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Editor's Notes and Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the former editors and officers of the Mississippi Philological Association for giving me the opportunity to work with the journal this year. Some of them helped with getting it off the ground at a new location this year: special thanks to Bill Spencer, Susan Ford, and Ted Haddin. The work turned out to be delightful most of the time because the contributors are. The department of English at Mississippi College also provided evaluative and editorial assistance; particular thanks are due to Lee E. Harding, Jonathan Randle, Kerri Stanley Jordan, Jim Everett and David G. Miller, who helped read, select, and copy-edit. Professors of some stature in Mississippi have contributed to the MPA and its journal for many years now. I hope to make it a peer-reviewed journal in the near future, which would give it more direct benefit to some of our careers, but I also hope both the conference and the journal will continue to serve what I have seen as one of its important functions, grooming young scholars to contribute their work to their scholarly fields. Within the past year, EBSCOHOST has included POMPA in its indexing and Gale Publishing has incorporated published essays from *POMPA*, so we are expanding our audience around the world: it has been a banner year.

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Fade to What You Will:

Tim Supple's Experiments with *Twelfth Night* in Film and Theater

In 1996 at The Other Place, the Royal Shakespeare Company's experimental and eloquent theater, Tim Supple re-discovered Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* by estranging it from its generic expectations, which allowed audiences to hear other languages than farce in the play. Supple also estranged that production from its comfortable *cultural* context, introducing non-western music and a racially mixed cast, embracing the strangeness of the result, giving it welcome. Supple used a similar fusion of ethnicity and cultural difference in his 1998 stage production of *Twelfth Night* at the Young Vic. But his 2003 televised *film* version of *Twelfth Night* was a more radical experiment: an artistic strategy of rediscovering a "familiar" work through estrangement, a strategy that marks Supple's theatrical and cinematic experiments with *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*.

Supple's 2003 televised version of *Twelfth Night* defamiliarized the play, especially for British and American audiences, by employing the mixed racial and ethnic cast, the use of middle eastern melodies and musical

instruments, the introduction of non-English language, and the severe cutting and reordering of scenes from their Shakespearean original. In addition, Supple allowed conventions of theater and film to inter-animate. The result was a re-discovery of strangeness, wonder, and an equally effective re-discovery of recognition, three of the central elements of *Twelfth Night* that can become banal by familiarity. From its opening moments this was an entirely foreign *Twelfth Night*. Aside from recovering the unanticipated sense of surprise for an audience, such "Global" cultural mixing prepared the audience for a discovery of what Supple calls a "'shared myth' from a slightly unexpected angle" (qtd. in Chappell). What country, friends, is this?

Part of that sense of surprise is the result of Supple's skillful mixing of cinematic and theatrical conventions. Conventional wisdom tells us that these two modes of artistic vision do not mix well. One tells its stories by appealing to the eye; the other by addressing the ear. Films are *watched* by *spectators*, while plays are *heard* by *audiences*. But in his director's notes to his DVD edition of *Twelfth Night*, Supple set out his bold, multi-media ambitions for this play. "Paradox," Supple insisted,

> lay at the heart of our ambitions. We would make a film and in no way film a play; yet, we would cast actors largely from the theatre and keep their performances at the center of the film.

> We would make a contemporary film, creating a contemporary-multicultural vision of Illyria/London, yet we would use only the original language and remain true to the Elizabethan identities of the characters. Our ambition was to make a soulful modern dream-film, deftly poised between laughter and tears, joy and sorrow, hope and despair.

Supple's televised *Twelfth Night* opens with a dizzy cinematic speed, displacing the play's opening aria—"If music be the food of love, play on"— and instead presenting us with a radical expositional contradiction, a kind of anti-establishment shot. The camera announces where we are, it would seem. Pieces of the title, *William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, appear on the screen, blue letters against a black background. No sooner does the title appear than it vanishes, followed by a succession of jump cuts that quickly, often in less than a second, move from one incomprehensible storyline to another. When the words "Twelfth Night" appear on screen, we hear a cacophony of shouts, the sounds of weapons being cocked, doors being kicked in. The words "Twelfth Night" then disappear, replaced by the single word, "or." Then, slyly, Supple supplies the play's alternate title, "What You Will," immediately followed by a succession of sharp cuts, as we move through the chaos of characters fleeing

something dangerous, some unnamed insurgency. A man, perhaps Sebastian, awakens a woman, perhaps Viola, and furtively puts his finger to her lips. The camera then cuts to a solitary figure, who speaks in a time signature all his own: "If music be the food of love, play on." But we do not linger with Orsino's romantic words. Instead, the camera sharply cuts to a figure—possibly Sebastian—hurriedly arming, then quickly cuts to a female singer, and back again to several frightened figures—our supposed Viola and Sebastian among them—being hurried off somewhere, then back to the singer, whose aria is interrupted with Orsino's languid demand: "That strain again" (I:1).

It is an effective tactic that both disables and fulfills our expectations of Shakespeare's play. For in the camera's sharp, incomprehensible alternations between fragments of violent action and languid repose, we sense the equally improbable conjunction of Orsino's world of languid poetry in 1.1 and Viola's sharp, quick, attentive questions in 1.2. Supple's camera, then, creates different theatrical and metrical spaces for Orsino and Viola as well as for Illyria itself. Color and tableaux together create a cinematic "set." In those scenes that depict Orsino deep in self-love, lost in his high fantastical world, the camera catches Orsino in emblematic poses reminiscent of the Garrick-like frozen "pause," suggesting a grand theatrical

moment. As Valentine reports Olivia's latest refusal, Orsino, who has been practicing his archery, suddenly freezes into an emblem of himself as both his own Cupid and Acteon, his arrow pulled back, as this lover indeed holds the bent bow. Behind him a burning, multi-colored sunset fills up the screen.

Supple's scene ends with a wonderful moment of magical realism that invokes both cinematic dreamscape and the indeterminate freedom of an open theatrical space. The camera follows Viola and Sebastian as they seek a way out of their entrapment. A window appears. As the twins open the shutters and prepare to jump, the camera looks through the window to see a dazzling starry night. Viola and Sebastian then jump. For a moment the two fall in slow motion, then dissolve into the stars, losing both themselves and each other but finding Illyria. Supple may be paying homage to another theater-to-film adaptation, Adrian Noble's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which the young boy who guides the film audience through this new medium follows the lovers through a magical door into another starry night of dreams. After Viola and Sebastian disappear, Supple's camera then dissolves the screen into an abstract blue-grey. We hear the sounds of the sea, gulls, bells, perhaps the sound of wind and rain, as the camera recovers its focus. We see a fishing boat, a sea captain, and a shivering, drenched,

young woman. And then we hear, for the first time, Viola's words, for it *is* Viola we hear, as we return to Shakespeare's play: "What country, friends, is this?" (I.ii.1)

Such fusion of cinematic and theatrical velocities also hints at the violence that emerges out of sentimentality, like to "th' Egyptian thief," to whom Orsino will sentimentally compare himself, when in 5.1 Orsino's own romantic constructions of both Olivia and "Cesario" will suddenly metamorphose into violence. For Supple, *Twelfth Night* is a world of dark transformation, wondrous but also terrifying, as ordinary characters suffer, in Supple's words, "flashes of transformations and glimpses of another potential that exists within [them]. . . . There seems to be a kind of fear about getting what you want and returning to yourself" (Interview n. pag.). Supple was speaking of his 1998 Young Vic stage production. Six years later, in his televised production, Supple's vision of the play had darkened, sharpened by a more menacing cast, the men in particular. David Troughton, as Sir Toby, whose facial muscles can conjure up a range of sadistic pleasures, is a most unpleasant drunk. He's not a reveler as much as a reviler. More surprising, perhaps, is Richard Bremmer's Andrew Aguecheek, here not at all the feckless and somewhat charming wooer he often is, but a kind of Sir Toby in training, who pushes himself into "My

mistress Mary Accost," intending to "embrace" her with a force that is no less brutal for all its drunken clumsiness. There's an uncomfortable sense of sexual intrusion and threat here that puts Puritan anti-theatrical railings in a whole new light.

There's also a sense of confinement associated with the sexual aggression, a kind of tired voyeurism. The revelers spy on Malvolio, not from behind a box tree, where most Tobys, Fabians, and Aguecheeks often risk losing their cover in their excitement, and indeed *would* lose it, breaking the sinews of their plot, were Malvolio not so thoroughly self-absorbed. By contrast, Supple's revelers sit in an enclosed surveillance room, part of the furniture of petty power, along with the weaponry that shows up everywhere in this Illyria. Although the aggression is mainly gendered male, Maria contributes as well. As the revelers attempt to catch their mad gull and take him to the dark house, Maria approaches from behind and slips a dark hood over Malvolio's head, an unmistakable and frightening iconography for any contemporary audience. But Maria has her limits. At the end of Malvolio's letter-reading scene, the surveillance camera continues to run, as Toby and Fabian continue to watch the next "scene," one involving Olivia and Viola. Maria has the good sense to turn off the monitor. It's an interesting meta-cinematic moment, fusing the revelers' voyeurism with our own, as we,

secure in our own room, gaze into our own monitor and watch the watchers watch. What is most surprising about these Malvolio scenes is that, without the vulnerability of comic risk, they are not at all funny. When the revelers laugh, there's something pathological, joyless, in the noise they make.

And yet there is wonder in this Illyria, all the more powerful for its suddenness. What signals those moments is an awareness of an alien convention. Such unrecognizable conventions at first estrange us from the very familiar, canonical, play we are watching. But such estrangement surprises us into epiphany as it carries us beyond our provincial expectations. It might be the middle eastern musical instruments, such as the guzheng, "a delicious sounding Chinese zither with twenty three strings," the 'ud, "an Arab lute, but unlike the European lute [with] no frets," a high-pitched Indonesian zither, or "the sarangi, an Indian instrument which is quite often used with voice in Indian music, and indeed sometimes sounds like a voice" (Hallett n. pag.). Such a wide range of non-western instruments can startle western listeners with an unnamable beauty that scores, and underscores, moments beyond our cultural reach.

Or the surprise might be linguistic in nature. There are moments in Supple's production when, without warning, the familiar Shakespearean language dissolves into an unrecognizable tongue, as Antonio and Sebastian

and later Antonio and Viola, and finally Viola and Sebastian speak to one another in what must be their Messaline tongue. The effect is two-fold. It isolates two cultures within the play, one Illyrian, one Messaline. But that same language also separates the audience from the very words in the play that *define* an audience, and its cultural hold on Shakespeare. *We are unable to hear, to understand, the recognition scene.* At the moment of our greatest epiphany, we also sense our exclusion. This is not entirely our play. It's not entirely *Shakespeare's*. And yet, does not our simultaneous awareness of an unnamable discovery, that is and is not, as well as our exclusion, allow us to experience, to understand, the mixed tones of the play's ending with unexpected depth?

Indeed, Supple's production continually grapples with the *dangers* of conventional recognition. His fused conventions, whether those of competing media or competing cultures, often disable easy provincial recognition through the introduction of multi-racial casting and cross-cultural conventions and influences. There are, to offer a variation of Coriolanus's famous words, *worlds* elsewhere. By globalizing our local perspectives we estrange ourselves from what we thought we knew and from

what we think we know. And for Tim Supple, that estrangement, paradoxically, discovers a deep and unanticipated wonder. What country, friends, is this?

John R. Ford

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FILM

THE IMAGES DO NOT LIE
UGLY AGE AND YELLOW ROT
THE STENCH OF DECAY WITH NOT
WHAT I HAVE BUT HAVE NOT
AND I WISH I COULD LOOK LIKE THE
IMAGES ON THE SCREEN THAT
FILL THE ROOMS THE MINDS THE PAGES OF
OUR AMERICAN DREAM.

Grace Orsulak

Chiromancy

It's enough to baffle Mrs. Lamarr.
A day comes you don't know
your own hand, a fine seine
draped across its back,
the index finger suddenly
swerving toward its fellows.
What are these deep braids
creasing the palm, fine lines
scoring fingers and all,
years' demented cross-hatching?

We cross into Alabama where
her sign points out
that Mrs. Lamarr's help is 22 miles
back. She'd map the hand
to check its chaos,
discover designs
of present, future, past.

Yet daily the hand moves
through customary tasks,
flying across keyboards,
following alphabets, melodies.
Automatically it finds the precise
angle for cracking eggs, tossing shells.
It plunges fearless
into hot water, gently crumbles
clumps of soil from pot-bound roots.
With its own knowledge it curves
into a caress.

Susan Allen Ford, Delta State University

Clearly not a Crutch: Phoenix's Cane as Phallus in Eudora Welty's "A Worn Path"

In a perceptive essay about Eudora Welty's "A Worn Path," James Saunders accurately characterizes Phoenix Jackson as a "gifted child of nature" (67). Because she has lived all her life in the backwoods of Mississippi, Phoenix's experiences have provided her with an extensive informal education. Over the years, she has developed the knowledge and skills she needs to negotiate her way through her immediate environment. She has learned the wisdom and lore of the woods. She knows the weather, she knows "the season for bulls," and she knows that "snakes curl up and sleep in the winter" (Welty 144). In this sense, Phoenix seems to be one with the natural world that she lives in. At the same time, however, Phoenix possesses qualities that clearly separate her from her world of nature, qualities that are peculiar only to humans. Phoenix speaks, and she meditates. In this sense, Welty emphasizes the paradoxical nature of human subjectivity, which is a bodily incarnation of a psychic, discursive entity. In addition, Welty foregrounds the paradoxical nature—the liminal space—of

Phoenix's subjectivity most vividly and most immediately in her cane. Rather than employ her cane to prop up an ailing self, Phoenix deploys it as a means of communication. More specifically, Phoenix's cane functions not only as a mediator between her bodily self and her psychic self, but it also functions as a vehicle by means of which she reveals her healthy human subjectivity to the world.

The value of Phoenix's cane becomes immediately apparent, for Welty describes it in the story's opening paragraph. After she tells how Phoenix walks—"moving from side to side in her steps, with the balanced heaviness and lightness of a pendulum in a grandfather clock"—Welty writes: "[Phoenix] carried a thin, small cane made from an umbrella, and with this she kept tapping the frozen earth in front of her. This made a grave and persistent noise in the still air, that seemed meditative like the chirping of a solitary little bird" (142). This passage is significant for a number of reasons. First, it associates Phoenix with an element of nature: "a solitary little bird." Paradoxically, however, Phoenix's "chirping" seems "meditative." Although it may occasionally seem otherwise, animals don't meditate; only humans do. That is, the act of meditation—the act of consciously reflecting on—of being aware of—subjectivity is a peculiarly human quality. Second, Phoenix isn't chirping or meditating directly. She

taps the "frozen earth" with her cane, which makes a "grave and persistent noise."

As the focus of the passage, Phoenix's cane takes on particular significance. First, like her clothes, it reveals her resourcefulness. Just as she transformed empty, bleached sugar sacks into a long, formal apron, she consciously and deliberately transforms an apparently broken umbrella into an exceedingly useful tool. Additionally, even though it is an artificial instrument that Phoenix employs, her cane seems to be almost a natural extension of her body—like an insect's antennae or bat's sonar. At the same time, though, it ironically functions as a means by which she communicates her psychic (i.e. discursive) subjectivity. As Welty states:

> Now and then there was a quivering in the thicket. Old Phoenix said, 'Out of my way, all you foxes, owls, beetles, jackrabbits, coons, and wild animals! . . . Keep out from under these feet, little bob-whites. . . . Keep the big wild hogs out of my path. Don't let none of those come running my direction. I got a long way.' Under her small black-freckled hand her cane, limber as a buggy whip, would switch the brush as if to rouse up any hiding things. (142)

In this sense, Phoenix's cane functions as the material manifestation of her phallus, her privileged signifier as Lacan defines it (285). Unlike Lacan, however, I distinguish between a positive and a negative phallus. The positive phallus is rooted in the classical ideas of *nosce teipsum* (self-knowledge) and *sophrosyne* (self-mastery). It is coterminous with *virtus*: manliness, worth, excellence, especially moral excellence. In this sense, it signifies a kind of oneliness or integrity, and one uses it to signify this state in himself or herself or to empower others. In contrast, the negative phallus is rooted in the conventional *meconnaissance* of the commensurability between the penis and the phallus (privileged signifier), and it represents the traditional ideologies of masculinity: power, privilege, and wholeness. This last quality, wholeness, signifies a kind of absolute self-sufficiency (why *real* men don't ask directions) and differs substantively from integrity, for it lacks *virtus* and generally represents discursive tyranny. Thus, even though Phoenix's cane is as "limber as a buggy whip," it functions quite differently, and while one may use a traditional whip, an embodiment of the negative phallus, to control or tame animals, or the Other, Phoenix uses her cane to protect her self and others—to alert them to avoid her and to care for their selves. In short, her cane represents her positive phallus and her *virtus*.

Similarly, when Phoenix must cross the log that lies across the creek, Welty emphasizes how the cane functions as an extension of Phoenix's substantive subjectivity or *virtus*, the psychic integrity that results from inhabiting *nosce teipsum* and *sophrosyne.* Phoenix knows that crossing the stream is perhaps the most difficult part of her journey, for she says: "'[n]ow comes the trial'" (143). Although she is cautious, Phoenix is undaunted: Putting her right foot out, she mounted the log and shut her eyes. Lifting her skirt, leveling her cane fiercely before her, like a festival figure in some parade, she began to march across. Then she opened her eyes and she was safe on the other side. (143). Because of her age, Phoenix is aware of her physical infirmities; rather than let them defeat her, however, she trusts her subjectivity to enable her to cope with the obstacles in her environment. By closing her eyes and "leveling her cane" to cross the log, Phoenix reveals how she has physically and discursively imprinted her journey onto her psychic subjectivity. In this sense, Phoenix moves with the skill and confidence associated with the animals in the forest. Figuratively speaking, she is one with her environment. She literally and figuratively knows where she is, and she moves along her path with the grace and assurance of a woodland creature. Once safely on the other side of the creek, she proudly

acknowledges the power and capability of her private, autonomous self: "'I wasn't as old as I thought,' she said" (143).

In this regard, Phoenix's cane signifies the trust and security she has in her psychic self. Even when she encounters what is perhaps her most fearful object in the woods—the "ghost" in the maze—Phoenix remains confident and secure, and she again relies on her cane to help her continue on her path. When she realizes that the figure is a scarecrow, Phoenix laughs at herself and "[t]hen she went on, parting her way from side to side with the cane, through the whispering field" (144). In this episode and particularly in this image, Welty parallels Phoenix's cane to Moses's rod. That is, as one commentary says, Moses actually "controls the action by holding out his hand" (Laymon 48), and it later indicates how Moses's hand is synonymous with his rod, "for the function of Moses' hands is probably a later modification of the primitive concept of the rod or standard as a symbol of divine presence" (51). In this sense, Moses's hand and rod function as extensions of one another, just as Phoenix's cane functions as an extension of her physical and psychic self. Thus, just as Moses parts the water of the red sea not only to allow the Israelites to escape their enemies, but also to secure their deliverance, so Phoenix uses her cane to ward off danger and to cut her path to salvation. Phoenix's artificial cane, then, seems to be a

natural extension of her physical self. As such, it possesses two important qualities. It not only enables her to function as a "natural" element in her environment, but it also enables her to cope with that environment. Rather than let the obstacles prevent her from achieving her goal, Phoenix uses her cane to work through them.

As a mediator between her psychic self and the world, however, Phoenix's cane occasionally proves less than reliable, for human consciousness and subjectivity are themselves vulnerable to the exigencies and accidents of the world. Once Phoenix crosses the maze and follows the track through the "quiet bare fields," she reaches a ravine where she pauses to drink from a spring "silently flowing through a hollow log." Refreshed by this metaphoric well-of-life, Phoenix arrives at the road. "Deep, deep the road went down between the high green-colored banks. Overhead the live-oaks met, and it was as dark as a cave" (145). Like her journey as a whole, the road is paradoxical. On the one hand, it signifies the liminal space of her journey; she is no longer in the woods, but she has not yet reached the city. At the same time, it signifies the liminal space of Phoenix's subjectivity, for it represents the paradoxical nature of her being. That is, like the road she walks, which is half way between the city and the forest, Phoenix at this moment is halfway between her consciousness and her unconscious, for as

soon as she enters the "cave," "[a] black dog with a lolling tongue came up out of the weeds by the ditch. She was meditating, and not ready, and when he came at her she only hit him a little with her cane. Over she went in the ditch, like a little puff of milkweed" (145). As Welty reveals here, the human quality of meditation—of consciousness—is itself paradoxical. This passage recalls the story's opening when the meditative tapping of Phoenix's cane functioned not only as a "natural" extension of her being, but it also functioned to reveal the integrity of her subjectivity, the "naturalness" of her subjectivity associated with the plants and animals of her world.

In this episode, however, in this liminal space, Phoenix's consciousness—her meditating—functions as a distraction. Rather than reveal her "naturalness," it reveals her unnaturalness, her artificial self, and this self-consciousness, her culturally determined self, makes her vulnerable to others. In this liminal space, the power of Phoenix's subjectivity becomes diminished, and she only hits the dog "a little with her cane." Taken out of her self by her act of meditating, Phoenix becomes vulnerable to the accidents or exigencies of life—"she was not ready." In this regard, Phoenix's most human quality—her consciousness—ironically fails her, and she becomes dehumanized, making her susceptible to the forces of nature.

Figuratively, she becomes "a little puff of milkweed" blown into the ditch by the wind of chance and her lack of preparedness.

