Several years ago, in the small swamp town of Illgard, a wealthy bookdealer named Ed lived in a stately manor with his pregnant wife Lenore. Unfortunately, when disease and fever swept through the swamp, Lenore became sick and lost the child. Unable to cope with the grief, she poisoned herself shortly thereafter. In his own despair and madness, Ed turned to dark magics in a desperate attempt to bring his wife back to life. Now, supernatural forces have taken hold of the manor. The persistent sounds of knocking throughout the house, a room filled with the sound of a heartbeat, and other bizarre oddities will have players on the edge of their seats as they attempt to clear the house of this evil presence. Mystery and horror await in this haunted mansion, which is filled with visuals and story elements that pay homage to the work of American author and poet Edgar Allan Poe.

Many thanks to the Reddit community for their eager support of this adventure!

Photo credit: Dieter Schaefer
The House of Poe

The Set-Up

This adventure can be used in any setting, although for the purposes of this module the town used will be the fictional town of Illgard. Illgard is a swampy, desolate town, with a green, mossy hue to most of the buildings, built on large wooden tiers so that the city itself doesn’t sink into the swamp. Many in the town are superstitious and as such see omens and ill signs everywhere they turn.

On the edge of town close to the waters edge, there is a well known house that for years has been owned by various wealthy, influential families. The current owner, a man named Ed, has become a recluse, having not been seen since his wife died several years ago. Many believe that he no longer lives in the house, or that he committed suicide shortly after his wife’s death.

Recently, those passing by the house have seen and heard disturbing things. A man matching Ed’s description was seen near the cemetery late at night, digging one of the graves. Screams, moaning, and a sudden booming of thunder that caused the house to develop a large crack through most of the foundation. When several guards investigated, what they saw apparently frightened them so much that they ordered the house be boarded up and chained, as apparently “evil magics” were afoot.

The players will go in and investigate the house, discovering the story of what happened to Ed, his eventually shift into necromancy, and eventually confront him and his undead bride Lenore.

The true joy of this adventure is that this is no ordinary house. Littered throughout the house are references to the works of Edgar Allan Poe, with “Ed” himself serving as the deranged author-turned-necromancer.

It’s recommended that the players be kept in the dark about this fact, as the suspense and mystery are subverted somewhat if the players are in on the joke. The reveal at the end should have players simultaneously frustrated and joyous about the true nature of the house they just went through.

Arriving in Illgard

The players will come upon the swampy town, humid and hot with that horrible acrid stench filling their senses and causing them to gag slightly, like rotting garbage left out in the hot sun. It feels like rain is coming at any moment, waiting to break.

If they seek an Inn or Tavern, The Green Anchor is their most immediate and comfortable option, a bar that serves as a respite for the various dockhands and swamper that make up the working class of this town.

Plot Hooks

There are a variety of ways to have adventurers go investigate the house. Mentioned here are just a few of the methods one can use to direct the players towards the adventure;

Plot Hooks

- Guards at a nearby table appear shaken and scared by something, shakily drinking their ale. They will speak of having checked out the house after a loud noise was heard inside the home, and inside discovered a tattered corpse walking towards them. They ordered the house be boarded and chained, as the superstitious town wants nothing to do with evil magics.
- A group of swampers swears that they saw the owner of the house digging something up at a nearby cemetery a few weeks prior. The whole town is afraid of the house and think it’s haunted.
- The mayor of the town, hearing that a few heroes of some local reknown are in town, have requested an audience with the the party to find the missing servants who were in Ed’s employ.
- At the cemetery, one of the priests at the nearby temple will report seeing Ed digging up two unmarked graves, and suspects something terrible is going on in the house.
- A wealthy businessman has gone missing, last seen near Ed’s house.

Whatever method you use to draw the players to the house, the players will find themselves heading East. There, against the edge of the swamp lies a tall, imposing manor that stands silhouetted against dark, billowing storm clouds.

Approaching the House

As the group begins walking towards the house, the gradual drip, drip of rainfall slowly descends, before cascading into a torrential downpour of rain. Booming thunder and lightning cascade throughout the swampy marsh.

Surrounded by a rusting iron fence is the house in question. Once a pristine manor, it has since fallen into disrepair, as a huge crack through the roof has spread across the entire house, seemingly splitting it in two (The Fall of the House of Usher.)

