

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,

That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

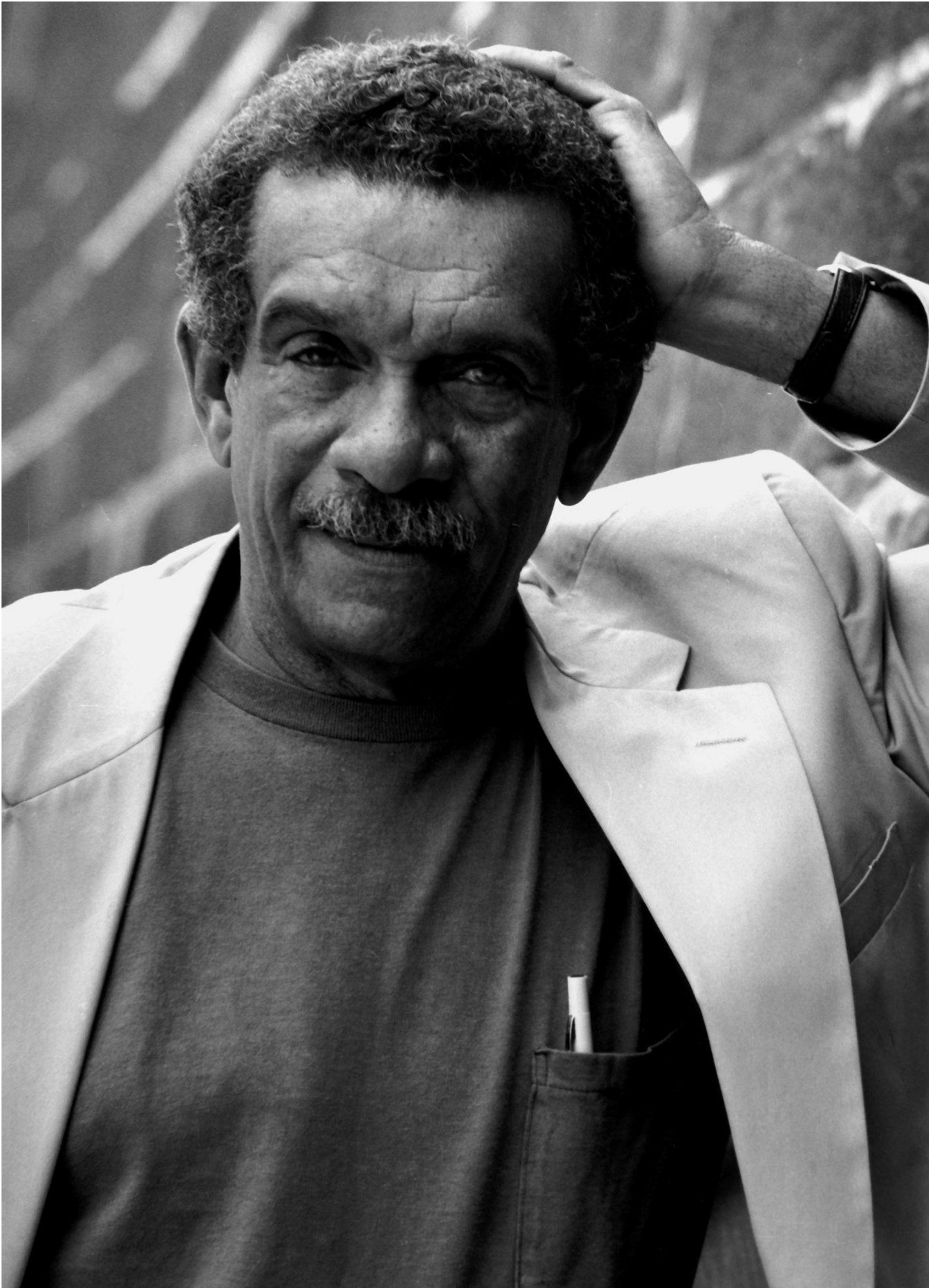
I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of Heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

