding the old gentleman good-day, I departed.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884)
Huch and His Conscience

Chapter 16.

(Excerpt)

WE slept most all day, and started out at night, a little ways behind a monstrous long raft that was as long going by as a procession. She had four long sweeps at each end, so we judged she carried as many as thirty men, likely. She had five big wigwams aboard, wide apart, and an open camp fire in the middle, and a tall flag-pole at each end. There was a power of style about her. It amounted to something being a raftsman on such a craft as that.

We went drifting down into a big bend, and the night clouded up and got hot. The river was very wide, and was walled with solid timber on both sides; you couldn't see a break in it hardly ever, or a light. We talked about Cairo, and wondered whether we would know it when we got to it. I said likely we wouldn't, because I had heard say there warn't but about a dozen houses there, and if they didn't happen to have them lit up, how was we going to know we was passing a town? Jim said if the two big rivers joined together there, that would show. But I said maybe we might think we was passing the foot of an island and coming into the same old river again. That disturbed Jim—and me too. So the question was, what to do? I said, paddle ashore the first time a light showed, and tell them pap was behind, coming along with a trading-scow, and was a green hand at the business, and wanted to know how far it was to Cairo. Jim thought it was a good idea, so we took a smoke on it and waited.

There warn't nothing to do now but to look out sharp for the town, and not pass it without seeing it. He said he'd be mighty sure to see it, because he'd be a free man the minute he seen it, but if he missed it he'd be in a slave country again and no more show for freedom. Every little while he jumps up and says:

"Dah she is?"

But it warn't. It was Jack-o'-lanterns, or lightning bugs; so he set down again, and went to watching, same as before. Jim said it made him all over trembly and feverish to be so close to freedom. Well, I can tell you it made me all over trembly and feverish, too, to hear him, because I begun to get it through my head that he was most free—and who was to blame for it? Why, me. I couldn't get that out of my conscience, no how nor no way. It got to troubling me so I couldn't rest; I couldn't stay still in one place. It hadn't ever come home to me before, what this thing was that I was doing. But now it did; and it stayed with me, and scorched me more and more. I tried to make out to myself that I warn't to blame, because I didn't run Jim off from his rightful owner; but it warn't no use, conscience up and says, every time,

"But you knowed he was running for his freedom, and you could a paddled ashore and told somebody." That was so—I couldn't get around that noway. That was where it pinched. Conscience says to me, "What had poor Miss Watson done to you that you could see her nigger go off right under your eyes and never say one single word? What did that poor old woman do to you that you could treat her so mean? Why, she tried to learn you your book, she tried to learn you your manners, she tried to be good to you every way she knowed how. That's what she done."

I got to feeling so mean and so miserable I most wished I was dead. I fidgeted up and down the raft, abusing myself to myself, and Jim was fidgeting up and down past me. We neither of us could keep still. Every time he danced around and says, "Dah's Cairo!" it went through me like a shot, and I thought if it was Cairo I reckoned I would die of miserableness.

Jim talked out loud all the time while I was talking to myself. He was saying how the first thing he would do when he got to a free State he would go to saving up money and never spend a single cent, and when he got enough he would buy his wife, which was owned on a farm close to where Miss Watson lived; and then they would both work to buy the two children, and if their master wouldn't sell them, they'd get an Ab'litionist to go and steal them.

It most froze me to hear such talk. He wouldn't ever dared to talk such talk in his life before. Just see what a difference it made in him the minute he judged he was about free. It was according to the old saying, "Give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell." Thinks I, this is what comes of my not thinking. Here was this nigger, which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children—children that belonged to a man I didn't even know; a man that hadn't ever done me no harm.

I was sorry to hear Jim say that, it was such a lowering of him. My conscience got to stirring me up hotter than ever, until at last I says to it, "Let up on me—it ain't too late yet—I'll paddle ashore at the first light and tell." I felt easy and happy and light as a feather right off. All my troubles was gone. I went to looking out sharp for a light, and sort of singing to myself. By and by one showed. Jim sings out:

"We's safe, Huck, we's safe! Jump up and crack yo' heels! Dat's de good ole Cairo at las', I jis knows it!"

I says: "I'll take the canoe and go and see, Jim. It mightn't be, you know."

He jumped and got the canoe ready, and put his old coat in the bottom for me to set on, and give me the paddle; and as I shoved off, he says:

"Pooty soon I'll be a-shout'n' for joy, en I'll say, it's all on accounts o' Huck; I's a free man, en I couldn't ever ben free ef it hadn' ben for Huck; Huck done it. Jim won't ever forgit you, Huck; you's de bes' fren' Jim's ever had; en you's de only fren' ole Jim's got now."

I was paddling off, all in a sweat to tell on him; but when he says this, it seemed to kind of take the tuck all out of me. I went along slow then, and I warn't right down certain whether I was glad I started or whether I warn't. When I was fifty yards off, Jim says:

"Dah you goes, de ole true Huck; de on'y white genlman dat ever kep' his promise to ole Jim."

Well, I just felt sick. But I says, I got to do it—I can't get out of it. Right then along comes a skiff with two men in it with guns, and they stopped and I stopped. One of them says:

"What's that yonder?"

"A piece of a raft," I says.

"Do you belong on it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any men on it?"

"Only one, sir."

"Well, there's five niggers run off to-night up yonder, above the head of the bend. Is your man white or black?"

I didn't answer up prompt. I tried to, but the words wouldn't come. I tried for a second or two to brace up and out with it, but I warn't man enough—hadn't the spunk of a rabbit. I see I was weakening; so I just give up trying, and up and says:

"He's white."

"I reckon we'll go and see for ourselves."

"I wish you would," says I, "because it's pap that's there, and maybe you'd help me tow the raft ashore where the light is. He's sick—and so is mam and Mary Ann."

"Oh, the devil! we're in a hurry, boy. But I s'pose we've got to. Come, buckle to your paddle, and let's get along."

I buckled to my paddle and they laid to their oars. When we had made a stroke or two, I says:

"Pap'll be mighty much obleeged to you, I can tell you. Everybody goes away when I want them to help me tow the raft ashore, and I can't do it by myself."

"Well, that's infernal mean. Odd, too. Say, boy, what's the matter with your father?"

"It's the—a—the—well, it ain't anything much."

They stopped pulling. It warn't but a mighty little ways to the raft now. One says:

"Boy, that's a lie. What is the matter with your pap? Answer up square now, and it'll be the better for you."

"I will, sir, I will, honest—but don't leave us, please. It's the—the—Gentlemen, if you'll only pull ahead, and let me heave you the headline, you won't have to come a-near the raft—please do."

"Set her back, John, set her back!" says one. They backed water. "Keep away, boy—keep to looard. Confound it, I just expect the wind has blowed it to us. Your pap's got the small-pox, and you know it precious well. Why didn't you come out and say so? Do you want to spread it all over?"

"Well," says I, a-blubbering, "I've told everybody before, and they just went away and left us."

"Poor devil, there's something in that. We are right down sorry for you, but we—well, hang it, we don't want the small-pox, you see. Look here, I'll tell you what to do. Don't you try to land by yourself, or you'll smash everything to pieces. You float along down about twenty miles, and you'll come to a town on the left-hand side of the river. It will be long after sun-up then, and when you ask for help you tell them your folks are all down with chills and fever. Don't be a fool again, and let people guess what is the matter. Now we're trying to do you a kindness; so you just put twenty miles between us, that's a good boy. It wouldn't do any good to land yonder where the light is—it's only a wood-yard. Say, I reckon your father's poor, and I'm bound to say he's in pretty hard luck. Here, I'll put a twenty-dollar gold piece on this board, and you get it when it floats by. I feel mighty mean to leave you; but my kingdom! it won't do to fool with small-pox, don't you see?"

"Hold on, Parker," says the other man, "here's a twenty to put on the board for me. Good-bye, boy; you do as Mr. Parker told you, and you'll be all right."

"That's so, my boy—good-bye, good-bye. If you see any runaway niggers you get help and nab them, and you can make some money by it."

"Good-bye, sir," says I; "I won't let no runaway niggers get by me if I can help it."

They went off and I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knowed very well I had done wrong, and I see it warn't no use for me to try to learn to do right; a body that don't get started right when he's little ain't got no show—when the pinch comes there ain't nothing to back him up and keep him to his work, and so he gets beat. Then I thought a minute, and says to myself, hold on; s'pose you'd a done right and give Jim up, would you felt better than what you do now? No, says I, I'd feel bad—I'd feel just the same way I do now.

Well, then, says I, what's the use you learning to do right when it's troublesome to do right and ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same?

I was stuck. I couldn't answer that. So I reckoned I wouldn't bother no more about it, but after this always do whichever come handiest at the time.

I went into the wigwam; Jim warn't there. I looked all around; he warn't anywhere. I says: "Jim!" "Here I is, Huck. Is dey out o' sight yit? Don't talk loud."

He was in the river under the stern oar, with just his nose out. I told him they were out of sight, so he come aboard. He says:

"I was a-listenin' to all de talk, en I slips into de river en was gwyne to shove for sho' if dey come aboard. Den I was gwyne to swim to de raf' agin when dey was gone. But lawsy, how you did fool 'em, Huck! Dat wuz de smartes' dodge! I tell you, chile, I'spec it save' ole Jim—ole Jim ain't going to forgit you for dat, honey."

Then we talked about the money. It was a pretty good raise—twenty dollars apiece. Jim said we could take deck passage on a steamboat now, and the money would last us as far as we wanted to go in the free States. He said twenty mile more warn't far for the raft to go, but he wished we was already there.

Bret Harte (1836-1902)

He was a writer of the gold-rush period in America. Towards the middle of the 19th century gold was discovered in California and thousands of adventurous young men rushed to the West in the naive belief that it would be easy to become suddenly rich in the gold-fields.

Greed for riches prompted most of the gold-seekers, but many came because they desperately wanted to be free of the constant threat of poverty that haunted them. The gold-rush also, attracted gamblers, thieves and other criminal elements who came to prey on the inexperienced young gold-seekers.

Bret Harte was one of the first to use the literary possibilities of the „picturesque New South-West". While the rest were digging in the earth hoping for a „lucky strike", or playing criminal trades, Harte set about unearthing the rich human material around him.

He was the first writer to deal with the sharp contrasts of human behaviour in „the Wild West", as that part of the country came to be known, and he succeeded in catching the flavour of a characteristic period of American history.

Childhood

Born in Albany, New York. Full name Francis Bret Harte. His father was a teacher of Greek in a local college. Francis was often ill in his childhood and did not show much interest in learning. But he liked to read and early in his boyhood he read the English classics and became interested in contemporary writers. By the age of eleven, Harte had published a number of poems.

1845, Bret Harte's father dies. His mother moved to California in 1853 to remarry. 1854, Bret Harte and his sister, Margaret, join the family in California. Did he go West to become a gold-miner? – We don't know. It is never mentioned (but he was a postman, a drug clerk, a school teacher, a compositor setting up type in a print-shop and finally a journalist).

California Years

First few years drifted from job to job - job as a typesetter in Northern California and reporter for the weekly newspaper *Northern Californian*. A few years later he went to San Francisco

He worked for the magazine The Golden Era (published his short stories) (Mark Twain also published here). Job at the U.S. Mint (secretary, where coins were made under State authority)

1862 - Married Anna Griswold, they have 4 children.

In the search of a new way to depict the West in its grotesque reality, some of the young writers began to parody the European sentimentalists, because sentimentalism and the rough spirit of the West were poles apart. Bret Harte wrote parody on the French writers, Hugo, Dumas and others, making fun of their melodramatic style.

He also wrote satirical parody on Dickens, though Dickens was his favourite. These were published in a book called the „Condensed Novels". The book shows Bret Harte's gift for satire which he unfortunately never developed in his later works.

Fame and Trouble

During the Civil War, Harte wrote twenty-two poems. *Overland Monthly*, founded in 1868 with Harte as its editor. Two of his most memorable pieces were published in this magazine, "The Luck of Roaring Camp" and "The Outcasts of Poker Flat".

Rejected job offers as professor, editor, columnist, publisher. Harte remained jobless and suffers great financial troubles

Bret Harte and Mark Twain

After moving to his native New York his collaboration with Mark Twain on the play *Ah Sin* (1877). Play fails. Harte and Twain have a falling out.

"In the early days I liked Bret Harte and so did the others, but by and by I got over it; so also did the others. He couldn't keep a friend permanently. He was bad, distinctly bad; he had no feeling and he had no conscience."

"Harte is a liar, a thief, a swindler, a snob, a sponge, a coward.

"I detest him, because I think his work is 'shoddy.' His forte is pathos but there should be no pathos which does not come out of a man's heart. He has no heart, except his name, and I consider he has produced nothing that is genuine. He is artificial."

In Europe

U.S. Consul position in Germany – 1878. Frequent visits to Great Britain. Transfer to Glasgow, Scotland until 1885. His wife and two of his children followed Harte to London after 1898.

Harte continued to write with little public recognition until his death from throat cancer in 1902.

Bret Harte's Aesthetic Principles

Bret Harte described in a realistic manner what was typical for the West of those days, more specifically of the gold-mining camps.

These camps attracted all kinds of rough and reckless types,gamblers and thieves. Armed robbers on horseback, sometimes singly, simetimes in bands, roamed the country-side attacking camps and mining sites. The law of life became „wolf eat wolf". The most trifling disputes were decided by violent means. Men were shot or hanged on the slightest pretext.

People became distrustful of each other. Bret Harte's realism was limited: he did not try to solve social problems; he merely colourfully described what he saw. However, neither did he accept the bourgeois ideas of morals. He was a humanitarian and recognized only such moral standards as were normal in the given situation. In his story „The Outcasts of Poker Flat" he portrayed the „outcasts" of bourgeois society as kind and unselfish at heart, while in „Who Was My Quit Friend" Bret Harte showed up „respectable", persons as being cruel and criminal. But even his limited realism of the writer set the bourgeois press against Bret Harte.

Bret Harte saw the tragedy of life in the gold-fields, but he also saw how ridiculous it was when violent conflicts rose over pretty trifles and he treated such conflicts with humour. For instance, in the story „Illiad of Sandy Bar" Bret Harte wrote about rough and rude characters in whom the finest of human emotions came to the surface when there was occasion for it; About people who unexpectedly became warm-hearted, kind and sympathetic as in „Miggles", „The Outcast of Poker Flat", „Tennessee's Partner" and others.

Bret Harte's stories set in the gold-fields were the first to win him recognition and fame. But he also wrote other stories of the West that brought him popularity as a writer. One of these stories was „Wan Lee, the Pagan", in which Bret Harte tells of the race riots in San Francisco where many Chinese workers were killed.

Wan Lee, the Pagan

As I opened Hop Sing's letter, there fluttered to the ground a square strip of yellow paper covered with hieroglyphics, which, at first glance, I innocently took to be the label from a pack of Chinese fire-crackers. But the same envelope also contained a smaller strip of rice-paper, with two Chinese characters traced in India ink, that I at once knew to be Hop Sing's visiting-card. The whole, as afterwards literally translated, ran as follows:--

"To the stranger the gates of my house are not closed: the rice-jar is on the left, and the sweetmeats on the right, as you enter.

Two sayings of the Master:--

Hospitality is the virtue of the son and the wisdom of the ancestor.

The Superior man is light hearted after the crop-gathering: he makes a festival.

When the stranger is in your melon-patch, observe him not too closely: inattention is often the highest form of civility.

Happiness, Peace, and Prosperity.

HOP SING."

Admirable, certainly, as was this morality and proverbial wisdom, and although this last axiom was very characteristic of my friend Hop Sing, who was that most sombre of all humorists, a Chinese philosopher, I must confess, that, even after a very free translation, I was at a loss to make any immediate application of the message. Luckily I discovered a third enclosure in the shape of a little note in English, and Hop Sing's own commercial hand. It ran thus:--

"The pleasure of your company is requested at No. -- Sacramento Street, on Friday evening at eight o'clock. A cup of tea at nine,--sharp.

"HOP SING."

This explained all. It meant a visit to Hop Sing's warehouse, the opening and exhibition of some rare Chinese novelties and curios, a chat in the back office, a cup of tea of a perfection unknown beyond these sacred precincts, cigars, and a visit to the Chinese theatre or temple. This was, in fact, the favorite programme of Hop Sing when he exercised his functions of hospitality as the chief factor or superintendent of the Ning Foo Company.

At eight o'clock on Friday evening, I entered the warehouse of Hop Sing. There was that deliciously commingled mysterious foreign odor that I had so often noticed; there was the old array of uncouth-looking objects, the long procession of jars and crockery, the same singular blending of the grotesque and the mathematically neat and exact, the same endless

suggestions of frivolity and fragility, the same want of harmony in colors, that were each, in themselves, beautiful and rare. Kites in the shape of enormous dragons and gigantic butterflies; kites so ingeniously arranged as to utter at intervals, when facing the wind, the cry of a hawk; kites so large as to be beyond any boy's power of restraint,--so large that you understood why kite-flying in China was an amusement for adults; gods of china and bronze so gratuitously ugly as to be beyond any human interest or sympathy from their very impossibility; jars of sweetmeats covered all over with moral sentiments from Confucius; hats that looked like baskets, and baskets that looked like hats; silks so light that I hesitate to record the incredible number of square yards that you might pass through the ring on your little finger,--these, and a great many other indescribable objects, were all familiar to me. I pushed my way through the dimly-lighted warehouse, until I reached the back office, or parlor, where I found Hop Sing waiting to receive me.

Before I describe him, I want the average reader to discharge from his mind any idea of a Chinaman that he may have gathered from the pantomime. He did not wear beautifully scalloped drawers fringed with little bells (I never met a Chinaman who did); he did not habitually carry his forefinger extended before him at right angles with his body; nor did I ever hear him utter the mysterious sentence, "Ching a ring a ring chaw;" nor dance under any provocation. He was, on the whole, a rather grave, decorous, handsome gentleman. His complexion, which extended all over his head, except where his long pig-tail grew, was like a very nice piece of glazed brown paper-muslin. His eyes were black and bright, and his eyelids set at an angle of fifteen degrees; his nose straight, and delicately formed; his mouth small; and his teeth white and clean. He wore a dark blue silk blouse; and in the streets, on cold days, a short jacket of astrachan fur. He wore, also, a pair of drawers of blue brocade gathered tightly over his calves and ankles, offering a general sort of suggestion, that he had forgotten his trousers that morning, but that, so gentlemanly were his manners, his friends had forborne to mention the fact to him. His manner was urbane, although quite serious. He spoke French and English fluently. In brief, I doubt if you could have found the equal of this Pagan shopkeeper among the Christian traders of San Francisco.

There were a few others present,--a judge of the Federal Court, an editor, a high government official, and a prominent merchant. After we had drunk our tea, and tasted a few sweetmeats from a mysterious jar, that looked as if it might contain a preserved mouse among its other nondescript treasures, Hop Sing arose, and, gravely beckoning us to follow him, began to descend to the basement. When we got there, we were amazed at finding it brilliantly

lighted, and that a number of chairs were arranged in a half-circle on the asphalt pavement. When he had courteously seated us, he said,--

"I have invited you to witness a performance which I can at least promise you no other foreigners but yourselves have ever seen. Wang, the court-juggler, arrived here yesterday morning. He has never given a performance outside of the palace before. I have asked him to entertain my friends this evening. He requires no theatre, stage accessories, or any confederate,--nothing more than you see here. Will you be pleased to examine the ground yourselves, gentlemen."

Of course we examined the premises. It was the ordinary basement or cellar of the San Francisco storehouse, cemented to keep out the damp. We poked our sticks into the pavement, and rapped on the walls, to satisfy our polite host--but for no other purpose. We were quite content to be the victims of any clever deception. For myself, I knew I was ready to be deluded to any extent, and, if I had been offered an explanation of what followed, I should have probably declined it.