As they approach the gate, a black cat with a small white patch on its chest will hiss and swipe at the players (use the stats of a Cat, MM, pg. 320) before running away. A player who makes a quick Perception Check (DC 15) will see that it’s missing an eye (The Black Cat)

The gate will be locked with a rusty padlock, but is easily pickable (DC 10.) Alternatively the gate can be climbed with a DC 12 Athletics Check.

Checking the perimeter of the house, the entire first floor has been boarded up and wrapped over with chains, making entry nigh impossible. The second floor back window, however, has a large window that is not boarded up or chained.
One can attempt to climb the pillars leading up to it (DC 15 Athletics Check), attempt flight, or simply not go that way at all and attempt to pull off/damage the boarded up and chained windows on the ground floor. (AC 2, 30 HP.)

A map of the house can be found in Appendix A.

**How to run the House**

The key to making this a memorable adventure for your players is to drum up the horror aspect of this adventure. Draw on real-world lighting and atmosphere to get players in the mood, with music that will have your players on edge. Have the visuals stand out, creating an atmosphere of tension and suspense.

In addition, it’s recommended that the mention of the Poe references are made subtle. Part of the players enjoyment is discovering that the house contained numerous references, and prolonging that discovery tends to increase the enjoyment. If you feel like the players are starting to catch on to what the house is too soon, feel free to modify or remove elements as you see fit.

Alternatively, you can choose to instead make the references abundantly clear. It is entirely the DM’s decision.

**Exploring the House of Poe**

1. **The Study**

Assuming the players enter through the window, they will crawl through dusty purple curtains and over an antique writing desk to get into the room proper. Otherwise, they will enter from the second floor hallway.

This room once contained a neat, orderly collection of books and documents, neatly stowed away on shelves that line the entire room. Now, most of the books and papers have been scattered across the room, a broken chair smashed against a wall and the glass that lined the cabinet doors have all been smashed or broken.

A bust of a goddess is perched above the doorway; a DC 13 Religion Check reveals it as a bust of the Raven Queen, Goddess of Death and Winter who guides the souls of the dead to their final resting place.

On the Western wall is an oil painting of a couple posed in regal-looking armchairs. The man, handsome with wild black hair and a thin mustache over his smiling lips. His hand rests on the shoulder of a beautiful woman with long, dark hair, pale skin and ruby red lips. The painting has been torn, slashed from top to bottom. A plaque below the painting reads "E & L."

A DC 15 Investigation Check of the room will reveal that most of these books and papers are either historical in nature or business related. Two items of interest, however, are a scrap of paper with a random sequence of numbers and a Scroll of Dimension Door (4th Level).

As the players spend a little time in this room, make sure that at some point they hear the sound of creaking coming from the hallway, as if someone is walking. The sound will go closer, until eventually it stops outside the room. A moment will pass before a knock knock knock on the door breaks the silence. Opening the door will reveal an empty hallway.

As most people will probably guess by now, this room represents The Raven.

2. **The Second-Floor Hallway**

As the players step out of this room (or whatever room they start in), they will begin to hear the sounds of knocking on various doors at random; use this at your discretion, and as a way to possibly lead players to specific rooms.

In the hallway, it will be mostly dusty and empty, with smashed end tables and chairs filling most of the space. Staircases leading to the ground floor can be found near the Maid’s Quarters or by the Parlor Room.

Lining the walls are various oil paintings, similar in style to the one in the Study. They are all very talented, but possess an eerie, otherworldly quality to them. Paintings include a depiction of an enormous whirlpool in the middle of an ocean, with a sailing vessel trapped in the current (A Descent into the Maelstrom); a large, grassy field where the grass transitions from a beautiful, verdant green, to a dry, crisp yellow, and then to a dead, ashy black (Eleonora); and finally a small island on a sea of calm, dark water, inhabited by some sort of fairy like creatures that are in the middle of a ritual-like dance (The Island of the Fay).

There is nothing in the hallway of value beyond the paintings, which can be sold for 10gp each. The floorboards will creak as if someone is walking, but no being is present.

