

A Transitivity Analysis of the Short Story “Tell-Tale Heart” by E. A. Poe

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Abstract: *The study aimed to investigate the application of Halliday’s theory of transitivity in the representation of the text of the story “Tell-Tale Heart” by Poe. The focus of this study was to identify and explain the representation of different processes and circumstances used in the text while examining the frequency and types of the processes used in the text. For analysis, data had been collected from the short story. As a unit of analysis, 61 clauses were collected from the story until the death of the old man. The analysis revealed that all six processes have been used in the story but the same frequency. The mental process is used the most frequently to create a psychological perception of fear in the story. Among circumstances used i.e. Location, Manner, Time and Accompaniment, Location is most frequently used to indicate the place of happenings. This qualitative study presented findings of a linguistics analysis on the literary text of a short story written by E.A.Poe “Tell-Tale Heart”.*

Key Words: Analysis, Circumstances, Processes, SFL, Transitivity.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Literature provides us the opportunity to study different aspects of language. It’s been a long tradition in linguistics to analyze literary texts to understand the phenomenon of language as they provide near instances of real language use. Language is a way of expressing ideas, emotions, happenings, and information. So is doing literature. Thus, to study language, analysis of a piece of literature can provide us in-depth sight into the language used. For language analysis, there are many modes of text which we can select. Among those are different genera like a novel, short story, poetry, prose, science fiction, and non-literary ones like newspaper articles, speeches, and recipes which provide us different use and forms of language as it carries different functions.

There are different linguistics theories for the analysis of language which are related to different levels of analyses like phonetic, syntactic, semantic, etc. The current study is focused on the syntactic analysis of a text of a short story written by E.A.Poe “The Tell-Tale Heart”. The analysis has used the theory of Systematic Functional Linguistics as the main approach while focusing on Transitivity mainly.

2. Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL):

In the early 20th century, linguistics has observed a substantial number of theories and each one has its distinct alignments, tendencies, and focuses of study. However, most of these theories, such as Halliday and Chomsky’s traditions, have been started by several supporters or independently. Moreover, each theory has been effective in accounting for facets of language from a certain outlook. One of them the most significant theories is Halliday’s SFL (Systematic Functional Linguistics) that has fascinated the most consideration and has been recurrently used in the literature on linguistics and applied linguistics.

SFL is an approach to language which was developed mainly by M.A.K. Halliday and his followers during the 1960s in the United Kingdom, and later in Australia (O’Donnell 2012, p. 1). It is built on earlier works of some potent linguists such as Bronislaw Malinowski and J.R. Firth. Bronislaw Malinowski was a polish anthropologist who did most of his works based in England (O’Donnell 2012, p. 5). The second linguist is J.R. Firth who recognized linguistics as a discipline in Britain.

These days, the SFL approach is used globally, particularly in language education, and for some purposes like discourse analysis. It is closely related to sociology even when many linguistic theories deal with language in the form of mental practice. Halliday’s approach, as an illustration, is more attracted in the way by which language is used in social settings to attain a specific objective (O’Donnell, 2012, p. 2). Related to data, SFL does not deal with the way of language representation or process in the human brain but tries to see discourses created in written or oral language form. Due to the relatedness of SFL with the language use, great importance is sited on the function of language, like what is the use of language, rather than what language structure is all about and the method by which it is structured (Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997).

2.1 Elements of SFL :

In SFL, a text is analysed in four ways. They are as follows: Context, Semantics, Lexico-grammar, and Phonology. Context is classified as one of the main concerns, due to its importance to the whole practice of making meaning. When language occurs in a context, it will link too many contexts. (Matthiessen & Halliday 1997) They are:

- a) The Context of Culture [genres].
- b) The Context of Situation [the technical term for this is Register].

Halliday models the context of the situation, where the aspects of the context relate intimately to the language used to create text, in terms of three significant elements (Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997). They are:

- a) The field gives us an indication of the topic or what is being talked about.
- b) Tenor: gives us an indication of who is/are involved in the communication and the relationships between them.
- c) Mode: gives us an indication of what part the language is playing in the interaction and what form it takes (written or spoken).

These three Register variables are used to explain people's intuitive understanding that individuals use different resources, different kinds, and different parts of the system of language (Matthiessen & Halliday 1997). Inside the language itself, the SFL labels a model with three levels as a tristratal model of language. They are as follows:

- a) Discourse-Semantics has three meta-functions. They are Interpersonal meta-functions, Ideational meta-functions, and Textual meta-functions.
- b) Lexico-grammar includes both grammar and vocabulary in one stratum and represents the view of language in both lexis and grammar.
- c) Phonology, orthography (or graphology) which refers to the sound system, the writing system, and the wording system (Eggins 2004, p.19).

