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**Thanatophobia in Edgar Allan Poe's
Selected Literary Works:
A Psychoanalytic Study**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirement for an M.A. Degree in English Literature
and Civilization

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I. Acknowledgement

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II. Abstract

This thesis presents and develops a potential biography of Edgar Allan Poe and an analysis of some of his literary works for the sake of understanding the reasons and the main purposes behind Poe's writing. By applying theories of psychoanalysis as well as theories of grief and survival, this paper shows a diagnosis of Poe's mental illness which is overlapped by extreme fear and a continual obsession with death, by relating his works to his life using the Freudian theory of Attachment and Loss along with the theory of Mourning and Melancholia. The study also shows the process of healing through literature by analysing the selected works of Edgar Allan Poe applying the Elizabeth Kübler Ross's theory known as *The Five Stages of Grief*. After empirical investigation, my analysis concludes that Edgar Allan Poe did curate himself using his own literature as a recovery ailment.

.Key words: Psychoanalysis, Thanatophobia, Edgar Allan Poe, Deat

Table of contents

I.	Acknowledgement	I
II.	Abstract.....	II
III.	Table of contents.....	III
1	General introduction.....	1
2	Chapter One.....	5
2.1	Introduction	5
2.2	Biography	5
2.2.1	Poe in the army	9
2.3	Gothicism	12
2.4	Bowlby and Freud.....	14
2.4.1	Bowlby's theory of <i>Attachment and Loss</i>	14
2.4.2	Freud's theory of <i>Mourning and Melancholia</i>	15
2.5	Elizabeth Kubler Ross and <i>the Five stages of Grief</i>	17
2.5.1	The Kubler Ross Model in the works of Edgar Allan Poe	18
2.6	Conclusion.....	19
3	Chapter Two 20	
3.1	Introduction	20
3.2	Denial and Isolation	20
3.3	Denial in <i>The Fall of The House of Usher</i>	24
3.3.1	Summary.....	24
3.3.2	Analysis	25
3.4	Denial and Isolation in <i>The Masque of The Red Death</i>	26
3.4.1	Summary.....	26
3.4.2	Analysis	27
3.5	Denial and Isolation in <i>The Oval Portrait</i>	28
3.6	The stage of Anger.....	30
3.7	The stage of Anger in <i>The Black Cat</i>	31
3.7.1	Summary.....	31
3.7.2	Analysis	32
3.8	Conclusion.....	36
4	Chapter Three 37	
4.1	Introduction	37
4.2	The stage of Depression	37
4.3	Depression in <i>The Raven</i>	39

4.3.1	Summary.....	39
4.3.2	Analysis	40
4.4	Depression in <i>Ligeia</i>	42
4.4.1	Summary.....	42
4.4.2	Analysis	43
4.5	The Stage of Bargaining.....	45
4.6	Bargaining in <i>The Conqueror Worm</i>	47
4.6.1	Summary.....	47
4.6.2	Analysis	48
4.7	The Last Stage of Acceptance	49
4.8	Acceptance in <i>A Dream within A Dream and For Annie</i>	51
4.8.1	summary	51
4.8.2	Analysis	52
4.9	Acceptance in <i>for Annie</i>	53
4.9.1	Summary and analysis.....	53
4.10	Conclusion.....	54
5	General Conclusion	54

1 General Introduction

A writer has always a purpose that heralds him to writing, whether it is for the sake of entertaining the reader or for expressing his ideas and feelings. However, sometimes, there are other hidden purposes that cannot be communicated by the writer. So, the reader has to figure out the purpose behind his or her art.

Edgar Allan Poe is the greatest writer in the history of the USA. European critics consider him as the greatest writer that The United States of America has yet produced. His literary masterpieces have been translated into many languages and have been widely spread all over the world (Trent 305).

He is the master of short stories and the one who has invented detective fiction. His tales of mystery and horror reflects his miserable life. However, there has been an exclusive debate about the main reason behind writing such mysterious literary pieces of writing. Nevertheless his works are still ambiguous and full of secrets as he himself said in his short story *The Man of The Crowd*: “There are some secrets which do not permit themselves to be told. [...] on account of the hideousness of mysteries which will not suffer themselves to be revealed” (Poe 269).

Edgar Allan Poe, as any other writer had his own purposes for writing as well as for choosing his style. However, those purposes are not clear and they are still ambiguous until now. So, the problem that is raised in this research is whether Poe wrote just for the sake of expressing his feelings and ideas as well as entertaining the reader , or there is a hidden purpose that is related to his own mental health.

It is commonly agreed that Edgar Allan Poe was mentally and physically sick and most of his family of his family member died to let him struggle alone. So, I suggest that he only had literature to keep him alive. Thus, he used writing in order to heal himself.

According to this hypothesis, some sub-objectives must be achieved in order to reach and find a way out for this problem. The long term study of the present work is to investigate whether Poe has used literature to curate himself from his mental illness. First of all, I will intend to show and explain Poe's mental illness which was resulted from sorrowful events in his life, and then I shall show the way it is portrayed in his works. After that, I will analyse his works based on the process of healing and which is essentially based on the five stages of grief as proven by Elizabeth Kubler Ross's theory.

In this study, I will work on The Collected Works of Edgar Allan Poe. So, I selected some of his works and short stories which I will analyse. selected works are: *The Cask of Amontillado (1846)*, *The Black Cat (1843)*, *Ligeia (1838)*, *The Fall of The House of Usher(1839)*, *The Masque of The Red Death(1842)* and *The Oval Portrait(1842)* that are short stories. The selected poems are: *For Annie(1849)*, *The Conqueror Worm(1843)*, *The Raven(1845)*, and *A Dream within a Dream(1849)*.

For the sakes of understanding Poe's illness and understand the way it is portrayed in his works, I will use Edward John Mostyn Bowlby's theory of Attachment and Loss in his book *Attachment and Loss: Separation : anxiety and anger (1972)*, as well as Sigismund Schlomo Freud's theory of *Mourning and Melancholia (1912)* . The last theory that I am going to use is The Kubler Ross Model or the five stages of grief written by Elizabeth Kubler Ross in his book *On Death and Dying* , which is the main theory that I will apply on the selected works of Edgar Allan Poe. This theory will help us understand how the writer under study overcomes his fear of death (Thanatophobia) through the five stages that E.K. Ross has successfully demonstrated.

Both Edgar Allan Poe's life and his works were deeply studied and analysed. However, there is a missing subject in these studies; none of the previous works on Poe's life and literature mentioned the relationship between his works and his health. In fact, I assume that this is the first study that intends to focus on the works of Edgar Allan Poe and their impacts on his health, which makes this research original.

There are very few secondary sources that are related to this topic, and no previous research which applied the Kubler Ross Model on Poe's works, which means that my research is original. Because of that, this study will be based on the primary sources as well as my own analysis in order to analyse Poe's works from a new point of view.

Thus, this research will embody three chapters. In the first chapter, I will provide biography of the writer, in which i mention all the traumatic period and the sorrowful events in the author's live for the sake of linking these periods and events to his works. I will also define the literary genre of Edgar Allan Poe which is Gothicism, and provide some of Poe's techniques and themes in his writings. This chapter will also include a clarification about Poe's mental illness which is Thanatophobia, based on two main theories which are Bowlby's theory of Loss and Attachment as well as Freud's theory of Mourning and Melancholia. The last part of this chapter will be and introduction to the Kubler Ross Model which will include a brief definition about Elizabeth Kubler Ross, the Five Stages of Grief and finally, the selected works on which I will apply this theory.

In the second chapter, I will introduce the first stage of grief which is Denial and Isolation. Then, I will provide summaries of *The Fall of The House of Usher* as well as *The Masque of The Red Death*. After that I will apply the "Stage of Denial and Isolation" on *The Fall of The House Of Usher*, *The Masque of The Red Death* and *The Oval Portrait*. The second part of the chapter will include the second stage which is "the Stage of Anger" along

with the summary of Poe's short story *The Black Cat*. Finally, I will apply the Stage of Anger on that same short story before mentioned.

The third chapter contains the last three stages of grief which are "Depression", "Bargaining" and finally "Acceptance". In this chapter I will introduce these stages and provide summaries to the rest of the selected works. After that, I will apply the stage of Depression on Poe's *Ligeia* and *The Raven*, and apply the stage of Bargaining in *The Conqueror Worm*. Finally, the stage of acceptance will be applied on *A dream within a Dream* and *For Annie*.

2 Chapter One: Edgar Allan Poe's life, literature and illness

2.1 Introduction

For the sake of circumventing the scope of this work, the present chapter intends to shed light on all the rudimentary elements that are needed to understand its content. Consequently, I will provide a deep biography of Edgar Allan Poe as well as including his gothic style and techniques in order to demonstrate the depiction of his life in his work. After that, I will include both Freud's theory of mourning and melancholia as well as Bowlby's theory of attachment so to demonstrate that Edgar Allan Poe had an extreme fear and obsession with death which led to his illness that is called Thanatophobia. The end of the chapter will include a definition of the five stages of grief by Elizabeth Kubler Ross which is called the Kubler Ross model.

2.2 Biography

Edgar Allan Poe was born on January 19, 1809 in Boston, Massachusetts. His life is considered as a disaster , a tragedy after tragedy that deprived him from the love he craved insanely. He was deeply paralyzed but the most important thing in Edgar Allan Poe is that he never stopped showing the world how genius and strong he was. In fact, after many obstacles like his own illnesses and poverty, he did not stop producing great works of prose and poetry. Moreover, after the loss of his wife, he continued to produce greatest works of high caliber like Eureka (Encyclopaedia of World Biography).

Yet, he could not show his pride and being honoured of his paternal family and his beautiful and professional actress. His beloved mother died when Poe was three years old. This was the first tragic event and the beginning of the traumatic life of Edgar and his family (Semtner).

Poe was the son of two professional travelling actors, Elizabeth Arnold Poe, an English born American actress 1787-1811, and the mother of Edgar Allan Poe. She was noted for her beauty, her singing voice and her theatrical talent. Nevertheless, Poe had not even one independent memory of his mother since she died of tuberculosis a month after the third birthday of her son.

