



UNIVERSIDAD DE JAÉN
Facultad de Humanidades y Ciencias de la Educación

Trabajo Fin de Grado

**Translation of *Berenice*
(1835) into the Comic
and its Evolution through
Time**

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Abstract

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 - 1849) was an American short-story writer and poet who is known to be one of the best gothic literature authors along with Bram Stoker, Mary Shelley and Oscar Wilde, among others. He was especially concerned with the cultivation of Dark Romanticism. His works deal with mystery, the macabre, romanticism and the supernatural. He converts the ordinary into drama. Some of his most popular works are “The Gold-Bug” (1843), “The Raven” (1845) and “The Cask of Amontillado” (1846). These stories have been analyzed exhaustively, however, other of his lesser-known tales should be given more consideration. These works are as good as the aforementioned works or even better. An illustration of this is the fact that quite a lot of his tales have been adapted into different ways or taken as inspiration for other authors. In this Final Degree Project, different comic adaptations of “Berenice” (1835) will be analyzed and compared with the original short story in order to show that even his less acknowledged stories are so exceptional that they have been adapted several times (from professional to amateur writers) and even taken as an influence for movie filming. The selection for the analyses includes the following adaptations: *Os Dentes de Berenice* (1962) Clásicos de Terror 24, *Berenice!* (1967) EERIE 11, *Berenice* (1968) Clásicos de Terror 6, *Los Dientes de Berenice* (1969) El Monje Loco 74, *Berenice* (1974) Scream 7, *Berenice* (1975) Creepy Stories 70, *Berenice* (2007) Cthulhu" #2 magazine, *Berenice* (2009) Historia y Arte Omar Hirsig, *Berenice* (2012) Dark Horse Presents #16, *Berenice* (2020) EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SNIFTER OF TERROR Season Two #5.

Keywords: Egaeus, Berenice, teeth, obsession, adaptation, representation, comic.

1. Resumen

Edgar Allan Poe (1809 - 1849) fue un escritor de relatos cortos y poeta americano conocido por ser uno de los mejores autores de literatura gótica junto con Bram Stoker, Mary Shelley y Oscar Wilde, entre otros. Estaba especialmente interesado en el cultivo del romanticismo oscuro. Sus obras tratan sobre el misterio, lo macabro, el romanticismo y lo sobrenatural. Su pretensión era explotar la esencia dramática y macabra de la cotidianeidad. Algunas de sus obras más conocidas son “El Escarabajo de Oro” (1843), “El Cuervo” (1845) y “El Barril de Amontillado” (1846). Estas historias han sido estudiadas hasta la extenuación, sin

embargo, algunas de sus obras menos conocidas deberían ser mucho más reconocidas, ya que la calidad de estas es comparable e incluso superior a las anteriormente citadas. Un ejemplo de esto es la cantidad de veces que sus cuentos han sido adaptados o han servido como inspiración a otros autores. El objetivo de este Trabajo de Fin de Grado es analizar adaptaciones llevadas al cómic del relato “Berenice” (1835) y compararlas con su correspondiente historia original con el propósito de demostrar que incluso sus relatos más infravalorados tienen una calidad tan constatada que han sido adaptados en multitud de ocasiones (desde escritores profesionales hasta aficionados) e incluso usados como fuente de inspiración para el rodaje de películas. La selección para el análisis incluye las siguientes adaptaciones: *Os Dentes de Berenice* (1962) Clásicos de Terror 24, *Berenice!* (1967) EERIE 11, *Berenice* (1968) Classicos de Terror 6, *Los Dientes de Berenice* (1969) El Monje Loco 74, *Berenice* (1974) Scream 7, *Berenice* (1975) Creepy Stories 70, *Berenice* (2007) Cthulhu" #2 magazine, *Berenice* (2009) Historia y Arte Omar Hirsig, *Berenice* (2012) Dark Horse Presents #16, *Berenice* (2020) EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SNIFTER OF TERROR Season Two #5.

Palabras clave: Egaeus, Berenice, dientes, obsesión, adaptación, representación, cómic.

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I have the moral commitment to include this section because I deeply feel I must thank all the people that have helped and supported me during all my life. Without them it would have been impossible to carry out this work.

Thanks to my friends Carlos, Carmen, Isa, Jesús and Lola for showing me since we were three years old that I will always be able to count on them, supporting me in my life decisions when no one else did.

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Words have no power to impress the mind without the exquisite horror of their reality.
—Edgar Allan Poe

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1. Introduction and Justification

An adaptation can add or simplify the original plot. This fact does not mean an adaptation is good or bad. An adaptation should not be even evaluated in terms of fidelity to the original story. It has to be born in mind that an adaptation is an original work by itself, therefore, maybe the author's intention is to approach the same story, but in a different way: *Complete fidelity to the text should not become a criterion for the evaluation of an adaptation* (Vlasyuk, 2015:18). For this aspiration, Mcfarlane stands out two points that can be applied for the comic translation: *(a) in the transposition process, just what is it possible to transfer or adapt from novel to film; and (b) what key factors other than the source novel have exercised an influence on the film version of the novel?* (1996:22). Once said this, some basic notions about the translations of short stories into comics should be taken into account:

- Approach to comic: Reading a comic is completely different from reading a 'novelle'. A comic involves a more active participation from the reader. The information is taken from the drawings and not only from the text. While the descriptions in a novel are exhaustive, and the information is presented from left to right in the order the author wants the reader to get it, in a comic, the reader has to pay attention to the scene, colors, lights, etc. The comics' artists can innovate regarding the structure: *Every comics reader knows from experience that, in practice, even when the gaze functions like an 'irremovable beam', the eye's movements on the surface of the page are relatively erratic and do not respect any precise protocol* (Groensteen, 2007: 47). The reading pattern can vary in every page. E.g. Structured in panels, a single illustration that represents a scene on one page, (splash page), sequences read up to down, left to right, etc. Information is taken differently. The reader can even guess what is going to happen just looking at the drawing.
- Narrative point of view: During the process of translation, the artist can struggle with the representation of a first-person narrator story, as Ferstl states: *a text narrated in the first person is inevitably drawn toward a third person point of view in the adaptation, even if parts from the original are prominently featured in the comic* (2010: 62). It is impossible not to represent the narrator if this one is the protagonist. Textual elements such as word boxes are used to fix this ([See Picture 5](#)). They provide information and

narration as if they were a voice-over of the main character. Anyway, despite this technique, the perspective tends to be closer to the third person narrator ([See Picture 3](#)).

- **Comics' Representation:** The work of a translator is based on constructing images based on textual elements in a process that Beineke calls "reverse ekphrasis" (2011:25). Artists construct their own way of drawing, being characterized by the use of certain techniques instead of others. E.g. Cartooning, realism, etc. This fact can make them stand out among others, nevertheless, adapting every single work with the same style carries out problems. A horror story does not fit within a cartoonist style. The scary tone would shift. However, changing suddenly the drawing style on certain pages of a comic can produce an impact and shock, making the themes changes too E.g. An unexpected murder in a cartoon comic: *In a book in which all the other pages are regular, a page that is suddenly distinguished by a special configuration carries and extremely strong impact.* (Groensteen, 2007: 97). Drawing does not express all the nuances of a story anyway. Artists make use of visual allusions to fill these lacks, such as in *Berenice* (2009) Historia y Arte Omar Hirsig, in which the adapter makes use of images of a talking raven to allude the fact that the protagonist is unable to distinguish between the reality and his illusions ([See Picture 2](#)). Something to bear in mind is that all the drawing techniques are fit for comic translation, it is a matter of taste.
- **Characterization:** Comic books are able to use literacy techniques for characterization purposes such as manner of speech, thoughts, etc. But due to the visual characteristic of adaptations, shaping a character is more accurate. The reader achieves a better understanding of certain facts, especially physical ones. Comic books are also able to represent the mind of the characters both, textually and visually. The artists can describe the mind of characters even sharper: *Like literature, [are] in no position to compete with photography or film in the representation of external reality, but [are] particularly well suited to present individual subjective experience that includes distortions and internal deviations.* (Vanderbeke, 2010: 112). E.g. Egaeus' obsession with teeth ([See Picture 9](#)).
- **Themes, motifs and symbols:** These are meant to remind the reader of a specific meaning during the whole story. They are presented in the comic in different ways:
 - **Double pages:** Two parallel pages dependent on each other in order to show thematic elements by antithesis or contradiction: *pages situated opposite each other are dependent on a natural solidarity, and predisposed to speak to each other. The layout, the color, and the effects of interweaving are the principle*

parameters implicated in this conception of ‘doubling’ (Groensteen, 2007: 35)
([See Picture 9](#))

- Framing: It consists in the placement of a specific frame in a panel. The purpose of this to make the reader stop and analyze in order to highlight a theme: *‘When he “meets” a frame, the reader is taken to presuppose that, within the perimeter that has been drawn, there is a content to be deciphered. The frame is always an invitation to stop and to scrutinize* (Groensteen, 2007: 54) ([See Picture 10](#)).
- Braiding (Term coined by Groensteen) is the use of shapes, devices, patterns, etc. repeated within panels in order to remind constantly of the main themes: *braiding deploys itself simultaneously in two dimensions, requiring them to collaborate with each other: synchronically, that of the co-presence of panels on the surface of the same page; and diachronically, that of the reading, which recognizes in each new term of a series a recollection or an echo of an anterior term* (Groensteen, 2007: 147). ([See Picture 11](#)).

Edgar Allan Poe’s works have been adapted all over the world in countless movies, TV programs, illustrated editions, etc. Among all the American authors ever existed he is possibly the most adapted one into the comic format. The first comic series ever published were based on short superhero, science fiction stories. Soon, the audience got bored of this repetitive genre, so they demanded horror and supernatural stories. The dark stories of Poe were fit for inspiration or straightforward representation. Poe was not only chosen because of the topics the reader demanded, but because of the financial benefits, since his stories were in public domain: *Potential financial profit also plays an important role when it is decided what artwork will be adapted* (Vlasyuk, 2015:18). And because they thought that his narratives were fit and attractive for *both knowing and unknowing audiences* (Hutcheon, 2012: 4.8). According to M. Thomas Inge (2001: 2), two hundred instances of Edgar Allan Poe have been adapted. Apparently, as it is stated in his research, Poe’s works have been translated since the 1940’s (2001: 3). The series that has adapted Poe’s short stories to a wider extent is *Classic Illustrated* (over sixty editions) and, actually, this was the first comic series that ever adapted his tales: *[it] has devoted no fewer than five issues to the poetry and tales of Poe* (Royal, 2007:55). The establisher of the series, Albert Lewis Kanter, published for the first time in 1944 two poems of Edgar Allan Poe, starting at that time one of many adaptations of this writer. His main goal was to introduce classic literature to his readers. These poems’ representations were “Annabel Lee” (1849), illustrated by Rolland Livingstone; and “The Bells” (1849) illustrated by Louis Zansky. These poems were

chosen because they are short enough not to exceed a certain number of pages in order to be acknowledged as a “Second Class Magazine” and enjoy more economic benefits concerning its distribution: *aspecto muy importante en un país tan extenso como Estados Unidos* (Sáez de Adana Herrero, 2010:2). The first story by Poe to be adapted was “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841) by Arnold L. Hicks in July 1944. This adaptation was only concerned with the inclusion of the original text. The quality of the art was poor, as Sáez de Adana claims: *No solo la calidad de los dibujos era discutible, sino que la secuenciación gráfica utilizada para narrar la historia no era la más adecuada* (2010:3); and some important themes were lost due to the drawings, such as the detective themes. The cover page of the story shows a huge gorilla, which totally ruins the mystery of the crime ([See Picture](#))¹. These first series of comics were presented as a kind of anthology. An important change happened in the illustration of Poe’s narratives when, in 1990 (revival of *Classics Illustrated*), Gahan Wilson illustrated nine poems by Poe (*The Raven and Other Poems*). He established a new way of illustrating for the coming generation of translation artists. As Vlasyuk acknowledges: *The artist manages to combine soft lines and pastel colors with surrealistically twisted shapes and dark themes of death and madness* (2015: 40). Although innovative, it was a failure in terms of representation because it was not divided into panels and many pages lacked illustrations; therefore, the ambiguous characteristic tone of the comic was missing.