When Phoenix arrives at the doctor's office—the dream-like world of the formally educated—her cane, rather than simply unreliable, becomes absolutely useless—at least until the very end of her trial there. Because she lacks a formal education, Phoenix feels inferior to the nurse and the attendant, and she allows her self to be marginalized and dehumanized by their discursive tyranny, their deployment of the negative phallus. Her self-consciousness, her sense of lack, makes her withdraw into her self "just as if she were in armor" (148). She loses her phallus. However, when the nurse reminds Phoenix about her grandson and the purpose of her journey, Phoenix experiences a psychic resurrection and "she [speaks] unasked now" (148). By recalling her grandson and by focusing on the purpose of her journey, Phoenix re-collects her self: she regains her phallus.

At this point, Phoenix reveals the power and authority of her positive phallus in her behavior and in her discourse. The attendant, affected by the spirit of Christmas, offers Phoenix a few pennies from her purse, and Phoenix proudly announces: "'Five pennies is a nickel'." When Phoenix receives the nickel she has "earned" from the attendant, she carefully fishes the nickel she "stole" from the hunter out of her pocket. Holding both of

them in her palm and cocking "her head on one side," she stares at them closely. By having Phoenix adopt this meditative attitude, Welty signals Phoenix's consciousness—the resurrection of her psychic self in unison with her physical self—how she once again "naturally" embodies her discursive self. In addition, Phoenix, in the final act that her meditative attitude generates, signals the substance of her private, autonomous subjectivity. As Welty says:

> Then she gave a tap with her cane on the floor. 'This is what come to me to do,' she said. 'I going to the store and buy my child a little windmill they sells, made out of paper. He going to find it hard to believe there such a thing in the world. I'll march myself back where he waiting, holding it straight up in this hand'. (149)

The tap of Phoenix's cane recalls the earlier episodes when she performed similar acts—when she tapped the "frozen earth in front of her" (142) at the beginning of her journey, when, a little later, she switched the brush "as if to rouse up any hiding things" (142), and when, in the middle of her journey, she leveled "her cane fiercely before her, like a festival figure in some parade" to march confidently across the log that functioned as a bridge over the creek. In contrast to Roland Bartel's assertion that Phoenix's tapping of

her cane and her descent of the stairs from the doctor's office signal her impending death (289), I suggest that by tapping her cane—that artificial extension of her psychic self—Phoenix signals how she has regained the power, privilege, and integrity commensurate with the positive phallus.

In addition, Phoenix deploys the positive phallus by buying her grandson "a windmill." While Bartel's "assumption" that Phoenix's grandson is dead or that he is only a figment of her imagination leads him to conclude that by "the end of the story [Phoenix's] senility seems to overcome her" (220), I suggest that Phoenix's grandson is alive and real and that Phoenix is anything but senile. Rather than spend the two nickels she has obtained on herself, that is, rather than spend them to satisfy her own needs and desires, which are probably numerous, she thinks of her grandson first—of his needs and his desires. In addition, instead of spending the money on something practical, Phoenix spends it on a toy. By doing so, she not only takes care of her grandson's physical needs, she gets the "soothing medicine," but she also attends to his psychic needs, for she gives him something novel—something to satisfy the mind and the spirit, not just the body.

Indeed, by having Phoenix hold the pinwheel "straight up in [her] hand" on her journey back to the woods, Welty again signals how Phoenix

embodies the positive phallus, how she has been psychically resurrected. Rather than sit with the "fixed and ceremonial stiffness" that she adopted when she first entered the doctor's office, Phoenix once again becomes a "festival figure in [a] parade." She once again relies on her knowledge and skills—the ontology she has acquired through her informal education—to negotiate her way over, through, and around the numerous obstacles that she knows she will encounter on her journey back home. To get there, moreover, she will again rely on her subjectivity—the manifestation of her *virtus* in the world—and her cane—the execution of her positive phallus—in order once more to traverse her worn path successfully.

Gregory W. Bentley, Mississippi State University

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Storm Season

For days we plotted a storm that
turned its back on us, imagined
whirling rains, a splintering
world, but felt only the slightest
stirrings of wind.

So when one oak with sharp
declamatory groans rent itself
in two, a casualty of disease or
a storm almost forgotten, we gathered
to marvel at narrow escapes,
to admire its near encroachment,
to wonder at its massive fallen arms,
the tangle of green
pressed against glass.

Their noise drowning ours,
men swarmed with chainsaws, rakes, brooms,
quickly cleared debris away.
They left us with the rustle
of still green leaves,
the oak's exposed and blackened heart.

Susan Allen Ford
Delta State University

Lions, Hares, and Monsters, Oh My!

Shakespeare's play *Troilus and Cressida* flies in the face of our normal expectations for a unified beginning, middle and end, for causal probability and character developments, even for a clear demarcation between audience and play or between creating author and created play. From the beginning, we are invited to take pleasure or not in an experience that systematically deflates literary themes and traditions. The play ends with an epilogue that is calculatedly shocking, pronouncing a corrosive judgment on all that we have seen even as we realize that we are included in that judgment. In between is a full war plot played off against a full love plot, from which the play's name is taken. There is even a critical commentator, Thersites, who reminds us of the parallels between the two again and again: "war for a placket"; "all the argument is a whore and cuckold"; "lechery, lechery, still wars and lechery."

Although a prologue was a common convention, only six of Shakespeare's plays begin with one, and in the prologue to *Troilus and Cressida*, the audience is admonished "to like, or find fault, as your pleasures are." It seems that Shakespeare may have been aware that this play might cause some problems, as indeed it has from the beginning.

From the apparent puzzlement of its first editors as to the genre of the play right down to the present, the arguments about what it is sound like Polonius's list in *Hamlet*: "tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral , tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral" (2.2.405-10). Neither have critics come to any agreements about the play's meaning or its success as a drama. It has been called "a play of puzzles" (Ure 33), and its criticism is littered with assumptions about the clarity, nobility, or even humanity of Shakespeare's ethical perceptions. Some see the problem as Shakespeare's failure to merge the story and the philosophy, "making the story . . . an excuse for thought rather than the embodiment of thought" (Bethell 98-105). Robert Kimbrough argues that "the plot has no central drive, no consistent argument" and thus has failed to achieve an intellectually coherent whole (205-06). However, other critics, such as Camille Slights, have shown that there is order throughout the play in terms of structure and language. And the play's order--the parallel structure, the pattern of counter-pointed double-plotting, reinforces the theme and tone of disillusionment and frustration. In particular, the Prologue and the Epilogue are evidence of that symmetrical balance.

Ironically, Troilus and Cressida are not mentioned in the prologue although the more famous lovers, Paris and Helen are. But, the "arm'd"

prologue sounds the note of discord that will resound throughout the play. The speech is at once darkly comic and ambivalent. In it we hear sounds that are loud with brass and the rattling of armor. And properly epic, the Prologue promises an epic construction to the upcoming story, beginning *in medias res* in Troy "within whose strong immures / The ravish'd Helen, Menelaus' queen, With wanton Paris sleeps." On the Dardan plains, the ships of sixty-nine "princes orgillous," from Greece have "disgorg'd their warlike fraughtage." The "brave pavilions" of the "fresh and yet unbruised" Greeks stand in contrast to "Priam's six-gated city" with its "massy staples / And corresponsive and fulfilling bolts" that "sperr up the sons of Troy."

> Now expectations, tickling skittish spirits,
> On one and other side, Troyan and Greek,
> Sets all on hazard—and hither am I come,
> A prologue arm'd, but not in confidence
> Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited
> In like conditions as our argument,
> To tell you, fair beholders, that our play
> Leaps o'er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,
> Beginning in the middle, starting thence away
> To what may be digested in a play.

Like or find fault, do as your pleasures are,

Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war.

Here we have a microcosm of the play. The abrupt shifts of tone and style, at once grandiloquent and deliberately off-hand, a celebration and mockery, not only prepare us for the scene of the play, but also subtly prepare us for the ironic and paradoxical treatment of the subject of love and war. It raises our expectation that we will witness a heroic action only to introduce us immediately to a petulant young man who is disarming.

This young man will not be the true Troilus of tradition, the loyal knight and constant lover. Here he refuses to fight; he speaks bitterly of Helen as being painted with the blood of both Greeks and Trojans: "I cannot fight upon this argument; / It is too stain'd a subject for my sword" (1.1.92-3). Then later in Act II when he is willing to fight, he passionately defends her retention because her "youth and freshness / Wrinkles Apollo's, and makes pale the morning" (2.78-79). Here he transforms Helen into a pearl "whose price hath launch'd above a thousand ships." Now she is "a theme of honor and renown / A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds / Whose present courage may beat down our foes, / And fame in time to come canonize us" (2.2.199-202). If Troilus is so constant, so true, we need to ask, true to what? If the answer is Cressida, then we have to ask why

Troilus never mentions marriage to her or why he does not claim her as his mistress to keep her from being traded to the Greeks. However, we don't have to ask questions outside the play itself. Troilus will continually make things into what they are not: Cressida more than Helen; the act of love more than that act; Helen into the sum of romantic significance; but ironically himself into less than he is. Of himself, he says, "I am true as truth's simplicity, / And simpler than the infancy of truth" (3.2.169-70). Yet faced with separation and Cressida's betrayal, his own constancy is at once forgotten, according to Rosalie Colie, as he "undeclares plainness in the fancification of his outcry against Cressida and Diomed" (332).

As we are kept from viewing Troilus as the ideal lover or the knight faithful in adversity and are made instead to see his pretensions and self-delusions, we are most certainly hindered from viewing Cressida as the idealized queen of courtly love—a role thrust on her by Troilus. When we first meet "the pearl" of Troilus' eulogy, she is holding her own in a bawdy repartee with first her servant then Pandarus. Here, Cressida is bold, witty, courtly. Troilus has described her as "too stubborn-chaste against all suit" (1.1.97); yet here we see her willing to lie on back to defend her belly. She tells Pandarus that she is willing to lie:Upon my back, to defend my belly, upon my wit, to defend my wiles, upon my secrecy, to defend mine honesty,

my mask, to defend my beauty, and you, to defend all these. . . . (1.2.260-64). Two points are important in the exchange between Cressida and Pandarus: in the world of Troy, she is quite capable of defending herself, and her consent to enter into an affair with Troilus is a foregone conclusion, making an ironic jest of Troilus' agonies and frustrations. Cressida understands her world; she knows that she can maintain a dominant position only by withholding sexual favors:

> Yet hold I off. Women are angels wooing:
> Things won are done, joy's soul lies in the doing.
> That she belov'd knows nought that knows not this:
> Men prize the thing ungain'd more than it is.
> That she was never yet that ever knew
> Love got so sweet as when desire did sue,
> Therefore this maxim out of love I teach:
> Achievement is command; ungain'd, beseech. (1.2.286-93)

Cressida, who like Helen becomes a pawn in the war plot, has been deprived of a secure place in Troy because of her father's treachery. She attempts to find security in the only way she knows, the only way her culture allows: she uses her physical beauty to attract the praise of men and to find a protector. Cressida wants to believe that Troilus loves her, but she is keenly aware of

the vulnerability to which that love will open her. She uses the image of the divided self to explain her conflict, and in this way warns Troilus that she cannot be the ideal of constancy and courtly love that he longs for: "I have a kind of self resides with you. / But an unkind self, that itself will leave / To be another's fool" (3.2.148-150). Troilus and Cressida are allowed one night of bliss before their forced separation, and when she learns that she is to be traded to the Greeks for Antenor, she is genuinely sorry. When she speaks of her fate, she speaks of her fidelity in terms of the "falsehood" she must come to exemplify: "O you gods divine, / Make Cressid's name as the very crown of falsehood, / If ever she leave Troilus!" (4.2.99-100). And though Troilus directs her attention to the forces beyond her control which will coerce her into betraying him, by the time he delivers her to Diomedes, she has become merely a possession, and Diomedes tells Troilus, "To her own worth / She shall be priz'd" (4.4.133-34).

The deflation of Cressida's character is at its worst once she is brought into the Greek camp. Although she resumes the mask of the bold and witty lady, using her "wit to defend her wile," she is passed from man to man to be kissed, observed, and commented on. Ulysses' contemptuous remarks make her realize that she will have to find yet another role in order to survive here: "There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip, / Nay, her

foot speaks; her wanton spirits look out / At every joint and motive of her body" (4.5.55-57). Only Diomedes has told her she can expect his protection: "The luster in your eye, heaven in your cheek, / Pleads your fair usage" (4.4. 118-19). However, this "fair usage" will be little more than his demanding sexual favors. While Cressida is haunted by her vows to Troilus, she knows that Diomedes' attention is here and now, revealing her awareness of the hopelessness of her position. When Diomedes threatens to abandon her, she decides to play the part toward which she has been moving—that of "false Cressida"—and bids him "Come." Her last remarks allude to the effect of living in a society that is obsessed with sexuality and yet denies it a place among its sanctities. She has come to terms with Ulysses' philosophy:

> For time is like a fashionable host
> That slightly shakes his parting guest by th' hand,
> And with his arms outstretch'd, as he would fly,
> Grasps in the comer. The welcome ever smiles,
> And farewell goes out sighing. Let not virtue seek
> Remuneration for the thing it was;
> . . . . . .
> The present eye praises the present object. (3.3.165-70, 80)

The three onlookers to the scene between Diomedes and Cressida judge her as having "turn'd whore" (5.2.114). Certainly she capitulates to the forces Troilus warned were beyond her control. Northrop Frye says that "she may be faithless, but fidelity would be impossibly quixotic in the world she is in, a world where heroism degenerates into brutality and love itself is reduced to another kind of mechanical stimulus" (85). However we may see her, Cressida sees herself more clearly than anyone else, including Ulysses and Thersites, as a "woeful Cressid 'mongst the merry Greeks!" (4.4.56).

That none of the characters survive such deflation demonstrates the irony between the fairy tale plot suggested in the Prologue with its almost geometric precision and the chaos at the end with its psychological reality. Helen is portrayed as an idle woman who is a source of destruction and debasement. In a scene with Paris and Pandarus, she is reduced to plain Nell. She is bawdy, and her language underscores her trivial worldliness and sensuality. Diomedes, speaking for the Greeks, calls her a "flat, tam'd piece" with "whorish loins" (4.1.63-4):

> She's bitter to her country. Hear me, Paris:
> For every false drop in her bawdy veins,
> A Grecian's life hath sunk, for every scruple
> Of her contaminated carrion weight,

A Troyan hath been slain. Since she could speak,

She hath not given so many good words breath

As for her Greeks and Troyans suff'red death. (4.1.69-70)

Helen, then, is a source of debasement for both Greeks and Trojans. For both sides she is a "theme." But this theme turns out to be enough to destroy one civilization and brutalize another.

All of the famous heroes who fight to keep her or to get her back are contaminated through a futile struggle and, yet, are unwilling to sacrifice what they come to regard as a principle of honor. The great Achilles does not escape belittling. When Hector first meets Achilles in Act 4, he is invited to feast his eyes on Achilles' physique. But Hector finds that the briefest glance will suffice. When Achilles has withdrawn from the fighting, he asks if his deeds are already forgotten. Ulysses replies that past deeds are "devour'd" and "hang / Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail / In monumental mock'ry" (3.3.148, 151-153). Thersites calls him "thou picture of what thou seemest, and idol of idiot-worshippers" (5.1.8). Then later when Achilles engages Hector in battle, Achilles is forced to accept clemency from his enemy. Even though Achilles is credited with slaying Hector, we see that the deed is actually done by his men who only follow his

instructions, and it is an unfair and treacherous fight since Hector is alone and unarmed.

Even Hector betrays the hope invested in him at the beginning. In Act 2, Hector judges Helen "not worth what she doth cost the holding" (2.51). Then, in the council meeting, he does an about-face and decides to keep her, a decision that has puzzled critics. Even Hector's chivalry is called into question. Ajax, asserts that his cousin is "too gentle and too free a man" (4.5.138). Troilus later voices the same criticism, calling Hector's sense of fair play, "Fool's play" (5.3.43). But the mistake that Hector makes that costs him his status as a hero in this play is his abandonment of his chivalry in being tempted by the goodly armor of a Greek soldier. Having stripped the dead Greek and found within only a "putrified core," he removes his own armor and thus exposes himself to Achilles' savagery.

What Shakespeare reveals about the martial heroes—dramatizations of the failure of men to live up to their values—has, as we have seen, its counterpart in the lovers of the play, Troilus and Cressida. Just as the heroes are deflated, so are the lovers, suggesting the pervasive subjection of reason to lust.

In *Troilus and Cressida,* Shakespeare has exposed sin and folly in a world of fools and knaves, a world where human action is doomed to

imperfection and disappointment. Several passages consistently point to a unifying thematic center, a bitter comment on human beings whose aspirations outweigh their capacity for self-knowledge and whose failure is due to their underestimation of the internal appetite. All of the characters become "monsters" of their own unrecognized passion: "They that have the voice of lions and the act / Of hares, are they not monsters? (3.2.88-89) As Troilus tells Cressida, it is this substitution of word for deed that is grotesque: This is the monstrosity in love, lady, that that the will is infinite and the execution confined, that the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit. (3.2.81-83) Consequently, these deflated, self-divided characters betray themselves and others as they fail to know who they are and are not: "And sometimes we are devils to ourselves when we will tempt the frailty of our powers" (4.4.95-96).We share the frustration of the characters at the failure to act, the failure of hope, the limitations. Shakespeare creates the expectation of self-discovery then undermines that possibility by the structural irony he builds into the theatrical situation. Like Troilus, we want the action to reveal "What Cressida is, what Pandar, and what we" (1.1.99). By the end we realize that we are included in the revelations. Troilus, Cressida, and company have become our creations, and by the same token we are theirs—a connection Pandarus will make quite clear in the epilogue

when he addresses us as "brethren and sisters." On Shakespeare's stage the self is a reflected entity which reciprocally reflects the identity of others who give it identity.

The play's stage history, especially in the last 50 years, suggests its modernity. Clearly, the epilogue is a reflection of our own generation's experience of disintegration, disruption, discord, and disillusionment. Yet being disillusioned with a world such as Shakespeare has presented in *Troilus and Cressida* does not necessarily equal a weary pessimism. According to Northrop Frye, "being disillusioned with a world like that is the starting point of any genuine myth of deliverance" (85).

The epilogue, which I earlier said is "calculatedly shocking," as Anne Barton describes it, is monolithic and brutal. It is delivered by a Pandarus who is much changed from the genial, if lecherous, valued confidante of both Troilus and Cressida. Now he is old, his bones ache, and he knows he is despised, the proof being Troilus's having struck him and cursed him. He asks, "Why should our endeavor be so lov'd and the performance so loath'd?" (5.10. 38-39).

> Good Traders in the flesh, set this in your painted cloths:
> As many as be here of Pandar's hall,
> Your eyes, half out, weep out at Pandar's fall,

Of if you cannot weep, yet give some groans;

Though not for me, yet for [your] aching bones. (5.11.45-61)

Brethren and sisters of the hold [door] trade,

Some two months hence my will shall here be made.

It should be now, but that my fear is this,

Some galled goose of Winchester would hiss,

Till then I'll sweat and seek about for eases,

And at that time bequeath you my diseases.

Pandarus' inclusion of us in his family and in his will may be embarrassing or even shocking, but it should also force us to realize that we have participated in the degradation of our most cherished values even as we become conscious that this is a play in which the fraudulent quality being exposed is our own idealism, and that we, too, violate our own ideals. The link to us has been made earlier in a line from Act 3: "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin" (3.3.175). After such knowledge, what catharsis? In fact, we do not experience that release of pity and terror.

Instead Shakespeare forces us to overcome that embarrassment and then we get the opposite—a forced compassion. We cannot say, "Not I" We must say with Pogo, "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

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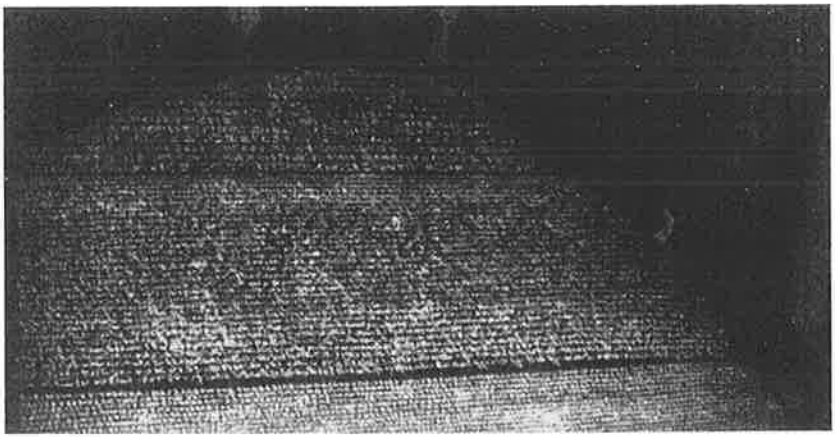

Acts

The night before Paul left Troas,
the faithful met for the breaking of bread
and Paul, with much to say, preached on and on
till midnight. The young Eutychus, overcome, fell
into a deep sleep and out the window,
three stories down to death.

I've been there. I can imagine the scene:
the third floor room, full of lamps, the sharp edge
of smoke that makes breath short, eyes smart.
Eutychus, shrewd youth, snags a comfortable spot,
a seat on the window, just at the border,
a slight remove to cool night air, a view
of the street outside.
At first attentive, during those long hours, Eutychus
relaxes, wanders, struggles, nods, falls.

