

**The Increasing Misery of the Speaker in “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe**

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## The Increasing Misery of the Speaker in “The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe

In Edgar Allan Poe's “The Raven”, the speaker falls into misery by dealing with an obscure raven. As bird repeats the word Nevermore, the speaker is saddened by the loss of Lenore, and he ends up in total emotional breakdown. Every conversation with the raven entrenches his sadness, and the poem symbolizes how unresolved grief can slowly eat up a human mind.

The speaker is already devastated by sorrow at the beginning of the poem. He tries to find comfort in his books but is not relieved of his grief over Lenore. Poe states, “*Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow / From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore*” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845). It sets his emotional vulnerability, and as the raven first taps at his chamber door, he thinks it is a harmless intrusion. But the arrival of the bird spells the onset of his steady tumble towards unhappiness.

The first experience with the raven appears to be insignificant, but it preconditions the further deterioration of the emotional condition of the speaker. He is not ready when he opens the door to meet the raven because all he sees is darkness. Poe describes, “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” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845). Although not active, the intrusion of the raven, breaks the speaker's solitude of grief (Lin, 2025). Its introduction is a trigger to his emotional disintegration, and it turns the tone to uncertainty instead of curiosity.

The repetition of the word “*Nevermore*” by the raven adds to the woe of the speaker. Whenever the bird talks, it represents that his grief will never leave, and trying to find closure is pointless (Díaz Morillo, 2023). Such as when the speaker questions the raven what his name is, the bird answers back, “Nevermore” (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845). The word appears nonsensical, but

it contains profound meaning to the speaker, emphasizing the fact that he will never stop grieving. The reiteration is a harsh reminder of the loss of Lenore, which further plunges the speaker into the depths of misery.

The emotional condition of the speaker becomes even worse as the conversation proceeds. At first, he is interested in knowing the origins of the bird, but he becomes desperate and frantic. *“Prophet!” said I, “thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!”* (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845). His voice turns from inquisitive skepticism to rage and insanity. Every question that the raven fails to answer makes him more frustrated and proves that his sorrow is inevitable. The cold repetition of nevermore by the raven compels the speaker to realize that he cannot get out of his sorrow.

The speaker is at the lowest point in the climax of the poem. At the end, he shouts at the raven, asking questions and hoping that he can find some hope. But the answer of the bird is still the same: Nevermore (Edgar Allan Poe, 1845). It is the point when the speaker completely falls apart as he understands that his grief will never go away and he cannot escape it (Díaz Morillo, 2023). The raven, instead of comforting, is the image of the firmness of grief.

The Raven by Poe shows how the speaker becomes more and more miserable as he has to face the inevitability of his grief. With every encounter with the raven, the speaker becomes increasingly emotional, which exemplifies how grief can take control of the mind. The repetition of the word nevermore by the bird serves as a reminder that there are pains that are too deep to forget, and it leaves the speaker in a state of continuous despair.

## References

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