David Poe Jr the son of David Poe Sr or the original David Poe who was known for his patriotic self sacrifice during the American Revolution. David Poe Jr was the father of Edgar, he was hard tempered and sensitive and he suffered from stage fright which eventually led him to alcohol. His family was in a financial crisis right after the birth of Edgar, he then abandoned the family, quit literally disappearing off the map and when Edgar was 18 months old and left his pregnant Eliza struggling all alone, David died three days after Eliza's death (Pruette 371).

Edgar was the second son of David and Elizabeth, his elder brother, William Henry Leonard Poe was born on January 30, 1807. He was a sailor and an amateur poet. After the death of his parents, he was taken to live with his paternal grandparents. He was a good brother to Edgar as they were an inspiration to each other. In addition to this, they had similar writing styles. Henry then left Edgar and died of tuberculosis at the age of 24 (ibid).

Rosalie Mackenzie Poe and Edgar Allan Poe's sister was born approximately on December 1810 in Norfolk, Virginia. She was the last offspring of David and Eliza. However, there were rumours about the real father of Rosalie since David had abandoned Elizabeth around the time Rosalie would have been conceived but, they were just rumours. Rosalie was sent to the care of William Mackenzie and his wife of Richmond. She was described as being degenerative, dull and never progressing beyond the development age of twelve. Both Edgar

and Rosalie lived in Richmond, she looked up to him , admiring and respecting him until he passed away in 1849 (Semtner).

Poe went to live with the Allan family after the death of his parents, he was adopted and baptized into the family of John Allan ,a rich Virginia planter. At the beginning, Poe received considerable affection from the wife of Mr Allan, though she couldn't really understand her brilliant foster son. What matters the most for Edgar Allan Poe is that Ms Frances could give him so much love whereas Mr Allan couldn't give him love and sympathy, he was proud of his foster son just because of his precocity and delighted to have him in to entertain guests after dinner by reciting poetry.

Mr Allan did a big mistake which was one of the main reasons Poe went into the dark side of his mind and became addicted to alcohol. Instead of giving the young boy love and sympathy, Mr Allan gave him huge amounts of pocket money which eventually led the poor and young offspring to alcohol at a young age. Poe himself, in speaking about paternal affection, said that he received nothing from his step father and it is the ugly truth that Poe had to live with (Pruette 372).

June, 1815, the Allan family set sail to England where Edgar was placed at school in Stoke-Newington, then a suburb of London. That historic and beautiful old place with its shadowed walks and memories of great and ill-fated lords and ladies became Poe's world for the next five years.

Dr. Bransby as well, who was Poe's teacher, under whom he studied in England for five years, once described his student as " a quick and clever boy who would have been a very good boy if he had not been spoilt by his parents. " who " allowed him an extravagant amount of pocket-money which enabled him to get into all manner of mischief. "(Pruette 273).

We can imagine the way Edgar Allan Poe grew up there, a sagacious imagination mixed with the old English towns all inside a dark and beautiful mind where the main theme is death. After he got what he needed in England, and in the summer of 1820, Poe went back to America with his family. In addition to these five years, Poe could manage to understand what the word beautiful means through the sea voyages, six weeks at the sea on these two occasions provided much for this young Poet. Nonetheless, the most important thing is that a great stimulus of Poe's imagination and the love of real beauty were provided. By combining them using his sagaciousness and adding his dark themes, a masterpiece will perfectly emerge to affect the readers' minds in a strange and a beautiful way .

Coming back to Richmond, Poe was old enough to figure out what was happening around him; his supremacy and his training though he was not that strong but he was courageous, and his friends and playmates did not allow him to forget his ancestry since they were thought an extravagant pride of ancestry as well. This situation and these reminders of his inheritance along with other environmental forces increased Poe's rebellious pride which made him far from being such a social boy and having good companionship. Eventually, found the need to defend himself all alone, fighting against the slightest suggestion of inferiority, loneliness and the cruel society's judgements (Quick 05).

At this point, comes the momentum, there was a huge desire for superiority inside Poe then he started challenging himself, society and the whole world. His idol, Lord Byron, the British poet was a good swimmer and a good poet, and so was Poe. His leadership in intellectual pursuits must have caused him to incur further the enmity of his schoolmates. One of his schoolmates once said about him "Poe, as I recall my impressions now, was self-willed, capricious, inclined to be imperious, and though of generous impulses, not steadily kind, or even amiable; and so what he would exact was refused to him . " By the time he reached the University of Virginia in February 14, 1826, he was spoken of as having many

noble qualities and being endowed by nature with great genius and diversity of talent. Unfortunately, it did not last for long time since he became a reckless gambler and a drunker. He left university owing 2000 dollars as debts of honour and for alcohol, he used to drink for the sake of stimulation rather than the flavour since it is what kept him up through life.

After he left university, Poe entered Mr. Allan's office but he found the work intolerable. Besides, Poe never stopped seeking the freer atmosphere of the artistic world which led him to Boston but there was another reason behind leaving the office and Richmond. As any other youth, Poe fell in love with S. Elmira Royster who lived next to the Allan's house they both loved each other, Elmira once described Poe as "warm and zealous in any cause he was interested in, being enthusiastic and impulsive" (qtd in Pruette 379). For Poe, it was a good start. He published a thin volume of some beautiful pieces of poems though the volume was not that attractive. The poor writer was unable to support neither himself nor his poems and then he decided to join the army.

2.2.1 Poe in the army

Poe was a good student and a very good soldier but just for a short period of time, a sergeant-major at the age of twenty is a good achievement. In addition to this, Lieutenant Howard, Captain Griswold, Colonel Worth and many other army leaders were astonished by the soldier's attitude since they had heard the opposite of what they had seen, but Poe wasn't really interested in this, in addition to that fact that he was poor, he didn't use his real name instead of that he served under the name Edgar A. Perry as a new member joined the US army on May 26, 1829. Poe climbed from private to regimental sergeant major of the 1st Artillery Regiment, promoted on Jan. 1, 1829. He served nearly two years of a five-year enlistment before the Army discharged Poe April 15, 1829, so that he could begin a yearlong effort to attend the Military Academy at West Point, N.Y (Howard 60).

He wanted to be kicked out, he had been admitted to the academy on July 01, 1830 and nearly seven months later , he was out. A very impressive record was accumulated by Poe , during these months he started causing troubles , from July to December , he committed 44 offenses and 106 demerits and January alone shows poe at the top of the list with 66 offenses. It is obvious that he was trying hard to get kicked out of West Point (Howard56).

Another example showing that he wanted to be out is that he was absent from mathematics class from 17 to 26 January 1831 but two months earlier, there was weekly class report that ranked poe among the best students in Mathematics, he was also placed among the best in French, but he wasn't really interested in this, in addition to that fact that he was poor , he didn't use his real name instead of that he served under the name Edgar A. Perry (Howard57).

While Poe impressed so many people with his sagaciousness, charm and brilliancy, he couldn't be very friendly since he found it hard to associate with individuals of his own age, probably the main reason was precocity. After the death of Mrs Allan, Edgar was so poor and what Mr Allan did was even crueller, the speedy remarriage after Poe's precious mother's death and this removed any possibility of his securing the inheritance which he had been brought to expect.

Poe then moved to Baltimore to live with his aunt. In 1836, at the age of 27, he fell in love again with his 13 years old cousin Virginia Clemm and they finally got married. He worked there as an editor and the job suited him along with his skills, talents and brilliancy as a writer and it helped him a lot to publish more of his dark pieces of art however drinking remained a principle in Poe's life. Edgar adopted a lifestyle similar to that of his original parents but he was so poor that he couldn't move so far though he was making frequent moves from Richmond, Virginia to Boston , New York and Philadelphia and with his

writings, he became famous but never stopped struggling against poverty , one of the most artistic pieces that he once made is THE RAVEN and he received 15 dollars for it (Patterson 1246).

Well, this is not the end of misfortune and cruel tragedy, the young wife had suffered from tuberculosis and Poe couldn't do much for her. Eventually, Virginia died in 1847 at the age of 24 to leave Poe all alone again in those gloomy streets of Baltimore, he had nothing to do in order to ease himself but to drink and write and sometimes trying to attempt suicide by opium overdoses (Patterson 1247).

Here comes the end of Edgar Allan Poe whom once said in his short story The Lighthouse: "There is no telling what may happen to a man all alone as I may get sick or worse ". On September 28, 1849 Poe stopped in Baltimore to spend the rest of his days there, he was well known by many people there but he went out of sight during the last days, details about his actions were so uncertain to be eventually found inside Gunner's Hall tavern by a printer in October 3, 1849, he was in a drunken state and had been robbed of his own clothes.

Poe was taken to hospital where he lapsed in and out of consciousness and his answers about his conditions were incoherent and unsatisfactory. On Sunday October 7, 1849 right before the sunrise, Edgar Allan Poe quietly passed away.

At this point everyone would wonder the way Edgar Allan Poe had become after all these struggles and the way he dealt with such circumstances but what a reader is sure about is that such situations added a dark splash in Poe's ingeniousness and when we mix such elements with imagination and put them in a paper, a dark aesthetic written piece of art would certainly show up, and this is one of the most special and dark genre of writing.

2.3 Gothicism

gothic literature is the art of dealing with supernatural, demons, and abnormal states of mind, it evokes a special atmosphere invaded by horror, dread, death and other elements that portrays the dark side of the world as well as the gloomy side of the human mind . Mystery and suspense are also two main elements that explains the settings of this type of literature in which we can find dark or hidden staircases, secret rooms, cemeteries and other haunted places like old castles (Vandana 37).

Edgar Allan Poe did really master Gothicism, He was best known for his tales of mystery and macabre. Poe was one of the earliest American practitioners of the short story and He was an originator of Gothic writings and facilitator of symbolism in European poetry. He also worked in surrealist trend. Besides, Poe's life was a tragedy, dark and not very clear, which gives his works a mysterious view. He had a number of common themes, motifs and structures that make his work easily recognizable. In other words, his works are obviously gothic but different from other works.