He woke again in flight, I guess, momentary
awareness before the awkward impact,
enough time to recognize where comfort,
detachment, unconsciousness had brought him.
Then what?

This I *can't* guess: consciousness or nothingness?
joy at deliverance, desire to return, or
regret? How long—a minute or an age—before
the others hurried down to gather round?
How long—ten minutes or ten ages—before
Paul descended to embrace him and pronounce
that there was life in him?

Climbing back up the stairs, awake, alive,
Eutychus knew, I'm sure, where he was going

if not exactly why,
and took his seat among them
and felt the heat of their bodies
and breathed in the bitter smoke
and ate the bread
and talked with Paul till dawn
and then, again descending, strode
into the waking streets of Troas.

Susan Allen Ford

Delta State University

Seen At All the Right Funerals

Uninvited by the living
now he comes
to join the club.
No membership required.
Who would deny the mourner a pew?

He sits amidst the familiar faces,
himself familiar
but forgotten.
Here is the society he fancies himself to belong to.

The living chose their company
for drinks and conversation.
Unadmitted to the porches of their laughter,
now, he comes, solemn
to the parlor that will not refuse him
achieving at last significance by association.

Kay Stricklin, Delta State University

Forever Man

In a tiny town near the southern Mississippi-Louisiana border, the most secure laboratory in the world sits back in the woods. Its location is similar to that of a well-placed whisky still; off a dirt road, past a hidden road made of two-by-fours laid like railroad ties, behind kudzu and dense bushy foliage stands a simple sharecropper's shack.

Inside is a man dressed in blue jeans and a T-shirt. He is meditating now, legs crossed, repeating his mantra silently in a deep, deep trance. Stephen Caine had tried everything when he was young: drugs, meditation, silva mind control, pyramids, a doctorate in psychology, even a little fundamentalism. Meditating seemed to work the best and so he had concentrated on that.

The meaning of life, his own death—those were the issues he could never get around. Everything else—marriage, childrearing, politics, society, religion—was easy. They were avoidable problems, like busy intersections under construction or generic supermarket bread. If one avoided them, they couldn't have that much of an effect on you.

"The strategy of avoidance" he called it in his early professional papers. His colleagues had laughed at him. How could one avoid marriage, child-rearing, politics, society, religion?

He had retreated to his "laboratory" and worked there for the last ten years. He had gotten the issues down to the meaning of life and his own death. And he had gotten the answer: to live forever. It was a simple answer, really, very simple.

So Stephen Caine had set about the business of living forever. Diet, meditation and exercise were part of the answer, he thought, along with avoidance. He had also figured he could work on a chemical answer too in his spare time.

He thought about it a lot (as he did with all things) and came up with another simple answer: age blockers. Age blockers. Like starch blockers and beta blockers, age blockers would simply allow the human body to deflect the ravages of age. Avoid them, he'd like to think.

With his undergraduate degree in chemistry, his habit for research and plenty of time, it was relatively easy for him to develop the idea into chemical reality. He knew it wouldn't work on mice or rats. A man is not a mouse or rat. But he was fortunate to have the perfect guinea pig, a very

intelligent subject whose actions and reactions could be recorded down to the most intimate detail.

He started taking the age blockers himself. He kept a diary and recorded his reactions. Unfortunately, there weren't any. He couldn't tell if he were not aging. He couldn't be able to tell for years. Still, he was happy and confident. He meditated, ate vegetables, and ran through his green, green pastures.

He never nursed a sick baby, argued with a wife over money, voted for a crooked alderman, fixed a food processor or praised our Lord Jesus on Sunday morning in a Baptist church. Now and then he wept and fasted. Once, he almost prayed.

What if age blockers did not work? What if he really had to die? Where did you go? What does it feel like? Every human being who ever lived had to do it except one, and no one seems to know exactly what that death meant. But there was Lazarus and the dead who walked out of the graves on Good Friday. And hasn't the Blessed Virgin ascended into heaven?

These were the questions he asked himself when he awoke in the middle of the night and couldn't return to sleep, when the cold Mississippi rain beat ceaselessly against the tin roof of his laboratory. Often he heard the

night animals about their business, scratching and scrabbling at the underside of his shack like so many hungry demons.

But, in time, Stephen Caine did have his revenge; the age blockers worked. He continued to look and feel thirty-five. His hair and nails grew but, unlike the billionaire Hughes, he kept them neatly clipped. The little Mississippi town near his shack never changed either, and twenty years passed as quickly for Caine as it had for Van Winkle.

Eventually, Caine got bored. The meditation, the vegetables, the running—sooner or later he knew he was going to get sick of it and sooner or later he did. He knew now that he would live forever but he wondered if it were worth it. He was bored to tears.

So he made the fatal mistake: he published his findings. In his own elegant, meticulous style, he laid it all out (except for his insomnia) in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. He concluded with this sentence: "It is now possible, given the correct use of A.B.s (age blockers) and this special lifestyle, for a man to live until he himself is ready to die."

Needless to say, the popular press got hold of the story and a sensation was created. "Psychologist Finds Fountain of Youth" was one of the typical headlines; "Shrink Says Ta Ta to Great Beyond" was a more extreme example.

The news coursed through the eyes and ears of America in a matter of days. The all-news network loved it, the religious networks hated it, feature writers got a midweek column out of it, talk show hosts and their audiences brooded on it, comedians joked about it.

It wasn't very long before a mob formed. Half thought Caine was the devil and half were afraid he was God. What the crowd believed effectively made no difference. The laboratory was burned to the ground.

Fortunately, Caine had hanged himself already. As soon as the thing was in print, he realized he was finished. He knew people would come to put him on airplanes and into television studios, to shine hot lights in his face, to praise and bury him simultaneously. His monkish regimen would forever be disrupted and without it the A. B.s would do no good.

Caine's death was in the papers and on television for one or two more days. Preachers made great, ironic sermons and local television station managers got a chance to wax philosophically over something over than fire safety and nuclear waste. Then a plane crashed in Spain, and the matter of the "voodoo psychologist" was forgotten by the collective mind.

Caine's body was cremated on the spot so there was no funeral or autopsy. Scientists studied the chemical composition of the few remaining A. B.s Caine had given them as samples. After analysis and a few

experiments, they found that the A. B.s didn't seem to affect the aging process in any way. In fact, they didn't seem to work at all.

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The Machine (Gun) in the Garden: *Et in Arcadia Ego* and Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*

Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* urges us to reconsider the ugly historical realities of the westering impulse in America. A number of critics, Barcley Owens among them, have noted how Judge Holden, in particular, seems to embody the worst excesses of this westering impulse—an impulse which proves essentially to be an American recycling of the European imperialism that the Monroe Doctrine was supposedly designed to block. In *Cormac McCarthy's Western Novels*, Owens examines in some detail the critique of American imperialism operating in *Blood Meridian*, linking the violent imagery of the narrative with the post-Vietnam War context of the book's 1985 publication date. For Owens, Captain White's filibusters and Glanton's gang of scalp-hunting mercenaries rehearse American atrocities in the Southeast Asian theater of the 1960s. This angle of discussion may be further extended by focusing on how the figure of the judge, with his aptly named gun, "Et In Arcadia Ego," signifies the intrusion of the machine into the garden: or more specifically, the machine(gun) into the garden. McCarthy's descriptions often linger in detail over weaponry wielded by the Glanton Gang. Moreover, the effects of these machines of war reconfigure in startling and disturbing ways the argument articulated by Leo Marx in *The*

Machine in the Garden. Using this junction of Marx's mythic reading of American literature with McCarthy's blood-spattered demolition of the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, this paper aims to unpack the brutal historical baggage of *Blood Meridian.*

In the introduction to his now-classic study *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America*, Leo Marx asserts, "The pastoral ideal has been used to define the meaning of America ever since the age of discovery" (3). The "ruling motive" of the American myth, as Marx points out, is the hopeful opportunity "to withdraw from the great world and begin life in a fresh, green landscape" (3)—an opportunity we can trace from Columbus's glowing descriptions of the New World through similarly golden visions in the writings of Arthur Barlow and John Smith and so many other framers of the American Dream. The westering impulse to explore and settle and start anew, as Marx points out, lies at the heart of the American experience. Marx's work, however, examines how this Edenic vision finds itself continually under duress with the constant intrusion of "a reality alien to the pastoral dream" (15), an image he finds in the intrusion of machines, especially "[t]he ominous sounds of machines," as Marx writes, "like the sound of the steamboat bearing down on [Huck and Jim's] raft or

of the sound of the train breaking in upon . . . [Thoreau's] idyll at Walden" (15-16).

This dream of the ideal Arcadia, the *ne plus ultra* of the American Dream, hovers in the background of Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian.* Despite the novel's brutality, the notion of the young pilgrim uprooting himself from unhappy circumstance and seeking adventure and fortune to the west is the narrative point of departure for McCarthy's text—a logical starting point that we find in more conventional western novels such as Owen Wister's *The Virginian* and A. B. Guthrie's *The Big Sky.* Of course, as any reader can easily recognize, McCarthy's novel thrusts before us a brutally de-romanticized recreation of this westering impulse. An anti-Western to end all anti-Westerns, *Blood Meridian* not only dismantles the heroic, Zane Grey images of cowboy culture that have shaped our visions of the American West for over a century; no, more than that, the novel also takes on the larger issue of the American experiment itself, revealing how the Arcadian vision Marx discusses is intruded upon by yet another machine—the gun.

It has been noted that McCarthy's landscape in *Blood Meridian* is hardly Arcadian—and this is true enough, of course. Indeed, much of the landscape is a deathscape, a vast graveyard or charnel house, and a

precursor, perhaps, to the corpse-riddled wasteland of his most recent novel, *The Road.* Nevertheless, a romantic and Arcadian subtext threads its way through the opening sections of the novel—though an ironic or subversive one, to be sure. Susan Kollin agrees that "McCarthy parodies the country's pastoral longings . . . recasting the myth of the innocent American and his quest to expand the frontier" (567). Even the earliest passages of the novel play ironically on romantic themes, with the Wordsworthian child references that mark our introduction to McCarthy's main character. This child, however, father to man though he is, is a bringer of death (his mother dies in childbirth) and a personification of violent human history—"All history present in that visage" (*BM* 3)—much like the small boy featured in Ambrose Bierce's "Chickamauga," who is "born to war and domination" (18) despite his apparent childhood innocence. In a sense, too, McCarthy's novel seems to hold up for examination two conflicting visions of American landscape: on the one hand, that of the orderly garden and on the other, that of the howling wilderness.

In *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, Richard Slotkin defines these conflicting visions of nature, both typical of eighteenth-century European reactions to the vast proportions of the New World. The pastoral notion of the American

landscape, Slotkin points out, "saw the natural world as a garden, cultivated and dominated by the mind of man or a reasonable God" (203). Such a landscape is, in Slotkin's view, "humanized and gentled, symmetrical, orderly, and peaceful—nature as the farmer shapes it, not the wilderness encountered by an exile or outcast" (203). This view contrasts sharply with the sublime and terrifying vision of American nature that eighteenth-century Europeans such as the French scientist Buffon theorized: "a vision of nature as all-powerful deity. . . [with] landscapes composed of violently exaggerated and contorted rock formations or huge, conflicting masses of rock and water, with man a tiny victim under the great mass of nature" (202).

McCarthy's main character, simply called the Kid, seems in a sense to move through both such landscapes, wandering westward from his East Tennessee birthplace through the cultivated plantation belt, and finally to the frontier fringes of American civilization along the Mexican border. However, even the eastern cultivated regions over which the Kid treks westward "like a raggedy man wandered from some garden" (*BM* 15) are figured in ironically anti-Arcadian terms: "flat and pastoral," this landscape is a garden already despoiled by the horrors of slavery, with "Blacks in the fields, lank and stooped, their fingers spiderlike among the bolls of cotton. A

shadowed agony in the garden" (*BM* 4). That passage alone, brief as it is, underscores the anti-pastoral thrust of McCarthy's vision in *Blood Meridian*, for order is brought to this garden by the overseer's lash. Georg Guillemin likewise sees in this opening sequence a suggestion of "the cursed garden" (74), a motif expanded later in the novel, he asserts, as the Glanton Gang ride past "abandoned haciendas" (*BM* 226) and villages with "crops rotting in the fields" (*BM* 176). Thus we might wonder whether the Arcadian ideal is ever rendered as a possibility in this novel; the American garden seems always already fallen, in some sense. Nevertheless, the Kid's westward journey brings him finally to an unequivocally cursed landscape—nightmarish, gothic, and far removed from any Arcadian vision, ironic or otherwise: "[a] vast world of sand and scrub shearing upward into the shoreless void where . . . the earth grew uncertain, gravely canted and veering out through tintures of rose and the dark beyond the dawn to the uttermost rebate of space" (*BM* 50). This is the anti-Arcadian landscape *par excellence*, devoid of pastoral beauty and, as Barcley Owens observes, "blasted by eons of natural violence . . . into terrifying, sublime postures" (7). Soon enough, however, as McCarthy's narrative unfolds, this landscape will be blasted by human violence as terrifying as any natural cataclysm. In fact, the ominous sounds we hear in McCarthy's novel are not those of the

steamboat or locomotive or the encroaching realities of industrialism but the sound of gunfire—sharp, loud, and deadly, exploding enormously in the desert silence, for Blood Meridian is as clouded with a "haze of gray gunsmoke" (*BM* 81) as it is drenched in the blood of the gunfire's victims.

Indeed, while McCarthy's landscape is more Rappaccini's garden trap than Arcadian paradise, it is man and machine intruding so ominously upon this landscape that hold our attention—and it is Judge Holden and his rifle, labeled in silver wire with the moniker "*Et In Arcadia Ego*" (*BM* 125), that serve as the central embodiments of both man and his machine in "the cursed garden" of McCarthy's novel. This moniker or motto— *Et in Arcadia Ego*—actually appears on several occasions in Leo Marx's book, becoming a kind motif for his study. Marx explains that he borrows the term from "Poussin and other landscape painters" of the seventeenth century, who "often introduced a death's-head into the most delicate pictorial idylls. To make the meaning of this *memento mori* inescapable they sometimes inserted the printed motto, *Et in Arcadia Ego*, meaning 'I [Death] also am in Arcadia'" (26).

The Judge himself embodies this motto, for he is the personification of death in the garden. Astoundingly well read, as nimble intellectually as he is musically, and always ruthlessly studying and categorizing the constituent

elements of the world around him, McCarthy's satanic Judge Holden personifies Western (or American) man run amok, his intellectual prowess turned to violent conquest of the natural world as well as of his fellow man (if the Judge is indeed human!). For Judge Holden, violent conquest is woven into the fabric of things on some fundamental level, as he explains to the Glanton Gang: "All other trades are contained in war. . . . War is the ultimate game because war is at last a forcing of the unity of existence. War is god" (*BM* 249). Indeed, if war is god, Judge Holden is its incarnate manifestation, its Messiah and messenger.

More specifically, Judge Holden is a man of the gun. But it is the image of the gun itself that dominates so many key scenes in McCarthy's novel. Guns are treated with near mystic reverence in *Blood Meridian* and are typically described in almost loving technical detail. And while it is not surprising that firearms would be a ubiquitous feature in a novel of the Old West, certain moments in the text seem completely given over to the gun, as if these weapons become characters in themselves, more fully developed and described than many of the human characters in the narrative. In one critical sequence, for instance, Judge Holden, together with Glanton, presides over the arrival of a shipment of powerful cavalry pistols: and the arrival of the gun in this scene signals a menacing turn of events with the unpacking of "a

stenciled ordnance box from the Baton Rouge arsenal" by "a Prussian jew named Speyer" (*BM* 82). As his men press in for a closer look, Glanton unveils "a longbarreled sixshot Colt's patent revolver. It was a huge sidearm meant for dragoons and it carried in its long cylinders a rifle's charge and weighed close to five pounds loaded. These pistols would drive the half-ounce conical ball through six inches of hardwood and there were four dozen of them in the case" (*BM* 82). We should note here the detailed specifics concerning how powerful these weapons are. We should note, too, how the narrative pauses over the unveiling of these weapons, as if to underscore their significance. In fact, the advent of these dragoon pistols bodes ill for future events in the novel, for armed with these devastating weapons, Glanton's men will pursue their genocidal mission without mercy.

Strangely, though, the pistol Glanton examines first emerges rather innocuously from the box as "a flat package in brown butcherpaper . . . like a paper of bakery goods" *BM* (82). This oddly domestic imagery, however, prefigures a later scene in which Judge Holden, while concocting gunpowder from the very earth itself, appears as "a bloody dark pastryman" (132). Here, in god-like fashion, Judge Holden creates death in the garden (in the form of the gunpowder) as the God of Genesis created human life from the clay. Holden literally breathes life (or death, really) into the firearms of his men as

they prepare to hold off an Indian attack. As the priest Tobin relates to the Kid, the Judge oversaw a veritable slaughter once he had completed his gunpowder concoction: "Gentlemen. That was all he said. . . . [A]nd he commenced to kill indians. God it was butchery. . . . It was sharp shootin all around and not a misfire with that queer powder" (134).

As startling a figure as Holden is, however, the recurring trope of the gun, figured as a killing machine of almost mysterious powers, becomes perhaps the charged image throughout the text. In a scene late in the novel, for example, the narrator again pauses to describe in detail a shotgun wielded by one of Glanton's scalp hunters, David Brown:

> The shotgun was English made. . . . There was a raised center rib between the barrels and inlaid in gold the maker's name, London. There were two platinum bands in the patent breech and the locks and the hammers were chased with scrollwork cut deeply in the steel and there were partridges engraved at either end of the maker's name there. The purple barrels were welded up from the triple skelps and the hammered iron and steel bore a watered figure like the markings of some alien and antique serpent, rare and beautiful and lethal. . . . (*BM* 265-66)

Any reader of McCarthy's fiction will recognize the author's love of technical and mechanical detail. However, much like Judge Holden's classically named rifle or the massive dragoon pistols Glanton unpacks before his men, Brown's shotgun takes on a sort of mystical significance in the above quoted passage, as if the gun is more than a gun. The shotgun's intricate markings suggest that this weapon is not only a machine in the garden but a serpent in the garden, strangely beautiful perhaps, but as a deadly as it is tempting.

The lethality of such a weapon requires a shooter, however, and thus we should return briefly to the earlier scene in which the huge dragoon pistols are unveiled. Here, events quickly take a turn toward the ominous as Glanton decides to test the pistol: for unfortunately, "[i]n that courtyard other than merchants and buyers there were a number of living things" (*BM* 82). At this point, the machine enters "the garden" with astonishingly brutal effect. First, Glanton levels the powerful weapon on a cat: "The explosion in that dead silence was enormous. The cat simply disappeared. There was no blood or cry, it just vanished" (*BM* 82). Both Speyer and the local Mexicans watch "uneasily" as Glanton levels the weapon on a group of domestic fowl in the courtyard: "The pistol roared and one of the birds exploded in a cloud of feathers" (82). Another shot leaves "a second bird . . . kicking" (82) on

the ground. Glanton then unleashes a cacophonous series of shots that leaves a small goat "stone dead in the dust," bursts a clay garraffa "in a shower of potsherds and water" and finally rings "the bell in its mud tower above the roof, [leaving] a solemn tolling that hung on in the emptiness after the echoes of the gunfire had died away" (83). The scene concludes, then, with ominous sounds indeed, for the ring of gunfire will continue to echo through so many of the remaining pages of McCarthy's novel.

We find again and again, too, that the characters in the novel most closely associated with the gun are Americans, Judge Holden and Glanton being two obvious examples. Critics have rightly observed that there is plenty of genocidal violence to go around in this novel. The Native Americans who ride down and decimate Captain White's filibusters are a bloodthirsty lot whose variegated dress and vicious ferocity seem to rival that of the Glanton Gang. But on the whole, the non-Anglos in the novel, white or Indian, tend to be archaically armed compared to the Americans. Native Americans are typically associated in the novel with the arrow, the short bow, and the spear. The aboriginal warriors in Captain White's fight, for instance, overwhelm "the unhorsed Saxons, spearing and clubbing them and leaping from their mounts with knives…" (*BM* 4). In this one case primitive weapons carry the day. But more typically, American guns—

modern, lethal, and cunningly crafted—dominate the bloodied landscape of the novel. In a violent encounter with mounted Mexican troops, for example, Glanton's group fare better than White's, leveling their guns against men armed romantically "with lances and muskets" and wearing "tall shakos faced with metal plates and horsehair plumes" (*BM* 182). Unimpressed by their enemy's storybook accoutrements, Glanton and his men make short work of them:

> The Mexican captain . . . stood in the stirrups to receive the charge with his saber. Glanton shot him through the head and shoved him from his horse with his foot and shot down in succession three men behind him. . . . In the morning dampness the sulphurous smoke hung over the street in a gray shroud and the colorful lancers fell under the horses in that perilous mist like soldiers slaughtered in a dream wide-eyed and wooden and mute. (*BM* 182)

The powerful handguns, wielded with much skill but with little mercy, leave in their wake a surreal scene of devastation. This scene, of course, is only one of many such unsettling sequences that punctuate McCarthy's narrative.

