

These equal syllables alone require,  
 Though oft the ear the open vowels tire ;  
 While expletives their feeble aid do join,  
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line ;  
 While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,  
 With sure returns of still expected rhymes ;  
 Where'er you find " the cooling western breeze,"  
 In the next line it " whispers through the trees ;"  
 If crystal streams " with pleasing murmurs creep,"  
 The reader's threatened (not in vain) with " sleep ;"  
 Then, at the last and only couplet, fraught  
 With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,  
 A needless Alexandrine ends the song,  
 That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.

Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know  
 What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow ;  
 And praise the easy vigor of a line,  
 Where Denham's strength and Waller's<sup>384</sup> sweetness  
 join.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance ;  
 As those move easiest who have learned to dance.  
 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,  
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense :  
 Soft is the strain when zephyr gently blows,  
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows ;  
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.  
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,  
 The line too labors, and the words move slow ;  
 Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
 Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the  
 main!

POPE.

<sup>384</sup> Dos poetas ingleses del siglo XVII.

## XIII.

## THE RAVEN.

1. 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."
2. 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.
3. 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."

4. 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

5. 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.

6. Back into the chamber turning,  
All my soul within me burning,

Soon again I heard a tapping,  
Something 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."

7. 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.

8. 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."

9. 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 bless'd with seeing  
     Bird above his chamber door—  
 Bird or beast upon the sculptured  
     Bust above his chamber door,  
     With such name as "Nevermore."

10. But the raven, sitting lonely  
 On that 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."

11. 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.'"

12. But the raven still beguiling  
 All my sad soul 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."

13. This I sat engaged in guessing,  
 But no syllable expressing  
 To the fowl whose fiery eyes now  
     Burned into my bosom's core ;  
 This and more I sat divining,  
 With my head at ease reclining  
 On the cushion's velvet lining  
     That the lamplight gloated o'er,  
 But whose velvet violet lining  
     With the lamplight gloating o'er  
     She shall press, ah ! nevermore.

14. Then, methought, the air grew denser,  
 Perfumed from an unseen censer  
 Swung by seraphim whose footfalls  
     Tinkled on the tufted floor.

“Wretch,” I cried, “thy God hath lent thee—  
By these angels he hath sent thee  
Respite—respite and nepenthe  
From thy memories of Lenore!  
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe  
And forget this lost Lenore!”  
Quoth the raven, “Nevermore.”

15. “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.”

16. “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.”

17. “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.”

18. And the raven, never flitting,  
Still is sitting, still is sitting  
On the pallid bust of Pallas  
Just above my chamber door;  
And his eyes have all the seeming  
Of a demon’s that is dreaming,  
And the lamplight o’er him streaming  
Throws his shadow on the floor;  
And my soul from out that shadow  
That lies floating on the floor  
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

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 XIV.

## EXPRESSION OF THE HUMAN COUNTENANCE IN DEATH.

He who hath bent him<sup>385</sup> o’er the dead,  
Ere the first day of death has fled,  
The first dark day of nothingness,  
The last of danger and distress

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<sup>385</sup> *Him*, en lugar de *himself*, que es la forma reflexiva.

(Before decay's effacing fingers  
 Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),  
 And marked the mild angelic air,  
 The rapture of repose that's there,  
 The fixed yet tender traits that streak  
 The languor of the placid cheek,  
 And—but for that sad, shrouded eye,  
 That fires not, wins not, weeps not now,  
 And but for that chill, changeless brow,  
 Where cold obstruction's apathy  
 Appals the gazing mourner's heart,  
 As if to him it could impart  
 The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon—  
 Yes, but for these, and these alone,  
 Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,  
 He still might doubt the tyrant's power ;  
 So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,  
 The first, last look by death revealed !  
 So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,  
 We start, for soul is wanting there.  
 This is the loveliness in death  
 That parts not quite with parting breath ;  
 But beauty with that fearful bloom,  
 That hue which haunts it to the tomb,  
 Expression's last receding ray,  
 A gilded halo hovering round decay,  
 The farewell beam of feeling pass'd away !  
 Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,  
 Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd earth !

BYRON.

FIN.

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 VOCABULARIO.
 

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