Poe's struggle to live with death was a battle he fought for the entirety of his career, and it is clear after reading much of his work that he experienced both sides of the spectrum: from insane obsession with lost love to an ability to look towards death with curiosity rather than fear. These themes, scattered throughout his career from beginning to end (there is no linear progression, but instead a continuous development of all variations of themes), depict an author struggling himself with death, using art to play out various scenarios and to identify finally his own beliefs about what death means—and subsequently what this means for life (Shearston14).

But the most important thing is that his qualities, elements and themes fit his stories into the classification of the gothic. Among these elements of the gothic that run throughout

the works of Edgar Allan Poe include the pervasive theme of death and decay, which is almost always a staple in Gothic fiction, the theme or presence of madness, insanity or other internal chaos, the supernatural in all of its forms, and haunted or creepy locations. Most stories by Edgar Allan Poe possess most if not all of these gothic qualities (Vandana 69).

Besides, in his essay “The Philosophy of Compositions”, Poe’s did explain the way he composes poems and short stories following some steps which makes the readers effected in a magnificent way though Poe believed that his method was difficult, if not impossible, to achieve with longer works because of the discontinuity of having to put a book down in the middle of reading and i think this is the main reason behind writing those great short stories and poems, and for him effecting the reader through the elements of the short story or the poem was one of the main purposes behind writing such pieces, though not the most important one.

Edgar Allan poe’s works differ from other gothic written pieces since the theme of Death invaded almost all of the writer’s works, he was obviously obsessed with death and afraid of it. But, this was never strange for him since almost all of his beloved ones passed away. So, by using the unity of effect and his ingeniousness, Poe managed to depict the way such deaths affected him, as Richard Hurley put it in words:

Edgar Allen Poe (1809-49) shifted the boundaries of fiction in the genres of detective stories, science fiction, and tales of horror. Death—especially fear of it—is a recurring theme in Poe's work. This fascination may result from Poe's own losses: his parents died before he was 3 years old. Poe married his 13 year old cousin, Virginia, in 1836; she died at the age of 24.

2.4 Bawlby and Freud

For the sake of better understanding of Poe's relationship to death and the way this effect caused another illness, we will be depending on the two models of Sigmund Freud as well as John Bowlby.

2.4.1 Bawlby's theory of Attachment and Loss

The first theory that helps the reader to understand the cause of Poe's obsession with death is Bowlby's theory of Attachment and Loss, this theory helps to give a clear image of the effect of attachment on relationships in life and the result of losing these relationships, in other words when the person loses his precious ones.

John Bowlby was a psychoanalyst who believed that mental health has a strong relation to early childhood, in fact he developed a theory called The Evolutionary Theory Of Attachment suggests that every offspring came to this world with an innate attachment that helps children to survive and losing this relation in an unnatural progress may cause many dangerous mental problems. Bowlby writes: "So long as a child is in the unchallenged presence of a principal attachment-figure, or within easy reach, he feels secure. A threat of loss creates anxiety, and actual loss sorrow; both, moreover, are likely to arouse anger" (177).

Bowlby sees that the most important attachment for an infant is that of his mother, he also hypothesised that both infants and mothers have evolved a biological need to stay in contact with each other ([Saul McLeod](#)).

The most dangerous problem which the infant may face during the first five years of his life is what Bowlby calls Maternal Deprivation Hypothesis, in other words, the disruption of that attachment between the offspring and the caregiver or his mother will result cognitive, social, and emotional difficulties for that child and the long term consequences of maternal

deprivation includes, delinquency, increased aggression, depression, and affectionless psychopathy ([Saul McLeod](#)).

For the affectionless psychopathy, it can be explained as the inability to express guilt or deep feelings for other but for Edgar Allan Poe expressing feelings and ideas was through literature. However, by applying Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation on Edgar Allan Poe's life, we can notice that the loss of two mothers at a young age effected Poe negatively, especially when he grew up to figure out that he was all alone, afraid of the unknown, unsecured and carrying the same illness that killed his original mother, Tuberculosis. And with the death of his beloved wife of the same disease as well, which caused him a hypochondriac fear of death and developing to become an illness called *Thanatophobia* which is :

An extreme and irrational fear of death. That being said, death is a very scary life experience that unfortunately we all have to look forward to. Since thanatophobia is actually such a common fear, in most cases it is not thought to be an actual "fear" at all. In Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" he could have been writing in satire to portray American society's common fear of death and the extreme lengths we are willing to go in order to avoid it .([Nagaunt](#)).

2.4.2 Freud's theory of Mourning and Melancholia

The second model is Freud's *Mourning and Melancholia*, published in 1915; the theory is based on loss and grief in which Freud shows the process of grief and how loss affects considerably human subjects.

Freud states that the bereaved person should detach himself from his precious dead person , this detachment happens emotionally and then reinvest those feelings in a new relationship (lovas 03).

That is what Poe did after the loss of his original parents. In fact, he perfectly replaced the relationship of his original Mother by that of Ms Allan, though he did not succeed in the paternal side and the damage was huge from the very beginning. But becoming addicted to alcohol was not because of the failure of moving from a paternal relationship to another since Poe found no important emotional bonds to break and the reason behind it is that his father left him when he was two years old, Ms Allan on the other hand played a important role in Poe's life.

I cannot say that Freud's theory was that effective since Ms Allan died of the same illness of Elizabeth Poe as well as his wife Virginia Clemm knowing that he went through several love relationships before marrying Virginia, in addition to this breaking and replacing emotional bonds is a difficult process which needs time and this was obviously hard for Poe .

The situation where Poe couldn't get over Loss is not just mourning. Freud named it Melancholia, this later means that the loved object did not actually die, it is just hidden in the unconsciousness and then it manifests itself in dreams, anger and hostile impulses toward the external situation that the person was living in and going through (Freud 247, 244).

This is exactly what happened to Poe but the fact that he had no friends or relatives to express such feelings and ideas for them, he used pen and paper, we can notice that anger, dreams and hostility were the main themes in many of his short stories and poem. A very good example to show the themes of anger and hostility in Poe's works is his short story *The Cask of Amontillado*, where anger led the narrator to revenge and revenge led to death, such themes are always interrelated in Edgar Allan Poe's literary pieces. Dreams as well, are one of

the most noticed themes in Poe's poems and probably *A Dream Within A Dream* is the best example that depicts the theme of dreams.

Melancholia leads the patient to act negatively. For Poe, all he could do was to drink, write and detach himself from the real world to struggle alone in the dark side of his mind. Eventually, it developed his illness to Thanatophobia, it is a form of deep anxiety and hypochondriac fear of one's own death or the process of dying. It is commonly known as death anxiety. This illness affected Edgar Allan Poe to a degree that most of his literary works were invaded by the theme of death and as we can see, Poe's life is a complicated tragedy and the two models of Bowlby and Freud couldn't do much. Nevertheless, they explained the way death affected Edgar to let him suffer of Thanatophobia.

For the sake of explaining that Edgar Allan Poe did not just write for entertaining the reader, I will analyse some of his works based on the theory of Elizabeth Kubler Ross, in order to seek out whether what I have put forward as a working hypothesis is a valid answer.

2.5 Elizabeth Kubler Ross and the Five stages of Grief

Dr Elizabeth Kubler-Ross was born in July,8 1926, a Swiss-American psychiatrist whom was named by Time Magazine as one of the "100 Most Important Thinkers" of the 20th Century (Shorey). Her internationally Best-selling book *On Death And Dying* (1969) is where she first introduced The Kubler-Ross model or the five stages of grief, this model identifies the stages that people experience when they are faced with the reality of their own death in the near future.

The book begins with two chapter *On the Fear of Death* explaining the reason behind people being afraid of their own deaths and the fear that everyone deals with when they face death at any rate.

In the nutshell, the book is an explanation of these five stages which are successively: *denial and isolation, anger, bargain, depression, and acceptance*. E.K. Ross built her analysis on patients who have been interviewed during “terminal illness”. It is worth mentioning that the book ends up with a last part entitled *Hope* in which she shows therapy with dying patients are following (Paniagua).

2.5.1 The Kubler Ross Model in the works of Edgar Allan Poe

First of all, Poe’s was suffering of Tuberculosis, which means that seeing his beloved ones like his original mother and his wife been killed by this disease makes him feel threatened and waiting to meet death at any single minute. Which also made him afraid of this mysterious life taker. in other words, Poe felt that he was dying earlier than it should be. Thus, his case is so similar to that of patients whom were terminally ill and waiting the time to die, the only difference is that Poe saw death many times and this situation lasted for a long time which was one of the reasons that he became a prisoner to Thanatophobia.

In addition to this, the reason behind applying the Kubler-Ross model on Poe’s works is that Edgar was not that social to express his emotions and have a better understanding of his situation with doctors, so he had to be the patient and the doctor of himself at the same time, In other words, Edgar Allan Poe is the only author whom it is possible to apply this theory on; one could assume that his case is perfectly feasible for this theory.

Moreover, the stages of the Kubler-Ross model are entirely spread all over Poe’s literature as well as his life, though the selected works will be chosen in a chronological order according the order of the five stages however, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross confirmed that the stages may not happen with the same order as it is shown on her book.

2.6 Conclusion

This first chapter has focused on the biography of Edgar Allan Poe as well as his style and his literary techniques. In other words I have provided a life story of Poe and his presented his gothic literature. The chapter has focused on the literary theories as well; I have introduced both John Bowlby's theory of Attachment and Loss, and Sigmund Freud's theory of Mourning and Melancholia that I have used to prove that Poe suffered of Thanatophobia. Finally I have introduced Elizabeth Kubler Ross and her theory The Five Stages of Grief which I will use in the last two chapters.

3 Chapter Two: Denial and Anger in Poe's works

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the present chapter is to put under study the first two stages of the Kubler Ross Model in relation to Edgar Allan Poe's selected fiction works. I will explain the first stage which is denial as well as the second stage which anger. Then, I intend to use them as a theoretical framework to scope Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of The House of Usher*, *The Masque of the Red Death* as well as *the Oval Portrait*, based on the stage of denial to show the way Poe went through this stage. The last part of this chapter is set to include the stage of anger, I will analyse Poe's *The Black Cat* to show the way Poe went through the stage of anger.

