Heavenly Creatures

SAPIENTIA ET VERITAS

This essay is the devotional act of an ardent admirer without portfolio on whom a long-lasting impression was made (*manet alta mente repostum*) and who now momentarily abandons impersonal, scholarly passivity for something more lyric but hopefully no less pardonable. For me, this was a landmark film. Not since *Barton Fink* had I felt myself to be such a proper narratee. No other film has so impressed itself upon me nor so consistently claimed, sustained and rewarded my attention. It is my most profitably studied film and it grows ever more satisfying with reflection. I always return to it with a sense of pilgrimage, rejoicing in nearly every detail and dwelling on it with undiminished enthusiasm, appreciation, affection, delectation and awe. Even the film's dedication presents an opportunity for personal emotional connection.

It was my privilege to view this film in the company of members of various Hollywood cinematic guilds, including those writers responsible for the film's Academy Award nomination. I managed to get through graduate school and to write my master's thesis without buying a computer. But *Heavenly Creatures* proved to be the last straw and I could hold out no longer. My discovery of the websites dedicated to this film was a major reason for the purchase of my second computer. It is to these online resources that completists seeking paralipomena are directed. A prerequisite for my purchase of a DVD player was the release of this film on that format, though the version released in 2002 is not the one treated here. It is important to note that this essay is based on and is proper to the 99-minute version of this film that was exhibited in the U.S. beginning in late 1994 and later distributed on laserdisc. The version available for streaming on Netflix as of the winter of 2013 is this short version with several frames that were missing from the original U.S. release restored at an elapsed time of 37:50. Though not the full original aspect ratio, this edition resolves the felonious formatting errors noted below.

Improvident adulation is sometimes expressed with absurdity, as when an evaluation of 12 is made on a scale of 1 to 10. A quantitative maximum cannot be exceeded, but significance can transcend the dimension of objective quality, as when one is asked to judge one's own children. As a passionately engaged and emotionally invested partisan acolyte, I consider it proper to recuse myself rather than offer my humble advocacy and proselytize on behalf of this film. For those who attend to critical opinion, this film has been dignified by having its excellencies sung by several important critics. It was ranked the #3 film of the year by Richard Corliss, #2 by Andrew Sarris, and #1 by Molly Haskell. Joseph Campbell writes of the Icelandic tradition of *land-nam* or "land-claiming," in which local landmarks are opportunistically commandeered and sanctified to serve as symbolic holy places. It is in that spirit of irredentism that I lay claim to this film and bow before it in an act of acknowledgment, affirmation, homage and celebration via admittedly unbridled (*vasta mole superbus*) but hopefully forgivable prolixity.

STA VIATOR, HEROEM CALCAS
MIRABILE VISU, MIRABILE DICTU
TRANSEAT IN EXEMPLUM

Those poor wretches who have not seen this film exhibited at its original theatrical aspect ratio should be aware that several rewarding bits of business and information have been denied them. The initial VHS release does not deserve to be flattered with the label "pan-and-scan" because of various residual formatting errors, to be noted in due course, that could have been easily and adequately corrected by panning and scanning, but were not. ("*Écoute bien ceci: nous allons voir, docteur, la bestialité dans toute sa candeur*.")

The DVD contains a relatively spoiler-rich trailer that at least rescues the film's musical score from overexposure by substituting Antonin Dvorak's symphony "From the New World." The DVD's subtitles appear over the image rather than in lower margin, and they translate even those foreign phrases that are to be diegetically translated seconds later.

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Even before the first image appears, the narrow audio bandwidth of the soundtrack music establishes a nostalgic, once-upon-a-time atmosphere as the screen remains black. In Eastern thinking, all things emerge from and recede into the void (*sunya*). This prologue is bracketed by blackness, as is the film as a whole. The very first syllable heard is "Christ," immediately heralding divinity. The first two syllables are "Christ" and "church," suggestive of sacred marriage and mystical union. The city of Christchurch is presented as "New Zealand's city of the plains." The spelling of "plains" is inferred as geographical. However, the first onscreen image shows not only plains but also a plane. This homophonic ambiguity permits the expectation of punning as an intrinsic norm and sanctions the interpretive use of puns later on. Puns are one of the symptoms via which psychoanalysis seeks to understand repression. Obsessional personalities often produce many bad puns by free association. Literary and dramatic puns may be assumed to be asteisms, rich in implication rather than accidental. At this point, it is not yet known if this image of a DC-3 should suggest the flight of Icarus, which would foreshadow presumptuous misjudgment leading to catastrophe. Only later will this story be recognized as the failure of a flight into artistic freedom on wings of art.

The film begins with a brief travelogue. As Joseph Campbell would say, the tour on which we are embarking will be psychological rather than topographical. Acting as psychocartographer, director Peter Jackson will conduct the audience on a psychological pilgrimage into the geography of the unconscious mind. "Canterbury" brings to mind storytelling by way of association with Chaucer's *Tales*. It also accords with the approaching mention of Cranmer Square. Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), archbishop of Canterbury, is relevant here for his association with divorce, contumacy and disputed royal legitimacy.

The old Academy aspect ratio adds to the nostalgia already established by the narrow audio bandwidth. Taken together, they may also represent narrow-minded parochial Puritanism. These physical factors, plus the puerile music and the narrator's retrospectively ironic statements, establish the background against which the crime will seem so shocking to this society.

As with such films as *Howards End*, *The Crying Game* and *Like Water for Chocolate*, this film could be regarded as including the portrait of a society, as in a *Gesellschaftsroman*. In

spite of the pretty flowers and the Chamber-of-Commerce hype of this georgic meant to evoke and extol endearing local eccentricities (*vedi Napoli e poi muori*), this is the wasteland, at least from the subjective point of view of the principal characters. Such a wasteland may be symbolized by physical analogy without recourse to anything as drastic as the parched desert of *The English Patient*. James Joyce's archetypal view of Dublin may be applied to Christchurch, with New Zealand assuming Ireland's role, as Stephen Dedalus puts it, of "the old sow that eats her farrow." Christchurch is presented as a fusty backwater of frustration, captivity, paralysis, and stultifying provincialism, with the Cathedral, symbol of cold petrified authority, at its heart. (A similar view of Cathedral Square can be seen in the 1957 film *Until They Sail*, which coincidentally features a Christchurch woman speaking of going to California, as well as the murder of a Christchurch woman. The film ends with indecision about whether understanding constitutes forgiveness.) The significance of the phrase "gay and golden" is discussed on the *Fourth World* website (www.adamabrams.com/hc/), a *locus classicus* and the online resource of first call.

Ernest Rutherford (1871-1937) was born in Nelson. He established the existence of the atomic nucleus and of radioactive transformation, which is a metaphorical analog of the shape-shifting trickster archetype that our heroines will exemplify. Pauline is to be a pioneer of innermost psychological space as Rutherford was a pioneer of innermost physical space. Delving below the surface to the quantum uncertainty underlying deterministic Newtonian space-bound exactitude also implies the release from spatiotemporal limitations afforded by imagination and aesthetic arrest. This reference and a functionally similar one to Sir Edmund Hillary near the end form a conjugate pair that bookend the film.

As if New Zealanders would rather not recall the dirty little secret hiding in a dark alley of Memory Lane, spring, summer, and autumn are acknowledged, but not the season on the first day of which the film culminates in murder. This prologue is seemingly preparing the palate for a quaint, easy to swallow rhozzum, a humorous shaggy dog story about some colorful local character, perhaps in the same vein as *Like Water for Chocolate*. But time to acclimatize to the rhythm of this cultural setting has hardly been given when a reality check occurs, revealing the horrors this little curtain raiser belies. Such disturbance of the status quo leads to disorientation and suggestibility in the audience. Staking out the conceptual territory by firing this opening volley across the bow of an unsuspecting audience, Peter Jackson wrenches his viewers from the protatic, nostalgia-inducing narrator (*laudator temporis acti*) and cuts to the emotional chase. The dissolution of distancing mechanisms is a dislocation and disorientation tactic that tempers and taints the preceding rose-tinted, cockeyed optimism.

Contemporary cultural circumstances can often serve to establish a dramatic substratum. The correct historical detail in Wagner's *Lohengrin* throws into the highest relief the mystical aspect of the story. Given that, as Mikhail Bakhtin observes, a film is a "historically situated utterance," period pieces are equally symptomatic of the time of telling, and the issues of receded eras are not necessarily obsolete. Blowing the dust off a bygone yet recognizable age, the currency, approachability and portability of its lessons facilitate expansion beyond cultural specificity and confrontation with one's own culture. After the establishment of period atmosphere and the evocation of another time and place (*genius loci*), there is an abrupt switch to the modern cinematic resources of widescreen format, a moving camera, realistic color and high-fidelity audio. Like the minimalist music in *Howards End*, this provides internal evidence of when the film was made. More importantly, the historical and emotional distance that had been established now collapses, suggesting the enduring relevance of the story and promoting

identification and resonance with universal, perpetual truths that transcend patavinity and *Zeitgeist*. Thus can the present be sensed in the past.

The only time the film's linearity will be explicitly compromised, this prologue will come to be understood as a flashforward to starkly contrasting and aggressively juxtaposed alternative futures, one of which is desired and the other actual. Intercutting between the two realms is often done with a graphic match on legs. The motif of siblinghood is introduced when both girls refer to the same woman as "Mummy." The blissful monochrome material contrasts with reality, the rediscovery of which can be a shock for those who become accustomed to fantasy. In spite of the unclear narrative, the girls' terror seems unequivocal. It also reveals something of the experience of the Christchurch citizenry who were shocked out of complacency because of how remote the possibility of these events must have seemed. Even those members of the audience already familiar with a synopsis of the plot when they first approach this film come to sense the meager antecedent likelihood of the pending tragedy. This exordial prologue becomes a conspectus, with the story summarized as involving a delicately quaint and comical context jarringly shattered by the disastrous, violence impact of reality. The girls' desperate cries for help refer beyond their immediate situation, becoming a plea to posterity for sympathetic reconsideration of their reputations. With that, the audience wades into the film somewhat more apprehensively than it otherwise might.

ACT ONE
The Imperfect Subjunctive

Following the cold (though contextualized) open, the Christchurch Girls' High School motto, *SAPIENTIA ET VERITAS* ("Wisdom and Truth"), lies unnoticed under foot. In Mahayana Buddhism and the Thomas Gospel, paradise is ever-present, yet remains unseen. A lemmatic motto has been extracted from each of several other films considered in these essays. But, as the first image following the title, no such material in any of these other films is so prominently displayed or harder to ignore. This is no mere ornament, but an overarching maxim and the central theme by which the film is informed. The entire film may be seen as an expansion and development of this *ligne donnée*. (It is also hoped that the alternative subsidiary mottoes offered for each act will prove equally cogent.) Wisdom and truth are considered feminine virtues in the mythological realm. They are said to be derived from myth and logic, respectively, and to give the hero the power to reconcile the internal and external domains. Taken together, they represent the synthesis of the ideal and the real. Related to this is Schiller's concept of the "*naiv und sentimentalisch*," which basically amounts to his distinction between talent and genius. Also, the two principal trees in the Garden of Eden are those of knowledge and of life. *Sapientia Dei* is also suggested, which is sometimes given feminine personification as Sophia. Haters of Latin will see the motto as a sign of institutional stagnation and obsolescence.

The emphasis on legs and feet established in the prologue continues, here underscored by the word "walk" in the accompanying hymn. This song can also be heard in such films as *A Face in the Crowd*, *Cool Hand Luke* and *Live and Let Die*. This primarily suggests earthbound materialism (*veritas*) in ironic contrast to the film's title. This irony is perhaps nowhere greater than near the end when the girls must negotiate mud, which testifies to their not being above the consequences of their actions. Similarly, in the tone poem *Don Quixote* of Richard Strauss, the blindfolded Don believes himself to have been flying, but a low note at the end of the episode

reveals the supposed flight to have been illusory. This film ends on a colossal low note indeed. As the lowest of body parts, feet suggest the baser elements of life, which may need improvement. Pauline would certainly take this view of her current situation.

But feet also recall the winged feet of Hermes/Mercury, suggesting both the freedom of flight and also the Hermetic interpretation of religious symbolism, which is the basis of the wisdom achieved in this film. Because he moves in the dark shadows with demonic power and deceptive ambiguity, Hermes/Mercury is the presiding deity of alchemy and the leader of souls through the underworld and the unconscious. The Hermetic art of alchemy is the search for a transmuting agent (the philosopher's stone), the real goal being a spiritual, not material transformation. This very sort of transformation is a cardinal theme in this film.

The foot can be a Freudian phallic symbol. As Oedipal/Electral themes are encountered in this story, recall that Oedipus means "swollen footed." Achilles' heel is also suggested. Balance between the conscious and unconscious is symbolized by the alternation of left and right feet during walking. This balance is further reflected in the fact that the film both begins and ends with a song having the word *walk* in its title. The counterpart of the phallic foot is the yonic shoe.

As the just-mentioned left/right polarity as well as its resolution are of potential symbolic importance in this film, a momentary digression will be taken in this most digressive of essays (*brevis esse laboro obscurus fio*) to consider this dichotomy.

The right-hand and left-hand paths represent, respectively, orthodoxy and heterodoxy; conformity and eccentricity; submission to rules and the breaking of taboos; male reason and feminine emotion; Eastern collectivism and Western individualism; Mosaic literalism and Hermetic symbolism. The left-hand path is that of the rebellious, heretical, countercanonical, countercultural, Arthurian ideal of the individual quest, what today would be called thinking outside the box. It is also reflected in Transcendentalism's reliance on individual conscience and intuition. The left-hand path leads to transcendent knowledge, the lack of which plagues mythological orthodox communities and prevents them from curing themselves. Alchemy regards the left as the dark, unconscious, incestuous direction. The left is literally sinister and metaphorically deceitful and impostrous. Jung warns that unconscious individuality may be expressed as ego-defensive compulsions. Many references to left-handedness occur in the "Eumaeus" chapter of James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

Both Pauline and Juliet are physically right-handed, but symbolic lefties due to the traits they share with most mythical heroes, who are typically revolutionaries who battle past parochial cultural limitations, rejecting outer doctrine in favor of the inner call. Heroes resist grazing in common within the herd and dissolving within a communal melting pot. They kick at society and disregards its prods, defying whatever threatens their humanity. They are estranged from mass culture and at odds with their age. They bristle at the idea of coloring within the lines simply for the sake of tradition. They are deaf to political and social strictures, and indifferent to social expectations and evaluation (*nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*). They are dissentient, adversarial, subversive and transgressive with respect to sumptuary laws and are usually in conflict with the standards of older generations. They resist servitude to the orthodox community, which defines its center at the expense of the margins, designates any deviation from stock institutional attitudes as anomalous, and supplies the resistance and alienation that foster the rebel's zeal (*crescit sub pondere virtus*). Chafing at the boundaries on the quest for wisdom, heroes are subject to tests and trials as they push the outside of the envelope on the dangerous heroic path. They withdraw from society to find their true selves, but then ideally return from

their adventure and reestablish a relationship with the group, acting as redeemers by sharing their acquired knowledge. The goal is to move within the world without being moved by it, in the way of the bodhisattva. Such an informed engagement with both wisdom and truth (*sapientia et veritas*) makes them masters of the two worlds: the conscious and the unconscious. Ralph Waldo Emerson believed that "the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude." Thus is the hero afforded relief from the often exorbitant cost of orthodoxy.

Directional cues may not constitute the elements of a consistent pattern throughout this film, but there do exist some wonderfully persuasive and amusing moments. For example, Pauline is always seen cycling toward screen right when going to Juliet's house. Assuming the 180 degree rule to be in force, this implies that Pauline turns to her left when leaving her house on such occasions, which is symbolically appropriate.

Another possible example of this symbolism involves a car in David Hare's screenplay for *The Hours*, where it is written, "Laura swings the wheel decisively to the left." This would be consistent with the car pulling away from a curb, but the situation of the car is not specified. With no orienting context to make this of practical use to a director, and with Laura metaphorically embarking on the left-hand path, there is every indication that this is purely symbolic.

Rejoining the action of the film, the camera finally tilts up and reveals backs turned so that faces remain hidden. It continues to crane upward along a lamppost in ironic counterpoint with the blackness at the end of the film. Miss Stewart, the bespectacled gorgon empress dowager, is discovered, giving the impression of a formidable and menacing martinet like Elena in *Like Water for Chocolate* (*oderint dum metuant*), but rendered farcically. Most of the teachers are only hastily sketched or even caricatured as risible stereotypes or depersonalized abstractions. But from the perspective of the protagonists, that is all that they deserve. This delicately comic treatment adds to the background being established against which the concluding crime will stand in such stark contrast. This heightening of surprise makes the crime more shocking in context than out.

The clothesline is a reminder that by the end of the film, the family's "dirty laundry" will have been made public. Pauline's room is peripheral to the house and its associated institutions of family. Even before her face in seen, Pauline is immediately associated with the color red as she emerges from behind a door of that color. The significance of certain colors will be addressed in due course. In an act of conformity, she desperately adjusts her stocking so as to be in compliance with a dress code. These stockings conceal scars, and this one may also be the actual stocking that will later form part of the murder weapon. They are a reminder of Barton Fink's wallpaper and what may be lurking beneath reassuring façades. Pauline then climbs over a fence, which foreshadows the rise-and-fall structure of the plot and generally suggests going out of bounds and beyond the pale. Meanwhile, Juliet is driven to her first day of school in a blue car.

The school hallways may be symbols of passage from one stage of life to another. Similar imagery will be encountered later in the hospital and in urban alleyways. Though friendly enough in these hallways, Pauline will soon seem less connected to her classmates.

Education often exploits the defenseless young to ensure the perpetuation of tradition. It sometimes imposes the Procrustean, dogmatic grip of mediocrity, produces a sterile, morally demarcated wasteland and harasses transgressors against decorum (*solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*). Single-gender institutions underscore conservatism. The imposition of unanimity confers anonymity, but also defines the constraints against which heroes strain. Indoctrination is

tolerated more easily by the masses than by heroes, and Pauline's servile classmates now seem to be enduring a much lesser ordeal than she. They take pride in their institutionally demanded abject, uncritical submission to the subjugating mastery of the orthodox community, with their singing indicating oral receptivity. This unison singing together with their uniforms are emblematic of the stifling of their individuality and creativity, creating the effect of standardized, lock step, coreligionist mannequins. Even the song's chromaticism seems radical in this atmosphere.

People are encouraged to flee from themselves into the herd, but Pauline resists being shepherded into the mainstream. It is she who is singularly dissatisfied, sufficiently so to abstain from singing (*non serviam*) when first seen during the morning convocation. Stanley Crouch quotes Jack Johnson as saying, "I was a brunet in a blond town." Pauline seems similarly marginalized, isolated and alienated. She considers concession and the resulting solidarity to be not worth the effort. Her initial refusal to sing signifies her distaste for the milieu in which she is immured, which was merely quaint in the prologue, but is now oppressive. She offers not even a perfunctory performance without coercion, but her rebellion cannot withstand the reproachful skunk eye from authority and she eventually relents and conforms. In the face of implied penalties for noncompliance, she yields to what Daniel Jonah Goldhagen calls "synchronizing orthodoxy."

For Pauline, school offers little more than involuntary servitude. She is, at best, spinning her wheels and marking time in this unjust, meaningless, mock-spiritual wasteland. She shares Siddhartha's disgust for the ordinary world. She awaits the call to adventure, the goal of which is the restoration of the spiritual life. Even if she is not on the prowl for the call, her appetite is whetted and she will be overtaken by it. Though spiritually prepared to meet Juliet, she is as yet unaware of their converging paths. Our principals are not merely destined for "a closer walk," but are on a collision course.

Following the onscreen processional, "Sit" may also be taken as a call to attention addressed to the audience, indicating the end of the overture. It is also an act of repression of libido, as standing connotes sexual arousal. Juliet arrives fashionably late, befitting a lady, allowing her to make a grand entrance.

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Miss Waller declares to her French class, "The imperfect subjunctive, like the imperfect indicative, indicates action in the past." The date in the ensuing caption then establishes this film as itself a reference to action in the past. This juxtaposition facilitates the interpretation of her statement as self-referential. But beyond its once-upon-a-time function, this announcement can be taken as an implicit disclaimer for any fictionalization in the screenplay. The subjunctive mood involves doubt, uncertainty, contingency and conjecture. It is the condition contrary to fact, and can also express wishes. This may indeed indicate how the "action in the past" is being depicted cinematically. Miss Waller uses the word *imperfect* in its linguistic sense. The audience, however, is free to take it as a pun augmenting the disclaimer. *Imperfect* can be taken to mean incomplete, unfinished, defective, faulty, erroneous or abridged. This may thus serve as acknowledgment that the screenplay may involve omissions or speculations, especially in light of the fact that this has become one of the most tortured of stock puns, examples of which are legion, if not uncountably numerous. Any doubts about the ubiquity of this evergreen cliché

(*crambe repetita*) will be quickly dispelled by a search of book titles, which yields dozens of examples, including:

- *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* by Mark C. Carnes.
- *Past Imperfect: A Museum Looks at Itself* by Donna Salvo.
- *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944-1956* by Tony Judt.
- *Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain: The United Nations at Fifty* edited by Ramesh Chandra Thakur.
- *Past Imperfect: Essays on History, Libraries, and the Humanities* by Lawrence W. Towner.
- *Past Imperfect: Alternative Essays in American History* by Blanche Wiesen.
- *Past Imperfect* by Joan Collins.
- *Past Imperfect* by Roger Gandy.
- *Past Imperfect* by Hilary Grenville.
- *Past Imperfect* by Janice Harrell.
- *Past Imperfect* by Kathleen Hills.
- *Past Imperfect* by Margaret Maron.
- *Past Imperfect* by John Matthews.

Feature film titles include *Past Perfect* (1990), directed by Adolfo Aristarain, and *Past Perfect* (1998), directed by Jonathan Heap. The title *Past Perfect* has also been applied to articles in periodicals such as the *Los Angeles Times* (12/14/98, 11/05/01) and *Entertainment Weekly* (5/17/96, 4/27/01). The same basic pun even appeared in two consecutive issues of *People Weekly*: "With his star turn in *Jane Eyre*, Irish actor Ciarán Hinds sees his career as past perfect." (10/27/97, page 77); "Talking With . . . Connie Flower. Past Perfect" (11/3/97, page 19). Richard Dreyfus cowrote and directed a 1995 television feature called *Present Tense, Past Perfect*.

