

Analyse the development of the scene and the actor in *The Fall of the house of Usher*

During the whole of a dark and soundless day near the end of the year when the clouds were hanging low in the heavens, I had been passing on horseback through country with little life or beauty and at length I found myself as evening fell within view of the house of Usher. I know not how it was-but with my first sight of the building, a sense of heavy gloom filled my spirit. I looked upon the scene before me\_ upon the house itself\_ upon the ground around it\_ upon the walls\_ upon the eye-like windows\_ upon a few decaying trees with a complete sadness of soul like no healthy, earthly feeling. There was coldness, a sickening of the heart, in which I could discover nothing to lighten the weight I felt. What was it?- I stopped to think- so fearful in my view of the house of Usher? It was a mystery to which I could find no answer.

I pulled my horse on the edge of a black and quiet lake that lay beside the building and looked there at the picture, upside down, of the ghastly trees and the vacant and eye-like window.

Nevertheless in this house of gloom, I was to spend several weeks. Its owner Roderick Usher, as a boy had been my friend, but many years had passed since our last meeting. A letter from him had lately reached me, a wild letter which demanded that I reply in person. He wrote of bodily illness, of a sickness of the mind, and of a desire to see me as his best and indeed his only friend. It was the heart in it\_ which didn't allow me to say no. Although as boys, we had been much together, yet I really knew little of my friend. I knew, however, that his family, a very old one, had long been famous for an understanding of all the arts, and for many quiet acts of kindness to the poor. I had learned too that the family had never been a large one, with many branches. The name had passed always from father to son and when people spoke of the house of Usher, they included both the family and the family home.

When I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its picture in the lake, there grew in my mind a strange fancy\_ a fancy so laughable that it only shows the force of the feelings which laid their weight on me. I really believed that about the whole house and the ground around it, the air itself was different. It was not the air of heaven, but it rose from the decayed trees, the gray wall, and the quiet lake- a sickly air that I could see, heavy, gray, slow-moving.

Shaking off from my spirit what must have been a dream, I looked more carefully at the building itself. The most noticeable thing about it seemed to be its great age. None of the walls had fallen yet the stones appeared to be in a condition of advanced decay. Perhaps the careful eye would have discovered the beginning of a break in the front of the building, making its way from the top down the wall until it became lost in the dark waters of the lake.