

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Shadows Creep

The setting of *The Tell-Tale Heart* plays a major role in making the story feel dark and ominous. From the very beginning, Edgar Allan Poe creates an eerie atmosphere by placing the story inside a dimly lit house, mostly at night. The reader never learns much about the house, but that makes it even scarier—leaving it up to the imagination.

The story takes place in a small, quiet space, where only two people live: the narrator and the old man. This isolation adds to the tension. There is no one else around to witness the strange behavior of the narrator, who silently sneaks into the old man's room night after night. Each night, the house is completely still. The narrator moves so slowly that he takes a whole hour just to peek inside the room. The silence makes even the smallest sound feel louder, increasing the suspense.

On the eighth night, the setting becomes even more terrifying. The old man wakes up, sensing something is wrong. In the pitch-black darkness, the narrator sees the old man's eye staring at him. Then, he begins to hear a soft, steady thumping sound. The noise grows louder and louder. The narrator believes it is the old man's heartbeat. But is it? Or is it his own fear taking over? The darkness, the silence, and the growing sound create an unbearable feeling of terror.

Even after the crime is committed, the setting continues to build tension. When the police arrive, the narrator is strangely calm. He even invites them to sit in the very room where the body is hidden. At first, the house seems peaceful, but then the narrator hears the sound again—thump, thump, thump. The walls seem to close in around him as the noise fills the space. His fear grows, the setting becomes suffocating, and in his panic, he confesses everything.

Poe uses the setting to trap both the narrator and the reader inside the story. The darkness, silence, and small space create a feeling of being watched and unable to escape. The setting does not just describe a place—it makes the reader feel the narrator's fear, adding to the story's dark and ominous tone.