The interpretation of Miss Waller's statement as a pun is thus not only appropriate, but eminently plausible. The potential of such an interpretation will now be considered at length.

Historically-informed films are routinely condemned as outrageously disrespectful of history, often by critics who are themselves ironically guilty of incorrigible descriptive inaccuracy in their reviews. Those who have risen to the bait and vexed themselves with this issue are not so much captious as alarmingly insolent toward the demands of drama. In a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*, 12/25/05, Batya Dagan declares, "A lying movie brings nothing good." In fact, except for history, such a film could bring a host of good things.

Walter Cronkite once denounced Oliver Stone's *JFK* as "absolute junk perpetrated on an unsuspecting public." The "unsuspecting" and superstition-prone who go looking for history in all the wrong places deserve what they find. Oliver Stone is not the fool for altering history, which he has dramatic license to do. The fool is the one who makes the desperately egregious error of relying on such a film as an objective, scholarly reference work. Jonah Goldberg recognizes this when writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, 1/5/06, of the President Kennedy "of Oliver Stone's imagination."

JFK has become a favorite target among commentators. Jon Margolis called the film "an insult to the intelligence." The insult, as discussed below, is no greater than that done by an impressionist painting. George Will called it "an act of execrable history," as if it aspired to anything more. Pat Dowell called it "Stone's scandalous challenge to history," there being no scandal if history can meet the challenge. *Newsweek* featured the headline: "The Twisted Truth of

JFK: Why Oliver Stone's New Movie Can't Be Trusted." No one except perhaps some imaginary straw man suggests that it should.

In his article for *Cineaste* (vol. XIX, no. 1) entitled "The Making of Alert Viewers: The Mixing of Fact and Fiction in *JFK*," Art Simon writes:

> [Certain scenes] demand of spectators a critical stance they should always assume when going to the cinema, a stance which resists associating that which is seen with that which is true. Throughout *JFK*, Garrison and his cohorts are fueled by the assumption that things are not as they appear, a point made repeatedly by images of an unidentified pair of hands doctoring the famous back yard photos of Oswald holding the alleged murder rifle. Viewers need to apply the same skepticism to Stone's film. That various scenes freely interchange archival footage with contemporary reenactments is hardly as threatening as critics have suggested. The fact remains that "alert viewers" do not just exist but are made, often by confronting images which challenge such problematic categories as documentary and fiction.

Thus, *JFK* is no less part of the solution than it is part of the problem. It is about the very nature of history, even if it is not history itself.

Oliver Stone told *Cineaste*, "I've never said it was the truth." Even in the absence of such disavowals, it is folly to infer a guarantee where none is implied. Nevertheless, Nick Clooney, in his book *The Movies that Changed Us: Reflections on the Screen*, says of *JFK* that "Mr. Stone chose to enshrine fantasy as fact." Such enshrinement can only be done by the audience in defiance of reason. When Clooney goes on to opine, "Only *The Wizard of Oz* asked more suspension of disbelief from its audience than Oliver Stone's *JFK*," he accidentally employs the proper verb, as there is no use pretending that the suspension in question is not knowingly solicited.

Parables are for those with the ears to hear. Drama is for those who can distinguish the declarative from the subjunctive. Just as people should not be allowed to drive without knowing the meaning of a red traffic signal, participation in civilization requires the ability to distinguish drama from documentary. As an example of how paternalistic indulgence has its limits, a Japanese exchange student was shot and killed in Florida partly because he was dressed strangely for Halloween. People are responsible for knowing that they do not deserve to be surprised by oddly dressed kids at the end of October. Those who are unwilling or unable to suspend their disbelief and grant they are observing fiction become victims of romantic irony, wherein the author does not expect his work to be taken seriously. The magic realism in a film such as *Like Water for Chocolate* could thus suffer erroneous censure for what it does not pretend to be.

Where spectatorial intelligence fails, a disclaimer is the sovereign remedy (*levamen probationis*) for any imagined pseudoproblem that may arise. It positions a film beyond the jurisdiction of the Fact Police and denies the critic any ground on which to strike a righteous attitude. Conservatives advocate personal responsibility. Responsibility for reading disclaimers lies with the viewer. And even in the absence of full disclosure, responsibility for "suspicion" rests with individual viewers, not with Big Brother.

Even documentaries, which are, inescapably, eclectic assemblages and interpretively filtered contrivances, must be mediated by documentarians exercising editorial judgment and determining which subset of the facts is relevant to their agenda. Different historians employ different colligatory concepts, allowing different accounts of the same event to emerge. A

documentary is merely one token of the truth and may even employ fictive modes. Every person has a unique, proprietary history of experience. All journalists and historians write in their own voice and write their own truth. The past cannot help but be held hostage to ideology, which effects how the issues are imagined and the questions expressed. The fact that *Empire of the Air: The Men who Made Radio* by Ken Burns is an agenda-driven corrective is obvious, but not necessarily unwelcome. Burns uses the phrase "manipulated truth" to describe his work. Paul Lieberman writes of him, "He's not producing a textbook but 'an epic poem.'"

In the *Los Angeles Times*, 3/29/09, David L. Ulin writes of a narrator "creating meaning out of the maelstrom of raw fact." Quoting Lawrence Weschler, Ulin writes:

> "What I say," he argues, "is that every narrative voice — and especially every nonfiction narrative voice — is a fiction. And the world of writing and reading is divided into those who know this and those who don't. When I report, I aspire to accuracy, fairness, all those things, but after I've gathered the material and I have this pile of notes on the table, that's when the fun starts. . . . It's a fiction in the sense that it is a version, something I composed. At this moment, to the best of my ability, this is what it seems like. Borges says there are two worlds, the world of language and the world of reality, and they don't intersect at any point. And any attempt to fashion a representation of one in terms of the other is a fiction."

Rush Limbaugh has said, "History is simple. It's . . . what . . . happened." Etymologically, history is only the knowledge or story of what happened. Superficially, accuracy in history is not just a virtue, but a duty. However, even though, as Agathon says, "Even God cannot change the past," history is unavoidably hypothetical and interpretive. It is inevitably compromised, truncated and distorted because facts can never be transmitted without residue via some transparent, unfiltered, disinterested, impersonal, uncommitted, unproblematic medium. As Lawrence Weschler says, "The notion of aspiring to accuracy is very important. The notion that we can achieve it is a fantasy." It is therefore philosophically naive to deny the editorial aspect of history, there being no unmediated, impartial access available thereto. This is expressed in the following observations and quotations: Herodotus is known as the father of lies. W.C. Williams observes that "facts may be nothing but a printer's error." Matthew Arnold refers to "that huge Mississippi of falsehood called history." "To know history is to realize its ultimate myth and its inevitable ambiguity" (Roy P. Basler). "Everything in history remains uncertain" (Goethe). "History consists of a series of accumulated imaginative inventions" (Voltaire). "There is no history, only histories" (Karl Popper). "The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it" (Oscar Wilde). "Novels arise out of the shortcomings of history" (A.S. Byatt). "Clio, the muse of history, is as thoroughly infected with lies as a street whore with syphilis" (Schopenhauer). "History is always written wrong, and so always needs to be rewritten" (George Santayana). "History has to be rewritten because history is the selection of those threads of causes or antecedents that we are interested in" (O.W. Holmes, Jr.). "History is a myth that men agree to believe" (Napoleon). "History is the distillation of rumour" (Thomas Carlyle). "History is, indeed, an argument without end" (A.M. Schlesinger, Jr.). "History is a loosely knotted net, through which many lives and stories are lost" (Donna Seaman).

"Revisionist history" is something often spoken of pejoratively, as when Max Boot (*Los Angeles Times*, 8/3/05) describes it as "self-indulgent second-guessing." Historians do more than tell received stories because history can never be a finished, settled enterprise. History, as

Richard Rayner observes, "accretes over time." Emendation and augmentation will always remain necessary, not least because of self-indulgent *first*-guessing by partisans who torture the first draft of history to make it favorable to their side, leaving it to be *un*tortured by later generations. "History," says Kenneth Rexroth, "would be so much simpler if you could just write it without ever having to let it happen." In the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 3/16/08, Douglas Brinkley, reviewing *The Purpose of the Past: Reflections on the Uses of History* by Gordon S. Wood, writes, "A solid work of history, he argues, shouldn't tell readers 'more about the historian than the events he or she is presumably recounting.'" Though this is true enough, the point is that telling absolutely nothing about said historian would be difficult. Brinkley continues regarding this collection of Wood's earlier book reviews, "But Wood has added an afterword, a careful analysis of the long-term significance of each book through the lens of hindsight. You might say he is, in essence, reviewing his own reviews." Thus, even conservatively scolding historians revise their own history.

In the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 11/18/07, Minna Proctor writes of history, "It is provisional, filled with guesswork and individual interpretation. It changes through the years; evidence decays, narrators embellish, and what emerges exists only to be toppled, or at least questioned, by the generation that follows." As a scholarly discipline, there is little else to be done within history *except* revision. Immunity from revision is a property of dogma, not history. Old certainties cannot help but be challenged and undermined.

In the spring/summer 2013 issue of USC Dornsife magazine, Peter La Chapelle writes, "R.G. Icollingwood's turn of phrase 'historical imagination' means not fabricating, not exaggerating, but thinking creatively through what a historical figure or group might have thought or done. In order to form a hypothesis about any event, we must first imagine what might have happened and what kinds of sources were left behind as evidence."

In cinema, beyond the genre of documentary, the issue of deviation from history simply does not arise. "Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied," says Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet* (II.ii.). Standards of fact apply to history but are misapplied to fiction, in which concerns of historical accuracy are peremptorily overridden by dramaturgical imperatives. Unless a film is offered as a documentary, the right to have it judged by factual criteria is forfeited. Attempts to "counter claims made in *The Da Vinci Code*" have been reported, even though any such "claims" in the realm of fiction, where farm animals talk and extraterrestrials visit the earth, are not necessarily applicable to the real world. The television movie *The Reagans* elicited objections to "overt, partisan politics masquerading as entertainment." Unless such entertainment aspires to journalism or scholarship, no impropriety can result. The *Los Angeles Times* (7/20/06) is similarly incorrect when it accuses Peter Shaffer's play *Amadeus* of "*advancing* the long-discredited idea" that Salieri poisoned Mozart.

Drama is not subject to standards of history any more than faith is subject to standards of logic. Assertion to the contrary is a form of the historical fallacy. Differential dramaturgical utility is the only relevant evaluative determinant within the autonomous rules of drama. Truth is not to be found exclusively in facts, and history does not necessarily yield the insight sought by the dramatist. James Thurber quotes Percy Hammond as saying, "Just because a thing happened is no reason it's true." In a featurette on the *Fargo* DVD called "Minnesota Nice," Peter Stormare says of *Fargo*, "It is a true story. But it might not have happened." Commenting on *The Rose & the Briar* in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 12/12/04, Geoffrey O'Brien writes, "The ballad is an irrational form of history-writing . . . and provides a direct path into the chaos of history. If the official story tells what 'really' happened – a consensus version untrue to any

individual experience – the ballad tells what it felt like." Likewise, Robert Stam asserts that *Rambo* does not distort reality. Rather, it "really" represents a rightist discourse. In the sphere of drama, emotional authenticity, even at the expense of history, is a culminating virtue (*summum bonum*). In the *Los Angeles Times*, 2/5/06, David L. Ulin writes, "In literature, truth is not so much known as it is felt." He continues, "in literature, the logic of the story can sometimes trump the logic of the world," as will be asserted in the essay on *The Hours*. In the *Los Angeles Times*, 10/16/05, Ulin writes, "Fiction, after all, has never been about history; rather, it has to do with (in E.M. Forster's phrase) the 'buzz of implication.'" In the *Los Angeles Times*, 12/4/05, Robert Schenkkan writes of history being "an important dramatic tool" and of Shakespeare setting *Romeo and Juliet* in Verona because struggles between English Catholics and Protestants could only be safely dealt with obliquely. In the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 5/7/06, Michael Connelly observes that novels provide the truth for which newspapers have no room, and that when truth is sought, facts are negotiable. In the *Los Angeles Times*, 6/8/08, singer-songwriter Joe Henry writes, "I needn't worry about blurring the distinction between the real and imagined since no song is ever made more meaningful simply by virtue of being true. Emotional resonance gives a song its 'truth,' and it has nothing to do with literal honesty." In the *Los Angeles Times*, 4/21/13, Geoff Dyer observes that "the fictive can set a standard of artistic authenticity to which the real is obliged to aspire – and can still, accidentally, achieve." A price must sometimes be paid for the higher end of synoptic insight into the human situation. History for its own sake is a desperate dodge of responsibility within drama, and no amount of accuracy can compensate for the misprision of dramaturgical failure.

The historian may not present a story any more interesting than what the facts will allow. No such alibi is available to the dramatist, as drama operates via a different deontic modality. Fiction can be informed by history, but it need not and should not be enslaved by the dramatically impertinent. Fiction may gesture towards historical fact, but not at the expense of emotional truth, which in drama is prior to the imitation of nature. William H. Gass writes of his novel *The Tunnel*, "It is the opposite of history." Neil Jordan goes so far as to say that while film can use history, it can never *be* history (*Irish Times*, 10/23/96). Verdi said of his opera *Don Carlo* that accurate dates are not important compared to Shakespearian truth and profundity of characterization. And Shakespeare's erroneous histories remain highly regarded as drama. Historical inaccuracy simply cannot discredit drama, as no such credit can accrue in the first place. At the very, very least, as Lizzie Skurnick writes in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 7/6/08, "The freedom of the author's imagination set against the stricture of history often yields a transcendent illumination – both of the time and of the characters."

Historical facts are relevant to and welcome in drama only to the extent that they serve a dramatic cause and are not dramatically dissonant. Accuracy is useless if no dramatic purchase is to be gained by it. For example, it makes little artistic difference whether Alexander Selkirk or Henry Pitman was the "real" Robinson Crusoe (though it may be of interest to this film's editor, Jamie Selkirk). Dramatists routinely and conventionally embroider and refashion stories in order to facilitate the generalization of truth beyond that specified by sterile facts. The use of proper names should not give rise to idolatry. Genuine tragedy is achieved only when the particular is penetrated to reveal what Joyce's Stephen Dedalus calls the "grave and constant in human suffering." The deployment of facts to the detriment of the drama is simply the squandering of an opportunity to optimize the drama, the dramatist's duty being to improve on reality whenever possible. Peter Jackson and cowriter Frances Walsh are at liberty to play freely over their whole keyboard and to try to make their story, as Ernest Hemingway said, truer than if it had really

happened. In the *Los Angeles Times*, 12/15/07, Mark Swed writes that Norman Mailer "insisted that facts distort reality, which is what gives the novel its value." When legend conflicts with fact, print the legend, where appropriate. Or, as John Milius puts it, "If you have a choice, always shoot the myth."

Realist theorists regard film as truthful representation, while formative theorists assert that film differs from reality. In contrast with strictly mimetic naturalism, in which events seem to recount themselves, artifice in *Heavenly Creatures* is flaunted by the self-conscious, counterillusionary, interventionist theatricalism of Peter Jackson, which marks the film as art "so that," in the words of Pat Dowell, "the audience will not mistake the screen for a window on the past," though special effects are not relied on to carry the film. This freedom from historical constraints and from the responsibility of verism in the portrayal of reality enables artistic expression and emotional, psychological and spiritual revelation. Such an opportunity may also entail obligation. In the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 6/16/08, Tara Ison writes, "Good storytelling, even of 'true crime,' demands a subjective shaping of fact, the infusion of perspective, the layer of interpretation."

In an article titled "Based on a True Story," Preston Lerner writes in the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, 9/11/05, about "Hollywood's gradual devaluation of reality." "We suspend our disbelief," he admits, "and, in return, they entertain us." But he seems not to believe himself when he writes of filmmakers that the "based on a true story" label "frees them from the responsibility of being credible." He also implies that obscurity is intractable when asking, "But what's the point of saying that a movie is 'inspired by a true story' if nobody's familiar with the story in the first place?" The point is to allow people to *become* familiar with it and in some cases for the filmmakers to avoid plagiarism. Lerner acknowledges situations in which "cameras . . . aren't unblinking documentary eyes." He further admits, "Even the most honest memoirists shade the truth." He concludes, "Truth isn't limited to reality, and reality isn't always all it's cracked up to be. So don't tell me that something's based on a true story or inspired by actual events. Just tell me the story, and I'll decide whether to believe it or not." This would be fine if he could be singled out as the object of such secrecy. But his lack of curiosity should not limit others who may wish to research the history of the events in question.

Myth and drama are misinterpreted as history. They exist as necessary compensation for the symbolic inadequacy of history, punctilious fidelity to which is dramaturgically irrelevant. Myth and dramatic license are fundamental parts of aesthetic ontology and essential organizing principles that allow psychological truths to be considered within fictitious contexts. Joseph Campbell characterizes art that is not informed by myth as dead. In *The Concept of Mind*, Gilbert Ryle writes, "A myth is, of course, not a fairy story. It is the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idioms appropriate to another. To explode a myth is accordingly not to deny the facts but to re-allocate them."

Eugene Véron says that accuracy is antithetical to art. The very concept of accuracy in art is almost oxymoronic. The goal of art is to understand reality, not to reproduce it, which it can only do obliquely in any case. Art entails intervention between object and subject, with the imposition of distortion and irony. "A painting," writes Patricia Hampl in *Blue Arabesque*, "must depict the act of seeing, not the object seen." The futility of competing with the objectivity of photography frees painters from the constraints of representation and almost necessitates the abstraction that is characteristic of impressionism and expressionism. Art is the realm where it is wrong for outer fact to interfere with inner truth, the goal being to be truer than fact. Wassily Kandinsky insists that the artist is obliged to satisfy his own inner needs by any means necessary,

and that "correctness" should not be allowed to interfere with a work's "inner value." The artist's obligation to history consists in delegating it to historians, just as watercolorists allow the burden of accuracy to be borne by photographers. Of course, the photographic process is also subject to its own aberrations and limitations. Verisimilitude is relevant only when convention specifies it as a method of representation. Even facts must often be adapted so as to accommodate human perceptual competence, as in the example of time-lapse photography (see also the discussion of the *idam* principle below). And within drama, facts only constitute the story, whereas the plot concurrently subverts, estranges and defamiliarizes.

Plato contends that a poem is a lie, while Aristotle maintains that a poem is not fact, but truth. Aristotle also says that the poet's function is to describe, not the thing that has happened, but a kind of thing that might happen. In Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (II.iii.), Touchstone says, "The truest poetry is the most feigning." Thomas Campbell declares, "Fiction in poetry is not the reverse of truth, but her soft and enchanting resemblance." As Sir Philip Sidney says in *The Defense of Poesie*, the poet "nothing affirms and therefore never lieth." All manner of solecism and literal falsehood are justified in poetry by poetic license (*licentia vatum*). Poetic truth does not presume to compete with scientific fact. Just as photography relieves painting of the burden of scrupulous rendering, dramatic license liberates drama from the prison of history, which, if resolutely adhered to, would vitiate the enterprise.

Structuralism recognizes the interdependency among texts and seeks to understand them in relation to each other rather than in isolation or in relation to reality. Formalism holds as irrelevant that which is external to a work of art, which is regarded as a thing in itself independent of historicity. It is the nature of New Criticism to decouple literary works from authorial autobiography. "When it comes to novels, the author's life is nobody's business. A novel, even when it is autobiographical, is not an autobiography," writes Cynthia Ozick regarding what she calls "the sovereign integrity of *story*." The pure phenomenology of contextualism may be too limiting for some, and it may be difficult to agree with Jacques Derrida that "there is nothing outside the text" (*il n'y a pas dehors-texte*). That the external circumstances that attend art supplement its autonomous aesthetic value and meaning is undeniable, and absolute contextual causal closure may be impossible. (Writing of Richard Wollheim, Edmund Fawcett reports that "he would look at a painting for an hour or more before 'irrelevant associations' fell away.") Xanaduism and historicism have their place, but exclusive recourse to such evidence to determine the interpretation of a work of art seems to miss the point. The *integritas* of a work of art renders its history obsolete. Those not satisfied with the story depicted in this film deprived of metatheatrical context and who seek extracinematic excursions are directed to the *Fourth World* website for biographical exegesis of any seemingly urgent exterior details. The sources to be discovered there, such as the book *Parker & Hulme: A Lesbian View* by Julie Glamuzina and Alison J. Laurie, will allow one to see where any telling liberties may have been taken in the screenplay.

A text limits the degrees of freedom of its concretization, but not absolutely. One need not be straitjacketed by the pedantry of genre constraints that fix the possibility space. One inherent aspect of feminist criticism is its revisionism, which seeks to draw novel meanings from texts. When a screenplay is adapted, whether from a novel or a history book, there is to be recognized the screenwriter's license to create an independent, original work and to dramatize the story and use it as a vehicle for self-expression. Peter Jackson has been quoted (*LA Village View*, 11/25-12/1, 1994) confessing to his meticulous research in preparation for writing this screenplay and offering assurance of how he strove to maximize accuracy and minimize

invention. That is fine, as far as it goes. But not even he can provide his audience with an unmediated view of another era, even via a documentary. And for all this biographical excavation, and however thorough the trawling of the archive in order to ground the story in specific factual details, the exercise is not strictly reportorial. He thus verges on committing a category error, or at least suffering from genre confusion. The taking of such liberties as cited above is totally defensible, even if the filmmaker chooses not to avail himself formally of any such defense. It has been rightly observed by others that, with respect to history, this film does not tell the whole story. Maybe no one film could ever do such a thing. (In the *Los Angeles Times*, 2/27/05, Laurence Bergreen writes that biopics are "where the compression and stylization are so drastic.") But even if completeness is impossible, integrity is not. No film need tell all of *the* story as long as it tells enough of *a* story, which this film certainly does.

No principled basis exists for the appeal to rules from within domains where they lack authority. Any objection arising from the inconsequent comparison with history is thus a spurious problem on which nothing important turns within the context of drama, wherein history must yield to any countervailing dramaturgical factors.