SFL labels distinctive systems at both the level of lexico-grammar and the level of discourse semantics, which shapes the contextual variables to make the generalized meanings or meta-functions. Hence, the SFL model proposes that human language has evolved to make three generalized kinds of meanings; they are Experiential meanings (clause as representation), Interpersonal meanings (clause as an exchange), and Textual meanings (clause as message) (Eggins 2004, p.58-59).

The Experiential meanings are with the way reality is represented and the grammatical resources for construing our experience of the world around us, as to what is going on, who is involved in the going-on, and when, where, and how the goings-on are going on. One of its chief grammatical systems is classified as **Transitivity** (Matthiessen & Halliday 1997). Transitivity includes many aspects:

- a) The processes [in the verbal group]
- b) The participants (human/non-human) who are participating in these processes [in the noun group].
- c) The circumstances in which the processes occur and the when, where, and how they take place [in the prepositional phrase and adverbial group]. For instance: [Circumstance] in the open glade [participant] the wild rabbits [Process] danced [circumstance] with their shadows (Matthiessen & Halliday 1997).

The interpersonal meanings are concerned with the interaction between the speaker(s) and the addressee(s). It is used to establish the speaker's role in the speech situation and relationship with others. One of its main grammatical systems is **Mood** and **Modality** (Matthiessen & Halliday 1997).

The textual meanings are concerned with the creation of text and the way we organize our meanings into the text that makes sense. One of the main textual systems is Theme and Rheme (Matthiessen & Halliday, 1997). For instance: [Rheme] the wild rabbits danced with their shadows and [Theme] in the open glade.

2.2 Introduction of "The Tell-Tale Heart"

"The Tell-Tale Heart" is a short story by Edgar Allan Poe first published in 1843. It shows an anonymous narrator who claims his sanity after killing an old man with a "vulture eye". The murder is carefully planned, and the killer hides the body by cutting it into pieces and hiding it under the floorboards. Eventually, the narrator's guilt reveals itself in the hallucination that the man's heart is still beating under the floorboards. It is unclear what relationship, if any, the old man and his murderer share. It has been suggested that the old man is a father figure or, perhaps, that his vulture eye represents some sort of veiled secret. The ambiguity and lack of details about the two main characters stand in stark contrast to the specific plot details leading up to the murder. The story was first published in James Russell Lowell's *The Pioneer* in January 1843. "The Tell-Tale Heart" is widely considered a classic of the Gothic fiction genre and one of Poe's most famous short stories. It has been adapted or served as a motivation for a variety of media.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Nguyen (2012), states that transitivity analysis took its start with the prominent study of Halliday (1971) on William Golding's "The Inheritor". This was proved to be an outstanding work on transitivity analysis. Researchers have done work on transitivity by applying this framework to explore how structures of language produce particular meanings and ideologies in literary texts. Transitivity analysis also explores the language used in non-literary texts like newspapers. It has also been applied in former works by scholars but newspapers are rarely the subject while common analysis is of reports, media, speeches and other literary works. Lwamoto (1995) explains that this analysis proves how language structures are used by linguists to show Japan as a case to respond to social demand. Hubbard (1999) investigated transitivity on characterization in Salman Rushdie's "The Moor's Last Sigh". He pointed out in his analysis "Transitivity Analysis" as a way of changing readers' responses to characters in fiction. The analysis was done by Manan (2001) where she shows the social impact of Media language. Many authors write about the delicacy of news production and representation. News being the most influential pillar of the current society, and assumed to be trustworthy, either reading printed copies or online; it is one of the most important consumption for the majority of the public in terms of printed discourse. After TV, the newspaper is the window for the majority to look into the outer world, and thus, such factors provide the newspaper a vital significance.

Yaghoobi did a systematic analysis in 2009. He investigated some news actors in two newspapers naming "The Newsweek" and "The Kayhan International". Through his analysis, he found out that the two media were opponents in ideology and the same news actors were represented opposing each other. Cunan (2011) did analysis Virginia Wolf's "Old Mrs. Grey" by applying the transitivity framework in stylistic analysis. He found out that linguistics choices of author-reader can explicate the evasive and subjective thinking of the writer. Mwinlaaru (2012) revealed the transitivity patterns in a text to explain the psychological viewpoint of the writer presented in the story. Moreover, Opara (2012) explains that using this analysis, we can evaluate that how discourse maker portrays a character by the selection of words and that one can also analyze the theme used by the discourse maker, she gives the example that the Discourse made by Emecheta used the theme of Positive Character.

