

It is a grotesque tale too which he reads to you in some of those mental struggles, those unbalanced, half-crazed fancies, which ever possessed the haunted palace of Poe's brain and against which life was for him a constant struggle. We feel when we read of the fancies and hallucinations of Roderick Usher that we drive for them upon his own mental organization. It is a wonderful piece of work, especially that poem of "The Hallowed Palace" which appears there in such a fitting setting. But one does not care to read it many times, or, at least, if it is a sane and normal man, he ought not to. The effect is too unsettling, too depressing; great figures, vast conceptions half uttered by the writer. It is a haunted land where, dimly seen, spectres stalk about. Two wonderful pieces of descriptive writing appear in this story—the account of the storm on the night of the re-appearance of Lady Madeline, and the description of the final fall of the House of Usher.

Though Roderick Usher now lived in a gloomy retirement in his ancestral mansion, the House of Usher, he had once had friends and companions capable of cheering him and of lifting from his mind the dark clouds which, even in youth, had haunted it. Therefore, when he wrote an urgent letter to a boyhood friend imploring him to come to him at once, the letter was answered in person by his friend in a short time as his horse could carry him to the sad old mansion. Usher had a sister, Madeline, who was afflicted with a mental disorder and in her later years had given him the association and cheer of his society in the region in which the House of Usher was situated. At the first glimpse of the house, the friend felt a sense of deep depression and of indefinable gloom come over him. The feeling was unrelieved by any of those poetic sentiments which he generally acknowledged in scenes of natural description. The whole view was simply one of appalling desolation, and the friend responded with a look of the soul such as is comparable only to that which follows an opium dream. The walls of the house were bleak and bare, the windows were unglazed, and a few feeble stumps of decaying trees scattered about the domain gloomed dimly through the falling dusk.

The stranger entered in his horse by the side of a structure which he knew lay with unobscured surface before the house and gazed down at the spectral image of the building and the reflection of the same in the stagnant pool of water which lay before the door. The ghastly trees with a shadowy appearance of the sun which was in its first light of the morning had set into his soul. What was it that so overpowered him? He felt that he had never before experienced a sense of such deep gloom and desolation, and that while there were simple combinations of natural objects which inspired him with such a feeling, he had never before experienced such a feeling of such depth and gloom. He felt that he had never before experienced such a feeling of such depth and gloom. He felt that he had never before experienced such a feeling of such depth and gloom.

Usher's mind, concerning which, of course, the friend questioned him. There was a sort of trepidation about the guest as he faced him, an expression of uneasiness and perplexity. The stranger was not at all reassured by the man's manner and appearance.

At length the visitor reached the studio of his friend, and Roderick, who had been awaiting him with anxious arms to welcome him with valedictory words to the studio. The studio of the master of Usher was a large and lofty room, with long, narrow, pointed windows. Feeble gleams of enshrined light made their way through the enfiladed panes, revealing a profusion of antique furniture and tapestries of hangings. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. The visitor felt that he had entered an atmosphere of sorrow. After Usher had greeted his friend in his manner, changed suddenly. They both sat down and for some moments he was silent, while his friend gazed upon him with pity and awe. What a friend was a worm being before him the companion of his boyhood.

Even in youth the complexion of Usher had been cadaverous—now it was ghastly in its corpse-like pallor. The dark, heavily lined eyes had become thin and bloodless, his nose a delicate Hebrew model, his chin sharp, his hair soft and tenuous. Now if these characteristics were exaggerated to such a degree as to give the individual an uncanny look to the man and make his friend doubt to whom he spoke. The ghastly pallor of the skin combined with the mysterious lustre of the eyes was starting. The hair that in his youth gleamed in the sun had become a matted and tangled mass. The features had become a mass of shadows, and his eyes were full of tremulous indignation and then it would have the taut, self-balanced and perfectly modulated natural utterance which is heard in the speech of the insane. Usher began to explain why he had sent for his friend.

He was suffering he said, from an abnormal weakness of the senses. He could see only the most insipid food. He could hear only the most insipid music. He could feel only the most insipid textures. The odor of all flowers was repulsive. He could hear only the faintest light and those were only familiar sounds and those from strings of instruments which he had heard in his youth. He had never known any other condition but that of a general feebleness of the senses.

In the greenest of our valleys,  
By good angels tenanted,  
Once a fair and stately palace—  
Radiant palace—reared its head  
In the monarch Thought's dominion—  
Of that happy tenement—  
Never seraph spread a plume  
Over fabric half so fair—  
Wanderers in that happy valley  
Through two luminous windows  
Saw the monarch in his glory,  
To a lute well-tuned law  
While evil things in robes of sorrow  
Assailed that monarch's high estate,  
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow  
Shall dawn upon him desolate.)  
And travelers now within that valley  
Through the red-dusted windows  
See the monarch in his glory,  
To a discordant melody,  
While, like a rapid ghastriver  
Through the pale door,  
A hideous throng rush out forever  
And laugh—best smile no more.  
The points which Roderick produced defied description. But if ever a man painted an idea he did. Yet the ideas, while not exactly part and parcel of that terrible, and yet so sublime, as might be supposed, strictly in keeping with the character of his fanes. They were all weird, all contained more or less of perverted fancy, as they sat one night in the studio discussing one of the most weird and fanciful of these books. Roderick suddenly announced that his sister had passed away. She had died that day, and he made what appeared to be a strange proposition, that he intended to preserve his sister's body for a fortnight in one of the subterranean apartments of the house, previous to its final interment. He had been led to this resolution, he said, by a consideration of the unusual malady of the deceased, because of certain obtrusive and vague inquiries of the medical man, and because of the remote and exposed position of the family burial place.