Thus, Miss Waller's words are an implicit (or at least symptomatic) acknowledgment that this film is not a documentary and could not help but be "imperfect" even if it were. As if to emphasize that not even a documentary could aspire to literal, epistemological objectivity, Miss Waller takes the trouble to remind us that *imperfect* applies to the indicative as well as the subjunctive. This film is one version of how these events *may* have happened, or perhaps of how drama demands they *ought* to happen. It is as much a meditation as a history. It is as much an imaginative response to facts as it is reportage. It is the inventive and passionate telling of some engaging biographical (often autobiographical) material as well as an expression of the emotions evoked in the filmmakers. It accompanies history, but does not change it. As Sean Hannity said (5/5/05), siding with Ridley Scott against critics of the latter's film *Kingdom of Heaven*, "It's just a movie."

Returning to Miss Waller, her stern countenance reinforces the atmosphere of rigorous discipline. Her name is curiously apt because it suggests obstruction and limitation, like the enclosing demon serpent Vritra killed by the god Indra, who was later humbled. The girls will also be humbled after overcoming threshold guardians. (It is noted in passing that Pauline and Juliet will be referred to in this essay as "girls" in accordance with the precedent established by Miss Stewart in this scene and because of such other factors as the name of this school.)

It is 1952. *Encyclopedia Britannica* reports that in 1952 New Zealand was celebrating the Olympic victory of Yvette Williams in the women's long jump and the centenary of constitutional government. It had a balanced budget and virtually no unemployment.

Yet another "Sit" command is issued. In a joke omitted from the VHS version due to faulty formatting, Pauline loses anonymity by remaining standing momentarily after all her classmates have sat down. Her attempts to conform seem futile and she remains out of sync with her peers.

Miss Stewart enters the classroom as a herald to issue the call to adventure in the form of a formal introduction befitting a princess, complete with pregnant, dramatic pause: "Miss Waller, class [distinguished guests and audience members], this . . . is Juliet Hulme." Juliet enters with aloof dignity. For the benefit of those who are not already familiar with these historical characters, the camera momentarily lingers, placing emphasis on a character whose significance

might not be immediately realized. Juliet's introduction is thus a subtle variant on that of Robert Redford's Sundance Kid.

With Derek's question to Barton Fink in mind, it may be asked of Pauline, "Have you seen the herald?" Madame Merle in *The Portrait of a Lady* says, "I'm afraid there are moments in life when even Schubert has nothing to say to us." This is true only for those who lack the ears to hear. The call comes for the one whose heart alone is fit to receive it and who is desperate to be saved from the wasteland. Help comes to the one who has responded to the call, which is sometimes in the form of personified wisdom, like Nacha in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Pauline is poised to respond to a cynosure and is receptive to finding a kindred spirit with, in the words of Marc Weingarten, "an urge to move off dead center before the rot sets in." In another sense, she is a sitting duck. Juliet arrives as a beacon in a pitching sea, filling a vacancy not only in the class, but in Pauline's psyche. This is to be expected because the adventure that occurs is the one for which the hero is ready and is an outward manifestation and fulfillment of the hero's own inward readiness. But Pauline is initially slow to recognize Juliet as an emissary from heaven. Juliet does not yet function as a fillip, and so the epiphany is not immediate. Juliet is afforded a grand entrance, though she does not at first en*trance*. Gradually, Juliet manifests her role as deliverer and is appreciated as a godsend.

Juliet's name immediately associates her with the theme of forbidden love. Pauline, not amused, shows indifference, if not contempt, giving Juliet the detriment of the doubt and considering her guilty until proven innocent (*sat pulchra, si sat bona*). When Juliet corrects Miss Stewart by dissociating herself from the indigenes, Miss Waller scowls disapprovingly, but sycophantically changes her expression when Juliet's father is identified, marking him as a man of consequence. The assumption that Juliet is a spoiled brat is bolstered when it is revealed that she has travelled "all over the world" to "exotic lands across the seas." Her itinerary will come to include travel across psychological seas and plans for Hollywood.

Pauline furtively draws, wisely keeping her creativity private in this setting (Matt 7:6). Her subject is horses, which will provide a link with Juliet later. Animals in general represent spiritual aspirations trapped in a crude, primitive form, but can also represent theriomorphic gods or totemistic figures. Several additional animal allusions will occur during the film. Horses represent instinct, intuition and passions that must be bridled, harnessed, or otherwise sublimated. In Greek mythology, horses were created by Poseidon and are thus associated with the sea and the chthonic underworld, two elements which will converge at the film's end. A horse can act as a mythological spirit guide (*psychopomp*). Athena is the tamer of horses (*damasippos*), as is Nestor. Uncontrolled brutality is the negative aspect of the symbol. In *Macbeth* (II.iv.), horses go wild and eat each other. Also recall Mr. Deasy's pictures of horses in *Ulysses*.

Under the circumstances, it is surprising that Juliet is allowed to choose her own pseudonym, and indeed this freedom soon proves illusory. The attention of the class is now turned to "irregular verbs in the present subjunctive." In *The Crying Game*, Jody requests, "Present tense. Please. Please." Recognition of the universality of human nature and of the aforementioned "grave and constant" element makes the past and present reciprocally relevant. Native American myths often occur not in antiquity but in an eternal present. A similar contemporaneity is found in logic, which operates in an eternal present in order to avoid contradictions between successives. As noted in the essay on *The Crying Game*, Joyce wrote to Carlo Linati regarding *Ulysses*, "My intention is to transpose the myth *sub specie temporis nostri*." Following the example of Tita in *Like Water for Chocolate*, Pauline and Juliet will become mythical taboo-breaking women *de nous jours*.

Having introduced the theme of imperfection, Miss Waller immediately demonstrates imperfection by making a linguistic mistake. But charity is warranted for both Miss Waller and for the filmmakers in light of their "frightfully difficult" tasks. Juliet does not hesitate to expose the less-than-formidable scholarship of her teachers (*cucullus non facit monachum*). Miss Waller offers a French sentence ("*Je doutais qu'il vienne*.") that expresses doubt about someone ("he") coming. Juliet responds not with the psittacism expected of her, but instead says, "You've made a mistake." The correction may be more than linguistic. Doubt about the coming of soul mates and redeemers is unwarranted. Juliet has come, as will Mario ("He") and Diello. In anticipation of this, a line comes to mind from *La Damoiselle Élue* by Claude Debussy after Dante Gabriel Rossetti. After an explanation of what she wants to happen, the protagonist says, "*Tout ceci sera quand il viendra*." As Juliet would no doubt know, this translates as "All this is when he comes." Miss Waller's incorrect French word sounds like *V.N.*, which could stand for Dante's *Vita Nuova*, though Juliet does not impress Pauline the way Beatrice did Dante. (Also, the phrase "He wanted her to give him some money" could relate to a possible economic dimension to the girls' relationship that will be discussed later.)

Pauline's name placard says *Paulette*. This is just the least of hints of the name changes appropriately in store for these protean characters. Also note that the name is written in red. Pauline has simply Gaulified her own name, while Juliet adopts a *nom de plume* that associates her with Marie Antoinette and haughty aristocracy, and also hints at the hubris to come. The name also has transtextual significance. Juliet anticipates the name she (or more accurately her historical model) will adopt in later life: Anne Perry. Antoinette Perry also happens to be the name of the woman after whom Broadway's Tony award is named. The actual word in the film sometimes appears black, but may in fact be written in blue. Pauline's name suggests *The Perils of Pauline* and recalls the zealous and impatient Paulina in Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*. She is sometimes addressed as "Paul," which is a masculinization of her name and not just apocopic hypocorism. The girls will later have an experience not unlike that of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. The names Antoinette and Paul associate the girls, respectively, with St. Anthony the Abbott and St. Paul the Hermit, who are sometimes pictured together. Both these saints are patrons of weavers, perhaps even weavers of tangled webs. As told by Saint Jerome, a raven brought bread to Paul during his 70 years spent in the wilderness, the lesson being that help comes when one's own resources are exhausted. Such help comes to the girls in the form of Diello as *deus ex machina* and is implied by the song "You'll Never Walk Alone." After Paul's death, his tunic was used by Pope Athanasius to raise a man from the dead. The girls (and Orson Welles) experience resurrection in various ways. Anthony means "inestimable," consistent with the girls' unforeseen potential. Anthony told his monks not to fear shape-shifting demons, advice to be given obliquely to the audience later. St. Paul the hermit was buried by St. Anthony the Abbott, who is the patron of gravediggers. The girls, in a sense, dig their own graves. Finally, the name *Antoine* will be spoken by Kate Winslet in the film *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, and the name will also occur in *Little Children*, in which she will star.

Miss Waller resents Juliet's hauteur and temerity. Juliet has begun to function as a kind of in-your-face trickster hero. Such figures, like Till Eulenspiegel, upset the status quo of such stagnant wasteland situations. They outwit their stronger enemy, expose academic hypocrisy and gall (or, this being a French class, perhaps one should say Gaul) Philistines. Consistent with the earlier emphasis on feet, Miss Waller quickly brings matters down to earth with her depreciatory, deflationary reversion from "Antoinette" to "Juliet." Both girls will eventually be brought low in a more fundamental sense. Miss Waller is unwilling to suspend disbelief and pretend, whereas

the girls will come to do so pathologically. Juliet's chosen name echoes as she is told to turn to "page 17," January 17 being Anthony's memorial or feast day. It also hints at the real Juliet's measured IQ of 170.

Juliet has no aversion to confrontation and stands up to Miss Waller literally, though in this case by invitation. She is quite pleased with herself and sits with obedience but not submission. Pauline recognizes their shared antipathy and has already begun admiring Juliet's audacious *sprezzatura* and flippant effrontery. Juliet's behavior is Pauline's first inkling of a countercultural affinity between them. Their minds, like those of Stephen and Bloom in *Ulysses*, are gradually becoming mutually attuned as Pauline's attitude transitions from skeptical to tolerant to half-admiring. Juliet, like the bird girl in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, embodies the call of life. Pauline is alive to the possibilities of this relationship, which may have been destined from the beginning (*ab ovo*). A tiny flame is now kindled, and with a look, Pauline silently aligns herself with Juliet.

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In the art class, the youth and colorful smock of Mrs. Collins hold the promise of less despotic severity than has been exhibited by the rest of the faculty. She reassuringly directs her students to "*decide* who wants to model and who wants to draw." But this freedom is as illusory as that in French class, where Juliet was told, "You can *choose* your own." Rules and obedience still override creativity and individualism, with authority belying any disguises.

On the wall behind Juliet, along with some landscapes, are two female figures, one in red, the other in blue. Next to them is a copy of the London version of Leonardo da Vinci's *Virgin of the Rocks*, with Mary clad in blue. Blue and red paints sit on the window sill and table behind Pauline, who has retreated to the margins.

A mermaid also rests on the window sill. The danger of mermaids and sirens is the tenacity of their grasp. They represent illusory, infantile fantasies as opposed to mature love. The goal is to yield to the lure of bliss, but to experience it without being consumed by it and falling victim to irresponsibility.

Pauline and Juliet share the experience of being the outsider when both remain unchosen after the voluntary pairing of the remainder of the class. Juliet proclaims her self-sufficiency, but Mrs. Collins joins her with Pauline, in spite of some of the mutual reluctance with which buddy movies usually begin. (Of particular relevance within this genre is *The World of Henry Orient*, of which *Heavenly Creatures* could be said to be the evil twin.) The faculty, collectively and ironically, continue to act as midwife to their relationship.

Composer Peter Dasent is a coconspirator in the narrational game of lulling the audience by establishing an intrinsic norm of innocent playfulness and superficial comedy with his musical clowning, even as accompaniment to Pauline's anger, which will be no joke at the end. Pauline had been subdued in French class while Juliet was confrontational. Pauline now passively models as Juliet actively draws, in accordance with the polarity mandated by Mrs. Collins. This continues the establishment of another norm to be reversed later. Also notice that one student holds an apple (like mermaids, a symbol of temptation) while another holds an object that continues the foot motif.

Juliet is self-motivated and is encumbered neither by imposed rules nor by the demeanor of her model. She ignores the assignment (*aquila non capit muscas*) and follows the creative rather than traditional approach to mythology. Art is conditioned by the character of the artist.

This will be seen later with respect to the girls' plasticine models and also applies to Peter Jackson's expressionistic style. Meanwhile, the orthodox community busies itself with erecting blockades to imagination. The prison of orthodox academic convention often cripples artists by forcing them in a direction counter to their natural inclination. But autonomous individual expression can never be totally suppressed. Significantly, Mrs. Collins expresses astonishment by referring to heaven and earth in adjacent sentences. (Questions beginning "What on earth" will later be asked by Henry, Honora and Hilda.)

Juliet's drawing depicts Saint George and the Dragon, with Saint George portrayed in the likeness of Mario Lanza and holding his lance in his left hand. George is the patron saint of England, from which Juliet is so proud to be that her very first words assert this to Miss Stewart. Dragons pose no actual physical threat. But art imitates genuine *inner* life. Mythical monsters in general derive from repressed feelings and embody what the mind is destined to become if they are kept repressed. Dragons are associated with the raw material (*prima materia*) of alchemy, which represents dangerous, primitive psychic forces that are in need of transformation and that should not be treated casually. They may be symbols for the destructive aspect of a woman's animus or mother-image, which the hero must confront and overcome. Dragons are inhibitors of consciousness (dragon = drag on) that represent imposed conformity, the taboo against unregulated impulse (*surtout pas de zèle*), bondage to ones own ego, the *muladhara* state of Kundalini yoga, and the insistence on objective, concrete, literal, Mosaic interpretation, which Mrs. Collins demands of Juliet's painting. They must be killed to achieve liberation from psychological impediments and to allow life energy to flow freely. But the consequences of killing them improperly will be seen later. In the classical Greek tradition, it is the bite of a serpent that allows the voice of the muse to be heard. Tasting a dragon's blood allows Siegfried to hear the song of nature, as the girls will come to experience in their own way. The archangel Michael is a vanquisher of Satan-as-dragon. (He is also, relevantly, a champion of individualism, and the patron of soldiers, horses and high places.) As it happens, 1952 is the Chinese year of the dragon, 1953 will be the year of the snake (to be discussed below) and 1954 will be the year of the horse, another animal with a prominent presence in this film.

Saint George is actually not the first saint associated with dragons to be mentioned in this film, for Juliet is said to be "joining us from St. Margaret." (Multiple online scripts for this film give this name as possessive [St. Margaret's], but the terminal *s* is totally inaudible.) Saint Margaret, whose voice was heard by Joan of Arc, was imprisoned, tortured, and encountered the devil in the form of a dragon, which swallowed her. She escaped by goading him from the inside with a crucifix. As the patron saint of childbirth, her protection will be relevant and welcome when Diello is born. She may serve as a model of a female dragon slayer to which the girls may aspire. But she herself could not be killed by fire or drowning. Disposing of Orson Welles and Honora will prove equally difficult.

In spite of Pauline's inertia, it will not be long before Juliet will have "gotten around to drawing her" out. The phrase "pop her on a rock" sounds like inverted foreshadowing of the murder, which will occur vice versa. For Juliet, Pauline is not yet in the picture, either literally or figuratively. Juliet seems "to have run out of room." At the end, Juliet will find herself without elbow room in which to maneuver, having run out of options. Pauline too will more than once find herself having "no option." "Sorry" is both the first and the last word Juliet speaks to Pauline in the film. Behind her poker face, Pauline harbors not resentment, but admiration and amusement for the defiant liberties taken by Juliet with her teachers.

Juliet was at least allowed to choose her own pseudonym in French class, but is not allowed to choose her own subject in art class, where she again exhibits impenitent cleverness. She is as frustrated as Walter von Stolzing in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* when she is pedantically forbidden to skip the preliminaries and go straight to the top. Instead, uninspired literalism is demanded of her and she responds with disdainful contempt. (Concerning the ideological implications of style, leftist film theory of the 1970s holds realism to be a bourgeois trait.) The artist is nearly always reviled, and orthodox society solicits trouble when it suppresses natural coping mechanisms. Mrs. Collins appreciates neither Juliet's trolling for complements nor her self-congratulatory tone. Juliet's vanity is stung and she is disappointed at not getting from her teacher the unqualified approval to which she must have become accustomed by her doting parents. Juliet rejects Mrs. Collins with imperious disdain. When the expected praise is instead provided by Pauline, Juliet soaks it up and a positive connection is established from the other direction that helps to nourish Juliet's wounded pride. Juliet proves a tonic for Pauline in French class, and Pauline now reciprocates, resulting in the first fruitful meeting between the two following earlier abortive contacts.

The girls are brought together in art class, where Mrs. Collins issues the call to be an artist. Joyce's Stephen Dedalus answers such a call. Sheldon R. Brivic holds that art, for Stephen, is a sexual activity. His art, invested with symbolic sexual powers, is his defense against phallic threat. It is, recalling Bill in *Barton Fink*, "a means of protection and escape from a sense of being trapped by the past and from crippling Oedipal fixations." Stephen is "attempting to construct an intellectual edifice to shelter him from neurosis and anxiety, an art to fulfill the function of his mother." Joseph Campbell gave a series of lectures on the novels of James Joyce entitled *Wings of Art*. As viewers participate vicariously in the ritualized symbolic art of this film, it seems that perhaps art may come to be such an oasis and mode of escape for Pauline and Juliet, who may be thought of as training for a flight on wings of art. Taking their satisfactions as they find them, art may allow them to impose order on their emotions and may afford them the satisfaction denied to them in life. (Yeats held that either work or life could be perfected, but not both.) An artist's own interior struggle and repressed potentialities find idealized expression in art. Artists are agents of revelation and the enemies of demagogues. They are distinguished by a willingness to risk and to fight against limits, symbolized by dragons. In the clash between artistic imagination and reality, the artist remains free in art, if not in life. About the time the girls were born (1938), the New Zealand author Ngaio Marsh (1899-1982) wrote a detective story, *Artists in Crime*.

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The Riepers, Herbert (Bert) and Honora (Nora), are discovered at home. The introduction of both sets of parents is mediated by fish: The Riepers are associated with fresh mackerel, while the Hulmes are associated with rotten salmon. Additionally, a teacher will later be alluded to as a "silly old trout." The fish may be a theriomorphic symbol for Christ. It thus suggests intuition, spiritual nourishment, baptism and rebirth. Recalling Christ's miraculous feeding of the multitude with five loaves and two fishes (Matthew 14, Mark 6, Luke 9), Mr. Rieper, it will be learned, has access to an inexhaustible supply of fish. Representing cold-blooded instinct, and recalling St. George, a fish may also be taken as a dragon in embryonic form (Matt 7:10). It symbolizes both the need for redemption and the redeemer. In the apocryphal book of Tobit, Tobias survives his marriage to Sarah thanks to organs he extracts from a fish. So fish can save a

father from being murdered by his daughter. Bert perhaps benefits from this same magic. Astrologically, Pisces alludes to the age now ending. Odysseus is killed by a fish-bone arrowhead.

Fish are caught in nets. The young Stephen Dedalus feels himself threatened by the nets of country, language and church. Beyond these nets, what remains is art. He seeks via silence, exile and cunning to avoid entanglement in these nets. Pauline implements silence when she, seeming like a fish-out-of-water, does not sing "A Closer Walk with Thee" (the lyrics of which include the word *snares*), and when she gives her parents the silent treatment. Juliet is exiled to such places as the Bahamas and the Bay of Islands, and both girls have spent time in hospitals. As for cunning, Pauline refers to herself and Juliet as "so brilliantly clever" and is called "clever" by Hilda, "damn clever" by John and "a clever little madam" by Honora.

As treasure brought up from the depths, fish represent material dredged up from the unconscious. Orpheus fishes souls out of the temporal flow of the waters of ignorance into the light of transcendence, a function later attributed to Christ. Pauline is fished out of the wasteland by Juliet. Diello is dredged up from the realm to which Orson Welles is temporarily consigned. This essay will close with a discussion of the possibility of rescue from abyssal depths such as those implied at the end of the film.

Honora offers the alternative of lamb (of God?) chops because Steve is "not much of a fish man" in spite of having been "splashing out." If the latter expression indicates a transition from darkness to light, then it may explain his behavior at the end of the scene. Further, in accordance with the internal sanction for puns, it may be noted that this phrase implicitly means "to spend," which was a colloquial Victorian term for orgasm. Confusion arises when the nonpiscivorous Steve addresses Bert as "Mr. Rieper," the title sequence having given Pauline's surname as Parker. This issue will be resolved only at the end. For further thoughts on the sexual implications of the spurning of fish, see the commentary on *The Wings of the Dove*.

Doris Day may indeed be "talented," but the girls will surpass this with "genius." Pauline would consider the former uninspired, as symbolized in Western art by the dragon. But fear not, for Mario Lanza, in his role as the dragon slayer, is at hand. He forms a link between the girls. Writing in the *Los Angeles Times*, 11/19/05, David L. Ulin explains that "the nature of fanhood" is such that "our affinities help us find purchase, a sense of identity in the world." Pauline's Mariophilia seems to predate her acquaintance with Juliet, despite her poker face in art class.

Listening to the music, Pauline rapturously inhales, literally taking inspiration from her hero. The quintessential romanticism of his singing being derived from his Italian heritage, Pauline may be forgiven for calling him Italian. Mario Lanza (1921-1959) was actually born in Philadelphia. He now rests in the mausoleum at Holy Cross Cemetery in Los Angeles near Jose Iturbi, Ray Bolger and Spike Jones. "Be My Love" was Victor's first gold disc for a vocalist, and Lanza was the first singer to sell 2.5 million albums. The song's lyrics include such relevant phrases as "set me burning," "one kiss is all I need to seal my fate," "hand in hand we'll find love's promised land" and "there'll be no one but you for me, eternally."

Bert's singing to the fish serves as a mockery of Christ via his symbol. In one of several instances of foreshadowing, larger concerns are revealed as the ending is summarized in microcosm (*si parva licet componere magnis*). Pauline seeks to cleanse the temple in the manner of Christ casting out of the moneychangers (Matt 21:12). She gives to her father the essence of the message the adults are given at the end: "Stop it. You're spoiling it. Go away!" The climax of the film is simply this challenge to parental authority and prerogative writ large. And as if with prescient foreknowledge, the potential implicit gravity of the statement has apparently not been

lost on Steve, judging by the otherwise quite disproportionate expression on his face as the scene ends. How else to explain his response except that it is occasioned by inward appreciation of the statement and the concurrent song lyrics as portentous and premonitory? A heavy hint is given that this comic atmosphere might conceal a darker truth of grave import. Sorrows to come have sent their harbinger.