In fact, the effects of these guns on human targets—how those effects are described—have troubled readers since the novel's appearance. McCarthy's swirling poetry does indeed seem to capture in prose the bloody choreography of a Sam Peckinpah film: for the brutal handiwork of these weapons is rendered in disturbing detail. When the Black Jackson, for instance, faces off with the reluctant Owens, Jackson and his pistol dispatch the racist restaurant owner with horrifying consequence: "Jackson fired. . . . The big pistol jumped and a double handful of Owens's brains went out the back of his skull and plopped on the floor behind him" (*BM* 236). Earlier in the novel, when the gang fall afoul of a group of Mexicans in a bar, the scale of the killing is unsettling: "Inside the huge pistols roared without intermission and the twenty or so Mexicans who'd been in the room were strewn about in every position, shot to pieces among the overturned chairs and the tables with the fresh splinters blown out of the wood and the mud walls pocked everywhere by the big conical bullets" (179). Although brutal passages such as these have left critics and readers uneasy, these sequences are critical, for they underscore with startling clarity how deeply the firearm is embedded into our nation's historical and cultural landscape.

In his Afterword to the thirty-fifth anniversary special edition of *The Machine in the Garden*, Leo Marx considers variations on the theme of

technology, including weapons technology, on the more recent state of the ruined American garden. For him, the Vietnam War—a conflict in which "the United States waged a high technology war against an Asian peasant society" (384)—was met by a fascinating reaction from the anti-war Left: "expressions of hostility to the 'machine'—and calls to 'Stop the Machine!'" (Marx 384). *Blood Meridian* demonstrates with startling fury how a sort of prototype of this well-oiled machine was in good working order much earlier than the 1960's—and we should recall here Barcley Owens's assertions of a link between the imagery of McCarthy's novel and the imagery television audiences of the sixties and early seventies came to associate with the Vietnam fiasco.

In his most recent novel, *The Road*, McCarthy continues to explore the intrusion of deadly killing machines upon the American landscape, and in this respect the new novel shares a lineage with *Blood Meridian*. In *The Road*, a grim post-apocalyptic tale, McCarthy turns his attention from the historical horrors of the American frontier to a terrifying vision of the nation's future, concluding with an enigmatic but pastoral image of mountain trout that once populated the streams before nuclear holocaust descended upon the American garden. Indeed, in *The Road* the machine in the garden is in fact the Bomb itself. In turn, McCarthy's ruined garden in

The Road recalls Leo Marx's work, which concludes on an elegiac note with a chapter titled "The Garden of Ashes," a fitting descriptor as well for the future world McCarthy's new novel predicts: the Arcadian paradise (however illusory it may be) so often associated with America may well be transformed by our own actions into a Garden of Ashes. In *The Road*, that very turn of events has occurred. *Blood Meridian*, a novel that finds a Garden of Ashes in the violent American past, prefigures the violent American future predicted in *The Road.* For, as *Blood Meridian* suggests, the bell tolled by the gun-wielding Glanton in that Mexican courtyard has been echoing ominously in the American air ever since.

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What Haunts and Preserves

No birthday card; she's not
Surprised. The heat leaves
Sweat on her upper lip.
She puts away the pain
As it is useless and terminal—
Won't focus on estranged father.

Here with her husband's
arms around her
his kindness is comfort,
and cloaks knowing
what should be but isn't.
For a while sustains her.

The sun takes its slow descent
and all ghosts temporarily
take leave of this world
of silver stars.

Maura Gage Cavell

Louisiana State University-Eunice

Fool's Gold

Women with hair of fool's gold
if you cannot read between the lines
then you are buying what they are selling.

The dark side gets a bad rap—
Everyone is so frightened of it.
Which only gives it more power.
Hence, the power of the Dark.
Ominous—forbidden—only a shadow.

I ask you to give your opinion—
  And you do.

I ask if you are sincere—
And you say you are.
I look for hidden motifs—
And you say there are none.
But I know.

Grace Ursulak

An Ecocritical Reading of Jane Hirshfield's *Of Gravity and Angels*

Lately, the talk among literary critics has turned toward the relatively new theory of "ecocriticism"—and what place, if any, the study of literature and the environment has in the world of academia. Many people are quick to dismiss ecocriticism—it seems, somehow, too far removed from the traditional literary academy. And, in a way, this is true. Ecocriticism is removed from the disembodied intellect of traditional literary theories. The act of theory is a cerebral one; and, ours is certainly a discipline that highly values theory. Somehow, though, through the act of criticizing, we have lost the sensory connection to the world—the very world that is the subject of our writings. We need to be reminded that the act of reading and writing, while cognitive, is also very aware of its bodily connection. Ecocriticism can be a way to regain that connection to the sensuous world.

In her autobiography *One Writer's Beginnings*, Eudora Welty discusses the moment she connected the idea of a sensuous world to language:

> In my sensory education I include my physical awareness of the *word*. Of a certain word, that is; the connection it has with what it stands for. At around age six, perhaps, I was standing

> by myself in our front yard waiting for supper, just at that hour in a late summer day when the sun is already below the horizon and the risen full moon in the visible sky stops being chalky and begins to take on light. There comes the moment, and I saw it then, when the moon goes from flat to round. For the first time it met my eyes as a globe. The word "moon" came into my mouth as though fed to me out of a silver spoon. Held in my mouth the moon became a word. It had the roundness of a Concord grape Grandpa took off his vine and gave me to suck out of its skin and swallow whole in Ohio. (10)

While Welty here is describing her first dealings with words as a writer, she also offers a good metaphor for what ecocriticism attempts to do. Welty describes here how she looked at the moon one night and felt her mouth form itself around the word as she verbalized it: "moon." As she spoke, her mouth becomes a globe; the word itself seemed to take on the same qualities as the thing it was describing. The word "moon" now had texture and form. No longer a jumble of vowels and consonants, it could be felt and seen and heard. Just as Welty's moon "goes from flat to round" as she speaks the word, so the act of writing brings the sensuous, bodily quality back to the

the squirrel's—the city is one of "stone" and "ice" (Hirshfield, *Of Gravity* 58). The human world is ignorant of the delicate balance within world, choosing, instead, a destructive relationship:

> So the wind-roughened fur of the squirrel brushes
> against the belly of the big brown
> and their doubles,
> perfectly camouflaged above, below,
> knew nothing of that meeting, its cold, quick touch.
> And we, who quarry the earth for silver and granite
> with any step,
> do not feel the green clouds of treetops, green clouds of
> weeds—
> how they rest like folded wings in the clear water,
> patient, waiting, having borne us this far. (*Of Gravity* 58)

Acknowledging the delicate and necessary, but often neglected, relationship between the self and the outside world, Hirshfield here does not offer any moral judgment. However, in other poems, the poet does offer warning for what can happen when this balance is ignored and also describes what wonderful connections can be made when this relationship is nurtured.

The poem "Surrounded by All the Falling" delicately broaches this

topic of unbalanced relationships and broken connections. Hirshfield begins by comparing sunlight after days of rain to birds, returning after a winter sojourn:

> sunlight fills the branches like returning birds,
> one of those flocks men believed
> they could shoot at forever and never reach the end.
> They went fluttering by, one by one,
> to extinction in seven years. (Hirshfield, *Of Gravity* 30)

Within this description of the sunlight, Hirshfield manages to slide in a warning, so slight as to be easily missed. It is almost as if the birds simply flew into their extinction. Hirshfield does, however, indict the hunters for their inability to connect with the natural world. She quickly leaves this metaphor behind, continuing in her description of the day. As she is painting the day, Hirshfield again gets lost in metaphor: "But this day startles in its sudden gold, / its colored persimmons, rust, and fallen / pine needles blond as a child's hair on the barber's floor" (*Of Gravity* 30). This brief side trip leads to the idea of loss, which is inevitably intermingled with the concept of desire. After all, loss is necessary for desire to flourish. The subject of this poem, the misuse of the land's resources, is what most consider typical discussion for an ecocritic. But it is important to note that

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Phaedre

Hypolyte est sensible,

Mais pas pour moi

(*Phaedre*, Racine)

Descended from Fire,
The Minotaur's half-sister,
Phaedre, worshipper of the
Sun, found the flames of
Hell that engulfed her in a
Love infernal.

Hedonist—
Torn between Thesee,
King of Athens, her husband, and
Hypolite, her step-son, she was
Fated, like her mother Pasiphae,
To pay the price for Passion.

Hypolite's chariot race,
His youth and speed were
Abominations to the Gods.
His faithlessness to Phaedre—
His death.

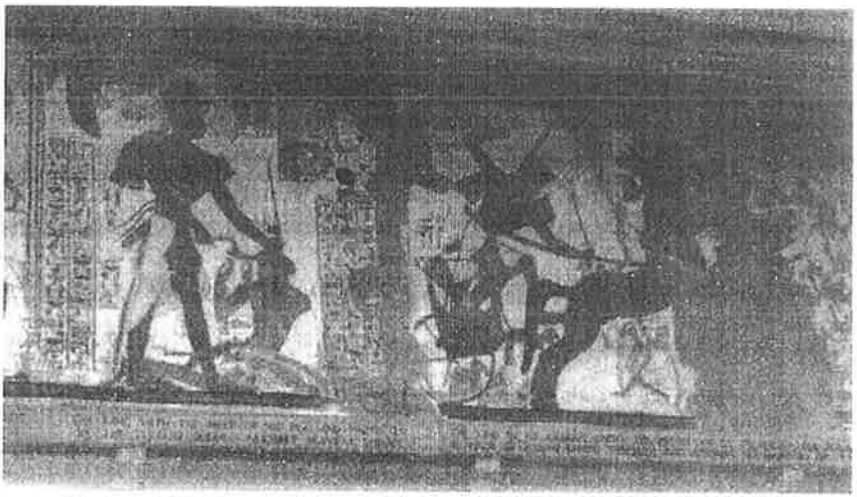
Even as he tossed her
Jewels to Poseidon, in defiance
To Thesee, and in a gift to the waters,
Poseidon overtook her Lover
As decreed.

"Good-bye," Phaedre said to
Daylight, "as I see you for the
Last time."

Sparks of Hypolite's
Chariot flicker, on and off,
Beneath the waves of the ocean
At night. In a certain light, at noon,
When the sun is directly overhead,
Some have said they resemble
Diamonds of a Tiara.

Yvonne Tomek,

Delta State University



The Poet General

A. Edge of a Cotton Field. Outskirts of Leland, Mississippi. April 9, 2002.

A broken old man uttered secret lamentations to the moon, his arms wide and his eyes closed. A supplicant atop the freshly disked dirt made ready for cottonseed, the old man imagined the moon's hoary light was cleansing him as the moon itself whispered to him.

It was the same moon to whom he had appealed when he was nineteen. It had hung over that little foreign village on that crisp, cold night in '43 after those preposterous, cruel men shipped him in that dank ship of unfortunates from his first prison to another one in their own land. It was the same moon that will hang over that very same village later in the day and until the End of the World. On that night long ago, he beseeched the moonman to reach down, pick him up, and replace him in the cotton fields of Mississippi from whence he came. The moonman didn't answer him other than with his silent no.

The old man touched the hole where his left ear should have been.

B. Telephone Calls. Friday. May 17, 2002.

Leland to Greenville

"Hello?"

"Three. That you?"

"Yeah, Dad. What do you need? We're about to leave for that opera Anne tricked me into at the Bologna Performing Arts Center, if you can believe that. She said I'd like

it because it was Wagner and there would be spears and Holy Grails and knights. All I know is, the only opera I ever went to in Memphis put me to sleep and – "

"I need you to come to the farm tomorrow," interrupted Two. "At sunrise. Bring Four and your brother Dun. Y'all bring your twenty-two rifles and pick up about ten of those cartons of cartridges from Walmart, the cartons with five-hundred rounds in them. Wear your duck boots and bring gloves, gloves you won't mind getting shed of. You hear?"

"What are you talking about Dad?" asked Three. "I'm taking Anne and the kids to Costco up in Memphis tomorrow, remember?"

"Well, you and Four can't go up to Memphis tomorrow," said Two. "There's something we've got to do."

"What do we have to do? What are you talking about?" asked Three.

"Can't say."

"Can't say? You want me to cancel our plans to Memphis, bring Four and Dun and our twenty-twos and ten cartons of cartridges – that's about five thousand rounds – and our duck boots and you can't say?"

"Nope," said Two.

"It's not even hunting season," said Three.

"I know. We ain't gonna be huntin'. Not really."

"Can I bring Maggie?" Three asked.

"Nope. Just you and Four and Dun. Be here at sunrise. Take your truck and meet us at Gale's cabin."

"Us? You and Gale?"

"Just be here at sunrise. Bring the boy and your brother. This is family business, son."

Greenville to Inverness

"Dun?"

"Yeah?"

"Two just called me. Did he call you?"

"Nope. What did he want?"

"He asked – no – told me to bring you and Four to the farm at sunrise tomorrow."

"For what?"

"He said he couldn't say," said Three. "But he also told us to bring our twenty-twos and about five-thousand rounds and our duck boots. And gloves we won't mind throwing away. And to meet him at Uncle Gale's house."

"Five-thousand rounds? What for?" asked Dun.

"He wouldn't say. But he sounded serious. He also said I couldn't bring Maggie."

"Damn, Three. I've got to perform surgery tomorrow on a chihuahua whose owner has too much damn money. I've got a hundred other things to do, too. You'd think I was the only vet in the Delta."

"He said it was family business, Dun."

"He used those words?"

"Yes."

"He said that when he told us about Momma," said Dun.

"I know."

"Alright," said Dun. "I'll meet you in Greenville."

"Meet us in the Walmart parking lot at five-thirty," said Three. "We have to buy the twenty-two rounds. It'll only take about thirty minutes to get there."

"Alright. Five-thirty. Walmart. Damn, Three. I hope Uncle Gale isn't dead."

"Me too," said Three. "See you tomorrow."

"Yep."

C. Deer Camp. Fulton, Mississippi. January 2017.

No one had killed a deer. One of them came close but missed. So he said. They had all heard the shots echo in the frigid forest air, but this particular gentleman was suspected of being Big Hat and No Cattle.

It was noon and too late and too cold to sit in a deerstand. All six hunters assembled in a circle around the healthy campfire which had been glowing in various stages of intensity since noon the day prior. Judge Matheson was preparing lunch on a grate set over a shallow bed of coals on the edge of the campfire.

Judge James W. Collier, IV – the youngest trial judge in Mississippi at 32 (having just won the election a mere four months ago after his father had retired) and still known as Four since most couldn't picture him as a judge yet – sat among the motley blaze-orange junto and stared into the fire. He concentrated on one particular staub from which he saw water bubbling slowly forth at one end as the flame consumed the other end. He heard the stick whine as it protested its conflagration.

The aroma of barbequed chicken made its way into Four's nostrils. Something about that smell changed what he saw in the flames. For a moment, the blaze became like some arcane and ancient boobtube showing him a sitcom about old massacres and souls rent asunder.

"Hey Judge, did you put on one of those steaks I brought? Y'all know I won't eat a chicken," said Four to everyone. "Not under any circumstances."

"Yeah, I put one on for you," said Matheson. "But I'm gonna eat one too. I'm sure you won't mind."

"As long as there's something other than chicken left for me, I'm satisfied," said Four. "I'd rather eat pickled pig's feet breaded with gravel and fried in motor oil than a damn chicken."

Four looked back into the fire, thinking he might see how the sitcom ended. The moment, however, had passed and now the flames were just flames. He already knew the ending anyway. Four continued to gaze into the fire. He sighed.

"What's the matter with you, Four?" asked another member of the group.

"Nothing. Why?"

"Well, you normally have a thing or ten to say," said the other.

"I was just thinking about my Uncle Gale," said Four. "He died last week on Christmas Day in a nursing home. He was ninety-three. The funeral was yesterday."

"I'm sorry to hear that," someone said after a moment of respectful silence.

"I'll tell you something weird," said Four. "My grandfather, we called him Two (y'all all know the pattern I'm sure: James W. Collier One, Two, Three, and Four), and his father died on Christmas Day, too. Two in ... let's see, two-thousand-and-three. Damn, fourteen years ago. Time flies. One died, well, somewhere around nineteen-forty-one because the very next week, after his funeral, Two and Uncle Gale joined the Army. That was about a month after Pearl Harbor. So a father and his two sons all died on the same day of the year. And on Christmas. I wonder what that means."

"Probably nothing," someone said.

"Maybe everything," said Matheson.

"Were you guys close?" the new guy asked after another moment of that silence that always shrouds a group of men on subjects uncomfortable.

"Who? With Uncle Gale?"

"Yeah," said the new guy.

"Sometimes," said Four. "When I was a kid, mainly. He used to give me shreds of his Levi Garrett chewing tobacco. I thought that was cool. He'd always play that ever-popular pull-my-finger game too. All kids love that. Boys at least."

Four paused for a moment and let out a breath slowly as if the fire of reckonings were burning him at one end to force the story out of the other.

Four continued: "Uncle Gale was ... well ... kind of crazy. Something happened to him in World War Two but he never told me what it was. I know he got his left ear cut off, though. My grandfather, Two, knew what happened, I'm sure, but he never told me before he died. You know how it is. Men come back from war and don't want to talk about it. What can I say about that? I couldn't tell you the difference between a private and a captain so I guess I don't have a right to comment on it. Hopefully I never will. My dad, Three, probably knows what happened to Uncle Gale but he's quiet about it too, like people are when there's madness in the family. I guess I should ask him one day. I started to at that last trip to the nursing home to see Uncle Gale but decided against it. Uncle Gale had been in there for fifteen years. That's a long time to be in a nursing home."

Four paused for another moment. He picked up a stick and poked the fire, then he continued: "One day in May of two-thousand-two Uncle Gale just broke. He'd been

strange ever since I knew him but there must have been some straw, some little thing, that finally broke him. Like a man who was carrying a load finally too heavy to handle. I know there was something that made him get all those damn chickens. After my grandfather died, Three and I were pretty much the only ones who ever visited Uncle Gale at the nursing home. Not that there was much to the visits. All he would do after that certain Saturday in two-thousand-two was murmur some kind of nonsense about a poet general. I don't think his kids even knew where he was. They never cared enough to find out. But I don't blame them, I guess.

"You see, when he came back from the war he wasn't right, as the oldtimers say. He tried his hand at marriage and had some kids after he got back but one day his wife and kids took their leave. He drank and I think he beat them. In fact, I know he did because my mother never liked Uncle Gale and once said she wouldn't go see a womanbeater and my father said she didn't know what she was talking about and I asked what were they talking about and they both said nothing. But he had been nice to me. I'd never even seen his wife or kids."

"By the time I came around, he wasn't living in town anymore. He lived in this little rickety cabin he built on the edge of our farm. Two let him live there after his family left him so he would have somewhere to be and something to do. Uncle Gale would help with the cotton, but not much. And he stayed out there. He never even came up to the house for holidays (that is, when Two was still living on the farm. Eventually Two moved to Leland after he retired and the manager moved into the house to run the farm)."

"Was it one of those old plantation houses?" the new guy asked. The new guy was a surgeon from Wisconsin who had just moved in next door to Matheson in Oxford.

Matheson had joked to Four that he'd brought him because he thought the man needed to kill something, perhaps to make him a better surgeon. A new arrival to Mississippi, the surgeon was still fascinated with the South and its famous and infamous shibboleth. Hence, many questions.

"No," said Four. "General Sherman burned down the plantation house when he came through Greenville in eighteen-sixty-three. That was before my people lived there. My great-grandfather, James Collier One, acquired the farm just after the Civil War and built a smaller house on a different section of the land. James One came down from Memphis in eighteen-sixty-six, a year after the war ended and a few months after both his parents were killed by burglars. He was twenty-five then, I think."

"Didn't he fight in the Civil War?" asked the surgeon.

"No," said Four. "He had a clubfoot. His father was a cotton trader who'd somehow possessed the foreknowledge to bury gold in the backyard. That's what the burglars were coming for, probably. So just after the war when Confederate money was worthless, and after his parents were killed, James One made his way down to the Delta and bought a farm that the owner couldn't make his taxes on. Near what is now Leland. Leland didn't exist then."

"Anyway, Uncle Gale lived way out on the edge of that twelve-hundred acres of cotton. I usually saw him when James Two or Three or my Uncle Dun would take supplies out there to him. And on holidays when we'd take him a plate or presents or both. And sometimes, during the summers when I had to work on the farm, I'd take the four-wheeler out there to hang out with him a little."

"Wait a minute," said the surgeon. "If your great-grandfather was twenty-five in eighteen-sixty-six, he would have been born in eighteen-forty-one. How old was your grandfather?"

"James One's first wife couldn't have children," said Four. "When she died, after forty-something years of marriage, One married again. He had Two and Gale when he was about eighty. Then he died on Christmas day in nineteen-forty and Two and Gale went to war a couple of weeks later."

"Well, that's entirely possible," concluded the surgeon.

"Well, when the spirit's willing," smiled Judge Matheson.

"Sometimes the spirit is no longer willing and gives up," said Four staring blankly into the fire. "That's what happened to Uncle Gale. One day, probably some time in April of two-thousand-two, he acquired five-thousand chickens."

"Five-thousand chickens? On a cotton farm?" someone asked.

"Five-thousand chickens," Four confirmed. "I have no idea how he got them or why, but he got them nonetheless. Being on the edge of twelve-hundred acres, we didn't even know they were out there until Two called my father one Friday night in mid-May and told him to bring me (I was thirteen then) and my Uncle Dun the next morning, at sunrise mind you, to Uncle Gale's cabin. We were told to bring our twenty-twos and a ton of ammunition and our duck boots."

"Why?" asked the surgeon.

"Let me begin answering that question by saying that I learned on that Saturday that family business is usually grim business," said Four.