Azar & Yazdachi (2012) explored transitivity patterns of the main character 'Maria' in James Joyce's short story "Clay" to verify a literary critique on 'Maria' as 'Virgin Marry' symbol in the story. In a Transitive analysis of the political language of Benazir Bhutto, Naz, Alvi and Baseer (2012) emphasis on Halliday's SFL that language is a tool for power show. Bhutto's strong determination for the establishment of Democracy was found in her speeches. Song (2013) carried out a transitivity analysis on "A Rose for Emily" and explained the processes along with their functions to build the theme and character in the text. Another research by Asad Mehmood et al. (2014) investigated the language forms which perform a communicative function in Wild's "The Nightingale and the Rose" by using transitivity as a tool. Ezzina (2015) did transitivity analysis on Thomas Pynchon's "The Crying of Lot 49" which revealed the fact that transitivity analysis can explore the linguistic techniques used by modern writers like Pynchon. The transitivity analysis was done by Mehwish & Fauzia (2016) on the song "I Am Malala" revealed the character construction of 'Malala' in the tribute song. It revealed how she was weak, timid, and inept like other girls but developed as a character having spiritual and psychological forbearance which enabled her to stand the oppression she had to face. From all distinguished data in the mentioned studies above, it is proved that transitive analysis is vital to evaluate the text and to explain why certain modes of language are chosen.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS :

What types of processes are used in "Tell-Tale Heart" by Poe? What type of circumstances used by the writer in the story?

4.1 Pedagogical Implications

This study will have implications for the students of language and literature as they both can get benefit by using the said framework to get insights into language and literature. It will benefit them to interpret different literary and non-literary texts to get a better understanding. Moreover, students can learn grammar effectively by applying this framework to any piece of text. Most previous studies in the related field have not discussed the aspect of "Circumstances" in the analysis. This study focuses on this aspect to fill the gap.

5. METHODOLOGY :

This study has used Halliday's Transitivity model as its main theoretical framework. Halliday says that there are three meta-functions of language: ideational function, interpersonal function and textual function. Language in its ideational function represents patterns of experience of the world due to which human beings build a mental depiction of reality, to understand their experience of what goes on around them and inside them. This reflective experiential aspect of meaning is called transitivity (Hu & Jiang, 2002). Transitivity is a grammatical system and it deals with different types of process which can be found in the language and the structures. Processes consist of processes,

participants, and circumstances. There are six types of processes: (1) material processes, (2) mental processes, (3) relational processes, (4) behavioural processes, (5) verbal processes, and (6) existential processes.

Material processes are processes of doing which include an Actor and usually a Goal. The Actor means the one that does something and the Goal implies directed to act. Mental processes are processes of sensing which comprise two potential participants, Sensor, and Phenomenon. The sensor is the conscious being that is feeling thinking or seeing. The phenomenon is what is sensed, felt, thought and seen. Mental processes can be divided into three subtypes: perception, affection and cognition. Relational processes are processes of being. There are three types of relational processes (1) intensive “x is a”, (2) circumstantial “x is at a” and possessive “x has a”, with the purpose to show the two kinds of relationship between a and x: “a is an attribute of x” and “a is the identity of x”. Behavioural processes are physiological and psychological behaviour such as breath, dream, and smile, cry, cough, etc. which usually have one participant, the Behaviour. Verbal processes are processes of saying which consist of three participants, the Sayer, the Receiver and the Verbiage. The Sayer is the addresser, the Receiver is the addressee and the Verbiage is the content of the message. Existential processes represent that something exists or happens. It is usually realized by re-construction (Hu & Jiang, 2002).