Before continuing, it may be useful here to review some of the vocabulary of psychoanalytic criticism, which is most applicable when dealing with the irrational and obsessive.

The id, ego and superego are concerned, respectively, with pleasure, reality and perfection.

The id develops out of frustration and is governed neither by logic nor ethics. It contains the libido, that nonrational vitality that aggressively drives the impulsive, instinctive quest for gratification without regard for consequences.

The ego provides a sense of identity and balances id and superego, conscious and unconscious, outer and inner experience. It accepts a subordinate role, but a weak ego can be overwhelmed by the unconscious. A fantasy produced by the ego is recognized as such and not mistaken for reality.

The superego involves internalized surrogate parental and social pressure. It is the moral censoring agency, developed due to parental influence and catering to the desire for prohibitions. A faltering superego manifests itself in the multiplication of father-figures, such as the girls' saints. When the superego is corrupted by the id, morality gives way to impulse, cruelty masquerades as moral indignation, and atrocities such as the Inquisition and the Holocaust are committed with moral zeal. Pauline eventually disengages from both internal and external parents, experiencing no guilt about evil thoughts.

The shadow represents that aspect of the personality that the ego dislikes and wishes to hide. It is that dark, dangerous, despised and unacknowledged monster whose most common projection is the Devil. The term is used colloquially to represent any personification of the dark side in general. More precisely, the repressed shadow is projected onto those of the same sex and determines relations with them. Hated people correspond to rejected aspects of the hater's personality. Society will have occasion to project its fanaticism and collective malice onto Pauline and Juliet. For girls, the development of the shadow is determined by the mother. A crisis presents an opportunity for the shadow to express itself, but calamity may ensue if proper avenues for expression are not available. On the positive side, a recognized and accepted shadow can be a source of vitality, inspiration and creativity if properly sublimated. Familiarity and reconciliation make control possible. The shadow must be derepressed and brought into the light of consciousness, where it, like a vampire, is disempowered. (Note that in this film, Orson Welles is always seen in the dark.) An overdeveloped shadow can emerge menacingly and overwhelm the ego.

The inferior function is related to the shadow and is symbolized by the weak beating the strong.

The soul-image represents one's unconscious contrasexual nature. Its development is determined by the contrasexual parent. It is the feminine in men (anima) and the masculine in women (animus). It is projected onto and facilitates identification with the opposite sex. It facilitates love at first site and the union of conscious and unconscious. Bad relations with the

soul-image result in bad relations with the opposite sex. Alliance of a woman's animus with her shadow may allow her ego to abandon logic.

The self is the organizing, integrating principle of the personality. It represents the goal of the psyche. Unfamiliarity with the self leads to projection of one's faults onto others. The ego can become dangerously inflated if it identifies with the self.

The persona is that protective mask that interfaces with the outside world, adapting to its collective ideals. It is a necessary bluff, but total identification with it leads to neurosis. The persona may be taken over by the shadow that it represses.

An archetype is an inherited cognitive predisposition. Its form is innate and constitutive, while personal experience determines content. Inflation results when the ego identifies with such images, while psychosis results if the ego is overwhelmed by them.

Complexes are the negative aspect of archetypes. In a woman's psyche, the ego is assaulted by the maternal superego through the power complex, by the paternal animus via the father complex, and by the shadow via the inferiority complex. Parents can come to symbolize these negative inner forces. But if the inner, psychological nature of these personifications is recognized and not mistaken for external reality, then they can be governed such that feelings of superiority and inferiority are balanced.

Projection is the transfer to others of repressed unconscious characteristics. Excessive emotional response in interpersonal relationships indicates reaction not to the other, but to part of oneself projected onto the other. This satisfying and comforting externalization can, however, veil the distinction between fantasy and reality. Projections are withdrawn once they are made conscious, confronted and recognized as arising from conflicts within the subject. The slaying of external monsters is then seen as a mistake, as it is in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Failure to withdraw projections results in neurosis.

Individuation denotes maturation and growth of character via integration of fragmentary components of psyche, including the shadow. This involves the courageous recognition of both one's good and bad qualities.

Repression is the active exclusion from conscious awareness. Repressed attitudes tend to erupt into perverse, destructive conduct. Repression is the denial of danger, while projection is the externalization of danger, reaction formation is the hiding of danger, and fixation is the stagnation of danger.

Primary process is the production of subjective memory indistinguishable from objective perception. Secondary process involves realistic thinking and problem solving.

Dream work involves encoding the latent in the manifest, while amplification involves making unconscious content explicit, thus helping to synthesize the conscious and the unconscious, and the personal and the collective. Of building his Bollingen House, Jung said that he "had to make a confession in stone" and had a feeling of being reborn in stone. The girls create their alter egos in plasticine and finally let a brick do the talking for them.

Jung specifies eight psychological types based on certain polarities. An extrovert is a person in whom the objective attitude predominates, while an introvert is one in whom the subjective attitude prevails. An extrovert is characterized by the outward flow of energy, while the introvert interiorizes the outer world. Extroverts dread loneliness and dying from inner disease. Introverts dread confinement and harm from outside. Each of these attitudes combines with one of four functions: thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition. For example, introvert intuition types regard themselves as possessing unique, unappreciated genius. The introvert feeling type tends to be creative, but also inscrutable, melancholy, and subject to astonishing

emotional storms. A feeling-type person with thinking-type parents is prone to experience a crisis.

Finally, the reader is invited to consider how these diagnostic criteria for Antisocial Personality Disorder could relate to the behavior eventually exhibited by Pauline:

1. Failure to conform to social norms.
2. Lying, including the use of aliases.
3. Impulsiveness or failure to plan ahead.
4. Irritability and aggressiveness.
5. Reckless disregard for others.
6. Consistent irresponsibility, as indicated by repeated failure to sustain consistent work behavior.
7. Lack of remorse as indicated by being indifferent to or rationalizing having hurt . . . another.
8. Threats are not effective in treating such people, who often experience difficulties with authority figures, including suspicious, unsympathetic clinicians.

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In the physical education class, the emphasis is again on legs as well as on duality and polarity ("Right . . . and left."), the fundamental properties of the natural realm that mysticism seeks to transcend. Like the earlier scenes that stress walking, the alternation of left and right feet again emphasizes the extreme modes of interacting with the world as opposed to the Middle Way. The instructor's words are a recognition of the incompleteness of life without the way of the left-hand path and psychic integration of the shadow. Truth *and* wisdom are required. The students are deployed in a June Taylor, Busby Berkeley pattern, this regimentation reflecting an attempt at conformity of body to parallel conformity of mind. Pauline and Juliet conform in neither sense.

Pauline's scar triggers the backstories of childhood illness, and it is gradually learned why the girls are excused from physical activities. Their medical histories give them a greater claim on our sympathy than was first realized.

The girls' blemishes are not merely skin deep. Juliet claims to have scars on her lungs. The real scars, of course, are on her psyche, and help contrast her material wealth with her emotional poverty. Some people like as well as lick their wounds. Juliet may appreciate, as did Frida Kahlo, that illness can provide leverage for obtaining sympathy. (In reviewing a book by Flora Fraser in the *Los Angeles Times*, 3/27/05, Kathryn Shevelow refers to princess Sophia, daughter of George III, as a "strategic invalid.")

Breath unites the inner spiritual and the outer physical realms. Lung problems disconnect the two and suggest inward withdrawal in response to a threat to the spiritual realm. Physical sickness can symbolize psychic birth defects and emotional malnutrition. Skin ailments in myth are said to indicate a yearning for metamorphosis. Scars recall the wounded Fisher King in need of a redeemer, the martyrdom of Christ, the eye that Wotan paid to gain wisdom, and the shaman as a wounded healer, as well as deformed villains such as Richard III. Jung says that "only the wounded physician heals," but only if he is "clean of neuroses." Scars can be emblematic of a tragic flaw (*hamartia*). The mark of distinction from the majority may also be the mark of Cain.

As symbols of impotence, the scars look ahead to the physical inefficiency of the murder and then to the girls' psychological helplessness at the end. They also harmonize with similar castration symbology in *The English Patient*. Psychobiographically, childhood trauma, as per the personal heresy, may be associated with compensatory creativity. Creativity and lameness often coincide in mythological characters like Vulcan, and many actual geniuses have been known for their mental instability. Samson and Wotan gain strength and wisdom, respectively, following physical impairment. However, Oedipus, who is lame, kills his father and marries his mother in ignorance.

Juliet, like the Duke of Windsor (another martyr to love), was "exiled" to the Bahamas during World War II. Her personification of royalty is facilitated by sharing this experience with the actual royal family. She brags about her endurance, childhood years being equivalent to dog years. She claims that her mother has "promised they'll never leave me again." Pauline grudgingly sets aside her shyness long enough to impart her parallel history to her new confidante.

Their analogous experiences of abandonment place Pauline and Juliet in the company of Osiris, Hercules, Dionysus, Sargon, Moses, Hansel and Gretel, and Oliver Twist. Heroes often have abnormal births or upbringings. This will soon include Diello. Robert Donington writes that it is "traditional for heroes not to know their true parentage." He also writes, "The hero's physical orphaning becomes a symbol for a psychic orphaning, out of which the possibility of a psychic rebirth arises." He further observes that, typically, a hero "is a deprived child, compensating for his deprivation by growing up to do desperate deeds to which he is driven by his own inner necessity, but from which the world is the gainer."

Juliet rationalizes their disfigurements as testaments of the trials that they have endured. These emblems of the dues that they have paid make them worthy. They are badges of nobility and sources of pride. They demonstrate that the girls have been chastened and ennobled by pain. Juliet is prepared to submit their respective scars in support of their application for elevation to a select, alienated and heroically suffering aristocracy. Her phrase "frightfully romantic" may very easily be taken as self-referential and as true in every possible sense.

Destiny has seemed to be demanding that the girls be unable to avoid each other. Yielding to this apparent inevitability, the continued revelation of comparable, shared experiences and affinities provides the girls the opportunity for the further voluntarily cementing of their relationship. Each is gradually seeing in the other a person with whom common cause can be made. Their stories allow each to project her own history onto the other's situation such that each is preaching to the choir. They begin to fasten upon each other and to progress through the three levels of engagement: recognition, alignment and allegiance. The lean years that they have endured may even come to be construed as preparatory to their meeting. The result will be the forging of a mystical bond stronger than that to their biological families (*amicus est tanquam alter idem*). This mutual empathy also marks the beginning of their mutual participation in each other's dysfunction. In superficial, practical terms, the girls eventually influence each other to their mutual detriment.

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As Pauline makes her way to Juliet's home, the "Ilam" sign is irredeemably absent from the VHS version, once again making the term "pan-and-scan" a misnomer for this rendition. Sparse exposition and low redundancy make such formatting errors devastating. The name *Ilam*

obliquely suggests tragedy as it recalls the town in Staffordshire and the story of the killing by wolves of the wife and child of St. Bertram. It also resembles *Ilium*, the classical Greek name for Troy, suggesting surprise and betrayal. It may constitute a warning to those on the left-hand path to the extent that it resembles *islam*, which means "submission." Another similar term, of ontological import, is mentioned in the obituary for Ralph Alpher in the *Los Angeles Times*, 8/16/07, wherein Thomas H. Maugh II writes, "Alpher accepted a suggestion from [George] Gamow that he study the formation of elements in the early universe . . . . His goal was to predict the concentrations of various elements in the universe if the Big Bang had occurred. His calculations showed that immediately after the initial explosion, the universe was filled with radiation and other primitive matter that Alpher dubbed 'ylem,' a term meaning roughly 'what was there before everything.' The ylem decayed to produce protons, electrons, neutrons and other particles, which eventually combined to produce the elements." In any case, Ilam's setting is resplendently exurban, though this term will not be coined by A.C. Spectorsky until 1955. The music heard at this point is titled "The Princess of Ilam" on the soundtrack CD, and variations of it will recur several times. When the house itself is first seen, the music resembles the entrance to the aria "*L'Anima ho Stanca*" from *Adriana Lecouvreur* by Francesco Cilea.

The initial view of Juliet prompts momentary uncertainty about its reality, and the audience may even join Pauline in being momentarily paralyzed with overawed fascination. Juliet stands on a bridge, as if on the threshold between the conscious and the unconscious. Additional analysis of the film's pontifical imagery will be found on the *Fourth World* website. Juliet is dressed in gold, perhaps associating herself with *jeunesse dorée* or aligning herself with the golden rather than the drab age of literature, according to the distinction made by C.S. Lewis. This stands in contrast to her school uniform and recalls the use of brightly colored clothes as a warning of the approach of lepers or Jews, perhaps appropriate for this follower of the left-hand path. Pauline is dressed in colors that include red, blue, and possibly black.

When Pauline catches sight of Juliet looking every inch a princess (*en grande tenue*), Pauline, with eyes more gluttonous than in French class, again takes Juliet's measure and dwells raptly on her. The discovery obviously has quite an impact on Pauline and leaves her altogether impressed. But those who are predisposed to interpret potentially lesbian imagery more liberally would say of Pauline's distinctly devouring glance that love cannot conceal itself (*l'amour et la fumée ne peuvent se cacher*)(*flamma fumo est proxima*). Those so inclined will see Pauline as transfixed and touched to the quick, her fondness for Juliet amply betrayed. For them, Pauline's self-disclosingly pellucid expression is shot through with the lineaments of desire and bespeaks an admiration just short of idolatry. A line from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* comes to mind: "A faint sickness of awe made him feel weak." The girls' friendship develops slowly, beginning without the impact of Dante's first vision of Beatrice. But Pauline cannot long withstand Juliet's qualities and is now persuasively intoxicated and wonderstruck. This perhaps signals that Juliet already stands in the potential relationship of lover for Pauline, and perhaps the latter's expression is as pregnant with prefiguration as that of Steve Bayliss earlier. Even if no erotic undercurrent is perceived, Pauline is poised to accept an invitation to the dance of life. She, for whatever reason, finds Juliet compelling and sparks are struck.

The girls have just finished rehearsing their similarities in the previous scene. Their differences may now be considered, as opposites may attract and partners are sometimes chosen so as to complement deficiencies. Superficially, the two are socially differentiated, belonging to families of different means. Pauline is not to the manner born. Juliet is well-heeled in the sense that she is moneyed and rich with privilege, but her unhealed psychological scars make her

emotionally impoverished. In deeper, more substantial ways, they may be very much alike (*discordia concors*), and will in fact soon prove to be emotional twins. Perhaps each needs the foil of the other, such that the polar ends of the spectrum inform and enhance each other by contrast. Opposing forces may interfere constructively or destructively. The tension between and union of opposites often bears fruit. Mutual attraction between these nominal polar opposites has grown on acquaintance, but the interaction proceeds from constructive to catastrophic. For now, they seem uniquely able to spark to each other's eccentricities.

The concept of binarism, in which meaning derives from opposition, may apply here. In the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 12/4/05, Mark Rozzo writes of Lennon and McCartney, "As the durable . . . cliché goes, the two balanced each other: Paul taught John the finer points of musicianship; John taught Paul how to shoplift." Each provides such counterpoint as the diacritical other. Jacques Lacan designates the term *other* as a desired object in relation to which the subject is constituted. At the film's apex, Pauline and Juliet will collapse into each other, going beyond mutual possession to near identity. There is certainly involved what Joseph Campbell calls the "knock-knock" and "twinkle-twinkle" principles, the latter involving "the allure of the exotic." It may also be that Juliet "answers to the call of the mild," with feelings toward Pauline more magnanimously curatorial than acquisitive. Other relevant considerations may include the Freudian scopophilic impulse to objectify the other, the sexual politics of looking, and feminist theories of spectatorship that involve masochism and masquerade. And fundamentally, as Jon Winokur writes, "Irony is about the interplay of opposites."

It has been suggested that the siren song to which Pauline is responding is not erotic, but rather that socio-economic determinism gives birth to her desire (see the *Fourth World* website). Before she notices Juliet, Pauline does pause momentarily to consider Juliet's house, the one in the film being, like a reliquary, the actual house where the real Juliet lived. Pauline may narcissistically see in Juliet the Platonic ideal self to which she aspires. Her relationship with Juliet may be a kind of *mariage de convenance* that would allow her to advance through the hierarchy of social and cultural distinction. Though her status anxiety may certainly, at least unconsciously, factor into the explanation of Pauline's beguilement, she just as certainly deserves to be seen as more than merely an economically self-interested social climber and Brahmin wannabe smelling an opportunity and desperately currying favor in the interest of careerism, just as Juliet deserves to be seen as more than a meal ticket. Tristan has the added excuse of a love potion, and Pauline's motivations may indeed be complicated. But this is welcome because, in spite of the risk of confusion, complexity adds richness and sophistication to a story.

Juliet is already on a nickname basis with "Paul." Again, in addition to affectionate diminution, thus converting Pauline's name is also masculinization. When Juliet's brother Jonathan appears, she refers to him as "Prince Runnymede," Runnymede being the site of the signing of Magna Carta by King John. (Bert will later be asked if he is "going to Lancaster Park," and there happens to be a Runnymede Farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Also, the house of Lancaster included kings named John and Henry.) In pursuit of this evil prince, Juliet leads and Pauline follows as they enter the forest of the adventure on the grounds of the actual Ilam, such that these events are being reenacted *in situ*.

The girls are excused from athletic activities at school. Yet, their supposed lameness apart, it will quickly come to seem that they can manage to run around not only nimbly, but almost indefatigably. Underestimation of their potential is a theme to be magnified later, and their exuberance is a foretaste of how physical, corporeal limitations will be transcended. They symbiotically borrow of each other's alacrity and share a buoyant, sustaining vitality. Schiller

said that man is only free when he plays. This frolicsome activity is indicative of some sort of healing. In Greek mythology, healing is completed by the companion of Asklepius, who is a hooded boy. Juliet's brother is thus appropriately dressed, and, as it happens, grew up to become a doctor in real life. In Asklepian healing, dreams and rituals allow the cure to arise from within, utilizing the power of the feminine unconscious. This results in a cure not only of the body, but also of the psyche, and thus of the whole person. In spite of any ungainliness, the girls will come to see themselves as more regal than infirm. All this running around also helps contrast this property with the cramped lot on which Pauline's house stands.

Jonathan is called "blighter," a term later applied to Diello, who perhaps is being glimpsed here in an embryonic form. Jonathan is conspicuously dressed in red and is said to have "gone to ground," in the manner of an electrical discharge. He is on the run, but offers a surprise counterattack. Pauline's ultimate downfall is foreshadowed when Jonathan knocks her down and breaks her Mario Lanza record. Her positive masculine symbol is destroyed by a negative masculine force. Pauline has already said, "You're spoiling it. Go away!" The finale is again obliquely sketched in microcosm when Juliet says, "Go away. We're not playing anymore. Go on. Bugger off!" This will come to be seen as no hollow, idle threat. It is also an acknowledgment of the disruptive possibilities of *veritas* because, for Freud, the opposite of play is not what is serious but what is real. Jonathan sticks out his tongue, which his sister already has. This, along with other things, may run in the family. Juliet says, "Oh, God," both when addressing Jonathan and when referring to the destruction of the Mario Lanza record. One of the lessons of *Barton Fink* is that such epithets should not necessarily be taken for granted. Juliet's apology foreshadows her final words in the film.

"Most friendship is feigning," says Amiens in *As You Like It* (II.vii.). Pauline's disclamation of concern with her broken record belies her true affection and indicates that she is not yet prepared to confide in Juliet fully (Matthew 7:6). She thus commits the sin of Tristan, chooses martyrdom and employs polite diplomacy in order to comfort Juliet and to conceal her potentially embarrassing enthusiasm. Juliet will later do the same in the sanitarium. This scene may be regarded as the start of the main action of the film, or its "point of attack," as this is the first time the principals are seen to interact voluntarily and on their own time.

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The Hulmes, Henry and Hilda, are discovered discussing sandwiches that contain egg and salmon. Parents are thus again introduced by way of fish, with the miracle of loaves and fishes again being recalled.

Eggs symbolize unrealized potential and imply both the next developmental level of the girls' relationship as well as the unborn (an even unconceived) Diello. The emergence of self from ego is likened to that of bird from egg. Rotten eggs may symbolize neglected potential or the negative potential of a "bad seed." Both girls feel neglected and will come to be regarded in some quarters as fundamentally evil.

The salmon is a Celtic symbol of wisdom (*sapientia*) and divine foreknowledge. Such a salmon of wisdom is cooked by Finn MacCool. It is associated with deep waters and thus thought to interact with other worlds. Going from the fresh mackerel at the Riepers' to the rotten salmon at the Hulme's suggests the loss of potency. Christ, in this context, is perhaps losing His authority along with His power of redemption. Rotten fish may also serve as an announcement of death, perhaps of ego, which would mark the initiation of greater spiritual development.

Henry thinks he smells sulfur, which, like the salt in *Like Water for Chocolate*, is one of the philosophical elements of alchemy, in this case representing the soul. It is also emblematic of the girls' volatile passion, in contrast to Dr. Hulme's cold intellect. Hydrogen sulfide from the rotten egg provides a plausible cause for the sulfur smell, but the phrase "What *on earth* are these?" emphasizes that this is merely the naturalistic, physical explanation. If the sandwiches have been in Henry's pocket for several days, why does he become aware of the smell at this precise moment and not before? ("Why did I smell it only now?" says Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*.) Sulfur is the smell not only of rotten eggs ("on earth") but also of the brimstone of hell, and the girls arrive only seconds after Henry smells sulfur. The temporal sequence of events can be significant, and Roland Barthes asserts that the proairetic code (code of action) is an invitation to establish meaning on that basis. Could it be that Dr. Hulme, however unwittingly, senses the approach of the infernal and diabolical as the girls near the house (*parlez du loup, et vous en verrez sa queue*)? Could his response be occasioned by an inward premonitory appreciation, like that of Steve Bayliss earlier, of the fact that, despite the film's title, there is, ironically, something demonic in the offing? Such foresight of the otherworldly would be consistent with the symbology of the salmon. Though this superficially appears to be a joke about inattentiveness and largesse, Henry is, after all, a scientist and a trained observer. It is this sagacity that allows him to be the first to sense the "intensity" of the girls' relationship and thus set the story on its downward spiral.