D. The Farm. Gale's Cabin. May 18, 2002.

Three Collier's late-model Chevy Z71 crewcab bumped and slimed its way slowly and sometimes not so surely down the pocked, muddy road to Gale's cabin. It had rained that night and the road was barely lit by the pale dawn light. As the cabin crept closer, they could barely make out thousands of white flecks in the distance, all of them realizing that the white flecks couldn't be cotton because it hadn't been planted yet. Even if it had been planted, you couldn't see white until late July or early August.

As they approached, they could make out three vehicles parked in front of Gale's cabin: one was the old International pickup Two Collier had driven for thirty years, one was a sheriff's squad car, and the other was some other kind of official vehicle. Four men – two black, two white – stood around talking to each other. All of them wore high rubber boots besmirched with mud and all of them held rifles.

Three parked the Chevy between the squad car and the vehicle with the words "Mississippi Department of Health" stenciled upon it. Four looked inside the sheriff's squad car and saw his Uncle Gale from his non-ear side sitting inside staring forward. Four, only thirteen, somehow knew not to ask questions or otherwise break the solemnity of this peculiar affair, whatever it turned out to be. He was just proud that he was considered old enough to participate in whatever dark business was afoot.

As soon as Three, Four, and Dun got out of the truck, there came upon them a cacophony and a stench. The sun had crept up on them enough to confirm that the white flecks were not cotton. There were thousands of chickens, some walking, some fighting, most clucking, and many dead and torn in the mud. Four noticed a dead coyote near Two's old pickup.

"Dad, what's all this?" Three asked. "What's with all the chickens?"

Two looked into Three's eyes, then into Dun's, then into Four's. He then looked over to the squad car and remained silent.

"Mornin', Judge Collier," Sheriff Willie Jackson said to Three. "Though I guess there won't be much good about it."

"Mornin', sheriff," returned Three. "Is somebody going to tell me what is going on? What's with all the chickens and why is my Uncle Gale in that squad car? Is he under arrest?"

"No sir, he ain't under arrest," said Sheriff Jackson. "We're just holding him there for a while. Until we do what we got to do."

"Judge Collier?" asked one of the two strangers with his hand out. "Hi, I'm Clarence Stokes from the Mississippi Department of Health."

"Hello. James Collier the Third. Are you going to tell me what's going on?"

"Well, Judge, your uncle has created a little problem," said Stokes.

"I can see that," said Three.

"Somehow, your uncle got a hold of about five-thousand chickens with blackhead disease."

"What's blackhead disease?" Three asked, turning to his brother Dun, the vet.

"It's one of many poultry diseases that is highly communicable among other chickens," said Dun, "but not to humans. Somebody must have known they had it and was trying to get rid of them and somehow and for some reason, Uncle Gale ended up with them."

"Do you know how he got them Dad?" Dun asked Two.

"No idea," said Two. "I didn't even know about them until yesterday when Sheriff Jackson called me. I haven't seen Gale since I last dropped off some newspapers about a month ago. I sent a kid with supplies last week and he didn't say anything about any chickens to me. Mr. Stokes here says we have to kill all of these chickens and burn them since they have that disease. I don't know what Gale's been doing with them, but evidently not feeding them or, as you can see, not even penning them up. There are chickens all over the damn fields. Look out yonder."

They all looked around. With the advantage of more light they could see even more chickens walking and scratching and digging and slipping around in the muddy field as far as their eyes could see. Feathers and bloody parts were scattered about helterskelter.

"What I want to know is why none of those boys who've been disking this field told me anything about any chickens," continued Two. "I called the farm manager yesterday and he says he didn't know anything about it. Which makes me wonder what the hell he is doing to not know there are five-thousand chickens out in this field. He's already two weeks late in planting. And if you look, you can tell that a bunch of chickens were disked along with the dirt. Damn it! What kind of operation is he running here? I knew I couldn't retire. A man who's got this much cotton just can't ever retire. I'll tell you this, though. He ought to get his ass out here to help us clean up this mess. But he said yesterday that he had to drive to Alabama for a funeral. I'm gonna fire his ass when he gets back. You can take that to the bank and deposit it."

Two stopped talking and gazed back at his brother still sitting in the back seat of the squad car, still staring forward. Four noted the look his grandfather gave to his Uncle

Gale. By that look, Four surmised that his grandfather did have some idea what was going on but he wouldn't tell any of them.

"What we have to do," said the other man from the health department, "is to shoot all of these chickens that are still alive and gather them up along with all the dead ones and burn them. I've got some masks in the car for the smell but if you just wait a few minutes you'll get used to it."

Since neither Two nor Three nor Dun nor the others chose to wear the masks, Four decided in the spirit of manly mimicry that he wouldn't either, although the smell was overpowering.

"Well, I guess there's no more use in talking. Let's get to it," said Two.

The work was macabre and long but necessary. Each walked and slipped in the mud among the blood and the feathers. Hundreds and eventually thousands of little booms echoed in the air as the seven twenty-two rifles shot and shot and shot chicken after chicken after chicken. At first, Four looked into their eyes before he shot them. After he lost count, he stopped looking or at least didn't care about their eyes anymore.

Four looked back at the squad car and saw the back of his uncle's head now bobbing fore and aft. He wondered if his uncle was too hot even though all the windows were rolled down. He also wondered why he didn't try to get out.

After his two-hundredth shot, Four felt his barrel and thought he should let it cool down or it might melt or blow up or something. He looked around at the muddy field: six other men walking, then standing, then pointing, then shooting. It was already hot and muggy. He slogged back toward his father's truck for some water, passing hundreds of dead chickens, some still jerking and twitching.

As he tipped his canteen, Four heard a low guttural growl behind him. There were three curs of various sizes snarling at him as if to say that they were here now and were going to eat those chickens and for him to stay away if he knew what was good for him. He thought about his rifle, the Ruger Model 10-22 his other grandfather had given him on his tenth birthday. It was on the seat in front of him. He hoped he was right that there was a freshly-loaded clip of ten cartridges inside. He couldn't remember.

The cur leader didn't like what Four was thinking. He crept up closer, his teeth bared, his mouth drooling. Four could feel in his guts the vibration of the dog's deep growl. He was trapped between the truck and the opened door. His fingers closed slowly around his rifle. He eased it against his shoulder, praying to God Almighty that it was loaded because he still couldn't remember, and pulled the trigger. He shot the cur leader in the chest. It squeaked like a scolded puppy and ran off along with its wild brethren. However, its brethren kept running whereas the cur leader only made it about fifty yards before Two and Three peppered him with ten or so shots.

"We'll just have to burn him along with the chickens," one of them said.

No one ate lunch, though they'd all brought something. After the first phase was complete, which left the gathering and the burning, everyone drank water and Gatorade while resting under the shade of the sole live oak tree that spread out like a dark green mushroom in front of Gale's cabin. Everyone except Two. He was sitting inside the squad car with his brother. The sheriff said he didn't mind when Two asked him if he could turn the car on for a while so the air conditioner could cool Gale down.

No one talked much. The Colliers said next to nothing. The break was over when Two Collier returned with an armload of shovels.

A couple of hours later they rested again. The sun, humidity, and the mosquitoes were getting to some of them. They drank more water in the shade. Three brought a can of mosquito repellant from the truck and sprayed everyone. He asked Four if he was alright and Four said, Yessir.

Four then looked up and saw the buzzards circling. Moments later a couple of the buzzards were brave enough to land some yards away. They fought over a mangled chicken. Dun shot at the buzzards and they flew away. Two returned from the squad car again, this time asking everyone to come to his truck. When they did, he handed everyone a gas can filled with diesel and a pack of matches.

E. The Squad Car

Two Collier sat in the back seat with his brother only one year his junior. Gale stared forward, rocking slightly back and forth. Two looked down and saw that Gale had pissed himself.

"What is it, Gale? What's the matter?" Two asked his brother in a voice that sounded to Gale like it did back when they were kids.

Two touched his brother on the knee which woke him from his trance, but only slightly.

"It was the moon," said Gale in voice that also sounded young to Two. It was as if they were no longer sitting in a squad car, two men approaching eighty, surrounded by heat and mosquitoes and five-thousand dead chickens. Rather, it was as if they had

slipped back in time to when they were ten or so, sitting down in the dirt, taking a break from working the fields, and bantering.

"The moonman," Gale continued. "He told me how I could stop the cries I heard on that march and the ones I heard later at Camp O'Donnell, then in Mitsushima."

"The march in Bataan?" asked Two.

"Yes. Bataan," said Gale. "I was on that march, you know."

"I know," said Two. "When we got you back in nineteen-forty-five after we nuked the Japs, I figured you didn't want, didn't need to talk about it."

"It was April nine, nineteen-forty-two," said Gale. "The Japs captured about sixty-thousand Filipinos and ten-thousand of us on the Bataan Peninsula. We were already sick and starving from the fighting. Those bastards made us march sixty miles north to Camp O'Donnell in that infernal heat. That heat was something else, Two. Foreign and worse."

"Is that when you lost your ear?" asked Two.

"Some tall Jap officer with a samurai sword and a class ring from the University of California cut it off because I had some Jap currency on me that he said I must have gotten off one of their dead soldiers. He said it in better English than I could have, too. On that march, those Japs cut off plenty of heads for possessing less. So I guess I got lucky. If you can call it luck."

"I saw a few things in Europe myself," said Two. "Things I don't care to remember."

"They wouldn't give us any damn water," Gale continued. "One time several guys couldn't take it any more and ran to a stream. The soldiers took turns hacking them with

their swords like they were practicing on dummies. Some of them bragged about being better at it than others. When they finally did let us have water, they made us drink from a stream where the water was oily and fouled by the dead bodies of men further up the line."

Two stared forward, listening, but also thinking about his time in Europe. His outfit found one of the first death camps near the end of the war.

"The cries and moans wouldn't stop in my head," said Gale, "until I got to tend to all those chickens in Mitsushima after they shipped us to Japan. Someone at the camp heard that I was a farmboy so they put me in charge of chickens. It was better than what other guys had to do. For only those hours during the day, I could forget everything in the sound of those chickens."

"That's why you got all these chickens?" asked Two.

"Yep."

"When?"

"Just after the night of April nine. The moonman told me to get as many chickens as I could so their chatter would drown out the damn cries that I can't turn off, not for all these years after Bataan."

"Did it work?" asked Two.

"Nope. That silver sumbitch lied to me. Now all I hear are the cries and all those damn chickens."

Gale paused and chuckled.

"I asked that damnable moonman back in Japan one winter night to pick me up and take me home," said Gale. "Back to our farm. But he wouldn't do it. Shoulda known better to ask him for help again."

Gale gazed forward again and was silent for quite some time. Two felt that he had just heard the last moment of lucidity from his brother. Gale said one more thing.

"This last April nine, I read in one of those papers you brought me about the sixtieth anniversary of the Bataan Death March. It said that even though we executed the general responsible, General Masaharu Homma, it wasn't his fault because he had told his soldiers to treat us humanely. Paper said he had been known as the Poet General. Can you believe that? The Poet General."

"Some poet," Two Collier said.

Parker W. Howard

Greenville, MS

The Art of Dancing.

Gypsies do it well. It's best without words
Arms heavy, feet tapping a strong pulse.

Life loves it—all of it. This dance
One beat at a time
with long fingers and
Strong legs again and again.

My daughter-in-law does it—
Gives birth—her moment
A select performance
Presents her son to the world
Over and over like a red skirt
Turning over a white lace
The one right moment
In the dance.

The infant claims it, his surprise
Presence so recent that he turns
In a primal urge to his mother's face—
His first ballet, while my son,
His father, claps and claps—
A joyous drumming
Their twin hearts beating double-time with
Three tambourines, music and pulse
All flamenco and percussion.
Breathe in. Breathe out. Welcome.
Think poetry. Think life. Welcome.
Come well.
Life understands it, every tropism
When at four the child moves to music as if
His birth especially scripted to dance
Tunes him to other souls as he
Leans into both sharp and soft claps
Of hands—a sufficiency of forever—

His voice rambunctious syllables.

He dances well, this child
With light eyes and light hair.
He turns with the music and the drums—
His joy spinning love in circles to know
That if we live, we can dance until we die.

A heart beats and we will dance. We dance when
It is necessary to dance because
It is very short, this moment when we are happy.

Diane R. Langlois

About My Address Book

They are still there
Names of the moment
Calling out the joke about
Mortality—like obituaries
Sure to give an age of death—
Text of the absurd.

So don't send this card to Gert
She's gone—never waving goodbye
Because you live so far away
Nor Claudette, all class and charm
Missed so soon without a word.

So you ask the Carmelites to pray
On this day of cerulean sky
With Red azaleas out the window—
Crimson berries—even in December.
As now the whitest egrets
Skim these late rice fields
Laced with silver strands of water
That tie the earth to the sky.

Diane R. Langlois.

Stuck in the Middle With Whom? Liminal Loss of Native Identity and Body in Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*

In an interview Louise Erdrich's late husband, Michael Dorris, said of *Tracks* (1988): "*Tracks* ... is not a story of 'good Indians' and 'bad Indians.' It's a very complicated story of people within a community who are trying to figure out what's going on in a time of great change. Each person has his or her own destiny in that context" (Huey 123). Erdrich's novel takes place on an Ojibwa reservation in North Dakota and spans the years 1912 through 1924. For this Native American community, this time span involves great changes, resulting from both plagues of tuberculosis and forced relocation by white commercial interests. In the midst of struggling with life and death, home and exile, and native and white cultural conflict, Native Americans must renegotiate their identities as individuals in order to adapt to the changing social environment.

While several characters in Erdrich's novel, including Nanapush, Lulu, and Nector, adjust to the changes facing the reservation, Pauline Puyat in particular finds herself trapped between her white and native family identities. Jeanne Armstrong describes this predicament: "*Tracks*'s central characters inhabit a world that is in-between white and Anishinaabeg

[Ojibwa, Chippewa] cultures. [They] also inhabit the threshold region between life and death, which is perhaps indicative of their position as survivors who have lost their entire families and are experiencing a cultural crisis" (18). In my analysis, I focus on Pauline's struggle in the interstices of the cultural fault-lines, or liminal zones, which are "complicated and unstable sites of cultural contact and painful loss...." (15). Pauline makes the extremist choice to attempt full assimilation into Euro-American society, causing her to "descend into the abyss of nonbeing" (15) and ultimately lose her cultural identity. Her attempt at full assimilation disregards her native heritage and leaves her unable to function in either culture.

This loss does not have to occur, since the "abyss," if navigated, can be a productive place. In *Off the Reservation*, Paula Gunn Allen notes the generativity of the "Void": "Women return from the spirit lands to the crossroads over and over.... We who are the nobody are the alive" (166-167). For Allen the "crossroads" between cultures is a place of questioning and interpretation from both sides. Utilizing the metaphor of the ghost for the void, Kathleen Brogan describes "ghosts as go-betweens" that serve to transition individuals through the liminal states of ghostly silence to their roles as transmitters of cultural history (6).

In extreme situations, however, involving individuals who seek to abandon and ignore their cultural past, it is impossible to negotiate the abyss and create an adjusted and productive identity. In the cracks between what is perceived as "native" and "white," Pauline becomes "ghosted" and powerless to blend both sides of the dichotomy into a whole, unified, and adaptable identity. I argue that through this situation, Erdrich is making a statement about the risk of individuals failing to negotiate the abyss while going to the extreme in an attempt at assimilation. This failure will result in loss and the ultimate denial of Pauline's very body. In *Tracks*, there are many ghostly qualities to Pauline that suggest the dangerous repercussions for assimilationists. Pauline may not be silent in the text, but she is indeed an invisible presence, and she does ultimately shed all connection to her family, her lover, her daughter, her community, and even her name. Pauline isolates herself and serves in the text as a negative example for Fleur's daughter Lulu of the effects of white ways on Native Americans. In her desire for the erasure of her native past and identity, Pauline "ghosts" herself and loses her grip on reality.

Pauline's disconnection is unhealthy, causing her to warp her own personal relationships in an effort to gain self-exaltation. In *Cultural Haunting*, Brogan discusses Pauline and her radical desires for martyrdom as

a result of the consumption of her native identity by white values. For Brogan, Pauline's quest for Christian perfection causes her to shun the spiritual world of the traditional Chippewa and turn exclusively to Catholicism. She describes Pauline's disturbing attempts to gain Christian "visions" and eternal life as a ghostly possession growing out of the disconnect between her native identity and her attempt to be fully white: "Pauline's perception of her body as loathsome in its plainness and above all Indianness finds theological justification in the Christian rejection of the sinful body in favor of the invisible spirit. In her effort to shed her Indian identity and its recent humiliating history, she attempts self-dissolution...." (51). In effect, what once was Pauline Puyat, an Anishinaabe, becomes lost in a radical shift to Catholic spirituality and monastic life complete with a new European name—Sister Leopolda.

Although Brogan points out the consumption of Pauline's identity by the surrounding white world and her desire to be unequivocally part of that world, she approaches this "self-dissolution" from the angle of Pauline's Christian conversion. She does not examine the ghostly aspects of Pauline as they manifest throughout her interactions with the more traditional characters in the text. Through a focus on these liminal scenes, I interpret Pauline as a ghost haunting Fleur and, by association, Anishinaabe tradition

and culture itself. Even if Pauline wishes to cross the line into whiteness, she cannot make the trip. Her devotion is too harsh and superstitious for the nuns in her convent, and the tribal members are not sure how to treat her either. Pauline is lost. She suffers from the insanity of not being able to explain herself or her motivations to anyone, including herself. She hides her devotional mutilations from her fellow sisters because they would be appalled, and Nanapush's narrative sections tell the reader that the tribe has no idea how to deal with or understand her. Armstrong writes, "Pauline is an anomaly outside the social order because she is neither white nor Anishinaabeg and belongs nowhere because she has lost her family" (27). Nanapush tells Pauline: "You are like no one else" (Erdrich 146). He also says of her, "Pauline was the only trace of those who died and scattered.... She was, to my mind, an unknown mixture of ingredients.... We never knew what to call her, or where she fit or how to think when she was around. So we tried to ignore her, and that worked as long as she was quiet" (39). According to Jacques Derrida, the paradox of a ghost, or specter, is its power: "*It is* something that one does not know, precisely, and one does not know if precisely it *is*, if it exists, if it responds to a name and corresponds to an essence. One does not know: not out of ignorance but because this non-object, this non-present present, this being there of an absent or departed one

no longer belongs to knowledge" (6). This idea of a ghost as something that "no longer belongs to knowledge" connects to Nanapush's problem with Pauline: a known member of the community becoming an "unknown mixture." If Pauline is a ghostly "unknown mixture," how can Nanapush know what to call her? His solution is to ignore the anomaly. In the process of "trying to ignore" her, however, Pauline's status in the community becomes confused. Even though the community pretends that she does not exist, she is present and floats at the margins of the reservation.

From the beginning, Pauline is an "unknown mixture." She has no use for the reservation and its traditions. Her identity is amorphous: "We were mixed-bloods, skinners in the clan for which the name was lost" (Erdrich 14). Immediately, Pauline wishes to go to the white town, Argus, and escape the reservation and her heritage: "I wanted to be like my mother, who showed her half-white. I wanted to be like my grandfather, pure Canadian. That was because even as a child I saw that to hang back was to perish. I saw through the eyes of the world outside of us" (14). Pauline wants to forsake the Indian side of her identity and become white. Brogan's idea of the ghost as "go-between, an enigmatic transitional figure moving between past and present, death and life, one culture and another" can be applied to Pauline (6). She may not successfully cross these borders, but she

certainly finds herself in-between them. At one point as she is describing the conflict between the tribe and the encroaching whites, she calls each group "the Indians" and "the whites," unable to include herself as a member on either side (Erdrich 139). She sees with the "outside world's" eyes; she is already between the native and the white worlds.

Once she arrives in Argus and begins work at the butcher shop with Fleur, her identity thins even more. She becomes tightly bonded to Fleur, remembering what it was like to have female relatives, but her bonding becomes a kind of haunting. Pauline says, "Because I could fade into a corner or squeeze beneath a shelf I knew everything" (16). She is the invisible observer. In his discussion of the ghost of Hamlet's father, Derrida comments on "the supreme insignia of power: the power to see without being seen" (8). Pauline has this advantage of being an unknowable presence: "It wasn't long before I understood something.... The men would not have seen me no matter what I did, how I moved" (Erdrich 19-20). Since she believes that she is safely invisible, her relationship with Fleur becomes pathologically close, a haunting obsession. When Fleur shows her maternal kindnesses, Pauline notes, "I was no longer jealous or afraid of her, but followed ... closer, stayed with her, became her moving shadow that the men never noticed" (22). Because of her invisibility, her powerlessness at

this point, and her antipathy to all things native, Pauline cannot form a bond with Fleur except to be a shadow, following and continually observing her.

Besides being caught between the white world and her Anishinaabe heritage, Pauline is also caught between the living and the dead. Pauline, under the tutelage of Bernadette Morrissey, becomes the "midwife," as she terms herself, for death on the reservation. She sits with the dying, aids the grieving families, and prepares the bodies for burial. She finds satisfaction in the realm between life and death and prides herself on understanding the actual moment of death. Nanapush comments, "[Pauline was] good at easing souls into death but bad at breathing them to life, afraid of life in fact, afraid of birth, and afraid of Fleur Pillager" (57). All three of these fears can be related to the aspects of her life that Pauline is trying to avoid.

