

Name _____



Justice Served

Edgar Allan Poe's *The Black Cat* is a story about crime and punishment. It follows a man who makes terrible choices and must face the consequences of his actions. At first, the narrator is kind and loves animals, especially his black cat, Pluto. But as he starts drinking too much, he becomes violent and cruel. One

night, in a moment of anger, he harms Pluto. The next day, he feels guilty but cannot undo what he has done. Soon after, his house burns down, and he sees a strange shape on the wall—a shadow of a cat with a rope around its neck.

The narrator tries to move on and even adopts another black cat. But this new cat, which looks just like Pluto, begins to haunt him. He believes the cat is watching him, judging him for what he did. As his fear and guilt grow, he loses control and commits another terrible crime. This time, he tries to hide the evidence. He thinks he has gotten away with it, but justice has a way of catching up.

In the end, the police arrive, and just as they are about to leave, a strange noise comes from inside the wall where the narrator hid his crime. The officers break through and discover his terrible secret. The second cat was inside all along, revealing the truth. The narrator, who thought he was clever, is caught by his own actions.

Through this story, Poe shows that crime does not go unpunished. The narrator thinks he can escape justice, but his guilt follows him, and his own mind betrays him. In the end, he learns that actions have consequences, and no one can escape punishment forever.