Hilda juxtaposes the words *God* and *Henry* (as with *Jesus* and *Barton*), but then admonishes Henry for being "hopeless." Hell is the place where all hope is abandoned. In a nice bit of foreshadowing, Henry prophetically "can't be trusted" even with lunch, much less with the girls' relationship. It becomes clear that Juliet has inherited her Mephistophelean eyebrows, along with her middle name, from her mother. In calling Juliet "supercilious," Luisa F. Ribeiro (*Film Quarterly*, Fall 1995) underscores a truth that is both literal and possibly even congenital.

Pauline enters this atmosphere of affluence and repose (*otium cum dignitate*) in a far more retiring mood than does Juliet, who does not trouble herself with an introduction. Pauline continues to try her best to be an undemanding guest. The bonds of friendship continue to solidify when Pauline sees Juliet's plasticine horses on the mantle, furthering the confluence of interests and mutual affinity. The suggestion of a new record holds out the promise of rebirth for the recently defunct Mario, and he is now audibly resurrected thanks to Juliet's record collection.

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There now begins some interesting play with the ontological status of the film's music. Showing the phonograph needle descend onto the record causes the resulting music to be interpreted as diegetic. As the music continues, however, other times and places are visited in a montage sequence, implying that the music has become nondiegetic. Thus, when visual actions occur in rhythm with the music, it is taken as director-imposed coincidence. So far, so unexceptional, but a more sophisticated wrinkle is yet to come.

The Hulmes seem to intimidate Pauline, but neither teachers nor parents seem to impede the petulant Juliet. Her abstemious milquetoast of a father may be the cause Juliet's attitude toward authority. Henry's name means "ruler of the home," and he will initiate the actions that result in tragedy. Here, however, untrue to his name, Henry ironically poses no obstacle (*nihil obstat*) for his pugnaciously insouciant daughter as she easily brushes him aside, the dragon slain, the objection obviated, as if she were Shiva, the destroyer of obstructions to illumination.

(Recalling the name adopted by Juliet in her French class, Thomas Jefferson called Marie Antoinette "disdainful of restraint, indignant to all obstacles to her will.") This serves as an example for Pauline to imitate, though in a perverted way, in dealing with her mother. Pauline will extrapolate and amplify this microcosmic patricide into literal matricide.

A *flâneur* no longer, Pauline now has new purpose in her life thanks to Juliet, and the two sally forth. Building on an established foundation of friendship, and despite social differences, Pauline and Juliet are now psychologically well entwined (*en rapport*). The celebration of their affinities is conducted with renegade immoderacy, and the audience is easily drawn into the unprecedented vivacity of their camaraderie. In mutual orbit and unable to get enough of each other, they do everything with a flourish and nothing by halves. With bacchanalian relish, Manippean jocularity and heedless, irrepressible ebullience to burn, they offer counterprogramming to society's Apollonian moderation and apathetic torpor. They proceed in high delight to have their fill like starvelings at a banquet, but this sequence is retrospectively bittersweet, with the realization that these are unsustainable joys. Bound by the synergy of mutually reinforcing projections, their relationship coheres. This interdependence will later degenerate from symbiosis to something more like parasitism and codependency. But for now, the girls' relationship is going so well that its ardor stands in ironic contrast to "the fair señorita" being referred to in "The Donkey Serenade" on the soundtrack. In parallel with the largely apathetic environment through which Pauline and Juliet move, the lady in the song "doesn't seem to care for the song in the air." The song also recalls Christ, the great donkey rider.

The physical virility of others is demonstrated in their ball games, during which Pauline and Juliet are emotionally pinballing as their burgeoning relationship coalesces. The Biggles books introduce the motif of flight, which is an expression of sexual arousal and a reminder of the flights of Icarus and Daedalus. Reading such as this helps stock their reservoir of imagination on which they will later draw. It is during this "flying" episode that the phrase "in the air" is sung by Mario Lanza on the soundtrack. The "Camel" in the title of one of these books is a reference to the Sopwith aircraft, but the animal itself is symbolically ambiguous. Where some see docile dignity and stamina, others see arrogant pride. It has positive associations with the Magi and John the Baptist, and St. Augustine admired its obedience when kneeling to receive its burden. Persian tradition connects it with dragons.

This vertiginous montage sequence is imbued with prodigious adolescent exuberance and contagious brio even when not involving physical activity. And why not? Art is emotive as well as cognitive, expressive as well as decorative. This film's style represents a manner of exhibition consistent with its principal characters' mode of experience. The great pitch and moment of tortuous pubescence invites not the lifeless flatness that Pauline Kael once called "saphead objectivity," but a heart-on-the-sleeve approach in which adolescent hysteria is given full scope for expression and the emotional participation of the audience is facilitated. The whimsical visual vocabulary is not wanton, ornamental sensationalism, but organically tracks the quixotic emotional contours. It is simply that which is suited to the occasion, while turgid, pedestrian naturalism would be an affectation. Under such circumstances, a few purple patches could be easily forgiven. But Peter Jackson knows that spectacle is not what matters. His dexterous, trenchant direction is an authoritative display of both daring formal flamboyance and subtle technical ingenuity in the successful service of drama. (On the commentary track of the *Fargo* DVD, cinematographer Roger Deakins say, "A lot of times filmmakers get too involved in showing off with the camera. But it's really about characters and performance and atmosphere." These factors sometimes collectively harmonize with "showing off with the camera.")

Subjective authorial refraction is the very substance of the epic style, not just its garment. In terms of stylistics, Peter Jackson is a distinct auteur. (Borrowing a phrase from Nicholas Delbanco, "The shadow of the photographer falls athwart the portrait," though those overly eager to infer autobiography should recall Arthur Conan Doyle's assertion that "the puppet is not the master.") Whether or not he stretches the vocabulary of film, he demonstrates great facility with his medium, creating a genuine sense of place and occasion. His freely individualistic cinemadaedaly, through which the story is filtered, lends more than just a personalized patina to the film. It inscribes the director into his work in the form of what may be called "Jacksonese" as he savors his characters' excesses and unbalanced zeal. The result is fittingly and effusively kaleidoscopic and even ecstatic, consistent with what André Breton calls "the strange ecstasies of puberty." Still, there may be some who do not begrudge the girls their happiness, but shrink from what they see as their over-the-top, over-elated mania.

Incidentally, for the purpose of coming to terms with the past (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*), Peter Jackson may consider the exhumation and thoughtful reassessment of this case to be his birthright as a New Zealander. Given the Aeschylian grandeur of his *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the mode of presentation used for *Heavenly Creatures* may seem to run counter to his gifts. But if *The Lord of the Rings* is his *magnum opus*, then *Heavenly Creatures* is his masterpiece in the old sense. Compared to his earlier work, it raises the bar on his expectations for the audience. The narrative is fueled by his obvious enthusiasm, but also moderated by ambivalence. William Makepeace Thackeray titled his masterpiece "*Vanity Fair: A Novel Without a Hero*." Similarly, this film was promoted with the tag line: "Not all angels are innocent." On the other hand, Peter Jackson has called this film "a murder story about love, a murder story with no villains." But issues of culpability will be dealt with later.

Pauline lacks Juliet's aplomb, but earnestly tries to display decorous *savoir vivre* when eating with Juliet's family. Eating coincides with the anabolic development of the girls' relationship. The artist assimilates all, and then digests, selects and refines. Eating represents internalization of outer material experience, its transformation into inner psychic experience and its repression into or integration with unconscious parts of the psyche. A sacred meal of bread, wine and fish signifies the integration of, respectively, the material, emotional and spiritual aspects of life. The girls are thus laying the groundwork for their later psychic egesta. Gottfried offers "bread" as nourishment for the spirit of those "noble hearts" (*edelez herze*, *cuore gentile*) who can digest it, as Rosaura in *Like Water for Chocolate* cannot.

The cavalcade of plasticine figurines continues as the girls, with the god-like power of the sculptor, indulge in the spontaneous imposition of form on matter, even to the extent of becoming creators of royalty. This creation of that which is desired is the Pygmalion effect. Giapetto creates Pinocchio and Dr. Frankenstein creates his monster. By comparison, the girls' figures are, for the time being, mere statues, which have form but lack life. They are substance without essence.

Plasticine is initially a raw, undifferentiated, amorphous mass ("without form and void"), but is also mutable, malleable and protean. This ambiguity represents the rich, pregnant, but undeveloped potential of youth and the infinite plasticity of dreams. Not just clay, but lives too can be shaped. The girls will transform plasticine and themselves with almost equal facility.

The female is the giver of form. These women who transform (virtual) people and animals into plasticine recall Circe and the Gorgons. Odysseus is protected from Circe by the herb moly, a gift from Hermes. Pauline will fail to resist temptation and will undergo transformation due to the loss of Hermetic wisdom.

These models are a microcosmic example of civilization building as sublimation, and perhaps also of the sublimation of religion to art. Art imitates inner life, such that a distillate of the psyche is projected onto formless material and put on display. Conflicts in the outer world erupt from and mirror conflicts in the inner realm. The dream characters in *Finnegans Wake* are personifications of aspects of the dreamer. Picasso said that art is a lie that helps us see the truth, and that giving form to one's demons allows for catharsis. He also said that the painter always paints himself. The girls' plasticine figures constitute concretized (plasticinized) symbolic self-portraiture depicting various aspects of their psychic anatomy. They are souvenirs of an inner journey. As with the food in *Like Water for Chocolate*, outward physical rituals realize and caricature inner abstract attributes. Similarly, the film itself is psychoanalytically eloquent of the psyches of Jackson and Walsh, as this essay is of its writer. Ultimately, the girls' figurines may serve as ammunition in an ideological battle.

Pauline is momentarily seen in drag for the one and only time in the film. The male clothing, suggestive of sacerdotal transvestism (and of the crossdressing typical of magody and lysiody), indicates a prominent animus, with its good potential for development and capacity for both creativity and destructiveness. She seems to be usurping Jonathan's male fantasy character role. Her ultimate downfall will result from her pathetic attempt to fill the shoes of another such character.

The hoydenish Pauline imitates Juliet in pushing Henry aside. Pauline has been emboldened by the example of Juliet's mischievous self-assurance, just as courage to face the Minotaur is obtained from Ariadne. By pooling fantasies, the girls achieve mutual support. Role playing may inform one's life, and fantasy may act as a bulwark against life's unpleasantries in a more temperate manner than Bill's "levy" in *Barton Fink*. An even more effective levy will be discovered at Port Levy. Properly, the goal is to be in touch with fantasy but not in servitude to it. As noted in art class, one should hear the sirens' song without being seduced by it. A balance of wisdom and truth can provide a valuable stabilizing ballast.

The exhibition of a Mario Lanza film sanctifies the movie theater, making it a shrine to be visited in the spirit of pilgrimage. Exiting a theater, Juliet, still swooning over Mario, kisses a bum who bears a suspicious resemblance to director Peter Jackson.

Writing of *The Lord of the Rings* fans in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* printed 12/27/03, Ronald E. Matuska says, "It's so sad that these people do not have a life of their own, and that they must live vicariously through watching movies." How he knows that they *must* is unclear. The existence of beings with the cognitive capacity to live vicariously is to be celebrated. That they must endure the envious reproach of those mentally capable of nothing beyond sheer survival and who are disturbed by the pleasure of others is regrettable. Similarly, in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times* printed 3/6/05, Alida Post asserts that Hollywood does not deserve to celebrate itself, writing, "No one has cured cancer; no one has contributed an iota to the betterment of the world." It is stipulated that this is true from the perspective of dogs. However, the vulgarian stance that Shakespeare and Mozart make no difference would merely expose the lack of those higher faculties appealed to by such artists. Even those directly responsible for curing cancer will likely require the recreation afforded by the occasional film. Film is, in fact, perfectly capable of functioning as ritual, which is the enactment of myth. As Leopold Bloom says, "You call it a festivity. I call it a sacrament." For Christian Metz, the cinema "encourages feelings of narcissistic withdrawal and dreamy self-indulgence, a regression into primary process conditioned by circumstances similar to those which underlie the illusion of reality in dream." Thus the distinction between reality and dream can dissolve in cinema. For

Surrealists, cinema could liberate the repressed, as it will when the girls see *The Third Man*. Film is also an institutional, industrial counterpart of the girls' individual, artisanal work with plasticine, paint and writing.

The hub of a bicycle wheel mimics the still point of *nirvana* in the center of the vortex of *samsara*, and anticipates the girls brief round dance in the forest. Pauline now wears a red sweater, while Juliet's skirt and blouse are blue.

The singing of Mario Lanza, who has been portrayed as St. George the dragon slayer, has brought us to the forest, which is where Siegfried slays Fafner the dragon. Fittingly, one of the lyricists responsible for the words being sung is Chet Forrest. The forest is a place redolent of enchantment and affords the girls the protective asylum of a sacred grove and a sylvan retreat from worldly affairs. The living trees of the forest contrast with the suitably dead urban stone of the scholastic, ecclesiastical and governmental edifices of Christchurch and the petrified institutions they house. The girls have fled these foundations of the superego in favor of a bucolic idyll in the realm of the id, as Barton Fink manages briefly to do in Griffith Park.

Psychoanalytically, nature represents regression to the realm of the irrational, untamed, undomesticated, impulsive, instinctual, spontaneous, and authentic. Vegetation and agriculture symbolize the feminine, the unconscious and cyclical renewal via procreation and resurrection. The color green itself is enough to signify these themes of fertility and natural cycles. Green is the color of the girls' form-taking plasticine. The alchemical soul of the world (*anima mundi*) is green and signifies germination and growth. This blessed greenness (*benedicta viriditas*) reveals the divine spirit of life in all things. Jung sees green as representing secret love and the promise of future harvest. Pauline will wear a green sweater on her first visit to the Fourth World. These verdant surroundings also hint at the girls' appointment with destiny, which will be kept in a park.

Coinciding with an interruption of the soundtrack music, Pauline's bicycle is accidentally and spontaneously diverted from the road. The forest is entered "where there was no path." Such inadvertency is an Arthurian prerequisite for adventure. Krishnamurti says, "Truth is a pathless land." Another Sanskrit text says, "The path that others have cleared leads nowhere." Many portals to an unsuspected special world are stumbled onto accidentally, including Alice's rabbit hole, Dorothy's cyclone, the *Narnia* wardrobe, and the tunnel in *Being John Malkovich*. Crossing these thresholds may be accomplished without an intentional leap of faith, and rough landings may occur. Freud says that there are no accidents, only the "opening of a destiny" in response to suppressed desires. Also, recalling the experience of St. Paul on the road to Damascus, Pauline's mishap on the road occurs just after the singing of the lyrics "There's a light in her eye."

Pauline feigns death, but immediately revives. With Pauline's mock death, the girls explore the mystery of the spiritual passage of death, transfiguration and rebirth, anticipating their special journey at Easter and the death and reincarnation of Orson Welles. Playful treatment of death may indicate either failure to appreciate it, or acceptance and celebration, as in Buddhism. Death may come to seem tamed such that it may be experienced in ritualized, ceremonial form. Symbolic death represents the divestiture of secular character and exploration of the unconscious to gain insight. In addition to their respective childhood illnesses, this symbolic death is another way in which the girls die to the flesh, thus allowing them to be born to the spirit. Death is also metaphoric of the consummation of love. But this mishap also foreshadows Pauline's tragic involvement with uncontrollable, overwhelming forces.

Pauline is "revived" by her sense of smell, which represents the intuitive feminine acquisition of wisdom from nature. She claims to smell onions. Onions have the concentric,

nested, multilaminar structure of nesting Russian Matrioshka dolls and suggest the progressive revelation of the penetralia, interstices and essential core of esoteric meaning. This was anticipated by the early reference to Rutherford, who peeled away the layers of matter to discover the atomic nucleus, and also recalls Barton Fink's pealing wallpaper. This structure also suggests encrusted layers of the persona that must be peeled away to allow immediate experience. Onions are also known for making people cry. Thus, it may be asked, as it is by Desdemona in *Othello*, "Does it bode weeping?"

Juliet calls Pauline a "toad." (Frida does the same to Diego in *Frida*.) Toads and frogs belong to the order *Salientia*, which reminds one of *sapientia*. Amphibians symbolize ambivalence, with their transition between land and water mirroring the interconnection between conscious and unconscious. As products of metamorphosis from tadpoles, they are, like butterflies, heralds of transformation, development, rebirth and resurrection. In alchemy, the toad is related to the dragon, representing abyssal life-progenitive powers. The toad sometimes represents the shadow. Witches sometimes use them to cast spells. The fear of toads may represent a fear of not transforming or not developing the creative imagination. The toad can represent earthbound materialist attitudes and the inability to transform, in contrast to the frog. Calling Pauline a toad is therefore not only an insult, but an ironic underestimation and misdiagnosis foreshadowing an arguably analogous one made by Dr. Bennett.

Frogs ("Toad, frog, lobster. They're all the same," says Clive Owen's Larry in *Closer*) represent fertility, creativity and vital impulse. Their leaps represent sublimated sexuality. They recall such classical sources as Ovid and Aristophanes. For example, in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Latona transforms Lycian peasants into frogs. In retelling the Grimms' story of the Frog King in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell says that the frog is the rejected one. Both the girls know rejection, as will Orson Welles. The Frog King comes from the water and ventures into a deep well. Orson *Well*es will be cast into the water. The Grimms' Frog King is an embryonic, undeveloped potential Prince transformed by a kiss. Pauline, who eventually becomes quite grim(m), is called a toad, is subsequently kissed by a princess of sorts, and is transformed into a prince (Charles). The Frog King demands to share the princess's bed. Pauline will share Juliet's. Both the mythical frog and Juliet appear as heralds, giving the call to adventure and signaling the awakening of the self.

Having led the way into the forest, even if accidentally, Pauline now initiates the undressing. Clothes are discarded in layers immediately after reference is made to onions. Disrobing signifies candor and the casting off of the mask of persona, and provides a foretaste of the nudity of the bathing scenes. A relative of the toad and the dragon is the snake, which is a ubiquitous religious symbol because it sheds its skin to be born again. After Pauline's fake death, the girls cast off clothes as if to cast off death. Aaron sheds his clothes to be born again at the conclusion of Steven Soderbergh's *King of the Hill*. Brünnhilde discards her aloofness along with her armor. Inanna removes an article of clothing at each portal on her journey to the underworld. Since clothing is only supposed to have been worn since the Fall, to strip is to return to a prelapsarian state, removing barriers to the experience of inner reality. Parzival displays Arthurian authenticity when he drops the reigns of his horse, surrendering to natural impulse. That the girls would undress at this point has been characterized by some as implausible, but the girls' act of spontaneity nevertheless remains psychologically, symbolically and dramatically appropriate. The profane nature of their play is signified by the fact that they do not remove their shoes, as one should before entering a mosque or treading on holy ground.

Briefly continuing the discussion of snake imagery, Jung observes that the Gnostics thought of serpents in a way that nicely symbolizes how the unconscious can unexpectedly express itself, as it does in this film. Less positively, the serpent can be a symbol of ingratitude, as in the Greek fable "The Man, the Serpent and the Fox." It was because of the ingratitude of the Israelites that "the Lord," in Numbers 21:6, "sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." King Lear reports "how sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child!" The parents in this film will discover this for themselves.

The girls momentarily perform a circular dance that establishes the world axis (*axis mundi*) within the cosmic vortex of turmoil. This action also imitates the *Tawaf*, the circumambulation of the Kaaba in Mecca performed by Muslim pilgrims. Ecstatic dance was once used to invite possession by Dionysus and rouse the animus from the unconscious. The whirling of dervishes is associated with mystical experience, and a joyous, triumphal dance is anticipated by Electra. Circles can also connote integration of the psyche.

As "The Donkey Serenade" returns to the soundtrack, the girls resume singing it both in time with the soundtrack and at the point where it was earlier interrupted. Retrospectively, this allows the music to have been diegetic but internal during the preceding sequence, as when Pauline was bobbing her head in time with the music. (Recall the surprise diegeticization of music in *Bananas* when a harpist is discovered in the closet by Woody Allen's Fielding Mellish. An equivalent revelation occurs in *Blazing Saddles*. Similarly, recall how, in *The Crying Game*, Jody plays with the ambiguous transitivity of the word *hurling*.) Ontologically, then, the song begins diegetically, appears to become nondiegetic, and finally becomes internally subjective. The girls have developed the ears to hear, with or without a phonograph. The soundtrack music is thus a synchronous expression of their inner world, just as Pauline's forthcoming nondiegetic (actually semidiegetic) voice-over will express her thoughts as they occur. The girls seem to experience enthusiasm in its original sense of divine possession. They sing the god's (Mario's) song and are now themselves the voice of god. They frolic in full panache and revel in being themselves. They outdo their earlier romp at Ilam and comply with the advice of Ludwig Wittgenstein: "Never stay up on the barren heights of cleverness, but come down into the green valleys of silliness."

A threshold guardian is now encountered. Genesis 3:22-4 speak of the angel placed as a sentry to bar any return to the Garden of Eden. A rancher mending his fence is confronted just as the girls sing the words, "like an angel I saw." (As it happens, Glenn Ford's first film had the title *Heaven with a Barbed Wire Fence*.) Coincidentally, recalling Juliet's choice of French pseudonym, the fire surrounding Paradise is said to be governed by St. Anthony. In an ironic reversal of the biblical image, this threshold guardian blocks the return to the normal world. The orthodox community and the conscious realm are represented by the controlled environment of the domesticated, cultivated landscape beyond the fence. The forest wilderness is the unconscious source of insight that lies beyond the boundaries of civilization. Subject to, but not subjugated by, the male gaze, the girls remain independent, refuse to confront the threshold guardian and choose to remain in the special world. The taboo-breaking nature of the female despises the restrictions of men, and it is not as if the aforementioned onions, like the fruit of the Lotus Eaters, have robbed them of resolve. Like Stephen Dedalus, they reject the notion of a penitent return. The great realization of Mahayana Buddhism (like that of Luke 17:21 and Dorothy's realization at the end of *The Wizard of Oz*) is that paradise is everywhere. But rather than return and adapt, they instead choose Hinayana disengagement. They regressively retreat from the threatening masculine world of patriarchal culture in favor of the feminine world of

matriarchal nature. They can hardly be blamed (yet), for such bliss is not lightly abandoned, perhaps not even by those bodhisattvas who willingly return to the ordinary world. As is written in the Upanishads, "Who, having cast off the world, would desire to return again?" This is often a dilemma for intuitive feeling types. But they risk being trapped in a state of irresponsibility. The threshold guardian also signifies the repression of unconscious impulses that, nevertheless, eventually emerge into consciousness, as will soon be demonstrated. Related to this refusal to leave paradise, Andrei Tarkovsky's *Stalker* is about refusal to *enter* paradise, while Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit* is about refusal to exit hell. Further, it is suggested in George Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman* that hell is the more satisfying alternative.