Although I am satisfied that Wang's general performance was the first of that kind ever given on American soil, it has, probably, since become so familiar to many of my readers, that I shall not bore them with it here. He began by setting to flight, with the aid of his fan, the usual number of butterflies, made before our eyes of little bits of tissue-paper, and kept them in the air during the remainder of the performance. I have a vivid recollection of the judge trying to catch one that had lit on his knee, and of its evading him with the pertinacity of a living insect. And, even at this time, Wang, still plying his fan, was taking chickens out of hats, making oranges disappear, pulling endless yards of silk from his sleeve, apparently filling the whole area of the basement with goods that appeared mysteriously from the ground, from his own sleeves, from nowhere! He swallowed knives to the ruin of his digestion for years to come; he dislocated every limb of his body; he reclined in the air, apparently upon nothing. But his crowning performance, which I have never yet seen repeated, was the most weird, mysterious, and astounding. It is my apology for this long introduction, my sole excuse for writing this article, and the genesis of this veracious history.

He cleared the ground of its encumbering articles for a space of about fifteen feet square, and then invited us all to walk forward, and again examine it. We did so gravely. There was nothing but the cemented pavement below to be seen or felt. He then asked for the loan of a handkerchief; and, as I chanced to be nearest him, I offered mine. He took it, and spread it open upon the floor. Over this he spread a large square of silk, and over this, again, a large shawl nearly covering the space he had cleared. He then took a position at one of the

points of this rectangle, and began a monotonous chant, rocking his body to and fro in time with the somewhat lugubrious air.

We sat still and waited. Above the chant we could hear the striking of the city clocks, and the occasional rattle of a cart in the street overhead. The absolute watchfulness and expectation, the dim, mysterious half-light of the cellar falling in a grewsome way upon the misshapen bulk of a Chinese deity in the back ground, a faint smell of opium-smoke mingling with spice, and the dreadful uncertainty of what we were really waiting for, sent an uncomfortable thrill down our backs, and made us look at each other with a forced and unnatural smile. This feeling was heightened when Hop Sing slowly rose, and, without a word, pointed with his finger to the centre of the shawl.

There was something beneath the shawl. Surely--and something that was not there before; at first a mere suggestion in relief, a faint outline, but growing more and more distinct and visible every moment. The chant still continued; the perspiration began to roll from the singer's face; gradually the hidden object took upon itself a shape and bulk that raised the shawl in its centre some five or six inches. It was now unmistakably the outline of a small but perfect human figure, with extended arms and legs. One or two of us turned pale. There was a feeling of general uneasiness, until the editor broke the silence by a gibe, that, poor as it was, was received with spontaneous enthusiasm. Then the chant suddenly ceased. Wang arose, and with a quick, dexterous movement, stripped both shawl and silk away, and discovered, sleeping peacefully upon my handkerchief, a tiny Chinese baby.

The applause and uproar which followed this revelation ought to have satisfied Wang, even if his audience was a small one: it was loud enough to awaken the baby,--a pretty little boy about a year old, looking like a Cupid cut out of sandal-wood. He was whisked away almost as mysteriously as he appeared. When Hop Sing returned my handkerchief to me with a bow, I asked if the juggler was the father of the baby. "No sabe!" said the imperturbable Hop Sing, taking refuge in that Spanish form of non-committalism so common in California.

"But does he have a new baby for every performance?" I asked. "Perhaps: who knows?"--"But what will become of this one?"--"Whatever you choose, gentlemen," replied Hop Sing with a courteous inclination. "It was born here: you are its godfathers."

There were two characteristic peculiarities of any Californian assemblage in 1856,--it was quick to take a hint, and generous to the point of prodigality in its response to any charitable appeal. No matter how sordid or avaricious the individual, he could not resist the infection of sympathy. I doubled the points of my handkerchief into a bag, dropped a coin into it, and, without a word, passed it to the judge. He quietly added a twenty-dollar gold-piece,

and passed it to the next. When it was returned to me, it contained over a hundred dollars. I knotted the money in the handkerchief, and gave it to Hop Sing.

"For the baby, from its godfathers."

"But what name?" said the judge. There was a running fire of "Erebus," "Nox," "Plutus," "Terra Cotta," "Antaeus," &c. Finally the question was referred to our host.

"Why not keep his own name?" he said quietly,--"Wan Lee." And he did.

And thus was Wan Lee, on the night of Friday, the 5th of March, 1856, born into this veracious chronicle.

The last form of "The Northern Star" for the 19th of July, 1865,--the only daily paper published in Klamath County,--had just gone to press; and at three, A.M., I was putting aside my proofs and manuscripts, preparatory to going home, when I discovered a letter lying under some sheets of paper, which I must have overlooked. The envelope was considerably soiled: it had no post-mark; but I had no difficulty in recognizing the hand of my friend Hop Sing. I opened it hurriedly, and read as follows:--

"MY DEAR SIR,--I do not know whether the bearer will suit you; but, unless the office of 'devil' in your newspaper is a purely technical one, I think he has all the qualities required. He is very quick, active, and intelligent; understands English better than he speaks it; and makes up for any defect by his habits of observation and imitation. You have only to show him how to do a thing once, and he will repeat it, whether it is an offence or a virtue. But you certainly know him already. You are one of his godfathers; for is he not Wan Lee, the reputed son of Wang the conjurer, to whose performances I had the honor to introduce you? But perhaps you have forgotten it.

"I shall send him with a gang of coolies to Stockton, thence by express to your town. If you can use him there, you will do me a favor, and probably save his life, which is at present in great peril from the hands of the younger members of your Christian and highly-civilized race who attend the enlightened schools in San Francisco.

"He has acquired some singular habits and customs from his experience of Wang's profession, which he followed for some years,--until he became too large to go in a hat, or be produced from his father's sleeve. The money you left with me has been expended on his education. He has gone through the Tri-literal Classics, but, I think, without much benefit. He knows but little of Confucius, and absolutely nothing of Mencius. Owing to the negligence of his father, he associated, perhaps, too much with American children.

"I should have answered your letter before, by post; but I thought that Wan Lee himself would be a better messenger for this.

"Yours respectfully,

"HOP SING."

And this was the long-delayed answer to my letter to Hop Sing. But where was "the bearer"? How was the letter delivered? I summoned hastily the foreman, printers, and office-boy, but without eliciting any thing. No one had seen the letter delivered, nor knew any thing of the bearer. A few days later, I had a visit from my laundry-man, Ah Ri.

"You wantee debbil? All lightee: me catchee him."

He returned in a few moments with a bright-looking Chinese boy, about ten years old, with whose appearance and general intelligence I was so greatly impressed, that I engaged him on the spot. When the business was concluded, I asked his name.

"Wan Lee," said the boy.

"What! Are you the boy sent out by Hop Sing? What the devil do you mean by not coming here before? and how did you deliver that letter?"

Wan Lee looked at me, and laughed. "Me pitchee in top side window."

I did not understand. He looked for a moment perplexed, and then, snatching the letter out of my hand, ran down the stairs. After a moment's pause, to my great astonishment, the letter came flying in the window, circled twice around the room, and then dropped gently, like a bird upon my table. Before I had got over my surprise, Wan Lee re-appeared, smiled, looked at the letter and then at me, said, "So, John," and then remained gravely silent. I said nothing further; but it was understood that this was his first official act.

His next performance, I grieve to say, was not attended with equal success. One of our regular paper-carriers fell sick, and, at a pinch, Wan Lee was ordered to fill his place. To prevent mistakes, he was shown over the route the previous evening, and supplied at about daylight with the usual number of subscribers' copies. He returned, after an hour, in good spirits, and without the papers. He had delivered them all, he said.

Unfortunately for Wan Lee, at about eight o'clock, indignant subscribers began to arrive at the office. They had received their copies; but how? In the form of hard-pressed cannon-balls, delivered by a single shot, and a mere tour de force, through the glass of bedroom-windows. They had received them full in the face, like a base ball, if they happened to be up and stirring; they had received them in quarter-sheets, tucked in at separate windows; they had found them in the chimney, pinned against the door, shot through attic-windows, delivered in

long slips through convenient keyholes, stuffed into ventilators, and occupying the same can with the morning's milk. One subscriber, who waited for some time at the office-door to have a personal interview with Wan Lee (then comfortably locked in my bedroom), told me, with tears of rage in his eyes, that he had been awakened at five o'clock by a most hideous yelling below his windows; that, on rising in great agitation, he was startled by the sudden appearance of "The Northern Star," rolled hard, and bent into the form of a boomerang, or East-Indian club, that sailed into the window, described a number of fiendish circles in the room, knocked over the light, slapped the baby's face, "took" him (the subscriber) "in the jaw," and then returned out of the window, and dropped helplessly in the area. During the rest of the day, wads and strips of soiled paper, purporting to be copies of "The Northern Star" of that morning's issue, were brought indignantly to the office. An admirable editorial on "The Resources of Humboldt County," which I had constructed the evening before, and which, I had reason to believe, might have changed the whole balance of trade during the ensuing year, and left San Francisco bankrupt at her wharves, was in this way lost to the public.

It was deemed advisable for the next three weeks to keep Wan Lee closely confined to the printing-office, and the purely mechanical part of the business. Here he developed a surprising quickness and adaptability, winning even the favor and good will of the printers and foreman, who at first looked upon his introduction into the secrets of their trade as fraught with the gravest political significance. He learned to set type readily and neatly, his wonderful skill in manipulation aiding him in the mere mechanical act, and his ignorance of the language confining him simply to the mechanical effort, confirming the printer's axiom, that the printer who considers or follows the ideas of his copy makes a poor compositor. He would set up deliberately long diatribes against himself, composed by his fellow-printers, and hung on his hook as copy, and even such short sentences as "Wan Lee is the devil's own imp," "Wan Lee is a Mongolian rascal," and bring the proof to me with happiness beaming from every tooth, and satisfaction shining in his huckleberry eyes.

It was not long, however, before he learned to retaliate on his mischievous persecutors. I remember one instance in which his reprisal came very near involving me in a serious misunderstanding. Our foreman's name was Webster; and Wan Lee presently learned to know and recognize the individual and combined letters of his name. It was during a political campaign; and the eloquent and fiery Col. Starbottle of Siskyou had delivered an effective speech, which was reported especially for "The Northern Star." In a very sublime peroration, Col. Starbottle had said, "In the language of the godlike Webster, I repeat"--and here followed the quotation, which I have forgotten. Now, it chanced that Wan Lee, looking over the galley

after it had been revised, saw the name of his chief persecutor, and, of course, imagined the quotation his. After the form was locked up, Wan Lee took advantage of Webster's absence to remove the quotation, and substitute a thin piece of lead, of the same size as the type, engraved with Chinese characters, making a sentence, which, I had reason to believe, was an utter and abject confession of the incapacity and offensiveness of the Webster family generally, and exceedingly eulogistic of Wan Lee himself personally.

The next morning's paper contained Col. Starbottle's speech in full, in which it appeared that the "godlike" Webster had, on one occasion, uttered his thoughts in excellent but perfectly enigmatical Chinese. The rage of Col. Starbottle knew no bounds. I have a vivid recollection of that admirable man walking into my office, and demanding a retraction of the statement.

"But my dear sir," I asked, "are you willing to deny, over your own signature, that Webster ever uttered such a sentence? Dare you deny, that, with Mr. Webster's well-known attainments, a knowledge of Chinese might not have been among the number? Are you willing to submit a translation suitable to the capacity of our readers, and deny, upon your honor as a gentleman, that the late Mr. Webster ever uttered such a sentiment? If you are, sir, I am willing to publish your denial."

The colonel was not, and left, highly indignant.

Webster, the foreman, took it more coolly. Happily, he was unaware, that, for two days after, Chinamen from the laundries, from the gulches, from the kitchens, looked in the front office-door, with faces beaming with sardonic delight; that three hundred extra copies of the "Star" were ordered for the wash-houses on the river. He only knew, that, during the day, Wan Lee occasionally went off into convulsive spasms, and that he was obliged to kick him into consciousness again. A week after the occurrence, I called Wan Lee into my office.

"Wan," I said gravely, "I should like you to give me, for my own personal satisfaction, a translation of that Chinese sentence which my gifted countryman, the late godlike Webster, uttered upon a public occasion." Wan Lee looked at me intently, and then the slightest possible twinkle crept into his black eyes. Then he replied with equal gravity,--

"Mishtel Webstel, he say, 'China boy makee me belly much foolee. China boy makee me heap sick.'" Which I have reason to think was true.

But I fear I am giving but one side, and not the best, of Wan Lee's character. As he imparted it to me, his had been a hard life. He had known scarcely any childhood: he had no recollection of a father or mother. The conjurer Wang had brought him up. He had spent the first seven years of his life in appearing from baskets, in dropping out of hats, in climbing

ladders, in putting his little limbs out of joint in posturing. He had lived in an atmosphere of trickery and deception. He had learned to look upon mankind as dupes of their senses: in fine, if he had thought at all, he would have been a sceptic; if he had been a little older, he would have been a cynic; if he had been older still, he would have been a philosopher. As it was, he was a little imp. A good-natured imp it was, too,--an imp whose moral nature had never been awakened,--an imp up for a holiday, and willing to try virtue as a diversion. I don't know that he had any spiritual nature. He was very superstitious. He carried about with him a hideous little porcelain god, which he was in the habit of alternately reviling and propitiating. He was too intelligent for the commoner Chinese vices of stealing or gratuitous lying. Whatever discipline he practised was taught by his intellect.

I am inclined to think that his feelings were not altogether unimpressible, although it was almost impossible to extract an expression from him; and I conscientiously believe he became attached to those that were good to him. What he might have become under more favorable conditions than the bondsman of an overworked, under-paid literary man, I don't know: I only know that the scant, irregular, impulsive kindnesses that I showed him were gratefully received. He was very loyal and patient, two qualities rare in the average American servant. He was like Malvolio, "sad and civil" with me. Only once, and then under great provocation, do I remember of his exhibiting any impatience. It was my habit, after leaving the office at night, to take him with me to my rooms, as the bearer of any supplemental or happy after-thought, in the editorial way, that might occur to me before the paper went to press. One night I had been scribbling away past the usual hour of dismissing Wan Lee, and had become quite oblivious of his presence in a chair near my door, when suddenly I became aware of a voice saying in plaintive accents, something that sounded like "Chy Lee."

I faced around sternly.

"What did you say?"

"Me say, 'Chy Lee.'"

"Well?" I said impatiently.

"You sabe, 'How do, John?'"

"Yes."

"You sabe, 'So long, John'?"

"Yes."

"Well, 'Chy Lee' allee same!"

I understood him quite plainly. It appeared that "Chy Lee" was a form of "good-night," and that Wan Lee was anxious to go home. But an instinct of mischief, which, I fear, I

possessed in common with him, impelled me to act as if oblivious of the hint. I muttered something about not understanding him, and again bent over my work. In a few minutes I heard his wooden shoes pattering pathetically over the floor. I looked up. He was standing near the door.

"You no sabe, 'Chy Lee'?"

"No," I said sternly.

"You sabe muchee big foolee! allee same!"

And, with this audacity upon his lips, he fled. The next morning, however, he was as meek and patient as before, and I did not recall his offence. As a probable peace-offering, he blacked all my boots,--a duty never required of him,--including a pair of buff deer-skin slippers and an immense pair of horseman's jack-boots, on which he indulged his remorse for two hours.

I have spoken of his honesty as being a quality of his intellect rather than his principle, but I recall about this time two exceptions to the rule. I was anxious to get some fresh eggs as a change to the heavy diet of a mining-town; and, knowing that Wan Lee's countrymen were great poultry-raisers, I applied to him. He furnished me with them regularly every morning, but refused to take any pay, saying that the man did not sell them,--a remarkable instance of self-abnegation, as eggs were then worth half a dollar apiece. One morning my neighbor Forster dropped in upon me at breakfast, and took occasion to bewail his own ill fortune, as his hens had lately stopped laying, or wandered off in the bush. Wan Lee, who was present during our colloquy, preserved his characteristic sad taciturnity. When my neighbor had gone, he turned to me with a slight chuckle: "Flostel's hens--Wan Lee's hens allee same!" His other offence was more serious and ambitious. It was a season of great irregularities in the mails, and Wan Lee had heard me deplore the delay in the delivery of my letters and newspapers. On arriving at my office one day, I was amazed to find my table covered with letters, evidently just from the post-office, but, unfortunately, not one addressed to me. I turned to Wan Lee, who was surveying them with a calm satisfaction, and demanded an explanation. To my horror he pointed to an empty mail-bag in the corner, and said, "Postman he say, 'No lettee, John; no lettee, John.' Postman plentee lie! Postman no good. Me catchee lettee last night allee same!" Luckily it was still early: the mails had not been distributed. I had a hurried interview with the postmaster; and Wan Lee's bold attempt at robbing the United States mail was finally condoned by the purchase of a new mail-bag, and the whole affair thus kept a secret.

If my liking for my little Pagan page had not been sufficient, my duty to Hop Sing was enough, to cause me to take Wan Lee with me when I returned to San Francisco after my two years' experience with "The Northern Star." I do not think he contemplated the change with pleasure. I attributed his feelings to a nervous dread of crowded public streets (when he had to go across town for me on an errand, he always made a circuit of the outskirts), to his dislike for the discipline of the Chinese and English school to which I proposed to send him, to his fondness for the free, vagrant life of the mines, to sheer wilfulness. That it might have been a superstitious premonition did not occur to me until long after.

Nevertheless it really seemed as if the opportunity I had long looked for and confidently expected had come,--the opportunity of placing Wan Lee under gently restraining influences, of subjecting him to a life and experience that would draw out of him what good my superficial care and ill-regulated kindness could not reach. Wan Lee was placed at the school of a Chinese missionary,--an intelligent and kind-hearted clergyman, who had shown great interest in the boy, and who, better than all, had a wonderful faith in him. A home was found for him in the family of a widow, who had a bright and interesting daughter about two years younger than Wan Lee. It was this bright, cheery, innocent, and artless child that touched and reached a depth in the boy's nature that hitherto had been unsuspected; that awakened a moral susceptibility which had lain for years insensible alike to the teachings of society, or the ethics of the theologian.

These few brief months--bright with a promise that we never saw fulfilled--must have been happy ones to Wan Lee. He worshipped his little friend with something of the same superstition, but without any of the caprice, that he bestowed upon his porcelain Pagan god. It was his delight to walk behind her to school, carrying her books--a service always fraught with danger to him from the little hands of his Caucasian Christian brothers. He made her the most marvellous toys; he would cut out of carrots and turnips the most astonishing roses and tulips; he made life-like chickens out of melon-seeds; he constructed fans and kites, and was singularly proficient in the making of dolls' paper dresses. On the other hand, she played and sang to him, taught him a thousand little prettinesses and refinements only known to girls, gave him a yellow ribbon for his pig-tail, as best suiting his complexion, read to him, showed him wherein he was original and valuable, took him to Sunday school with her, against the precedents of the school, and, small-woman-like, triumphed. I wish I could add here, that she effected his conversion, and made him give up his porcelain idol. But I am telling a true story; and this little girl was quite content to fill him with her own Christian goodness, without letting him know that he was changed. So they got along very well together,--this little

Christian girl with her shining cross hanging around her plump, white little neck; and this dark little Pagan, with his hideous porcelain god hidden away in his blouse.

There were two days of that eventful year which will long be remembered in San Francisco,--two days when a mob of her citizens set upon and killed unarmed, defenceless foreigners because they were foreigners, and of another race, religion, and color, and worked for what wages they could get. There were some public men so timid, that, seeing this, they thought that the end of the world had come. There were some eminent statesmen, whose names I am ashamed to write here, who began to think that the passage in the Constitution which guarantees civil and religious liberty to every citizen or foreigner was a mistake. But there were, also, some men who were not so easily frightened; and in twenty-four hours we had things so arranged, that the timid men could wring their hands in safety, and the eminent statesmen utter their doubts without hurting any body or any thing. And in the midst of this I got a note from Hop Sing, asking me to come to him immediately.