3. **The Master Bedroom**

A once pristine and cozy space, this room has been defiled. Sheets have been slashed and torn, and a pool of dried blood stains both the walls and the sheets themselves. Feathers from the pillows and linens litter the room. Off to the right is a door that connects to a bathroom, and in one of the corners lies a large iron safe.

As soon as players enter this room, they will become acutely aware of their own heartbeat. After a moment, they will realize that it is not their own heartbeat they hear, but some outside entity, the sound becoming louder and more oppressive. Have each player that enters the room make a DC 14 Wisdom Save or be deafened by the noise for one hour, unable to hear anything but their own heartbeat. (The Tell-Tale Heart)

Players looking around the room can find a hidden cache under one of the floorboards with a DC 12 Investigation check. The moment they discover this cache, the heartbeat noise will cease, although anyone who failed their Wisdom Save will still be deafened.

Inside the cache is a small locked iron box, but can easily be picked open with a DC 10 Sleight of Hand check. Inside is a small leatherbound journal, belonging to "Ed". (Read the note titled "The Journal" for more information.)

The safe in the room is heavily secured, requiring both a combination and a special key in order to open. The combination can be found in the Study, while the key can be found on Ed. Inside is 400gp, 208sp and 981cp. Also inside are several love letters exchanged between Ed and Lenore from when they first started seeing one another, detailing how, due to Lenore’s father’s hatred of Ed, she kept his love letters inside an envelope that she disguised to look like they had been sent from an old friend (The Purloined Letter.)
Also included in the letters is a charcoal sketch of Ed drawn by Lenore. From the drawing and the letters, it becomes clear that the two had a deep affection and one love for one another.

**THE JOURNAL**

This journal belonged to the head of the house, a wealthy book dealer named Ed. The earliest entry dates to just after his wedding to his "darling wife, Lenore," wherein he details having bought the house with the intent of raising a family there.

When Lenore became pregnant, the two were overjoyed. They were to have a daughter, named Annabel (Annabel Lee). Their joy was shortlived, however, for while Ed was away on business, Lenore caught "Swamp Fever," a debilitating illness that is common in Illgard. While Lenore survived the Swamp Fever, the illness caused her to miscarry the baby. Lenore, in grief and despair, found herself unable to carry on, and poisoned herself. Ed returned only to find her corpse. In his sorrow and rage, he blamed his daughter for his wife's death, cursing that he had ever conceived such a "perversion" (Imp of the Perverse).

His journal entries thereafter become more erratic and less frequent. At some point, he settles on a course of action to bring back his wife from the dead. He makes mention of going to the "College of the Ligeia" (Ligeia) to learn the mystic arts. Unable to find a concrete answer, he secluded himself away in the house, hoping one of the books he had collected over the years contained an answer.

At some point he eventually found such a tome. At this point the writing has become barely legible and mostly insane gibberish, making references to a "dark sacrifice". The last clear entry mentions a ritual where he would "sacrifice the Imp," and with that he would have his Lenore once again.

**4. Master Bathroom**

Connected to the Master Bedroom is, of course, the master bathroom. The room contains a white marble bathtub with water taps enchanted to make the water hot or cold depending on the tap.

There is a mirror in the bathroom near a sink basin. If a player stares into the mirror, they need to make a DC 13 Wisdom Saving Throw or be suddenly sucked into a dreamlike state. During this state, they suddenly wake up in a dark, tightly enclosed space, lying on their back. Pressing against the surfaces of where they are, they are laying on a very comfortable padded velvet, but a heavy wooden surface blocks their escape. Outside, a sermon is being held; it is the players funeral, and they are trapped inside a coffin. Despite all their protests or efforts to escape, the player will be unable to break free or get help. The coffin will eventually be lowered into the ground and then quickly buried with dirt, until they are now buried alive (The Premature Burial).

In real life, the player is standing in front of the mirror and is suffering from the charmed and paralyzed conditions. If they are left alone for the whole hour, the player develops an irreversible fear of being buried alive and becomes highly claustrophobic.

A player who finds someone standing in the mirror while under these effects can smash the mirror, ending the effect early.

There is no treasure or loot in this room.

**5. Maid’s Quarters**

This small bedroom is bare of most furniture, just a small bed, nightstand and dresser make up the space in this room. However, a large blood splatter is smeared across the wall, suggesting something horrible happened here. There is no treasure in this room.