When Pauline first observes the moment of death while watching at the sick bed of a young woman, she feels "cut-free," and she says, "I alone, watching filled with breath, knew death as a form of grace" (68). She describes herself as if she is somehow between life and death: "Perhaps, hand over hand, I could have drawn [the dying woman] back to shore, but I saw very clearly that she wanted to be gone. I understood this. That is why I put my fingers in the air between us, and I cut where the rope was frayed down to a string" (68). Pauline oddly finds freedom in the space between

life and death. She also finds power and control. She says, "I handled the dead until the cold feel of their skin was a comfort, until I no longer bothered to bathe once I left the cabin but touched others with the same hands, passed death on" (69). She seems to be trying to slowly eradicate the tribe's identities as her own has been lost. She is a harbinger of the end and the afterlife, but she is alive. Moreover, her hybrid religious views affect her deathwatches once she becomes a novitiate. She imagines that Christ has given her a mission to be the link, the door between life and death for the Native Americans: "He gave me the mission to name and baptize, to gather souls. Only I must give myself away in return, I must dissolve" (141). Armstrong describes this mission: "Pauline reconciles herself to personal and cultural loss by embracing death as the path to salvation for herself and her people, whom she can offer to Christ once she delivers them into death from influenza and consumption" (30). Pauline imagines herself as the key between the tribal members and the Christian God, but this key can only be through death and dissolution of what she once was and the death of her former people's ways.

Another aspect of Pauline's ghostly loss of identity and her knack for dwelling in liminal spaces without properly transitioning involves her experience when she actually enters the tribal afterlife. Once again, she

follows Fleur with an uncontrollable desire to observe: "I followed her, the way I had in Argus, drawn against my judgment" (Erdrich 159). Fleur has just lost her second child. The infant came too early, and Pauline was a less than helpful midwife. Since Fleur practices Anishinaabe cultural traditions and is connected to two powerful manitous (the bear and Misshepeshu), she makes a journey to the underworld to bargain for the life of her child. The scene is the same poker table from Argus, and Pauline's presence is merely as a shadow: "I stood watching, quiet as I'd watched in Argus...so intent that I ceased to breathe and turned invisible, clear like water, thin as glass, so that my presence was finally nothing more than a slight distortion of the air" (161). Pauline believes that in the underworld she can behave as she does in the world of the living with the same results, but she discovers this assumption to be wrong. She remembers, "That moment seemed to last so very long, for the men turned to me then, picked me out among the watchers. Their eyes followed me through dead air no matter how small I made myself. *I was visible*" (162, emphasis mine). Whereas Pauline cultivates an invisible power in the reservation and white worlds, when she enters the liminal zone of the afterlife, she becomes physically tangible. In the underworld she is *visible*. This visibility highlights her responsibility for the deaths of the three men back in Argus, as she was the one who locked them

in the meat freezer during the tornado that hit the town. This visibility, however, also connects Pauline more fully to the dead shadows and to the place that she keeps stocked with souls. Not only is Pauline not quite Indian and not quite white, but she is additionally not quite alive and not quite dead.

Pauline's final stage in her loss of native identity occurs when she abandons her daughter, Marie, to the care of Bernadette and joins the convent as a full-fledged member of the order. Reflecting on her daughter, she thinks, "But the child was already fallen, a dark thing, and I could not bear the thought. I turned away" (136). Pauline initially wishes to deny the physicality that created Marie by aborting the child or causing a complication during her own labor—more attempts at self-dissolution. In the end, it is Marie's sinfulness as a female and native body that repulses Pauline and plants her firmly within the convent, a location of purity and denial. For Pauline, the illegitimate child signals weakness and is a symbol of the very part of her identity that she has been trying to escape: her native heritage. After she leaves Marie and is at the convent full-time, Pauline receives a message from God alerting her to the fact that she is really pure white, as she so fervently wishes: "He said that I was not whom I had supposed. I was an orphan and my parents had died in grace, and also, despite my deceptive features, I was not one speck of Indian but wholly

white" (137). Not much of Pauline Puyat remains, and her final mission is to destroy the lake spirit, Misshepeshu: the manitou that supplies Fleur's shamanistic powers.

Pauline's desperate—and insane—plan to destroy Misshepeshu hinges on her conviction that she is the one who must disconnect the Indians from the "evil superstitions" of their traditional spiritual beliefs. As she states: "I knew there was never a martyr like me" (192). After repeated visions of both Christ and Satan, Pauline heads out onto the lake in a storm. Later in the night, Pauline encounters what she thinks is the lake monster, and she kills it with her rosary beads: "I strung the noose around his neck and counted each bead in my fingers as I tightened the links" (202). She also screams "profane curses" and blocks the mouth with a blanket, but her main weapon is the rosary noose. Only after the struggle and murder does Pauline realize that she has not killed Misshepeshu, but Napoleon Morrissey, her former lover and the father of her abandoned child. Pauline, however, feels no remorse for this: "There was no guilt in this matter, no fault. How could I have known what body the devil would assume?" (203). This is one more step toward Pauline's desire for the dissolution of her female body. Because of her warped sense of Christianity as superior to the, in her mind, evil Native spirits and her thirst for power over life and death, she desires to rise

above the physical realm, which for her is sinful and results in loss of personal control. For Allen, this type of spirituality "approaches the psychotic" because it "den[ies] the physical body" (91). Not only has Pauline murdered the last vestige of her native identity and any relationship that may have still connected her to the reservation, but also she describes herself once again as between spaces of identity, not sure how to cross over. She says that she is still naked but covered in dirt, and she describes herself as "dressed in earth like Christ" and "in furs like Moses Pillager" (Erdrich 203). In this description, Pauline is mentioning both her Christian and native sides. On the way back to the convent, Pauline covers herself in "dead leaves, in moss, in defecation of animals" (203). This liminal moment of uncertainty is captured in her words when she says, "I was nothing human, nothing victorious, nothing like myself" (204).

Pauline's destruction of her native identity is complete when she takes her final vows. This loss of her past and everything that she once was is symbolized by the taking of a new name—Leopolda. Before seeing the name, Pauline realizes the momentous change: "I asked for the grace to accept, to leave Pauline behind, to remember that my name, any name, was no more than a crumbling skin" (205). Pauline has successfully shed her former conflicted native self as if it were an old skin. But has she really

crossed over? As she becomes connected to the Catholic faith, it is clear that she differs from the other sisters in her convent. Before she finally joins, she mentions that the other nuns watch her every move in order to help her "regain [her] sense" (204). It is easy for the reader to imagine, though, that they are watching her closely because she *cannot* regain her sense. In the end Pauline cannot be Native *or* white, because she wishes to transcend both—"any name, [is] no more than a crumbling skin." This transcendence is impossible and leaves her trapped between two cultural identities, unable to fuse the separate sides. She is an "unknown mixture" who confounds her former reservation community and her present fellow nuns. For Brogan and Allen, the space or "pause" between cultural identities can be a productive and generative space; on the other hand, for Pauline, identity formation requires a slash-and-burn technique, which refuses to negotiate the cultural divide and allows her to slip through the cracks.

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Camera Obscura

Your father, making room for winter clothes,
dislodges from closet shelf
a box from a coffee pot long-vanished,
filled now with fused negatives
and fragile photographs.

Spreading them across his dining room table,
crazy solitaire,
I piece out a mosaic, construct a collage,
formed solely of you.
I contrast clothes, ages, toys, days,
overlap expressions, poses, moods.

Earnestly, merrily, from ten months or
two years, you gaze at me now:
in jumper or sailor suit, you
cross a wedge of lawn,
sail joyously on a swing,
study the tires of a '37 Packard,
tie a length of clothesline to a pole.
Later a proud cowboy, you bear
your lunchbox to the first day of school.
An altar boy, your arms and legs push
beyond cassock and surplice.
After almost a quarter century,
I'm seeing you anew.

In this darkened room, I peer through
the aperture of the past.
I invent continuities from fragments,
test the precise combination of
distance, time, and light to bring you
into new focus.
I study time's inversions
trace the dimensions of your present self—
your singular mix of exuberance, anger, love,
anxiety, tenderness, joy—

from these fading shadows.

Your father, eyeing the confusion of his room,
asks repeatedly and then again,
"When are you going to clear these away?"
I won't be rushed.
This delicate process takes time.
Where is the prism to resolve
each reflected moment
into your radiant stream
of life and light.

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Finnegans Wake as a Body without Organs

The world of *Finnegans Wake* is notoriously difficult to navigate. The characters, if indeed there are characters in this book, appear and disappear at random, only to resurface under new guises later. The plot moves forward and then regresses, only to repeat itself. Under such difficult circumstances it is only natural for a reader to attempt to create his or her own form of stability in the ever-changing never-changing wilderness of this text. Some readers seek stability by attempting to chart out and categorize every single pun, allusion, and intimation, while others create a framework to act as a prism to distill the multi-colored rainbow of the *Wake* back into a single beam of white light that can then be comprehended.

I propose a move in the direction of the latter method, though one that will encompass the former. I offer a framework to view the *Wake* through, one that will not seek to cull out the complexity of the *Wake* in order to force it to make "sense"; instead, I am proposing a reading of the *Wake* that accepts the multiplicity of readings and interpretations inherent in its body while at the same time offering a means of navigating the notorious circumlocution of the *Wake*. I intend, then, to examine the *Wake* using the theory created by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their two-volume work *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. In proposing this reading of the novel,

I must make it clear that I am all too aware of John Bishop's claim that "any reader can go into *Finnegans Wake* and discover everywhere within it whatever he or she wants to or already knows. It's a notorious truism that the book serves as something of a Rorschach test revealing a reader's ... areas of expertise" (xi). Bishop's statement is a caveat that all readers of *Finnegans Wake* must confront, for it implies that the interpretation put forth by a reader is already filtered through the reader's own life and experiences. The question we must ask, then, is: does such an interpretation reveal anything about *Finnegans Wake* or does it simply reveal something about the interpreter. The answer is both, for, as I will show in my own reading, tainted though it is by my own subjectivity, the reading of *Finnegans Wake* must ultimately be a collective venture so that every new reader who shares his/her interpretation adds to the collective understanding of the work.

Deleuze and Guattari offer in their philosophy a true conception of multiplicity and interconnectedness that I believe can help one to navigate the *Wake*. Their philosophy is a way of explaining not only what makes the book so difficult, but also what makes it so intriguing. Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy offers a perspective through which to read *Finnegans Wake*; however, unlike many other interpretations of the novel, reading the *Wake* through such a lens will not lose any of the complexity that Joyce

constructed. In essence, Deleuze and Guattari's model does not constrict and compress *Finnegans Wake* in order force it to fit into their paradigm.

A primary aspect of Deleuze and Guattari's framework presented in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* is their participation in the anti-psychoanalysis movement and their reformulation of desire. Prior to Deleuze and Guattari's writings, Jacques Lacan transfigured the basic Freudian principles of psychoanalysis and dislocated them from their sexual rooting. Desire for Lacan is not simply a sexual longing, but a desire for the Other—that which we can never possess. Lacanian desire, then, means that we crave and constantly strive for an unattainable goal which can be sexual, but is not only based upon sex. Desire, for Lacan, thus seeks to fill a fundamental lack which all persons possess.

Deleuze and Guattari, though, situate their formulation of desire elsewhere, for they see psychoanalysis as limiting and psychoanalysts as those "who would subjugate the multiplicity of desire to the twofold law of structure and lack" (Foucault xiii). Desire as "desire for the Other," is too constricting a concept for Deleuze and Guattari, and so they posit desire as a desire for connections. Yet what do these connections produce? What structure arises from the coupling and connecting of the desiring machines? According to Deleuze and Guattari, this structure is the "body without

organs" (also referred to as the BwO). The body without organs is "nonproductive; nonetheless it is produced, at a certain place and a certain time in the connective synthesis, as the identity of producing and the product" (Deleuze, *AO* 8). This is to say that desiring machines are the method of production; it is through our desire to form connections that things are produced. The body without organs, a product of production, though, does not produce, nor can it produce itself. To use the metaphor of a city, a city is composed of the people who live in it. A city cannot exist without inhabitants, it would die and become a ghost town. The city (the body without organs) is then produced by the population (the desiring machines) out of their need to form connections. The city does not produce itself, but rather is a product of its inhabitants. The city is also "the identity of producing and the product" insofar as people who live within the city identify themselves by their location as members of the city. Those who live in New York City refer to themselves as "New Yorkers" and thus the city becomes a means of identification.

Deleuze and Guattari give their views on multiplicity more succinctly in the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia, A Thousand Plateaus*. In the first chapter of this work, they address two models of knowledge: the arboreal model and the rhizomatic model. The arboreal

model of epistemology is what has thus far been prevalent in Western thought since Descartes: binary thinking. Deleuze and Guattari write, "binary logic is the spiritual reality of the root-tree. ...This is as much as to say that this system of thought has never reached an understanding of multiplicity" (Deleuze, *ATP* 5). The problem of binary logic is that not only does it assume that all of reality can be reduced to a set of dualities, it also presumes to privilege one of the terms over the other. In the classical case of Descartes, mentioned above, Descartes' mind-body dualism privileged the mind over the body to the point where he shunned and almost degraded the body. What concerns Deleuze and Guattari most about the privileging of binary terms is that doing so establishes a hierarchy, which is by definition unequal. The hierarchy is the reason they label this type of epistemology an arboreal model; it is hierarchical in structure and thus vertical; different terms are privileged and are placed higher on the "tree." In contrast to the arboreal model, Deleuze and Guattari provide a new model of knowledge known as the rhizome. Arborescent systems are flawed because of their hierarchical structure which limits them because "the tree articulates and hierarchizes tracings" (12). Tracings are untrue and false representations. The rhizome, though offers a map, not a tracing (12). What differentiates a map from a tracing is that a map is "open and connectable in all of its

dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification" (12). The map, then, is a multiplicity and multiplicities are rhizomatic (8).

Thus far I have only described the rhizome in negative terms, how it is not arboreal, and thus a true definition of the rhizome is necessary. A rhizome is a structure of knowledge that is similar to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of desiring machines—it is a way to speak of knowledge as forming connections. The rhizome "ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains" (Deleuze, *ATP* 7) and since multiplicities are rhizomatic, the rhizome itself "has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, dimensions" (8). The rhizome, then, is not a typical system, it is not a subject or an object, it merely exists to form connections. As such, the rhizome "never allows itself to be overcoded" (9). Overcoding is the fixing of a particular point on the rhizome; to use Deleuze and Guattari's metaphor of the tree, it would be to put down a root. The rhizome is thus ever-changing and forming new connections, yet to attempt to solidify and label part or all of it is to kill it because this would attempt to fix a multiplicity into a single category. Thus, as Deleuze and Guattari write, "the rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple [;] ... it has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle" (21). To say that there is a

beginning or an end to a rhizome is thus to attempt to "fix" it to a point, to root it down, to label it as a single thing. Yet a rhizome defies such readings because it is always in process, always changing, shifting, connecting.

A rhizome, then, is simply a construct, a paradigm through which to view how knowledge works and exists. Knowledge is connected and ever-growing and ever-changing as well. New words and ideas are created, older words and ideas are replaced or modified, yet they remain connected through language and culture. The rhizome, though, also connects people to one another. Many friendships or even romances begin because of a shared thought, philosophy, or idea. When we look for friends, we often look for elements in them that are shared within ourselves. A rhizome thus causes a political leveling, a fully egalitarian democratization of people, for it shows that despite perceived differences, we are always able to find some common element with any other person, and since no point on a rhizome is given precedence over any other, no connection can be given precedence either. A rhizome is not a Jungian collective unconscious, but rather, a conscious collective that creates connections between peoples and cultures.

Deleuze and Guattari, in creating these new conceptions, thus establish an alternative to psychoanalysis, what they term "schizoanalysis." For them, schizophrenia, a disconnection from both reality and society, is a

liberating concept, for it frees one from the repression of society. Deleuze and Guattari thus use the schizophrenic as a trope to explain their model; the oedipal framework presumed by psychoanalysis is part of the repressive hegemony of culture due to its limiting nature: a man is always in a position where he desires his mother and wishes to kill his father (and women remain marginalized). Psychoanalysis "subjects the unconscious to … hierarchical graphs. … Psychoanalysis cannot change its method in this regard: it bases its own dictatorial power upon a dictatorial conception of the unconscious. … Schizoanalysis, on the other hand,

treats the unconscious as an acentered system, in other words, as a machinic network" (Deleuze *ATP* 17-8). What Deleuze and Guattari call for, then, is not true schizophrenia; they do not encourage madness. Rather, they want people to be able to break free from the limiting oedipal structure and embrace multiplicity, for multiplicity provides true freedom.

Perhaps the simplest connection between the *Wake* and Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy is in the structure. As mentioned, Deleuze and Guattari look to schizophrenia as a trope for escaping the constrictions of arboreal thought, for the schizophrenic dissociates from society and social norms. Indeed, many people often confuse schizophrenia with multiple

personality syndrome, though schizophrenia is usually associated only with hearing multiple voices in one's head.

Finnegans Wake contains schizophrenic elements, or was at least inspired by the psychosis. In his discussion of the novel, Harry Burrell claims that Joyce used *The Dissociation of a Personality* in the *Wake* and that Issy is meant to be a multiple personality (66). One could even say, though, that every "character" in *Finnegans Wake* is a multiple personality, for their signification within the text is never stable. They shift and mutate into various permutations of themselves. Shem and Shaun become the Mookse and the Gripes or the Ondt and the Gracehoper or two washer women on the banks of the Liffey. These various versions can be read as, perhaps, the workings of a schizophrenic mind. If the text itself is the representation of a schizophrenic mind, then it would follow that not only representations of the subject, but also other objects would be multiple. That would also account for ALP's defense of HCE's crime. A crime is committed when one breaks the mores of a society, yet if ALP is part of a schizophrenic mind, then such mores and norms are not rigid and binding.

Another point of unity between Joyce's text and Deleuze and Guattari's theory is the idea of "consumption." In his essay "Falling Asleep in the *Wake*," Jeremy Lane says that readers of *Finnegans Wake* become

bored or dissatisfied "because of the *Wake's* resistance to 'consumption' and our inability to consistently 'produce the text, play it, *make it go*' (172). This may seem to be an understatement, but *Finnegans Wake* is difficult to understand; not only are there multiple levels of meaning upon each word, but the countless allusions and the style itself produce a dense text whose meaning is unstable and cannot be fully consumed by the reader. No matter how many allusions are charted, how many puns gleaned or languages catalogued, readers are still met with the inescapable feeling that they have "missed something" in the *Wake*, that despite their best efforts, they will never fully understand everything about the work. With this idea of consumption in mind, we should return to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the Body without Organs which, they write, is "the unproductive, the sterile, the unengendered, *the unconsumable*" (*AO* 8, emphasis added). The Body without Organs, then, is able to be seen and understood but never in its entirety. It can never be fully presented or represented. *Finnegans Wake* thus appears to act as a Body without Organs. No matter how many "skeleton keys" or brief synopses of the *Wake* are written, they must, of necessity, leave out part of the work. Such endeavors merely produce simulations (in the Baudrillardian sense) of *Finnegans Wake*; they cannot completely unravel the web.

Joyce's text thus decenters the typical trajectory of the novel as a form. In a typical novel, characters—primarily a protagonist and often an antagonist—are present, and action occurs to advance the plot. The basic structure of other novels is consumable; one can "digest" the plot and characters. Yet *Finnegans Wake* has no discernable protagonist. One could say that the mythical and elusive HCE is the focus of the work, though this statement cannot be fully proven. One could just as easily argue that Shem and Shaun or Finnegan or Finn MacCool or even the city of Dublin are the main characters. Similarly, *Finnegans Wake* has no decisive plot. We can ascertain that HCE (possibly) committed a crime that (most likely) occurred in Phoenix Park. The exact events, though, are never clarified. Other than this base skeleton of a plot, a discernible structuring of action does not occur. At times, vague outlines of events, such as the Washers at the Ford section, appear only to recede into the background again. Often, just as a plot, theme, or characterization becomes apparent, the novel regresses and changes direction entirely.

This use of puns and allusions forms vertical connections that are not usually present in written language, but can occur as homonyms in spoken language. The *Wake* is thus composed of "errors, of signifiers made up of letters that have wandered away from their proper locations in the body of

language" (McGee 131-2). Joyce's style thus serves to upset not only the typical order of the novel, but also the order of language itself. But we must ask, if the letters have wandered away, where have they wandered to? I believe that they have "wandered off" not only to make connections, but also to subvert the traditional orders of both the novel and language.

After examining *Finnegans Wake* in this manner, we are left with the question of what purpose does the reading serve in understanding the *Wake*—is this reading helpful or is it merely another Rorschach test? I have shown how the *Wake* exemplifies Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of the Body without Organs and the rhizome, but I believe that the true worth of reading *Finnegans Wake* in such terms is that this interpretation allows the novel to be viewed in terms of multiplicity. Categorizing the *Wake* as both rhizome and Body without Organs allows one to take advantage of all the multiplicities of meaning and interpretation inherent in the work.

Much ado has been made over the title of the work. *Finnegans Wake* is an obvious allusion to the title of the popular pub song "Finnegan's Wake," and since Tim Finnegan of the song appears at times within the novel, the title is apropos. It is the lack of apostrophe, however, that has made critics and scholars question the title. The shift from "Finnegan's" to "Finnegans" seems to imply an overview of the novel, for the possessive,

with its singular interpretation as "belonging to Finnegan," shifts to what appears to be a plural. *Finnegans Wake* could then stand for the fact that a single "Finnegan" does not exist in the text, rather, Finnegan is multiple in the form of Tim Finnegan, Finn MacCool, and even HCE. Since so much has been written on what *Finnegans Wake* is "about," I would argue that, as is shown even in the title, that it is not about any one thing, but rather, the *Wake* is about everything. The multiple narratives, narrators, characters and their characterizations, themes, puns, riddles, meanings, and allusions, thus serve to undermine the notion that a text can ever be read in a single way. Was this not the subject of the "death of the author" debate in literary criticism? The death of the author theory said that readings of novels should not be limited to authorial intent, and, if so, then texts can be read in multiple ways, even ways that were not the intentions of the author.