I found his warehouse closed, and strongly guarded by the police against any possible attack of the rioters. Hop Sing admitted me through a barred grating with his usual imperturbable calm, but, as it seemed to me, with more than his usual seriousness. Without a word, he took my hand, and led me to the rear of the room, and thence down stairs into the basement. It was dimly lighted; but there was something lying on the floor covered by a shawl. As I approached he drew the shawl away with a sudden gesture, and revealed Wan Lee, the Pagan, lying there dead.

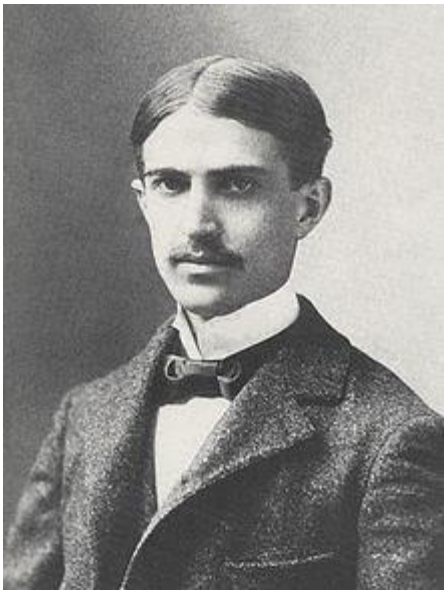
Dead, my reverend friends, dead,--stoned to death in the streets of San Francisco, in the year of grace 1869, by a mob of half-grown boys and Christian school-children!

As I put my hand reverently upon his breast, I felt something crumbling beneath his blouse. I looked inquiringly at Hop Sing. He put his hand between the folds of silk, and drew out something with the first bitter smile I had ever seen on the face of that Pagan gentleman.

It was Wan Lee's porcelain god, crushed by a stone from the hands of those Christian iconoclasts!

THE END.

Stephen Crane (1871-1900)



Born November 1, 1871 in Newark; 14th child of a Methodist minister. Started to write stories at the age of eight; at 16 he was writing articles for the *New York Tribune;*

After high school, spent 1 semester at Lafayette College and another at Syracuse University- was asked to leave (could not afford to go on with his education).

1891- Moved to New York as a free-lance writer and journalist.

1893- lived among the poor in the Bowery slums of New York to research his first novel, *Maggie: A Girl Of The Streets.*

1895- second novel, *The Red Badge Of Courage* brought him international fame.

Crane's collection of poems, *The Black Rider*, also appeared in 1895, brought Crane better reporting assignments as a war correspondent in combat areas

1898- Crane settled in Sussex, England

June 5, 1900- Crane died of tuberculosis

Writing

Crane was a born writer and naturally turned to newspaper wok as a means of earning a living. It was Crane's nature to be experimental. He had a keen sense of the dramatic. His mind instantly caught the absurd or ridiculous aspect of any incident and he would draw out an account of it in his own entertaining fashion.

But editors did not like news stories in which the reporters' impressions dominated over the facts, and he had to give up newspaper work.

Now and then he wrote stories which were sometimes accepted by various papers. Crane was very independent, in financial as well as in intellectual matters. He refused to take financial help from friends and relatives. As to his writing he was spoken of as a writer of the 'pioneer type'. He also wrote free verse, in protest against conventions.

In *Maggie: a Girl of the Streets* , Crane utilizes. . .

Realism,

Naturalism

Impressionism

Realism is a literary movement that began during the 1870's that was prompted by the Civil War; renders reality in comprehensive detail, depicts life as it really is; provides extremely detailed descriptions of "ordinary people"; avoids the sensational, dramatic elements of naturalistic novels and romances; displays a pessimistic view of the world.

In Realism . . .

- ❖ The character is more important than action and plot; complex ethical choices are often the subject.
- ❖ Diction is natural vernacular, not heightened or poetic; tone may be comic, satiric, or matter-of-fact.
- ❖ Objectivity in presentation becomes increasingly important: overt authorial comments or intrusions diminish as the century progresses.

Naturalism - the whole picture is somber and dark; the general tone is one of hopelessness and even despair; is a more deliberate kind of realism in novels, stories, and plays, usually involving a view of human being as passive victims of natural forces and environment. Naturalism typically illustrates the helplessness of man, his insignificance in a cold world and his lack of dignity. It is concerned with the less elegant aspects of life; has settings that are the slums, the sweatshops, the factories and the farm; represents the life of the lower class truthfully; highlights forbidden regions as violence, sex and death.

Impressionism - the selection of a few details to convey the sense impressions left by a scene or incident; characters, scenes, or actions are portrayed from an objective point of view of reality; great precision in the use of language to illustrate the transitory, vague, complex, and subjective impressions based on experiences

An example would be of using color to give bits and pieces of the scene - in his landmark novel, 'The Red Badge of Courage', Stephen Crane gives us the sense and mood of the battle, without the technical details.

Impressionism

The term 'Impressionism' comes from the school of mid-nineteenth century French painting, which was in reaction to the academic style of the day. The Impressionists, as they called themselves, made the act of perception the key for the understanding of the structure of reality. They developed a technique by which objects were not seen as solids but as fragments of color which the spectator's eye unified. The basic premise involved was that "truth" lay in the mental processes, not in the precise representation of external reality.

Every sentence, Crane manages to analyze and refer to human nature as a cause of the characters' actions. Crane uses powerful and beautiful diction to describe his characters not through imagery, but through their possessions and actions.

"*His hat was tipped over his eye with an air of challenge. Between his teeth a cigar stump was tilted at the* ***angle of defiance***."

"*Withered persons, in* ***curious postures of submission*** *to something, sat smoking pipes in obscure corners*."

"*Maggie, with side glances of fear of interruption, ate like a* ***small pursued tigress****… Jimmie sat nursing his various wounds. He cast furtive glances at his mother. His practiced eye perceived her gradually emerge from a mist of muddled sentiment until her brain burned in drunken heat. He sat breathless*."

"*A* ***reader of the words of wind demons*** *might have been able to see the portions of a dialogue pass to and fro between the exhorter and his hearers*.

"*You are damned," said the preacher. And the* ***reader of sounds*** *might have seen the reply go forth from the ragged people: "Where's our soup*?"

Imagery

Crane uses colors a lot to symbolize certain **emotions.**

He often plays upon the contrast of colors to set up a desperate situation.

"*Eventually they entered a dark region where, from a careening building, a dozen gruesome doorways gave up loads of babies to the street and the gutter. A wind of early autumn raised* **yellow dust** *from cobbles and swirled it against a hundred windows*."

"*Her yellow brows shaded eyelids that had grown blue*."

Transition – both physical and metaphorical → exposes the tragedy of the situation

"*Jimmy's occupation for a long time was to stand on street corners and watch the world go by, dreaming* **blood-red dreams** *at the passing of pretty women*."

Symbolic of his past abuses projected upon society

"*She received a stool and a machine in a room where sat twenty girls of various shades of* **yellow discontent**."

As a war correspondent, Crane traveled to the American West, Cuba, Mexico, and Greece.

"The Open Boat" is one of Stephen Crane's best known short stories and a classic example of naturalism.

"The Open Boat"

“The Open Boat” is a fictional account of a true experience. Newspaper reporter Stephen Crane was sailing to Cuba on *The Commodore* when the ship went down off the coast of Florida.

After his ordeal, Crane wrote a newspaper article in which he described with much detail the events involving the sinking of the ship, but he barely mentioned the 30-hours spent in a 10-foot dinghy adrift off the coast of Daytona Beach.

A year later, Crane shared his experience in the short story, “The Open Boat.”

Examples of Naturalism in “The Open Boat”

Man at mercy of indifferent natural world

Role of the individual in community

Importance of human relationships

The Red Badge of Courage (1895)

Crane was a great stylist and a master of the contradictory effect. *The Red Badge of Courage* (1895) is a short novel (or a long short story) by Stephen Crane about the meaning of courage, as it is discovered by Henry Fleming, a recruit in the Civil War.

It is often considered one of the best American war stories ever written, even though the author was born after the events and never saw battle himself. His purpose in writing the book was to explore fear and courage in the face of the most daunting trial imaginable: battle.

The book won international acclaim for its realism and psychological depth in telling the story of an old soldier. Crane had never experienced battle personally, but had conducted interviews with a number of veterans, some of whom may have suffered from what is now known as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Main Characters

- *Henry Fleming*
- *Jim Conklin*
- *Wilson*
- *The tattered soldier*
- *The lieutenant*
- *Henry's mother*

Henry Fleming

The novel's protagonist; a young soldier fighting for the Union army during the American Civil War. Initially, Henry stands untested in battle and questions his own courage.

As the novel progresses, he encounters hard truths about the experience of war, confronting the universe's indifference to his existence and the insignificance of his own life.

Often vain and holding extremely romantic notions about himself, Henry grapples with these lessons as he first runs from battle, then comes to thrive as a soldier in combat.

Jim Conklin

Henry's friend; a tall soldier hurt during the regiment's first battle. Jim soon dies from his wounds, and represents, in the early part of the novel, an important moral contrast to Henry.

Wilson

A loud private; Henry's friend in the regiment. Wilson and Henry grow close as they share the harsh experiences of war and gain a reputation as the regiment's best fighters. Wilson proves to be a more sympathetic version of Henry, though he does not seem to be troubled by Henry's tendency to endlessly scrutinize his own actions.

The tattered soldier

A twice-shot soldier whom Henry encounters in the column of wounded men. With his endless speculation about Henry's supposed wound, the tattered soldier functions as a nagging, painful conscience to Henry.

The lieutenant

Henry's commander in battle, a youthful officer who swears profusely during the fighting. As Henry gains recognition for doing brave deeds, he and the lieutenant develop sympathy for each other, often feeling that they must work together to motivate the rest of the men.

Henry's mother

Encountered only in a brief flashback. Henry's mother opposed his enlisting in the army. Though her advice is only briefly summarized in Henry's flashback, it contains several difficult themes with which Henry must grapple, including the insignificance of his life in the grand scheme of the world.

Themes

- Courage
- Manhood
- Self-Preservation
- The Universe's Disregard for Human Life

Courage

Given the novel's title, it is no surprise that courage—defining it, desiring it, and, ultimately, achieving it - is the most salient element of the narrative. As the novel opens, Henry's understanding of courage is traditional and romantic. He assumes that, like a war hero

of ancient Greece, he will return from battle either *with* his shield or *on* it. Henry's understanding of courage has more to do with the praise of his peers than any internal measure of his bravery.

Within the novel's first chapter, Henry recalls his mother's advice, which runs counter to his own notions. She cares little whether Henry earns himself a praiseworthy name; instead, she instructs him to meet his responsibilities honestly and squarely, even if it means sacrificing his own life.

Courage

The gap that exists between Henry's definition of courage and the alternative that his mother suggests fluctuates throughout *The Red Badge of Courage,* sometimes narrowing (when Henry fights well in his first battle) and sometimes growing wider (when he abandons the tattered soldier).

At the end of the novel, as the mature Henry marches victoriously from battle, a more subtle and complex understanding of courage emerges: it is not simply a function of other people's opinions, but it does incorporate egocentric concerns such as a soldier's regard for his reputation.

Manhood

Throughout the novel, Henry struggles to preserve his manhood, his understanding of which parallels his understanding of courage.

At first, he relies on very traditional, even clichéd, notions. He laments that education and religion have tamed men of their natural savagery and made them so pale and domestic that there remain few ways for a man to distinguish himself other than on the battlefield.

Having this opportunity makes Henry feel grateful to be participating in the war. As he makes his way from one skirmish to the next, he becomes more and more convinced that his accumulated experiences will earn him the praise of women and the envy of men; he will be a hero, a *real* man, in their eyes. These early conceptions of manhood are simplistic, romantic, adolescent fantasies.

Manhood

Jim Conklin and Wilson stand as symbols of a more human kind of manhood. They are self-assured without being braggarts and are ultimately able to own up to their faults and shortcomings.

Wilson, who begins the novel as an obnoxiously loud soldier, later exposes his own fear and vulnerability when he asks Henry to deliver a yellow envelope to his family should he die

in battle. In realizing the relative insignificance of his own life, Wilson frees himself from the chains that bind Henry, becoming a man of "quiet belief in his purposes and abilities."

By the novel's end, Henry makes a bold step in the same direction, learning that the measure of one's manhood lies more in the complex ways in which one negotiates one's mistakes and responsibilities than in one's conduct on the battlefield.

Self-Preservation

An anxious desire for self-preservation influences Henry throughout the novel. When a pinecone that he throws after fleeing from battle makes a squirrel scurry, he believes that he has stumbled upon a universal truth: each being will do whatever it takes, including running from danger, in order to preserve itself. Henry gets much mileage out of this revelation, as he uses it to justify his impulse to retreat from the battlefield. His conceits—namely that the good of the army and, by extension, the world, requires his survival—drive him to behave abominably. He not only runs from battle, but also abandons the tattered soldier, though he knows that the soldier is almost certain to die if he does not receive assistance.

Soon after his encounter with the squirrel, Henry discovers the corpse of a soldier. This sets in motion Henry's realization that the world is largely indifferent to his life and the questions that preoccupy him. Courage and honor endow a man with a belief in the worth of preserving the lives of others, but the pervasiveness of death on the battlefield compels Henry to question the importance of these qualities. This weighing of values begs consideration of the connection between the survival instinct and vanity.

The Red Badge of Courage (1895)

Henry Fleming meets a dead soldier

Chapter 7.

The youth cringed as if discovered in a crime. By heavens, they had won after all! The imbecile line had remianed and become victors. He could hear cheering.

He lifted himself upon his toes and looked in the direction of the fight. A yellow fog lay wallowing on the treetops. From beneath it came the clatter of musketry. Hoarse cries told of an advance.

He turned away amazed and angry. He felt that he had been wronged.

He had fled, he told himself, because annihilation approached. He had done a good part in saving himself, who was a little piece of the army. He had considered the time, he said, to be one in which is was the duty of every little piece to rescue itself if possible. Later the officers could fit the little pieces together again, and make a battle front. If none of the little pieces were wise enough to save themselves from the flurry of death at such a time, why, then, where would be the army? It was all plain that he had proceeded acording to very correct and commendable rules. His actions had been sagacious things. They had been full of strategy. They were the work of a master's legs.

Thoughts of his comrades came to him. The brittle blue line had withstood the blows and won. He grew bitter over it. It seemed that the blind igorance and stupidity of those little pieces had betrayed him. He had been overturned and crushed by their lack of sense in holding the position, when intelligent deliberation would have convinced them that it was impossible. He, the englightened man who looks afar in the dark, had fled because of his superior perceptions and knowledge. He felt a great anger against his comrades. He knew it could be proved that they had been fools.

He wondered what they would remark when later he appeared in camp. His mind heard howls of derision. Their density would not enable them to understand his sharper point of view.

He began to pity himself acutely. He was ill used. He was trodden beneath the feet of an iron injustice. He had proceeded with wisdom and from the most righteous motives under heaven's blue only to be frustrated by hateful circumstances.

A dull, animal-like rebellion against his fellows, war in the abstract, and fate grew within him. He shambled along with bowed head, his brain in a tumult of agony and despair. When he looked loweringly up, quivering at each sound, his eyes had the expression of those

of a great criminal who thinks his guilt and his punishment great, and knows that he can find no words.

He went from the fields into a thick woods, as if resolved to bury himself. He wished to get out of hearing of the crackling shots which were to him like voices.

The ground was cluttered with vines and bushes, and the trees grew close and spread out like bouquets. He was obliged to force his way with much noise. The creepers, catching against his legs, cried out harshly as their sprays were torn from the barks of the trees. The swishing saplings tried to make knows his presence to the world. He could not conciliate the forest. As he made his way, it was always calling out protestations. When he searated embraces of trees and vines, the disturbed foliages waved their arms and turned their faces leaves toward him. He dreaded lest these noisy motions and cries should bring men to look at him. So he went far, seeking dark and intricate places.

After a time the sound of musketry grew faint and the cannon boomed in the distance. The sun, suddenly apparent, blazed among the trees. The insects were making rhythmical noises. They seemed to be grinding their teeth in unison. A woodpecker stuck his impudent head around the side of a tree. A bird flew on lighthearted wing.

Off was the rumble of death. It seemed now that Nature had no ears.

This landscape gave him assurance. A fair field holding life. It was the religion of peace. It would die if its timid eyes were compelled to see blood. He conceived Nature to be a woman with a deep aversion to tragedy.

He threw a pine cone at a jovial squirrel, and he ran with chattering fear. High in a treetop he stopped, and, poking his head cautiously from behind a branch, looked down with an air of trepidation.

The youth felt triumphant at this exhibition. There was the law, he said. Nature had given him a sign. The squirrel, immediately upon recognizing danger, had taken to his legs without ado. He did not stand stolidly baring his furry belly to the missle, and die with an upward glance at the sympathetic heavens. On the contrary, he had fled as fast as his legs could carry him; and he was but an ordinary squirrel, too--doubtless no philosopher of his race. The youth wended, feeling that Nature was of his mind. She re-enforced his argument with proofs that lived where the sun shone.

Once he found himself almost into a swamp. He was obliged to walk upon bog tufts and watch his feet to keep from the oily mire. Pausing at one time to look about him he saw, out at some black water, a small animal pounce in and emerge directly with a gleaming fish.

The youth went again into the deep thickets. The brushed branches make a noise that drowened th sounds of cannon. He walked on, going from obscurity into promises of a greater obscurity.

At length he reached a place where the high, arching boughs made a chapel. He softly pushed the green doors aside and entered. Pine needles were a gentle brown carpet. There was a religious half light.

Near the threshold he stopped, horror-stricken at the sight of a thing.

He was being looked at by a dead man who was seated with his back against a columnlike tree. The corpse was dressed in a uniform that once had been blue, but was now faded to a melancholy shade of green. The eyes, staring at the youth, had changed to the dull hue to be seen on the side of a dead fish. The mouth was open. Its red had changed to an appalling yellow. Over the gray skin of the face ran little ants. One was trundling some sort of bundle along the upper lip.

The youth gave a shriek as he confronted the thing. He was for moments turned to stone before it. He remained staring into the liquid-looking eyes. The dead man and the living man exchanged a long look. Then the youth cautiously put one hand behind him and brought it against a tree. Leaning upon this he retreated, step by step, with his face still toward the thing. He feared that if he turned his back the body might spring up and stealthily pursue him.

The branches, pushing against him, threatened to throw him over upon it. His unguided feet, too, caught aggravatingly in the brambles; and with it all he received a subltle suggestion to touch the corpse. As he thought of his hand upon it he shuddered profoundly.

At last he burst the bonds which had fated him to the spot and fled, unheeding the underbrush. He was pursued by the sight of black ants swarming greedily upon the gray face and venturing horribly near to the eyes.

After a time he paused, and, breathless and panting, listened. He imagined some strange voice would come from the dead throat and squawk after him in horrible menaces.

The trees about the protal of the chapel moved soughingly in a soft wind. A sad silence was upon the little guarding edifice.

Frank Norris (1870 – 1902)

His Life

Frank Norris, novelist and critic, was one of the progressive writers of his time whose works dealt with social problems and won the attention of the reading public. Born in Chicago, in the family of a rich jeweller, Norris was able to get a good education. When he was still a boy his father moved to California where he became a successful businessman.

At the age of 17 Norris went to Paris and studied literature and the arts for 2 years.

1890 – entered the University of California, and later went to Harvard.

„McTeague"

1890 – he began to write his first novel, „McTeague", which was considered to be one of the naturalist novels in America. The novel was written under the influence of Zola in the style of the French naturalistic writers. It was a portrayal of slum life in San Francisco. Unable to find a publisher at the time, Norris applied for newspaper work. He became a war-correspondent.

