

The Eerie bird

One of the most popular genres in literature is the genre of horror. In different ages, people have read thrilling fairy tales, short stories, poems and novels which have some features of horror stories. Horror stories provoke response from the reader either emotional or psychological and consequently the reader reacts with fear. Thus, the whole horror genre is based on people's fear of the mysterious and their anxieties.

Undoubtedly, the greatest American writer who liked to scare his readers was Edgar Allan Poe. In his every poem, he tried to create a plot which would not allow the reader to be bored. His poems were mainly about the death with its physical signs, live burying, and mourning. Edgar Allan Poe wrote a large number of poems, but one of his most popular ones was "The Raven" published in 1845.

There are different techniques to make the reader interested – using unreal figures (for example, ghosts) or more real situations and figures (for example, killers). Edgar Allan Poe used an unreal figure in the "The Raven" – almost a phantom, a big and black raven and its frightful repeated phrase "Nevermore!" can scare some sensitive readers. For readers in the 19th century, this character would look mysterious, but for modern people who are not so superstitious this poem would probably be not so frightful. People like more real situations with killers, massacre, many victims and a sensational end. I believe that the only group of people who will respond emotionally to "The Raven" is children, who are naive and unsuspecting yet. However, it is worth to describe Poe's poem "The Raven" in more detail, because on its basis the modern horror genre was created.

The most important part of any horror story is characters the writer creates. In "The Raven", there are two main characters: the narrator, a young man who lost his love Lenore, and the raven, who made the narrator at first curious, but later angry and desperate when he understood at last that he could not return his love. Meanwhile, the raven is a great symbol

because it is usually associated with the death and disaster, and also prophetic powers. Thus, through this character, Poe personified the sorrow caused by loneliness and separation.

In the poem, the Raven constantly repeats the phrase “Nevermore”. It would be frightening to hear a raven saying this word. So the phrase also created the ghostly mood in the poem:

“Then upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking “Nevermore”.

In addition, the poem is set in a dark December night in a gloomy room. It creates a special mood in the poem, and the reader starts immediately to sympathize with the main character and understand his mourning:

“Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor...
...From my books surcease of sorrow - sorrow for the lost Lenore
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore
Nameless here for evermore.”

In conclusion, “The Raven” is a grand masterpiece of the horror genre. It has an interesting plot, weird main characters and symbols. Every line of the poem should keep the reader tense and anxious about what will happen next. However, due to the development of new genres, such as fantasy or fiction, gothic horror stories are not as popular as they used to be. The reader likes it more when the real and unreal are mixed in one story. Edgar Allan Poe believed that a piece of literature should be read in one sitting and thus should not be long. Thanks to him, new horror stories became much more thought-out and thrilling.

Works Cited

Edgar Allan Poe. The Raven. The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Seventh Edition. W. W. Norton & Company. 2010