3.2 Denial and Isolation

Christina Gregory believes that denial is the initial stage that can help us to survive the loss. Since the patient thinks that life is meaningless and overwhelming and his existence makes no sense at all. Besides, denying the ugly truth and facts makes us go numb and then we start imagining the way life would go if such circumstances and facts did not exist. However, the patient is in shock because his life has completely changed in an instant from peace, joy and light to darkness, fear and sadness. That is why the patient tries to neglect and deny reality believing that there must be a misunderstanding or a mistake must be done in the lab like the blood which they worked on was mixed with someone else's blood. In addition to this, when the patient receives news on a death of a loved person, he may directly cling to what is called false hope like he was dreaming or they identified the wrong person. In other words, the patient lives in a reality that he created in order not to take all the shock at once, it is a natural self defence mechanism, it is the best way to escape the actual reality. By the end,

denial and shock fade, and the feelings that the patient was suppressing come to the surface (Gregory).

Elizabeth Kubler Ross and David Kessler affirm that denial is natural , it is the way nature wants to let out only what we can handle and the rest of the shock and feelings will suppressed, they also believe that those feelings are very important for the patient, they are the protectors of the psychological side of the patient ([Kubler-Ross and Kessler](#) 24)

Kubler Ross gives us an example of people who face a loss of a beloved one to show us that grief is obliged even if the survivor had a bad relation with his lost partner. The example shown is a husband and his lost wife who have been fighting against each other all the time for years. However, when the wife dies, the husband cries, pulls his hair, beats his chest, and fears his own death more than before since the husband believes in “an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth” which means that he will soon have a pitiful death as well (Kubler Ross 17).

For Poe, the fear of death which is, as it is mentioned before, caused by the loss of his beloved ones has developed a pathology that makes him sink into Thanatophobia, because most of his beloved ones died of tuberculosis which was Poe’s illness as well, and which also makes Poe think only about death, waiting gloomily to join his family.

E.K.Ross affirms that a terminally sick subject feels that she/he does not exist anymore and that she/he has no right or opinion, but the most important thing is that the patient wants to be heard (Kubler Ross 22). As Poe wants his own literary works to be read and some of them were written to be judged by the reader. Poe wants the reader to live those literary pieces in order to feel and understand the author’s life and circumstance as he explained this in his essay *Philosophy of Composition* (1846).

The idea which Poe has on death was that it is an invisible, strong and invincible enemy who chooses the time and the place of the battle, the time when he is going to face the enemy,

he will already be defeated, in other words, he has no chance at all, fatality invades his soul and he has nothing to do against it , death has already taken almost all of his beloved ones which makes him alone, weak and anxious. However, he refuses to accept this fact at any rate.

Kubler Ross calls this stage initial denial which is a conclusion made by the patient himself on his own, and it is used by patients during the first stages of illness and sometimes later on as well. (Kubler Ross 49.50)

She also confirms that this kind of denial is a healthy progress for handling the uncomfortable and hurtful situations especially when the patient has to live with such circumstances for a long time, since denial absorbs shocking news and events as it allows the patient to find another way of dealing with reality and look for less radical defences (ibid 50).

The first reaction to learning about the terminal illness, loss, or death of a cherished loved one is to deny the reality of the situation. “This isn’t happening, this can’t be happening,” people often think. It is a normal reaction to rationalize our overwhelming emotions.

Julie Axelrod defines denial as a kind of defence mechanism that absorbs the loss by escaping our emotions and hide from that ugly truth, we start to see almost everything invaluable and life becomes meaningless. This stage is important for most people who experience grief and it is necessary for survival because it carries the first and biggest wave of pain (Axelrod).

Kubler-Ross talks about one of the patients whom had a terminal illness and she explains the way the patient felt and thought, she confirms that one of the patients under her study did not speak too much though she was confused and disoriented and she had spent the rest of her weeks alone in her room. She also affirms that people who visited her could not

talk too much to her as they did not know what to say since she has such crazy ideas (Kubler Ross 55).

For the sake of understanding the relation between denial and isolation, Kubler-Ross mentions that Mrs. K felt that much of isolation and loneliness that she used to take the phone off the hook in order to hear someone's voice. And when she was holding Dr. Kubler-Ross's hand she said *"I hope you are going to be with me when i get colder and colder"*. At that moment, they both knew that Mrs. K had dropped her denial. The terminally ill patient became able to talk but not too much. However, she could finally think and talk about her death as well as asking for good company and trying to have some good memories for her family (ibid 55)

Jenni A. Shearston states that Edgar Allan Poe explored and described death so perfectly that no other American author could explore it that way, Poe did not only portray the way humans can become very obsessive because of the perceptions of death to a degree that they refuse to accept both life and death, but he also portrayed the way such perceptions can become transcendent and transformative as well. When Poe discussed death, he defined it as an internal battle that allows us to explore the self, understand death of the loved ones, fear and come to terms with this enemy. This is Poe's unique way of exploring the self through death (Shearston 01).

Shearston divides Poe's tales into four major types according to the way this one has portrayed death. Three of these groups focus on unhealthy way of thinking since it is based on the obsessive and irrational view of death, sometimes not thinking at all and trying to avoid it. The last type portrays death as an art, a beautiful and transcendent piece of art (Jenni A. Shearston01).

According to Shearston, one of the four types is called “The Avoidance Technique”, which is a group of stories written by Poe to create an alternative world to avoid and ignore death. This technique, I may say, sustains Kubler Ross’s First Stage, Denial. This world is Poe’s own place and it is based on his own rules, and it seems like his actual life. However, the author cannot succeed to avoid death perfectly, since all the stories end up with death itself (ibid 02).

The fall of the house of usher is one of the best examples of the avoidance technique, it is a short story in which the writer creates his own alternative world in order to allow himself to avoid his own cruel end, his own lifestyle as well as his sister’s infirmity. The story also depicts the way decisions can be misleading and deadly at the same time (ibid 15).

3.3 Denial in The Fall of The House of Usher

3.3.1 Plot Summary

The story is about Roderick Usher who lived in his own world, an alternative reality which was all inside his head, he sent a letter to his childhood friend who was the narrator himself for the sake of helping his mentally ill friend. Indeed, when the narrator arrived to the house of Usher, he found his friend in a horrific state of mind, deep and severe depression as well as extreme nervousness.

The narrator then spent his days inside the house, providing good company to his friend by reading books, playing guitar and painting. However, the narrator could not manage to help Roderick and ease his terrible state of mind, he also started to stop using reason to understand the events that happened inside the house.

Roderick's sister Madeline was also sick, she had a cataleptic illness that made her suffer for a long time which made her brother' worried and more nervous and afraid at the same time. Few days after, Roderick believed that Madeline passed away and decided to call the narrator in order to help him to entomb the poor woman in one of the vaults of the house, he wanted to let his sister in the vault for a period of time until they take her to the grave of the Usher's family. "At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest" (Poe 231).

After the death of Madeline, things started to get worst day after day, Roderick became so sick that he went crazy. Over the next days, both the narrator and his friend were in a state of nervousness and fear, until one stormy night, they heard strange sounds and voices coming from the walls of the house and then from the vault.

The narrator felt guilty since he was not sure that Madeline died. Besides, the voice that they heard was similar to that of Madeline. By the end, she returned from the vault covered with blood to die with her brother, while the narrator fled the house to let it fall soundlessly into the lack next to it.

3.3.2 Analysis

As it is noticed in the story, the narrator and Roderick became slaves of fear and cannot live a normal life as they cannot understand through reason, and for Poe, reason is attached to life, which means that once the character detaches himself from reason, he will be dealing with death from his own perspective and based on his own rules. This may seem crazy, however, it is a way of creating an alternative reality by Edgar Allan Poe for the sake of avoiding death for a period of time. Though, it is obvious that at the end death will come at any rate.

3.4 Denial and Isolation in The Masque of The Red Death

3.4.1 Summary

The story was about a plague or a lethal disease that is called the red death, it was deadly and dangerous and the victim dies after few minutes of infection. Although the disease was spreading all over the country, Prince Prospero did not care about it, he invited many of his friends from the noble class to his abbey in order to escape the illness as well as the outside world.

Prospero enjoyed his life of the abbey, organizing parties with his friends, having fun and food which they stocked there to survive. However, after six months, Prospero decided to organize a party where the guests wear masks and costumes in seven different rooms, it is called the masked ball. "It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence" (321). Yet, the last room was special since its walls were all black with red gothic window. There also was a big clock which strokes every hour to interrupt the joy of the guests because the sound of the clock was horrible. Nevertheless, the soon started having fun once the sound stopped.

When the clock stroked again, all the guests stopped dancing and laughing and some of the dancers saw a strange guest dressed as a dead victim of the Red Death walking through the dancers and frightened them. When Prospero saw the ghost, he asked his friends to take off the mask of the red death but no one had the courage to do it.

The masked stranger started walking toward Prospero and Prospero felt ashamed of his lack of courage and fear which made him rush with his sword toward the mask of the red death. The two finally meet inside the last room and once the mask turned to face the prince, Prospero falls dead and the crowd heard him screaming which made them throw themselves

into the stranger to realize that there was nothing underneath the mask, it was the Red Death itself who came to the party with no invitation and killed everyone to become the only guest left in the abbey.

3.4.2 Analysis

The Mask of the Red Death portrays the madness of the narrator who tried to escape death at any rate. Yet, it represents an event that can never be escaped which is death itself, it is an end that Prospero tried to avoid but, it is a fate that cannot be evitable. In the story, death seemed to be a great force that no one can avoid it no matter how hard Prospero tried to keep it far by creating his own alternative world, living with his favourite people and based on his own rules by inviting his friends to his castle and lock himself there away from the plague or the red death. Nevertheless, time passes and death kept moving forward until it certainly became inevitable.

The story also shows that Prospero was psychologically unstable not because of his world decoration and his weird parties but, because of his philosophy of escaping, avoiding and trying to neglect death from the outside world by staying inside his alternative dream world. However, the story shows that as time passes by, death will certainly reach those who live in their own world that is created out of chaos and will certainly return to it.