At heart a literary critic as much as a writer, Norris kept an eye on everything fresh and original in the creative work of other young writers. When Crane's first novel „Maggie" appeared, he wrote a review in favour of the book and its gifted author.

Norris as a journalist

His work as a journalist at *The Wave* took him to various corners of California. He witnessed an actual fight between the farmers and agents of the South-Pacific Railroad Company in the struggle of the farmers to defend their rights to the land they had cultivated.

The fight made a deep impression on the young writer. He knew that his thoughts on the farmers' movement would not be printed by the newspaper, so he saved this material for a book which he later wrote, „The Epic on the Wheat".

The Spanish-American War found Norris in Cuba as a correspondent for an American magazine. In Cuba he fell ill with yellow fever and had to return home. He went to live in New York where he began writing his novel „The Epic on the Wheat". But an operation for appendicitis stopped his creative work. He died in New York in 1902.

Norris's Works and His Views on Literature

In his first novel, „McTeague (1899), Norris warned to show the corrupting influence of gold upon human nature, and how it breeds greed and avarice (kapzsiság) in human beings. The story is set in poor district in San Francisco. Norris tried to depict the exact surroundings in great detail with an observant rather than with a philosophyical eye, that is to say, he described life more from the outside.

McTeague

McTeague is a dentist without a diploma. He is not a bad fellow, generous by nature; but he is a narrow-minded philistine and when aroused, becomes a beast. Soon after his engagement to Trina, a young and pretty neighbour she wins five thousand dollars in a lottery. This money brings unhappiness to the couple. McTeague's friend. Schouler, is envious to their good fortune and regrets that he had not proposed to Tina himself. He knows that McTeague has no official license to work as a dentist and informs the police. McTeague loses his practice.

Trina, now his wife who has been very good-natured, turns into a mean woman. She grudges her husband the money she has won and refuses to give any of it to him. In a fit of fury he tries to take the money by force, and without meaning to do so kills Trina. He is compelled to run away from San Francisco and hides from the police in the Californian desert, the Death Valley, where he suffers cruelly from thirst. Schouler pursues him into the Death Valley, captures him and chains him to his own body. McTeague struggles to free himself and in a brutal fight kills Schouler. Finally McTeague dies of thirst. He perishes chained to the dead body of his enemy.

Symbols

Norris gives daramatic unity to the whole story through the symbol of gold: there is a golden canary cage in McTeague's room; Trina's 20 dollar gold pieces; McTeague's birthday present from Trina: an enormous tooth coated with French gilt to use as a dentist's sign in the window of his establishment. There also appear secondary persons in the novel, such as the rag-picker, whose eyes glitter at the sight of gold".

Towards the end of the century Norris made a clean break with the naturalistic method of writing. He wrote much about his views on realism in his critical articles. A collection of these articles was published posthumously in 1903 under the title „The Responsibilities of the Novelist". In these articles Norris writes about Leo Tolstoy.

The Epic on the Wheat

Norris's greatest work is his famous novel „The Epic on the Wheat". Norris had planned to write a vast trilogy, three separate novels on one and the same theme.

The first book „**The Octopus**", tells of the growing of the wheat;

The second book „**The Pit**", describes the marketing of the wheat; and the third novel, „**The Wolf**", was to be about the consumption of the wheat.

But Norris completed only the first two parts of the trilogy, the stories of which take place in America. These were received with great enthusiasm by the readers. The third book, which was to be set in Europe, was never written because of the writer's untimely death.

The Octopus

As seen by the novels of the trilogy, the writer dealt with his subject-matter from a sociological and economic point of view. The epic form which Norris chose for the work demanded large canvasses. Norris showed man as part of society: the individual is swallowed in the enormous mass of people and is swept along with them.

„The Octopus" is a story of farm life in California;

„The Pit" – a story of a stock-market in Chicago.

In both books Norris meant to expose the crimes of the businessmen and show how difficult it was for the farmers to struggle against the monopolies.

By the octopus Norris meant the new railroad that had been built across the great Californian valley. The agents of the railroad are the villains in the story.

There is the **local banker, Behrman**, a land speculator, and an agent of the railroad; there is a lawyer who is also a politician, and other businessmen. They are a gang of robbers who decide to make millions of dollars for themselves first by literally stealing land from the farmers, and then by raising railroad tariffs on the shipment of wheat. The farmers who till the soil in the valley along the San Joaquin River are unable to pay for the shipment of their goods. The railroad ruins the Californian farmers and finally they are to lose their land. The farmers stick to their rights in armed defence, but it is the railroad firm that is victorious.

The railroad grips the wheat growers in its cruel tentacles. It spares neither man nor beast.

The impact of the „octopus" is shown in one of the first scenes of the novel when a locomotive roars, by filling the air with the reek of hot oil, vomiting smoke and sparks; it destroys on its way a flock of sheep that wandered upon the track. „It was a slaughter, a massacre of innocents."

Norris symbolizes by it the crushing of the men and women of the valley under the wheels of modern industrialism. The novel gives a picture of actual life in California. Norris

sympathizes with the farmers. Everything he hated in capitalist America is concentrated in the land speculator Behrman. He is the great boss, the unscrupulous dealer and money-lender. He is victorious, while the farmers whose sweat and blood went into the land lose the fight. They all meet with a tragic end.

Norris, the realist, does not make Behrman die in the fight with the farmers, because he knows that there surely will be another Behrman of the same kind, should this one be done away with. Norris sees the wheat as the symbol of a mightier power than that of the masters of the monopolies – the power of the toiling masses; therefore, at the end of the novel, Norris has Behrman suffocated to death under the grain while it is being loaded into the hold of the ship.

Frank Norris The Epic of the Wheat

The Octopus - A Story of California 1901 □

(Excerpts from Book 1 Chapter 1)

As from a pinnacle, Presley, from where he now stood, dominated the entire country. The sun had begun to set, everything in the range of his vision was overlaid with a sheen of gold.

First, close at hand, it was the Seed ranch, carpeting the little hollow behind the Mission with a spread of greens, some dark, some vivid, some pale almost to yellowness. Beyond that was the Mission itself, its venerable campanile, in whose arches hung the Spanish King's bells, already glowing ruddy in the sunset. Farther on, he could make out Annixter's ranch house, marked by the skeleton-like tower of the artesian well, and, a little farther to the east, the huddled, tiled roofs of Guadalajara. Far to the west and north, he saw Bonneville very plain, and the dome of the courthouse, a purple silhouette against the glare of the sky. Other points detached themselves, swimming in a golden mist, projecting blue shadows far before them; the mammoth live-oak by Hooven's, towering superb and magnificent; the line of eucalyptus trees, behind which he knew was the Los Muertos ranch house □ his home; the wateringtank, the great iron-hooped tower of wood that stood at the joining of the Lower Road and the County Road; the long wind-break of poplar trees and the white walls of Caraher's saloon on the County Road.

But all this seemed to be only foreground, a mere array of accessories — a mass of irrelevant details. Beyond Annixter's, beyond Guadalajara, beyond the Lower Road, beyond Broderson Creek, on to the south and west, infinite, illimitable, stretching out there under the sheen of the sunset forever and forever, flat, vast, unbroken, a huge scroll, unrolling between the horizons, spread the great stretches of the ranch of Los Muertos, bare of crops, shaved close in the recent harvest. Near at hand were hills, but on that far southern horizon only the curve of the great earth itself checked the view. Adjoining Los Muertos, and widening to the west, opened the Broderson ranch. The Osterman ranch to the northwest carried on the great sweep of landscape; ranch after ranch. Then, as the imagination itself expanded under the stimulus of that measureless range of vision, even those great ranches resolved themselves into mere foreground, mere accessories, irrelevant details. Beyond the fine line of the horizons, over the curve of the globe, the shoulder of the earth, were other ranches, equally vast, and beyond these, others, and beyond these, still others, the immensities multiplying, lengthening out vaster and vaster. The whole gigantic sweep of the San Joaquin expanded,

Titanic, before the eye of the mind, flagellated with heat, quivering and shimmering under the sun's red eye. At long intervals, a faint breath of wind out of the south passed slowly over the levels of the baked and empty earth, accentuating the silence, marking off the stillness. It seemed to exhale from the land itself, a prolonged sigh as of deep fatigue. It was the season after the harvest, and the great earth, the mother, after its period of reproduction, its pains of labour, delivered of the fruit of its loins, slept the sleep of exhaustion, the infinite repose of the colossus, benignant, eternal, strong, the nourisher of nations, the feeder of an entire world.

Ha! there it was, his epic, his inspiration, his West, his thundering progression of hexameters. A sudden uplift, a sense of exhilaration, of physical exaltation appeared abruptly to sweep Presley from his feet. As from a point high above the world, he seemed to dominate a universe, a whole order of things. He was dizzied, stunned, stupefied, his morbid supersensitive mind reeling, drunk with the intoxication of mere immensity. Stupendous ideas for which there were no names drove headlong through his brain. Terrible, formless shapes, vague figures, gigantic, monstrous, distorted, whirled at a gallop through his imagination.

He started homeward, still in his dream, descending from the hill, emerging from the canyon, and took the short cut straight across the Quien Sabe ranch, leaving Guadalajara far to his left. He tramped steadily on through the wheat stubble, walking fast, his head in a whirl.

Never had he so nearly grasped his inspiration as at that moment on the hill-top. Even now, though the sunset was fading, though the wide reach of valley was shut from sight, it still kept him company. Now the details came thronging back — the component parts of his poem, the signs and symbols of the West. It was there, close at hand, he had been in touch with it all day. It was in the centenarian's vividly coloured reminiscences — De La Cuesta, holding his grant from the Spanish crown, with his power of life and death; the romance of his marriage; the white horse with its pillion of red leather and silver bridle mountings; the bullfights in the Plaza; the gifts of gold dust, and horses and tallow. It was in Vanamee's strange history, the tragedy of his love; Angéle Varian, with her marvellous loveliness; the Egyptian fulness of her lips, the perplexing upward slant of her violet eyes, bizarre, oriental; her white forehead made three cornered by her plaits of gold hair; the mystery of the Other; her death at the moment of her child's birth. It was in Vanamee's flight into the wilderness; the story of the Long Trail, the sunsets behind the altarlike mesas, the baking desolation of the deserts; the strenuous, fierce life of forgotten towns, down there, far off, lost below the horizons of the southwest; the sonorous music of unfamiliar names — Quijotoa, Uintah, Sonora, Laredo, Uncompahgre. It was in the Mission, with its cracked bells, its decaying walls, its venerable sun dial, its fountain and old garden, and in the Mission Fathers

themselves, the priests, the padres, planting the first wheat and oil and wine to produce the elements of the Sacrament — a trinity of great industries, taking their rise in a religious rite.

Abruptly, as if in confirmation, Presley heard the sound of a bell from the direction of the Mission itself. It was the de Profundis, a note of the Old World; of the ancient régime, an echo from the hillsides of mediæval Europe, sounding there in this new land, unfamiliar and strange at this end-of-the-century time.

By now, however, it was dark. Presley hurried forward. He came to the line fence of the Quien Sabe ranch. Everything was very still. The stars were all out. There was not a sound other than the de Profundis, still sounding from very far away. At long intervals the great earth sighed dreamily in its sleep. All about, the feeling of absolute peace and quiet and security and untroubled happiness and content seemed descending from the stars like a benediction. The beauty of his poem, its idyl, came to him like a caress; that alone had been lacking. It was that, perhaps, which had left it hitherto incomplete. At last he was to grasp his song in all its entity.

But suddenly there was an interruption. Presley had climbed the fence at the limit of the Quien Sabe ranch. Beyond was Los Muertos, but between the two ran the railroad. He had only time to jump back upon the embankment when, with a quivering of all the earth, a locomotive, single, unattached, shot by him with a roar, filling the air with the reek of hot oil, vomiting smoke and sparks; its enormous eye, cyclopean, red, throwing a glare far in advance, shooting by in a sudden crash of confused thunder; filling the night with the terrific clamour of its iron hoofs.

Abruptly Presley remembered. This must be the crack passenger engine of which Dyke had told him, the one delayed by the accident on the Bakersfield division and for whose passage the track had been opened all the way to Fresno.

Before Presley could recover from the shock of the irruption, while the earth was still vibrating, the rails still humming, the engine was far away, flinging the echo of its frantic gallop over all the valley. For a brief instant it roared with a hollow diapason on the Long Trestle over Broderson Creek, then plunged into a cutting farther on, the quivering glare of its fires losing itself in the night, its thunder abruptly diminishing to a subdued and distant humming. All at once this ceased. The engine was gone.

But the moment the noise of the enginelapsed, Presley — about to start forward again — was conscious of a confusion of lamentable sounds that rose into the night from out the engine's wake. Prolonged cries of agony, sobbing wails of infinite pain, heart-rending, pitiful.

Library of Congress Currier & Ives, Night Scene at an American Railway Junction, 1876 (detail).

The noises came from a little distance. He ran down the track, crossing the culvert, over the irrigating ditch, and at the head of the long reach of track between the culvert and the Long Trestle paused abruptly, held immovable at the sight of the ground and rails all about him.

In some way, the herd of sheep Vanamee's herd had found a breach in the wire fence by the right of way and had wandered out upon the tracks. A band had been Library of Congress 1893 crossing just at the moment of the engine's passage. The pathos of it was beyond expression. It was a slaughter, a massacre of innocents. The iron monster had charged full into the midst, merciless, inexorable. To the right and left, all the width of the right of way, the little bodies had been flung; backs were snapped against the fence posts; brains knocked out. Caught in the barbs of the wire, wedged in, the bodies hung suspended. Under foot it was terrible. The black blood, winking in the starlight, seeped down into the clinkers between the ties with a prolonged sucking murmur.

Presley turned away, horror-struck, sick at heart, overwhelmed with a quick burst of irresistible compassion for this brute agony he could not relieve. The sweetness was gone from the evening, the sense of peace, of security, and placid contentment was stricken from the landscape. The hideous ruin in the engine's path drove all thought of his poem from his mind. The inspiration vanished like a mist. The de Profundis had ceased to ring.

He hurried on across the Los Muertos ranch, almost running, even putting his hands over his ears till he was out of hearing distance of that all but human distress. Not until he was beyond earshot did he pause, looking back, listening. The night had shut down again. For a moment the silence was profound, unbroken.

Then, faint and prolonged, across the levels of the ranch, he heard the engine whistling for Bonneville. Again and again, at rapid intervals in its flying course, it whistled for road crossings, for sharp curves, for trestles; ominous notes, hoarse, bellowing, ringing with the accents of menace and defiance; and abruptly Presley saw again, in his imagination, the galloping monster, the terror of steel and steam, with its single eye, cyclopean, red, shooting from horizon to horizon; but saw it now as the symbol of a vast power, huge, terrible, flinging the echo of its thunder over all the reaches of the valley, leaving blood and destruction in its path; the leviathan, with tentacles of steel clutching into the soil, the soulless Force, the iron-hearted Power, the monster, the Colossus, the Octopus.

Henry James (1843-1916)

Period includes rise of the Realistic novel, local color, regionalism, and naturalism. Opposes romanticism and idealism. Since life lacks symmetry, fiction should avoid symmetry of plot.

Doesn't always follow traditional story format (exposition, conflict, climax, denouement) in order to portray a more realistic "slice of life." Interestingly, Realism often portrays happy endings despite real-life unhappy ones.

Realistic fiction is written so as to give the effect that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common reader. There is a sense that characters exist and the things in the story might happen.

Imitation - Use of everyday (realistic) dialogue and dialect

Verisimilitude—A semblance of reality

Simple, direct, clear prose;

Ethical issues often examined;

Value of the individual = praise characterization as center of novel;

Psychological introspection and exploration of characters.

Objective observer

Henry James (1843-1916)

Born in New York City in 1843. Father independently wealthy; close, loving family.

Family went to Europe when James was less than 1 yr. old. Father "constantly dissatisfied with his life"

Biographical Details

At a young age, considered one of the best writers of short stories. Tended to write of the mind, not of action. Became a British citizen in 1915

A Citizen of the World

Father believed in exposing children to the best of culture: "sensuous education"—museums, libraries, theatres. Children studied languages; very well read; educated by tutors. James later attended Harvard Law School. Thought America was hostile to creativity

Imagined himself as “a detached spectator of life”. “Grand Tour” of Europe in 1869. Spent his life traveling. Gregarious and friendly, but never married. Avoided involvement

Early Days

Wrote critical articles and reviews. Influenced by George Eliot, Nathaniel Hawthorne. Wrote short stories, novels, and novellas.

William Dean Howells, editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, was a friend and mentor. Developed style of American “realism”.

The Novel of Manners

Society is the focus. More about the conversation and thought people have than about actions. Popular in the 19th century; still around today in an updated form

Helps us see quality of life.

Great Novels and Novellas

- *The American* (1877)
- *Daisy Miller* (1879)
- *Washington Square* (1881)
- *The Bostonians* (1886)
- *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)
- *The Wings of a Dove* (1902)
- *The Ambassadors* (1903)

Detachment

Felt cut off from American cultural life: saw culture as something to delight in, not to study out of a sense of duty. Made his way to London where he became part of a community of writers and artists

Europe

Visited Florence; met many Americans doing European tours; found them “vulgar” . “Wonderful sense of place” in all his writings. Great themes: “the tension between the old world and the new”; the “international theme”. “The drama, comic and tragic, of Americans in Europe and occasionally of Europeans in America”

Famous brother William James—1st American Psychologist

Bret Harte posed the accusation that James “looks, acts, thinks like an Englishman and writes like an Englishman.”

***Daisy Miller* (1879)**

A novella about American innocence defeated by the stiff, traditional values of Europe. Daisy brings her “free” American spirit to Europe. She looks at people as individuals, rather than as members of a social class.

Despite her goodness, she is completely misunderstood by the European characters. She meets a young American, who had lived in Europe a long time and had taken on the same kind of coldness. The coldness of these people finally leads Daisy to her death.

Daisy Miller and the International Theme

Daisy, as a character, is an innocent, but the whole problem of innocence, especially in contrast to the influence of evil, comes out most vividly in *The Turn of the Screw*. There the entire story examines the potential meanings, the ironies and ambiguities, of this basic theme.

Together *The Turn of the Screw* and *Daisy Miller* are two of Henry James's most popular stories. They contain his essential themes and his essential style.

The Jamesian Novel

James looked upon the novel as a work of art. One of the first writers to think of the novel in this way.

James did not use the novel as a social document or as a forum for his philosophy. To James, the novel is a form complete in itself. Admittedly, he is difficult to read.

1. A Jamesian novel not a vehicle for something else.

   The story, plot, dialogue complete within the work itself.

2. In a James novel, there is always what James referred to as the "central consciousness," that is, a mind and person through whom the story is being presented to the reader.

James always conscious of how the reader is hearing and seeing his story. Basically, he stays away from the omniscient narrator except for occasional comments.

The omniscient narrator means that the story is told from the point of view of the author. The narrator knows all the characters and what they are thinking and doing.

James usually attempts to tell the story from the point of view of a character in the work.

In *Daisy Miller,* the story is seen through the mind of Winterbourne.

Work never seen from Daisy's point of view.

Work about how Daisy is seen by others, especially Winterbourne.

The reader should understand that James's dominating technical device is point of view, the decision that the author had made on from whose eyes, ears, and mind he is going to tell the story to the reader.

In James's novels there are rarely, if ever, plain ornaments.

Dialogue is never just plain talk; it is always moving the plot forward.

Description always establishes a scene so that one can understand the direction of the work.

- oScenes are always full of meaning in relation to other things in the novel.
- oA Jamesian novel is always organic; all things are in relation to the whole.
- oNothing--not character, plot, story, scene, dialogue, description--nothing is isolated. All parts are related.

