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# Eureka: A Prose Poem

*By Edgar Allan Poe*



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## **Eureka: A Prose Poem By Edgar Allan Poe Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Eureka, Poe's testament, the synthesis of his analytic ideas, offers itself as a treatise on nothing less than cosmology. Having begun as a scientific lecture, it winds up as an apocalyptic revelation.... It may be read as a rationalistic counterstatement to the metaphysics of Transcendentalism, or as a pioneering experiment in the embryonic genre of science fiction.... 'Eureka!' is his heart-cry. 'I have found it!' he breathlessly seems to announce."

#### From the Back Cover

In this remarkable prose-poem, master storyteller Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) builds on known scientific truths to propound a universe governed by the immutable laws of attraction and repulsion, i.e., expansion and a return to unity. The irascible, vindictive God of the Old Testament and the Deists' Master Clockmaker are routed by Poe's pantheistic World Spirit who, through the force of expansion, is diffused throughout his creation. Moreover, we human beings are all part of this universal spirit and each of us is his own god. The end result of our being is not eternal torment but a return to the primal unity.

#### About the Author

Edgar Allan Poe (/poʊ/; born Edgar Poe; January 19, 1809 – October 7, 1849) was an American writer, editor, and literary critic. Poe is best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre. He is widely regarded as a central figure of Romanticism in the United States and American literature as a whole, and he was one of the country's earliest practitioners of the short story. Poe is generally considered the inventor of the detective fiction genre and is further credited with contributing to the emerging genre of science fiction. Poe was born in Boston, the second child of two actors. His father abandoned the family in 1810, and his mother died the following year. Thus orphaned, the child was taken in by John and Frances Allan of Richmond, Virginia. They never formally adopted him, but Poe was with them well into young adulthood. Tension developed later as John Allan and Edgar repeatedly clashed over debts, including those incurred by gambling, and the cost of secondary education for the young man. Poe quarreled with Allan over the funds for his education and enlisted in the Army in 1827 under an assumed name. It was at this time that his publishing career began, albeit humbly, with the anonymous collection of poems *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), credited only to "a Bostonian". With the death of Frances Allan in 1829, Poe and Allan reached a temporary rapprochement. However, Poe later failed as an officer's cadet at West Point, declaring a firm wish to be a poet and writer, and he ultimately parted ways with John Allan. Poe switched his focus to prose and spent the next several years working for literary journals and periodicals, becoming known for his own style of literary criticism. His work forced him to move among several cities, including Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City. In Baltimore in 1835, he married Virginia Clemm, his 13-year-old cousin. In January 1845, Poe published his poem "The Raven" to instant success. His wife died of tuberculosis two years after its publication. For years, he had been planning to produce his own journal *The Penn* (later renamed *The Stylus*), though he died before it could be produced. Poe died in Baltimore on October 7, 1849, at age 40; the cause of his death is unknown and has been variously attributed to alcohol, brain congestion, cholera, drugs, heart disease, rabies, suicide, tuberculosis, and other agents.

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