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“Deep Into That Darkness Peering”: An Essay on Gothic Nature

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When the anxious narrator of Edgar Allan Poe's “The Raven” first hears the gentle “rapping at my chamber door” that disturbs his reading of “many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,” he imagines its source to be some human “visitor” that has come knocking (58). Cast into a state of apprehension by thoughts of his recently deceased beloved Lenore, he “open[s] wide the door” to find only “Darkness there, and nothing more”

(Poe 58). In a powerful moment pregnant with anticipation and dread, he stands there, “Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing, / Doubting,” all the while staring into the blackness of the open doorway. Suddenly uncertain of what lurks within that darkness, Poe's...

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