**6. Servant’s Quarters**

Very similar to the Maid’s Quarters, this small, tidy space has been showered with blood, staining the walls and floors of the space. Unlike the Maid’s Quarters, a Servant sits upright, still wearing his uniform, staring out blankly towards the door. His features are bloated and stiff, and his eyes have gone milky white. A fly crawls across the surface of them, where he does not blink.

If the group approaches the Servant, he does not move, but his mouth begins to twitch, as if trying to say something. After some coaxing, he will eventually get his mouth to work. The first thing he does is beg the players to kill him. He actually died months ago, but Ed has kept his body and mind in a kind of stasis; his body is still decomposing, but he is unable to move on from his physical form. He is unable to eat, or sleep, and even his own senses are starting to fail him. He does not even remember his own name; all he knows is the agony of his own existence. The only way for him to move on from the material plane is if Ed wills it; since he will not willingly free the Servant, Ed’s death is the only way to free the Servant.

The Servant has gone insane from being unable to eat, sleep, or drink for months. While calm at first, eventually his madness takes hold as he just continuously begs the party to "Put me to sleep, please, put me to sleep or wake me or kill me, put me to sleep!" (The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar). After this point, the Servant will only scream insanities at the group, being of no further use to them.

**7. Lavatory**

A small lavatory for upstairs guests or servants to use. Inside is 1 gold piece.

**8. Guest Bedroom**

As with most of the house, this room is in disarray, with the sheets slashed and torn and the once fine desk in the room smashed and broken, one of its legs torn off and the desk itself looking like an axe was taken to it.

A thorough search of the room reveals that it is basically empty save for a few broken bottles of ink and pieces of parchment.
9. Guest Bathroom

Compared to the room prior, this bathroom is actually pristine, sparkling white marble bathtub.

The sink basin, while also white, has a red, watery substance stopped in the sink, with a few objects cluttered at the bottom of the basin. Players who investigate the objects will discover that they are human teeth (Berenece).

There is nothing else in this room.

10. Parlor Room

Once the centerpiece of conversation and joy in the house, this room has also fallen into disarray, although not to the extent of the other rooms on this floor.

A large table takes up the center of the room, surrounded by a comfortable (if dusty) sofa and chairs. The room is filled with oddities ranging from eclectic to bizarre.

A DC 13 Investigation Check reveals some of the more interesting oddities:

- On an end table next to one of the sofas is a glass dome, inside which is a golden scarab-like beetle, crawling around among the glass (The Gold Bug). Releasing it will cause it to grow and attack the party. Use the stats of a Giant Fire Beetle (MM, pg. 325).
- On a small table behind the sofa is a silver shaving razor worth 5 gp, with a dried red substance across the blade.
- A taxidermied orangutan, face frozen in a snarl, in the corner furthest from the doors. If players bring a source of open flame within 10 feet of the razor, the orangutan will come to life and attempt to attack the players by grabbing the nearby shaving razor (The Murders in the Rue Morgue and Hop Frog). Use the stats of an Ape (MM, pg. 317), replacing its rock attack with a razor attack (use the stats of a dagger minus the thrown property).
- A plain white performers mask lying on the table off to the side of the room. Picking the mask up from the causes blood to pour out of the mask's eyes, staining the mask red as blood continuously pours down the mask. (The Masque of the Red Death.)
- A painting on the wall, similar in style to the paintings that line the halls. The painting depicts an artist feverishly at work on a canvas, an image of a beautiful girl painted on his own canvas. His subject, however, is that of a corpse, long since decomposed. (The Oval Portrait) He either is so engrossed in his work that he has not noticed he is painting a corpse, or he's depicting beauty in the face of death.

Also found in this room are a few scattered books. Many of them detail the history of arcana and magic. A few of them specialize in necromancy, detailing various attempts and rituals of bringing the dead back to life, as well as how to obtain greater magical power.

One of the books seems to be a beginning spellbook, containing all Necromancy spells levels 1-3, worth 800 gp to the right collector.

11. The Main Hall

The players now find themselves on the first floor of the estate, a large lobby shrouded in dust and darkness, save for the few thing beams of dim light coming from outside.