Types of Processes

Processes	Participants	Circumstances
Material Process	Actor-Process-Goal	
Mental Process	Sensor-Process-Phenomenon	
Relational Process	Attributive or Identifying Carrier-Process-Attribute Identified-Process-Identifier	Extent Location Manner Cause
Behavioral Process	Behavior-process	Accompaniment
Verbal Process	Sayer-Process-Receiver- Verbiage	Matter Role
Existential Process	Process-Existence	

The qualitative research design has been employed in this study. Qualitative research focuses on meaning i-e the researcher investigates “how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structure of the world” (Creswell, 1994). It is descriptive. This study used a descriptive design that is used to describe the characteristics of the phenomenon being study. The present study aims to describe the process types in Transitivity systems that are involved in the clauses used in the sort story “Tell-Tale Heart” and to determine the functions of verbal clauses. The data used in the present study has been taken from the short story written by E.A.Poe which was first published in 1843 in James Russell Lowell’s “The Pioneer”. The analysis covered all of the clauses till the death of the old man and clauses are given the numbering C1, C2, and C3 to make it easy to refer to them in the analysis.

6. DATA ANALYSIS:

Exemplary analysis has been given in this section to discuss the processes in the text by selecting some examples from the actual analysis. Complete analysis has been given after this discussion in form of a table.

6.1 Material Processes

The material process is related to the physical actions of a participant Actor, Goal. The story “Tell-Tale Heart” contains sentences that are narrations of the narrator of the story. So, descriptions and narrations of events are more than sentences carrying physical actions. Clauses that contain material processes come in the text frequently where the narrator, who is a killer in the story, kills the old man. The killing and hiding process of the corpse contains material process more frequently. On page 2, C18 carries the material process, “*I slowly opened his door*”. This clause is the material process where the Actor is “I” who is the narrator of the story and killer narrating his through the use of ‘I’. ‘Door’ is another participant in this process named Goal. This clause also carries a circumstance ‘manner’ by the use of the adverb ‘slowly’. Following this clause, C19-C24 all contain the material process. This is the part of the story where the narrator tells the reader how he frightened the old man by some of his connected actions. Before killing the old man he frightened him by entering his room silently. As he says

I stood there quietly (C22)

This clause contains ‘I’ as an Actor, which is a material process, and ‘there’ is a Goal. ‘Quietly’ is indicating ‘Manner’ Circumstance. He tells the reader how he stood there by the use of manner circumstances just to create an element of fear here. Then in the next clause, he tells the reader about his further action to frighten the old man. C23 is a material clause having participants of Actor as ‘I’ and Goal ‘the cloth’. He tells the reader here how he lifted the cloth through the use of manner circumstances by ‘carefully’. Another part of the story which contains material processes is the part in which the killer kills the old man. C56 is the initiating clause of this killing process which also contains

material process having participants ‘I’ as Actor and ‘into the room’ as Goal. Here circumstance has also been created through the use of ‘crying’ as Manner. The sentence which shows the killing of an old man contains two clauses C58 (a, b). *I fell upon him and held the bedcovers tightly over his head.* Both clauses are material processes. C58a has ‘I’ as Actor and ‘upon him’ as Goal while C58b has Goal participant which is ‘the bed cover’. Two circumstances have been indicated in a later clause to show how and where the process had been executed. Circumstances are ‘tightly’ as Manner and ‘over his bed’ as Location.

6.2 Mental Process

Halliday says that affection like fearing, liking, and cognition like thinking, perception like seeing; hearing, knowing, and understanding are subtypes of mental processes. The mental process is a kind of process which found frequently in the analysed text as compared to many other processes. The reason behind the perception and feeling of fear the writer create through the use of the mental process in the story. He wants to make the reader feel emotions of fear through the use of mental verbs such as hear, hate, love, hurt, feel, know, and see. Among them, he uses the mental verbs ‘hear and feel’ so frequently to explain the sounds which create fear in silence and darkness. He creates the whole atmosphere of awe by using the mental process to make his reader feel the same as the old man felt before his death. Firstly he tells his condition in C5 (a, b) that he could hear different kinds of unheard sounds. With the mental process, he uses ‘I’ and ‘sounds’ as Senser and Phenomenon respectively. In C5b he uses the same process with ‘I’ as Senser and ‘before’ circumstance of Time. In clauses C6 and C7 he repeatedly uses the verb ‘heard’ to create a mental process with Senser ‘I’ and Phenomenon ‘sounds’ along with circumstances of Location through phrases ‘from heaven’ and ‘from hell’ respectively. Again in C9 he uses the same verb ‘hear’ to create a mental process with Senser ‘you’ and Phenomenon ‘how healthy my mind is’. In the following sequence of clauses C10, C11, C12, C13, C14, the mental process has been employed through the use of verbs hate, love, hurt, want and think respectively. Through this sequence of mental processes, the writer tries to make the reader feel the intensity of those emotions which he had for the old man. He uses ‘I’ in almost every clause as a participant which tells us the dominant participation of the narrator throughout the happenings of the story.

