

II

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;---
'T is the wind and nothing more.

Open here I flang 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 Plutonium 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 is "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 the 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 his melancholy burden bore
of 'Never- Nevermore'"

But the Raven still beguiling my sad 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."

III

This I said 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 diving with my head at ease reclining
on the cushion's velvet lining with 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 lend thee by those 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 house by horror haunted --- tell me truly I implore ---
Is there --- is there halm 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 heavens 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 Plutonium 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 of my door!
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
on the placid 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!