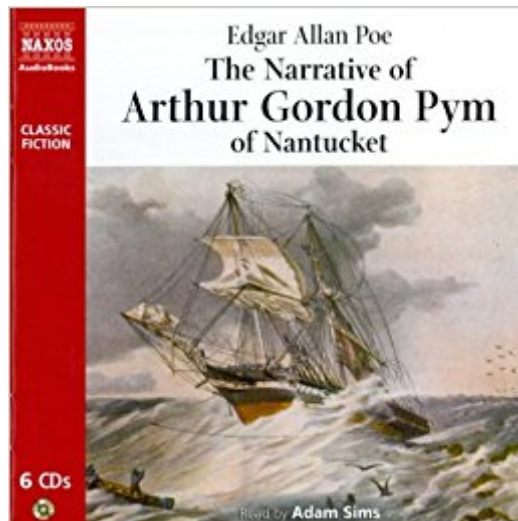




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The Narrative Of Arthur Gordon Pym Of Nantucket (Classic Fiction)



Synopsis

"The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym," the only full-length novel that Edgar Allan Poe wrote, is the story of a boy, Pym, who stows away aboard a whaling ship. Along with Augustus, the captain's son, Arthur Gordon Pym avoids disaster aboard the ship while witnessing a series of incredible events. Rich with symbolism and allegory, "The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" is an exciting gothic sea adventure that greatly influenced the genre of the maritime novel.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Edgar Allen Poe's only novel, is read with engaging energy by Adrian Sims and unfolds with the vividness and horrid logic of a dream. It begins with a prank, when young Pym stows away to be with a friend on a Nantucket brig. Mutiny leads to his claustrophobic incarceration (a familiar Poe theme), then shipwreck, with hunger and thirst agonisingly detailed. After narrowly escaping massacre on an island where even the teeth of natives are black, the two survivors sail into a snowy white curtain of white to be welcomed by huge angelic figures. Bizarre but well worth the voyage. - Christina Hardyment, The Times Over-the-top and hugely enjoyable Kati Nicholl, Daily Express

The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket by Edgar Allan Poe In his late teens, Arthur Gordon Pym, hero of Edgar Allan Poe's only full-length novel, runs away to sea with his friend, Augustus Bernard, on his father's vessel, the American whaling brig, Grampus. Their plan is that Arthur will start the voyage as a stowaway, until they are far enough out to sea to prevent his return to Nantucket. Nothing goes according to plan, however. A couple of days out, a mutiny forces

Augustus to conceal Arthur's presence for his safety. Not only Arthur's fate, but his very life is in question as conditions deteriorate, and the forces of man and nature rise against him. The tale is actually in two parts, the first records this voyage of the *Grampus*, the second deals with an ill-conceived and somewhat fantastical voyage to Antarctica. Poe's sense of the macabre and unexpected pervades the novel, creating an ever-rising suspense. Adam Sims, a veteran of radio, television, and theater performances, renders a very successful recounting of Arthur's tale, most of which is delivered in the first person. Sims conveys Arthur's naivete, adventurous spirit, ingenuity, and optimism concerning all the perils that befall him during the two journeys. This audiobook will appeal to adult and teen readers alike who love sea stories with a captivating story line and laden with heightened suspense. Several graphic passages dealing with cannibalism and violence may not be appropriate for junior high audiences. - Susan Allison, Soundcommentary.com

Edgar Allan Poe's only long fiction has provoked intense scholarly discussions about its meaning since its first publication. The novel relates the adventures of Pym after he stows away on a whaling ship, where he endures starvation, encounters with cannibals, a whirlpool, and finally a journey to an Antarctic sea. It draws on the conventions of travel writing and science fiction, and on Poe's own experiences at sea, but is ultimately in a category of its own. Appendices include virtually all of the contemporary sources of exploration and south polar navigation that Poe consulted and adapted to the narrative, together with reviews and notices of Pym and a sampling of responses to the novel from a wide array of authors, from Herman Melville to Jules Verne. Seven illustrations are also included. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