Nouvelle

James also referred to *Daisy Miller* as a nouvelle--a French word for the literary form also called (using an Italian word) a novella. The nouvelle longer than a short story, but shorter than a full-fledged novel. Flexibility of the form appealed to James who called the nouvelle "beautiful and blest."

James's nouvelles differ from his novels.

In the nouvelle he makes extensive use of narrative summary; that is, he often describes events rather than dramatizing them in detail, and he foreshortens time in order to achieve compactness. For example, many of Daisy's experiences in Rome are related very quickly and in no detail; weeks pass in only a few pages.

Introduction to *Daisy Miller*

Daisy Miller: A Study first appeared in *Cornhill Magazine* in England in 1878 and came out in book form the following year after an American publisher had rejected it. The work was an immediate success and projected James into fame for the first time.

Theme

At first, the character of Daisy was considered an "outrage." Subsequently, that opinion changed.

To many critics, this short novel is a full expression of James's most important theme: his international subject, or the confrontation between a youthful, innocent girl and a Europeanized society that has played out its ideas and is now living in the conventions and formalities of a structured society.

Central Theme

Conflict between innocence and energy of New World and wisdom and corruption of Old World.,Comfortable, well-to-do Americans: provincial and free from constraints of society

Author's Style

Acclaimed for attempt to represent the inner workings of the mind. A focus on character would bring out important elements of protagonist. Pictured the “self-made” young woman, the bold and brash American innocent in European society.

James’s Place in American Literature

A pioneer in psychological realism. A “master craftsman”. Criticized by some because of his focus on the elite.

Henry James

The Portrait of a Lady

Isabel

(Excerpt)

In this extract, James introduces his heroine and provides some clues as to her somewhat complex character. Isabel has just learned that she has attracted the attention of Lydia Touchett, long-lost English aunt. Mrs Touchett is determined to do something to help the girl, whose sisters are both married and whose parent are dead.
Her sister, Lily, who watches her ”as a motherly spaniel might watch a free greyhound” and who just wants ”to see her safely married”, wonders whether the interest in Isabel has made her sister feel grand.

Whether she felt grand or no, she at any rate felt different, felt as if something had happened to her. Left to herself for the evening she sat a while under the lamp, her hands empty, her usual avocations unheeded. Then she rose and moved about the room, and from one room to another, preferring the places where the vague lamplight expired. She was restless and even agitated; at moments she trembled a little. The importance of what had happened was out of proportion to its appearance; there had really been a change in her life. What it would bring with it was as yet extremely indefinite; but Isabel was in a situation that gave a value to any change. She had a desire to leave the past behind her and, as she said to herself, to begin afresh. This desire indeed was not a birth of the present occasion; it was as familiar as the sound of the rain upon the window and it had led to her beginning afresh a great many times. She closed her eyes as she sat in one of the dusky corners of the quiet parlour; but it was not with a desire for dozing forgetfulness. It was on the contrary because she felt too wide-eyed and wished to check the sense of seeing too many things at once. Her imagination was by habit ridiculously active; when the door was not open it jumped out of the window. She was not accustomed indeed to keep it behind bolts; and at important moments, when she would have been thankful to make use of her judgement alone, she paid the penalty of having given undue encouragement to the faculty of seeing without judging. At present, with her sense that the note of change had been struck, came gradually a host of images of the things she was leaving behind her. The years and hours of her life came back to her, and for a long time, in a stillness broken only by the ticking of the big bronze clock, she passed them in review. It had

been a very happy life and she had been a very fortunate person--this was the truth that seemed to emerge most vividly. She had had the best of everything, and in a world in which the circumstances of so many people made them unenviable it was an advantage never to have known anything particularly unpleasant. It appeared to Isabel that the unpleasant had been even too absent from her knowledge, for she had gathered from her acquaintance with literature that it was often a source of interest and even of instruction. Her father had kept it away from her--her handsome, much-loved father, who always had such an aversion to it. It was a great felicity to have been his daughter; Isabel rose even to pride in her parentage. Since his death she had seemed to see him as turning his braver side to his children and as not having managed to ignore the ugly quite so much in practice as in aspiration. But this only made her tenderness for him greater; it was scarcely even painful to have to suppose him too generous, too good-natured, too indifferent to sordid considerations. Many persons had held that he carried this indifference too far, especially the large number of those to whom he owed money. Of their opinions Isabel was never very definitely informed; but it may interest the reader to know that, while they had recognized in the late Mr. Archer a remarkably handsome head and a very taking manner (indeed, as one of them had said, he was always taking something), they had declared that he was making a very poor use of his life. He had squandered a substantial fortune, he had been deplorably convivial, he was known to have gambled freely. A few very harsh critics went so far as to say that he had not even brought up his daughters. They had had no regular education and no permanent home; they had been at once spoiled and neglected; they had lived with nursemaids and governesses (usually very bad ones) or had been sent to superficial schools, kept by the French, from which, at the end of a month, they had been removed in tears. This view of the matter would have excited Isabel's indignation, for to her own sense her opportunities had been large. Even when her father had left his daughters for three months at Neufchatel with a French bonne who had eloped with a Russian nobleman staying at the same hotel--even in this irregular situation (an incident of the girl's eleventh year) she had been neither frightened nor ashamed, but had thought it a romantic episode in a liberal education. Her father had a large way of looking at life, of which his restlessness and even his occasional incoherency of conduct had been only a proof. He wished his daughters, even as children, to see as much of the world as possible; and it was for this purpose that, before Isabel was fourteen, he had transported them three times across the Atlantic, giving them on each occasion, however, but a few months' view of the subject proposed: a course which had whetted our heroine's curiosity without enabling her to satisfy it. She ought to have been a partisan of her father, for she was the member of his trio who

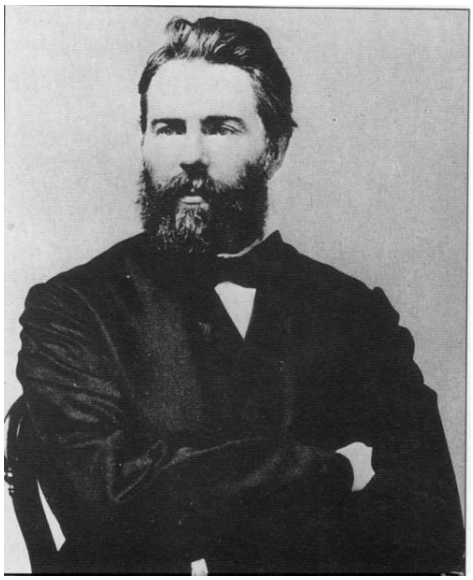
most "made up" to him for the disagreeables he didn't mention. In his last days his general willingness to take leave of a world in which the difficulty of doing as one liked appeared to increase as one grew older had been sensibly modified by the pain of separation from his clever, his superior, his remarkable girl. Later, when the journeys to Europe ceased, he still had shown his children all sorts of indulgence, and if he had been troubled about money-matters nothing ever disturbed their irreflective consciousness of many possessions. Isabel, though she danced very well, had not the recollection of having been in New York a successful member of the choregraphic circle; her sister Edith was, as every one said, so very much more fetching. Edith was so striking an example of success that Isabel could have no illusions as to what constituted this advantage, or as to the limits of her own power to frisk and jump and shriek--above all with rightness of effect. Nineteen persons out of twenty (including the younger sister herself pronounced Edith infinitely the prettier of the two; but the twentieth, besides reversing this judgement, had the entertainment of thinking all the others aesthetic vulgarians. Isabel had in the depths of her nature an even more unquenchable desire to please than Edith; but the depths of this young lady's nature were a very out-of-the-way place, between which and the surface communication was interrupted by a dozen capricious forces. She saw the young men who came in large numbers to see her sister; but as a general thing they were afraid of her; they had a belief that some special preparation was required for talking with her. Her reputation of reading a great deal hung about her like the cloudy envelope of a goddess in an epic; it was supposed to engender difficult questions and to keep the conversation at a low temperature. The poor girl liked to be thought clever, but she hated to be thought bookish; she used to read in secret and, though her memory was excellent, to abstain from showy reference. She had a great desire for knowledge, but she really preferred almost any source of information to the printed page; she had an immense curiosity about life and was constantly staring and wondering. She carried within herself a great fund of life, and her deepest enjoyment was to feel the continuity between the movements of her own soul and the agitations of the world. For this reason she was fond of seeing great crowds and large stretches of country, of reading about revolutions and wars, of looking at historical pictures--a class of efforts as to which she had often committed the conscious solecism of forgiving them much bad painting for the sake of the subject. While the Civil War went on she was still a very young girl; but she passed months of this long period in a state of almost passionate excitement, in which she felt herself at times (to her extreme confusion) stirred almost indiscriminately by the valour of either army. Of course the circumspection of suspicious swains had never gone the length of making her a social proscript; for the number

of those whose hearts, as they approached her, beat only just fast enough to remind them they had heads as well, had kept her unacquainted with the supreme discipline of her sex and age. She had had everything a girl could have: kindness, admiration, bonbons, bouquets, the sense of exclusion from none of the privileges of the world she lived in, abundant opportunity for dancing, plenty of new dresses, the London Spectator, the latest publications, the music of Gounod, the poetry of Browning, the prose of George Eliot.

Herman Melville (1809-1891)

Moby-Dick

Biography



He was born into a rather wealthy family, but his father eventually went bankrupt and then died, leaving Melville as the head of the family. Melville ended up quitting school and worked to support his family for seven years.

After all those years of hard work, Melville began seeking adventure in his early twenties and he decided to join a whaling expedition.

After a couple of years out at sea, Melville returned to America and began writing about his voyage, including *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life* and *Omoo,* both about his time in Polynesia.

In *Typee*, Melville elaborated on his experience with the cannibalistic tribe of the Typee and tells the story of a great love affair with a native girl named Fayaway.

In the sequel, *Omoo*, the narrator goes off on a whaling trip on its way to Tahiti. There's a mutiny, the crew is captured and the narrator explores the Tahiti culture.

Both novels were highly successful as Americans embraced his tales of adventure. At this point Melville had achieved quite a bit of fame and a promising career, as readers were anxious to hear more.

While everyone else loved his stories, Melville himself grew tired of the same old stuff. He was inspired by Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and began writing his famous novel, *Moby Dick*. Sadly, people weren't too interested, and when he died in 1891 at the age of 72, no one really knew who he was. As Ralph Waldo Emerson would say, 'To be great is to be misunderstood.' And thankfully, a few decades after Herman Melville's death, people began to revisit his work and decided that he had been quite misunderstood during his lifetime. Ever since, Melville has been known as one of the great writers of his time, and maybe even of all time.

His Works

It was already mentioned that Herman Melville's most famous story is *Moby Dick*. His story of Captain Ahab's obsessive quest to kill the **white whale** is what Melville is known for today, but at the time, no one was terribly excited about the book, and his popularity sunk. While this was obviously disheartening to Melville, it did not keep him from writing. Instead, he continued to experiment with the metaphysical, or the attempt to explain the fundamentals of nature.

Metaphysical is actually so much more than that simple definition; the problem is it's not easy to define.

The metaphysical is an abstract concept focused on the theories of human nature, especially in the sort of supernatural realms. Metaphysical literature explores why people do what they do and what the consequences are. In the case of Melville, he looked at people's motivations for their decisions, and in the case of Captain Ahab, their obsessions.

His Style

As a Dark Romantic, Melville's style falls in line with writers such as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe.

Dark Romantics are known for creating characters who are trying to make life better for themselves, but self-destruct in the process because of the supernatural forces of evil. Melville's Captain Ahab, whose obsession with Moby Dick leads to his death, certainly fits this description.

Of course, the language Melville uses to tell his stories is an even more important element of his style. To put it simply, Melville is wordy. His descriptions are verbose and grandiose and include sentences with 471 words. But it's not just his sentence structure that is over the top. Melville's diction, or word choice, is also complex. And while this may seem unnecessary for most readers, it's actually a reflection of the complexity of his themes in his story.

One last thing to note about Herman Melville's style is that in spite of being a Dark Romantic wrought full of gloom and doom, Melville does have a sense of humor. He's sly about it, but Melville does tend to poke fun at his characters, through their own thoughts even. This is an element that offsets his verbosity and makes him an enjoyable read.

Moby-Dick - Characters

Moby Dick, the novel has influenced many areas of current culture, including the most famous coffee chain in America. The Starbucks founders chose the name because of its association with the ocean. (But if the pop-culture connection isn't enough to catch your interest, consider that the author **Herman Melville**, who is writing about a bunch of seamen

searching for a gigantic sperm whale with the name 'Dick,' did not fail to notice the obvious humor in such things. And while the story is a rather serious piece about evil and revenge, it's full of vulgar sex jokes that would make even the raunchiest of readers blush. In other words, the story is entertaining on a variety of levels, and worth the read, in spite of its reputation.)

There are tons of characters in the story, some having more definition than others, but for the most part, there are three we need to remember.

Ishmael is our 'narrator' who is about to start out on his first whaling adventure.

Captain Ahab is the captain of the ship called the **Pequod**. He is on a vengeful hunt for a huge white whale called Moby Dick.

Moby Dick - And who, or what, is **Moby Dick**? Well, aside from being a giant white whale, about 90 feet long, he is the object in the story onto which all of the characters sort of project their own interpretations. He is the central part of the story even though he only shows up in three chapters. Three out of 135.

Plot

The 135-chapter story begins with the very famous line, **'Call me Ishmael.'** Ishmael, our first-person narrator, is a former schoolteacher who decides that hunting for whales might make him feel a bit better about life. On his way to Nantucket to find a ship, he meets a rather shady-looking guy named Queequeg.

Queequeg, whose tattoo-covered body is a bit off-putting, has just returned from a whaling trip and is too looking for another adventure.

The two men become roommates (after Ishmael gets over the guy's general appearance), and both sign up for a three-year expedition to hunt sperm whales. Together, they hunt these sperm whales on a ship called the Pequod, a foreboding title since it's named after a Native American tribe called the Pequot, all of whom were killed in the 17th century.

The other sailors on the Pequod have equally strange names: Starbuck, Stubb, and, of course, Flask. Tashtego and Daggoo are on there too as the ship's harpooners.

There is a captain of the ship, but he doesn't show up for awhile, so the shipmates get everything going on their own.

Since Ishmael isn't familiar with the whole sailor gig, he isn't quite sure what to make of not seeing the captain, so when Captain Ahab does show up, Ishmael is pretty pumped.

Captain Ahab, it transpires, only has one leg (which has been replaced with the jaw of a giant sperm whale), and we learn that Moby Dick, a ginormous white whale, ate the other one. In turn, the whole crew, including Ishmael, swears to hunt down Moby Dick to avenge the missing leg.

Life on the Pequod doesn't immediately become adventurous. The crew is always on the lookout for Moby Dick, and they talk to crews from other ships who have news about the white whale, but in the meantime, they do some actual whale hunting.

Ishmael describes in detail how the whales are butchered and harvested for their sperm oil, which is stored in large barrels on the ship. The story drags on for over a year, and the ship and crew make their way from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, by way of the southern part of Africa, where Moby Dick lives.

Once they arrive in the general location, a bunch of bad stuff starts happening: their navigational tools break, they meet with a typhoon, Tasheto falls into the huge head of a whale and has to be saved by Queequeg, and we learn of several other crews who have lost members to good ol' Moby Dick. Just when you start thinking the whale might not exist, Captain Ahab finally gets his chance at Moby Dick.

After three days of sending whaling boats after the beast, only for them to be easily destroyed, the Pequod goes in after the white whale. Predictably, the ship is wrecked, but that doesn't stop Ahab.

In a last effort, he throws the special, blood-soaked harpoon at Moby Dick. Instead of hitting the whale, the harpoon misses, and the rope grabs Ahab around the neck, strangling him while he drowns.

Of course, the only survivor of the wreck is Ishmael, who saved himself by hanging on to Queequeg's coffin. The 'orphaned' Ishmael is rescued by another whaling ship, the Rachel, whose captain is on a mission to find his lost son.

Analysis: Dark Romantic Elements

As a dark romantic, Melville followed the idea that because of 'original sin' (where Adam and Eve ate of the Tree of Knowledge), mankind is now evil. To do this, he is using a gigantic, important symbol, something that represents another idea. The greatest thing about this symbol is that it is open to many interpretations.

Moby Dick, the whale, not the novel, is quite literally the biggest symbol in the story.

The only problem with the symbol is that it's open to so many interpretations that it can be difficult to interpret. When it comes down to it, you have to see what the huge white whale represented to each of the characters. For Ahab, it was the embodiment of evil. For the rest of the crew, Moby Dick is more of a God-like persona, in that he is ever present and indestructible.

Ishmael takes a different approach, and seeing that the whale is white, looks at the symbolic representations of that: purity, angels and even atheism. Since we can't have a single

interpretation for this symbol, it's just good to remember that each character's explanation of the symbol is relative to who they are at their core.

The fact that *Moby Dick* the novel, not the whale, is considered an allegory, where each of the characters and the plot stands for something else, is also one of many different interpretations.

The characters are mainly named from people in the Old Testament of the Bible. Melville does this intentionally to fuel a moral allegory. Captain Ahab's character fuels this allegory.Like Ahab in the Bible, Captain Ahab encounters prophets who foresee his death, and he is known to be a rather wicked ruler. We can also see Captain Ahab's struggle against Moby Dick as further development of the allegory, if we look at the white whale as a God-like figure.

Additionally, *Moby Dick* can be read as a political allegory. Many reads of the story have connected the white whale to the 19th century American quests with the characters representing the historical figures on the journeys. Of course, all of these symbols and allegories mean we have a variety of themes we can take from this story.

Very roughly, we see the power of nature (the sea and the whale) over that of the individual (the crew members, or Ahab). But, like most **dark romantic** novels, we ultimately see that evil and vengeance lead to insanity and self-destruction. Even though Captain Ahab believes that it is the whale that is evil, he is willing to sacrifice the lives of others in his own vengeance.

Herman Melville

Moby Dick

(Excerpt)

In the following passage, Ishmael provides the reader with an explanation for Captain Ahab's obsessive desire to capture the white whale, Moby Dick.

It is a thing well known to both American and English whale-ships, and as well a thing placed upon authoritative record years ago by Scoresby, that some whales have been captured far north in the Pacific, in whose bodies have been found the barbs of harpoons darted in the Greenland seas. Nor is it to be gainsaid, that in some of these instances it has been declared that the interval of time between the two assaults could not have exceeded very many days. Hence, by inference, it has been believed by some whalemen, that the nor' west passage, so long a problem to man, was never a problem to the whale. So that here, in the real living experience of living men, the prodigies related in old times of the inland Strello mountain in Portugal (near whose top there was said to be a lake in which the wrecks of ships floated up to the surface); and that still more wonderful story of the Arethusa fountain near Syracuse (whose waters were believed to have come from the Holy Land by an underground passage); these fabulous narrations are almost fully equalled by the realities of the whaleman.

Forced into familiarity, then, with such prodigies as these; and knowing that after repeated, intrepid assaults, the White Whale had escaped alive; it cannot be much matter of surprise that some whalemen should go still further in their superstitions; declaring Moby Dick not only ubiquitous, but immortal (for immortality is but ubiquity in time); that though groves of spears should be planted in his flanks, he would still swim away unharmed; or if indeed he should ever be made to spout thick blood, such a sight would be but a ghastly deception; for again in unensanguined billows hundreds of leagues away, his unsullied jet would once more be seen.

But even stripped of these supernatural surmisings, there was enough in the earthly make and incontestable character of the monster to strike the imagination with unwonted power. For, it was not so much his uncommon bulk that so much distinguished him from other Sperm Whales, but, as was elsewhere thrown out - a peculiar snow-white wrinkled forehead, and a high, pyramidical white hump. These were his prominent features; the tokens

whereby, even in the limitless, uncharted seas, he revealed his identity, at a long distance, to those who knew him.

