

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Shadow Justice

In Edgar Allan Poe's *The Black Cat*, the second cat plays a powerful role in the story. More than just an ordinary pet, this mysterious black cat seems to serve as a symbol of retribution—or justice—for the narrator's cruel actions.

At the beginning of the story, the narrator is a kind man who loves animals, especially his black cat, Pluto. But over time, he changes. He becomes violent and harms Pluto in a moment of anger. Soon after, his house burns down, and he sees a strange shadow of a cat on the remaining wall. Though he tries to forget his crime, guilt begins to take over his mind.

Then, a second black cat appears. It looks just like Pluto, except for one difference—a white mark on its chest. At first, the narrator welcomes the cat into his home. But over time, he starts to fear it. The cat follows him everywhere, watching him. He begins to imagine that the white mark is changing into the shape of a noose, a symbol of punishment. It is as if the cat is a reminder of what he did to Pluto, and no matter how hard he tries, he cannot escape.

The second cat becomes a symbol of justice because it leads to the narrator's downfall. One day, in another moment of rage, the narrator harms someone close to him. He tries to hide his crime by sealing the body inside a wall. When the police come to investigate, he believes he is safe. However, just as they are about to leave, a loud sound comes from inside the wall—the second cat has been trapped inside! The police tear down the wall and uncover the crime. The very thing the narrator feared—the cat—becomes the reason he is caught.

Through this eerie story, Poe suggests that people cannot escape justice. The second cat is more than just an animal; it is a reminder of guilt, a symbol of fate, and a force that ensures the narrator pays for his terrible deeds.