This is one of two of Mr. Poe's works referred to by Stephen King in his book *Roadwork*, the other being *Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar*. Both refer to the experience of a person at the moment of death. I did not realize when I started reading this (a freebie from) that it is Poe's only novel, and a long one it is! Interestingly, I also started reading an H. P. Lovecraft compendium, which includes *At the Mountains of Madness*, which refers to the Pym narrative. So, before going further in the Lovecraft story, I vowed to finish the Poe story. And a very long and at times very draggy story it is: the tale dates from 1838 and tells of the protagonist being helped by his friend, the son of a sea captain, to stow away on the *Grampus*, for a sea adventure. The narrative actually is fairly exciting for the majority of this first part of the book, entailing mutiny, a shipwreck, cannibalism for survival, and meeting up with another ship whose crew is rotting corpses. They are eventually rescued by

another ship, the *Jane Guy*, whose crew is on a trip to the South Pole. This second part of the book is a very lengthened geography and maritime lecture, enumerating many longitude/latitude locations and the various small islands of the South Pacific (a good atlas/globe/GoogleMaps at the ready helps). I found this part boring and interminable. The third part enters into the realm of fantasy, in that the environs of Antarctica (again the map) is of a more temperate climate and peopled by primitive tribes who are initially friendly but who turn out to be savage and murderous. There are a number of what appear to be ancient symbolic runes that are not fully explained, and the ending, in which the survivors escape in a canoe only to view a very mysterious large figure, abruptly ends the tale. I've read some possible interpretations, but remain frustrated. Interestingly, those guys at included an excerpt from Felix Parma's book, *The Map of the Sky* at the end. It's a fantasy in which the protagonist is H. G. Wells, and how he came to write *The War of the Worlds*. In this book (I'm part way through it), Mr. Poe is a gunnery sergeant on the *Annwan*, the exploration ship headed by Jeremiah Reynolds, to test the *Hollow Earth Theory* (which maintains that the South Pole is the entrance to the center of the Earth, which has its own climate and civilization). In actuality, Poe was reportedly strongly influenced by Reynolds in writing this story. *The Map of the Sky* goes on to indicate that a Martian craft had crashed in the Antarctic, with an escaped Martian wreaking havoc on the *Annwan's* crew and is responsible for its destruction, but those details are for another review. Three stars, then, for *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. By the way, I've also finished *In the Mountains of Madness* and its review will be included in the Lovecraft compendium review. Good story.

I've read that this book influenced Herman Melville and Jules Verne among others. There is no doubt about that. A few times I actually thought I was reading Moby Dick. Some of the descriptions were real chores to plow through as a reader. Later in the story I thought I had stumbled onto *Mysterious Island* or *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. I really enjoy Poe's poetry and short stories, but this...all I can say is that if anybody knew how to end a story it was Poe. Whether this ending was what he had in mind when he started writing or just took this ending on the fly, we will never know, but wow! When he decided it was time to end it, he ended it. There have been other books that have left me wanting for more but none like this. Was this ending a joke or sheer genius? I prefer to think genius. Anyway, four stars. Too wordy and cerebral to be five stars for me. Oh, and I see where Jules Verne actually wrote a sequel to this book as did Charles Romeyn Dake. I've

ordered both. Should be fun.

I'm a huge fan of Poe but I hadn't read this novel before we used it in an American Lit class. It's just not as well known as his short stories. It's a sea adventure and it has elements of just about every kind of sensational literature that was being written at the time. It has shipwrecks, cannibalism, treacherous natives, even a nod to the hollow earth theory. It won't necessarily remind you of the other writings of Poe but I enjoyed it throughly. It was one of my favorite novels we read in that class. Don't go into it expecting to be horror in the vein of *The Pit and the Pendulum*. Go into knowing that this is a Poe version of a sea adventure and all that might entail. I see this as one of those books I'll be back to read again.

This is a sensationalistic and, at times, gruesome novel. That said, it's also quite brilliant, and, if you ask me, it directly influenced Melville in the writing of *Moby Dick*. Poe wrote only this one novel, and it was serialized, but it has the same careful construction, artistry, and hidden meanings that his great short works do. Most critics find this to be a fascinating, albeit confusing work. It's definitely not your typical Saturday afternoon, feel-good novel, but if you're a fan of high literature (or sea fiction), this is a rewarding read, with an ending you won't soon forget.

Combine Robert Louis Stevenson with Jules Verne and you have Edgar Allen Poe's classic adventure tale of *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*. In some ways this sole novel of Edgar Allen Poe is an extraordinary shipboard adventure filled with pirates and mutineers and in others it is a glimpse into fantastical imagined worlds similar to ones we have seen in works of Jules Verne and it is no wonder as this work has influenced writers as Jules Verne and Herman Melville and more recently Pym by Mat Johnson. It starts out as an adventure story as Pym and his buddy Augustus conjure up a scheme in which Arthur will stowaway on Augustus' father ship to set out on a seafaring adventure. As one might expect with Poe things don't go quite as planned and the book is a diary of young Arthur's improbable misadventures. Surprisingly Poe gives detailed accounts about the dynamics and structure of the ocean vessel. I had to wonder if he might at one time have fantasized about being a sailor or explorer. It does seem his fancy was caught by the tale of two seafaring survivors and thus he wrote the book. While it does have the dated feel, it is still a wonderful adventure read, fast paced and entertaining throughout.

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