Another sequence that employed the mental process is C23, C39, C40, C41, C42, and C43. He again uses verbs to hear, know, and feel repeatedly to create perception and feelings of his own and old man. In this sequence, the writer adds circumstances also to tell the reader about the happenings. Through the use of circumstances of Location, he tells the reader where those happenings took place. By adding circumstances to this sequence of clauses more dimensions to his going on. After killing the old man he again uses a mental process to tell about his feeling regarding the success of his purpose. C60: *“I felt that success was near”* contains ‘I’ as Senser ‘success was near’ as a phenomenon.

6.3 Relational and Existential Processes

Relational and existential processes are found in a good amount in the text but not as frequently as material and mental processes and more than Verbal and behavioural processes. C1, C4, C16, C34, C45, C47, and C51 are relational processes. Verbs like become and to be express or indicate the relational process. As in C16: *My blood became cold.* Where ‘my blood’ is Carrier and ‘cold’ is attributing here. In C34: *I became afraid,* ‘I’ is carrier and ‘afraid’ as an Attribute.

C25, C32, C49, C58, C54, and C55 are existential processes. For example C32: *I was at his door.* Where ‘I’ is an existent and circumstance of Location ‘at his door’ C54 and C55 contain ‘I’ and ‘the time’ as existent respectively with ‘someone must hear’ as Matter in C54 and ‘come’ and Matter in C55.

6.4 Verbal and behavioural processes

Verbal processes identified by verbs like say, tell, talk, etc. and the actual content of the message is called Verbiage. This story uses very few verbal processes. As in C2: *But why do you say that I have lost control of my mind.* This clause is a verbal process, ‘you’ as Sayer and ‘I have lost control’ as Verbiage. Another instance of the verbal process is C3 where the verbal process uses say as a verb. C8 and C27 also verbal processes where ‘I’ Sayer ‘you’ is a receiver and ‘how it happened’ as Verbiage in a later clause. Whereas in C27 Sayer is ‘I’, Receiver is ‘him’ and ‘how he slept’ is Verbiage.

Like the verbal process, the behavioural process is also used not so frequently in the text. Very few instances are found in this process. C15, C28, and C59 show the behavioural process through the use of verbs like look and smile. ‘The old man’ is Behavior, ‘at me’ is Behaviour in C15. C59: *I smiled.* Where ‘I’ is Behavior

Detailed Analysis Table

Clause Number	Participant	Process Type	Circumstances
C1	I, Very ill	Relational	
C2	You, control	Verbal	Accompaniment

C3	You, I, mad	Verbal, relational	
C4	My sense of hearing, more powerful	Relational	
C5a C5b	I, sounds, I	Mental, Mental	Time
C6	I, sounds	Mental	Location
C7	I, sounds	Mental	Location
C8	I, you	Verbal	Manner
C9	You, how healthy my mind is	Mental	
C10	I, the old man	Mental	
C11	I, him	Mental	
C12	He, me	Mental	
C13	I, his money	Mental	
C14	I, it was his eye	Mental	
C15	The old man, me	Behavioral	Manner
C16	My blood, cold	Relational	
C17	I, I had to kill the old man	Mental	Time
C18	I, door	Material	Manner
C19	The door	Material	
C20	I, my hand in	Material	
C21	I, a light	Material	Location, Manner, Accompaniment
C22	I, there	Material	Manner
C23	I, the cloth	Material	Manner
C24	The eye	Material	
C25(a, b)	It, the old man, I, I had to kill	Existential, Mental	
C26	I, his room	Material	
C27	I, him, how he had slept	Verbal	
C28	I, him	Behavioral	
C29	The hands of a clock	Material	Manner
C30	I, my power	Mental	Manner
C31	The old man, there	Material	
C32	I	Existential	Location
C33	He	Material	Manner, Location
C34	I, afraid	Relational	
C35	I, he could not see the opening of the door	Mental	
C36	I, my hand	Material	
C37	I, my hand		Accompaniment
C38	I, him	Mental	Location
C39	I, that he was sitting up	Mental	Location
C40	I, that he knew	Mental	Location
C41	He, me	Mental	Location
C42	He, me	Mental	Location
C43	He, death was standing	Mental	Location, Time
C44	I, the cloth	Material	Manner
C45	It, open	Relational	
C46	I, old man's face	Mental	
C47	The blood, like ice	Relational	Location
C48	I, a quick, low, soft sound	Mental	
C49	It	Existential	
C50	I, to stand	Material	Manner
C51	My anger, greater and more painful	Relational	
C52	It	Existential	
C53	My anger, fear	Relational	Time, Location

