

Lou Reed

"The Tell-tale Heart"

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True
Nervous
very nervous

Madman

Why will you say that I am mad
The disease has sharpened my senses
not destroyed
not dulled them

Madman

The eye of a vulture
a pale blue eye
with a film overit

Listen
observe how healthily
and how calmly I tell this story

He had no passion for the old man
He was never insulted

He loved him

It was the eye the eye the eye

I made up my mind
To take his life forever

Passionless

The eye of a vulture

You should have seen me

How wisely I proceeded

To rid himself of the eye forever

With what dissimulation I went to work

Caution

I turned the latch on his door
and opened it

To work

To practice

I opened his door
and put in a dark lantern

Dark

Slowly I put my head in
Slowly I thrust it until in time I entered
I was in so far

He was in so far
he could see the old man sleep

And then I undid the lantern so a thin ray
fell upon the eye

The vulture eye

He did this for seven days

Seven days

But always the eye was closed
and so I could not do the work

And in the day he would greet the old man
calmly in his chamber

Calmly

Nothing is wrong and all is well

Knock, knock
who's there

Came night eight

Night eight

I was slower than a watch minute hand
The power that I had with the old man

not to even dream my secret thoughts

Secret thoughts

My sagacity

I could barely conceal my feelings of triumph

When suddenly the body moved

The body moved

But I went in even further
pushing the door open even further

Who's there

Who's there

I did not move a muscle
I kept quiet and still

The old man sat up in bed

In his bed

Who's there

I heard a groan
and knew it was a groan of mortal terror
not pain or grief

Oh no

It was the low stifled sound that arises
from the bottom of the soul
when overcharged with awe
I felt such awe welling up in my own bosom
deepening with its echo the terrors that distracted me
Knowing what the old man felt and

Pitying him

Although it made me laugh

Ha ha

He'd been lying awake since the first slight noise
He'd been lying awake thinking

Thinking

It is nothing but the wind

The wind

It is nothing but the house settling

The old man stalked with his black shadow

Death approaching

The mournful presence of the unperceived
causing him to feel my presence

Open the lantern

I saw the ray fall on the eye

On the eye

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