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“SUPERSTITIONS &
MOURNING CUSTOMS OF
THE VICTORIAN WIDOW,”
BY THE **BRIGHTON
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How to Assemble:

1. Copy images onto card stock.
2. Cut out each fan leaf.
3. Punch a hole in the circle at the base of each handle.
4. Layer each leaf, one on top of the other, aligning each hole.
5. Insert a metal brad or ribbon through the hole to secure the fan.
6. (Optional) After fanning the leaves open, an additional ribbon may be strung, first through opposite holes of leaf image and then to each adjacent leaf.



“The Raven” by Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)
MOURNING FAN

“The worst fear of death to the Victorian wasn’t death itself, but the fear of not being properly mourned.” *Oh, and then there was the fear of being buried alive. . .* Disease and death were rampant in the Victorian era. Hospitals were disease-invested holes where people were sent to be forgotten. Thus, people regularly died in the home, where families frequently witnessed the horrific moment. An elaborate set of mourning rituals helped the Victorian navigate through these tragic times. Edgar Allan Poe, and other authors of Victorian literature, romanticized the morbid aspects of death and dying, while the Victorians developed a mourning culture steeped in coffin-escaping tools, post-mortem photography, tear vials, and an array of other mourning rituals.

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Death portrait of Virginia Eliza Clemm Poe, Edgar Allan Poe’s wife, who died from Tuberculosis on Jan. 30, 1847 at the age of 24, leaving Poe despondent with grief. Her struggles with illness and death are believed to have influenced his writings in "Annabel Lee," "The Raven," and "Ligeia."