C54	I	Existential	Matter
C55	The time	Existential	
C56	I, into the room	Material	Manner
C57	The old man, a loud cry	Material	
C58a C58b	I, upon him, the bedcovers	Material	Manner, location
C59	I	Behavioral	
C60	I, success was near	Mental	
C61	The old man	Existential	

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

Transitivity analysis has been employed in this study to analyse the selected text from E.A.Poe’s “Tell-Tale Heart”. The unit of analysis was clause and 61 clauses were analysed. The analysis of the selected data revealed that all of the six processes mentioned by Halliday i.e. Mental, Material, Verbal, Behavioural, Relational, and Existential have been found in the text. The writer of the story who is the killer also used ‘I’ as a participant for different processes in almost every clause to narrate happenings in the story. Among the six processes, he has employed the ‘Mental’ process most frequently as compare to other processes. The main reason behind the frequent use of the mental process is the expression of psychological feelings and emotions of fear which he wanted to make the reader feel through verbs like hear, hate, love, hurt, feel, know and kill. The mental process is a kind of process which is related to the psychological perception of participants involved in the process. By frequent use of the mental process, the writer creates feelings of fear and awe as he feels himself during the happenings in the story. The material process is also found in the text but not as frequently as a mental process. The material process is related to the physical actions of the participants hence found in that part of the story frequently where the killer kills the old man. Other processes are also found in different parts of text but are less as above discussed processes. Moreover, circumstances found in the text are Location, Time and Manner, and Accompaniment. Among them, Location is most frequent and manner is frequent as compared to other circumstances.

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Appendix

- C1: I have been ill, very ill.
 C2: But why do you say that I have lost control of my mind.
 C3: Why do you say that I am mad?
 C4: My sense of hearing especially became more powerful.
 C5 (a, b): I could hear sounds I have never heard before.
 C6: I heard sounds from heaven.
 C7: I heard sounds from hell.
 C8: I will tell you how it happened.
 C9: You will hear how healthy my mind is.
 C10: I did not hate the old man.
 C11: I even loved him.
 C12: He had never hurt me.
 C13: I did not want his money.

C14: I think it was his eye.
C15: When the old man looked at me with his vulture eye.
C16: My blood became cold.
C17: I finally decided I had to kill the old man.
C18: I slowly opened his door.
C19: The door was opened wide enough.
C20: I put my hand in
C21: In my hand, I held a light covered over with a cloth
C22: I stood there quietly.
C23: Then, carefully, I lifted the cloth.
C24: Always the eye was closed.
C25: For it was not the old man I felt I had to kill.
C26: I went to his room.
C27: I asked him how he had slept.
C28: I looked in at him as he slept.
C29: The hands of a clock move more quickly.
C30: I felt so strongly my power.
C31: The old man was lying there.
C32: I was at his door.
C33: Suddenly he moved in his bed.
C34: I became afraid.
C35: I knew he could not see the opening of the door.
C36: I put in my head.
C37: I put in my hand, with the covered light.
C38: Nor did I hear him again lie down in his bed.
C39: I knew that he was sitting up in his bed.
C40: I knew that he knew that I was there.
C41: He could not hear me there.
C42: He felt me there.
C43: Now he knew that Death was standing there.
C44: Slowly, little by little, I lifted the cloth.
C45: It was open.
C46: I could not see the old man's face.
C47: Only that eye, that hard blue eye, and the blood in my body became like ice.
C48: Now I could hear a quick, low, soft sound, like the sound of a clock heard through a wall.
C49: It was the beating of the old man's heart.
C50: I tried to stand quietly.
C51: My anger became greater and more painful.
C52: But it was more than anger.
C53: In the quiet night, in the dark silence of the bedroom my anger became fear.
C54: I was sure someone must-hear.
C55: The time had come.
C56: I rushed into the room, crying, "Die! Die!"
C57: The old man gave a loud cry of fear.
C58: I fell upon him and held the bedcovers tightly over his head.
C59: I smiled.
C60: I felt that success was near.
C61: The old man was dead.