This story is seen as a depiction of Poe's illness of "Tuberculosis" that killed his mother, foster mother, his brother William and his wife. Besides, at the time Poe was writing the short story, his wife Virginia was so sick and suffering from the disease (Thomas). Poe knew that his wife would die. Yet, he did not accept this fact and tried to neglect the idea that his beloved will die. By the end, it was clear that no one can escape death. This is called denial.

The two worlds of the house of Usher and Prospero's mansion were both examples of alternative worlds made for escaping death. However, Roderick differs from Prospero because Prospero tried to neglect all the circumstances that were happening in the outside world and tried to fool himself that he can overcome death and nature. Yet, the two worlds are similar since they both portray the symbol of an unhealthy mind.

Prospero realized that his own alternative world is inevitable, as the Red Death walked through the seven rooms and through the guests, this terrifying scene shows that we all we face death and there is nothing we can do about it. As Poe writes:

he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him (325).

This means that death cannot be escaped in our fantasy's world or in the real world because the two worlds are connected, that is what Poe's art seeks, these pieces of literature connect the real world with mind and death. Nevertheless, *The Mask of The Red Death and the Fall of The House of Usher* are examples of what happens in minds of people who experience the first stage of grief.

3.5 Denial and Isolation in The Oval Portrait

The Oval Portrait also shows how man can neglect death until it comes nearby. The story is about an unnamed narrator and his servant who went to an old house to spend the night because the narrator was injured and could not sleep outside. When the two entered the house, the servant slept and the narrator's eyes and mind were attracted by a painting of a beautiful woman and realizes that she was the wife of an artist who painted her portrait. When

the husband was painting his wife's portrait he did not notice that his wife was getting weaker. By the time passes, the painter was about to complete his artistic piece. However, his wife declined further until she became so pale and the painting seemed to be ever more lifelike. Yet, when the painter noticed that his wife was not fine and went to check on her, the poor woman already passed away.

The story showed how blind can a person be, love led the painter to paint his wife, but he was blind enough not to notice that she was declining every single minute until he realized that she was dead. In fact, the painter blinded himself, he knew that death will take his wife but he did not accept this fact, he wanted his wife to stay with him all the time. So, he did not only neglect death but, he tried to create his wife again in a way that she will not die again.

Painting was the best way for the husband to prolong the life of his wife and to represent her in way that she will never grow older again. The painter tried to preserve the life of his beloved wife which avoids death as well. However, there is no way to beat nature nor to escape it. In the painting, the young woman's perfection will last forever and her beauty will not vanish. But, in real life she will grow old and die like any other creature.

Poe's choice in portraying death this way is because of his hypochondriac disorder and the fear of his own death, which makes him feel like a terminally ill patient , at the same time, his grief for the loss of his beloved ones made his denial strong and his hypochondriac obsession deep which led him to think of ways to escape death. However, this denial will not last during the whole process of grief and anger will replace it.

3.6 The stage of Anger

Elizabeth Kubler Ross believes that denial will be replaced by feelings of envy, rage and anger because the patient cannot maintain denial any longer. Starting from this point, another stage will appear which is the stage of Anger., Kubler Ross states that this stage is very difficult to cope with from the side of friends and family of the patient because this rage and anger will be directed and projected to the environment and onto the close friends and family members (Kubler Ross 60).

One of the reasons behind this anger comes with a logical question which the patient asks himself: “why me?” As one of Dr Elizabeth’s patients said: “I suppose most anybody in my position would look at somebody else and say, ‘Well, why couldn’t it have been him?’ and this has crossed my mind several times. . . . An old man whom I have known ever since I was a little kid came down the street. He was eighty-two years old, and he is of no earthly use as far as we mortals can tell. He’s rheumatic, he’s a cripple, he’s dirty, just not the type of a person you would like to be. And the thought hit me strongly, now why couldn’t it have been old George instead of me?”(ibid 60).

At this level, the patient will compare his family to other people and all he will think about is destruction, fires and wars. He will also listen to news full of tragedies that are far from him. In order to make sure that he is not forgotten, he will scream, raise his voice, ask for attention and make demands because he thinks that he is being neglected because he will die. So, his reaction is a like a loud cry full of rage saying: “I am alive, don’t forget that. You can hear my voice, I am not dead yet!” (ibid 62).

Dr Elizabeth and Kessler affirm that when this stage of anger begins, it means the patient is progressing well because, he is allowing the feeling that were locked by denial come

to the surface. This anger may take many forms: anger at life and the circumstances, anger at the lost of the beloved ones and anger at death that is unfair. However, this stage of anger must be accepted without trying to find meanings for rage because it is a natural reaction to the unfairness of death , life and loss. That is why sometimes, it may seem an unjustified rage or anger. Yet, it may isolate the patient from his friends and family at the time when he needs them the most. Besides, he will also experience a feeling of guilt, which is anger directed to the self that affirms that the patient felt, loved and lost (Kubler ross and Kessler 29).

3.7 The stage of Anger in *The Black Cat*

3.7.1 Summary

The story is about the narrator who narrates his story, flashing back to the past and talks about his tragedy. He was a good kind man fond of animals who lives with his wife and his pets. Nonetheless, he had one favourite pet which is a black cat named Pluto.

The narrator was an alcoholic which made him sick and angry. He also became violent towards his beloved cat and wife. One gloomy night, the narrator was drunk and thought that Pluto was avoiding him and his presence. The narrator got angry that he caught off one of the cat's eyes and later hanged Pluto from a tree.

The night Pluto died, the house burned down into ashes and the next day, the narrator went to see what the fire left, he saw an image on the last standing wall. The image was of a black cat and a white splash on the chest. This image made the narrator think of searching for another one.

Eventually, he found a one eyed black cat and took him home. However, he did not like it as Poe mentioned:

I continued my caresses, and, when I prepared to go home, the animal evinced a disposition to accompany me. I permitted it to do so; occasionally stooping and patting

it as I proceeded. When it reached the house it domesticated itself at once, and became immediately a great favorite with my wife. For my own part, I soon found a dislike to it arising within me (87).

The death of Pluto made him feel guilty, in addition to alcoholism and the illness which did not allow him to love the new one. One day, the narrator and his wife went to the cellar of the building and when they went down the stairs, the cat passed through them which bothered the narrator and tried to kill the new cat with an ax. But, his wife stopped him so, he killed her instead.

The narrator wall up the body of his wife in a wall and felt comfortable, especially when the new cat vanished. Days after the death of the wife, the police came for investigation inside the house, they heard a strange howl coming from the wall and found both the corpse and the cat. Yet, the one eyed cat kept staring at the narrator until the end.

3.7.2 Analysis

The main subject of the story is alcoholism, which is an illness caused by continued drinking that led the narrator to be so sick. At the beginning, he was kind and fond of animals and pets, until his anger and rage became uncontrollable (Yunhadi 03).

I grew, day by day, more moody, more irritable, more regardless of the feelings of others, I suffered myself to use intemperate language to my wife. At length, I even offered her personal violence. My pets, of course, were made to feel the change in my disposition. I not only neglected, but ill-used them (Poe 84).

The life of the narrator started to change day after day because of alcohol until it became a fatal disease which led to catastrophes.

But my disease grew upon me-for what disease is like alcohol? One night, returning home, much intoxicated, from one of my haunts about town my original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body; and a more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured (ibid).

The catastrophe of the whole story is that the narrator kills not only the cat but his wife too. Nevertheless, the reason of that anger and rage was not just because of the illness of alcoholism but because the cat avoided the narrator as well as the wife that went against her husband.

Poe's unique relation of anger and death makes the reader understand that violence that is resulted from anger is related to death. In other words, the internal feeling which is caused by the avoidance of the cat and the wife who did not accept the narrator's demand which is the wish to kill the new cat both led to violence, this latter led to death. However, the narrator killed Pluto and his wife because his own demands and existence were threatened due to his illness of alcoholism.

In his story, *the Black Cat*, Poe expressed his feelings of being avoided and being unable to have what he wants because he is sick and going to die. So, he wanted the reader to understand that he is there, he is still alive and still exist. Yet, the anger resulted by this situation can lead to catastrophic actions. And, because he is obsessed with death, and he was sure that no matter how hard he tries to prove his existence, death will reach everyone at any rate and there is nothing that can stop this monster from coming.

What made the narrator kill his wife as well was in order to show us that once the patient is dying, he will certainly lose his beloved ones and become so alone. So, this makes it clear that even if the family and friends of the patient can hear him and feel that he is not dead yet, the situation will not remain as it is anyway.

The anger that is directed to the self is guilt, Poe showed this guilt in the Black Cat to make the reader understand that he felt and loved his cat and wife, and that he is sad about his loss and never wanted to be isolated from his beloved ones no matter how hard the situation can be.

Through the story, the narrator explains the way illness and anger can be related and the way they blind the patient. The choice of depicting the illness in alcoholism was because Poe was addicted to alcohol in real life, that is from one side. From the other side, the effect of alcoholism is so strong that it leads to violence and blinds the patient. However, anger, blinds the mind from seeing what is right and what is wrong.

In both cases, the patient does not know what to do because he is weak and unable to find a proper solution to death. So he can do is surrender to the illness and anger and let them control his mind. Yet, the consequences will not change at any rate.

Concerning the consequences of this emotion, in Poe's tales the thoughtlessness of a character overruled by anger commonly leads to ruthless deeds – to violence. Now violence caused by anger is frightful because of the fact which I have already stressed – the enraged individual does not think clearly, he is hot-headed, inconsiderate, and often uncontrollable in his actions (Tereza 24).

The most convenient specimen of a story of violence is *The Black Cat*. A very predictable choice, for this tale is recognized and remembered for its occupation with the theme of violence. It is one of the narratives which are introduced by the notion of death sentence: "to-morrow I die, and to-day I would unburthen my soul" (Poe 597); the reader is thus alerted that he is about to face some violent act for which the narrator was condemned" (Tereza 24).