Resuming their rambunctious curvettings, the girls finally lie down in the ivy of immortality, so designated because, like the tropical lobby of the Hotel Earle in *Barton Fink*, it is evergreen and exempt from seasonal flux. (The Victorians used it to symbolize marital bliss and fidelity.) Their kiss recalls that which triggered the transformation from frog to prince and, juxtaposed with the surrounding vegetation, contributes to the general Dionysian atmosphere. It is merely a playful foretaste of what is to come. Looking further ahead, the lyrics of the song being heard include the word *scream*, which may be taken as foreshadowing.

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Pauline travels by night, which is the realm of the irrational, the unconscious and death. Nocturnal shamanic rituals reinforce the idea that the yonder world is a place of everlasting night. We accompany Pauline to the girls' sacred riparian cult precinct and feel privileged to discover their penetralium, as Rutherford discovered the atomic nucleus.

The girls are discovered in the act of hagiological grangerizing, with their idols accorded the iconophilic reverence normally given to gods. Departing from monotheism, the various beneficiaries of their grass-roots canonization constitute a pantheon of worthies, from whom the girls will acquire honor by association and among whom the girls will eventually come to count themselves. In what Joseph Campbell calls the triumph of libido over credo, the girls choose and associate with personal deities (*dii penates*), like a shaman's familiars. Rather than engaging in euhemerism (the posthumous deification of mortal heroes), the girls recruit from among the living. The saints are legitimized by quasi-religious dogma (*a lo divino*), like Japanese emperor worship. Deities are iconic images that reflect and manifest the archetypes. They are personifications of one's own unconscious motivations and aspirations of potency. Pantheons reveal aspects of the psyche organized into a hierarchy of values. All the girls' saints are male. Mythologically, the cure for the female comes from the masculine realm. A weak biological father may cause a woman to search for an ideal, heroic father to carry her animus projection. Such a figure may allow restoration of the internal parental authority that is the superego.

A crude altar is formed from bricks, which will gain significance in due course. An altar is a place of sacrifice, to which the girls' mutual devotion will indeed lead (*amicus usque ad aras*). It takes on the character of a shrine for the girls' saints. The bricks recall the "toppling masonry" mentioned in *Ulysses* after Stephen smashes the chandelier in the brothel with his ashplant. They suggest fallen idols, with the altar rebuilt on the ruins of the earlier order. Juliet is about to declare the collapse of the Christian church from her perspective.

The humble structure is decorated with candles, adding to the votive atmosphere. Candles represent displaced excitement, with flame and wax mimicking the interaction of spirit and matter. They may also be considered phallic. The girls will come to regard themselves as

torchbearers of sorts, and these candles hold the flames of which they will be the keepers. The brick altar, wax and phallic implications ironically comport with the standards of the old order (Gen 28:18, 22).

Having returned to Ilam, it is proper to contemplate a similarly named principle that is being explicitly demonstrated here. (It is conceded that this may seem like overreaching, but remember that this should all be taken as free association, so please be indulgent.) By a happy accident, *Ilam* is but one letter removed from the word *idam*, which denotes a personal deity. The Sanskrit terms *idam* (this) and *tat* (that) signify the divine, respectively, in its manifest, imminent, overt, explicit, phenomenal form and its latent, implicit, transcendent, inaccessible, noumenal form. An *idam* is thus a concretely comprehensible object on which attention can be focused and to which worship can be offered. The Eastern idea is that a deity is an adapter spanning the mystical gulf between the worshipper and the transcendent. If the deity causes one culture shock, then the adapter's jack does not match one's plug and the connection is not made. In the East, it is felt that it is every individual's prerogative to recognize and choose as a target of devotion whatever symbol speaks to one's own heart. This individualism is another manifestation of the left-hand path. Again, no assertion is made that this is more than accidental. And, in her article for the Fall 1995 issue of *Film Quarterly* (volume 49, number 1), Luisa Ribeiro makes the greater stretch of interpreting Pauline's approaching use of the word "It" as *id*, the 75% resemblance between *ilam* and *idam* being half again as good as her 50%. The comparison is therefore made with less strain and without apology.

A related concept is that of *istadevata*. This is a wished-for, longed-for, independently chosen deity that acts as tutelary spiritual guide. Such a psychopompos emerges from one's own consciousness. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* echoes this idea with the phrase, "I am the source from which the gods arise." Joseph Campbell, in *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space*, quotes Plotinus as saying, "Not all who perceive with eyes the sensible products of art are affected alike by the same object, but if they know it for the outward portrayal of an archetype subsisting in intuition, their hearts are shaken and they recapture memory of that Original."

Direct experience of God would be no more intelligible than binary computer code. Just as a user-friendly computer interface must be provided in the form of a virtual machine, an adapter is required to connect nature and transcendence, this connection being the literal meaning of the words *religion* and *yoga*. Meister Eckhart teaches that a god (note the small *g*) is an artifact invented to act as a virtual God. Anything available to perception or cognition can only be a mask, a portal that connects both to the region of actuality and to God. But user-friendliness is for the user to decide. Aped tradition, the *argumentum ad antiquitatem*, is stillborn. Meister Eckhart advocates the leaving of god for God. The goddess Kali decapitates herself to free her devotees from her influence. Sheldon B. Kopp wrote a psychotherapy book titled *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him*. Deities maintain relevance and utility by changing with and adapting to historical circumstances. They otherwise become obscured by accumulated dogma, ossify and disengage. Scientific knowledge is constrained by facts and logic, but the concept of deity is permeable and assimilative, just as musical harmony and discord are purely conventional. Religion is thus free to respond adaptively to the demands of the psyche. In *Culture and Value*, Ludwig Wittgenstein asserts that religious doctrines that do not match people's level of appreciation are subject to misunderstanding and abuse by such persons and are useless and invalid to them. Thus, forms of expression should be found to accommodate every level of devotion.

Functionally defined entities allow for various realizations. All objects embody the mystery of being. Therefore, any object, such as the food in *Like Water for Chocolate*, can facilitate the contemplation of that mystery, function in the role of a god, be experienced as a sacrament and serve as a vehicle of radiance (*claritas*). Various material symbols may interchangeably actualize, or at least refer to, the same abstract concept. Dante comprehended God simultaneously in human form and as light. Though reflected in many puddles, there is but one moon (*gradu diverso, via una*). This referential transparency leaves one free to chose and give pride of place to those symbols whose qualities are conducive to one's temperament. Such personal mythopoeia yields user-friendly autotypes, thus accommodating the contingency, provisionality and idiosyncrasy of taste (*suum cuique*). Joseph Campbell's chosen deity was Pancaksara, the patroness of literature and scholarship. Mario Lanza has already been chosen by Juliet as the portrayer of Saint George. It is well within Pauline's prerogative (*cuilibet in arte sua credendum est*) to declare that, for her, James Mason would "be perfect as Jesus." He is her deity by decree and sanctified by usage. Pauline and Juliet use the word *saint* as more than a mere antonomastic courtesy title, though they initially designate saints and conceptualize "the Fourth World" without realizing their potential. In addition to their saints, the girls claim each other according to the principle of *land-nam*, just as this writer claims this film. By mutual acclamation, each is the other's well-beloved chosen one.

Even received traditional stories are altered in the retelling to suit the purpose of the reteller. Every Medieval author had a different take on Tristan, as did Wagner, who urged his followers to invent whole new art forms ("*Kinder*, *schaffts neues*"). In *The Flight of the Wild Gander*, Joseph Campbell writes, "In India the objective is to be born from the womb of myth, not to remain in it, and the one who has attained to this 'second birth' is truly the 'twice born,' freed from the pedagogical devices of society, the lures and threats of myth, the local mores, the usual hopes of benefits and rewards. He is truly 'free' (*mukti*), 'released while living' (*jivan mukti*)." Juliet demonstrates mythological creativity when she reinvents Saint George in art class (*cuilibet in arte sua credendum est*). She also arrives at school late on her first day and thus avoids participating in the singing of "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," which would involve submission to the orthodox deity imposed on her by the community. In this same way, the girls choose their own saints on their own terms.

Psychoanalytically, all rebellion derives from the rejection of parental authority. Ironically, Juliet cites her father when disparaging the Bible. When Pauline offers the orthodox view of the afterlife, Juliet, as Offender of the Faith (*fidei offensor*), leads her onto the left-hand path. Juliet indicates in her statement of aspiration that she thinks the choice of afterlife is hers to make. Her concept of the Fourth World is first described in Hinayana terms, with few people going there. It is seized on with enthusiasm by the apostate Pauline, who will eventually become an equally zealous defender of these tenets. Peter Dasent sets the stage for their later arrival in this place by accompanying Juliet's description with an embryonic form of the music that will be heard at that time.

There are no Christians in the Fourth World because it cannot be reached via Mosaic interpretation. Someone was once overheard to regret this film's "Christian bashing." The left-hand, Arthurian formula demands independence from the dominant orthodox majority. Familiarity breeds contempt. If Hindu bashing is preferred, then a story set in India is required. Once the independent variable of geographical setting is fixed as New Zealand, dependent variables such as Christianity are determined as the proper targets of rebellion. This is also a reflection of a general Oedipal hostility to authority demonstrated repeatedly in this film.

Oedipalism involves defiance of whatever aspects of culture happen to predominate and get in the way. As Marlon Brando's Johnny Strabler says with respect to rebellion in *The Wild One*, "Whaddya got?" Additionally and crucially, as discussed in the essay on *The English Patient*, when tradition and duty are defied in literature, it must be contextually understood that it is itself a tradition for literary characters to be dutifully defiant.

Reactionary traditions are an expression of a negative aspect of the masculine. Confronting them is a psychological necessity and is to be anticipated. The hero rejects outer doctrine for the inner call because heroism occurs only when local cultural limits are transcended. Thus the flight from the Apollonian, paternal light of Christianity into Dionysian, alchemical, maternal darkness. Juliet's forthcoming "royal family" essay, with its subversion of orthodoxy via demotion of the Windsors, is an implicit manifesto that derives naturally from this anomalous rather than canonical chiliasm. This is all consistent with a programmed adolescent crisis that is exemplified by an excusable temptation toward iconoclasm and that initiates one into adulthood. Adolescence involves simultaneous courage and vulnerability, and both finding and losing one's way in the world.

Like Alecto, the unnameable Fury, the saints become pronominals and are assigned indicative pronouns. Introduced via ostension, the girls' ruling cadre of mythologized, theologized, fetishized celebrities includes Mario Lanza as "He," James Mason as "Him," Mel Ferrer as "This," and Jussi Björling as "That." Appropriately, these last two pseudonyms correspond to the metaphysical terms discussed above.

In the extended version of the film, favorable mention is also made in a later scene by Pauline of actor Guy Rolfe (1911–2003). Films of his with relevant titles, some of which were even appropriately timed, include the following: *Knight Without Armour* (1937), *The Inheritance* (1947), *Broken Journey* (1948), *Portrait from Life* (1948), *Easy Money* (1948), *Saraband for Dead Lovers* (1948), *Fools Rush In* (1949), *The Spider and the Fly* (1949), *Prelude to Fame* (1950), *Home to Danger* (1951), *The Reluctant Widow* (1951), *Dance Little Lady* (1954), *You Can't Escape* (1955), *It's Never Too Late* (1956), *Light Fingers* (1957), *Girls at Sea* (1958), *Yesterday's Enemy* (1959), *And Now the Screaming Starts!* (1973).

Tetrads (sets of four) represent psychic wholeness. The Persian *chahar bagh*, for instance, is a quadripartite garden. The incomplete Christian trinity is brought to completion with the addition of the rejected dark side. The four traditional Western elements are earth, air, fire and water. The fifth element in Eastern philosophy is *akasha* (ether, space), which is not material. Pauline nominates Orson Welles as a fifth saint ("It"), but his candidacy fails and he is rejected because Juliet is still in charge and has veto power (*ne vile fano*). Juliet's repudiation of a saint is not unlike the judgment of Paris, which led to the Trojan War.

Eating was dealt with earlier. Spitting out, as with Peter in *The Crying Game*, would indicate projection. Juliet projects the disruptive forces within her own psyche onto Orson Welles and expels him. Neurotic anxiety causes unsavory conscious energy to be thrust into the unconscious out of fear of one's own instinctive impulses. There, it remains potentially destructive because the unconscious is irrational. Denial of the unpleasant parts of oneself and repudiation of the dark side are not conducive to mental stability and love of life. A whole life can be undermined because of one small area of neglect, like the heel of Achilles. Gorgons symbolize man's neglected anima, which, if sunk into the unconscious, may ally with the shadow. The shadow was suppressed by Christianity when Satan's positive potentialities were not officially admitted. Alchemy helped to redress the imbalance by keeping alive a positive attitude toward demonic elements. Human evil is said to continue because St. Michael succeeded

only in repression rather than assimilation when he forced evil into the underworld, thus postponing the final decisive confrontation. It is also said that Christianity's failure to integrate opposites makes an Antichrist inevitable. Jung claims that the diabolical is an aspect of every psychic function that gains independence from the integral psyche. (It is also an aspect of Juliet's eyebrows.) Welles, who would have literally supplied quintessence to the saints, is now granted just such satanic unchecked autonomy.

But repression is unstable, so "It" may not be gone for long. Freud contends that repressed material proliferates in the dark. Repression of desires promotes nightmares, and a repressed crisis is subject to repetition. The animus, if repressed into the waters of the unconscious, returns negatively and with a vengeance. That which is ignored becomes a compulsion, with denial generating the thing denied, as in *Howards End*. Siegmund is defeated, but reappears in the more effective form of his son Siegfried. Lilith, the primitive, destructive female power, is repudiated in favor of Eve and is repressed by being cast into the sea, but returns. Peter Pan loses and then recovers his shadow. The name Orson is associated with the bear, as is Arthur, the name of the British king whose return is promised.

As a priestess of the imagination, Juliet majestically intones incantatory praise, reflecting exaggerated ceremonial solemnity. Her clumsy but reverent paying of homage to the saints may seem comical, but Pauline is stirred by the majesty and occult import of her ritualistic invocations. Rituals embody feelings, and are what Jung calls the canalization of psychic energy. They reflect turmoil of life, reveal the structure of the mind, and influence the unconscious through the dramatic enactment of myth. The girls are not just congregants, but concelebrants (*locum tenens*) of a recondite priestcraft who are elevated to the status of a kind of secular priestly class by self-ordination. They offer veneration within a system that they have constructed to suit themselves in a manner that may be related to the way that psychoanalysis recruits its labels, such as narcissism and the Oedipus complex, from literary sources. They also operate more as visionaries than as mere servile functionaries.

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "Wells shouldered [Stephen] into the slimy water." Here, it is Welles who is cast into the stream, as coins are thrown into wishing wells and Wotan's eyes is cast into the well of wisdom. Rivers suggest time flowing into the vast timelessness of eternity. Water symbolism in general will be discussed later, but it is of note that being swept away by water is a form of rebirth imagery. Additional fluvial imagery is featured in a deleted segment of the prologue, in which the Avon (like the Mississippi in *Huckleberry Finn*, the Liffy in *Ulysses* and the Rio Grande in *Like Water for Chocolate*) counters the stasis of the community through which it flows.

Pauline does not protest the banishment of Orson Welles. Perhaps this is yet another instance of polite diplomacy and deferential humility, as when she says of the breaking of her Mario Lanza record, "Doesn't matter." But, just as Siegfried sees his reflection in a clear stream, maybe Pauline senses that the image of Welles in the water is a reflection of her own reviled and rejected nature, making his absence good riddance.

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A match on sound from the rushing of water to the crumpling of wrapping paper brings us to Christmas of 1952. Bert's Christmas socks are a comical, diminutive echo of the stockings that conceal Pauline's scars and which later conceal a brick to form the murder weapon.

Juliet was dressed in gold when Pauline visited her at Ilam, and Honora now receives a gold-colored box from Wendy, to whom the audience is never formally introduced. Gold symbolizes highest value, endurance, incorruptibility, eternity, immortality, perfection, sun, fire, insight, vitality, knowledge, love, heavenly light, attachment to the world, libido and consciousness. The golden fleece, which for Jung represented goals attained in spite of reason, was guarded by a dragon. The girls pursue just such goals. Gold in Wagner's *Ring* cycle is the medium of world domination, Alberich's ring being fashioned from that gold, just as Diello is molded from plasticine. This *Rheingold* originates in a river and ultimately returns to it. Orson Welles is cast into a stream, but later reemerges.

Gold and silver symbolize solar mind and lunar shadow, respectively. Wendy is the blonde sister who gives golden gifts. Juliet, the blonde surrogate sister, is the golden solar extravert to Pauline's silver lunar introvert. Unlike gold, silver must be repolished (re-Paul-ished?). A plainer form of gold is yellow, which can suggest disease (jaundice), jealousy (in Shakespeare), or yellow journalism, of which Pauline and Juliet may become victims. The negative aspect is represented by King Midas. As this story will come to resemble the myth of Electra, gold also applies to Juliet in her role as Chrysothemis, *Chryso* meaning "gold," and *Themis* being the goddess who holds aloft the scale of justice.

We are left to infer that the unidentified young woman must be Pauline's sister and that the old woman in the background is her grandmother, possibly the "Nana Parker" referred to later. In response to the gift given her by Pauline, Wendy says, "Thanks, Yvonne." Having gotten to know her as Pauline, the postponed exposition promotes confusion. Pauline's dress is green with red flowers. A flower is a wonderful thing that emerges from common soil.

Bert gives Pauline a diary that ominously says is "from Whitcombe *& Tombs*," though its title page bears only "Whitcombe's."

Literature allows language to survive its speakers (*vita brevis, ars longa*). Pauline's diary functions not merely as a real-time historical chronicle preserved for posterity (*littera scripta manet*), but as interior monologue and soliloquial confession. As a result, the film has something of the lyric nature of *lyrisme romantique* and often operates in the more personal Aeolian mode as opposed to the more objective Dorian. The diary's disclosures afford the filmmakers a wealth of drawn-from-life anecdote that they exploit to give the impression of a remarkable coup of intimacy, occasionally by way of what seems like a fly-on-the-wall perspective. The story concerns both girls and their relationship, but the diary is Pauline's. Pauline is the ostensible subject and narrative voice. This helps establish hers as the primary viewpoint and keeps the story from being totally third person omniscient, though neither is it quite holographic, as not all scenes are restricted to her knowledge. Jackson and Walsh act as deliverers of the word in a form not unlike "as told to" memoirs. Still, even introspection is subject to distortion and history is transmitted as distorted reflections in individual minds. In *A Plea for Eros*, Siri Hustvedt writes of "remembering what never happened." Pauline is thus also a ventriloquial vehicle for the filmmakers, who combine with her as parts of a plurisignificative subject of enunciation. As Mary Karr says, "In fiction you make up events to support interpretation. In memoir you inherit the events and make up the interpretation."

Pauline's writing in her diary is ironic from the very first entry. It brings to mind diarists such as Anaïs Nin and Samuel Pepys, and will come to involve self-glorification of an artist, like the memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini. Caution is appropriate in such cases because autobiography is, according to George Orwell, the most outrageous form of fiction. But, says Brian Friel, "An autobiographical fact may be a lie and no less true for all of that." Ideally, then, memoir mediates

perfectly well between the personal and the collective. Recalling the discussion of the ontological status of music, nondiegetic voice-over is by an anonymous speaker, while semidiegetic voice-over is by a diegetic character, as is the case here as well as in *Like Water for Chocolate* and *Whale Rider*.

Even allowing for judicious editing, the analects of Pauline's diary reveal so much of substance (*multum in parvo*) that a more fortuitous foundation for the screenwriters could scarcely be imagined (*facile est inventis addere*). It is a rich legacy on which the filmmakers may draw and is available to them either as a palimpsest via which they can express themselves, as a narrative compass, commonplace book or even a convenient excuse (*ipse dixit*). But neither should the insufflationary achievement of Jackson and Walsh be minimized (*urbem lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*) (*materiam superabit opus*)(*monumentum ære perennius*). The film gets its legs from Pauline's diary, but gets its wings from Jackson and Walsh, who grasped and mined the story's dramatic possibilities, getting their fingerprints all over it in the process of intertextual dialogue between diary and screenplay. And although, at the end of the prologue, a claim of authenticity is made for Pauline's diary entries, this does not extend to the letters to be exchanged by the girls.

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Juliet pushed her father aside when Pauline visited Ilam. Now that Juliet is making a reciprocal visit, Pauline struggles to employ a similar strategy, her words ("Go away.") again anticipating the girls' implicit message at the end. Juliet arrives dressed in blue. The Parker/Rieper confusion continues as Juliet greets Honora as "Mrs. Rieper." In a rare instance of flagrant, flaunted foreshadowing, Peter Dasent provides a subtly pungent chord for musical punctuation as Juliet extends her hand to Honora, as if to indicate the sealing of the latter's fate with a handshake as one would with the kiss of death. The ultimate tragedy is indeed the result of bringing Juliet into the picture, and even now, Honora begins to yield to her destiny that lurks hidden in the future. The music quickly reassumes a sprightly character.

Civilization is said to be born of frustration, and it has been claimed that all wars are a projection of family conflict. With the story of Charles killing Lancelot (*Lanza*lot?), there begins the displacement of aggression to stories of heroic combat. In yielding to their writerly yearnings (*furor scribendi*), the girls find yet another outlet in addition to their drawing and sculpture. Their work draws upon a rich legacy of historical models, including perhaps medieval romances. The use of archaic and remote forms helps distance any pain to which voice is being given. The chivalric atmosphere of Juliet's tale may be the romantic aura of antiquity that often accompanies experiences of the self. Heroes such as Charles symbolize the developing ego. It might be hoped that Charles would be as positive an animus figure as Mario. Queen Elizabeth II will soon be crowned, and the person poised to succeed her is also named Charles. But Juliet's Charles brutally deposes Lancelot, just as the shadow can usurp the authority of the ego. The episode is also similar to the story of Gyges told in *The English Patient*. Lancelot is an Arthurian name traditionally associated with the left-hand path. Charles kills him and then takes the conservative, right-hand path of conformity by proposing marriage. He thus avoids adultery, as did Chrétien's Cligés, on whom another Lancelot got the last laugh (see the essay on *The English Patient*). As with the film itself, this mock-epic story seems to feature the mutually compensatory burlesque and grandiloquence of melodrama. Perhaps, as Mrs. Stevens later suspects, this story functions, intentionally or otherwise, as a *Zeitroman*, critical of contemporary culture. The reader is invited

to consider how the following terms apply to the girls' paintings and writings: Cavalier drama, fabliau, Goliardic verse, Gongorism, grand guignol, grand style, Grobianism, grotesque, Johnsonian, novel of sensation, pastiche, pastourelle, Restoration comedy, Ritterroman, rodomontade, romance, samizdat, satyr play, Schauerroman, third theater.

