



The Poe Shadow: A Novel

By Matthew Pearl

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The Poe Shadow: A Novel By Matthew Pearl

“I present to you . . . the truth about this man’s death and my life.”

Baltimore, 1849. The body of Edgar Allan Poe has been buried in an unmarked grave. The public, the press, and even Poe’s own family and friends accept the conclusion that Poe was a second-rate writer who met a disgraceful end as a drunkard. Everyone, in fact, seems to believe this except a young Baltimore lawyer named Quentin Clark, an ardent admirer who puts his own career and reputation at risk in a passionate crusade to salvage Poe’s.

As Quentin explores the puzzling circumstances of Poe’s demise, he discovers that the writer’s last days are riddled with unanswered questions the police are possibly willfully ignoring. Just when Poe’s death seems destined to remain a mystery, and forever sealing his ignominy, inspiration strikes Quentin—in the form of Poe’s own stories. The young attorney realizes that he must find the one person who can solve the strange case of Poe’s death: the real-life model for Poe’s brilliant fictional detective character, C. Auguste Dupin, the hero of ingenious tales of crime and detection.

In short order, Quentin finds himself enmeshed in sinister machinations involving political agents, a female assassin, the corrupt Baltimore slave trade, and the lost secrets of Poe’s final hours. With his own future hanging in the balance, Quentin Clark must turn master investigator himself to unchain his now imperiled fate from that of Poe’s.

Following his phenomenal debut novel, *The Dante Club*, Matthew Pearl has once again crossed pitch-perfect literary history with innovative mystery to create a beautifully detailed, ingeniously plotted tale of suspense. Pearl’s groundbreaking research—featuring documented material never published before—opens a new window on the truth behind Poe’s demise, literary history’s most persistent enigma. The resulting novel is a publishing event that, through sublime craftsmanship, subtle wit, and devious twists, does honor to Poe himself

From the Hardcover edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Fans of Pearl's bestselling debut, *The Dante Club* (2003), will eagerly embrace his second novel, a compelling thriller centered on the mysterious end of Edgar Allan Poe, who perished in Baltimore in 1849. Poe's ignominious funeral catches the notice of Quentin Clark, a young, idealistic attorney, who finds himself obsessed with rescuing Poe's reputation amid rumors that the writer died from an excess of drink. Clark's preoccupation soon becomes all-consuming, imperiling his practice and his engagement, especially after he learns that Poe's legendary master sleuth, the Chevalier Auguste Dupin, was modeled after a real person. The lawyer journeys to France to track down the real Dupin, in the hopes that the detective can help him solve the puzzle of Poe's death. Pearl masterfully combines fact with fiction and presents some genuinely new historical clues that help reconstruct Poe's final days. While Clark remains a little enigmatic, the exciting plot, numerous twists and convincing period detail could help land this on bestseller lists as well. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Matthew Pearl's best-selling *The Dante Club* (2003) successfully meshed history, literature, and mystery. Though he tries to duplicate this formula and honor a great American writer, *The Poe Shadow* fails to garner similar interest. First, Pearl's attempt to echo 19th-century prose is fusty and verbose. Second, Clark, though he has his eccentricities, is rather "poor company" (*Wall Street Journal*). Third, while the subplots offer intrigue, they rarely advance the plot and never attain the macabre tone of Poe's tales. The historical context, however (though weighed down by ponderous if meticulous research), provides new insights into Poe's personal life and literary career. The verdict: for Poe (or Pearl) fans only.

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From [Booklist](#)

The strange circumstances surrounding the death of Edgar Allan Poe, intriguing to fans and scholars alike, provide the basis for this literary historical mystery. In late 1849, Poe, traveling from his home in Virginia to Philadelphia for a lucrative editing job, went missing; however, he was found several days later, apparently drunk in a Baltimore tavern; he died after several days of delirium in a hospital and was buried unceremoniously. Press reports that Poe would be little missed so disturb Quentin Hobson Clark, a young Baltimore lawyer of independent means and a Poe admirer, that he vows to represent Poe's interests. To solve the mysterious death, Clark seeks in Paris the real-life model for Poe's fictitious detective, C. Auguste Dupin, selecting crime solver Auguste Dupont over lawyer Baron Claude Dupin. But the baron, still claiming to be Poe's model, follows Clark and Dupont to Baltimore, starting a cat-and-mouse game of detection that, because of French political implications, turns deadly. This is similar to Pearl's *Dante Club* (2002), which portrayed renowned authors trailing a serial killer, in its masterful blend of historical and fictional figures, meticulous research, and nineteenth-century literary style. Whether interest in Poe will make this book equally popular remains to be seen. *Michele Leber*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

William Deck:

What do you think of book? It is just for students since they are still students or it for all people in the world, what best subject for that? Just you can be answered for that question above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for every single other. Don't to be pushed someone or something that they don't wish do that. You must know how great and important the book *The Poe Shadow: A Novel*. All type of book can you see on many sources. You can look for the internet methods or other social media.

Norberto Brody:

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Lisa Yates:

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Audrey Patton:

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