Two Periods can be distinguished concerning the representation of these stories. From 1940 to 1969 and from 1990 to nowadays. These periods of time are divided due to the disappearance of *Classics Illustrated* in 1969 and its revival in 1990. The first period is composed of adaptations that were mere representations of the original story. The second period, as a result of the inclusion of new illustrators and translators, is composed of adaptations whose main intention was to achieve the same Poe’s aesthetics but with different contexts, settings, endings, illustrations, etc. These were not literal translations. As Royal quotes: *since the late 1990s several comics haven given a new twist to Poe’s stories and poetry by opting for nonliteral translations through differentiated contexts, ahistorical settings, unresolved endings...* (2007:55). The first group is concerned with the plot, whereas the second one surely focusses on aspects such as the imagery (minimal use of dialogues). An interesting fact regarding the first period’s adaptations is the inclusion of a rational narrator. This figure develops a feeling of complicity with the reader.

¹ [Illustration]. (2018, August 27). The Murders In The Rue Morgue By Edgar Allen Poe.
<https://www.pulpanypoison.com/edgar-allan-poe/the-murders-in-the-rue-morgue-edgar-allan-poe/>

Other publishing houses especially interested in the translations of Poe's work into comics are Educational Comics' (later Entertaining Comics) *Crypt of Terror* (1950), *The Vault of Horror* (1950) and *The Haunt of Fear* (1950); Warren Publishing's *Creepy and Eerie* (1965); Eureka Productions' *Horror Classics* (2004) and *Edgar Allan Poe* (2006); and Marvel Comics' *Haunt of Horror: Edgar Allan Poe* (2006). Educational Comics were written down by Max Gaines with the help of Albert Feldstein as editor. In 1951, they adapted "The Cask of Amontillado" (1846), illustrated by Graham Ingels; and "The Living Death", a story based on Poe's "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar" (1845). In the first translation, more dynamism is included in the plot. The narrator becomes a wine merchant and elements such as guns are added. In the second, the plot is enlarged adding a second doctor, who takes a different way to treat diseases. The juvenile delinquency raised in the US was associated to the dark content of this series, therefore, a new censorship code known as "Comic Code" (1954) was established. They were unable to adapt to this new regulation and consequently, disappeared. Knowing this, Warren Publishing adjusted the size of the magazine to be considered as an "adult magazine", in order to skip the "Comic Code" rules. They adapted over 25 stories of Edgar Allan Poe. Some of these, such as "The Fall of House of Usher" (1839) or "The Masque of the Red Death" (1842), were drawn twice by different illustrators. The writers of this publishing house were Archie Goodwin and Richard Margopoulos (later, he worked for Marvel Comics' *Haunt of Horror*). They were extremely lineal regarding the main plot of the tales adapted. Therefore, more talented and young artists were signed up to bring more visual power and creativity. Some of these new artists were Isidro Monés, Jose Ortiz and Richard Corben (who also worked later for Marvel Comics' *Haunt of Horror*). Eureka Productions' main translators were Tom Pomplun and Joe Ollmann, whose illustrations change the standard number of panels per vignette (four or five) to a smaller number of these but wider. This is noticed in their adaptation of the narrative "The Premature Burial" (1844). Pomplun and Ollmann give so much realism to the drawings that, in one concrete scene, when the protagonist tries to get out of the coffin, it looks as if the character jumped out of comic strip, creating a blurred line between fiction and reality. The most recent adaptations of this publishing house carried out by Rod Lott and Kevin Atkinson are quite more focused on a comedic side. This feature is noticeable in the text, but principally in the drawings, which seem to form a cartoon series. This can be seen in their version of "Some Words with a Mummy" (1845). Another noticeable graphic translator is Matt Howarth whose representation of the mind of the narrator is very interesting. The reader is told about the feelings or impressions of the narrator regarding certain events or even landscapes.

G. R. Thompson, a writer that investigated Poe's work, claimed that, actually, even when current representations may be different, the goal of achieving Poe's aesthetics stays alive, defending the idea that his characters are not plain, and that the reader has to go beyond the surface of the main characters exploring more sophisticated aspects. Thompson believes that Poe's narratives try to break the dramatic illusion mixing humorous/absurd comments with serious narratives: *Irony was the device that allowed him both to contemplate his obsession with death, murder, insanity, guilt, loss, and fear of total annihilation in a meaningless universe* (1973: 9) This feature gives certain scenes and events a darker shape. Nevertheless, since this work is committed to analyze "Berenice" (1835), Marvel Comics' will be taken into more consideration because this is one of the few publishing houses already mentioned that translated "Berenice" (1835) along with Warren Publishing. Marvel adaptations remark the characteristic morbid tone of Poe. The main translators are Richard Corben and Richard Margopoulos. The stories represented by these translators go from lineal representations to completely different stories regarding the original plot. Corben is accustomed to represent the setting in a different time and place. He also commonly changes the original plot and ending. Some other representations are adorned with more embellishment, making the story quite less macabre (such as Marvel Comics' *Dark Horse Presents #16 Berenice* (2012)). The figure of the narrator is very important in these adaptations. It is usually a sinister and mysterious host who introduces the cycle of the story and finishes it with a reflection. It is commonly a sarcastic figure. This ironic tone is emphasized by the ambiguity of certain elements in the text and drawings.

The reason for the choice of "Berenice" (1835) as the main story to investigate is because actually it is a perfect example of the work of Edgar Allan Poe. It represents in all senses the gothic literature he cultivated. It is a macabre story that turns the ordinary into the supernatural as well as mixing love with metaphysical elements. Therefore, "Berenice" (1835) was fit for demonstrating:

1. That even his lesser-known narratives are so well considered that have been adapted all over the world to comic since long time ago.
2. That comic representations are as valid and fit for adaptation as any other medium with a better reputation, such as filming.
3. The changes in his adaptations through the passing of time by means of the analysis of different comics.

In order to analyze the different adaptations of “Berenice” (1835) into comic strips, we have followed these criteria:

1. Comparison of the changes in the plot of the adaptations with respect to the original short story, emphasizing the elements, sequences or events skipped, added or shifted and concluding certain aspects regarding the final event.
2. Analysis of the art of the adaptations, pointing out outstanding features of the drawings such as the color of the vignettes (black and white or in color), characterization of the protagonists, settings, etc.
3. Examination of the text. Elements such as the narrator, language used in the dialogues, similarity to the original text of “Berenice” (1835), or even possible literary devices will be evaluated.

2. Main Nucleus: “Berenice” (1835)

First nucleus: In the first part of this short story the main character is introduced by the name of Egaeus. Even though the fact that Edgar Allan Poe named the protagonist is unexpected, it is surprising that he prefers not to tell his surname for unknown reasons. *My baptismal name is Egaeus; that of my family I will not mention.* (Poe, 1835). In this part the reader is told about the death of his mother in his birth in the library and the description of his home laying special emphasis on the books contained in the house: *and, lastly, in the very peculiar nature of the library's contents, there is more than sufficient evidence to warrant the belief* (Poe, 1835). At the very end, Egaeus says that in his childhood he could not really differentiate reality from his hallucinations and visions: *The realities of the world affected me as visions, and as visions only, while the wild ideas of the land of dreams became, in turn, not the material of my every-day existence-but in very deed that existence utterly and solely in itself* (Poe, 1835). Madness is introduced in this first nucleus. This madness is highly related to reality. What Poe does is an inversion of it, Egaeus sees reality as visions and the other way around. Brown describes him as a “visionary character” (1996:453): *Our line has been called a race of visionaries* (Poe, 1835). For Egaeus, what he thinks or imagine is part of the reality, such as when he calls Berenice: *Berenice! and from the gray ruins of memory a thousand tumultuous recollections are startled at the sound! Ah! vividly is her image* (Poe, 1835). He brings her to reality. In order to have a successful understanding of the way Egaeus acts, Brown believes that: *Poe would like to bring his readers to much the same condition as that suffered by the narrator* (1996:456).

Second nucleus: In this second nucleus, Egaeus introduces his cousin Berenice. He explains how different their childhoods were. Berenice was a healthy and playful girl who never had a single worry whereas Egaeus was a weak kid always focused on his education: *Yet differently we grew —I ill of health, and buried in gloom —she agile, graceful, and overflowing with energy* (Poe, 1835). In this part, he tells how Berenice suddenly changed when she was diagnosed with Catalepsia: *a species of epilepsy not unfrequently terminating in trance itself* (Poe, 1835). He also explained how his illness made him focus on random things without any coherent reason. At the end, the reader is told that even though he did not love her when she was healthy, he really missed her way of being. Eventually, Egaeus proposed to her to marry: *and, in an evil moment, I spoke to her of marriage* (Poe, 1835).