The disease known in Poe's *the Black Cat* caused by the consumption of alcohol is a depiction of his fatal disease in real life Tuberculosis which killed most of his beloved ones, in addition to Poe's excessive consumption of alcohol, he was certain that death will soon reach him, which means that he felt like a terminally ill patient and he already lost many people in his life. Thus, grieving about both his death and his loss, and this requires entering and experiencing the stages of grief.

The Black Cat is a story that portrays the feelings experienced by Poe during the second stage, the main cause of the anger was the illness and the other reason is the avoidance resulted by seeing the narrator sick, which led to an aggressive and catastrophic deed.

The fury of a demon instantly possessed me. I knew myself no longer. My original soul seemed, at once, to take its flight from my body and more than fiendish malevolence, gin-nurtured thrilled every fibre of my frame. I took from my waistcoat-pocket a pen-knife, opened it, grasped the poor beast by throat, and deliberately cut one of its eyes from the socket! (Poe 84).

Edgar Allan Poe experienced the second stage of anger for a long period of time that is seen in the black cat. As the narrator killed Pluto, he felt guilty and sad until he decided to have another cat from him and his wife because all he used to think about is the cat, and at night, dreams of fear invaded his head. "evil thoughts became my sole intimates [. . .] The moodiness of my usual temper increased"

However, rage and anger emerged again from inside the narrator even after having a new similar cat to Pluto. "Once again, it is the cat which gradates the rage of its master and provokes the violent reaction: The cat followed me down the steep stairs, and, nearly throwing me headlong, exasperated me to madness. "

Probably, the reason behind experiencing the stage of anger twice by Edgar Allan Poe is because he went through more than one cycle of grief. The first cycle caused by the death of

his wife, and the second cycle was about his terminal illness. This is shown in the second outburst of rage in the short story which led not only to the death of his cat but he also killed his wife.

Uplifting an axe, and forgetting, in my wrath, the childish dread which had hitherto stayed my hand, I aimed a blow at the animal [. . .] But this blow was arrested by the hand of my wife. Goaded, by the interference, into a rage more than demonical, I withdrew my arm from her grasp and buried the axe in her brain (Poe 88).

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the Beginning of the healing process of Edgar Allan Poe and has showed the way Poe's mental illness manifests itself in his literary works. I have also analyzed the selected works of Edgar Allan Poe based on the first two stages of grief and demonstrated the way Poe did overcome denial and isolation as well as anger.

4 Chapter Three: Depression, Bargaining and Acceptance in Poe's works

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will be devoted to the last three stages along with the analysis of Poe's *The Raven* and *Ligeia* based on the stage of depression to understand the way depression is reflected in Poe's works. After that, I will analyse *The Conqueror Worm* based on the fourth stage which is bargaining. Finally I will analyse Poe's *A Dream within A Dream* and *For Annie* to show the way Poe reached and went through the last stage which is Acceptance.

4.2 The stage of Depression

According to Kubler Ross, after the loss of a beloved person, or when a person is terminally ill, he has to go through the third stage of grief which is depression. She divides this stage into two types.

The first type of depression is the *reactive depression*. During this stage the patient will talk, cry and share his feeling which means that it needs verbal interactions. It is then a tool used to pave the way into the state of Acceptance. However, in order to make this acceptance reachable and much easier to go through, the patient needs to express his sorrow because he is in the way and the process of losing every beloved person and face death all alone (Kubler Ross 93). This is on the one hand.

On the other hand, the second type is called the *preparatory depression*; it happens because of a past lost, although it takes also into account the impending losses. This type does not let the patient expresses too much of his feelings. Yet, he needs a mutually expressed feeling like a silent sitting and touching hands. During this stage the patient will just ask for prayers and no more discussions because if someone tries to cheer him up, his emotional preparation will be hindered rather than enhanced (ibid 92).

A person who wants to understand the patient's state of mind will find no difficulties in figuring out the cause of depression as he will realize that a kind of shame and guilt always accompanies the depressed patient (ibid).

Elizabeth Kubler Ross presents a case of 'Mr. H' who went through the third stage of depression. His case illustrates both the two above mentioned types of this stage as he expressed his guilt and shame as well. "Mr. H" was ready to separate himself from this world and this life because of the despair and sadness he felt; he was very sad that he accepted to struggle for life when he already prepared himself to die. Elizabeth Kubler Ross believes that this is the reason behind the greatest grief that patients go through. She puts this in words: "It is this discrepancy between the patient's wish and readiness and the expectation of those in his environment which causes the greatest grief and turmoil in our patients" (Kubler Ross 94).

In addition to that, during the interview, Mr. H. expressed his sense of hopelessness and guilt, his inability to take good care of himself as well as his family. Besides, he regretted all the negative events that happened in his life and he felt weaker day after day until he could not work or think positively anymore as he could not satisfy his wife's demands and thinking that his children's lack of achievements was his fault as well (ibid 112).

Eventually, he believed that he has always been a failure and he had to take all the blame by himself because he was the one who would live in sorrow and he has deserved it. All this happened during the process of grief that is caused by the loss of his daughter which revived the sadness and sorrow of his parents' death (ibid 113).

4.3 Depression in The Raven

4.3.1 Summary

The story took place in the narrator's house, in his chamber and at the middle of the night, while he was perusing an old book for the sake of easing and forgetting his sorrow because of the loss of his sister, Lenore. As the narrator lapsed between reading and falling asleep, he heard a sound tapping at the door of his bedroom. Nevertheless, he refused to open the door believing that it is a visitor who came to talk to him and he could not talk because of sadness and sorrow caused by the death of his beloved Lenore.

However, the sound bothered him so he decided to open the door while asking for forgiveness because he was asleep. When he opened the door, he saw nothing but darkness and silence in front of him and all he did was whispering the name of Lenore to himself and returns to his room. "But the silence was unbroken, and the darkness 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!" (Poe 911).

The sound came again from the window of his chamber but louder. Yet, the poor narrator believed that the sound was just the wind that was beating outside his window, he opened the window and realized that it was not the sound of the wind, it was a strange raven, went into the door and perched on a bust of Pallas.

The speaker was amused by the raven and asked for its name, the bird answered the narrator's question with one single word "Nevermore". At the beginning, he thought that the raven can say more, but he soon realized that the raven can only reply with "nevermore". Again, the narrator believed that the raven will disappear the next morning and leave the sad speaker. However, the raven did not agree and responds with the same word again.

The narrator thought that this raven learned this one word from a melancholy master. The lonely narrator smiled and sat in his room in front of the raven and tried to figure out the

matter with the bird and its word. Again, Lenore came to the narrator's mind and he felt sad because she will never sit on that chair again. Nonetheless, the speaker tried to overcome his depressed situation and guessed that the bird is a messenger from god sent to ease the pain of the lonely narrator. So, he asked the bird if he will see Lenore again. But, the raven answered only with "nevermore". "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" (913). The narrator got angry and shouted, demanding the raven to leave and let him alone with his sorrow.

The raven said his own word as an answer to the demand of leaving to make the narrator believe that this evil bird will never leave his soul and keep reminding him of his loss.

4.3.2 Analysis

The poem opens with sadness, grief, depression and loneliness at the same time and from the very beginning. the narrator is at his home all alone at night mourning and feeling so sad and lonely while he is reading for the sake of forgetting his sadness and guilt because he lost one of his beloved ones that is Lenore.

The narrator cannot control his mind any longer because of the grief, he is deeply depressed that everything reminds him of his lost Lenore. Poe writes :

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 (Poe 911).

Depression dominated his mind that he cannot stop imagining his beloved Lenore anymore, he is not living the present or the future, and his mind is stuck in grief and the past in his room.

The depressed man's way of thinking became negative and full of doubt. He is depressed that he could not even talk to people as he refused to open the door to the raven which the speaker believed that it was a visitor. The narrator wanted silence and looked for a way to ease the pain.

The depressed man could not help it but to ask the raven a negative question which expressed his feelings of despair. However, the raven answers with despair as well to make the narrator sink deeper in depression and negativity. This explains that the narrator was going through the third stage of depression that is full of negativity, sadness, guilt and despair.

The conversation which the narrator had with the raven only made him sink deeper in depression. Specially, after he desperately asked the raven about seeing his beloved Lenore again, and realized that he will be alone forever and have to deal with all that pain alone. In addition to this, after the narrator demanded the raven to leave because the bird was evil, the raven replies with his mysterious word to let the narrator acknowledge that he will live alone and forever and he will remember his guilt and shame every time he sees the raven. As Rebecca hope explained the way depression develops through the poem. As Rebecca Hope puts it forward:

Depression is a major topic of the poem. As the man sinks further into grief and negativity, he finds himself drowning in a disabling sea of depression. The bird's beak in his heart, its eyes demonically gleaming at him and its shadow enveloping him are symbolic of the depression that immobilizes him and makes him believe that he will feel that way forever. In this way, the poem suggests that grief and negativity can produce long-term depression in a person who has lost a loved one and is experiencing extreme loneliness (Hope).

4.4 Depression in *Ligeia*

4.4.1 Summary

The story begun with the unnamed narrator who said that he could not remember the moment and the place he met his beloved wife Ligeia. He could not even remember her last name or her past. Nevertheless, he remembered her appearance so precisely, her eyes, hair, skin, beauty, intelligence, language, and her wisdom.

The narrator lived happily with his wife for a period of time until Ligeia got so sick. She fought her illness but she could not survive. However, before she passed away, she asked her husband to read for her a poem that she wrote recently. The poem called "*The Conqueror Worm*"; it was about angels watching a play performed by mimes. Suddenly, a creature entered the theatre and feed on mimes. Ligeia told her husband that this was the natural tragedy of life. By the end of the poem, Ligeia prayed loudly about the unfairness of tragedy and life and passed away to leave the narrator in grief and sorrow.

The narrator moved to England and purchased an abbey after the death of his wife. He then married Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine but their marriage was loveless, which led the narrator become addicted to opium and daydreams of his lost wife as Poe mentioned in the story :

I had become a bounden slave in the trammels of opium, and my labors and my orders had taken a coloring from my dreams. But these absurdities must not pause to detail. Let me speak only of that one chamber, ever accursed, whither in a moment of mental alienation, I led from the altar as my bride—as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia—the fair-haired and blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion, of Tremaine (Poe 130).