The mercilessly cheerful Juliet is such a garrulous raconteuse, it is a wonder she has a chance to eat. If her story is written with as much gusto as it is now told, then it threatens to burst the book's binding. Her enthusiasm has little impact on the adult's sobriety, leaving the mood informal but intense. Honora would not want her "private business being discussed with a complete stranger." It will be her death that will cause it to be discussed quite widely. Juliet speaks of how few divorces her mother, as a marriage counselor, has had in two years. In two more, she may ironically have had her own.

The real Juliet eventually adopted the name Anne Perry. The first name has already been hinted at in French class and Bill Perry suggests himself as a plausible source for the surname. This William Perry shares his name with a U.S. Secretary of Defense and a legendary pugilist. His name also recalls Dr. John Weir Perry, much of whose work on schizophrenia could be relevant to this discussion. Schizophrenics experience dissociation from the environment. The outsider comes to feel an urge for power. His art and then his life are organized by aesthetics. The mother is perceived negatively, and a great father image is sought beyond both the biological father and God. Strict discipline and regimentation cause him to seek love. He comes to identify with the world-redeeming hero. Perry also specifies several prominent motifs of the schizophrenic crisis: a new world center, death and sacrifice, descent into the abyss, cosmic conflict of good and evil, fear of the opposite sex, apotheosis, sacred marriage, the birth of the hero child, the idealized society and the paradise garden. The hero is the one who can live out of his own nature, master his challenges and progress. The schizophrenic's mind, however, is disorganized and fails to integrate all these images. The story of Hercules may be interpreted as the failure, due to inflation, of the attempt to unite unconscious forces.

Hilda insists on talking about Bill's feelings, but probably never attends so well to those of her own daughter. Juliet is not sure about her mother's "deep therapy," but will discover its nature first-hand in due course. Juliet joins in the audience's confusion about names when Honora says, "Eat up, Yvonne." Without the comma, it would sound like an imperative to Pauline's shadow to consume her. It also anticipates Pauline's direction: "Go on mum. Treat yourself."

In *Finnegans Wake*, as in dream, characters change identity. Pauline and Juliet, at least superficially, play many parts. Their inventory of names, pantomime characters, pseudonyms and sobriquets turns the critic into a census taker. These multiple identifications reveal the diverse, even dissonant facets of their personalities. They also convey the idea of a complementarity between Pauline and Juliet, who are somehow incomplete in themselves. The significance of this plurality extends beyond mere stereotypical female changeability (*varium et mutabile semper femina*). The full meaning of a true symbol emerges only through multiple expressions and cannot be captured in a single image. In the search for identity, the deaths of innocence, of ego and of old character (self-annihilation in miniature) allow psychic rebirth and advancement.

E.M. Forster distinguished between what he called flat (stable) and round (dynamic) characters. Pauline and Juliet alter and develop throughout the story, with the particular natures of their sundry guises being psychologically revelatory. Going beyond capricious masquerade, the girls aspire to being effectively camouflaged chameleons who change their archetypal masks as occasion demands, defensively becoming moving targets. They emulate the cunning

pseudonymity of Odysseus, which is also displayed in *The Crying Game*. They are daughters of Proteus, the evasive, shape-shifting sea god who represents elusive truths underlying mutable surface appearances. The girls' protean potential for transformation is reflected in the plasticity of the plasticine with which they model, in contrast to Bert's preference for modifiable but rigid wood. This idea is further underscored when, interpolated into this scene in which Pauline is called Yvonne for the first time, Mr. Perry asks to be called Bill. Related to this issue is the fact that the first names of all four parents begin with the letter *H*. This interchangeability facilitates Pauline's adoption of the Hulmes as her surrogate family.

In a convergence of Christ symbols, Bert sells fish and is suspected of being a carpenter. As the manager of a fish store, he also comically recalls the Fisher King in *Parzival*. "You are a fishmonger," says Hamlet to Polonius (II.ii.). The latter's daughter Ophelia later says (IV.v.), "They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but not what we may be." Pauline is also a fishmonger's daughter and few could guess what she may be. She will also come to be associated, like her father, with Christ symbology.

As noted above, some have suggested that an economic imperative drives Pauline, pride in social identity being potentially the most insidious and crippling of mental blocks on the road to release. When John enters as a prospective boarder, Pauline is embarrassed by her family's rusticity and expresses shame to be of the boarding-house class. She perhaps also has a presentiment of danger, as when Henry smells sulfur. Juliet seems to pity her status anxiety, and had earlier sided with Pauline when Jonathan defended his insular existence at Ilam by saying of Pauline, "But she's an invader!" Such examples of class-consciousness and classism invite Marxist criticism regarding the accuracy of social representation (see the *Fourth World* website for a discussion of how these characters are defined by such factors as clothes and accents). Honora assures John, "The bedrooms are small, but they're very clean and comfortable." In a deleted scene, Hilda similarly welcomes Bill to his lodgings at Ilam, saying, "It used to be the servants' quarters, but it's very comfortable." Significantly, John eyes Pauline. This is something that will enter and then resurface from Pauline's unconscious later on.

St. George having slain the dragon of doubt and inhibition, Juliet speaks confidently of publishing their novel in New York, and Bert plays along (*nihil potest*). She will have to wait a few decades, but the real Juliet's novels will indeed come to be published in New York. Their titles will include *A Dangerous Morning* and *A Sudden Fearful Death*, in which a character says, "We all try to forget what hurts us, it is sometimes the only way we can continue." According to Penelope Lively, in her book *Making It Up*, confabulation is "the creation of imaginary remembered experiences which replace the gaps left by disorders of the memory."

The girls seem to feel that the pleasure of their labor will be sweeter if not confined to themselves. Their optimism perhaps indicates a fallacy of expressive form, in which enthusiasm is presumed necessarily to yield success. But any vision of immediate and unreserved acclaim is a forlorn hope. In spite of their literary ambitions, were it not for their crime becoming their chief claim on history's attention, their current efforts would probably never have made a name for them. Anne Perry's name may be transmitted to posterity via her adult novels, but the writings of Juliet Hulme are poised to become her forgotten juvenalia. They will prove to be a *succès* neither *d'estime* nor *fou* but only *de scandale*. As to the influence and legacy of this film, William Lorton writes in the *Los Angeles Times*, 3/17/02, "[A] quick list of 'best pictures' from the last 10 years . . . yields only one masterpiece. . . . The rest are mostly bloated, self-important footnotes to film history, and in most cases, footnotes in the careers of their own makers. On the other hand, a competing list of 'Un-Awarded Films Most Likely to be Relevant to Cinema Theory and History'

reveals this sampling: *Three Colors: Red*, *Heavenly Creatures*, *Babe*, *Lone Star*, *The Sweet Hereafter*, *The Celebration*, *Election* and *Dancer in the Dark*, to name only a few."

If nothing else, Pauline gains pride, prestige and social cachet by associating with Juliet. As part of the landed gentry, Juliet provides Pauline with some impressive arm candy in the manner of a trophy wife. Pauline remains relatively subdued, content to bask in Juliet's reflected glory. In the next scene, she will begin the process of displacing Juliet as the confident one.

Feeling their oats and congratulating themselves on being *Wunderkinder*, the girls style themselves literati. However, the reference to "our genius" risks hubris, for according to Cyril Connolly, paraphrasing Euripides, "Whom the gods would destroy, they first call promising." Talent is the ability to succeed within existing rules, while genius involves the invention of new rules that allow for the expansion of possibility space. Sometimes, as in *Howards End*, genius is considered a form of madness. Yet another disclaimer is implied when Pauline claims that "no one could fully appreciate us." Both the Buddhist and Platonic traditions hold that wisdom cannot be taught.

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The visit to Port Levy begins portentously as the plot is rehearsed in microcosm. Juliet, whose bathing suit features the colors blue and red, leads the way onto the dock. Pauline follows in a bathing suit of mousy brown, which, with a bit of a stretch, is like a sorry excuse for red. A standard motif in heroic stories is the refusal of the call. The girls are reluctant to partner with each other in art class and Juliet now hesitates at the brink and refuses to dive off the pier. Pauline turns to her left, passes Juliet, and plunges headlong into the water, accepting the call. In the end, after hesitating, Juliet will follow Pauline over the edge. Jesus and the Buddha both had to deal with three demonic temptations. Jesus recognized his material nature and prudently refused to "take the plunge." Five centuries earlier, the Buddha identified himself with his spiritual nature and did not resist when attacked. Pauline chooses the latter course, which will later result in disappointment.

The sea suggests the cosmic ocean of unity where all things are one, as well as the concept of sea change wherein redemption and renewal are achieved via death and corruption. The juxtaposition of land and sea suggests the distinction between the logical male conscious and the emotional feminine unconscious. This littoral environment may have been foreshadowed by some of the landscapes seen hanging on the walls earlier in the art class. Plunging into water obviously suggests baptism as well as compassion and empathetic participation, but also the Freudian death instinct, which is the unconscious desire to retreat from life's disagreeable elements. Water is also the most common symbol of the illimitable unconscious psyche. It is here that transformation is possible. As the intermediate physical state between gas and solid, liquid water can represent a psychic state balanced between random imagination and petrifying rigidity (or between *sapientia* and *veritas*). Water's fluidity suggests ambiguity and ambivalence. The Great Mother both rewards and punishes. Similarly, water can suggest fertile, maternal, amniotic creativity, but can also be a destructive abyssal coffin. It encompasses the entire mystery of birth, death and resurrection. Ideally, one should "take the plunge," but care should be taken not to drown.

Continuing this water theme, the girls are shown bathing on several occasions. The bathtub may function as a sweat lodge, in which one returns to the spiritual womb for cleansing and rebirth. This is related to the symbolism of bathing in sacred water, such as that of the

Ganges. The alchemical retort facilitates transformation. *Aqua sapientiae* cleanses, illuminates, and portends rebirth. But bath water is always seen to remain in the tub in this film. Purification is incomplete, such that the sins of the past have not been washed away and still cling.

One factor inspiring or influencing the occasionally seen monochromatic shipboard fantasy is perhaps revealed when this happy episode of Pauline vacationing with the Hulmes is depicted in black-and-white photographs.

Charles is referred to in the third person and the camera adopts his point of view. As he rides toward the girls' sand castle, he "clutches his wounded shoulder," such that he and Pauline will both now have scarred bodies. Castles are symbols of positive wish fulfillment. As a structure with a guarded interior, it harmonizes with the allusions to onions and Rutherford. The Grail castle symbolizes the unconscious as a magical place that is difficult to reach. The girls build their sand castle when they are on the brink of their first visit to the Fourth World. Robert Donington observes that Wotan "learned that stone castles offer illusory security." Charles storms this castle as easily as Arthurian lovers breech artificial barriers to love. But neither physical castles nor even "castles in the air" can absolutely withstand time and corruption. However enchanting this sand castle may be, it is insubstantial, ephemeral, and destined to fall. As such, it foreshadows the end. Likewise, the penetration of the castle by the camera foreshadows acts of penetration by Diello and Nicholas as well as the final actual murder.

Deborah awaits Charles "at the very top of the tower." A tower is obviously phallic and can represent power, the world axis, spiritual striving and the transcendence of death. It can symbolize a group of men, such as the girls' saints, in psychological compensation for physical monogamy. On the negative side, a tower can represent inflation, and its collapse represents the destruction of that which is not based on reality. Tarot card XVI is The Tower of Destruction.

Approaching Deborah, Charles "smells her scent." Olfactory issues were dealt with in an earlier scene. Charles chooses to rush up the right-hand staircase because he, like Chrétien's Cligés, is a proper, orthodox proposer of marriage and avoider of adultery, in contradistinction to the individualistic, left-hand path suggested by the name of his defeated rival Lancelot. The girls observe the proceedings from above through windows, as King Mark observes Tristan and Isolde in the Cave of Lovers (*la fossiure a la gent amant*). A crab decorates the wall of the chamber. Because a crab sheds its shell, it is a lunar symbol associated with the dormant period between incarnations, as well as with resurrection, the emergence of consciousness from the unconscious, and pregnancy. It is thus an appropriate witness to the conception of a character who represents the reincarnation of Orson Welles from the unconscious. A crab's oblique movement implies dishonesty. It represented for the Inca the terrible aspect of the Great Mother and has been regarded as a bringer of misfortune. Ominously, as explained later, the constellation Cancer hosts the sun as it begins its southerly motion immediately following the summer solstice. That constellation memorializes the death-defying bravery of the crab that pinched Hercules and was crushed by him. This quality may be sorely needed by our heroines at the end. Similar crab symbology will apply in the essay on *Whale Rider*.

A destructive male force again operates when Jonathan, in his blue bathing suit, causes the collapse of the sand castle, which is well tolerated compared to the breaking of Pauline's Mario Lanza record. It is noted in the *Fourth World* website that Juliet attributes to her brother a historically inaccurate age. The animus tends to emasculate rivals by portraying them as immature. This might cause Juliet unconsciously to underestimate her brother's age, which is permissible within the "imperfect subjunctive" mood in which the film is operating. Also note that Diello's age will be specified when he is "only ten."

The girls have just speculated about Deborah becoming pregnant in conjunction with her union with Charles in the sand castle. It is now revealed that "Charles and Deborah are going to have a baby." Both parents are specified, not just Deborah. This excludes Lancelot from any speculation of paternity. This is something that "Paul and I have decided." As did Barton Fink individually, Pauline and Juliet jointly assume the role of creator, and the benefit to be derived from this offspring is meant for both of them. Juliet functions as a sort of angel of the Annunciation. But, as Aunt Juley says in *Howards End*, "The warning is all the other way," as Juliet herself is soon to be on the receiving end of just such a visitation, following which the royal offspring will not be long in coming.

Borovnia sounds vaguely Slavic, like the actual cities of Borovnica, Borovë, Borovichi, Borovoye and Borovsk. The name *Diello* suggests such negative associations as Diablo, Diavolo, Delilah, and a book titled *Underworld* authored by Don DeLillo. Diello is to be a negative, destructive male character, as Jonathan has been. The *Fourth World* website proffers a plausible source of the name: James Mason as Ulysses Diello in the 1952 film *Five Fingers*. James Mason appeared in several other films with titles relevant to the present story: *Lady Possessed* (1952), *Botany Bay* (1953), *Charade* (1953), *The Man Between* (1953), *Cry Terror* (1958), *The Decks Ran Red* (1958), *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1959). Juliet reveals that "Paul thought it up." Something similar might also be said of Christianity. But, unlike Christianity and Orson Welles, Juliet accepts it. Pauline is beginning to show initiative and is contributing more to the enterprise so as to make it a true partnership. The girls hold hands, anticipating their posture soon to be assumed in the Fourth World.

The announcement of her parents' trip is the motivating incident that reawakens Juliet's abandonment issues and precipitates the crisis that will send the girls to the Fourth World. Hilda, not the feckless Henry, asserts phallic power by standing. As she does, it is revealed that they are sitting in front of the "Christmas cottage." An expository caption specifies this sequence as Easter 1953. Pauline will later refer to this as the day of the death of Christ. Diello is thus associated with Christ by being conceived on Good Friday in the vicinity of the Christmas cottage. When used properly, Diello certainly will be a savior for the girls. Jonathan offers further contradiction of the doubt expressed in French class when he says, "Me. I'm coming!" Hilda's anger at Henry for not delaying the surprise of the trip hints at tension in their marriage. Juliet's reaction recalls the promise that her parents would never again leave her (*expertus metuuit*). As in *Barton Fink*, the removal of shoes suggests walking on holy ground. Hilda thus assumes an unholy attitude and shows contempt for Juliet's fragile psyche when she signifies a retreat from the sacred (Christmas cottage) to the profane by telling Jonathan to put his shoes on. A child may become spoiled if inflation is rewarded. But alienation, though necessary for psychic development, can become unbearable if a child feels betrayal rather than acceptance following punishment (*minimæ vires frangere quassa valent*).

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It would not be improper to be reminded of *The Sound of Music* by the ensuing helicopter shot because Juliet is about to demonstrate that the hills are indeed alive, if one vivifies them. As in Strauss's *Elektra*, the music comes from oneself. The circling aerial shot suggests revolution around the world axis, recalling the girls' round dance in the forest. This axial still point is another symbol of the world navel where earth meets heaven and divine grace flows into the world. With the soundtrack functioning as a *serranilla* (Spanish mountain meeting song), the

girls go over the hill, where the grass is always greener. Hills and mountains may be seen as natural altars mediating between heaven and earth such that they meet and the sacred marriage of opposites is solemnized. The sacred central mountain of myth is everywhere, so any particular mountain will do. Such places as Mount Olympus and Mount Sinai become the seat of the gods and are artificially imitated with pyramids and ziggurats. High places represent man's highest aspirations and are where the treasures of the gods become available for theft, as by Prometheus.

The dry foliage symbolizes the wasteland and contrasts with what is to come. The girls, like many before them, are about to encounter god in the wilderness. They themselves encountered each other in the wasteland of school and then experienced enthusiasm in the forest. The present landscape does little to assuage Juliet's *Waldeinsamkeit*, her yearning for the spatially and temporally distant realms that she has imagined. Juliet is dressed in blue, while Pauline is in red and green. Juliet's quite energetic squinting initially suggests an exhibition of bad acting until the conjuration in which she is engaged is retrospectively appreciated. Perhaps her tears are the oils of ordination that finally endow her with the power to escape.

Juliet is shot from a low angle as she issues her invitation to Pauline: "Come with me." Juliet is still in the lead at this point and it may seem as though Pauline is the normal one getting sucked into a charismatic friend's dysfunction and misadventures. Juliet is in fact acting as a valuable mentor for Pauline (*nemo solus sapit*).

The rays of the sun harmonize with Juliet's blond hair. The seeming proximity of the sun ominously recalls the hubris of Icarus and the fate of Ixion, who seeks pleasure and is punished for inflation by being bound to a fiery wheel in the sky. It may be optimistically hoped that this will be a force for illumination rather than degradation, and that the girls will succeed in a Daedalus flight by experiencing a revelatory awakening to self-realization with no unanticipated fall.

Bright light is associated with religious experience, such as that of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. William James calls this photism. Jung speaks of the expansion of awareness resulting from such situations, which he claims are encounters with the self. The Hindus speak of the sun door, which is the portal of the second birth and the threshold between time and eternity. In contrast with the inconstant moon, the sun facilitates focus on the eternal rather than temporal domain. It is symbolically associated with creative energy, enlightenment and blinding truth. It may here be acting as the kind of sign by which heroes are confirmed in their mission, as in the Old Testament. However, the brightest light also casts the deepest shadow.

In addition to being part of spring, with its romantic and erotic associations, Easter suggests death and resurrection, and the change to a new perspective. The sun becomes symbolic of the next stage of the girls' relationship in the sense of light born out of the darkness and of consciousness arising out of the unconscious. Easter also suggests the sun/son pun often employed in Christianity that will play itself out here as well. This Good Friday sun has just overseen the conception of the Borovnian son Diello. This divine visitation by celestial light on such a day is a kind of annunciation that recalls such miraculous impregnations as those of Mary and Danae. This is the same sun by which Honora will be haloed at the end in a special sign of reassurance.

Though the sun may cause the girls' biological eyes to squint, their inner eyes are about to open. After Siegfried tastes of the dragon's blood, he understands the song of a bird, from which he learns the truth about his "father" Mime and kills him. Pauline's eyes have likewise opened and she will treat her mother similarly. When Juliet opens her eyes, recalling the Buddha,

she sees an earthly paradise. As in *Finnegans Wake*, this is the realm of dream consciousness featuring radiant objects that allow for multiple meanings.

Until now, the girls' ability to escape via fantasy may have been underestimated. If Pauline's diary provides a front-row seat from which to view her mind, then a backstage pass now allows us behind the curtain to an unprecedented extent (*voir le dessous des cartes*), such that we advance from voyeurs almost to participants. Without even changing physical location (much less literally dying), the girls move to a different psychological terrain as the wasteland morphs into the promised land of the Fourth World. This dreamscape, like Pauline's diary, is a reflection of the girls' inner lives, with which Peter Jackson contrapuntally punctuates the film.

Border crossings are prominent elements in *The Crying Game* and *Like Water for Chocolate*. Gross physical thresholds were a prominent factor in the "Donkey Serenade" scene, when the girls accidentally crossed one and then refused to cross back. Now, a subtle, immaterial border is crossed such that the girls find themselves not in the forest, but in a landscape proper to myth. We are not in Kansas anymore, but in *sukhavati*, the place of bliss. This is *mahasukha*, the great delight (*denique coelum*). As living Fourth-Worlders, the girls become, at least temporarily, *jivan mukta* (freed in life, released while living). Ignorance yields to knowledge. Conscious experience of the archetypal psyche is a life-altering event, comparable to the discovery of God, the metaphorical end of the world, and rebirth. The symbolic nature of the end of the world is discussed by Joseph Campbell in *The Hero's Journey*. Once the radiance of eternity has been experienced, life as it is lived by those who think only in Mosaic, concretizing terms has ended.

Recalling Tita in *Like Water for Chocolate*, periodic withdrawal from the world to reharmonize the psyche can sometimes take extreme forms, such as catatonia and autism. This particular (un)real estate now visited by Pauline and Juliet could be said to arise from their heightened receptivity to regressive, narcissistic wish fulfillment that also involves the sublimation of sex. A hardhearted view of this beautiful illusion of a world undisturbed by reality would characterize it as a cowardly retreat. Also like Tita, the girls are now identical with the goddess and her power. Rather than just worship the saints, they join them in an imaginary utopian state.