Immediately players will notice a horrible spectacle in the center of this space. A once beautiful carpet has been pushed up against the staircase in order to make room for some sort of ritual in the center of the room. Use the text below to describe the scene;

Main Hall Description

As you come into this once grand entrance to the house, a chilling scene lays before you. The backdrop of thunder, rain and that ever-persistant knocking provides a horrible symphony for the end result of some dark, twisted ritual.

A large ornamental carpet has been pushed to the side of the staircase to make room for a 20 foot wide circle, with arcane runes and symbols inscribed around the inside ring. The material used on the circle maintains a soft, greenish glow, while the runes are written in black ink. Starring at the runes, you see whispers of shadow trailing off the writing, floating upwards before disappearing.

(Those with Arcana training recognize many of the runes that represent "life" and "death" are involved in the ritual.)

You see in the center of this circle a small black object, a little over a foot long, the object itself lumpy and mishapen. Upon further inspection, you have to fight off the bile that has risen to your throat, as you realize you are staring at the burnt, charred corpse of a fetus, skin charred and black. The body, smaller than you would have thought, is curled up on itself, the outline of its form just barely discernable. You see coming off the body in a similar manner to the runes are small wisps of shadow, rising up towards the ceiling before fading into nothingness.

This is, unfortunately, the body of Annabel, the daughter of Ed and Lenore who died in her mother's womb. Ed is using her as a tethering point to keep his wife's soul on the material plane, as she would have been otherwise unwilling to return or be resurrected.

Players who attempt to go into the circle are flung backwards, as a green wall of energy shoots up and sends them flying backwards, taking 2d6 necrotic damage. Players may make a DC 17 Arcana check to determine that this ritual is being used to tether and bind a soul into a body, and that only destroying the vessel that the soul is now contained in, or killing the one who performed the ritual, can drop the barrier and release the soul.

There is nothing of value in this room or down the various hallways. Next to the Nursery is a staircase leading down into the basement.
12. Coat Room
A small closet filled with filthy, moldy coats and jackets. In one of them is a small pouch filled with 30 sp. Beyond that, there is nothing of value in this room.

13. Spare Bedroom
Inside is a small, plain bedroom, used for multiple guests staying in the house or for passing travelers. Inside the room is nothing of value, save for a small silver bell worth 4gp. If any of the players ring the bell, they and any players within a 10 foot radius sphere around them must make a DC 16 Constitution Saving Throw, as the bell triggers the effects of a 2nd level Shatter spell, cast on the location where the bell was rung. Once used this way, the bell becomes mundane and non-magical.

14. Dining Room
A large wooden dining table surrounded by almost a dozen chairs takes up a majority of the space of this room. This room is relatively in tact, although several plates of rotten and spoiled food make the stench abysmal.

Several rats have scavenged the remains of the meal and are now starving for more food now that they are trapped in the house. They will attack the players as a perceived source of food if the players step inside.

Alternatively, if a player presents the rats with food, they will leave the players alone and begin fighting and eating each other to get at the food. Use the stats for a Swarm of Rats if the rats decide to attack (MM, pg. 339)

15. Kitchen
A once bustling room where meals were prepared and cooked, this room lies cold, cobwebs and dust lining the space, save for a very small cleaned off area near one of the stoves. A DC 14 Investigation check reveals it has been used recently, within a day or two.

Looking around the room, players can find a puddle of a dried red substance near the empty fireplace. Players making a DC 15 Perception or Investigation check find something very large blocking the fireplace about four feet up; pulling the blockage down will reveal the decaying corpse of a Maid, her throat slit open from the razor upstairs (yet again, The Murders in the Rue Morgue.)

On her body they will find a bag of 100gp and a letter from her family wishing her safe travels home; she was going to leave the house before Ed decided she couldn’t leave at all.

16. Pantry
A mostly empty pantry with shelves collecting more dust and cobwebs than it does food. A few small stacks of unspoiled grain and dried preservatives in jars are all that remain of the food supply. There is nothing of value in here.

17. Nursery
This room is locked, and requires a DC 16 Skill check to open the door.

The room has been charred, purposefully set ablaze it seems. Burnt piles of paper line the floor, the apparent source of the fire. This room contains the remains of a child’s nursery, a burnt and crumbling crib and several melted or burnt toys indicating that this was supposed to be Annabel's room. Looking at the burnt scraps of paper, a few bits and pieces survived. They are all written in Ed’s handwriting, and appear to be letters to Annabel, written before she died, about how much he loved her and would always care for her.