Third nucleus: In this final part, Egaeus tells how before they got married, Berenice appeared in front of him dressed up in black clothes and really pale in the library. When she left the room, he could not stop thinking about her white teeth. *The teeth! —the teeth! —they were here, and there, and everywhere* (Poe, 1835). The main theme of the story is introduced at this point, which is Obsession. Egaeus sees in Berenice an object to analyze and to muse. The library is connected to life and death and therefore, to reality. His mother died in the library and he was born there too. Egaeus is attached to the physical world through reading books in the library, that is why the appearance of Berenice makes him unsure of what is happening. This is the reason why he does not know whether he is musing or not when she is presented. His obsession for the teeth of Berenice after this event has the aim of checking whether everything that happened was real or not. As Brown states: *The teeth are that part of a human face that remains after death* (1996:459). Fear is also introduced here, especially related to death. Poe was really concerned about the death. According to Kennedy: *Unlike most of his contemporary, (Poe) refused to soften or idealize mortality and kept its essential horror in view* (1987:17). It is a common topic within his stories. Poe explores the fear of Egaeus towards the death in a different way. Egaeus is not afraid of the ending of life but, as Brown states, to: *The horror of the impossibility of dying* (1996:449). Poe is dehumanizing Berenice, denying her soul to leave her body. Life follows certain rules, without them, such as when Berenice does not die, it loses all the sense. Therefore, Egaeus gets into the unknown and fears it. He is afraid of turning into the same way Berenice did, not allowing him to die. As Blanchot says: *Death is man's greatest hope, his only hope of being human* (1981:47). After that issue, he is told by a servant that

Berenice has died. That night he is not able to distinguish reality from his imagination. Egaeus has the feeling that he has done something bad but he cannot remember. Suddenly, a servant enters his library to tell him that Berenice has been disfigured and buried alive. Egaeus realizes that his clothes are full of dirt and blood and that there is a shovel next to him: *He pointed to garments; -they were muddy and clotted with gore* (Poe, 1835). There is also a box on his desk with thirty-two teeth. *...from it, with a rattling sound, there rolled out some instruments of dental surgery, intermingled with thirty-two small, white and ivory-looking substances that were scattered to and fro about the floor* (Poe, 1835). After the death of Berenice, the focus of the fear is shifted. Poe represents the fear of Egaeus towards being discovered under possession of the teeth. Brown states that they represent: *the terror of our own exposure, of our own participation in a morbid and violent act.* (1996:452). The fact he has got and hidden all the teeth of his wife incriminates him in her murder.

All the named themes are interconnected between them to the power of the mind. Edgar Allan Poe truly believed in this. As it has been mentioned the powerful mind of Egaeus made him believe things that maybe did not even happen. His mind is so powerful, that it can even overcome death, such as in “Ligeia” (1838). According to Shulman: *Poe divides the mind into three faculties of Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense* (1948:246). Making special emphasis in the taste, Shulman states that it deals with: *supernal Beauty, Unity and Perfection* (1948:246). That is to say, a perfect life has to end with death. If death is not achieved, the sense of unity and beauty disappear. According to Shulman: *For Poe the highest aim of the self and the universe is to lose individuality* (1948:247). Berenice is not able to die, that is why Egaeus is so consternated.

3. Adaptations to be compared:

3.1. Os Dentes de Berenice (1962) Clássicos de Terror 24

Adaptation and art by Flavio Barbosa Mavignier Colin



[Illustration/Picture]. (2016, January 8). Professor H's Wayback Machine.
<http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2016/01/poe-1961-pt-3.html>

Story: The reader discovers in this comic that Egaeus regrets his way of living since he was a kid and that what he really wants is to have a happy life. This current lifestyle has hurt him both, mentally and physically: *...Then you will understand how I can carry an elderly expression at the age of thirty...* (Flavio Barbosa Mavignier Colin, 1962, p. 4)², *... I had an ardent desire to learn, to learn the most difficult of the arts: LIVING...* (p. 4). It is suggested that the illness of Egaeus, in a way in which he could escape from reality to have a better life, was manifested due to his obsession for reading. This has similarities with Don Quixote in Cervantes' "Don Quijote de la Mancha" (1605), in which the protagonist loses his mind after his obsession for reading medieval novels: *My dreams led me to a wonderful country, where I could at once be knight-errant, valiant gladiator...* (p. 4). After the death of Egaeus's mother Berenice is introduced. Apparently, Berenice did not grow up with Egaeus. He even does not remember what she looks like: *I think that after so much time I will not recognize her right away...* (p. 5), *... She had gone to study in a distant country and returned now, grateful and beautiful as ever...* (p. 5). Berenice establishes her residency in the castle. Berenice's dynamic and happy personality makes Egaeus abandon "the country of his dreams" and start to develop feelings for her. His cousin is the way Egaeus is looking for to fully enjoy a real life: *... Berenice filled the emptiness of my life a bit...* (p. 6), *Sometimes, when I was beside Berenice, I even forgot the country of dreams...* (p. 6), *I love you Berenice!* (p. 6). For the first time it is told that Berenice suffers the first epilepsy attack in front of Egaeus. This event is not narrated in the

² All the quotations from *Os Dentes de Berenice* (1962) Clássicos de Terror 24 were written by Flavio Barbosa Mavignier Colin in 1962

original plot. After the arrival of the doctor and the confirmation of the bad news, Egaeus develops an addiction for alcohol and opium, which derives in monomania: *I was left with the consolation of the drink...* (p. 7), ... *My illness was caused by the immoderate use of opium. I was on my way to an irresistible monomania...* (p. 8). These two addictions are perfect examples of braiding, in order to highlight the pain of Egaeus towards the suffering of her cousin. Due to the slow deterioration of Berenice, Egaeus decides to stop visiting her. He cannot support seeing his love die: *I do not have the courage to see her... Every time she is more slim, more slim...* (p. 8). Therefore, it can be guessed that he finds on her no object to muse. After the announcement of the death of Bernice, the reader is skipped to her funeral, where Egaeus notices how her hands were moving and her lips let him show her teeth ([Picture 1](#))³. Egaeus is shocked and runs away to his library: *Did I hallucinate or had the hand of the deceased really moved...?* (p. 11), ... *She seemed to smile, showing those terrible white teeth...* (p. 11), *I turned convulsively from the bed and ran like a maniac out of that room of mystery...* (p. 11). The end of the story remains as the original but we have to underline some missed elements such as the fact that Egaeus is a doctor, the childhood of Berenice or the proposal of Egaeus.

Drawings: The vignettes are drawn in color. Despite the fact that the whole story takes place under daylight, some gothic elements keep the dark atmosphere of the story, which is developed in an old grey castle next to a cemetery. Inside, there are huge family pictures, long curtains and armors, and guns or swords used as decorative elements. Even though it is sunny outside, inside the castle the only light comes from candles. This fact makes the faces of the main characters in some comic strips not visible, giving more mystery to the scene ([Picture 2](#)). Egaeus is thin with long and light eyebrows. His eyes are tiny and have bags. He has brown hair and receding hairlines. He has a tired look and appearance. Berenice is not really shown until she appears in front of Egaeus' desk. Her illness has devastated her. She is quite thin, especially appreciable in her facial features. Her eyes are small and have bags. Her lips are sharp and her chin prominent. She is extraordinarily pale and her hair is dark and long. She is not pictured as scary as in other adaptations, but actually this transformation is quite similar to the original tale. Braiding throughout huge images of teeth in the background is used to represent the madness of Egaeus ([Picture 3](#)). The adapter of this version prefers to incriminate Egaeus through nails scratches in his hands rather than through blood stains in his clothes ([Picture 4](#)).

³ All the illustrations belonging to *Os Dentes de Berenice* (1962) Clássicos de Terror 24 were retributed from <http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2016/01/poe-1961-pt-3.html>

Something outstanding in this comic is the fact that some comic strips were copied from certain scenes of *House of Usher* (1960) ([See Picture](#)); and some scenes from *The Tomb of Ligeia* (1964) were taken from the comic itself ([See Picture](#)). Both are based on two tales of Edgar Allan Poe. These films are adaptations of “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839) and “Ligeia” (1838).

[Illustration]. (2014, December 24). Professor H's Wayback Machine. <http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2014/12/poe-1967-pt-1.html>

Story: The tale starts with the intrusion of a servant into the library of Egaeus announcing that something bad has happened to Berenice ([Picture 1](#))⁴. Unlike other works, this intrusion is announcing the illness of Berenice and not the desecration of her tomb: ... *Hurry, Doctor, It's Miss Berenice! Something terrible's come over her...* (Archie Goodwin, 1967, p. 21)⁵. Even though the fact that he spent his early days among books is not mentioned, it is said that he eventually became a doctor in the very first line of the comic. The narration of the youth of Egaeus is omitted, it does not have its correspondent representation. Instead, images of him going to see what is happening to Berenice are presented. The figure of a doctor is also introduced in this adaptation. It is curious that even though Egeus is a doctor, it is another one who is treating her: *I want you to drink this and get plenty of sleep...* (p. 22) ([Picture 2](#)). This new doctor explains to Egaeus the nature of her illness, advising him that one day Berenice will no longer be herself anymore, and predicting future events: ...*But she'll never be herself again...* (p. 22). In contrast with the original work, the burial of Berenice takes place ([Picture 3](#)): ... *The grave was ready for its tenant, and all the preparations for the burial were completed...* (p. 24). After it, in the final part of the story, Egaeus himself realizes the presence of the metallic box before a servant enters announcing the death of his future wife: *On the table near the lamp lay a little box of no remarkable character...* (p. 25). Once it is suggested that Egaeus could have killed her cousin he tries to open the metallic box to see what it hides: ...*And grasped the box that lay upon it...* (p. 26). At the end of the story, Framing is used to emphasize that on this occasion Egeus is fascinated by the fact that he killed Berenice ([Picture 4](#)).

Drawing: The vignettes are drawn in black and white. The shadows located in the faces of the characters are quite remarkable. In this way a gloomier view is represented. The facial features of the protagonist in comparison with other characters are totally different. The faces of the servants do not look as if they were human at all ([Picture 5](#)). Their eyebrows, noses and lips are huge and their sights are empty. They do not have any expression. The same image of a skull is drawn almost in every single comic strip ([Picture 6](#)). Probably, the use of braiding here is an allusion to the obsession of Edgar Allan Poe for death in his works. The character of

⁴ All the illustrations belonging to *Berenice!* (1967) EERIE 11 were retributed from <http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2014/12/poe-1967-pt-1.html>

⁵ All the quotations from *Berenice!* (1967) EERIE 11 were written by Archie Goodwin in 1967.

Egaeus is portrayed as a man with wavy, long hair, big white eyes, long nose and prominent chin. His facial features reflect uncertainty and doubtless, as if he was not able to distinguish the reality from his illusions. The figure of Berenice is not shown until the event where Egeus gets obsessed with her teeth. Curiously, the drawer has decided to portray her as a beautiful woman once she appears in the library (Picture 7). She is a thin tall woman with long black straight hair. Her nose is small and her eyebrows are slim. She seems to be a normal person, as if she passed through a softer process of transformation than in Poe's narrative. The adaptation of this character is not scary at all. The representation of the obsession of Egeus is made by braiding through huge images of the teeth and pupil-less eyes of Berenice (Picture 8). Another well represented element is the blood found on the body of the protagonist. There is that amount of blood in the hands of Egeus that is pouring to the floor. When the teeth are finally shown, it can be noticed in the face of Egeus that he is fascinated by this discovery, while the servant is completely terrified (See Picture 4 again) (framing). He does not care being incriminated in the murder of Berenice. The figure of the second narrator appearing in the beginning and at the end, is probably a representation of the madness of Egeus (Picture 9). It wears the same clothes as him but looks more disturbed.

