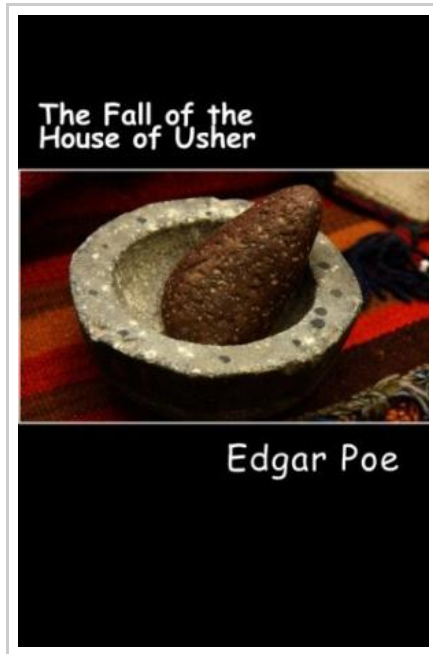




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The Fall of the House of Usher

By Edgar Allen Poe

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The Fall of the House of Usher is a short story by Edgar Allan Poe. The story begins with the unnamed narrator arriving at the house of his friend, Roderick Usher, having received a letter from him in a distant part of the country complaining of an illness and asking for his help. Although Poe wrote this short story before the invention of modern psychological science, Rodericks condition can be described according to its terminology. It includes a form of sensory overload known as hyperesthesia (hypersensitivity to light, sounds, smells, and tastes), hypochondria (an excessive preoccupation or worry about having a serious illness), and acute anxiety. It is revealed that Rodericks twin sister, Madeline, is also ill and falls into cataleptic, deathlike trances. The narrator is impressed with Rodericks paintings, and attempts to cheer him by reading with him and listening to his improvised musical compositions on the guitar. Roderick sings The Haunted Palace, then tells the narrator that he believes the house he lives in to be alive, and that this sentence arises from the arrangement of...



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