Two months after marriage, Rowena got ill as well, and she was about to die. The narrator gave his new wife a goblet of wine to ease her pain and fear, under the effect of

opium, the narrator saw a red liquid falling into the goblet but not wine. Three days after, Rowena died and the narrator was beside her dead body but all he thought about was his first wife Ligeia.

The narrator heard a moan which came from his second wife, and he noticed that her face turned to red again and then it vanished again and got colder. This process happened many times until she revived enough to stand up and take a few steps. Nonetheless, she seemed taller and her hair turned to black, the narrator took off the funeral shroud to realize that Ligeia came back to life.

4.4.2 Analysis

In the story, the narrator suffered of deep depression after the loss of his wife Ligeia whom was for the narrator everything that is positive. So, after her death, everything became negative. In addition to the fact that he became a prisoner of the past, all Ligeia's memories were present in Poe's mind and can never be detached anymore even if he marries another woman.

The narrator loved only one woman while he detested Rowena; this is obviously the effect of depression which has effectively deprived the depressed man from the ability to love another woman. Besides, he could not detach Ligeia from his memory even when he is under daydreaming and consumption of opium, as Poe states :

I loathed her with a hatred belonging more to demon than to man. My memory flew back, (oh, with what intensity of regret!) to Ligeia, the beloved, the august, the beautiful, the entombed. I revelled in recollections of her purity, of her wisdom, of her lofty, her ethereal nature, of her passionate, her idolatrous love. Now, then, did my

spirit fully and freely burn with more than all the fires of her own. In the excitement of my opium dreams (131).

Because of the opium, the narrator drowned in a dream where Ligeia came back to life. This types of dreams are not strange the patient who experience the stages of grief as Kubler Ross and Kessler stated a similar case to that of Edgar Allan Poe, which is about a woman who lost her husband, as they put it in words:

After her husband died, a woman dreamed there was a knock on the door to tell her there had been a mistake at the hospital. Someone else had died; it was a terrible mistake and her husband was alive, recovering, and on his way home. In the next moment of her dream, her husband was stepping out of the front seat of an ambulance with sirens blaring as if to herald the enormity of the mistake made. He walked toward her looking healthy and whole (Kubler Ross and Kessler 58).

The guilt and shame that the narrator felt beside depression resulted due to experiencing many failures. For instance, he could do nothing but reading a poem while seen his beloved wife dying in front of him, he tried to save her but he could not. These failures make him feel hopeless, helpless and it is shameful that he is a failure.

As a result of the speaker's deep depression and sorrow, he can no longer feel the outside world; he could not even love his new wife, until he became addicted to opium and started daydreaming about Ligeia. Nevertheless, the narrator used to consume opium before the death of his first wife; he just became addicted after her death because of the depression.

The narrator in this story presents Edgar Allan Poe and the depression he went through because of the loss of his mother, stepmother, and his wife. This led him to be more addicted to alcohol. However his consummation of alcohol grows every time he sinks deeper in depression. Jarnagin explains:

Poe caught glimpses throughout his life of the motherly affection he so deeply craved, but that craving was never fully satisfied. The more mother-images he lost, the worse his depression became. Towards the end of his life, the loss of significant women pushed him to an unhealthy consumption of alcohol, which further aggravated his depression and, eventually, his mental instability. However, these unfortunate events positively inspired his writing (Jarnagin 15).

4.5 The Stage of Bargaining

After the wave of anger and depression, the terminally ill patient will enter the fourth stage of grief: it is bargaining for the sake of having whatever the patient wants. Searching desperately for ways to avoid and escape the painful events or delaying them. Thus, it creates a hazy kind of hope which makes the patient believe that the painful events are revisable and they can change.

Elizabeth Kubler Ross states that what the fourth stage is not well known because it does not take long periods of time. Nevertheless, it helps the patient to prepare himself for the sad facts and become able to face them. During this short period of time the patient will try to ask god nicely since he was already angry but things did not change. So, it would be more favourable if the patient asks to postpone the inevitable events in a kind way. Dr Elizabeth gave us an example to show us that we are familiar with this way of asking. A child first demands, but when the parents refuse the demand, he tries to be good and asks for it nicely as a favour, there will be a chance then to accept their bargain and the child will have what was denied before (88). DR kubler ross writes:

The terminally ill patient uses the same manoeuvres. He knows, from past experiences, that there is a slim chance that he may be rewarded for good behaviour and be granted a wish for

special services. His wish is most always an extension of life, followed by the wish for a few days without pain or physical discomfort

(Kubler Ross 89).

The bargaining's main goal is to postpone the inevitable sad facts. Nonetheless, it needs a kind exchange, the promise that the terminally ill patient makes for the sake of getting whatever he wants, needs an offered prize in exchange so the patient will make sure that he will have his wishes.

The patient will also make a promise that he will never ask for more once he get his wish. Nevertheless, Kubler Ross affirms that the patient will never keep his promise. She argues about this, saying that "none of our patients have kept their promise"; in other words, they are like children who say, "I will never fight my sister again if you let me go". Needless to add, the little boy will fight his sister again (ibid 90).

If the patient is religious, he will ask for great things, like giving him time by God, and bringing his beloved ones back. In return, he will make a promise to God that he will be faithful until the last minute of his life, or he will stop a bad habit and spend more time doing good things. Kubler Ross comments:

Most bargains are made with God and are usually kept a secret or mentioned between the lines or in a chaplain's private office. In our individual interviews without an audience we have been impressed by the number of patients who promise "a life dedicated to God" or "a life in the service of the church" in exchange for some additional time. Many of our patients also promised to give parts of or their whole body "to science" (if the doctors use their knowledge of science to extend their life) (90).

However, these promises can be resulted because of guilt, the patient may feel guilty for not being good enough, for wasting time doing bad habits or even for not even feeling guilty for not going to church regularly.

Usually, bargaining can never find that permanent solution that will fix the problem once and forever. During the loss of a beloved person, bargaining helps to step out of danger of the outcome toward the final stage that is known as acceptance. Yet, the truth behind it is that it is away to dodge the painful event for while, but death is inevitable anyway. All in all, when the sad fact reaches the patient next time he will be satisfied and psychologically prepared to accept it.

4.6 Bargaining in The Conqueror Worm

4.6.1 Summary

The poem starts with the angels who are the guardians of men sitting in their places as spectators to watch the play of theatre which the narrator describes it as the play of hope and fears. However, the angels were crying sadly for the tragedy that happened in the play and the cruel ending that happened to the actors.

The characters of the play were mimes flying in form of gods and controlled by invisible forces, they were trying to chase formless things but they seemed to try desperately and hopelessly. Nonetheless, they still could not help it but to try because they had nothing else to do.

The actors continued their plot repeatedly, but they always return to the same scene trying to catch the formless thing. As the narrator explained, this plot brought only sins, horror, and madness because neither man with their divine power nor angels could change the plot and free the mimes. While the actors were chasing the intangible thing, the great conqueror worm appears then to eat and kill all the mimes and makes an end to their misery once and forever.

4.6.2 Analysis

In the poem, man is trying to reach the formless thing before the conqueror warm reaches him and makes an end to his misery by killing him. So, probably the intangible thing is Time. Here, Poe seems trying to beg for any divine forces from angels or from gods in order to give mankind Time to heal from its wretchedness. By pretending to be godlike in the play, man thought he can somehow prolong his life and postpone his death with some divine forces and by having angels as guardians, he thought that they may protect him.

As Dr Elizabeth and David Kessler stated in their book *On Grief and Grieving* , the terminally ill patient sees and talks about angels as divine power or as gaurdians during the stages of grief. As they gave an example of the forty years old woman lying in bed and telling her husband that she saw angels, as Kubler Ross and Kessler comment:

“Oh, they were so beautiful,” she said, with sparkling eyes. She looked at her husband, who did not look reassured by her vision. “ Don’t worry,” she said, “ they’ll be there for you when the time comes. They will comfort you.” The chaplain ran into her physician outside the room and asked how she was doing medically. Her physician discussed her limited options but said there was an experimental treatment that might give her some additional time. When the doctor asked the chaplain how his visit went, the man replied, “She saw angels” (Kubler Ross and Kessler 55).

As I mentioned before, bargaining often based on religion or spirituality when the patient is religious or spiritual and Kubler Ross and Kessler explained the case of the woman and her husband and added:

The doctor looked down. “That’s never a good sign,” he told the chaplain. “Yes,” the chaplain said, “not medically. But spiritually, it’s perfect.” When the woman died, those words “They will comfort you” were like a cushion for her husband’s grief. He

confided in a close friend, “I can’t describe it and I don’t want people to think I am crazy, but I can feel it. The moment she died, I knew she was all right, and I have felt watched over ever since that moment” (ibid 55).

The actors’ struggle was meaningless even if they asked god or angels for time, the only solution for their misery is death. Even if man searched for time, not even god or angels can provide this formless thing for them because their end already destined. Due to man’s greed in the plot, he kept falling in madness and sins until the end of his life.

In Poe’s *Ligeia*, the narrator was asked to read the conqueror worm for his wife before she dies. However, when the narrator read the poem, Ligeia cried out and asked god if this tragedy can be avoided or if the worm can be conquered instead of her. This show that Poe was going through bargaining with god in order to change Ligeia’s faith, because she was not sinful. Yet, he knows that she will die at any rate. The narrator’s wish by the end was to bring Ligeia back and extend her life.

Nonetheless, the end of the poem makes it clear that death is certainly inevitable, and it is the only solution for man’s pain and sufferings. Also, death or the conqueror worm in the play is a hero since it seen as the one solution that can end the man’s grief and despair. Nevertheless, for Poe, death is still tragic and sorrowful as it is seen when the angles cry at the sight of the whole play. “And the angels, all pallid and wan, / Uprising, unveiling, affirm / That the play is the tragedy, “Man, / And its hero the Conqueror Worm” (Poe 943).