Text: The narrator is Egeus himself. First person narrator. It has also included a kind of addressee. The function of this second narrator is to introduce the story and to make a kind of satirical comment at the end of the story as a conclusion. Therefore, due to this inclusion, the story has a third person narrator too: *EERIE CLASSIC time, literature lovers... featuring some morbid melancholia by the macabre master of the fear form, EDGAR ALLAN POE, and our adaptation of his weird work... Berenice!* (p. 21), *If you think I'm going to make some crack about this being a story you can sink your teeth into, you said a mouthful!* (p. 26). The text exchanges dialogues between characters with monologues of the narrator. Some of its sentences are taken from the original text of Poe: *Berenice and I were cousins, and we grew up together...* (p. 21), *I found myself sitting in the library...* (p. 25). Exclamative sentences and key words in bold font are used too in order to give more emphasis to certain scenes: **Good God!** (p. 25). There are some informal dialogues between characters (informal register): *...Are you listening, man?* (p. 22). The use of contractions is also noticeable: *S-She's Dead!* (p. 24).

3.3. Berenice (1968) Clássicos de Terror 6

Adaptation by Francisco de Assis/ Art by Ignacio Justo & "Edegar"



[Illustration]. (2016, March 28). Professor H's Wayback Machine.
<http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2016/03/poe-1968-pt-2.html>

Story: A more melancholic Egaeus is presented in this work. This sadness is portrayed even before the appearance of the illness of Berenice: *...Sadness fills my soul!* (Francisco de Assis, 1968, p. 91)⁶. Some missing passages are the narration of Egaeus' and Berenice's childhood and the marriage proposal. The family relationship between both main characters is not clear. It is not mentioned that Berenice is the cousin of Egaeus, so maybe in this comic she is just his beloved. It is also not possible to know whether they are already married or Egaeus never proposed to her to marry. Anyway, unlike the original work, it seems they have loved each other before the illness of Berenice appeared because of the way Egaeus reacts to the report of the doctor and by the way Berenice talks to him: *It's not true. Doctor! It cannot be!* (p. 91), *Can we go back, darling?...* (p. 91). Other changes in the plot are that it is told that the monomania of Egaeus develops due to his worries about Berenice and not in his childhood: *The pain I felt affected me... I began to suffer from monomania...* (p. 92), and that the transformation of Berenice does not take place in the library but in the middle of the garden: *But my real misfortune began when I was in the garden...* (p. 92) ([Picture 1](#))⁷. When the death of Berenice is announced, Egaeus is woken up by a servant. He is sleeping in his bed, not in his library ([Picture 2](#)). Besides the appearance of Berenice in the forest, another passage added in this comic is the scene of the funeral ([Picture 3](#)). This sequence is skipped in the original work giving way just to the scene of the burial. Due to this event, Egaeus gets even more immersed

⁶ All the quotations from *Berenice* (1968) Clássicos de Terror 6 were written by Francisco de Assis in 1968

⁷ All the illustrations belonging to *Berenice* (1968) Clássicos de Terror 6 were retributed from
<http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2016/03/poe-1968-pt-2.html>

in his meditation. In the funeral, he thinks he has seen her moving her hands and showing him her teeth, making him consider the possibility she is still alive ([Picture 4](#)): *I'm dreaming again... The fingers of Berenice moved!* (p. 95), *Hours passed... I found myself sitting in the library...* (p. 96). At the end of the story, the reader is informed by one of the servants of Egaeus that in fact, Berenice was still alive: *Her disfigured body, shrouded, was breathing. Heart beating... Still alive!* (p. 97).

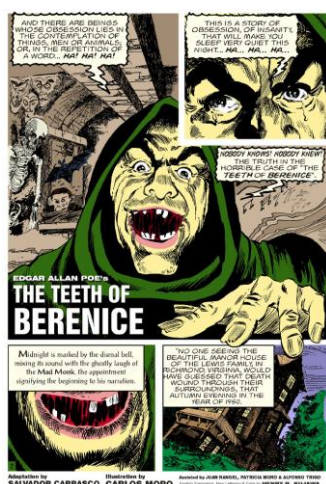
Drawing: The comic has been drawn in colors. The story takes place in an isolated castle surrounded by a leafy forest. The residency of Egaeus reminds of the castle in Abraham Stoker's *Dracula* (1897). A dark aura is presented all over the comic strip. This aura is attenuated by the lights of candles or of the moon. All the events of the story take place during the night. Regarding the character's designs, on the one hand, Egaeus is portrayed as a tall, elegant and strong man. He has marked facial features and wears a suit. On the other hand, Berenice is portrayed as a tall, slim woman with long, straight, black hair, red lips and light facial features. The ghost of Berenice does not really change her appearance. She is paler and her hair is not done. The fog of the forest gives more dramatism to this event and the fact that Berenice is almost transparent contributes and helps to the idea that she is actually a spirit ([Picture 5](#)). It can be considered as an analogy of the original work. Berenice changes in the same way (paler and thinner), unlike other comics in which Berenice changes radically. As in other adaptations, and as example of braiding, the artist has chosen to represent the obsession throughout huge images of the teeth of Berenice in the background too ([Picture 6](#)). Due to the use of colors in this comic, and contrary to some black and white adaptations, the blood stains are well represented, conferring a more realistic atmosphere to the key event of the story ([Picture 7](#)). Either in the original work or in other adaptations, it is not clear if Berenice was still alive once she was buried, but in this comic, due to the inclusion of the funeral's scene, it is highly probably that her heart was still beating at that moment.

Text: On this occasion the narrator is Egaeus himself. It is a first person narration oriented towards a third person point of view as it can be seen due to the use of word boxes ([Picture 8](#)). The text exchanges monologues (of the narrator) and dialogues. Formal register is used: *Sir! Berenice... She lives... No more!!* (p. 94). Some sentences are copied from the original text: *MISERY is manifold. The wretchedness of earth is multiform...* (p. 90), and now, *at the closing in of the night, the grave was ready for its tenant...* (p. 95). Exclamative sentences are used almost in every single vignette along with long pauses, giving to the story more

dramatism and tension: *Sir... Your clothes! Dirty... with clay! And...Blood clots!* (p. 97). Bold fonts on some words and proper names are applied to emphasize the focus of the main action: *Her disfigured body, shrouded, was breathing. Heart beating... **Still alive!*** (p. 97).

3.4. Los Dientes de Berenice (1969) El Monje Loco 74

Adaptation by Salvador Carrasco/ Art by Carlos Moro



[Illustration]. (2020, October 16). Professor H's Wayback Machine. <https://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2020/10/poe-1969-pt-3.html>

Story: At the beginning, the narrator makes a little speech about the plot to introduce the story: *This is a story of obsession, of insanity...* (Salvador Carrasco, 1969, p. 2)⁸. This figure of the narrator calls himself *The Mad Monk* (reference to the name of the comic series “El Monje Loco”). The setting and the age in which the story takes place are entirely changed (Picture 1)⁹, and for the first time a surname is given to the family of Egaeus: *No one seeing the beautiful manor house of the Lewis family, in Richmond, Virginia, would have guessed that death wound through their surroundings, that autumn evening in the year of 1950.* (p. 2). The comic starts picturing the death of the mother of Egaeus (Picture 2). Unlike other representations, some details about the family are told and also a name is given for the servant of the Family: *...Madame Lewis, widow of a dead soldier in the Second World War...* (p. 3),

⁸ All the quotations from *Los Dientes de Berenice* (1969) *El Monje Loco* 74 were written by Salvador Carrasco in 1969.

⁹ All the illustrations belonging to *Los Dientes de Berenice* (1969) *El Monje Loco* 74 were retributed from <https://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2020/10/poe-1969-pt-3.html>

...*The old servant, Renan, cried in silence...* (p. 3). The development of the feelings of Egaeus towards his cousin has its origin in the last wish of his mother: *Egaeus, I'm leaving, take care of your cousin Berenice...* (p. 3). Anyway, these feelings are not related to love but to affection. Two new passages are added in this comic: the burial of the mother of Egaeus ([Picture 3](#)) and the mourning of both characters during some months ([Picture 4](#)): *In the nearby cemetery, accompanied by a small group of friends and servants...* (p. 4), *The first days were filled with pain and desperation...* (p. 4). These two passages make possible the fact that Berenice falls in love with Egaeus due to all the time they had to spent together. Some facts are shifted to their adulthood, instead of in their youth. The nature of the characters is altered too. The illness of Egaeus appears after the death of his mother, and not when he is a child. Also, Berenice and him were not raised together. The time after the funeral they spent together Berenice established her happiness on his cousin, making herself dependent on him. On this occasion, Egaeus is not obsessed with the teeth of Bernice, but still has intrusive meditations. Actually, in this adaptation Berenice does not develop an illness and die so she is not shown in the library, making Egaeus crazy: ... *Berenice, being there, became his joy...* (p. 5), *Contrasting with the character of her cousin Egaeus, who had returned taciturn...* (p. 5). A new character is introduced: Leslie, who is a neighbor with whom Berenice usually takes walks. He is in love with Berenice and tries to show his feelings, but surprisingly she is in love with Egaeus and aims to marry him one day. They both promise to keep meeting until she marries: *Berenice, I would like to tell you... No, Leslie, I beg you, do not tell me We are good friends, I am in love with my cousin Aegeus, and someday soon I will marry him Alright, I won't insist. But until your wedding day comes, promise that you will continue to be my partner in walk...* (p. 7). The focus is reversed in this story: The main character is Berenice. The one whose obsession grows is hers. She wants to marry him even though he fully ignores her. She does not really know why she loves him and how the situation has turned out this way: *Why do I love you so much, Egaeus? Is it because I see you very disappointed, very sad?...* (p. 9). Simultaneously, Egaeus gets so immersed in his meditations that he is no longer able to distinguish between his hallucinations and reality: *The illness in Egaeus's poor brain grew...* (p. 10). During one of these long meditations, Egaeus wakes up suddenly. There is no way to know whether the final event did really happen or it was a hallucination produced by the mind of Egaeus due to the disturbing sound of the horn of Leslie's car ([Picture 5](#)). Anyway, it is a certainty that Egaeus likes to muse: *The strong sound of Leslie's auto horn, left Egaeus exasperated...* (p. 11), *Renan! Give it to that crazy in the street.* (p.11). In one of these meetings between Leslie and Berenice, his car breaks down and they are forced to go for a walk. Leslie tries to get Berenice a flower

among a covered area of silt: *...There is a lot of silt, it can be hazardous...* (p. 13), but he miscalculates the jump and goes directly to the silt ([Picture 6](#)). Finally, he sinks and dies in the middle of the forest. This death means that no transformation takes place in this comic, therefore, the theme of fearing to overcome death is lost. After it, Berenice runs away from that place. When she is found lost the next morning by some travelers, she decides not to tell anyone what happened and comes back home: *...confusedly, she explained where she lived...* (p. 16). This is by far the most bizarre adaptation analyzed. It cannot be even considered an adaptation of the original work. It is an absolutely different story. It is a perfect example of adaptation belonging to the second period of representations (1990-) of stories of Edgar Allan Poe.