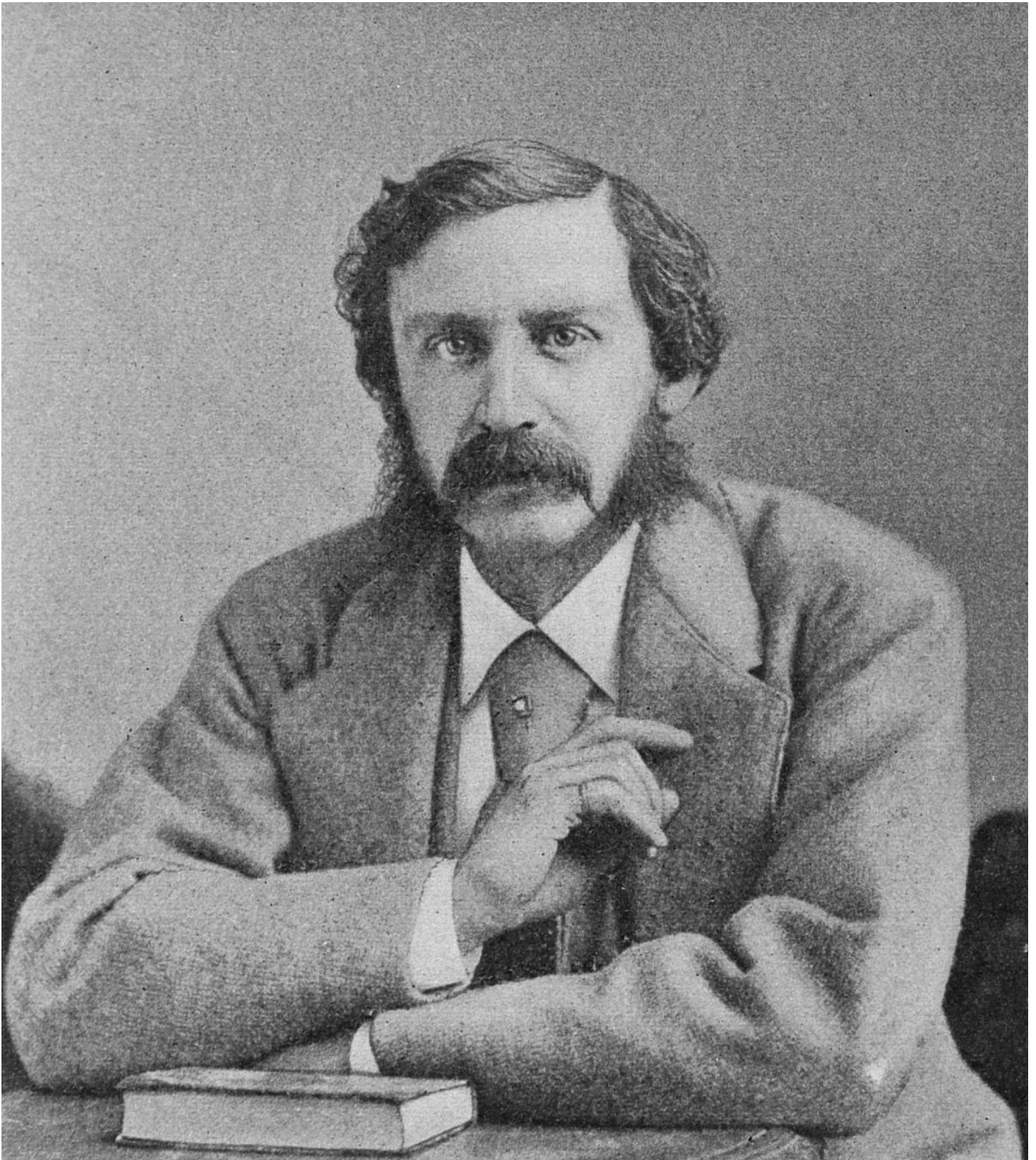
For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea.



Derek Walcott (1930-2017)

Thanksgiving

Miraculous as when a small cloud of cabbage-whites
circles a bush, the first flakes of the season
spun over Brookline, on Beacon; the afternoon lights
would come on by four, but everyone said, "So soon?"
at the multiplying butterflies, though it was late November,
but also because they had forgotten the miracle,
though the trees were stricken and brief day's ember
didn't catch in their firewood; they did not recall
the elation of flakes and butterflies that their element
is a joy quickly forgotten, and thus with the fall
certainly gone, the leaves dimmed, their flair spent,
the old metaphor whispered to everyone's mouth
about age, white hair, the Arctic virginity of death,
that the flakes spun like ashes; but before my heart fled south,
my farewell confirmed by the signature of your breath,
white butterflies circling, settling in your hair, that could soothe
your closed eyelids trembling like cabbage-whites
on my island road, the sea's scales stuttering in the sun.



Bret Harte (1836-1902)

Fate

"The sky is clouded, the rocks are bare,
The spray of the tempest is white in air;
The winds are out with the waves at play,
And I shall not tempt the sea to-day.

"The trail is narrow, the wood is dim,
The panther clings to the arching limb;
And the lion`s whelps are abroad at play,
And I shall not join in the chase to-day."

But the ship sailed safely over the sea,
And the hunters came from the chase in glee;
And the town that was builded upon a rock
Was swallowed up in the earthquake shock.



George Arnold (1834-1865)

September

Sweet is the voice that calls
From the babbling waterfalls
In meadows where the downy seeds are flying;
And soft the breezes blow,
And eddying come and go
In faded gardens where the rose is dying.

Among the stubbled corn
The blithe quail pipes at morn,
The merry partridge drums in hidden places,
And glittering insects gleam
Above the reedy stream,
Where busy spiders spin their filmy laces.

At eve, cool shadows fall
Across the garden wall,
And on the clustered grapes to purple turning;
And pearly vapors lie
Along the eastern sky,
Where the broad harvest-moon is redly burning.

Ah, soon on field and hill
The wind shall whistle chill,
And patriarch swallows call their flocks together,
To fly from frost and snow,
And seek for lands where blow
The fairer blossoms of a balmier weather.

The cricket chirps all day,
"O fairest summer, stay!"
The squirrel eyes askance the chestnuts browning;
The wild fowl fly afar
Above the foamy bar,
And hasten southward ere the skies are frowning.

Now comes a fragrant breeze
Through the dark cedar-trees,
And round about my temples fondly lingers,
In gentle playfulness,
Like to the soft caress
Bestowed in happier days by loving fingers.

Yet, though a sense of grief
Comes with the falling leaf,
And memory makes the summer doubly pleasant,
In all my autumn dreams
A future summer gleams,
Passing the fairest glories of the present!