

When the narrator arrives late on the eighth night, though, the old man wakes up and cries out. Driven mad by the idea that they are mocking his agony with their pleasant chatter, he confesses to the crime and shrieks at the men to rip up the floorboards. Soon, the narrator hears a dull pounding that he interprets as the old man's terrified heartbeat. The narrator is careful to be chatty and to appear normal.