Drawing: The comic strips are drawn in colors. The figure of the narrator is represented as a monk. His mouth has been ironically drawn with some teeth missing, as perfect allusion to the obsession Egaeus suffers for the teeth of her cousin. Nevertheless, in this adaptation, there is not such obsession, therefore it cannot be considered as an example of braiding. It is just a simple allusion to Poe's story ([Picture 7](#)). This is one of the few adaptations in which the mother of Egaeus has been drawn. She is portrayed as an old woman with long black/grey hair ([Picture 8](#)). Regarding the main characters, Berenice is portrayed as a beautiful, young lady with long dark hair, red lips and round face, whereas Egaeus is represented as a tall, thin man with marked facial features and receding hairlines. They are antithesis of each other, Berenice is blossoming, whereas Egaeus is withering both, mentally and physically. This antithesis is well represented through the method of double pages, in which while Egaeus is drawn enclosed reading, Berenice is having fun in the nature ([Picture 9](#)) ([Get back to Double pages](#)). Even when their ages are not mentioned, Egaeus looks older than his cousin. Because the age in which the story is set has changed, some modern elements regarding the original work have been added. There can be seen cars, mirrors, couches, lamps, etc. Maybe this fact makes the story less terrific than it should be. Moreover, the scenes in which tragic events happen, are not accompanied by the setting. All the story is developed during the daylight and it is always sunny. The new character, Leslie, is represented as a young, elegant man. The design of this character is quite similar to the Egaeus's one ([Picture10](#)). Spirits are spoiled in the background of some comic strips, as a perfect example of braiding, suggesting that something bad is going to happen ([Picture 11](#)) ([Get back to Braiding](#)).

Text: In contrast with many graphic illustrations, the narrator is not Egaeus, it is actually a Monk (making a reference to the title of this comic series "El Monje Loco"). Third person

narrator. The dialogues are informal and contain long pauses with the purpose of giving more dramatism. Some sentences are similar to the original text, but not the same: *My mother said I belong to a race of visionaries...* (p. 5). Onomatopoeias and bold fonts are used on some key words such as *crazy visionaries* or *RRRRR*. Misspellings happen with the name of “Egaeus” in some vignettes (“Aegeus”) and mistakes also occur in the use of possessive adjectives such as the use of “her” instead of “his”, and the other way around. The reason why these grammatical mistakes appear along with senseless uttered sentences such as: *Renan! Give It to that crazy in the street* (p. 11) is because this Spanish comic was translated into English by an amateur writer (probably without the enough grammatical knowledge of Spanish) as it is stated in the webpage from where this adaptation was taken. *As far as I know, none of these have ever been translated into English UNTIL NOW. Enjoy* (Kujawa, H, 2020).

3.5. Berenice (1974) Scream 7

Adaptation by Al Hewetson/ Art by Ricardo Villamonte



[Illustration]. (2015, February 9). Professor H's Wayback Machine.

<http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2015/02/poe-1974-pt-9.html>

Story: The story begins with Egaeus introducing himself and describing his home. By the way he describes it, it looks as if he already knew the place he lives is doomed: *...Our castle is notorious... with its grey, gloomy halls of dark, ancient horror...* (Al Hewetson, 1974, p. 25)¹⁰. In this adaptation he lives in a castle and not in a mansion ([Picture 1](#))¹¹. He does not

¹⁰All the quotations from *Berenice* (1974) Scream 7 were written by Al Hewetson in 1974.

¹¹ All the illustrations belonging to *Berenice* (1974) Scream 7 were retributed from <http://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2015/02/poe-1974-pt-9.html>

mention either his mother or how he spent his childhood among books. Regarding his childhood, Egaeus focuses on the different health conditions he and his cousins had. While her cousin was agile and energetic, he was a delicate child. Egaeus was concerned about his illness from a very early age. This fact gives him a more pessimistic aura in comparison with other comics: *...And I was (and am) ill of health and buried in gloom...* (p. 25). In this work, the reader is told explicitly that Egaeus fell in love with Berenice when she started to develop her illness, and not before, when she was a healthy woman. What makes him want to marry her is his attraction for her disease. He finds on her an object to muse on. The name of her illness in this comic is not mentioned: *...Now as she became ill, and almost fearsome to look upon-- I fell deeply in love with her...* (p. 26). The biggest changes of the plot are located when Berenice suddenly transforms herself into another being. Unlike the original tale, Berenice does not appear instantly in front of Egaeus, she is already in the library with him and transforms when he is not looking at her ([Picture 2](#)): *... One night... As Berenice and I sat in my library...I looked at her...* (p. 27), *...As I had never seen her before...* (p. 27). Egaeus also sees her leaving the room and not disappearing when he stops looking at her: *...She left me alone...* (p. 27). After this event, he got immensely obsessed with the teeth of her cousin, but on this occasion, Egaeus himself explains that his obsession is taking place due to his illness. He still thinks logically: *...Then came the full fury of my monomania... I struggled against it in vain...* (p. 28). When he is informed by a maid that Berenice has died, Egaeus feels relieved, rather than feeling sad. He thinks that due to the fact that Berenice has died, he will no longer be obsessed with her teeth ([Picture 3](#)): *Oh God... have mercy on her soul... have mercy on my soul...* (p. 28). Apparently, Berenice died under the supervision of a servant but when she was buried and unearthed by Egaeus she was still alive. Everyone could hear her screaming: *...You say there was a wild cry in the night...* (p. 29), *...Mistress Berenice was not dead when she was buried!* (p. 29). Eventually, after the discovery of the metallic box, Egaeus remembers the episodes where he violated the graves of his wife: *...It was obvious...* (p. 31), *...What I had done...* (p. 31).

Drawing: The comic is drawn in black and white. The setting of the story reminds of the location where Count Dracula lives. The castle is portrayed as a medieval castle, full of turrets and covered by an obscure atmosphere ([Picture 1](#)). Both characters are an antithesis of the other one. Egaeus is always drawn with dark colors. His hair is black and, in some way, it reminds of the hair shape of Edgar Allan Poe ([Picture 4](#)). Regarding Berenice, she is drawn with bright colors even when she is suddenly transformed ([Picture 5](#)). The other characters are also portrayed with white colors. This fact could mean that Egaeus is a doomed character,

surrounded by this dark aura. The “other” Berenice is drawn as a totally different creature. She is clearly thinner and all her body is covered by acne and warts. Her lips have disappeared, making her gums visible. Her teeth are sharper now, as the teeth of a wild animal. She is portrayed as a zombie ([Picture 6](#)). As an example of braiding, once again, huge images of her mouth shape are used to illustrate the monomania of Egaeus ([Picture 7](#)). Once Egaeus realizes what he has done, he is absorbed in a kind of black hole ([Picture 8](#)). It symbolizes the culpability he feels. Flashbacks are also drawn to give more veracity to the story, since Egaeus starts to remember what he has done ([Picture 9](#)).

Text: The figure of the narrator is Egaeus himself. Once again, it is a first person narration oriented towards a third person point of view, as it can be seen due to the inclusion of word boxes ([Picture 10](#)). It exchanges internal monologues with dialogues between characters ([Picture 11](#)). The register is formal, and as in the previous adaptation, some sentences are similar to those used in Poe’s text: *...She spoke no word, but an icy chill ran through my body...* (p. 27), *I struggled against it in vain...* (p. 28). There are not contractions and titles such as “mistress” are used: *The mistress Berenice has died...* (p. 28). Long pauses are employed to give a more pessimistic perspective. Bold fonts enlargement and exclamations signs are used in some essential words such as “teeth” or “blood” in order to make key words and dramatic events stand out ([Picture 12](#)).

3.6. Berenice (1975) Creepy Stories 70

Adaptation by Richard Margopoulos/ Art by Isidro Monés.



[Illustration]. (2015, March 27). Professor H's Wayback Machine.
<https://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2015/03/poe-1975-pt15.html>

Story: At the beginning, the reader is placed in the library of Egaeus after the deaths of his mother and his wife Berenice: *It was in this very library that my mother died!...* (Richard Margopoulos, 1975, p. 49)¹², ...*We shared a love so pure, so wholesome, so brief...* (p. 49). On this very first page, in comparison with other adaptations, Egaeus looks more conscious of his actions: *In the study of ethics, evil is sometimes the consequence of good! so, in fact. Out of joy is also sorrow born!* (p. 49). It seems that even though he knows he is ill, he is more aware of this fact. Somehow, he tries to justify his behavior stating that he was not responsible for his actions, but his alter-ego is. A more logical minded Egaeus is portrayed (Picture 1)¹³. The reader gets immersed in the mind of the main character and for the first time we finally understand his way of thinking besides the simple explanation of his illness: *It was almost as though I were another person, educated, surely...But ignorant in the true workings and horrors of the world!* (p. 49). Even though the different kinds of education both characters had, and the illness of Egaeus are mentioned: *Yet differently we grew! I, often haunted with a strange illness... Or else, buried in the time-worn books* (p. 50) ...*She, agile, graceful and overflowing with energy; Hers was the ramble on the hillside...* (p. 50), it does not correspond to the weak nature of Egaeus because actually, he and Berenice can be seen practicing fencing ([Picture 2](#)) on the same page where it is explained. Therefore, maybe Egaeus was not in such a bad state. In contrast with other adaptations, there can be noticed a more concerned and worried Egaeus about the death of Berenice. Somehow, he takes all the responsibility of the illness of his wife. Egaeus thinks that he could have helped her, but due to his disease, he used to be focused on irrelevant things during her epileptic seizures, ignoring her completely and letting her die. Egaeus takes all the culpability even though he knows he could not avoid his introverted meditation: ...*And as a result of my contemplation in other things unfolded dramatically!* (p. 51), *I could easily be absorbed in a quaint shadow falling aslant upon a tapestry...* (p. 51). Actually, Egaeus is shown as a more “human” character, caring about others and showing his feelings. The worries of Egaeus towards Berenice are transformed into suffering. He tries to ignore the existence of Berenice throughout reading to avoid the pain but he could not forget her image in misery: *In the lucid intervals of my mental infirmity, her calamity, without a doubt, gave me pain!* (p. 52),

¹² All the quotations from *Berenice* (1975) Creepy Stories 70 were written by Richard Margopoulos in 1975.

¹³ All the illustrations belonging to *Berenice* (1975) Creepy Stories 70 were retributed from
<https://professorhswaybackmachine.blogspot.com/2015/03/poe-1975-pt15.html>

I sought to escape her... (p. 52) *Yet even there, she flitted before my eyes* (p. 52). Due to the pain of his cousin, Egaeus gets even more immersed in his meditation in an attempt to escape from reality. In his long lucid dream, he proposes Berenice to marry him: *...And, in a moment of evil, I spoke to her... of marriage* (p. 52). The fact that on this time Egaeus is more conscious of everything makes some themes such as fear and madness not so outstanding. At the end of the story, one minor fact is changed regarding the final event. Egaeus does not wake up from his meditation in his desk, but in his bedroom ([Picture 3](#)): *Suddenly I awoke in bed...* (p. 56). He is not discovered by his servants either. He realizes what he has done by himself due to the blood stains in his hands ([Picture 4](#)).

