

**1847**

**ULALUME**

**Edgar Allan Poe**

**Poe, Edgar Allan (1809-49) - American poet, short-story writer, and critic who is best known for his tales of ratiocination, his fantastical horror stories, and his genre-founding detective stories. Poe, whose cloudy personal life is a virtual legend, considered himself primarily a poet. Ulalume (1847) - One of Poe's poems. A sorrowful, musical piece written at the request of an elocutionist. Opening lines: The skies they were ashen and sober; / The leaves they were crisped and sere- ... \**

## Ulalume

The skies they were ashen and sober;  
 The leaves they were crisped and sere  
 The leaves they were withering and sere;  
 It was night in the lonesome October  
 Of my most immemorial year;  
 It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,  
 In the misty mid region of Weir  
 It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,  
 In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic,  
 Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul  
 Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.  
 There were days when my heart was volcanic  
 As the scoriac rivers that roll  
 As the lavas that restlessly roll  
 Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek  
 In the ultimate climes of the pole  
 That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek

In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,  
 But our thoughts they were palsied and sere  
 Our memories were treacherous and sere  
 For we knew not the month was October,  
 And we marked not the night of the year  
 (Ah, night of all nights in the year!)  
 We noted not the dim lake of Auber  
 (Though once we had journeyed down here),  
 Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber,  
 Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent,  
 And star-dials pointed to morn  
 As the star-dials hinted of morn  
 At the end of our path a liquescent  
 And nebulous lustre was born,  
 Out of which a miraculous crescent  
 Arose with a duplicate horn  
 Astarte's bediamonded crescent

Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said- "She is warmer than Dian:  
 She rolls through an ether of sighs  
 She revels in a region of sighs:  
 She has seen that the tears are not dry on  
 These cheeks, where the worm never dies,  
 And has come past the stars of the Lion,  
 To point us the path to the skies  
 To the Lethean peace of the skies  
 Come up, in despite of the Lion,  
 To shine on us with her bright eyes  
 Come up through the lair of the Lion,  
 With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger, Said-  
 "Sadly this star I mistrust  
 Her pallor I strangely mistrust:  
 Oh, hasten!- oh, let us not linger!  
 Oh, fly!- let us fly!- for we must."  
 In terror she spoke, letting sink her  
 Wings until they trailed in the dust  
 In agony sobbed, letting sink her  
 Plumes till they trailed in the dust  
 Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied- "This is nothing but dreaming:  
 Let us on by this tremulous light!  
 Let us bathe in this crystalline light!  
 Its Sybilic splendor is beaming  
 With Hope and in Beauty to-night:  
 See!- it flickers up the sky through the night!  
 Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,  
 And be sure it will lead us aright  
 We safely may trust to a gleaming  
 That cannot but guide us aright,  
 Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,  
 And tempted her out of her gloom  
 And conquered her scruples and gloom;  
 And we passed to the end of the vista,  
 But were stopped by the door of a tomb  
 By the door of a legended tomb;

And I said- "What is written, sweet sister,  
On the door of this legended tomb?"  
She replied- "Ulalume- Ulalume'  
Tis the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"  
Then my heart it grew ashen and sober  
As the leaves that were crisped and sere  
As the leaves that were withering and sere  
And I cried- "It was surely October  
On this very night of last year  
That I journeyed- I journeyed down here  
That I brought a dread burden down here  
On this night of all nights in the year,  
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?  
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber  
This misty mid region of Weir  
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,  
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

**THE END**