It is my contention then that the *Wake* should, and must, be read in terms of multiplicity; to try to limit it to a singularity is to do this masterpiece a grave injustice. One can easily respond, when asked, "what is *Finnegans Wake* about?" with a variety of answers. One could say that it is a dream, or it involves HCE's crime, or the debate between the artist and society, or the need for forgiveness, or renewal and redemption. I have listed six possibilities, but even this list is, of necessity, truncated, for

Finnegans Wake is about more than just those six ideas. To try to narrow it down, to fix it, to understand it in terms of one single reading, destroys the novel's purpose, for if the *Wake's* subject matter is "all of human knowledge and history," then to limit it to only particular pieces of knowledge or history undermines its value. Similarly, to try to chart out a map of the *Wake* by finding every allusion, unpacking every pun, or listing every possible interpretation of a word is also fruitless. One may endeavor in such a way for the entirety of one's life and never be certain that the entirety of *Finnegans Wake* has been discovered. Yet again, this type of endeavor, though helpful in making "sense" of the novel, is much like trying to find a single plot, both assume that charting a course through the wilderness of the *Wake* is the goal, or the end result. I believe that the goal of *Finnegans Wake* is not to make it "make sense" or find every allusion. To try to attempt this would be maddening. Instead, I think that in reading *Finnegans Wake*, a reader must give up and accept that a complete understanding is not possible. Instead, they should make connections where possible. One must understand that *Finnegans Wake* is more than the sum of its parts. The pleasure derived reading it is derived precisely because of its multiplicity; the process of reading the novel forces one to return to the text, the literal words themselves. We as readers must let go of the desire to "make sense"

and instead simply enjoy the master piece(s) and multiplicities that are *Finnegans Wake.*

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Endnotes

[1] To return to the metaphor of the city: in general, a city can be known. Its inhabitants can be charted using a census, its roads and buildings using a map. But this is not the entirety of the city. Maps and censuses do not account for the culture or representations of the city.

[2] The death of the author can be problematic, of course, for it often leads to anachronistic readings of texts; however, the idea that a text should not be rooted in a single interpretation is what is of importance here.

What Summer Brings

As the heat comes,
our children begin to arrive for summer.
The world gets lighter
when they breathe life
into our lives,
sweet air fills our home,
voices sing a delightful
tune, a certain music,
a joyous, open, beautiful sound.
Hearts of sunlight,
souls as deep as the river,
imaginations more vast
than the sky—
such softness they bring—
ah, summer,
arrive, arrive!

Maura Gage Cavell

A Poetic Legacy: Mary Oliver's Use of "Riprap"

Gary Snyder, one of America's foremost ecologically minded poets, published in 1958 a volume of poetry entitled *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*. The first section of the book, *Riprap*, includes poems that deal predominantly with the American experience of physical labor. Snyder sets most of these poems in mountainous regions, resulting in his choice of riprap as the controlling image of this section of the book. According to Snyder, riprap is "a cobble of stone laid on steep slick rock to make a trail for horses in the mountains" (i). Snyder uses the image of riprap to describe what he sees as the primary function of poetry. He believes that the poet creates "a guide to a path" (qtd. in Paul 300) for readers, a path that in Snyder's case involves relocating the place of the human in a world that consists largely of the non-human. "As Snyder says in his afterword to the 1990 edition of *Riprap, & Cold Mountain Poems*, 'the title . . . celebrates the work of hands, the placing of rock, and my first glimpse of the image of the whole universe as interconnected, interpenetrating, mutually reflecting, and mutually embracing'" (Murphy *Understanding* 66).

In a clear tribute to Snyder, Mary Oliver chooses "Riprap" as the title of one section of her book-length poem *The Leaf and the Cloud,* published

in 2000. While Oliver perpetuates throughout this poem Snyder's notion of the poet as advocate for a particular lifestyle, Oliver's use of the term riprap differs from Snyder's in subtle ways. As in *Riprap, & Cold Mountain Poems*, in *The Leaf and the Cloud*, words/poems function as riprap; these poems both promote a human way of life that embraces its natural environment and provide a path for attaining that goal. However, unlike Snyder's "Riprap," Oliver's "Riprap" principally deals with helping humans to reconcile inevitable death with fruitful life.

In "Robinson Jeffers, Gary Snyder, and the Problem of Civilization," Patrick D. Murphy labels Snyder as a *bodhisattva*, a practitioner of the Way who "[shoulders] the responsibility of persuading others, of bringing them also to enlightenment" (94). In other words, Snyder sees himself, the poet, as one who makes a trail for his readers to follow, with the words of his poems constituting the stones that pave the way to the kind of life he advocates. Two poems from *Riprap*, the title poem and "Piute Creek," clearly illustrate both Snyder's poetic vision and the lifestyle that vision promotes.

In "Riprap" Snyder commands the reader: "Lay down these words/ Before your mind like rocks" (30; lines 1-2). The list which follows the poem's decree includes items from both the natural and the man-made

worlds—a "riprap of things" (30; line 8) that provides a path to illumination for readers, here portrayed as "lost ponies with/ Dragging saddles" (30; lines 12-13). "Riprap" ends with a discussion of the geological classification of the words, or rocks, of the poem. In this comment on the writing process, words are "Granite: ingrained/ with torment of fire and weight" (30; lines 21-22). According to Sherman Paul's reading of "Riprap," ". . . we need 'sure-foot trails—and *we make them* as we go, by choosing words that are solid because ingrained with our experience, with our *thoughts*, *things*, and *torment*, and fused by processes like those of cosmic creation" (214). These words are not culled merely from the world of human technology and innovation, but also from the larger, natural world that predates (and will outlive) human experience. Snyder's mission to offer readers a lifestyle choice involves re-imaging man's place in his environment, a mission that becomes more evident in the poem "Piute Creek."

"Riprap" informs readers of the obligations of the poet/*bodhisattva*, and "Piute Creek" reveals the illumination to which the poet's riprap leads. The poem begins with the kind of single-pointedness that accompanies all acts of meditation. The speaker of "Piute Creek" discusses options for meditative focus from his immediate environment—"a rock, a small creek,/ A bark shred in a pool" (6; lines 3-4). As the speaker focuses his attention

on the natural world around him, "All the junk that goes with being human/ Drops away" (6; lines 12-13). His investment in scholarship and human learning is "gone in the dry air" (6; line18). Once the narrator has achieved this de-anthropomorphized state, he is free to recognize the agency of the non-human world that surrounds him. The poem concludes, "Back there unseen/ Cold proud eyes/ Of Cougar or Coyote/ Watch me rise and go. (6; lines 26-29)

After his enlightened experience, the narrator can acknowledge the animals around him as thinking, sensing beings. Murphy describes the speaker of the poem in the following statement: "Nature includes and surrounds the individual, and in the process of realizing that participatory inclusion, he moves beyond the limitations of being human" (98).

Oliver's *The Leaf and the Cloud* begins with a quotation from John Ruskin's *Modern Painters* that describes a veil over humanity that serves as a shield from both the certain death of human life on earth and the "unendurable glory" (Oliver i) of heaven. Oliver begins the poem with this quotation in order to reveal the mission of her work as poet. For Oliver, poetry is a way to break through Ruskin's veil to touch both the light of heaven and the comforting darkness of death. Although moments of transcendence exist in *The Leaf and the Cloud*, the majority of the poem is

concerned with acceptance of death. Two sections of the book in particular, "Riprap" and "Gravel," illustrate Oliver's conception of death and the riprap she provides to safely navigate its terrain.

"Riprap" begins with a description of a natural, coastal environment. Oliver depicts marine animals with great accuracy and attention to detail. According to Douglas Burton-Christie, "This attention to the particular is for Oliver a discipline, necessary for cultivating and preserving the only spiritual awakening that matters—an awareness of life's endless beauty" (2). Though Burton-Christie comments on another of Oliver's nature poems, his observations apply equally to *The Leaf and the Cloud.* In Oliver's poetic vision, things of the earth are beautiful, despite Ruskin's association of the earth with the darkness and gloom of inevitable death. As Burton-Christie mentions, and as *The Leaf and the Cloud* makes plain, Oliver finds the world's beauty important precisely because it never ends. The eternal cycle of life and death is presented as comforting in this poem; beauty always reemerges from whatever ugliness and pain that death may conjure.

As the poem progresses, Oliver lists items from both the natural and man-made worlds, much as Snyder does in his own "Riprap." She writes, "The sweet-faced cat,/ the good goat,/ the golden feet of the hen" (26; lines 1-3). Later in the stanza, Oliver lists eating utensils and the implements of

human artistic enterprise. The speaker of this section of *The Leaf and the Cloud* engrosses herself in the natural world around her. Like Snyder's poetry, this poem houses a vision of human and non-human life coexisting, with neither category dominating the other.

The fourth stanza of "Riprap" introduces the transient nature of human life. The speaker asserts, "Though it will all vanish utterly, and surely in a little while,/ I know what is wonderful" (Oliver, 28 lines 7-8). Despite the passage of time and the inevitability of her own death, the narrator of "Riprap" celebrates the accumulated memories of a lifetime. The stanza seems to suggest that the speaker has access to knowledge that makes this inevitability easier to bear, that in spite of death "[she's] humming, and clapping [her] hands,/ and [she] can't stop" (Oliver, 28 lines 17-18).

This knowledge becomes more clearly disclosed in the poem's sixth stanza. Here, again, Oliver focuses on the inescapable nature of death. She writes: As reliable as anything you will ever know/ time moves its dim, heavy thumb over the shoreline/ making its changes, its whimsical variations./ Yes, yes, the body never gets away from the world (28; lines 1-4). What distinguishes this stanza from the fourth is the speaker's revelation that "everything is one, sooner or later" (29; line 6). After death, human life becomes food for plant life, which is food for animal life, so that death

becomes an avenue to another kind of living. This process ensures that beauty, which Oliver writes is "so hot-blooded and suggestive,/ so filled with imperative" (26; lines 16-17), never ends; it merely transmutes into another beauty. In Laird Christensen's words, Oliver views "... physical mortality as redemptive regeneration. Traditional distinctions between mortality and immortality quickly break down in [her] poems as the material elements of each being are transformed into the elements of other bodies" (137).

The eighth stanza of "Riprap" further explains the path Oliver wishes her readers to follow. This stanza consists of a series of rhetorical questions concerning the existence of souls for humans, mussels, snakes, trees, a bed of lilies. Oliver asks, "Does the weedy mussel clinging to the rocks have a soul?" (29; line 2), and the poem as a whole answers with a resounding, "yes." Stanza eight gives the same urgency to questions of the self-knowledge of a star or a grain of sand as to questions of human immortality. Oliver removes humans from the pinnacle of the hierarchy of being and instead portrays life on earth as the kind of interpenetrating, interconnected web represented in Snyder's poetry. In other words, for both Oliver and Snyder, humans do not occupy a position of mastery over of nature; we are no more important than the other inhabitants of our environment and our

existence is connected in very vital ways to the animal and plant life that surrounds us.

The section of *The Leaf and the Cloud* entitled "Gravel" makes the fullest use of Snyder's image of riprap. In the fourth stanza, the speaker asks if its readers are afraid of death and in the following stanza bids farewell to animals, plants and natural phenomena that will dissipate with time. "Goodbye to the goldfinches/ in their silver baskets./ Goodbye to the pilot whales, and the curl of their spines" (40; lines 1-3). These two stanzas seemed designed to express the depth of human fear surrounding death; not only do humans fear death, the amount of death the earth contains can feel overwhelming. Birds die; whales die; breath dies.

Like Snyder, Oliver acts as a *bodhisattva* in "Gravel." In one of the most beautiful moments in all of *The Leaf and the Cloud*, Oliver writes:

> Death, whoever and whatever you are, tallest king of
> tall kings, grant me these wishes: unstring my bones;
> let me not be one thing but all things, and wondrously
> scattered; shake me free from my name. Let the wind, and
> the wildflowers, and the catbird never know it. Let
> time loosen me like the bead of a flower from its wrappings
> of leaves. (37; lines 5-11)

These lines serve as the thesis for the entire poem. Death should not cause fear because it is the beginning of a new kind of life as part of the natural environment.

Instead of building her riprap entirely of poetry, Oliver chooses to form her "safe trail" from rather curious stones. The speaker of "Gravel" says, "Everything is participate./ Everything is part of the world we can see, taste, touch, hold onto/ and then it is dust./ Dust at last./ Dust and gravel. (39; lines 13-17). As in Snyder's poem, the words of Oliver's poem form her riprap; however, here the riprap quite literally consists of the bodies of the dead turned to gravel. Oliver suggests that humans should not fear dying because the dead provide a way to understand life. Their bodies, ground to dust and mingled all over the earth, ultimately form the gravel the living will walk upon. In Oliver's poetry, death equals a positive immersion in the natural environment.

As a consequence, Oliver's poetry suggests that re-evaluating the place of the human in the larger world should preclude the human fear of mortality. If we humans envision our surroundings as participate, if we include the lily and the snake in our theological undertakings, if we immerse ourselves in the natural environment before death, total immersion in nature after death cannot cause fear. If Snyder ripraps a path for readers that leads

to coexistence with the natural world in life, Oliver ripraps a trail for readers that culminates in merging with the natural world in death. According to Vicki Graham, "Oliver's celebration of dissolution into the natural world troubles some critics . . . . But for Oliver, immersion in nature is not death: language is not destroyed and the writer is not silenced. To merge with the non-human is to acknowledge the self's mutability and multiplicity, not to lose subjectivity," (352). Indeed, the closing lines of "Gravel" supply evidence for Graham's conjecture. Oliver writes: "*dirt, mud, stars, water--/ I know you as if you were myself./ How could I be afraid*?" (45; lines 9-11).

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Queen Elizabeth's *Semper Eadem:* Reflections of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* in the *Ditchley Portrait*

Queen Elizabeth's reign, without question, evokes historical debates and propagates unanswerable questions. Critics and historians consistently disagree about how much, if any, political control Elizabeth held over England and whether or not her created public image contributed to her authority. But whether they agree as to the amount of control Elizabeth exerted over her publicized image or to what degree her public image bolstered her authority, they do agree that Queen Elizabeth's royal images secure her as the best known and most recognized English monarch.[1] Juxtaposed with scholarship that investigates Queen Elizabeth's images are critical discourses discussing whether or not Edmund Spencer's Gloriana accurately depicts Elizabeth. Brenda Ralph Lewis's explores the Elizabethan society's fascination with Elizabeth as Gloriana and proposes:

> Poets, playwrights, painters, the creators of water pageants and masques at court, propagandists, pamphleteers, and ballad makers all conspired to intensify the image of Elizabeth as 'Gloriana,' the Virgin Queen or the 'Faerie

> Queene' of Edmund Spenser's fantasy. Artists also promoted Elizabeth in all her bejeweled glamour, surrounded by a glittering court full of lusty young men whose dauntless deeds she inspired. (20-21)

Despite interest in Queen Elizabeth's portraiture, iconography, and a substantial body of Elizabethan criticism, scholarship exploring Spencer's *Faerie Queene* (c. 1591) with Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger's *Ditchley Portrait* (c. 1592) has been, for the most part, overlooked [*Editor's note: see http://faculty.goucher.edu/eng211/ditchley portrain.htm for the portrait*]. In fact, while almost totally disregarding Spenser's own personal claim that his Gloriana captures the essence of Queen Elizabeth, most scholarship explores other popular portraits of Elizabeth and focuses on similarities between Elizabeth and Spenser's Amazonian warrioress, Britomart.[2] In Julia M. Walker's dismissal of Gloriana as a candidate for Elizabeth, she contends that "neither the perpetually deferred Gloriana nor the fatherless Belphoebe with her twin sister Amoret offers as accurate a reflection of Elizabeth as does Britomart, the heir of her father's kingdom and a figure of female power—not in Faerieland or on the slopes of Olympus but in a male-dominated society" (176). However,

when we take into consideration that Sir Henry Lee's commissioned *Ditchley Portrait* appears shortly after Spenser's Gloriana emerges, we can see Spenser's image of Queen Elizabeth as one who holds ultimate power and earthly divinity visually depicted in the *Ditchley Portrait*. While Spenser's Gloriana ideologically represents a powerful and controlling political configuration of Elizabeth, the *Ditchley Portrait* offers a visual representation of national stability and of a conquering and unconquerable body politic, wherein Elizabeth embodies her own motto, *Semper Eadem*.[3]

Preceding Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, works of art and poetic references symbolically associate Elizabeth with the moon-goddesses, Diana, Phoebe, and Cynthia, and these images are linked to England's sea-power either to the queen's virginity or her impregnable body.[4] Drawing from this well-known tradition, Spenser writes a letter to Sir Walter Raleigh overtly proclaiming that his Faery Queene, Gloriana, shadows Queen Elizabeth. He insists that "in that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceiue the most excellent and glorious person of our soueraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land" (*The Faerie Queene* 716). By representing Queen Elizabeth through the Faerie Queene and England through

Cleopolis (Faerie Land), Spenser attempts to capture the ideological and political conceptions that surrounded Elizabeth and England. However, with the visible female characters, like Britomart, Una, Amoret, and Belphoebe, engaging in the prominent action, an initial reading may deceptively displace the Faerie Queene as an insignificant character. But with a closer examination, we can see that even though the Faerie Queene remains obscured from view, her presence, in fact, frames the narrative and manipulates the action. Gloriana's powerful, but masked position affords her the opportunity to function like the silent controller of a game board, moving her subjects around and propelling her knights into action at her pleasure, not only in her kingdom, but throughout other kingdoms.

The most important characteristic Spenser draws relates to Elizabeth's power and authority in relation to her body and England. While Gloriana may seem "perpetually deferred," as Walker argues, her reputation that manifests itself in Cleopolis's renowned fame actually instigates most of the characters' actions. While it is true that we only see the Faerie Queene through other characters and her words are related through the voices of her subjects, it is her projected image, similar to that of Queen Elizabeth's, that sustains and perpetuates her power and

influence. Through Spenser's Gloriana, we see an Elizabeth whose reputation reveals that she holds supreme authority over her kingdom and other kingdoms. She, as well as Faery Land, is regarded in the highest honor and earn the respect of individuals. Based on the Faery Land's reputation, the "old Palmer," Una, and Irena all turn to Gloriana for assistance. Una explains why she seeks Gloriana's help:

> At last yled with far reported praise,
> Which flying fame throughout the world had spred,
> Of doughty knights, whom Fary land did raise,
> That noble order hight of maidenhed. (I.vii.46)

Una admits that she travels to Faery Land because of its "fame throughout the world" (II.ii.46). Likewise, Guyon explains why subjects often turn to Gloriana's assistance, claiming that Gloriana's power and "glory is in gracious deeds," and is renowned and respected "throughout the world" (II.ii.43). In a similar incident, Irena also acknowledges Gloriana's reputation of providing aid to those who seek it:

> To whom complaining her afflicted plight,
> She her besought of gratious redresse.
> That soueraine Queene, that mightie Emperesse,
> Whose glorie is to aide all suppliants pore. (V.I.4)

Whether referring to Faery Land or the Faery Queene, characters recognize that these two bodies share the same reputation and display the same authoritative power. With the Faery Land's reputation embedded in Gloriana's gracious deeds of providing succor for individuals in difficult situations, the Faery Land becomes known throughout other kingdoms as a land of glory and honor. Not only do characters seek Faery Land for its notoriety in granting assistance to individuals, but also knights who dwell in Cleopolis or provide service to Gloriana benefit from her divine presence.

The Red Cross Knight's adventure takes him to Faery Land where he observes first-hand the interchangeable descriptions and reputations of Cleopolis and Gloriana.

> Yet is *Cleopolis* for earthly fame,
> The fairest peece, that eie beholden can:
> And well beseemes all knights of noble name,
> That couett in th' immortal booke of fame
> To be eternized, that same to haunt,
> And doen their seruice to that soueraigne Dame
> That glory does to them for guerdon granunt
> For she is heuenly borne, and heauen may

iustly vaunt. (I.x.59)

The Red Cross Knight sees Gloriana as a "soueraigne Dame" who is powerful enough to maintain order and peace throughout Cleopolis. He recounts that those who dwell in Cleopolis and serve Gloriana glean glory and honor; thus, knights "couett" the right to serve her and desire to live on this body of land to serve Gloriana. With Gloriana's supernatural glory embodying her kingdom, these depictions suggest that Elizabeth's identity is, in fact, meshed with England.

In turning to the *Ditchley Portrait*, we can see reflections of Spenser's Gloriana in Gheeraerts's visual representation of Elizabeth. Tarnya Cooper explores various meanings embedded in several of Elizabeth's portraits and claims that these "images of Elizabeth acted as idealized symbols of embodied statehood and just, God-given order. In this respect, royal portraits had more in common with images of religious deities, as they needed to be depicted as distinctively monarch-like, rather than wholly individualistic" (38). (See Figure 1). Here not only does Elizabeth appear "monarch-like," she actually appears to embody the whole island of England. Elizabeth appears in gigantic proportion to the rest of the world as she stands on a globe with her feet planted on a map of England. In fact, her overwhelming presence

emphasizes England and dwarfs the remaining countries. Her overpowering image seems to be connected to the map as she towers above England and the rest of mankind. As Dani Cavallaro and Alexandra Warwick suggest, the edges of Elizabeth's dress extend to the map and "its edges [match] the lines of her skirt" (29). This image creates an illusion of the queen's body and England as being one object. In Roy Strong's invaluable research and scholarship on Elizabethan images, he also argues that "in the 'Ditchley Portrait' Queen, crown, and island become one. Elizabeth is England, woman and kingdom are interchangeable" (136). Like Spenser's Gloriana and Cleopolis, Elizabeth and England constitute the same body.