There is nothing valuable in this room.

The Staircase to the Basement
To get to the Basement, one must take the stairwell next to the Nursery. Opening the door down into the basement, the players are met with a long, dark staircase. This stairwell is considered dim light for those with darkvision and darkness for those without it.

Going down the stairs, have whoever is leading the group make a DC 16 Perception check, at disadvantage if they do not have dark vision. If they succeed, they notice that after four steps down, four steps are missing, creating a hole.

If the players step on the four steps leading up to the hole, they trigger a swinging blade trap that swings across the pit in a quick pattern (The Pit and the Pendulum.) Players can make a DC 14 Acrobatics to jump safely across. Additionally, they can make a DC 15 Perception check to learn the pattern of the swinging blade and make the Acrobatics check with advantage. Players that fail the check jump a little too late and are hit by the blade, causing 3d6 piercing damage and another 2d6 bludgeoning damage as they’re knocked down into the pit. Players can climb out with a DC 14 Athletics Check.

If players throw rope or chain across the opening in order to stop the blade from swinging, have them make Strength checks. One or more players on both sides of the pit must succeed on a DC 16 Strength check. If successful, they are able to stop the blade swinging for 1d4 rounds.

18. The Basement
Once past the stairwell, they will come across a door leading into the basement. On the door in that same green phosphorous material as the circle upstairs is a rune that arcane users recognize as a rune signifying life.

Inside, the room will be completely dark. Those with darkvision can just faintly make out a figure standing near the center of the room. As the players enter the room, candles in the far left corner will illuminate, their glow tinged with black energy. From that light, they can see a small wall extending outward, beyond which is a dirty and disheveled cot, stained with dirt, located next to an open and unoccupied coffin with dirt pouring out of the opening.

As the players step further in, candles around the entire room will begin to illuminate. They will now see a female figure standing in the middle of the room with her back to the group. Her long dark hair is set in a beautiful braid, and she appears to be wearing a white dress made to resemble a wedding dress.
This figure is Lenore, a slightly intelligent and enhanced undead. She will not react to the players at all if they speak out to her.

Hiding in the bottom left corner as the players enter the room is Ed, crouched and invisible, waiting for the players after hearing them moving around upstairs. Once the players move close to Lenore, he will cast Mislead on himself and "reveal" himself in the corner, telling players to not go near Lenore, purposefully walking around the players and not touching any of them.

In reality, this Ed is just an illusion meant to distract the players, while the real Ed stays hidden in the corner, still invisible. Ed is a tall, pale individual with messy, almost greasy black hair and a thick black mustache. His frame is gaunt and almost skeletal, his fingers like bones and his eyes and teeth have yellowed significantly. He looks sickly, and yet moves and walks with the strength of a much heartier man.

Ed will reveal to the players his "beautiful wife Lenore, made whole once more." As he turns her around, for a split second, she is beautiful; pale white skin, green eyes, and ruby lips. As she continues turning, however, part of her face has been eaten away by worms, one of which is currently crawling out of her eye socket, and various chunks of flesh have fallen away to reveal the bone underneath. She stares at them all with a vacant, almost dream-like quality.

Ed will reveal to the players any information they don't already know; how he was a bookseller starting his business in Illgard when he met Lenore, an aspiring painter who had just moved into town; her miscarriage and the denouncing of his child; his arcane studies; and the ritual that used the corpse of his unborn daughter to bring his wife back. Unfortunately, since his daughter had never been "alive", it only brought Lenore back part-way, "but enough of the way for me to pretend."

Now, there are several living individuals in the house, and using their life forces, he can finally bring Lenore back to life...

**Combat**

Once Ed makes this revelation, he will immediately dispell Mislead and attack the party from the corner, gaining a surprise round on the party. Ed will lash out at the nearest individual with a Dagger of Life Stealing, and command Lenore to attack. Stats for Ed and Lenore can be found in Appendix B.

Ed is an 11th level Wizard who will mostly attack the weakest individual and then Blink to safety if possible, using Shield liberally for physical attacks. If someone attacks Lenore, however, he will immediately target that person. If the party kills her first, then he will, in a rage, cast Circle of Death on as many of the party as he can, including himself in the radius if it means taking down all of them.

