# Annabel Lee - Story Behind the Edgar Allan Poe

"Annabel Lee" is one of Edgar Allan Poe's most-famous poems.

Was it autobiographical?

The story is told that a young woman - named Annabel Lee - was part of a wealthy Charleston family. She fell in love with a Virginia sailor who was stationed in that South Carolina port town. The navy man wanted to marry the Southern girl.

However ... Annabel Lee's father did not approve of her suitor. Not only that ... he absolutely forbade his daughter to even see him.

Love prevailed, however ... at least for a time ... and the couple met in a local cemetery (where they thought no one would spot them). One day the suspicious father followed Annabel Lee. When he realized that his daughter had disobeyed him, he had her locked inside her bedroom.

The sailor had no choice. He could no longer spend time with his great love.

Soon thereafter, Annabel Lee contracted yellow fever and died of the dreaded sickness.

After the young sailor learned that his love had died, he returned to Charleston to see her one last time. It did him no good, however.

Annabel Lee's father refused to even let the young man know where his daughter would be buried. He had grave sites in the family plot "dug up," to keep his daughter's friend from learning the exact location of her remains.

That cruelty caused the young Virginian to grieve over the entire plot.

"Annabel Lee" - the poem - sounds like the story behind the Charleston legend. One of two things could be possible:

- Poe heard the story when he was in the Army and stationed at Fort Moultrie (which is located on Sullivan Island, near Charleston); or

- The story is about Poe himself. Local lore has it that he and a real girl, named Annabel Lee Ravenel, were close friends during Poe's tour of duty at Ft. Moultrie (during 1827-28). If this story is true, the young man who was turned-away - by the prominent Mr. Ravenel - was the future writer of the poem.

We will never know the real story behind this famous work. As far as anyone knows, Poe left no notes about it.


ANNABEL LEE

***Annabel Lee***

*It was many and many a year ago,*
*In a kingdom by the sea,*
*That a maiden there lived whom you may know*
*By the name of Annabel Lee; -*
*And this maiden she lived with no other thought*
*Than to love and be loved by me.*

*I was a child and she was a child,*
*In this kingdom by the sea;*
*But we loved with a love that was more than love -*
*I and my Annabel Lee -*
*With a love that the wingéd seraphs of Heaven*
*Coveted her and me.*

*And this was the reason that, long ago,*
*In this kingdom by the sea,*
*A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling*
*My beautiful Annabel Lee;*
*So that her high-born kinsmen came*
*And bore her away from me,*
*To shut her up in a sepulchre,*
*In this kingdom by the sea.*

*The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,*
*Went envying her and me -*
*Yes! - that was the reason (as all men know,*
*In this kingdom by the sea)*
*That the wind came out of the cloud by night,*
*Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.*

*But our love it was stronger by far than the love*
*Of those who were older than we -*
*Of many far wiser than we -*
*And neither the angels in Heaven above,*
*Nor the demons down under the sea,*
*Can ever dissever my soul from the soul*
*Of the beautiful Annabel Lee: -*

*For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams*
*Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;*
*And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes*
*Of the beautiful Annabel Lee: -*
*And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side*
*Of my darling - my darling - my life and my bride,*
*In her sepulchre there by the sea -*
*In her tomb by the sounding sea.*

For the Classics at AwesomeStories

## Credits:

"Annabel Lee," by Edgar Allan Poe - read by Carole Bos (creator of Awesome Stories).

Image of Annabel Lee by Mirella Black.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Annabel-Lee-Story-Behind-the-Edgar-Allan-Poe

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Annabel-Lee-Story-Behind-the-Edgar-Allan-Poe

Media Stream



Annabel Lee by Mirella Black

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/