**"I DREAD," HE SAID, "THE EVENTS OF THE FUTURE, NOT FOR THEMSELVES, BUT FOR THE TERROR WHICH THEY WILL INSPIRE IN ME. I DO NOT ABHOR DANGER IN ITSELF, BUT FOR ITS EFFECT—WHICH IS TERROR."**

was to be seen, he said, in the gradual, yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and walls.

The visitor started, for he remembered how, when he had paused on the further side of the causeway upon his arrival and looked at the house and the domain he had fancied he saw a peculiar atmosphere—an aura—about them. Roderick went on to say that it was this atmosphere which had for centuries been exerting an influence upon his family, and had in length made him what his friends saw him. It was the sentence of the stones and plants which had been exerting itself upon his family with a terrible and portentous influence.

A modern physician would probably say that Roderick's idea was not so unscientific after all in this latter respect, and have replied, "Yes, but the strange malaria exerting itself upon a race from generation to generation. But in the days when Poe wrote said, the germ theory had not yet evolved. This by way of digression.

The books over which Roderick and his friend pored—books which had for years formed no small part of the remote existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, strictly in keeping with the character of his fanes. They were all weird, all contained more or less of perverted fancy, as they sat one night in the studio discussing one of the most weird and fanciful of these books. Roderick suddenly announced that his sister had passed away. She had died that day, and he made what appeared to be a strange proposition, that he intended to preserve his sister's body for a fortnight in one of the subterranean apartments of the house, previous to its final interment.

It was upon the seventh or eighth day after the Lady Madeline had been placed in her temporary tomb that the friend, upon going to bed, felt with a certain and terrible conviction that the idea came over him. Roderick Usher requested his friend personally to assist him in the temporary entombment. The body having been placed in its coffin, the two men were left in the room. It was a small, damp vault, built far below the house; to which they carried the coffin of the Lady Madeline. The vault had been originally constructed in feudal times for the worst purposes of a donjonkeep, and it was evident that in more modern days it had been used for the storage of gunpowder or something else of a highly combustible nature, for a portion of its floor and the whole exterior of a long archway through which it was reached were carefully sheathed in copper. The door was of massive iron, and its immense weight caused an unusual sharp grating noise as it turned upon its hinges.

Having deposited their mournful burden upon some trestles which had been provided, the two mourners at this strange burial turned back the coffin lid, which had not been fastened down, and looked upon the face of the tenant. The friend noticed a remarkable resemblance between the face of the dead woman and that of her brother, and mentioned it. Roderick told him that they were twins and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. What was especially noticeable was the conditions which existed in the deceased, marks which are generally present in all persons after death who die from strictly cataleptic diseases. There was a fair flush upon her face and bosom, and that peculiar smile which the lips



The huge antique leaves of the door themselves took upon the instant. The rumbling gust, it was that old, but it seemed as if it had opened in obedience to some awful spell. And there, standing just as Roderick and his friend had seen it in the Lady Madeline. There was blood upon her white robes and the evidence of a bitter struggle to free herself from the vault in which she had been unwittingly placed alive while in a cataleptic state by her brother and his friend.

For an instant she stood trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold of the room, and then, with a low, moaning cry, threw herself upon her brother. He fell to the floor in her embrace—fell dead through the horror of the thing, a victim of the terrors he had anticipated. Lady Madeline, exhausted by her struggle to free herself from the vault, fell upon her knees, and in the same instant, from the terrors of that chamber and that house the friend died, as if his mind had been so worked upon by the associations and horrors which he had gazed upon while he lay upon his back at the House of Usher that he was incapable of regarding anything in a practical and natural light. The storm was still abroad in its wrath. He found, as he crossed the causeway, that suddenly a wild, red shaft of light shot along the path, and he turned to see the source whence a gleam so unusual could have issued from the vast house and its shadows which were alone behind him.

Next week's ONE-PAGE CLASSIC WILL BE "ANDREWS AND MERTON" BY THOMAS DAY.

Getting Married by Correspondence. Mrs. Hattie Cooper Cundy points out the road some people travel to reach the marriage state.

I followed out for two years the lives of some of my correspondents. One man, a New York married woman, had married several women of means and had lived with them long enough to either get what they had or find out that they were too smart to let him get their money. There is a man who has represented that he has means in order to get married, and when the man found out he could get nothing but a woman, he simply hid out and left them.