

Lenore  
A Play  
By  
Rene Zabel



Rene Zabel  
1248 Steed St.  
Ranson, WV 25438  
304-620-2484  
Rene@renezabel.com

SYNOPSIS

*Lenore* is a one act thriller set in 1879 and the 1920s. This is the love story of LENORE and LORD EDMOND. Edmond commissions an artist to paint Lenore, along with her raven, Simon. Lenore, who as a sickly child, wanted acceptance from her father, LORD SAMUEL, who blames Lenore for the death of his beloved wife, Lenore's mother; On Christmas Eve, 1879, Lenore, LORD WILLIAM, LADY PENELOPE, and Lord Samuel gather for brunch and to discuss the couple. Lord Samuel is set against the two lovers, an argument ensues, between Lenore and her Father. Lenore races out, she is hit by the carriage which is bringing EDMOND home to meet Lenore. She later succumbs to her injuries.

45 years later, Edmond's son LORD DUDLEY inherited when his Father, Lord Edmond, when Dudley went away to university. Lord Edmond slowly declined mentally over the years, eventually locked himself in his rooms. On the anniversary of Lenore's tragic accident, Lenore returns to the scene. Lord Dudley believes her to be a lost damsel in the snow storm. LADY HYACINTH and LORD THOMAS come for Christmas Eve dinner, where Lord Thomas sees Lenore as a threat to Lord Dudley. Lady Hyacinth reads tarot for Lenore, which causes Lenore to run from the house. Hyacinth finds the painting of Lenore from 1879, in Lord Edmond's old rooms. She and Lord Thomas beg Dudley to leave, but he refuses and stays behind with Lenore.

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
*William Peyton	Land Owner, Steel baron. Edmond's Father, Dudley's Grandfather.		M
*Edmond Peyton	Lord William's son. Lenore's love interest. Lord Dudley's Father	25-30	M
*Penelope Ainsworth	The Lady of Kightshayes. Lady Hyacinth's Mother		F
*Samuel Brightsmith	Lenore's Father. His wife became ill right after Lenore was born. She died when Lenore was a small child.		
*Dudley Peyton	A Gentleman Barrister. He lives in the manor with his butler, Barnes and Cook. His Mother passed away when he was an adolescent.	30s Male	
*Thomas Sutterfield	Second son of the Duke. has been friends with Lord Dudley since childhood. Thomas is very opinionated, cocky, but is loyal to his friends.	30s	Male
*Hyacinth Ainsworth	Life long friend of Lord Dudley. Her father is an Earl and quite wealthy. She is very eccentric. Wears men's clothing in private.	20s/30s	
Lenore Brightsmith	Because she was a sickly child and couldn't play outside, she didn't have friends growing up. Her Father had little patience with illness.	20's	
*BARNES	The quintessential English Butler.		

OS voice:  
Edmond's wife

\* Characters can be doubled with Sir Edmond - Lord Dudley, Lord William - Barnes, Lady Penelope - Lady Hyacinth, Lord Samuel - Lord Thomas.

#### Scene List

Prologue: Peyton family lounge, afternoon, 1879

Scene One: Peyton family den, afternoon, 1879

Scene Two: Peyton family den, night, 1925

Scene Three: Peyton family den, night, Christmas Eve

Scene Four: Lord Edmond's rooms.



**LENORE**

PROLOGUE

Non specific location. Mid to late 1800's. Down stage an easel with a large canvas, the artist in unseen, with the exception of their legs behind the canvas. LENORE stands in a pose, holding a birdcage with a raven inside.

**LENORE**

(singing)

THREE RAVENS SAT UPON THE TREE  
HEY DOUN HEY DERRIE DAY  
THREE RAVENS SAT UPON THE TREE  
HEY DOUN  
THREE RAVENS SAT UP ON THE TREE  
AND THEY WERE BLACK AS BLACK COULD BE  
AND SING LA DO AN LA DO A DAY

(to the raven)

Who is my pretty boy?

(The raven trills and clicks)

Yes...yes you are...my lovely fellow.

(EDMOND enters, crosses to the canvas. LENORE crosses to EDMOND.)

**EDMOND**

(raises his hand to stop her)

Do not move a muscle...My darling...Perfection.

(EDMOND moves around from behind the canvas.)

I am happy we commissioned this work...Such an angelic subject.

**LENORE**

My darling, I am not angelic...just a mere mortal.

(EDMOND crosses to LENORE, kisses her hand)

**EDMOND**

You, my love...You can never be considered a mere mortal. The goddesses Aphrodite and Persephone do not hold a candle to you.

**LENORE**

Edmond, you are such a boon to my soul. I do adore you, my heart.

(EDMOND crosses back to the painting)

**EDMOND**

Come... look at your celestial image. I see an angel...a Goddess.

**LENORE**

(runs her finger across her bow, down her cheek)

I do look...pretty.

**EDMOND**

(sighs)

I wish you could see how earth shatteringly beautiful you are. Everyone will see tomorrow, but tonight we dance...Come, we will be late for the ball.

(They exit, lights dim)

## SCENE ONE

Lights up on the parlor in WILLIAM PEYTON's home; Two chairs with a table between; a Settee across.

WILLIAM PEYTON, SAMUEL BRIGHTSMITH stand with brandy snifters as PENELOPE AINSWORTH sits with a pack of Tarot cards in her lap, in an armchair drinking sherry.

(WILLIAM crosses to the painting)

**PENELOPE**

William, what is that?

**WILLIAM**

It is a painting Edmond commissioned.

**PENELOPE**

How thrilling. May I see.

**WILLIAM**

I really think we should wait for Edmond.

**SAMUEL**

I sorely hate to get you in the thick of this, Penelope.

**PENELOPE**

It is no bother, truly. If I can be of assistance--

**SAMUEL**

Penny, you know the situation...Edmond and Lenore...  
(shakes his head)

**PENELOPE**

Yes, I know they have grown quite fond of each other. What I am unable to understand is why all the fuss? Especially from you Samuel, surely you can see how close they have become.

**WILLIAM**

Edmond asked for her hand in marriage...

**PENELOPE**

That is wonderful news...then...what...

**WILLIAM**

Samuel has refused to give his blessing.

**SAMUEL**

And I will not.

**PENELOPE**

Now, Samuel, you must give these two hearts an opportunity to flourish.

**SAMUEL**

The situation, as noted, is not a favorable match. (beat) No offense to your boy, William.

**PENELOPE**

(places her glass on the table,  
begins to shuffle the cards.)

Whatever could be unfavorable, Samuel? They are two young people, ready for their lives to begin. How can you deny that chance?

**SAMUEL**

I cannot allow it. Lenore is a sick child.  
(LENORE stands just offstage,  
She overhears the conversation  
rushes to her Father.)

**LENORE**

(smiles slightly)

Papa, Edmond knows of my illness, he wants me anyway. He care not if I can run up the stairs. He sees me for who I am..

**SAMUEL**

(through clenched teeth)

Lenore! You will not embarrass me or yourself in this way.

**LENORE**

I am begging you PaPa, let us have our life, no matter how short lived it may well be. Why don't you want me to be happy? MaMaw would want me to have some happiness.

(She pauses out of breath)

**SAMUEL**

See there, you are out of breath just from speaking. Besides, you know nothing of happiness.

**LENORE**

How can you say that? Everyday I am alive is happiness. Every minute I feel Edmond near me, is pure joy!

(LENORE twirls around in a dance, laughing.)