

I sweat. I shake. Thump. Thump. They smile and chat. They do not hear.

Oh, oh. This is so bad. Thump. Thump. I cannot stand up. Thump. Thump. How can this be? He is dead, dead, dead.

They do not hear. They drink tea. Thump. Thump. Thump.

I cry. My head is in my hands. They see me cry. They look and look. They ask me things. I cry and cry.

I did it! I killed him! Tear up the floor! He is there! He is there! His heart beats! He will not let me rest!

Take me. I must leave this place!

The police take me away.

The End

Words to Watch

ugly angry creep shhhhhh evil

Talk About the Story

1. What does the writer tell you about himself?
2. Why does the writer want to kill the old man?
3. Who sent the police to the man's house?
4. Does the policeman hear the man's heart beat?
5. Why does the writer confess?

"He has that pale evil eye. It makes me angry."



The Tell Tale Heart

By Edgar Allan Poe

Retold by Carol Creswell



A Big Read Project 2009

Wood Library Adult Services in Partnership with
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Story Editors: Kathi Nacca and Barbara Henry

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I will share my story with you. They say I am nuts. They are wrong. I hear well. I see well. I think well. Too well. I think much, much too well.

I do not know how this idea came to me. It is hard, now, to think. A rich old man is my friend. I love the old man. He is kind to me. I do not want his gold. He does not say bad things to me.

Maybe it is that cold blue eye he has. It is ugly. He looks at me a lot. He smiles. He talks. But he has that pale evil eye. It makes me feel angry.

I make up my mind to kill the old man. I am very smart. I am not nuts. I make a careful plan. I go slowly. I take my time. I make a plot. I smile a lot. I am kind to him. He does not suspect a thing.

I go to his room late at night. I open his door. I go slowly. I am quiet.

I tell myself, "Shhhhhh." Creep. Creep. Creep. I take a dim light. It shines on his face. The blue eye is closed. I leave.

The sun shines the next day. I come to see him. We joke. We sip tea.

The next night I come. The evil eye is closed.

I come to him in the day time. We talk.

I come again at night. His eye is closed. I see him every day.

I come to his room every night. I do not hate the old man. I hate his eye. His eye is bad.

I make a plan. You see that I am not nuts. I am careful. I stand in his room on the 8th night. I stand for a long time. It is dark. I hear his heart beat. It is loud. It thumps. It thumps slowly.

I shine the light. The thin light shines on him. He sits up. His eye is open. It is so ugly. He is very scared. I yell. I jump at him.

He screams. His heart beats are loud. He has a heart attack. He falls back. I put a pad over his mouth. I hold it there. I hold it and hold it.

He is dead. Oh my. I must hide him. I am quick. I will chop him up. I will hide him under the floor. No one will know.

I work all night. It is done. The room is clean.

Someone who lives next door calls the police. They come to the house. They want to know why someone yelled.

I tell them that I yelled. I had a bad dream.

I tell them that the old man is out of town. I bring a chair for them. They sit. We chat. They sit right over the floor boards where I hid the old man. I smile. I pour tea. They do not think I am bad.

I hear a sound. I hear a thump. It gets louder. I hear thump, thump. It is a heart beat. It is the old man's heart!