The rest of his body was so streaked, and spotted, and marbled with the same shrouded hue, that, in the end, he had gained his distinctive appellation of the White Whale; a name, indeed, literally justified by his vivid aspect, when seen gliding at high noon through a dark blue sea, leaving a milky-way wake of creamy foam, all spangled with golden gleamings.

Nor was it his unwonted magnitude, nor his remarkable hue, nor yet his deformed lower jaw, that so much invested the whale with natural terror, as that unexampled, intelligent malignity which, according to specific accounts, he had over and over again evinced in his assaults. More than all, his treacherous retreats struck more of dismay than perhaps aught else. For, when swimming before his exulting pursuers, with every apparent symptom of alarm, he had several times been known to turn around suddenly, and, bearing down upon them, either stave their boats to splinters, or drive them back in consternation to their ship.

Already several fatalities had attended his chase. But though similar disasters, however little bruited ashore, were by no means unusual in the fishery; yet, in most instances, such seemed the White Whale's infernal aforethought of ferocity, that every dismembering or death that he caused, was not wholly regarded as having been inflicted by an unintelligent agent.

Judge, then, to what pitches of inflamed, distracted fury the minds of his more desperate hunters were impelled, when amid the chips of chewed boats, and the sinking limbs of torn comrades, they swam out of the white curds of the whale's direful wrath into the serene, exasperating sunlight, that smiled on, as if at a birth or a bridal.

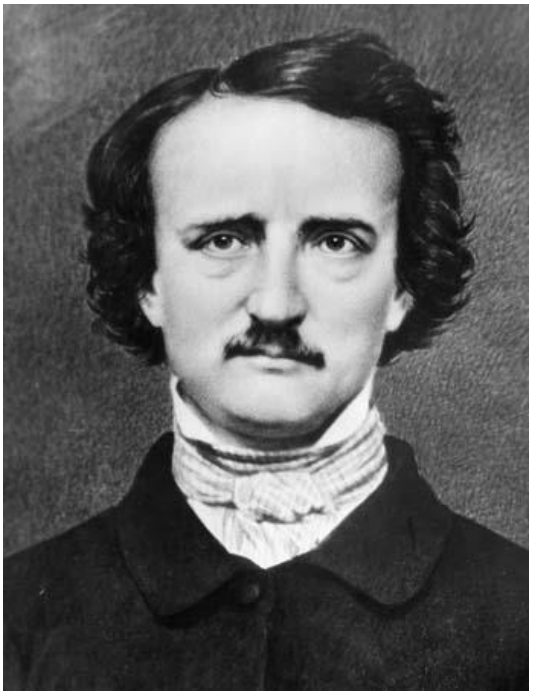
His three boats stove around him, and oars and men both whirling in the eddies; one captain, seizing the line-knife from his broken prow, had dashed at the whale, as an Arkansas duellist at his foe, blindly seeking with a six inch blade to reach the fathom-deep life of the whale. That captain was Ahab. And then it was, that suddenly sweeping his sickle-shaped lower jaw beneath him, Moby Dick had reaped away Ahab's leg, as a mower a blade of grass in the field. No turbaned Turk, no hired Venetian or Malay, could have smote him with more seeming malice. Small reason was there to doubt, then, that ever since that almost fatal encounter, Ahab had cherished a wild vindictiveness against the whale, all the more fell for that in his frantic morbidness he at last came to identify with him, not only all his bodily woes, but all his intellectual and spiritual exasperations. The White Whale swam before him as the monomaniac incarnation of all those malicious agencies which some deep men feel eating in them, till they are left living on with half a heart and half a lung. That intangible malignity which has been from the beginning; to whose dominion even the modern Christians

ascribe one-half of the worlds; which the ancient Ophites of the east reverenced in their statue devil; - Ahab did not fall down and worship it like them; but deliriously transferring its idea to the abhorred White Whale, he pitted himself, all mutilated, against it. All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick. He piled upon the whale's white hump the sum of all the general rage and hate felt by his whole race from Adam down; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart's shell upon it.

It is not probable that this monomania in him took its instant rise at the precise time of his bodily dismemberment. Then, in darting at the monster, knife in hand, he had but given loose to a sudden, passionate, corporal animosity; and when he received the stroke that tore him, he probably but felt the agonizing bodily laceration, but nothing more. Yet, when by this collision forced to turn towards home, and for long months of days and weeks, Ahab and anguish lay stretched together in one hammock, rounding in mid winter that dreary, howling Patagonian Cape; then it was, that his torn body and gashed soul bled into one another; and so interfusing, made him mad. That it was only then, on the homeward voyage, after the encounter, that the final monomania seized him, seems all but certain from the fact that, at intervals during the passage, he was a raving lunatic; and, though unlimbed of a leg, yet such vital strength yet lurked in his Egyptian chest, and was moreover intensified by his delirium, that his mates were forced to lace him fast, even there, as he sailed, raving in his hammock. In a strait-jacket, he swung to the mad rockings of the gales. And, when running into more sufferable latitudes, the ship, with mild stun'sails spread, floated across the tranquil tropics, and, to all appearances, the old man's delirium seemed left behind him with the Cape Horn swells, and he came forth from his dark den into the blessed light and air; even then, when he bore that firm, collected front, however pale, and issued his calm orders once again; and his mates thanked God the direful madness was now gone; even then, Ahab, in his hidden self, raved on. Human madness is oftentimes a cunning and most feline thing. When you think it fled, it may have but become transfigured into some still subtler form. Ahab's full lunacy subsided not, but deepeningly contracted; like the unabated Hudson, when that noble Northman flows narrowly, but unfathomably through the Highland gorge. But, as in his narrow-flowing monomania, not one jot of Ahab's broad madness had been left behind; so in that broad madness, not one jot of his great natural intellect had perished. That before living agent, now became the living instrument. If such a furious trope may stand, his special lunacy stormed his general sanity, and carried it, and turned all its concentred cannon upon its own

mad mark; so that far from having lost his strength, Ahab, to that one end, did now possess a thousand fold more potency than ever he had sanely brought to bear upon any one reasonable object.

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 – 1849)



The father of the modern mystery story. Edgar Allan Poe is a pop culture legend. His works have been translated into nearly every language.

His legacy as the inventor of detective fiction has kept him in more than just literature textbooks. He's known to have influenced such great horror writers as Stephen King and Alfred Hitchcock.His stories have been made into countless film adaptations.

Biography

He had a rather sad childhood. Edgar Poe was born on January 19, 1809 in Boston, the second of three children. His parents, who were traveling actors, died when he was young, so he was sent to live with a wealthy merchant, John Allan, and his wife, Frances, in Richmond.

Frances served as a good mother to Edgar, but John proved to be a less-than-supportive foster father. This plaque in Boston marks the approximate location where Edgar Poe was born.

Childhood

Despite the fact that they never adopted Edgar, Allan was added to his name, and he spent his younger years traveling with the couple and learning the family business. Poor Edgar wasn't terribly interested and spent a good deal of his time writing poems instead.

By the age of 13, he had enough poems to publish an anthology, but he was discouraged by both his teacher and his foster father, who preferred he stay in the family business.

At the age of 17, Poe left for the University of Virginia, but because his foster father would not help him pay his bills, he wound up in debt. To offset this, Poe turned to gambling, which only made matters worse.

It is said that Poe became so desperately poor that he had to burn his furniture to keep warm. That was a turning point in Poe's relationship with Mr. Allan. Poe resented him for not helping him financially, especially since there was plenty of money available. His situation worsened when he returned home from school to find his fiancée engaged to someone else.

While this was all devastating to Poe, he vowed that he would find success and published his first book, *Tamerlane*, under the name Edgar A. Perry. He was only 18.

He also enlisted in the army, and after two years of service, he returned home in hopes of seeing Frances - the only mother he had known - who had become sick. Sadly, he arrived too late to say his good-byes, a tragedy which haunted him. He remained in Richmond long enough to publish another book of poetry before heading to West Point, to the prestigious military academy.He wasn't there for long, though.

After starting, Poe heard that John Allan had remarried without telling Poe or inviting him to the wedding. Since Poe was there on Allan's recommendation, he did his best to get kicked out. As a result, Poe chose to focus on writing and completely severed ties with Mr. Allan.

In 1831, at the age of 22, he moved to Baltimore.After being robbed by one of his relatives, he wound up staying with his aunt, Maria Clemm, who became a mother to him. He also lived with his young cousin, Virginia.

Poe continued to live in poverty in Baltimore. Even when Allan died, he left Poe out of his will, so Poe received no help from the man who had raised him. To make money, Poe wrote and sold short stories. This eventually led to a position at the Southern Literary Messenger as an editor and critic, which moved him back to Richmond. Within a year, the magazine became extremely popular thanks to Poe's stories and nasty reviews.

By the age of 27, Poe was able to bring Maria and Virginia to Richmond. In 1836, he married his cousin Virginia; she was only 13 years old.

Mostly, the 1830s and early 1840s were good to Poe. He moved to New York, to Philadelphia and back to New York. He wrote some of his best stories and became famous in his own time, quite a feat for any writer (though it did not make him rich).

In 1845, Poe's popularity exploded with the publication of 'The Raven.' He traveled the country presenting lectures and solidifying his reputation. However, in 1847, his treasured wife, Virginia, died, and Poe began to struggle. He was no stranger to loss, but that didn't ease the tragedy of losing his 24-year old wife. He suffered from writer's block for months.

His short but tormented life came to a tragic end on October 7, 1849. He briefly disappeared only to be found five days later in a bar that was being used as an election polling station. He was struggling to stay alive. No one really knows where he had been or what brought about Poe's death. At the time, it was believed to be congestion of the brain. Other speculation has blamed alcoholism.

His literary adversary, Rufus Griswold, wrote a nasty, vengeful obituary of Poe in hopes of paying him back for the critiques Poe made of Griswold's work. His account of the author's life, which began with, *'This announcement will startle many but few will be grieved by it,'* claimed that Poe *'had few or no friends'* and led people to believe that Poe led a drug- and alcohol-induced life.

This is the biography that most people know of Poe, though many sources say those are only myths. Nonetheless, Griswold's attempts to attack Poe only brought more attention to his work, causing sales to skyrocket.

His works

Of course, with all of this tragedy in his life, it is no wonder that Poe often wrote about madmen, murder, being buried alive and death.

His psychological thrillers, however, gave way to the modern-day mystery, making him the father of the detective story.

His 1841 publication of 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' was the first of these stories and the first to introduce C. August Dupin, Poe's recurring detective.

Unlike some writers, though, Poe wrote in a variety of forms. His most popular pieces are short stories, like *'The Tell-Tale Heart,' 'The Masque of the Red Death'* and *'The Fall of the House of Usher,'* and poems, like *'The Raven' and 'Annabel Lee.'* However, he also wrote essays, including one called *'The Philosophy of Composition,'* which shows the method he used to write 'The Raven.'

He wrote one play and one novel as well. As a literary critic and an editor, Poe was known to be quite harsh and made many enemies easily. He was especially critical of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poetry, believing it to be poorly written.

Style

Poe is said to have been influenced by Lord Byron; however, their styles are very different. Poe's use of **diction**, or word choice, is the start of what makes him stand apart from other writers. In his short story **'The Fall of the House of Usher'** he uses words like 'bleak,' 'rank,' 'depression of the soul' and 'hideous dropping off of the veil' to describe the House of Usher.

This pretty heavy word choice is both sophisticated and chock-full of terrifying connotations, or emotional meanings.

Of course, it only follows that this use of such diction leads to horrific imagery, where he uses words to create a picture in the reader's mind.

One of Poe's most famous images comes from the first line of his poem 'The Raven:'

'Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary'

While he doesn't use long, lavish descriptions in this line of the poem, we can easily see in our mind's eye the night he describes. It's pitch black at midnight. A dull rain is pattering on what is probably a lifeless backdrop. And because the narrator is so tired, those images are amplified in his mind, too.

The other stories are more grotesque in nature, and even others do not create images of the setting but images of what the narrator is thinking.

The Masque of the Red Death

Although Poe is perhaps best known for his poem, 'The Raven,' Edgar Allan Poe wrote many poems and short stories before his untimely death in 1849 at the age of 40. Poe published 'The Masque of the Red Death' in 1842 and like much of Poe's work, it is considered an example of the Gothic fiction genre.

Plot Summary

The plot of 'The Masque of the Red Death' is quite simple. The Red Death is a fictional plague sweeping through the land. Prince Prospero, the main character in the short story, is hiding from the plague in an abbey, along with a bunch of other nobles.

Despite the plague being quite horrific and consisting of symptoms like sweating blood and dying within 30 minutes, the nobles think they are safe in the abbey. In fact, they are so relaxed about their situation that Prospero hosts a big masquerade ball.

The only downside of the abbey, which is quite luxurious, is the decor. There are seven rooms which are color-coded and arranged East to West. The last of these rooms is a creepy room that is decorated in black and scarlet. This room contains a huge clock that scares the guests whenever it chimes on the hour. The clock does not disrupt the masquerade for long, however. People keep partying until it strikes midnight. Then a mysterious figure shows up, which is disturbing because the doors to the abbey were welded shut to keep all the plague-infested people out.

The figure is dressed in a bloody robe and the figure's mask is designed to look like someone who has died from the Red Death.

Prospero chases the figure through the abbey until he corners the figure in the creepy room (which is the room farthest to the West).

When the stranger looks at Prospero, Prospero drops dead. The other noblemen corner the stranger and unmask him. Once he is unmasked, they realize that he does not possess a body.

Everyone in the abbey catches the Red Death and dies.

Symbols And Motifs

The Seven Rooms

Arranged in a row from East to West, the seven color-coded rooms in the abbey are considered symbolic of the progression of life. The stages they represent are birth (blue), youth (purple), adolescence (green), adulthood (orange), old age (white), imminent death (violet), and death itself (black/scarlet).

The seventh room, which represents death, is the room into which Prospero chases the stranger. It is also the room that everyone at the party avoids until the very end of the story. Once Prospero and the other nobles cross into the room, they all contract the Red Death and immediately die.

The Clock

Have you ever heard the phrase 'Time is running out'? Well, if the black room represents death, and there is a huge black clock in the room that marks each and every passing hour so loudly that all of the guests at the party take note of it, it seems fairly obvious that the clock is a symbolism of the fleetingness of life and the inevitability of death.

You can hide in an abbey to escape a plague, but you can't hide from death itself, since even if you manage to avoid the plague, you will still die of old age eventually.

The Color Red

The color red features heavily in 'The Masque of the Red Death.' While sometimes red can symbolize passion or life-sustaining blood, red is exclusively associated with death in this story. The fictional plague is named the Red Death because it makes people bleed out of the pores on their face. Red is also used along with black to decorate the room that is supposed to represent death.

Theme

The Inevitability Of Death

The last line of 'The Masque of the Red Death' sums up the story's main theme of the inevitability of death: 'And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.' *Illimitable* means limitless.

'The Masque of the Red Death' ends with Prospero and all of the other nobles dying, despite their best efforts to avoid the plague. This final line suggests that even if they had done things differently their fate would have been the same. Death is inevitable.

Edgar Allan Poe's The Raven

This famous poem, which was written in 1845, making him extremely popular even in his own time, has been referenced and parodied countless times over the 150 years since it

was written. Even during Poe's time people were reciting the poem. So how popular is Poe? Countless allusions to and parodies of Poe's 'The Raven' exist today. His raven and lyrics have made it into books, movies, television shows, magazines, cartoons, and even professional wrestling.

The Raven - Source of Inspiration

The raven in Charles Dickens' 1841 novel, *Barnaby Rudge*, a historical novel about anti-Catholic riots in London in 1780 in which a mentally retarded person (Barnaby) is falsely accused of participating. Barnaby owns a pet raven, Grip, which can speak. In the fifth chapter of the novel, Grip taps at a shutter (as in Poe's poem).

The model for Grip was Dickens' own talking raven, which was the delight of his children. It was the first of three ravens owned by Dickens, all named Grip. After the first Grip died, it was stuffed and mounted. An admirer of Poe's works acquired and mounted the bird and donated it to the Free Library of Philadelphia, where it is on display today.

The Poem

The poem begins after midnight on a cold December evening. A man, the narrator, sits alone by the fire dozing off as he reads a book, hoping to forget about Lenore, his lost love. While he sits, he hears a knocking at the door.

He gets up to answer, apologizing in the process, only to open the door and find absolutely nothing there. With it being after midnight, he's a little creeped out, so he tries to tell himself that it's just the wind hitting the window.

When he goes to the window to remedy the problem, however, what should swoop in, but the Raven. Unlike a normal bird that would probably fly around the room scared, the Raven just perches itself on a statue of Athena, the goddess of wisdom, above the door.

Rather unnaturally, the narrator begins to talk to it, asking for its name. And while you wouldn't expect a raven to be able to answer, he does respond with, 'Nevermore.'

Of course, this is alarming for a couple of reasons. One, the Raven is actually talking. Two, the only thing he ever says has such a foreboding connotation that the narrator can't help but be unnerved. In fact, he is so rattled that he just keeps asking questions to which the Raven continues to respond with the same answer. And sadly, that is the last answer the narrator wants to hear. By the end of the poem, the narrator has lost his mind, giving in to the sorrow of losing his lost love Lenore and knowing that she will return 'nevermore.'

The chamber of a house at midnight.

Poe uses the word *chamber* rather than *bedroom* apparently because *chamber* has a dark and mysterious connotation.

Style: Poe's Recipe For Success

In 1846, Edgar Allan Poe wrote an essay called 'The Philosophy of Composition' where he explains his writing method and how intentional each part of the writing process must be, something he called the unity of effect.

Additionally, Poe believed, that 'the most poetical topic in the world' was 'the death...of a beautiful woman,' which is no doubt why he chose to develop our narrator's madness as he is faced with the reality that his long lost love Lenore is gone forever.

According to an essay, Poe wrote 'The Raven' in hopes of appealing to both critics and commoners, and the result is a spooky poem chock-full of symbolism and literary effects.

Symbolism: The Raven

A symbol is something that represents something else. In literature a symbol can be subtle or obvious. In 'The Raven' the symbol is obvious. Poe himself meant the Raven to symbolize 'mournful, never-ending remembrance.'

Our narrator's sorrow for his lost, perfect maiden Lenore is the driving force behind his conversation with the Raven. In turn, the Raven, even through his limited vocabulary, forces the narrator to face the reality that Lenore will return 'nevermore,' a fact that the narrator does not want to acknowledge.

As a result, by the poem's conclusion the Raven has the eyes 'of a demon's' and its shadow hangs over the narrator's soul. For the poem's speaker, the Raven has moved beyond mournful, never-ending remembrance to an embodiment of evil.

Poetic Devices

Poetic devices are the techniques a poet uses to write a poem. The meter of a poem is the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.

The rhythm is then the measured flow of words that is established through the stressed and unstressed syllables. To find the meter, we have to look at each syllable in the foot to determine if it is stressed or unstressed. The effect of the meter is the rhythm.

Let's look at the first line of the poem.

*'**Once** u**pon** a **mid**night **drea**ry, **while** I **pond**ered **weak** and **wea**ry,'*

If we read the line with an over emphasis on the stressed syllables, we can mark which are and are not stressed. Once we mark the stressed and unstressed syllables, then we can figure out the meter.

To determine the meter we have to look at two things: the stressed/unstressed pattern and the foot count in each line. The first line starts with a stressed syllable, followed by an unstressed syllable, and the pattern continues.

This pattern of stressed followed by unstressed is called trochee. Then we can count each foot in the line. There are eight, which is called octameter. So, the meter for this line of the poem is trochaic octameter.

But that's just the first line.

Most poets like to change it up and use different meters throughout the poem, to add emphasis to different lines or to reflect the content of the poem. Poe changes the meter in the last line of the stanza, which only has seven syllables instead of eight.

'On-ly this, and no-thing more.'

The rhythm creates a sort of sing-song quality that grows increasingly sinister as the poem progresses. In addition to the rhythm and meter, Poe uses internal rhyme, or rhyme within a line of poetry, to add to the 'unity of effect.'

'Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,

And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

The words 'remember' and 'December' are both located in the same line and rhyme. They also rhyme with the word 'ember,' which is in the middle of the next line. This adds to the rhythm as well as creates a sort of beat, like a heart, with the repetition of the 'b' sound.

The repetition of the 'b' sound leads us to alliteration, the repetition of consonant sounds.

Poe uses this throughout the poem for different effects. Take for example:

'And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain'

'Silken,' 'sad,' 'un-certain,' and 'ru-stling' all have an 's' sound like curtain itself might have as it rustles in the wind - a likely intentional effect for a poet who believes that each element of a poem should be used for unity.

Of course, repetition in and of itself is a poetic device that Poe uses liberally.

Repetition, using the same word or phrase over and over, is most obvious with the Raven's *'Nevermore*.' But we see it elsewhere in the poem too, such as when the narrator is trying to calm himself as he is jolted in the night by a knocking on the door:

'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,'

The repetition in these two examples is used quite differently: the first to create suspense and to illustrate the eventual madness that takes over the narrator and the second to show nervousness. So did Poe achieve 'the unity of effect?' Sure! He is using standard poetic

devices to add to the overall quality and effect of the poem. Look at the last stanza of the poem.

*'**And** the **ra**ven, **ne**ver **flit**ting, **still** is **sit**ting, **still** is **sit**ting*
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 lamp-light 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!'

As in his short stories, Poe is careful to use primarily words that contribute to the overall atmosphere and tone of the poem. These words include *weary, dreary, bleak, dying, sorrow, sad, darkness, stillness, mystery, ebony, grave, stern, lonely, grim, ghastly,* and *gaunt*.

The Raven - Who is Lenore?

It is possible that Lenore, the idealized deceased woman in the poem, represents Poe's beloved wife, Virginia, who was in poor health when Poe wrote "The Raven." She died two years after the publication of the poem, when she was only in her mid-twenties.

Dark Romantic Characteristic

Dark Romantic writers often use elements of the supernatural to reinforce the dark side of the human mind. In this case, Poe uses a supernatural messenger, the Raven. Of course, a raven, in general, is not supernatural; however, a talking raven is. And not only does the Raven talk, it reminds the narrator of the one thing his mind does not want to know: that Lenore will never return. We watch as the narrator slowly begins to accept this reality, quite unwillingly, and in the process he goes mad with grief as the dark side of his psyche takes over.

The Raven - Criticism

Some reviewers in Poe's day, including poet Walt Whitman, criticized "The Raven" for its sing-song, highly emotional quality. The poem is still criticized today–and often parodied–for the same reason. However, the consensus of critics and ordinary readers appears to that the poem is a meticulously crafted work of genius and fully deserves its standing as one of the most popular poems in American literature. It is indeed a great work.

The Raven

by Edgar Allan Poe

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 mortal 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 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 the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther 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 lamp-light gloated o’er,
But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o’er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls 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 of 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 lamp-light 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!

The Masque of the Red Death

by Edgar Allan Poe

(1842)

THE "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal --the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body and especially upon the face of the victim, were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure, progress and termination of the disease, were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the meantime it was folly to grieve, or to think. The prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori, there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven --an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different; as might have been expected from the duke's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed

corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue --and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange --the fifth with white --the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet --a deep blood color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire that protected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the fire-light that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes, was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered, that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall, a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes, (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies,) there

came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the duke were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the decora of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric lustre. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be sure that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the moveable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great fete; and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm --much of what has been since seen in "Hernani." There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these --the dreams --writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away --they have endured but an instant --and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many-tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away; and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appals; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches their ears who indulge in the more remote gaieties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful

among those who revelled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise --then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revellers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in blood --and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its role, stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him --"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him --that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly --for the prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

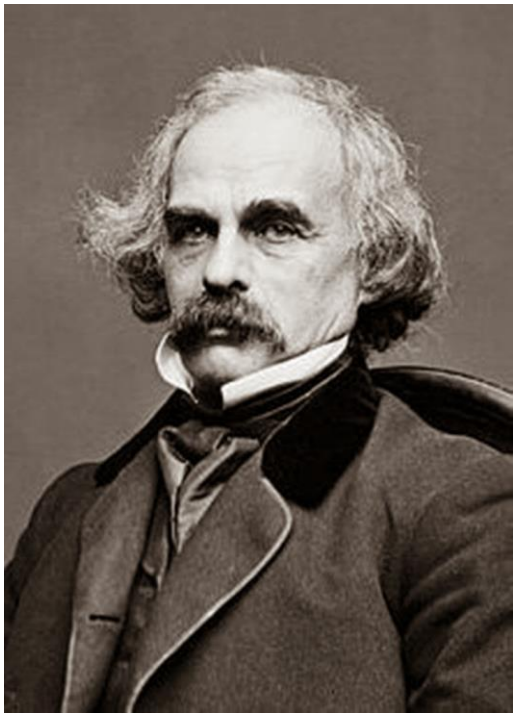
It was in the blue room where stood the prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the

mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the prince's person; and, while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centres of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple --through the purple to the green --through the green to the orange --through this again to the white --and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry --and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revellers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave-cerements and corpse-like mask which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revellers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)

His Life



Nathaniel Hawthorne was born on July 4, 1804, in Salem, Massachusetts - the perfect contradiction of time and place for a man who truly defines the dark side of America.

In spite of being a descendant of John Hathorne, a well-known judge who sent quite a few innocent people to their death during the Salem witch trials, Hawthorne (who changed the spelling of his name to distance himself from his ancestors) had some famous college friends, like poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and future president Franklin Pierce.

Transcendentalists Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson were his friends later in life, and fellow Dark Romantic writer Edgar Allan Poe wrote great reviews of his books. In spite of his status among the famous and being very handsome, Hawthorne was terribly shy. In fact, we probably wouldn't know anything about him if he were writing during our lifetime.

Most of what we do know about his life is what was recovered from his diaries after his death. In fact, he was so shy that he didn't even want anyone to know when he published his first novel *Fanshawe* in 1828. He published it anonymously.

While working as a weigher and gauger at the Boston Custom House, Hawthorne wrote several short stories including what are now some of his most well-known works: *'Young Goodman Brown'* and *'The Minister's Black Veil.'* These were published in various periodicals, but in 1837, he published the stories into a collection called *Twice-Told Tales*. While this brought him local recognition, it was not enough to make a living.

By 1841, Hawthorne had fallen in love with Sophia Peabody, an illustrator and a transcendentalist. In hopes of getting a home for Sophia and himself, he joined Brook Farm, a transcendentalist utopian society.

As a Dark Romantic, his views differed from the transcendentalists, but he was able to save money while he was there and used the experience when he wrote his novel The Blithedale Romance.

In 1842, Hawthorne and Sophia were married and moved to Concord. They both were pretty shy and stayed to themselves. Eventually though, Hawthorne took a job at the Salem Custom House as a surveyor. He found the job to be horribly boring and wrote to Longfellow to complain that as much as he wanted to write, the Custom House job was causing sort of a mental-block. Much like many today, his job put food on the table but was totally unfulfilling.

The Scarlet Letter

Thankfully, he was fired from his job in 1848 when a new president was elected and the politics shifted. He then spent his time writing and published his most famous work, *The Scarlet Letter*, in 1850.

Over the next few years, the Hawthorne family moved from Concord and back to find themselves again in the midst of some of the greatest historical figures of the time. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau were now Hawthorne's neighbors, and his relationship with Franklin Pierce led him to write a biography of the man who was to be president. Hawthorne was given the position of United States consul in Liverpool when Pierce was elected, which allowed the family to tour France and Italy.

Hawthorne died on May 19, 1864, after returning to America, meeting new President Abraham Lincoln, and witnessing the beginning of the American Civil War. He is buried in the now-famous Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord, like many of the other important Americans from his time. His wife Sophia continued to publish his works until her death in 1871.

To really understand Nathaniel Hawthorne's literature, it's best to understand that he was a Dark Romantic in the midst of a bunch of transcendentalists. Transcendentalists like Emerson and Thoreau *believed that society, including organized religion, was killing the individual's pure soul.* To the transcendentalist, people and nature were inherently good, if they were being self-reliant and if each person was true to him or herself.

They *believed in utopian societies,* where each person embraces their individual strength and *contributes to the betterment of the community.*

This is in contrast to the Dark Romantic who believed that humans had a dark side. Hawthorne had seen the dark side of humanity and believed it lay in everyone. From his point of view, people needed things like guilt or sin to learn how to be themselves, and there wasn't

much room for that in utopian society. Eventually, he began to write against transcendentalism.

His novel, *The Blithedale Romance* is a fictional story based on his time living in the utopian community Brook Farm. The characters in the story, who are supposed to be changing the world with their endeavors, end up being rather egotistical, which leads to tragedy. This illustrates that that the dark side of the human mind does exist in everyone, no matter how much we may try to suppress it.

In fact, Hawthorne's experiences fueled many of his stories. Because of his dark, Puritan ancestry, Hawthorne, who was quite embarrassed by his heritage, spent a good deal of time studying the Puritan beliefs. He used his own family's past to influence his themes.

Rather than mimic the Puritan point of view in his works, he sought to use their style of allegory, where the characters and objects in a story represent something else in order to teach a lesson, in order to show the hypocrisy, sin, and corruption that was rampant as a result of their religious beliefs.

His most famous work, *The Scarlet Letter*, is a racy yet heartfelt account of Hester Prynne, who has a daughter after a brief affair with the minister.

Her struggle to overcome the social discriminations is the focus of the story, as are the effects of repressed guilt, sin, and evil.

Another of his novels, *The House of Seven Gables*, was also heavily influenced by Hawthorne's Puritan obsession and deals with hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

It is the story of the Pyncheon family, *who were cursed generations before by a man that one of the ancestors had accused of being a witch* - obviously a connection to Hawthorne's own life. The curse is lifted only when two decedents of the accused and the accuser unite to solve the sort of mystery surrounding the house.

Style

Hawthorne's writing style goes hand-in-hand with his gloomy themes and stories. As a Dark Romantic, it's no surprise that he used symbols and metaphors to teach lessons. His focus on the psychological is also typical of the Dark Romantic style, which he used to illustrate themes of sin, guilt, and hypocrisy.

All-in-all, if it's a story that somehow shows the faults of Puritan ideology, it's probably Hawthorne. But beyond the literary techniques he imposes, Hawthorne's writing **style** is also known for extremely long, drawn-out sentences.

Example

In my native town of Salem, at the head of what, half a century ago, in the days of old King Derby, was a bustling wharf,--but which is now burdened with decayed wooden warehouses, and exhibits few or no symptoms of commercial life; except, perhaps, a bark or brig, half-way down its melancholy length, discharging hides; or, nearer at hand, a Nova Scotia schooner, pitching out her cargo of firewood,--at the head, I say, of this dilapidated wharf, which the tide often overflows, and along which, at the base and in the rear of the row of buildings, the track of many languid years is seen in a border of unthrifty grass,--here, with a view from its front windows adown this not very enlivening prospect, and thence across the harbour, stands a spacious edifice of brick.'

Yes, that is one sentence from 'The Custom House,' the introduction to *The Scarlet Letter* - one of the longest sentences ever! Think of it as if you're sitting on the porch with an elderly fellow who has very few visitors. You can sort of see his eyes glaze over as he tells you his tale in an almost stream-of-consciousness form. Not all of Hawthorne's sentences are that long or so elaborately punctuated, but he does like descriptions and eloquent language.

"**Dr. Heidegger's Experiment**"

It is a short story by Nathaniel Hawthorne, about a doctor who claims to have been sent water from the Fountain of Youth. Originally published anonymously, it was later published in Hawthorne's collection *Twice-Told Tales* in 1837.

The story begins with old Dr. Heidegger inviting four elderly friends over to his rather eerie study: Colonel Killigrew, Mr. Medbourne, Mr. Gascoigne, and the Widow Wycherly.

The four old folks have all fallen a long way from their prime; each squandered his own type of fortune (youth, money, power, beauty) and is now in a miserable state. The narrator also informs us that, when they were young, the three men used to fight over the attention of the Widow Wycherly.

Heidegger's creepy study contains, among other things, a bust of Hippocrates with whom Dr. Heidegger consults from time to time, a magic black book, a skeleton in a closet, and a mirror that supposedly contains the visages of Heidegger's dead patients. The Doctor presents his guests with four empty champagne glasses and an ornate vase full of clear, bubbling liquid. He takes an old, withered rose, drops it into the vase, and shows his guests that it has in fact been rejuvenated to a fresh-blooming flower.

Dr. Heidegger then claims that the liquid in the vase is water from the mythical Fountain of Youth. He would like their help in an experiment: they drink the water, he sits back and watches. The guests are clearly skeptical, but they agree. Before they drink, Dr. Heidegger warns them not to make the same mistakes they did the first time they were young.

The guests drink, and they believe they have grown young again. (Whether or not they actually are physically transformed is ambiguous.)

Of course, they act like fools, and the three men end up wrestling each other for the Widow's attention. In their tussling they knock over the vase, which spills the elixir all over the floor.It doesn't take long for the effects of the potion to wear off, and the four guests find that they are old again.

Dr. Heidegger does not regret the spilled elixir; he has learned his lesson by watching his guests, and would not drink the water for anything. The guests, however, have learned nothing, and vow to travel to Florida, find the fountain of youth, and drink from it day and night.

The Scarlet Letter: Summary and Analysis of an Allegory

See how Nathaniel Hawthorne uses allegory and symbolism to illustrate the affair and resulting guilt between a minister and a Puritan woman in his novel 'The Scarlet Letter.'

Introduction

Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter has been adapted countless times for stage and film. The most current, well-known film version of the novel, which was released in 1995 and starred Demi Moore and Gary Oldman, deviates from the original story but does capture the main plot points. Other stories have played off of the themes and symbols found in Hawthorne's story, including the most recent movie, Easy A (starring Emma Stone), which takes the opposite approach - coming clean about being a virgin in the midst of rumors.

The Characters

Nathaniel Hawthorne's dark romantic novel has all the elements for a steamy love story: a secret affair, an illegitimate child, a husband in disguise, stuffy Puritans - all pretty racy for a story taking place in Boston during the 1600s.

Hester Prynne is a beautiful woman who is known for her needlework. She is also an adulteress and has to wear a scarlet letter A on her dress as a punishment.

Arthur Dimmesdale is the town minister. No one knows it, but he is an adulterer too. He punishes himself in private about it.

Roger Chillingworth is Hester's husband, who has been missing (and thought to be dead) for a couple years. He is in disguise in town hoping to take revenge on Hester's lover.

Pearl is Hester's illegitimate daughter. She is unique in spirit and doesn't like Puritans very much.

The Custom House

Hawthorne begins the novel with a long, drawn-out explanation from an unnamed narrator who worked at the custom house, a place where ship's traffic is monitored and customs are paid in Salem, MA. What the custom house introduction boils down to is this: the narrator found a bunch of old papers in the attic of the building, one set of which was two-hundred-years old and bundled with a scarlet, gold-embroidered letter 'A' on top. After being fired from his job at the customhouse, which he is pretty happy about since it was boring and making his brain rot, he decides he needs to write a fictional story about the power of the scarlet letter explained in those papers. And he needs to do this before his brain disintegrates any further!

The Plot

The story itself then begins at the door of a prison in Boston. This is the time of the Puritans, English Protestants who were rigid in their faith and extremely un-fun. The place is foreboding with iron spikes coming out of the door, looking like it would house the worst of criminals, except for a beautiful rosebush that grows next to the door. Hester Prynne emerges from the prison wearing an elaborate, gold-embroidered scarlet letter 'A' on her dress. She is beautiful and proud as she is paraded down to the scaffold of the pillory, the place where they kept the stocks used for punishment. Hester has committed adultery - something the entire town knows because she has given birth to a child named Pearl, whom she is currently carrying in her arms, and she has no husband. Actually, she does have a husband, but he's been missing for a couple of years, so she has no present husband. As part of her punishment for having committed the sin of adultery, she has to wear a scarlet letter 'A' on her dress at all times. The townspeople, who are at the public shaming, want Hester to name the father, but she refuses to tell them.

During the ordeal, an older man in the crowd is identified by the narrator as Hester's long-lost husband. Why is he there? Well, he wants revenge on Hester and whomever Pearl's father may be. He quickly confronts Hester, and for some crazy reason she agrees not to tell anyone who he really is. He tells the townspeople that he is a physician named Roger Chillingworth.

After several years of this, Hester is no longer in jail and is free to move, but she stays in Boston working as a seamstress on the outskirts of town. She is very good and in high demand to make clothing for special occasions (though not for wedding attire). But she still remains an outcast. Pearl is described as 'impish;' she is beautiful, deep, passionate and quite uncontrollable. She also likes to throw stones and scream at other children who look at her funny, so she doesn't make many friends. She does, however, spend a good amount of time in

daydreams where she destroys mean Puritans who are her enemies. Of course, the Puritan authorities are not pleased with Pearl's behavior and want to take her from Hester. Thankfully, the nice minister, Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, convinces the governor to let Hester keep Pearl.

Meanwhile, Roger Chillingworth's physician disguise works brilliantly because the nice minister, Reverend Dimmesdale, is having heart trouble. Chillingworth, who ends up moving in with Dimmesdale to help him, quickly suspects him to be Pearl's father and finds a strange red mark on the man's chest, which causes Chillingworth's face to break into 'a wild look of wonder, joy and horror.' Chillingworth does a little dance of excitement at the sight of the mark and begins some serious psychological torture on Dimmesdale. As a result, Dimmesdale begins punishing himself for his sin of adultery by beating himself with a whip.

One night, after one of his punishment parties, Dimmesdale leaves the house and goes to the scaffold where Hester had been shamed seven years before. It just so happens that Hester and Pearl walk by - after just having left the governor's deathbed - and join Dimmesdale on the scaffold. They hold hands, with Pearl in the middle. Pearl asks Dimmesdale if he will join them on the scaffold at noon the following day. As he explains that he will join them on 'the great judgment day,' a meteor lights up the sky with a sort of red letter 'A.' In all of the confusion, they notice that Pearl points to someone standing nearby. Who else would it be but Chillingworth, who looks evilly excited? Hester still does not tell Dimmesdale that Chillingworth is her husband.

But, Hester does see how ill Dimmesdale has become and confronts Chillingworth. She tells him that she will no longer keep her promise to keep his real identity a secret. Not long after, she waits in the forest for Dimmesdale to return from a trip so she can tell him what is really going on. Pearl is with her and begins asking about the Black Man (also known as Satan) and believes the letter on Hester's dress is his mark. She also wonders if Dimmesdale clutches his chest to hide his mark of the Black Man. Together, in the forest, Hester and Dimmesdale make a plan to get away from all of the 'iron men' Puritans and find a home elsewhere. It seems like Hester and Dimmesdale are finally going to be happy. But this is a dark romantic novel, so we know that can't be true.

Instead of running off with Hester, Dimmesdale decides to mount the scaffold just as Hester had done seven years prior. He confesses to being Pearl's father and, quite dramatically, rips his shirt apart showing what appears to be a letter 'A' on his chest. Then he dies. No happy ending there.

A year or so later, Chillingworth dies and leaves all of his stuff to Pearl, so she and Hester can go find a new life. Hester does leave, only to return to the colony wearing her scarlet letter 'A' again, but this time by choice. To end the story, Hester dies and is buried next to Dimmesdale. Their headstone is marked with the letter 'A.' Very romantic, but sadly so.