4.7 The Last Stage of Acceptance

Kubler Ross believes that when a patient has enough time, fighting against his own illness, and goes through the four above mentioned stages, he will mourn his losses and the end of his beloved ones as well as his life and health. He will also stop striking back and

resisting because he becomes weak and he cannot handle both his mental and physical states (Kubler Ross 115).

The patient in this stage is not considering himself happy. Yet, the pain will no longer exist and he enters the void of feelings, which means that the struggle will be over and he will get a rest before the end of his fight for survival. All the patients desire during this stage is being alone and not being bothered by other problems from the outside world because now they find a kind of acceptance and peace at the end of the tunnel (ibid 116).

The patient will only think about death as a rest that will separate him from pain in his body as well as the world; that is why he will prepare himself to be detached by limiting people to whom he used to talk and the communication with them will become silent and less verbal. This situation suits him the most because it makes him able to face death alone and accept it.

Only few strong patients who reach this stage of acceptance and struggle enough to keep that glimpse of hope until the very end. Once they decide that they cannot fight any longer, the fight will come to an end and they will be able to accept peace and dignity. The closed people to the patient may consider this giving up a rejection of the family (117). This is one of the reasons behind the patient's regrets and wishes to spend more time with his family and friends. Nonetheless, hope doesn't exist anymore and all what can the terminally ill patient do is to remember his good memories with them so he can satisfy his desires.

Elizabeth Kubler Ross mentions one of her patient whom was going through the last stage of grief. Mrs. W. talked about her family, children and husband whom she wished that he will continue by himself. She also talked about her past and the good and meaningful times she had like her marriage. She asked to be alone and die in peace. She wanted less involvement specially from her husband because he did not want to accept her choice to die

alone and in peace that is why she wished to detach herself from her husband and the world (Kubler Ross 119).

The surgeons suggested that another surgical procedure may give her extra time and prolong her life. The husband could not understand that she wants to die in peace but he asked the doctors to do whatever it takes to “ turn the clock back ”. Once they informed Mrs. W., she weakened and rejected the operation. It was hard for her to reject such life prolonging operation and get ready to leave her husband and children. It was also hard to let that glimpse of hope vanishes and accept the finality of that great enemy which is death without fighting once more (ibid 119).As Kubler Ross states about Mrs. W. :

She was clearly delusional, had visual hallucinations and paranoid ideas. She looked frightened and bewildered and made no sense in her communications to the staff. Yet, in all this psychotic behaviour, there was a degree of awareness and logic that remained impressive (ibid 120).

4.8 Acceptance in A Dream within A Dream and For Annie

4.8.1 summary

The short poem opened with narrator kissing an unnamed beloved lady, saying his last goodbye. The narrator then agreed with what his beloved person told him about the past days that were a dream and letting go everything because that glimpse of hope vanished.

In the second and the last stanza, the protagonist standing in an ocean shore and crying. He was holdin in one of his hands some sand but it kept falling through his fingers. However, he asked god in a sorrowful way whether he can keep one grain of sand and save it in his hand or he cannot.

4.8.2 Analysis

The first stanza of the poem shows that the narrator is aware of the finality and the mortality of his time and love, he is parting away from the world as well as his lover. The narrator is sad because he will let go everything not just love and time, but also hope, which makes him sad and desperate. The dream which the narrator mentions in the first stanza is about the days that he spent with his beloved person, those days for him were good time and memory and he felt like they passed so fast specially that he realizes that he will not be able to spend more days like those of the past so they seemed like a dream rather than reality.

The narrator believes that since hope vanished, finality of time is certain and there nothing to do but to question himself about reality and dream. It was is for him to believe that it is time for farewell and for letting everything behind which includes the loss of his lover as well as time. All this looks like a dream for him.

The narrator also uses dreams as a way to accept the fact that everything is gone and nothing seems real anymore. When the speaker thinks this way, it means that even if time, love and life will come to an end, it would seem meaningless because he is living a dream at the first place.

In the second stanza, the narrator stands on the shore of the ocean questioning himself about hope and despair as well as the possibility of change. However, the shore is the limit between life and death which means that death is not just near but it is in front of him.

The falling sand in the second stanza and the desperate question of the narrator makes it clear that time has passed and the end is so near. The narrator is asking god desperately to save one single grain of the golden sand or saving some time for life. Nevertheless, time waits for no creature and this reminds us of the hour glass that can never stop. "O God! can I not grasp / Them with a tighter clasp? / O God! can I not save / One from the pitiless wave?" (Poe 950).

4.9 Acceptance in *for Annie*

4.9.1 Summary and analysis

The poem for Annie opened with the narrator greeting death happily and with open arms and thanking death for taking him because it will free him from the pain of life. Nevertheless, he did not want anyone to feel pitiful on him since everyone will experience death at any rate. The poor speaker could not move a single muscle, lying in his bed, believing that death is the only cure for his life.

This is exactly the way a terminally ill patient feels when he goes through the last stage of grief, accepting death with open arms and stops fighting. All he was thinking about was his beloved Annie a Also, the narrator is silent from the beginning of the poem until the very end, he could not talk or move even when he saw Annie

However, once Annie entered the room believing that the narrator already passed away, she started crying and looked sad. Yet, the narrator told her that she should be happy not sad because it is the end of his illness and life because death will free him. “And the fever called "Living", Is conquered at last .”

Although the narrator was dying and he totally accepted death, he could not leave his beloved Annie, he declared that his mind and heart revived again more than any other time. This explains the reason behind choosing to be alone by the speaker otherwise his death will not be final since he was attached to Annie.

Edgar Allan Poe probably wrote this poem for his lover, Annie L. Richmond whom, he is telling her not to be sad even if he is dying. Besides, The case of the narrator in this poem is

similar to the case of Mrs. W. who went through the stage of grief and expressed the same feelings which Poe expressed in this poem. Nevertheless, Poe wrote this poem before he got sick because he was suffering of thanatophobia and hypochondriac disorder before his terminal illness.

4.10 Conclusion

In this last chapter I have analyzed the rest of the selected works of Edgar Allan Poe and applied the three stages of grief on them. The chapter has also demonstrated the way Poe finally reached the stage of acceptance and became able to face death with no fear. Finally, this chapter has shown the way depression, bargaining and acceptance were portrayed in Poe's literary works.

5 General Conclusion

In this research, I have tried to demonstrate and to explain Poe's fear and obsession with death as well as his mental illness which is Thanatophobia or the extreme fear of death. In other words, I have made a diagnosis based on both Poe's works as well as his traumatic life and I consider that I have proved that Poe suffered of Thanatophobia. Besides, I have also

examined and portrayed this illness in Edgar Allan Poe's works as the second aim of this research, and the reason behind using gothic literature in order to portray the theme of death in his literary works. After the diagnosis, the last aim that I have set in this study is the analysis of some of Poe's poems and short stories as I have shown the process of healing through the stages of grief.

The aims of my work have been based on the problematic that I have risen in this work which is the main reason that led Edgar Allan Poe to write. The purposes behind Poe's writing were unclear and ambiguous which have led me to investigate through analysing *The Cask of Amontillado (1846)*, *The Black Cat (1843)*, *Ligeia (1838)*, *The Fall of The House of Usher(1839)*, *The Masque of The Red Death(1842)* and *The Oval Portrait(1842)*, *For Annie(1849)*, *The Conqueror Worm(1843)*, *The Raven(1845)*, and *A Dream within a Dream(1849)* based on the three theories of Edward John Mostyn Bowlby's theory of Attachment and Loss, Sigmund Schlomo Freud's theory of Mourning and Melancholia and Elizabeth Kubler Ross's theory of the five stage of grief.

Also, in my research, I have suggested a hypothesis for my problematic. Along these pages, I have stated that Edgar Allan Poe's main purpose behind writing and using literature was not just for expressing his feeling and idea as it was not for entertaining the reader. In fact, I have suggested that he was writing in order to curate himself from Thanatophobia.

For the sake of reaching the aims and the result of my study, I have followed some procedures through the three chapters that i have written.

The first chapter of this research has provided a deep biography of Edgar Allan Poe in which I have stated the traumatic events and experiences in his life and its relationship with his illness. I have also explained and demonstrated Poe's gothic style and his techniques and shown the depiction of his tragic experiences in his literary works. In addition to that, this

chapter has included both Sigmund Freud's theory of Mourning and Melancholia as well as John Bowlby's theory of Attachment and Loss, and i have used both as a method to diagnose Poe's mental state through his life and literary works and proved that Edgar Allan Poe was suffering of Thanatophobia.

The second chapter of this study has presented the beginning of the process of healing, based on the Kübler Ross model or the five stages of grief. I have introduced and explained the two first stages of the Kübler Ross model. Then I have selected some of Poe's works and analysed them based on these stages. To put it differently, I have shown the way Poe overcame the stage of denial as well as the stage of anger through his short stories and poem.

Finally, the last chapter has focused on the last three stages of grief and has demonstrated the way Edgar Allan Poe reached the last stage of acceptance. Besides, in this last chapter, i have analysed the rest of the selected works and explained the way the stages of depression, bargaining and acceptance were portrayed in Poe's works. by the end of the chapter, i Have shown the way Poe reached the last stage of acceptance using literature and overcame his fear of death.

After the analysis of the selected works, this study has demonstrated that Edgar Allan Poe wrote in order to curate his mental illness and reached the stage of acceptance which led him to overcome his fear of death and finally accepted and greeted death with open arms. In other words, the result of this research has proved and showed that Edgar Allan Poe's main purpose for writing was to curate himself from Thanatophobia.

Because of the lack of reliable sources, it was not easy to analyse Poe's works from another point of view, especially after realizing that this is the first research that has focused on Edgar Allan Poe's way of health. Besides, this is the first research that has used the Kübler

Ross Model on the works of Edgar Allan Poe which means that I could not find many reliable and academically-valid references.

Nevertheless, I hope that my study added an important contribution to Edgar Allan Poe's life and literature as well as literature in general. Because this research supports the idea that specific kinds of mental illness can be healed through literature. That is why I suggest that more studies must be devoted for this problematic.

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