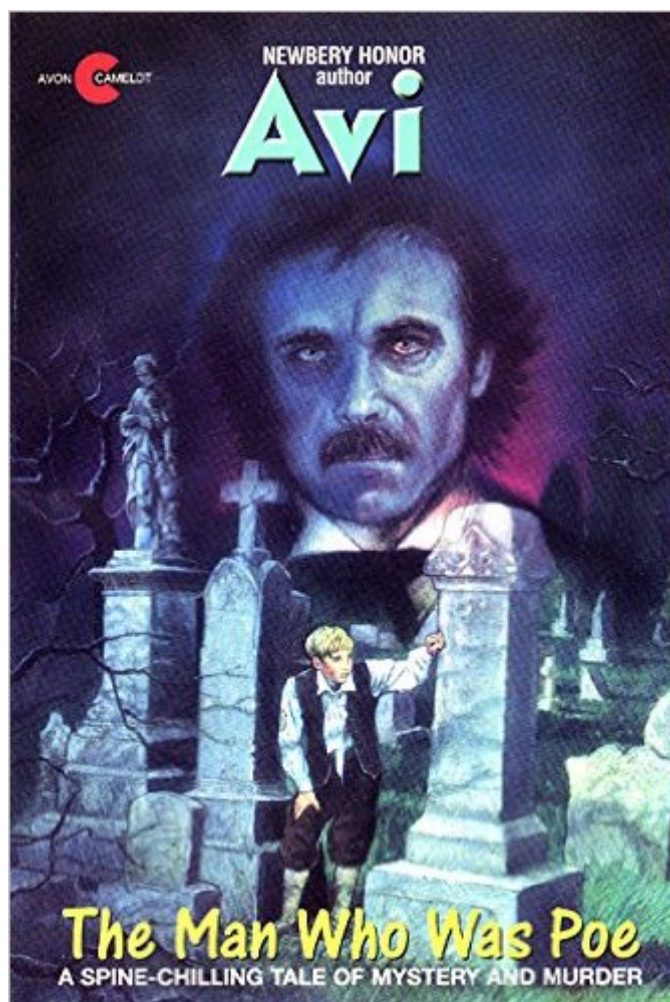


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The Man Who Was Poe



Synopsis

The Old City Lay Dark And Cold...It is night. And Edmund is alone. His mother is gone. His aunt, who went in search of her, is dead. His sister has disappeared. Edmund has no one. Except for a stranger of the night. A dark, mysterious stranger who flees from demons of his own...who follows Edmund with grim determination through the cold and shadow city, promising to help, but often hindering. A stranger who needs Edmund for purpose of his own!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I remember reading this book in middle-school and really enjoying it. Just the other day, and more than a decade later, I found my copy in a box of old books and on a nostalgic whim I grabbed it on my way out the door, for something to pass the time. I must say, to my surprise, I still really enjoyed it. Avi weaves an interesting suspense mystery of interlocking storylines, complete with gothic settings of graveyards and foggy streets in 1848 Providence, Rhode Island. And of course, we have the master of letters himself, Edgar Allan Poe, as a central character. He grudgingly helps eleven-year-old Edmund search for his missing sister and mother, more for reasons of his own than sympathy, as in the young boy he sees a mirror of himself and the potential for a great story. Poe, calling himself Auguste Dupin, his character from *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (history's first detective story), is depicted by Avi as a genius whose soul has been broken. Grief and alcohol have warped his mind and sensibility, and he attempts the courting of a wealthy widow in order to find not only love but some degree of normalcy in his existence. Death follows him everywhere and he is prone to spouts of delusion, where his story and reality are at times difficult to discern. His mood

shifts rapidly, mostly depending on drink, and his memory drifts on a tide of rum. Poe is not a likable character, but he is the guiding force. Avi's Poe seems more based upon the smear campaign and forged letters of Rufus Wilmot Griswold that followed his death, which presented him as a wicked drunkard, though scholarly evidence to the contrary has long been the accepted truth. This can be disheartening to Poe lovers like me, but it does make for a unique character in a young adult novel.

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