Lenore will mostly serve as defense for Ed, attacking anyone who attacks him. Despite her aggressive fighting, there is a flicker of sadness on her face while she attacks the party, and some of her actions appear slightly unwilling. If Ed dies before she does, then she will immediately collapse to the ground, the spell tethering her to her body now broken.

**The Reveal**

Her husband dead and the spell broken, Lenore's spirit will rise out of her undead body. Read the following passage to your players:

**Edgar Allan**

The battle done and the Necromancer slain, the candles begin to lose their black-edged flames. As they revert to normal, a soft glow emerges from Lenore's body, as you see a spectral form rise out of the corpse. There, standing in front of you, is the spirit of Lenore, restored to the beauty that she had in life.

She kindly nods to you all. "Thank you, brave heroes, for releasing me from my husbands spell. You have done well to end his magic; his obsession of bringing me back became his undoing."

She stares at his crumpled form and smiles sadly to herself. "We were so young and foolish when we met. But he gave me the world, saw beauty in my work, and gave me such happiness. For me to not return that happiness, to become sick and lose Annabel... I could not live with myself. I did not think my husband would turn to such madness. I apologize."

She suddenly turns back towards you all, a stern look across her face. "Do me this one favor, my last request. Bury Annabel and I with my husband. Do not separate our family in death. Madness may have clouded his mind, but I will always love that bookseller named Edgar Allan."

And with that, her form fades, vanishing into the ether.

On Ed's person is the Dagger of Life Stealing, as well as a Wand of the War Mage +1. Lenore will have no effects on her body.

**19. The Hidden Room**

If players search the room and beat a DC 17 Investigation check, they will realize that one of the corners has bricks that have only recently been put in and are covering something up. Tearing down the wall, the players will find several barrels of wine. Among them is the corpse of a wealthy businessman, with 80gp on his person, as well as a 200gp bottle of wine in his hand (The Cask of Amontillado).

**What's next?**

From here, the story can go many places. Perhaps Ed learned his secrets from a much stronger and deadlier Necromancer, who is close to unlocking the secrets of Lichdom. Lenore may require the group travel to her home to return a family heirloom; a document in Ed's safe leads to a long forgotten treasure. Wherever they go, the players now that their adventure in Edgar Allan's house will haunt them...nevermore.
Appendix A - Maps (Cont.)

Credit: Jonny Houbrick
Appendix B - Creatures

Ed the Necromancer
Medium humanoid, neutral evil

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 72(12d6 + 36)
Speed 30ft.

STR  DEX  CON  INT  WIS  CHA
8 (-1)  12 (+1)  16 (+3)  18 (+4)  13 (+1)  7 (-2)

Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Elvish, Dwarvish, Orc, Halfling, Gnomish
Challenge 7 (2,300 XP)

Wand of the War Mage Ed gains a +1 to spell attack rolls (included in the modifier) and ignores half cover when making a spell attack.

Spellcasting Ed is a 12th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Ed has the following wizard spells prepared;
Cantrips (at will): acid splash, chill touch, friends, minor illusion, ray of frost
1st level (4 slots): false life, ray of sickness, shield, witch bolt
2nd level (3 slots): blur, invisibility, misty step, scorching ray
3rd level (3 slots): animate dead, vampiric touch
4th level (3 slots): blight, phantasmal killer
5th level (2 slots): dominate person, mislead
6th level (1 slot): circle of death

Actions
Dagger of Lifestealing, Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 3 (1d4 + 1). If the hit is a critical hit, the target takes an additional 10 necrotic damage if it isn’t a construct or undead. Ed also gains 10 temporary hit points

Lenore the Zombie
Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 34(3d8 + 21)
Speed 20ft.

STR  DEX  CON  INT  WIS  CHA
14 (+2)  8 (-1)  16 (+3)  5 (-3)  6 (-2)  5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +0
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 8
Languages understands the languages it knew in life but can’t speak
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Undead Fortitude. If damage reduces Lenore to 0 hit points, she must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5+ the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, Lenore drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions
Slam, Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 4 (1d4 + 2)
CREDITS AND THANKS

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