Spenser's narrative ultimately engages and comments on Gloriana's physical body and character:

> Great and most glorious virgin Queene aliue,
> That with her soueraine power, and scepter shene
> All Faery lond does peaceably sustene.
> In widest Ocean she her throne does reare,
> That ouer all the earth it may be seene;
> As morning Sunne her beames dispredden cleare,
> And in her face faire peace, and mercy doth appeare.

In her richesse of all heauenly grace,
In chiefe degree are heaped vp on hyr
And all that els this worlds enclosure bace,
Hath great or glorious in mortall eye.
Adornes the person of her Maiestye. (II.ii.40-41)

The idea of a virtuous, but powerful woman, embodied in Gloriana, is central to Spenser's depiction of Elizabeth. She represents the most glorious virgin with her face expressing mercy and peace. Her throne, like an island, arises from the ocean, and it stands paramount to other countries. She sustains order with her sovereign power in which peace abounds in Faery Land. She clothes her body in the most extravagant and luxurious elements that can be obtained. Indeed, Spenser depicts Gloriana as a beautiful woman, but she ostensibly possesses the power of a man.

Interestingly, Queen Elizabeth artistically constructed this complicated gender identity in her own words during her 1588 "Armada Speech to the Troops at Tilbury." She asserts that "I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king and of a king of England too—and take foul scorn that Parma

or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm" (Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose 326). Here Elizabeth acknowledges that she has the physical body of a woman, but she also proclaims that she has the stamina and authority of the most powerful king, i.e., the king of England. Susan Frye contends that "through...spectacles Elizabeth constructed herself for the court as being neither 'feminine' nor 'masculine' according to sixteenth-century conceptions of gender but as possessing a female body empowered by masculine self-possession and agency" (57). Similarly, Gloriana, while described as a beautiful woman, embodies divine authority and exhibits unlimited strength and majesty as she maintains power over the great island.

Gloriana's majestic influence and divine illumination spread "all over the world." She radiates light, "As morning Sunne," which suggests that her presence is necessary to sustain life. In this sense, it appears that she possesses power over nature in that she seems to control the 'sunne of the world, great glory of the sky" (VI.x.28). Spenser also describes his Gloriana as a "Goddesse heauenly bright" and the "Greatest Ladie of the greatest Isle, whose light / Like Phoebus lampe throughout the world doth shine" (Proem I). Undoubtedly, the *Ditchley Portrait* reflects

Spenser's idea of a powerful, authoritative, and protective Elizabeth who is not only the "Great Ladie of the greatest Isle," but also the sustaining light of England (Proem I). The *Ditchley's* Elizabeth appears to control nature as light emanates from her presence as she defeats the clouds of darkness. In doing so, she brings peace and prosperity to England. Similar to the *Armada Portrait* in which Elizabeth controls the destruction of the Spanish fleet and ushers in victory, this portrait depicts Elizabeth as a glorious manifestation of light who has the power to defeat darkness. Just as Spenser describes his Gloriana as the "Goddesse heauenly bright" and the "Great Ladie of the greatest Isle" (Proem I), the portrait's Elizabeth parallels her as she appears as "Sunne of the world, great glory of the sky, / That all the earth doest lighten with thy rayes, / Great *Gloriana*, greatest Maiesty" (VI.x.28).

The *Ditchley's* Elizabeth is poised against a backdrop containing a split sky with Latin mottoes. The left side seems sunny and bright and contains the inscription "Da [e]xpectat" (She gives and does not expect) while the turbulent and stormy right side inscription states "Potest nec vlciscitvr [...] (She can but does not take revenge)." Below this inscription a cartouche stands containing a sonnet and beneath the sonnet is a different inscription, "Reddendo [...] ce[...] (In giving back she

increases)." Over the years, the portrait's reduction in size and fading has left fragments of the inscriptions, but if we assume William Leahy's inscriptions/translations are correct, it appears Elizabeth has the power over life-giving and life-taking and "can but does not take revenge."[5] Just like Spenser's depiction of Gloriana as merciful and mighty, Queen Elizabeth often did not take revenge, but extended mercy to her subjects.[6]

While there are numerous speculations about the authorship of the sonnet and there are problems with obtaining a precise inscription, the portions that are decipherable offer striking similarities to Book II, Canto ii, Stanzas 40-41 and call for further exploration.

> The prince of light, the Sonne by whom thin(gs)
> Of heaven the glorie, and of earthe the (grace?)
> Hath no such glorie as (. . .) grace to go (. . .)
> Where Correspondencie May have no plac(e)
>
> Thunder the Image of that power dev(ine)
> Which all to nothinge with a word c(. . .)
> Is to the earthe when it doth ayre r(. . .)
> Of power the Scepter, not of wr(. . .)

This ile of such both grace (. . .) power

The boundless ocean (. . .) em(. . .)

P(. . .) p(rince?) (. . .) the (. .)ll (. . .)

Rivers of thankes retourne for Springes (. .)

Rivers of thankes still to that oc(ean) (. . .)

Where grace is grace above, power po(wer)

Here the sonnet mentions "The prince of light." This phrase seems to reinforce Queen Elizabeth's complex gender references as a woman and as "king of England" and Gloriana's description as a powerful kingdom ruler. The "Sonne," like Spenser's Gloriana, the "Sunne of the world," appears as great and glorious. With the "Image" of divine power that is displayed to all the world through the "power of the Scepter," the island of England possesses both grace and peace, like that of Faery Land where Gloriana sustains peace. The sonnet's suggestion that divine influence controls the island's reign supports Queen Elizabeth's assertion that her rule is God-ordained and Spenser's Gloriana who rules with divine power. Just as Gloriana's knights return favors to her from their quests and Queen Elizabeth's military and navy forces bring

treasure from foreign kingdoms, the sonnet suggests that the "boundless ocean" that surrounds the isle returns bounties to its shores.

In the portrait, Elizabeth wears an extravagant white dress accented with a jeweled stomacher. While the jewels display her opulence, the design of the dress gives the impression of a "fairy princess." The fabric drapes from her shoulder, giving the appearance of wings, and the ruff opens, giving rise to gauze-like wings at the back of her neck, even giving her a heavenly appearance. In addition, two translucent structures in the form of wings appear, seemingly attached to the back of the dress, rising behind Elizabeth's head. As Cooper points out in her discussion of Elizabeth's portraits, "Elizabeth appears in these portraits sumptuously dressed, with a range of emblems that encouraged an audience schooled in Renaissance symbolism to reflect upon her special virtues of virginity, charity, and wisdom" (38). Pearls, rubies, and other precious stones all adorn Elizabeth's body. One strand of pearls reflects the well-known virginal knot while the others three strands represent her chastity, regal status, and wealth.[7] The inverted V-shaped stomacher indicates her virginity, and Albert Labriola contends that "the jewels and the small plates of precious metal or bosses in which they are inlaid on the stomacher create the appearance of a breast plate"

(46). The configuration of a breast plate with her virginity suggests that her virginal status as well as the body of England remains well protected. Susan Doran argues that "there was no systematic presentation of Elizabeth as virgin queen before the 1580s, but thereafter allusions to her virginity dominated her representation in miniatures and recurred frequently in court paintings" (191). Another interesting detail emerges from the two pink roses attached to Elizabeth's ruff. It seems Elizabeth departs for her usual Tudor rose and opts for a rose that suggests unity and a peaceful kingdom. As Labriola suggests, "their pink color [commingles] the white of the house of York and the red rose of Lancester" (48). Elizabeth's parallel with Gloriana reflects that she is a "glorious virgin Queene" who "adorns the person of her Maiestye" with the "richesses" of heaven (II.ii.40-41). Gloriana's characteristics are also reflected in Elizabeth as the "flower of grace and chastity" who displays unearthly wisdom and maintains peace throughout her kingdom (II.ix.4).

An extravagant jeweled necklace, a ruby and diamond diadem, and pearled hair jewelry all frame and accent Elizabeth's fair face. Just like Gloriana, Elizabeth appears as a "fayre as a creature" with a "face diuyne" (I.ix.13-14). In marked contrast to Queen Elizabeth, who is at the time of this portrait about sixty-three-years old, Elizabeth's face

appears as a beautiful young woman. According to Doran, "Banishment of signs of age in most of the later portraits was not simply the result of the queen's personal vanity for there were obvious political advantages in the practice"(189). With concerns about an aging Queen and unanswered questions about succession, Elizabeth and her anxious government attempted to control her public image.[8] Using a face pattern, commissioned and noncommissioned painters encapsulated Elizabeth's image in time, creating what is known as the Mask of Youth, which gives the impression of a perpetually young queen. As Elizabeth grew older, her youthful image remained the same, giving way to the idea of her immortality and emphasizing her motto, *Semper Eadem*. Not surprisingly, Spenser's representation of Elizabeth as Gloriana also suggests her immortality.

Along with Gloriana's timeless nature, she appears as a mystical entity who possesses the ability to entice subjects into her service. Her mesmerizing presence induces characters to obey her every command as they attempt to win her favor. Their adoration and devotion to her incite loyalty and secure their willingness to submit to her service directly or indirectly. Her authority rests in gaining her subjects devotion and loyalty. She assumes control of the narrative as she assigns the Red

Cross Knight the task of rescuing Una's mother and father from a "Dragon horrible and stearne" (I.i.3). Although rescuing Una's parents is the Red Cross Knight's assignment, his motivation stems from serving and wanting to please Gloriana. In accomplishing his quest, he hopes "of all earthly things" to earn Gloriana's approval. The Red Cross Knight vows to help Una, but his ultimate goal resides in serving and pleasing the Faerie Queene. Even when he rescues Una's parents and her father gives his blessing for them to marry, the Red Cross Knight, even though he loves Una, must refuse because of his loyalty to the Faerie Queene. He leaves Una to mourn, and so "Backe to retourne to that great Faery Queene, / And her to serue sixe yeares in warlike wize" (I.xii.18).

Similarly, Arthur's quest originates in his desire for Gloriana. But unlike Red Cross Knight, Arthur's journey is not Gloriana's direct command, but a result of her controlling influence. He recounts his experience of encountering Gloriana and admits that this meeting spawns his obsession to find her again. Arthur describes Gloriana as "a royall Mayd / Her daintie limbes full softly did lay: / So fayre a creature yet saw neuer sunny day" (I.ix.13). She speaks softly to him in "Most goodly glee and louley blandishment" and bids him to loue her deare" (I.ix.14). From his account, Arthur describes Gloriana as a "royall

Mayd," which suggests not only her youth and virginity, but also her noble position. Her divine face and beauty captivate him, and he describes her complexion as so white that he assumes her skin has never been exposed to the earth's sun.[9] He confesses that her skillful play with words captivates his heart: From that day forth I lou'd that face diuyne;

> From that day forth I cast in carefull mynd,
> To seeke her out with labor, and long tyne,
> And neuer vowd to rest, till her I fynd. (I.ix.15)

In his desire to find Gloriana, Arthur's journey leads him to various quests and adventures. His nine month pursuit for Gloriana leads him into hardships and suffering, but nothing quenches his devotion or deters his search for her.

Similar to the Red Cross Knight's quest, Guyon embarks on a journey at Gloriana's command. Guyon explains that on the Queene's "yearly solemne feast" an "old Palmer" arrived at court complaining of the enchantress, Acrasia, and begged Gloriana to appoint a worthy knight to avenge Acrasia's atrocities (II.ii.42-43). Guyon expresses his unworthiness, but his devotion to Gloriana prevents him from refusing her commands. He claims that "Me all vnfitt for so great purpose she

employes" (II.ii.43), but Gloriana's magnificence induces his dedication and his expressed honor to serve her.

> To her I homage and my seruice owe,
>
> In number of the noblest knightes on ground,
>
> Mongst whom on me she deigned to bestowe
>
> Order of Maydendead, the most renownd. (II.ii.42)

And, as Guyon explains, all men who look upon her are subjected to her overwhelming power.

> That men beholding so great excellence,
>
> And rare perfection in mortalitye
>
> Doe her adore with sacred reuerence,
>
> As th'Idole of her makes great magnificence. (II.ii.41)

No one escapes Gloriana's captivating influence or control. To those who gaze upon her, she exerts a mesmerizing fixation that causes them to revere and obey her. Similar to Gloriana's other commands, Artegall receives the assignment to overtake Grantorto and restore Irena's rights. But before he finishes his task, Gloriana, without explanation, calls him back to Faerie Court. While Andrew Hadfield interprets the Faerie Queene's actions as "irrational" and "capricious," this incident reveals

her authority and domination over her knights. Knights embark on her command and return on her command.

Spenser's image of Elizabeth in Gloriana reveals that Elizabeth's presence captivates her audience and induces her subjects to subservient behavior and dedicated service. Gloriana's manipulation of her subjects implies that Elizabeth has controlling power over all aspects of her kingdom as well. Just as Gloriana sends her knights on various quests, Queen Elizabeth appointed courtly and military positions and directly and indirectly controlled all ventures in exploration and colonization.[1] Labriola reaffirms that "under Elizabeth, England abandoned its singular status and embarked on worldwide exploration and colonization. Led by Sir Walter Ralegh, Sir Francis Drake, and others...England not only claimed much of North America...but also attacked Spanish possessions in the New World" (42). In order to succeed in "worldwide exploration," whether as a result of Queen Elizabeth's direct or indirect commands, England's massive navy engaged in extensive sea quests.

Surrounding Sir Henry Lee's portrait of Elizabeth/England is a large body of water with ships sailing in multiple directions. The puffed sails not only indicate that some ships travel towards England while others travel away, but also they manifest the wind's power. Elizabeth

holds a fan in her hand that appears attached to her body. It is poised in such a position that it appears it could sweep across the landscape and change the directions of the ships at any given moment. Elizabeth's looming presence impresses on the viewer that she possess the power and authority to direct these ships' courses. Much like Gloriana's knights, these sea farers are under Elizabeth's command and sent on diverse missions. Another fascinating representation of Elizabeth's control over the seas is located in Elizabeth's left earring, which is designed in the shape of an astrolabe or an armillary sphere. While the armillary sphere symbolized heavenly wisdom, it also was a navigational tool used to acquire direction on land and the sea. (*Editor's Note: due to the difficulty of acquiring reliable permission to publish these images, I am inserting the links where they can be found readily on the internet: for the Astrolabe, see "signature" at http://www.royal.gov.uk/OutPut/Page2229.asp); for the portrait of Henry Lee, see http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.tate.org.uk/tateetc/issue7/images/prisoners_captainthomaslee.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.tate.org.uk/tateetc/issue7/prisonersoflove.htm&h=512&w=412&sz=63&hl=en&start=5&tbnid=_lsZZkU_gWwgvM:&tbnh=131&tbnw=105&prev=/images%3*

Eq%3Dportrait%2Bof%2Bhenry%2Blee%26gbv%3D2%26sxsrf%3D10%26hl%3Den.] Not only does this visual representation capture Elizabeth's navigational power to direct her own ships, but her overwhelming presence symbolizes her ability to scatter foes away from her sea coast, thereby keeping her body and the body of England well-protected.

When *The Faerie Queene's* verbal description and the *Ditchley Portrait's* visual representation are explored side by side, we can see the images of Elizabeth closely intertwined. The ability to construct public images profoundly influences the creation of a stable national identity and sense of political power. In the uncertain and turbulent years of Elizabeth's reign, she and her government struggled to provide a sense of stability for England. Questions of succession, troubles in Ireland, war with Spain, and the Essex rebellion, all heightened the need for reinforcing Elizabeth's God-given authority and political power. As Susan Frye suggests, "Court discourse was predicated upon an assumed difference between Elizabeth and the rest of humanity—that she was ageless, invulnerable, unique, wise, and independent, a being both gendered and crossgendered" (74). Like court discourse, works of art and literature contribute to construct an identity that set Elizabeth apart

from mankind and have been instrumental in obtaining her immortality. Despite the queen's advanced age, the *Ditchley Portrait* and Spenser's *Faerie Queene* enforce an image of Elizabeth's perpetual virginity, beauty, and youth. In other words, Elizabeth remains *Semper Eadem.*

Notes

1. John N. King's "The Royal Image, 1553-1606, *Tudor Political Culture* Ed. Dale Heak (Cambridge UP, 1995): 104-32 discusses how Henry VIII's Act of Supremacy over the Catholic Church is reflected in his portraits, which transformed the image of the English monarch. Prior to Henry's insistence on powerful images in his portraits, rulers were usually depicted in more realistic manners. King suggests that Elizabeth drew from these image-making strategies to establish her own position of authority. Both Roy Strong's *Gloriana: The Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I* (London: Pimlico, 2003) and Susan Doran's *Elizabeth: the Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2003) are vitally instrumental in the historical chronology and discussion of Elizabeth's numerous portraits. Also, Carole Levin's *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003) provides a succinct but detailed history of Elizabeth's reign, along with historical debates surrounding her political rule.

2. Mary R. Bowman's " ' She there as Princess rained': Spenser's Figure of Elizabeth," *Renaissance Quarterly* 43.4 (1990): 509-28 addresses why Spenser names Gloriana as his representation for Elizabeth and argues his intentional omission of Britomart points to her as the unmentioned Elizabeth.

3. One of Queen Elizabeth's famous mottoes, which means "Always the Same."

4. See John Lyly's Endymion (1588) for an allegorical representation of Queen Elizabeth as the moon goddess, Cynthia. Also Susan Doran's "Virginity, Divinity, and Power: The Portraits of Elizabeth I" *The Myth of Elizabeth,* Ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillian, 2003) investigates Elizabeth's association with the chaste moon goddess Diana, and she

argues that "in her guise as moon goddess, Cynthia or Phoebe, Diana had command over the seas and oceans" (189-90).

5. For further research on the portrait's Latin inscriptions, see William Leahy's " 'A Stranger Ladies Thrall': Elizabeth I, Henry Lee and the Ditchley Progress of 1592" *Elizabethan Review* (2001).

6. Levin specifically relates that Elizabeth not only released Mary Queen of Scots many times before her execution, but she also hesitated about the final pronouncement of death. In another incident, Levin claims that after Roderigo Lopez's execution for treason Elizabeth extended mercy to the wife's pleas and restored her family's lease, household goods, and her son's expenses for school.

7 Gloriana's white face is also reflected in the portrait. White cosmetic face powder was popular in Elizabethan custom, as it indicated status and nobility. Actors adopted a crude form of makeup and powdered their faces with chalk.

8. Levin points out that Elizabeth supported European traders who were challenging Spanish and Portuguese monopolies in West Africa, the Americas, and the East. The Queen also encouraged exploration and trade in such regions of the world as Russia and the Middle East" (58).

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Silver Earring

"Where were you?"
I asked with amazed relief.
I looked everywhere for you,
under the desk, in the wastebasket,
behind the tables. How many
times did I rearrange the books and
papers hoping to find you.
Did you know how desperately I searched?

Months passed. No sign.
Day after day, I tried again.
Maybe in the drawer—maybe in a pocket.
You couldn't have just vanished, I said.
Reason told me you had to be somewhere.
Solid objects cannot disappear.
Had I loved you too much?
Idolatry is evil—so you had been taken from me.

At last it is time to go.
The last day this will be my office.
Boxes have been taken away.
Everything is bare. No pictures. No books. No papers.
There in the center of the empty desk
shining—solitary—a single silver earring.
Where have you been?

I needed the mystery as much as I wanted you.

Kay Stricklin, Delta State University

Pedagogy

Riding around looking at trees is an
Alibi I give for some serious tasks—

Lessons I give my child on budgeting, coping,
Steering the course of daily life. But on designated
Corners I slow the car and exult over the red maple
On College Avenue and that one on Farmer or
Terrace Road, in late autumn, still so intense
of ochre, scarlet, magenta, crimson red—

my favorite time of year.

And I have been reading
Frost and Oliver and Keats,
So full they are of the revelations of autumn—
The quiet and sometimes blazing resignations—
The stillness into the dark.

And so today we are making lists and
Translations, pedagogical and psychological.
Cooking tips and housekeeping hints. Fashion
Statements. A little reminiscing into the archives of
Family, thinking of and mentally composing
Christmas letters to write, a little gossip
Thrown in. I don't understand why she
Doesn't see the auras I see, though her
Soul is bigger than anyone's I know,
And I tell her so.

She senses an animal invisible to me,
In pain, for example, down the road.

Those black branches look like the Chinese
Alphabet on your blouse, I tell her, insisting on
The beauty of some Fall configurations.

But we are so happy together.

Later though I hear her telling her
Father about me and our afternoon together,
As she concludes it all by saying "We had a very
Nice time together, really, but basically,
Mam just wanted to ride around all day—
Looking at trees.

Yvonne Tomek

Delta State University.

To M. W.

Nights of wine
espousing love.
Lingering smell
of decomposition
Dead skin is dust.
Love is lust.
And this is the way of the world.

Days of fear
pretending real.
Foreboding smell
of last night's tremors in cold.
Lost skin in bed.
Love is dead.
And that is the way of the world.

Grace Orsulak