Drawing: The vignettes are drawn in black and white. Egaeus is portrayed as a man with serious facial features. His nose is large and his eyebrows short. He has curly short hair and wears glasses. Berenice is represented as a thin elegant woman. She has long, straight and blond hair. Her facial features are soft. She has long eyelashes and thick lips. The mother of Egaeus is not portrayed but it is mentioned that she is similar to Berenice. The intrusive meditation of Egaeus is well represented through some passages where he can be seen reading books in the darkness alone, or images where, while Berenice is enjoying taking a ride, he is sitting down in the shadow of a tree ([Picture 5](#)). On the one hand, the comic strips where Berenice appears are accompanied with light colors and surrounded with elements such as flowers. On the other hand, the comic strips where Egaeus is portrayed are accompanied with dark colors and surrounded by elements such as candles or skulls. These features are well represented through double pages ([Picture 6](#)). Once Berenice starts to suffer epilepsy attacks, this dark atmosphere which surrounds Egaeus starts to invade the vignettes where she is drawn. One really good detail regarding these epilepsy attacks' representations is that her body posture is portrayed as painful and antinatural and her eyes are pupilless ([Picture 7](#)). This fact is certainly realistic. Berenice changes completely when she is shown in the library. Her hair is not done, longer and looks curlier. She is extremely thin and pale, it is specially noticed in the bones of her cheeks where these are more outstanding. The most impressive part of her new appearance is her eyes. The iris of her eyes "has been eaten" by her pupils, leaving them completely black ([Picture 8](#)). Braiding is presented through images of skulls, eyes, set of teeth and smiles to exemplify the obsession of Egaeus ([Picture 9](#)). A peculiar fact is that when Egaeus unearths Berenice, it is snowing ([Picture 10](#)), while in other adaptations it is raining. As a perfect example of framing, the translator introduces this frame in order to make the reader stops and thinks on its meaning (Get back to [Framing](#)). Walking in the snow is harder than walking while it is raining, maybe

what the adapter tries to mean is that this time, what Egaeus is going to do is harder for himself. As it has been said previously, in this representation, Egaeus is more concerned with his actions, therefore unearthing his wife is tougher.

Text: The narrator is Egaeus himself. There are no dialogues in this story. The whole story is composed around an internal monologue. First person narrator and formal register. Some sentences are taken from the original text: *I call upon her name* (p. 51). The narrator talks in past tense, therefore, all the events he is talking about have already happened. The monologues are full of exclamative sentences and long pauses in order to give more suspense in certain events. Bold fonts are also used in specific words such as “teeth” or “spade” to make reader focus on key elements.

3.7. Berenice (2007) Cthulhu" #2 magazine

Adaptation by José Avilés



[Illustration]. (2009, October 13). José Avilés Blog. <http://joseavilesblog.blogspot.com/2009/10/mas-de-berenice-de-edgar-allan-poe.html>

Story: On the very first page Egaeus introduces himself. He barely mentions his family as in the original work and does not mention his mother nor his relationship with her. Maybe because she died in his birth there is not much to say about her. Egaeus also talks about his memories in the mansion he still lives in and how, he was focused on his studies and had hallucinations from a very early age: ... *I loitered away my boyhood in books...* (José Avilés,

2007, p. 1)¹⁴, ... *The realities of the world affected me as visions, while the ideas of the land of dreams became in turn, my existence...* (p. 1). After it, Egaeus describes the different lifestyles he and his cousin had when they were young. Whereas Berenice overflowed with energy and had no occupations, Egaeus was immersed in his own meditation. There can be noticed how much Egaeus admired the vitality and beauty of his cousin: ...As in the early days of her light-heartedness and joy! Oh gorgeous yet fantastic beauty! (p. 2). Something curious to be mentioned in comparison with other adaptations is that after Berenice gets ill, the reader is told that Egaeus realizes that his disease is getting worse. It is also explained that he is getting worse gradually, not suddenly: *In the meantime my own disease grew rapidly upon me...* (p. 2). Unlike other works, Egaeus starts to get obsessed with Berenice before the event of her teeth. This obsession is produced because he finds on her illness a new focus to muse on. He is especially interested in her physical deformities. He finds in her a new abstraction: *...The fearful alteration produced by Berenice's unhappy malady would afford me many objects for the exercise of that intense and morbid meditation...* (p. 3). It is specified that Egaeus, as an act of compassion, eventually proposed to Berenice to marry him not because he was obsessed with her but because he realizes she loved him: *I knew that she had loved me long, and, in an evil moment, I spoke to her of marriage* (p. 3). The reader is told that finally, in a winter afternoon, before they got married Egaeus gets definitely mad when Berenice is shown in front of his desk. Her appearance totally changes. He has a mixture of feelings. He is so afraid that he is not able to speak, but he also starts to develop desire for her white teeth when she smiles at him: *...And I - No for worlds could I have uttered a syllable...* (p. 4) *I had no thoughts but for the teeth...* (p. 4). In other adaptations there is no such emphasis in the madness of Egaeus. The focus is totally different. In other graphic illustrations, the illness of Egaeus gets worse suddenly but he is still able to think logically. He is not mad. However, in this comic, it is suggested that Egaeus eventually gets mad not because of his illness but actually because the ghost of Berenice is in front of him. It is a more supernatural story in this case. After it, his maid announces to him that his wife has died the night after she appeared in front of him and not the same night as it happens in other works: *The mists of a second night were now gathering around...* (p. 5) *She told me that Berenice was - no more!* (p. 5). Next to the burial, Egaeus is found in his desk awakening from his musing. He knows he has done something bad, but he cannot remember ([Picture 1](#))¹⁵. A curious fact is that while he was doing what he cannot remember, he remembers hearing the

¹⁴ All the quotations from *Berenice* (2007) Cthulhu" #2 magazine were written by José Avilés in 2007.

¹⁵ All the illustrations belonging to *Berenice* (2007) Cthulhu" #2 magazine were retributed from <http://joseavilesblog.blogspot.com/2009/10/mas-de-berenice-de-edgar-allan-poe.html>

shouts of a woman: ...*The shrill and piercing shriek of a female voice seemed to be ringing in my ears...* (p. 5). Other works just skip the burial of Berenice suggesting that Egaeus killed his wife. That would explain why he remembers her screams, but in this adaptation, the maid says that Berenice actually died because of an epilepsy attack and moreover her burial is drawn, therefore it is sure that she was dead and not buried alive. Maybe what Egaeus remembers is the screams of the ghost when he was desecrating her grave, besides he is not the only one who heard the shouts, his servants did too: *what was it?* (p. 6) *A wild cry disturbed the silence of the night, awakening all the servants...* (p. 6). These facts give more veracity to the idea that Berenice is already dead when she is shown in the library. At the end of the story, it is Egaeus himself, and not his servant, the one who discovers that he unearthed his wife and pulled out all her teeth. One fact not told in this story is that Egaeus is a doctor. That is why he was able to take her teeth easily.

Drawing: The first thing to be noticed in this adaptation is the fact that the drawing is made in black and white. Somehow white color predominates over the black making the vignettes much brighter ([Picture 2](#)). Maybe this adaptation represents the best Gothic elements within its draw. The story is set in a huge mansion located in the middle of nowhere. It has long corridors and a library full of books ([Picture 3](#)). These settings are accompanied by the lights of candles and the constant feeling of loneliness. Concerning the characters, Egaeus is represented at the beginning as a self-careless man, as if he did not pay attention to his appearance ([Picture 4](#)). This is probably because he is talking after the death of Berenice. It is portrayed as a man with long hair and nails. He wears pyjamas and has disheveled hair. Berenice is portrayed as a young and vivid woman with long black hair. During her illness, the draw represents the agony and pain of Berenice in her epilepsy attacks in really good terms. In the draw, there is also a metaphor concerning the health of Berenice. In her youth she is portrayed carrying a basket full of roses that have been recently picked up. These roses are a braiding, representing her happiness and health. Once she starts to get ill these roses wither, representing that her life is consuming itself ([Picture 5](#)). Before she dies, she is drawn extremely thin (especially remarkable in her face) and with eye bags. Her gaze is lifeless. She knows she will die soon. The image of Berenice gets even gloomier when she appears in front of the desk of Egaeus. She is paler and it looks as if her forehead and fingers have been lengthened. She is not Berenice anymore, she is another entity ([Picture 6](#)). The obsession of Egaeus for the teeth of Berenice and his madness is well represented in the draw. Egaeus is shown holding his head with both hands with a shocking face while his mouth is completely open. This event is even

more emphasized once again through braiding with the drawing of the teeth of his cousin in the background as a representation of his obsession for the latter ([Picture 7](#)). Although the reader is specified that Egaeus does not love Berenice as much as she does, on the fifth page, when her burial is portrayed, it is shown that the last person to leave the tomb is Egaeus ([Picture 8](#)). Besides, he is depicted with a crestfallen pose, maybe suggesting that eventually, he developed feelings for her. Changes in the drawing in comparison with other adaptations to be mentioned are the fact that the unearthing of Berenice is not represented, besides after this event, Egaeus is not drawn covered in mud and blood, he is totally clean (although it is mention by the servant) ([Picture 9](#)). A peculiar fact at the end is that the tools that Egaeus used to pull out the teeth of Berenice are drawn inside the metallic box where he hid them ([Picture 10](#)).

Text: Egaeus is the narrator of the story. Word boxes are greatly used in order to exemplify internal monologues ([Picture 11](#)). Therefore, it is a first person narration oriented towards a third person point of view. The register employed is formal, words such as “master” are used to refer to Egaeus. Some sentences used are the same as in the original text: *I found myself sitting in the library* (p. 5). Unlike the majority of comics analyzed, there are not bold fonts, but still there is a great use of long pauses and exclamative sentences to develop a feeling of insecurity and tension to the reader. There are only a few dialogues at the end, such as when the servant tells Egaeus about the screaming coming from the tomb of Berenice: *A wild cry disturbed the silence of the night, awakening all the servants* (p. 6).