Analysis: Dark Romantic Allegory And Symbolism

An allegory is where characters and objects in a story represent something else in order to teach a lesson. The Puritans were huge fans of allegorical thinking and saw signs and lessons in the world around them. Hawthorne, who was both fascinated with and loathed Puritan ideology, chose to write his story as an allegorical lesson preaching the opposite of what the Puritans would want us to gain from this sort of tale. Here, Hawthorne teaches the theme that sin can lead to insight about ourselves and others. He does this through the use of symbols - where an object or character represents something else - which is an obvious technique to use when writing an allegory. The Dark Romantics are known for their use of symbols to convey ideas about sin and guilt and hypocrisy, and Hawthorne uses a bunch.

The most obvious, of course, is the scarlet letter 'A' which takes on a variety of meanings throughout the story. Initially, it is a symbol of adultery and punishment. But it is beautiful and gold (the color of perfection) and is worn over her heart, showing that her pure feelings of love are hidden behind her sin. The 'A' on Dimmesdale's chest is quite different, in that it is hidden and not as beautiful as a result. Because he cannot reveal his true self, the symbol takes on a different meaning. Some characters even interpret the 'A' differently, depending on the situation. Dimmesdale sees the letter 'A' from the meteor as a sign of his guilt, whereas the townspeople believe it means that the Governor has become an angel. And as Hester and the 'A' on her chest become synonymous, its meaning turns to able, hard work, charity and grace. Hawthorne also uses the 'A,' and the events surrounding Hester's struggle, to show the hypocrisy of the Puritan belief system.

Pearl is also a symbol that can be interpreted based on the characters' outlook. She is the physical representation of Hester and Dimmesdale's sin. She isn't like the other kids; she is precocious and insightful and completely wild. Hester names her Pearl 'as being of great price - purchased with all she had - her mother's only treasure!' Hester gives up everything to have Pearl (because without the presence of Pearl, no one would have known of Hester's sin). Dimmesdale does too when he dies after acknowledging Pearl as his daughter. In spite of representing her parents' sin, Pearl turns out just fine, marries a European aristocrat, and has a family of her own.

Hawthorne even uses parts of the setting as symbols, most notably, the scaffold. Used for public humiliation, the scaffold is not a place to be if you're a Puritan. But for our characters, it's a place of change, and a place to show who they really are. This is in contrast to the forest, which is wild and full of evil to the Puritans who live nearby. For Hester, Pearl and Dimmesdale, it is a place of natural laws and a place of escape. Even the foreboding jail, in contrast to the beautiful rosebush, shows Hawthorne's belief that the rigid Puritan laws are unnatural and stifling.

To review, The Scarlet Letter, written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, is a dark romantic story about a woman and her minister who had an affair and are punished by the Puritan society as a result. Along with an intentional allegory, Hawthorne uses symbolism - where a character or object represents something else - to tell his story. Of all the symbols, The Scarlet Letter 'A' is the most well-known, taking on a variety of meanings - from adultery to able, proving that sin can bring us to a better understanding of ourselves and others.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Dr. Heidegger's Experiment

THAT VERY SINGULAR man, old Dr. Heidegger, once invited four venerable friends to meet him in his study. There were three white-bearded gentlemen, Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne, and a withered gentlewoman, whose name was the Widow Wycherly. They were all melancholy old creatures, who had been unfortunate in life, and whose greatest misfortune it was that they were not long ago in their graves. Mr. Medbourne, in the vigor of his age, had been a prosperous merchant, but had lost his all by a frantic speculation, and was now little better than a mendicant. Colonel Killigrew had wasted his best years, and his health and substance, in the pursuit of sinful pleasures, which had given birth to a brood of pains, such as the gout, and divers other torments of soul and body. Mr. Gascoigne was a ruined politician, a man of evil fame, or at least had been so till time had buried him from the knowledge of the present generation, and made him obscure instead of infamous. As for the Widow Wycherly, tradition tells us that she was a great beauty in her day; but, for a long while past, she had lived in deep seclusion, on account of certain scandalous stories which had prejudiced the gentry of the town against her. It is a circumstance worth mentioning that each of these three old gentlemen, Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne, were early lovers of the Widow Wycherly, and had once been on the point of cutting each other's throats for her sake. And, before proceeding further, I will merely hint that Dr. Heidegger and all his four guests were sometimes thought to be a little beside themselves--as is not unfrequently the case with old people, when worried either by present troubles or woful recollections.

"My dear old friends," said Dr. Heidegger, motioning them to be seated, "I am desirous of your assistance in one of those little experiments with which I amuse myself here in my study."

If all stories were true, Dr. Heidegger's study must have been a very curious place. It was a dim, old-fashioned chamber, festooned with cobwebs, and besprinkled with antique dust. Around the walls stood several oaken bookcases, the lower shelves of which were filled with rows of gigantic folios and black-letter quartos, and the upper with little parchment-covered duodecimos. Over the central bookcase was a bronze bust of Hippocrates, with which, according to some authorities, Dr. Heidegger was accustomed to hold consultations in all difficult cases of his practice. In the obscurest corner of the room stood a tall and narrow oaken closet, with its door ajar, within which doubtfully appeared a skeleton. Between two of

the bookcases hung a looking-glass, presenting its high and dusty plate within a tarnished gilt frame. Among many wonderful stories related of this mirror, it was fabled that the spirits of all the doctor's deceased patients dwelt within its verge, and would stare him in the face whenever he looked thitherward. The opposite side of the chamber was ornamented with the full-length portrait of a young lady, arrayed in the faded magnificence of silk, satin, and brocade, and with a visage as faded as her dress. Above half a century ago, Dr. Heidegger had been on the point of marriage with this young lady; but, being affected with some slight disorder, she had swallowed one of her lover's prescriptions, and died on the bridal evening. The greatest curiosity of the study remains to be mentioned; it was a ponderous folio volume, bound in black leather, with massive silver clasps. There were no letters on the back, and nobody could tell the title of the book. But it was well known to be a book of magic; and once, when a chambermaid had lifted it, merely to brush away the dust, the skeleton had rattled in its closet, the picture of the young lady had stepped one foot upon the floor, and several ghastly faces had peeped forth from the mirror; while the brazen head of Hippocrates frowned, and said--"Forbear!"

Such was Dr. Heidegger's study. On the summer afternoon of our tale a small round table, as black as ebony, stood in the centre of the room, sustaining a cut-glass vase of beautiful form and elaborate workmanship. The sunshine came through the window, between the heavy festoons of two faded damask curtains, and fell directly across this vase; so that a mild splendor was reflected from it on the ashen visages of the five old people who sat around. Four champagne glasses were also on the table.

"My dear old friends," repeated Dr. Heidegger, "may I reckon on your aid in performing an exceedingly curious experiment?"

Now Dr. Heidegger was a very strange old gentleman, whose eccentricity had become the nucleus for a thousand fantastic stories. Some of these fables, to my shame be it spoken, might possibly be traced back to my own veracious self; and if any passages of the present tale should startle the reader's faith, I must be content to bear the stigma of a fiction monger.

When the doctor's four guests heard him talk of his proposed experiment, they anticipated nothing more wonderful than the murder of a mouse in an air pump, or the examination of a cobweb by the microscope, or some similar nonsense, with which he was constantly in the habit of pestering his intimates. But without waiting for a reply, Dr. Heidegger hobbled across the chamber, and returned with the same ponderous folio, bound in black leather, which common report affirmed to be a book of magic. Undoing the silver clasps, he opened the volume, and took from among its black-letter pages a rose, or what was

once a rose, though now the green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue, and the ancient flower seemed ready to crumble to dust in the doctor's hands.

"This rose, said Dr. Heidegger, with a sigh, "this same withered and crumbling flower, blossomed five and fifty years ago. It was given me by Sylvia Ward, whose portrait hangs yonder; and I meant to wear it in my bosom at our wedding. Five and fifty years it has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now, would you deem it possible that this rose of half a century could ever bloom again?"

"Nonsense!" said the Widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. "You might as well ask whether an old woman's wrinkled face could ever bloom again."

"See!" answered Dr. Heidegger.

He uncovered the vase, and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. At first, it lay lightly on the surface of the fluid, appearing to imbibe none of its moisture. Soon, however, a singular change began to be visible. The crushed and dried petals stirred, and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson, as if the flower were reviving from a deathlike slumber; the slender stalk and twigs of foliage became green; and there was the rose of half a century, looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it to her lover. It was scarcely full blown; for some of its delicate red leaves curled modestly around its moist bosom, within which two or three dewdrops were sparkling.

"That is certainly a very pretty deception," said the doctor's friends; carelessly, however, for they had witnessed greater miracles at a conjurer's show; "pray how was it effected?"

"Did you never hear of the 'Fountain of Youth'?" asked Dr. Heidegger, "which Ponce de Leon, the Spanish adventurer, went in search of two or three centuries ago?"

"But did Ponce de Leon ever find it?" said the Widow Wycherly.

"No, answered Dr. Heidegger, "for he never sought it in the right place. The famous Fountain of Youth, if I am rightly informed, is situated in the southern part of the Floridian peninsula, not far from Lake Macaco. Its source is overshadowed by several gigantic magnolias, which, though numberless centuries old, have been kept as fresh as violets by the virtues of this wonderful water. An acquaintance of mine, knowing my curiosity in such matters, has sent me what you see in the vase."

"Ahem!" said Colonel Killigrew, who believed not a word of the doctor's story: "and what may be the effect of this fluid on the human frame?"

"You shall judge for yourself, my dear colonel," replied Dr. Heidegger; "and all of you, my respected friends, are welcome to so much of this admirable fluid as may restore to you the bloom of youth. For my own part, having had much trouble in growing old, I am in no

hurry to grow young again. With your permission, therefore, I will merely watch the progress of the experiment."

While he spoke, Dr. Heidegger had been filling the four champagne glasses with the water of the Fountain of Youth. It was apparently impregnated with an effervescent gas, for little bubbles were continually ascending from the depths of the glasses, and bursting in silvery spray at the surface. As the liquor diffused a pleasant perfume, the old people doubted not that it possessed cordial and comfortable properties; and though utter sceptics as to its rejuvenescent power, they were inclined to swallow it at once. But Dr. Heidegger besought them to stay a moment.

"Before you drink, my respectable old friends," said he, "it would be well that, with the experience of a lifetime to direct you, you should draw up a few general rules for your guidance, in passing a second time through the perils of youth. Think what a sin and shame it would be, if, with your peculiar advantages, you should not become patterns of virtue and wisdom to all the young people of the age!"

The doctor's four venerable friends made him no answer, except by a feeble and tremulous laugh; so very ridiculous was the idea that, knowing how closely repentance treads behind the steps of error, they should ever go astray again.

"Drink, then," said the doctor, bowing: "I rejoice that I have so well selected the subjects of my experiment."

With palsied hands, they raised the glasses to their lips. The liquor, if it really possessed such virtues as Dr. Heidegger imputed to it, could not have been bestowed on four human beings who needed it more wofully. They looked as if they had never known what youth or pleasure was, but had been the offspring of Nature's dotage, and always the gray, decrepit, sapless, miserable creatures, who now sat stooping round the doctor's table, without life enough in their souls or bodies to be animated even by the prospect of growing young again. They drank off the water, and replaced their glasses on the table.

Assuredly there was an almost immediate improvement in the aspect of the party, not unlike what might have been produced by a glass of generous wine, together with a sudden glow of cheerful sunshine brightening over all their visages at once. There was a healthful suffusion on their cheeks, instead of the ashen hue that had made them look so corpse-like. They gazed at one another, and fancied that some magic power had really begun to smooth away the deep and sad inscriptions which Father Time had been so long engraving on their brows. The Widow Wycherly adjusted her cap, for she felt almost like a woman again.

"Give us more of this wondrous water!" cried they, eagerly. "We are younger--but we are still too old! Quick--give us more!"

"Patience, patience!" quoth Dr. Heidegger, who sat watching the experiment with philosophic coolness. "You have been a long time growing old. Surely, you might be content to grow young in half an hour! But the water is at your service."

Again he filled their glasses with the liquor of youth, enough of which still remained in the vase to turn half the old people in the city to the age of their own grandchildren. While the bubbles were yet sparkling on the brim, the doctor's four guests snatched their glasses from the table, and swallowed the contents at a single gulp. Was it delusion? even while the draught was passing down their throats, it seemed to have wrought a change on their whole systems. Their eyes grew clear and bright; a dark shade deepened among their silvery locks, they sat around the table, three gentlemen of middle age, and a woman, hardly beyond her buxom prime.

"My dear widow, you are charming!" cried Colonel Killigrew, whose eyes had been fixed upon her face, while the shadows of age were flitting from it like darkness from the crimson daybreak.

The fair widow knew, of old, that Colonel Killigrew's compliments were not always measured by sober truth; so she started up and ran to the mirror, still dreading that the ugly visage of an old woman would meet her gaze. Meanwhile, the three gentlemen behaved in such a manner as proved that the water of the Fountain of Youth possessed some intoxicating qualities; unless, indeed, their exhilaration of spirits were merely a lightsome dizziness caused by the sudden removal of the weight of years. Mr. Gascoigne's mind seemed to run on political topics, but whether relating to the past, present, or future could not easily be determined, since the same ideas and phrases have been in vogue these fifty years. Now he rattled forth full-throated sentences about patriotism, national glory, and the people's right; now he muttered some perilous stuff or other, in a sly and doubtful whisper, so cautiously that even his own conscience could scarcely catch the secret; and now, again, he spoke in measured accents, and a deeply deferential tone, as if a royal ear were listening to his well-turned periods. Colonel Killigrew all this time had been trolling forth a jolly bottle song, and ringing his glass in symphony with the chorus, while his eyes wandered toward the buxom figure of the Widow Wycherly. On the other side of the table, Mr. Medbourne was involved in a calculation of dollars and cents, with which was strangely intermingled a project for supplying the East Indies with ice, by harnessing a team of whales to the polar icebergs.

As for the Widow Wycherly, she stood before the mirror courtesying and simpering to her own image, and greeting it as the friend whom she loved better than all the world beside. She thrust her face close to the glass, to see whether some long-remembered wrinkle or crow's foot had indeed vanished. She examined whether the snow had so entirely melted from her hair that the venerable cap could be safely thrown aside. At last, turning briskly away, she came with a sort of dancing step to the table.

"My dear old doctor," cried she, "pray favor me with another glass!"

"Certainly, my dear madam, certainly!" replied the complaisant doctor; "see! I have already filled the glasses."

There, in fact, stood the four glasses, brimful of this wonderful water, the delicate spray of which, as it effervesced from the surface, resembled the tremulous glitter of diamonds. It was now so nearly sunset that the chamber had grown duskier than ever; but a mild and moonlike splendor gleamed from within the vase, and rested alike on the four guests and on the doctor's venerable figure. He sat in a high-backed, elaborately-carved, oaken arm-chair, with a gray dignity of aspect that might have well befitted that very Father Time, whose power had never been disputed, save by this fortunate company. Even while quaffing the third draught of the Fountain of Youth, they were almost awed by the expression of his mysterious visage.

But, the next moment, the exhilarating gush of young life shot through their veins. They were now in the happy prime of youth. Age, with its miserable train of cares and sorrows and diseases, was remembered only as the trouble of a dream, from which they had joyously awoke. The fresh gloss of the soul, so early lost, and without which the world's successive scenes had been but a gallery of faded pictures, again threw its enchantment over all their prospects. They felt like new-created beings in a new-created universe.

"We are young! We are young!" they cried exultingly.

Youth, like the extremity of age, had effaced the strongly-marked characteristics of middle life, and mutually assimilated them all. They were a group of merry youngsters, almost maddened with the exuberant frolicsomeness of their years. The most singular effect of their gayety was an impulse to mock the infirmity and decrepitude of which they had so lately been the victims. They laughed loudly at their old-fashioned attire, the wide-skirted coats and flapped waist-coats of the young men, and the ancient cap and gown of the blooming girl. One limped across the floor like a gouty grandfather; one set a pair of spectacles astride of his nose, and pretended to pore over the black-letter pages of the book of magic; a third seated himself in an arm-chair, and strove to imitate the venerable dignity of

Dr. Heidegger. Then all shouted mirthfully, and leaped about the room. The Widow Wycherly--if so fresh a damsel could be called a widow--tripped up to the doctor's chair, with a mischievous merriment in her rosy face.

"Doctor, you dear old soul," cried she, "get up and dance with me!" And then the four young people laughed louder than ever, to think what a queer figure the poor old doctor would cut.

"Pray excuse me," answered the doctor quietly. "I am old and rheumatic, and my dancing days were over long ago. But either of these gay young gentlemen will be glad of so pretty a partner."

"Dance with me, Clara!" cried Colonel Killigrew.

"No, no, I will be her partner!" shouted Mr. Gascoigne.

"She promised me her hand, fifty years ago!" exclaimed Mr. Medbourne.

They all gathered round her. One caught both her hands in his passionate grasp--another threw his arm about her waist--the third buried his hand among the glossy curls that clustered beneath the widow's cap. Blushing, panting, struggling, chiding, laughing, her warm breath fanning each of their faces by turns, she strove to disengage herself, yet still remained in their triple embrace. Never was there a livelier picture of youthful rivalship, with bewitching beauty for the prize. Yet, by a strange deception, owing to the duskiness of the chamber, and the antique dresses which they still wore, the tall mirror is said to have reflected the figures of the three old, gray, withered grandsires, ridiculously contending for the skinny ugliness of a shrivelled grandam.

But they were young: their burning passions proved them so. Inflamed to madness by the coquetry of the girl-widow, who neither granted nor quite withheld her favors, the three rivals began to interchange threatening glances. Still keeping hold of the fair prize, they grappled fiercely at one another's throats. As they struggled to and fro, the table was overturned, and the vase dashed into a thousand fragments. The precious Water of Youth flowed in a bright stream across the floor, moistening the wings of a butterfly, which, grown old in the decline of summer, had alighted there to die. The insect fluttered lightly through the chamber, and settled on the snowy head of Dr. Heidegger.

"Come, come, gentlemen! come, Madam Wycherly," exclaimed the doctor, "I really must protest against this riot."

They stood still and shivered; for it seemed as if gray Time were calling them back from their sunny youth, far down into the chill and darksome vale of years. They looked at old Dr. Heidegger, who sat in his carved arm-chair, holding the rose of half a century, which he had

rescued from among the fragments of the shattered vase. At the motion of his hand, the four rioters resumed their seats; the more readily, because their violent exertions had wearied them, youthful though they were.

"My poor Sylvia's rose!" ejaculated Dr. Heidegger, holding it in the light of the sunset clouds; "it appears to be fading again."

And so it was. Even while the party were looking at it, the flower continued to shrivel up, till it became as dry and fragile as when the doctor had first thrown it into the vase. He shook off the few drops of moisture which clung to its petals.

"I love it as well thus as in its dewy freshness," observed he, pressing the withered rose to his withered lips. While he spoke, the butterfly fluttered down from the doctor's snowy head, and fell upon the floor.

His guests shivered again. A strange chillness, whether of the body or spirit they could not tell, was creeping gradually over them all. They gazed at one another, and fancied that each fleeting moment snatched away a charm, and left a deepening furrow where none had been before. Was it an illusion? Had the changes of a lifetime been crowded into so brief a space, and were they now four aged people, sitting with their old friend, Dr. Heidegger?

"Are we grown old again, so soon?" cried they, dolefully.

In truth they had. The Water of Youth possessed merely a virtue more transient than that of wine. The delirium which it created had effervesced away. Yes! they were old again. With a shuddering impulse, that showed her a woman still, the widow clasped her skinny hands before her face, and wished that the coffin lid were over it, since it could be no longer beautiful.

"Yes, friends, ye are old again," said Dr. Heidegger, "and lo! the Water of Youth is all lavished on the ground. Well--I bemoan it not; for if the fountain gushed at my very doorstep, I would not stoop to bathe my lips in it--no, though its delirium were for years instead of moments. Such is the lesson ye have taught me!"

But the doctor's four friends had taught no such lesson to themselves. They resolved forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida, and quaff at morning, noon, and night, from the Fountain of Youth.

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