

Name _____



3 SOUND



Twisted Logic

The narrator of *The Tell-Tale Heart* insists, over and over again, that he is not mad. He claims that his senses are sharper than ever and that only a truly clever person could carry out such a perfect plan. But is this really true? Or is his very insistence proof that he is, in fact, insane?

The irony in the story is clear: the more the narrator tries to prove his sanity, the more he reveals how deeply disturbed he truly is. From the very beginning, he tells the reader how carefully he planned everything. For seven nights, he snuck into the old man's room, moving slowly and quietly, convinced that his patience and precision were signs of his intelligence. He took pride in how cautious he was, as if that made his actions normal. But his obsession with the old man's eye was anything but normal.

On the eighth night, the old man woke up. His eye was open, and the narrator believed it was staring straight at him. He could hear the old man's heartbeat—thump, thump, thump—growing louder and louder until he could not take it anymore. In a frenzy, he acted. But even after committing the crime, he remained convinced that he was too clever to be caught.

When the police arrived, he was calm. He invited them in, smiled, and even placed chairs right over the hidden body. He believed his confidence proved his sanity. But then, he heard it again—that terrible heartbeat, pounding louder and louder. The sound filled his mind until he could not bear it. Unable to control himself, he confessed everything.

Ironically, in his attempt to appear sane, he only proved how mad he truly was. A sane person would not have been driven to madness by an imaginary heartbeat. A sane person would not have thought that careful planning made a terrible crime acceptable. And in the end, it was not his crime that gave him away—it was his own guilt and paranoia.

The narrator thought he was in control, but in reality, his own mind betrayed him.