3.8. Berenice (2009) Historia y Arte Omar Hirsig

Adaptation by Omar Hirsig



[Illustration]. (2010, July 12). Omar-Hirsig. <http://omar-hirsig.blogspot.com/2010/07/berenice-de-edgar-alan-poe.html>

Story: At the beginning, the reader is located after the funeral of Berenice. Egaeus briefly tells the way his life has been living there since he was a kid. He looks exhausted and sad. He cannot believe his love is dead now: ...*¿Cómo es posible que el amor se transforme en desdicha y horror?* (Omar Hirsig, 2009, p. 1)¹⁶. In his hands, the metallic box where he hid the teeth of Berenice, remains unopened. He has not realized yet what he did last night ([Picture 1](#))¹⁷. While Egaeus tries to remember what he did, he keeps narrating his memories dating back when he was younger: *Yo siempre enfermo, envuelto en tristeza...* (p. 2) *Ella tan ágil, graciosa y llena de fuerza...* (p. 2). By the way Egaeus talks about his cousin, the reader can infer that he loved her since they were kids: *¡Encantadora y fantástica belleza! ¡Oh sílfide entre los arbustos de Arnheim!* (p. 2). After it, Egaeus talks about the illness of Berenice and how she will never be the same again. At the same time, the reader is told that his meditation, maybe as a result of the illness of her love, turns into madness: ...*Una enfermedad que la ciencia psicológica designa con una sola palabra: locura* (p. 3). This fact is curious because neither in the original story nor in any of the other adaptations has Egaeus referred to his madness. For the first time the key fact of his musing could have originated because of love. Due to the imminent death of Berenice, Egaeus eventually proposed to her to marry. After it, one day, as an explicit reference to “The Raven” and, in order to exemplify the fact that the protagonist cannot distinguish what is real from what is not, (1845), Egaeus finds a raven who seems to whisper at him ([Picture 2](#)) (get back to [Comics’ Representation](#)): ...*Nunca más* (p. 4). The raven is notifying him that Berenice will never be as she used to be. Egaeus does not know whether this occurrence actually happened or it was just an illusion as a consequence of his madness: *¿Fue el hecho de que mi imaginación estuviera trastornada?*... (p. 4). However, the reason is, the madness of Egaeus increases when Berenice appears in front of him. In other comics, when she is shown in the library, she makes shocks and horrifies Egaeus to the extent that that he is not able to talk, nevertheless, in this adaptation, he is not so afraid to try to communicate with her ([Picture 3](#)): *¡Berenice, Dios mío, qué te sucede!?* (p. 5), *¡Háblame!* (p. 5). Egaeus starts to lose the sense of the time, and besides his obsession for the teeth, he is especially worried about the ghost: ...*Pero el fantasma de los dientes mantenía su terrible dominio sobre mi...* (p. 6).

¹⁶ All the quotations from *Berenice* (2009) Historia y Arte Omar Hirsig were written by Omar Hirsig in 2009.

¹⁷ All illustrations belonging to *Berenice* (2009) Historia y Arte Omar Hirsig were retributed from <http://omar-hirsig.blogspot.com/2010/07/berenice-de-edgar-alan-poe.html>

Next to this event, Egaeus is told that his cousin died that morning. One minor change regarding the original tale is that he is informed of her death not in his desk but in another room, when he goes out of there and asks a crying maid what is happening. After the burial ([Picture 4](#)), the reader is located again at the beginning of the story. Three priests enter the library announcing that someone has unearthed the tomb of Berenice and has disfigured her body ([Picture 5](#)). In this scene the reader realizes that Egaeus has finally lost his mind. As an example of braiding, to stand out his madness, Egaeus mentally exchanges the face of one priest for a skull. After realizing that his clothes were full of mud and blood and seeing surgical instruments on the floor, they found out that Egaeus was the crime actor. Particularly curious is his attitude when he was discovered. He acts as if the fact that he has pulled out the teeth of his dead wife was not important and serious at all: *Sólo son treinta y dos pequeños objetos blancos de marfil...* (p. 7), *...Sólo eso* (p. 7). He is not afraid at all of being incriminated in her murder. Something that has to be taken into consideration is the incredible fact that this graphic illustration was made by an amateur artist. It follows the plot incredibly good, besides, it is full of references to Edgar Allan Poe and has a great character design, especially concerning the character of Berenice after her transformation. It is actually a really original adaptation.

Drawing: The colors used are just black and white. Although this is an amateur adaptation, it is a very detailed one. It is full of references to the author and reflects perfectly all the elements of a gothic story. The majority of these elements are stationed in the setting of the mansion. It is located between mountains, with no other people living near it. The mansion itself has a macabre appearance ([Picture 6](#)). The walls and windows are full of climbing plants, it looks as if it were an abandoned place ([Picture 7](#)). Inside the house, elements such as skeletons of animals or fake human bodies (for medicines purposes) contribute to create a Gothic atmosphere ([Picture 8](#)). Concerning the representation of characters, on the one hand, Egaeus is portrayed as a young man dressed up with a suit. His hair is combed back and he has long sideburns. His face is marked with fatigue. The design of this character reminds somehow of a version of Count Dracula in an adaptation for kids (*Hotel Transylvania* (2012)) ([Picture 9](#))¹⁸. On the other hand, Berenice is drawn as a healthy young woman. She is a thin lady with short straight black hair. Her lips are thick, eyelashes are long and her cheeks are covered by tiny freckles. The design of the Egaeus changes through the time, at the end of the story, his facial features are different, as if he were another person (surely provoked due to the stress and

¹⁸ This illustration was retrieved from <https://www.nacionrex.com/pelis/Gru-Mi-villano-favorito-conde-dracula-hotel-transilvania-similitudes-comparacion-20171117-0011.html>

madness) ([Picture 10](#)). To emphasize the different lives both characters have, Egaeus is drawn in closed and dark settings full of books and skeletons whereas Berenice is located in the middle of bright fields picking up flowers and surrounded by animals ([Picture 11](#)). While Egaeus represents death and sadness, Berenice represents life and happiness. An allusion is made to Edgar Allan Poe on the third page. In this vignette there is a wall full of pictures. In one of these, Poe is drawn. Next to him there is also a picture of a bird. Maybe this is another allusion to his well-known poem “The Raven” (1845) ([Picture 12](#)). The moments of sadness and obsessions are also well represented. Sadness is portrayed in the occasions on which the reader cannot see the eyes of Egaeus such as when he realizes Berenice is ill ([Picture 13](#)); whereas the moments he feels obsessed with something, the word associated with that is written several times in the background ([Picture 14](#)). These are two examples of braiding are presented in order to exemplify the feelings of Egaeus. The representation of the spirit of Berenice is probably the scariest one among other adaptations. She is depicted as another being. She is almost undressed. Her sight is empty. Her lips, the corners of her mouth and her cheeks have disappeared, showing just her gums and teeth. Although her teeth are white, they look as if they were going to break. There are breaches among them ([Picture 15](#)). This vignette can be considered as an example of framing. Her teeth are going to crack, just as the mind of the protagonist. Again, another allusion is made to Edgar Allan Poe during the burial of Berenice. The name of the author is written down in one of the graves of the cemetery ([Picture 16](#)). Finally, once Egaeus is discovered as the crime actor, small details such as mud, blood, and surgical instruments are included in the setting to give more realism.

Text: The story is introduced by a quotation, making a clear reference to the main event of the tale: *Me decían mis camaradas que si visitase el sepulcro de mi amada, mis penas se aliviarían un poco* (p. 1). The text exchanges dialogues with monologues of the narrator. No sentences are copied from the original text because this adaptation was made in Spanish, but anyway, there are similarities such as the quotation that presents the story (this quotation is in Latin in Poe’s story, but here it was translated into Spanish). The figure of the narrator is Egaeus himself, therefore, it is a first person narration. Anyway, due to the fact that Egaeus is also the main character, the story is oriented towards a third person point of view, as it can be seen due to the inclusion of word boxes ([Picture 17](#)). It has a formal register and resources such similes are used by Hirsig, as in the second page where Egaeus compares the beauty of Berenice with the garden of Arnheim, making allusions to “The Domain of Arnheim” (1847), another work by Edgar Allan Poe: *¡Encantadora y fantástica belleza! ¡Oh sílfide entre los arbustos de*

Arnheim! (p. 2). In that story a beautiful garden is extremely detailed and compared with the beauty of a woman. The creation of beauty is essential to achieve happiness. An obvious but important fact to be underlined is that the whole story is written in Spanish.

3.9. *Berenice* (2012) Dark Horse Presents #16

Adaptation by Richard Corben/ Lettering by Nate Piekos of Blambot.



Corben, R. (2012, August 22). [Illustration]. In *Dark Horse Presents #16* (1st ed., p. 50).

Story: At the beginning of this adaptation, the reader is located in the funeral of Berenice. Egaeus remarks in his thoughts that since they were kids, Berenice was physically stronger than him due to his weak nature. He admits that he is relieved even though she died because now she is not stronger than him anymore: *What a competitive little brat. Always beating me in physical contests. When she went away it was good.* (Corben, 2012, p. 50)¹⁹. There also has to be mentioned the introduction of the mother of Egaeus ([Picture 1](#))²⁰. In the original work Egaeus tells that her mother died a long time ago. He just names her at the beginning. On this occasion, the mother of Egaeus tells him that his cousin will live with them to help her with the occupations of the house. This is a contradiction in both works. In Poe's, Berenice has always lived in that house, whereas in this comic, the reader is also told that Berenice has also been raised there because of Egaeus' thoughts claiming that since they were kids, she has been beautiful: *She had her own special beauty, he thought. A very special beauty.*

¹⁹ All the quotations from *Berenice* (2012) Dark Horse Presents #16 were written by Richard Corben in 2012.

²⁰ All the illustration belonging to *Berenice* (2012) Dark Horse Presents #16 were retributed from *Berenice* (2012) Dark Horse Presents #16

Egaeus' mind drifted back to when they were children (p. 50). There can be noticed too some kind of disrespectful behavior of Egeus towards his mother. She is obliged to call Berenice to help her because Egeus refuses to do it: *The effort to run this place is getting too much for me. I'm getting old.* (p. 51), *The... rain... in... Spain...* (p. 51). Once Berenice enters Egeus' study, she proposes to him to marry her as one of the last wishes his mother expressed before she died: *Before your mother died, she told me you and I should marry...* (p. 52). This is kind of confusing for Egeus. He does not seem surprised that Berenice is a man (framing), for him this fact is completely natural. What shocks him the most is the fact that he does not remember that his mother is dead and that they went to her funeral when actually they have been talking a few moments ago: *Mother... dead--?* (p. 52). These two features are explained by the narrator: *The lad had some problems with his attention span...* (p. 52). His illness and his obsession for reading may make him not be able to distinguish what is real from what is not. The reader is told that despite the aspect of Berenice, Egeus married her: *The engagement seemed to change the young man.* (p.53). They seem to enjoy their new life together. There is also a clear reference to alcohol ([Picture 2](#)) which never happened in Poe's work (allusion to Edgar Allan Poe's alcoholism). The reader is told that even though Berenice was in a very healthy state, she usually fainted until one day she died: *It was said that despite her robust health, Berenice suffered from strange, possibly fatal fainting spells* (p. 53) *Then without warning, she was taken by an attack* (p. 53). Her death did not happen because of the development of an illness as in the original story but because she was poisoned. Egeus is seen reading a book about sedatives and poisons, and just after it is shown how he is pouring a glass of wine to his wife ([Picture 3](#)). This braiding is used in order to outstand the obsession of Egeus for the death. Egeus actually killed Berenice in this adaptation. Although Egeus looks and acts better regarding his illness and his obsessions for reading he is actually not. After her death, the reader is located in the funeral of Berenice, and as perfect example of framing, Egeus notices that her dead body is moving ([Picture 4](#)): *As she lay on her lap, Egeus thought he saw something move. What was it?* (p. 53). The event where Berenice is shown in a gloomy appearance in the library is replaced by this scene where she is clearly showing her teeth. He is terrified by the idea that no one but him realizes that her heart is still beating while she is being carried to her grave by the pallbearers. The suspicions of Egeus about the unearthing of Berenice are confirmed by a butler when he enters his office announcing that there has been a disturbance in the grave of his wife: *Why was the butler staring at him?* (p. 55), *What is in here, sir?* (p. 56). The figure of the butler is something bizarre. Despite the fact that he is certainly similar to Berenice, in the original work, the one who finds out the crime of Egeus is a woman not a man. This feature

of gender change roles is even most outstanding with Berenice. Once the teeth of Berenice are found, the butler gets out of the room looking for a doctor: *you need help! I'll fetch the doctor* (p. 56) and the dead body of Berenice appears holding the shovel Egaeus used to unearth her. It is quite ironic that after ignoring his mother Egaeus asks her for help: *P-P-Please B-B-Berenice! I love you!... Mommy!* (p. 56). Finally, Berenice gets her revenge killing Egaeus with the shovel he used to unearth her ([Picture 5](#)). It is truly sarcastic that Berenice kills her cousin hitting him so hard that she pulls out all his teeth. After this event, the worker comes in with a doctor discovering the dead body of his master: *Insane? he's dead!* (p. 57).

Drawing: The vignettes are drawn in color. The first figure introduced is the narrator. He is covered by a kind of veil as if he tried not to be recognized. His nose is extremely big. His only visible eye is black, the other one is covered by an eye patch. Apparently, he is a monk ([Picture 6](#)). Egaeus is portrayed as a chubby short man. His face is rounded, his lips are thick and his eyebrows thin. The mother of Egaeus is pictured as an old opposite gender representation of the protagonist ([Picture 7](#)). Probably the biggest change in comparison with the original short story is the representation of Berenice. In this comic, Berenice is introduced as a strong, blond and tall man ([Picture 8](#)). The use of framing is outstanding in this feature, since it is clearly noticed that the adapter wants the reader to make a stop in the reading. It is very shocking that the translator and the artist changed the gender of Berenice. While Egaeus is dreaming, images of him disfiguring the face of his wife and trying to pull out her teeth are drawn to give more emphasis on his obsession ([Picture 9](#)) (get back to [Characterization](#)). Later on, it is discovered that this dream, in fact, was not an illusion, actually the scene where he perturbs the tomb of her cousin is represented. Something outstanding in this adaptation is that the shape of the butler in the shadows is very similar to the one of Berenice. These two characters are similar to each other. Although the butler is balding, both characters are blond, are dressed in a suit and are never seen together. When one of them gets out of the scene, the other appears. Their eyes are also something remarkable. Both characters have extremely shiny eyes in the darkness ([Picture 10](#)). Maybe they are actually the same person. The dead body of Berenice is portrayed as a kind of zombie. She is covered in blood and all of this comes from her mouth. Her face is not distinguishable and besides the blood and her silhouette, her shiny eyes are the only left thing visible ([Picture 11](#)). Once Egaeus dies the picturization of the butler changes. He looks much older than he looked when he left the office. His hair is not blond anymore, it is grey ([Picture 12](#)). It seems as if during the whole story, the reader has seen the characters in the way Egaeus used to see them. A deformed reality caused by the illness of the

protagonist that made the audience see Berenice as a man. The representation of some new scenes gives more veracity to the story, such as when Egaeus is seen reading a book of sedatives or the arrival of pallbearers in the cemetery ([Picture 13](#)).

Text: Unlike many graphic illustrations, the narrator is not Egaeus. Third person narration. He knows all the details of the story. Therefore, he is an omniscient narrator. As it has been explained in the introduction of this project, Marvel Comics' narrators are quite sarcastic. This feature can be seen at the end of the story: *I guess it was a case of "a tooth for a tooth"*. (p. 57). The text is mainly original but some parts are based on Poe's: *He sank into a strange but exciting dream* (p. 54). The dialogues exchanged by the characters are informal. This can be noticed by the vocabulary used and because these are full of contractions. Colorful fonts are used to represent onomatopoeias, sounds, or screams. Exclamative sentences are also frequently used.

3.10. Berenice (2020) EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SNIFTER OF TERROR Season Two #5

Adaptation by Alisa Kwitney/ Art by Mauricet.



[Illustration]. (2020, February 15). First Comics News.
<https://www.firstcomicsnews.com/edgar-allan-poes-snifter-of-terror-season-two-5/>

Story: In this illustration the reader can notice several differences with Poe's short story. On the first few pages of the comic, Egaeus can be found talking about her wife Berenice next

to her grave. The story begins after the death of Berenice. There has to be an emphasis on the fact that Egaeus is drinking alcohol (Picture 1)²¹. Next to the tomb there is another empty bottle. A logical assumption would be to think that just after the death of her cousin he supported his pain with alcohol, but later on the reader is revealed that actually he started to drink when Berenice started to show symptoms of her illness: ... *I succumbed to the lure of Brandy to calm my nerves.* (Kwitney, 2020, p. 2)²². This braiding is a clear allusion to Poe's alcoholism. In this adaptation the events of the proposal and the narration of the childhood of Egeus and Berenice are skipped. It seems that they are already married and have loved each other for a long time: ... *But we loved with a love that was more than a love* (p. 1). In contrast with other representations, in this one, Egeus and Berenice seem to be enjoying a life full of luxuries and happiness, organizing parties with a lot of guests (Picture 2). There is not a real focus on the illnesses of both characters. Apparently, the illness of Berenice makes her lose her teeth one by one. The obsession of Egeus is probably awakened due to his alcoholism. What eventually made him lose his mind was the fact that he found a tooth of his wife in the bed: ... *I woke to find this under my pillow* (p. 2), *A parting gift from my dearest angel.* (p. 2). In this graphic illustration Berenice never died, therefore, she did not appear in front of the desk of Egeus and her tomb was not disturbed. Apparently, this obsession has not an actual reason since as in the rest of adaptations, as in the original story, the aim of getting her teeth is to check whether Berenice is dead or not because the teeth is one of the few body parts that remains after the death. The way Egeus gets her teeth is through lying to her. A common belief of that period was that women should not ride a bike because the vibrations from the seat could move their uterus (Jarry, 2020). Knowing that, Egeus takes advantage of a day in which Berenice is riding a bike to trick her (Picture 3): *The absorption of the vibrations from the seat can displace your uterus!* (p. 4), *No! What can I do?...* (p. 4). Apparently, the only way to cure Berenice is pulling out each of her teeth to remove the pressure gathered in her body: *Dangerous pressure has built up in your zygomaticus muscle, which, if left untreated, will damage the orbicularis oculi...* (p. 5). Some important things to be said are that although the reader is not told that Egeus is doctor or dentist, he disposes of all the instruments needed for their work (even a dentist chair). A curious fact is that Egeus is interested in having the teeth of her cousin but he does not want her to suffer any pain (unlike in the original story where, even if it was probably unintentionally, the face of Berenice is disfigured) so he uses ether to treat her: *Thanks to the marvels of modern*

²¹ All the illustration belonging to *Berenice* (2020) EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SNIFTER OF TERROR Season Two #5 were retributed from <https://www.firstcomicsnews.com/edgar-allan-poes-snifter-of-terror-season-two-5/>

²² All the quotations from *Berenice* (2020) EDGAR ALLAN POE'S SNIFTER OF TERROR Season Two #5 were written by Alisa Kwitney in 2020.

medicine, his beloved felt no pain. (p. 6). To conclude, Egaeus does not seem to be hiding his obsession for the teeth. He feels no remorse because his wife is alive, therefore, nothing bad can happen to him for having her teeth. The comfort Egaeus feels is presented through framing in the last vignette where it is showed that he keeps the teeth in a crystal box where these are visible. At the end he is not traumatized but happy ([Picture 4](#)): *But in this moment, he was perfectly satisfied.* (p. 6).

Drawing: The vignettes are drawn in a set of muted colors. There are some winks to Edgar Allan Poe. In the cover of the comic a raven is drawn, making an allusion to his well-known story “The Raven” (1845) ([Picture 5](#)). Egaeus is portrayed with similar facial features and the same hairstyle as the author. He is also represented as an alcoholic, which was one of the main reasons Poe died. Besides, in the very first comic strip, when Egaeus is drinking next to a tomb it can be seen that it is named with the name of his wife (who actually was his cousin) “Virginia Eliza Clemm Poe” ([Picture 6](#)). Berenice is depicted really similar to Virginia Poe. Her hair is done in the same way and facial characteristics such as the large forehead or the shape of her cheeks are alike. The scene where Egaeus decides to “treat” her is well illustrated. All the instruments needed for the work of a dentist can be seen, even anaesthesia ([Picture 7](#)). Framing is also used at the end of the story where, images of carnivorous plants catching flies are presented as a simile ([Picture 8](#)). Egaeus is the Carnivorous plant, whereas Berenice is the poor fly that has been caught.

Text: Egaeus is the narrator himself. First person narration. He establishes communication with the reader although he is the narrator: *What brings me here, you ask, at this dread hour?* (p. 1). This comic alternates monologues of the narrator with dialogues between the characters. The story is oriented towards a third person point of view since word boxes are used ([Picture 9](#)), and a new narrator is introduced from the third page of the comic. This new one is not Egaeus because he talks about him: ... *The way Egaeus loved his charming cousin Berenice.* (p. 3). Third person narration. Apparently, no texts were taken or based from the original short story due to all the changes in the plot. The dialogues are informal. The characters address each other by nicknames and the text is full of contractions. Some key words use bold fonts to express more emphasis: *I **can**...* (p. 5). A more specific and scientific language is used by Egaeus in some parts of the story to trick a naive Berenice: ... *pressure has built up in your zygomaticus muscle, which, if left untreated, will damage the orbicularis oculi...* (p. 5).

4. Conclusions

Although in this project, only a sample of 10 comics have been selected for analysis, it has to be born in mind that these have been taken only from internet. Actually, due to the amount of time and age in which this story has been translated (around 80 years), it is a fact that countless representations of “Berenice” (1835) can be found physically. This evidence proves that this narrative is so selected and high quality for comic adaptation then, since it has been represented until nowadays. It also has to be taken into consideration that the fact that this story has been represented so many times proves that comic representation is as valid as any other medium due to the extensive number of publishing houses interested in adapting this tale into the comic medium. Its influence within comics is so important that some of these graphic illustrations have been used for inspiration in cinema, such in *Os Dentes de Berenice* (1962) Clásicos de Terror 24 ([See Picture](#)). Also, as in any process in which a large amount of time is involved, it has been proved that changes occur in the comic adaptation field too. As it has been showed, the older the adaptation is, the more similar the story will be in comparison with the original one. Different plot lines, drawing techniques, and registers (usually more informal) are used as the time keeps passing, as in *Berenice* (2020) EDGAR ALLAN POE’S SNIFTER OF TERROR Season Two #5. Which means that although a representation may differ from the original it does not mean it is a bad one. It is just a matter of evolving as the time keeps passing.

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