The goal of Buddhist meditation is the waking experience of the nonspecific, intransitive consciousness normally experienced only during dreamless sleep. The Zen master Yasutani Hakuun Roshi claimed that there is nothing extraordinary about *satori*, as one achieves it every night in one's sleep. Zen, he said, is just a trick for achieving it while awake. Similarly, the Fourth World was earlier spoken of in terms of an afterlife, like heaven. It is now not something that will be, but something that is. It is the kingdom come, an oasis within the wasteland and a refuge from the world of mundane banalities. Such an experience suggests that important changes are about to occur. Juliet will soon have a vision of her animus equivalent to Siegmund's vision of Brünnhilde. The Valkyrie's warning of impending death has its positive aspect, which will be discussed near the end when it applies to Honora.

It was once said of Bach's music that it demonstrates the extent to which a master is free to move, even when he is in chains. Whatever their physical circumstances, Pauline and Juliet are living large psychologically, like Stephen Dedalus, Joyce's Homeric hero of the mind. They transcend the physical constraints of bad chests and bone diseases by resorting to the unencumbered imagination. Childhood loneliness often results in recourse to a secret, proprietary, symbolic sanctuary that shelters the threatened psyche from stress. Like Vishnu in his role as world dreamer, Pauline and Juliet, driven to fantasy by despair, dream up the Fourth World. Their escape from anxiety is achieved not by physical flight, but by the transubstantiation

of the ordinary landscape into *nirvana*. The formerly private and evanescent is now brought to the foreground and manifested for the audience in the style of magic realism and *p'ing hua*. As in Wagner's *Lohengrin*, irrational spiritual material is injected into a real historical setting. The Doric rusticity of the "Donkey Serenade" forest is now balanced by the Attic sophistication and elegant order of the Fourth World, which will in turn contrast with the plebeian, even sordid chaos of Borovnia.

The gardens at Ilam are nice, but a pale imitation of the paradisal garden of the inner psyche to be found in the Fourth World. Gardens aspire to be models of a timeless, blissful, prelapsarian paradise of unspoiled innocence and preternatural beauty. This place of earthly ecstasy is to be found within, and exists now amidst the turmoil of life, making it the Hermetic, Gnostic, Mahayana alternative to Eden and heaven. It is an unfallen realm not yet destroyed by passion. The pastoral world is a symbolic sanctuary from sexuality and uncontrolled experience. It is often romantically idealized as an uncorrupted, harmonious domain of great antiquity. The Fourth World is of a different order than the girls' earlier revel in the wilds of the forest. The dark forest was perhaps the incubating womb that prepared them for greater things to come, which they now enjoy (*et ego in Arcadia fui*). After a period of gestation in maternal Dionysian darkness, they are now born into Apollonian light, only to return to darkness later. It should not be forgotten that the Garden of Eden is also a place of temptation, sin and fall.

Each of the girls is being recognized as the other's true consort. They were earlier reluctant to return from the irresponsible bliss of the forest. Shamanic ecstatic experience of the unconscious always entails a danger that a spirit departing during a ritual trance may fail to return to the body. Fantasy resolves psychic tensions, but with the attendant risk of enslavement to delusion. Fantasy is a nice place to visit, but some want to take up residence there. Paradise can become a prison if one tarries. Insidious, regressive, escapist illusions can be traps. Again, the goal is to decouple benefit from detriment and to be master of the two worlds. Sirens can then be enjoyed without falling victim to them. Like a pearl diver, one must obtain treasure without drowning.

Unicorns are discovered, which harmonize well with the girls' preexisting interest in horses. Unicorns are associated with virginity, the union of opposites, inner creative power, the sublimation of undisciplined or sexual urges, the elusive spirit of Mercurius, and, significantly, unrealized potential. They can transform into the alchemical white dove, symbolic of the Holy Ghost. They are fitting inhabitants of the Fourth World, but produce discord when later incongruously located in the landscape of Ilam, except for viewers of nonletterbox versions who are denied this prospect. In England, the unicorn has heraldic associations with the lion, which is an earthly reflection of the sun, a symbol of force subdued by reason and of wrestling with one's own shadow. Now that the girls have graduated from the physical to the transcendent, their challenge will be to avoid regressing from an ethereal form of passion, represented by the unicorn, back to a more bestial form that would be represented by the lion (*libera eas de ore leonis*).

The butterflies are a favorable omen, as insects generally represent ordered thinking and the sorting out of compulsions and obsessions. Metamorphosis from caterpillar to butterfly represents abandoning earthly concerns in favor of the elusive, ethereal realm of thought, intuition and spirit. This symbol of transformation signifies the maturation of the girls' relationship, which was only potential and embryonic when eggs were earlier mentioned. With their two large and two small wings, butterflies mimic the two normally more developed and the

two relatively inferior psychic functions. The butterflies also foreshadow the music to be heard later from *Madama Butterfly*.

Pauline describes their revelation as the finding of a key. *A Portrait of the Artist as a young Man* refers to "the power of the keys." The issue of keys also arises in *Ulysses* and *Howards End*. Lock-and-key imagery may almost too easily be interpreted sexually. As in *The Twilight Zone*, the key to the Fourth World is that of imagination put to the service of psychic defense. It represents the Mahayana realization that the ordinary and the special worlds are actually one, the special being the forgotten dimension of the ordinary. This insight, not a material substance, is the true secret of alchemy and is also the Gnostic equivalent of the end of the world. The wasteland problem is soluble without physical exodus or pilgrimage. The Fourth World is omnipresent and accessible to the living, though only on two days a year, according to Pauline. Luke 17:21 and the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas declare that heaven exists on earth for those who can see it (*crede quod habes, et habes*). Alas, as Pauline will discover, the same is true of hell.

"The day of the death of Christ" specifies Good Friday (April 3, 1953). Good Friday, and Easter generally, represent crisis, death and rebirth, and breakthrough to new levels of consciousness and illumination, as via *satori*. Eden is left by means of a tree and returned to by means of another. Easter represents crossing that threshold and returning to the Garden via that second tree, which is the cross. Good Friday also has associations with Parzival. In *Ulysses*, Stephen chants the introit for Pascal time prior to the symbolic end of the world. Pace-egging plays are performed on Easter Monday and feature St. George. The phrase "death of Christ" echoes Juliet's rejection of Christianity and its concept of a remote and inaccessible heaven. By this time, Christ's death is only a formality for the girls, for the superannuated Mosaic interpretation has already died and been reborn as the altered vision of the Hermetic, Gnostic perspective. Meister Eckhart's mystical iconoclasm and the death of ego and of obsolete boundaries are also suggested. But as Christ is a model of individuation, his death may hint at impending psychic degeneration. The death of the imposed deity coincides with the conception of the chosen Borovnian heir, whose birth follows almost immediately. This in turn is followed by the symbolic death of the imposed monarchical dynasty. This new heir, who will function as a kind of redeemer and savior, is himself a resurrected Orson Welles.

Though Mahayana Buddhism asserts that all may realize eternity while living in the world, Pauline characterizes the key in Hinayana terms of exclusivity, with salvation being restricted to "only about ten people." Jungian archetypal knowledge is reserved for the adept, while the Thomas Gospel asserts that the kingdom is here, yet men do not see it. Visions of ghosts and phantoms are often reserved for the select few, as has already been seen in *Like Water for Chocolate*, with further examples ranging from *The Turn of the Screw* to *Harvey*. In the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 10/28/07, Michael Joseph Gross writes, "The Greek word that we translate as *apocalypse* does not refer directly to the end of the world: It means 'the lifting of the veil,' conveying secret knowledge to a group of privileged people set apart from the rest of humanity."

The girls have already placed themselves not amongst but above the anonymous vulgarian horde. They now consider themselves among the true elite, there being so few of whom that their Elysian fields appear unpeopled. They are honored to receive the call to number themselves among those who are open to the song of the universe. They no longer merely occupy a penumbra of the viceregal and no longer feel impeded by the old tantric saying: "By none but a god shall a god be worshiped." They have upgraded themselves to preeminence in the most

exclusive coterie in the highest aristocratic caste in the spiritual hierarchy. They rank themselves as part of that minority of "noble hearts" to whom Gottfried von Strassburg sought to bring pleasure with his *Tristan*. Newly self-appointed, self-accredited and self-enthroned, they serenely contemplate the awesome power that is now theirs to wield, priding themselves in smelling roses of which others are not even aware.

Inspired persons are often regarded as freaks and reviled by the sanctimonious, antipathetic orthodox community, which associates genius with madness. As self-styled superior artists, the girls indulge in isolation so as to keep their inner selves inviolate (*nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus*). Related to this is the Moses motif, when children feel so superior to and alienated from their parents that they think they must have been adopted. Such feelings may be involved in Pauline's shift of filial allegiance to the Hulmes, a distorted example of the crisis that occurs with separation from one's old family and the establishment of a new one. These aloof outsiders would identify with Joyce's unappreciated artist Stephen Dedalus and his "almost sacramental disowning of family, city, race, and religion." For him, "exile was the smithy." (In his book *Istanbul: Memories and the City*, Orhan Pamuk similarly notes that certain writers are "fed by exile.") Like Pauline and Juliet, the young Stephen is an alienated, creative nonconformist who is too weak to play. As noted earlier, he guards his inner life with the three weapons of the artist: silence, exile and cunning. The girls also enjoy a mystical, transgenealogical relationship like that between Stephen and Leopold Bloom. As the girls ride home in the car, savoring their sodality of the elect, they lean to their left, which recalls the setup of a cinematic practical joke in *The Piano*, which is discussed elsewhere in these essays.

The crossing of the first threshold between the normal and special worlds often involves preparatory self-annihilation and typically brings the first act to a close. The "Donkey Serenade" scene was a false start, as it was the crossing of a mere physical threshold, which could only hint at this major psychological adjustment culminating in a state of contemplation, repose and stasis (*non sum qualis eram*). The first act may thus be said to end with both an image of clouds and the word "clouds." They form a momentary celestial *rideau d'entr'acte* between the first and second acts. Clouds suggest the home of the gods and are sometimes associated with epiphanies. But they also serve as an ominous portent (*occurrent nubes*).

ACT TWO
I Don't Excel in History

The beginning of a new stage of dramatic or psychic development is well symbolized by the birth of a child. Act two may thus be said to commence with the birth of Diello, which is introduced with an abrupt return from the celestial to the terrestrial.

Juliet characterized the phrase "*Je doutais qu'il vienne*" as a mistake. Pauline supports that opinion as she says, "It's coming!" The pronoun has significance beyond the uncertainty of gender. Diello is born into the realm of consciousness, emerging, like most symbols, from the neglected unconscious into which "It" had been repressed. He is "It" transformed by dream work and resurrected. That which was rejected returns like the prodigal son, psychic wholeness being impossible without it, though repressed sexuality may be expected to return with increased violence. Additionally, Jonathan, an earlier embodier of masculine destruction, proclaimed, "I'm coming!" immediately following the announcement that Diello was being expected. Pauline exclaims, "Oh, God." An infant god combines and fuses the opposites that its parents symbolize.

The ego defending itself against possible overthrow is sometimes symbolized in myth by the exile of royal children. Juliet saw fit to banish Orson Welles to the unconscious, but Diello is not perceived as such a threat. He is born as an amorphous pillow, symbolic of undeveloped juvenile potential. Note also that the pillow is red.

Diello's arrival is only a parody of a physical birth. Christianity has been rejected, but its symbols remain as the torch is passed to Diello, who is Christ reinvented. Diello is a problem solver conceived on Good Friday in front of the Christmas cottage who now experiences a virgin birth, aside from the fact that Juliet is presumably a literal virgin. Juliet, though portraying Deborah bearing a son to Charles, also acts as the Divine Virgin, touched by no man, but only by the impregnating spirit. "In the virgin womb of the imagination the word was made flesh," says Joyce in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where it is also said, "Reproduction is the beginning of death." This counterfactual birth is thus also in accordance with the "imperfect subjunctive" disclaimer. This divergence from biology moves us into the realm of myth, which Joseph Campbell calls "the second womb, the matrix of postnatal gestation." The virgin birth of Diello, like the promised land exemplified by the Fourth World, is properly interpreted psychologically, not physically, for Diello is constituted of the same subtle matter as are Dhyani Buddhas and the *kundalini*. His birth, like the unusual conception of Horus or the birth of the Buddha from his mother's side, is more redolent of inner truth than it is attuned to outer facts. An even more relevant example may be the birth of Athena from the head of Zeus, which had been split open by Hephaestus wielding a hatchet. Hecate, the patroness of women in childbirth, is also associated with the hound of death and war. In the absence of the positive influence of the Mother Goddess, Hecate's influence can give rise to hatred of children and of motherhood.

Charles and Deborah began as abstract fiction. The incarnation of the royal couple may have started with their portrayal by the girls in some frivolous role playing at Ilam. Now, however, Pauline and Juliet embark on a somewhat deeper identification such that these characters arise via a kind of self-creation or self-birth as the girls act as their own chosen deities. Mario Lanza in the role of St. George was a personification of desires. With their imaginations fully engaged, the girls' desires and frustrations are sublimated into motherhood for Juliet's Deborah, with Pauline's Charles as an androgynous father. Emotions will also be projected onto the new royal offspring. Such victorious issue can only occur through the mediacy of a mother. As the mother of both Diello and of the new Pauline, Juliet thus creates a monster twice, with Diello symbolizing that which Pauline herself is eventually to personify. Thus is birth given to an aspect of themselves. Cast into the abyssal waters of the unconscious to fester, the repressed now recrudesces. And so is born a Janissary to be loosed on the world in the role of delegated assassin.

The girls' behavior is still within normal bounds and is merely amusing, not disturbing. A subtle form of gender polarity is implied. Pauline personifies the male character, Juliet the female. One significant aspect of the male principle is its inertia. It takes charge and dominates only after being activated by female energy (*shakti*). Padma activates Vishnu. Fricka awakens Wotan in scene 2 of *Das Rhinegold*. *Cherchez la femme*. Pauline is initially passive. Juliet acts as pied piper, taking the compliant fledgling protégé in tow. Juliet boldly storms through life with effrontery, as Pauline humbly follows in her wake. Juliet, the enabler, then draws Pauline out of herself and coaxes her into ambition, awakening latent, dormant potential waiting coiled up like the *kundalini*. Then the pendulum swings and initiative shifts. Pauline assumes the male character of Charles, and with Juliet as her muse, she then becomes the active leader. By the time Juliet, as Deborah, gives birth to Diello with the assistance of Pauline's Charles, the former has

already begun to act as maieutic mentor, gradually aiding in Pauline's discovery of her own nature. Then, Juliet, the transforming agent, is herself transformed. Formerly in control, she finds herself driven (as on her first day at school), not the driver. She degenerates from puppeteer to puppet (or, perhaps more fittingly, to marionette, given that her middle name is Marion). Pauline proves to be a more potent Svengali to Juliet than vice versa. Juliet is thus trapped and doomed. The ultimate tragedy resulting from this enantiodromia is that once Pauline achieves dominance, she follows the example of Charles supplanting Lancelot and usurps Diello's function as killer of enemies.

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On May 11, 1953, Juliet reads her essay written in anticipation of the coronation of the queen at whose pleasure she and Pauline will be detained the following year, making few concessions to the solemnity of the occasion. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place June 2, 1953. The *Britannica Book of the Year 1954* reports that the ceremony included "revival of the armills or bracelets which, although part of the ancient rite, fell out of use in Stuart times. The bracelets symbolize 'sincerity and wisdom' and are 'tokens of the Lord's protection embracing you on every side' as well as 'symbols and pledges of that bond which unites you with your people.'" This bond to *these* people is particularly direct, as manifested in the proximity of the phrase "sincerity and wisdom" to the school's latin motto: *Sapientia et Veritas*. Like the reintroduced bracelets, Pauline will recall Stuart times when she satirically tells the story of Charles II, who was a Stuart.

The true hero, like the bodhisattva, altruistically returns from his adventure with boons for the orthodox community (*noblesse oblige*). The girls intend to publish their novel and Juliet tries to share her essay with her classmates, who seem appreciative. This may not actually be proselytizing because in a sense the girls seem to regard the common rabble as beneath contempt (*infra dignitatem*) and beyond reform, with posterity poised to return the favor. Even if they sometimes foresee fame, fortune and a mob of sycophants, they despair of these ciphers ever actually obtaining "the key." In any event, enthusiasm is seldom universally infectious, so the girls should not expect to be triumphantly carried on the shoulders of a lionizing entourage. In their own eyes at least, they have progressed from the vassalage and serfdom of the classroom to a nobility with license to resist the hegemony of orthodox culture.

Like her art class drawing and her other writings, Juliet's essay continues the search for a new form of sacred art to replace the system they have abandoned. In accordance with the *idam* principle, the girls exert their prerogative to stipulate both their deities and their royal family by peremptory fiat. But the prophet has no honor in his own land, and the legitimacy of the Borovnian countercanon is not recognized in this society (*in partibus infidelium*). For her impertinent repartee and her impious, indiscrete taking of the left-hand path of creativity and self-determination, Juliet is punished by having her *scandalum magnatum* stifled by an unreceptive, unsympathetic authority. Recalling how Promethean heroes are often punished for benefitting society, and how people, such as Socrates, have often been liquidated for not towing the party line, Juliet might do better not to feed the mouth that bites her (Matthew 7:6). As already seen in other classes, spontaneity is shocking to the inelastic and defensively conservative bourgeoisie, who demand untroubled, literal representation. All change implies loss, but ingrates are unworthy of the fruits of progress.

Pauline and Juliet each have a comic "However" during the course of the film. Juliet here takes her turn first. Eschewing the opportunity for a prudent retreat, she again unabashedly dares to step up to the plate and exploit this bully pulpit. But the girls are on the villain's turf, where one is at a disadvantage.

Juliet applies the term "blighter" to Diello, having earlier applied it to Jonathan's fantasy dress-up character. The former may have been partially modeled on the latter. The uncontrollable Diello foreshadows Honora's murder by slaughtering nannies, who are parental surrogates. Like Bertha in *Jane Eyre*, he is an expression of the girls' repressed negative potential. Diello may not be in the same league with such monsters as the Kraken or Leviathan, but all are the distorted fulfillment of destructive urges and unacknowledged wishes. Diello symbolizes the strong aspect of this energy, in contrast to Dr. Hulme. Giants and ogres symbolize unregulated passions lurking in undeveloped, irrational and neglected parts of the psyche and in need of transformation or sublimation. These impulses mercilessly threaten those who rigidly refuse to change, but can be inspiring and invigorating if controlled. Integration of such a neglected truth is necessary for psychic peace and unity. But possession by the animus leads to obsession, aggression and harsh rationality, as will be reflected in Pauline's plotting. Her will is eventually bound to serve these unconscious interests. It is also noteworthy that the animus is connected with breathing problems. Henry Wilcox in *Howards End* may be tormented by the persistence of that which he seeks to forget. But, after banishing Orson Welles from their pantheon, the girls welcome Diello as a potency projection, possibly because, like Narcissus, they fail to recognize themselves in him. Diello is in the ascendant and gradually becomes the girls' executive agent.

Satire, which exposes, censures and ridicules folly, often does not offend because, as Swift noted, it is a mirror in which people see everyone's face but their own. Mrs. Stevens, however, is blessed with uncommonly incisive perspicacity. With astonishingly sophisticated insight, she interprets Juliet's essay metaphorically. That it could also refer symptomatically to the girls' mutual feelings is made clear by the fact that they have only moments earlier identified with the characters in this story. Incidentally, note that Juliet's notebook is blue.

Mrs. Stevens expected Juliet's essay to be something pat, in the tradition of the well-made play. But, as demonstrated in *Like Water for Chocolate*, convention can be oppressive (*gravissimum est imperium consuetudinis*). The essay may simply be an attempt to overcome the inertia of tradition (*vis inertiæ*), but it is taken by Mrs. Stevens as a public act of apostasy, iconoclasm and insurrectionary sillographic scurrility, rather than as a healthy and harmless sublimation of indignation. It comes across as nihilistic recusancy that threatens parental, academic, ecclesiastical and civil authority. It is granted no imprimatur, but instead finds itself on the teacher's *index librorum prohibitorum*.

Juliet functions as a clown deity, satirizes complacency and resists societal constraints on individualism. But the shattering of routine with unwelcome novelty often excites furious anathemas from established authority (*omnis innovatio plus novitate perturbat quam utilitate prodest*). Mrs. Stevens feels threatened when this shadow government (*imperium in imperio*) is offered in opposition to officially ordained institutions. When such institutions become obsolete and are in danger of being supplanted by a new order, they often retaliate and counterthreaten.

As in earlier classes, the voluble Juliet is playful, sarcastic, serenely defiant and slow to sit. Both she and Pauline laugh, but Pauline quickly and earnestly nails her colors to the mast. Pauline has started to come out of her shell and is now confrontational and combative in response to a what she sees as a denunciatory broadside from her caustically dismissive teacher. She will not tolerate a libel on Borovnia, which for her is a blasphemous affront in derogation of

the sacrosanct (*ludere cum sacris*). Pauline follows Juliet's example from French class and literally stands up to her teacher. She and Mrs. Stevens both express phallic power by standing, but Pauline quickly sits down again. Deference, however, is not obedience. Pauline inwardly defies compromise and is aggressively unrepentant, her face eloquently expressing her barely contained execrations. As a result of the collision of mutually antagonistic triumphalisms, a *Kulturkampf* now erupts and is robustly contested, with Pauline and her teacher engaging in a genuine dynastic struggle between parallel hierarchies. They answer each other's taunts with missionary zeal and belligerent self-assertion (*nemo me impune lacessit*).

Christchurch prides itself on its Englishness, but the girls display a postcolonial impatience with subjugation by foreigners analogous to that implicit in *The Crying Game* and *Like Water for Chocolate*. (A later scene in which Pauline tells of her inability to obtain a passport begins as her hand falls onto a newspaper that features a column titled "Colonial Atmosphere.") According to the *idam* principle, the bestowal of primacy is their prerogative, as is the repudiation of anything uncongenial to or inharmonious with their character. They aspire beyond their inheritance and resolve to cultivate another patch. They are unwilling to cede sovereignty and participate in the dogmatic maintenance of an entity whose *raison d'être* (like that of the QWERTY keyboard system) has lapsed. They refuse to pose as obedient functionaries of an alien ideology. They reject feudal submission to illegitimate authority, demand government by consent, and emancipate themselves from the cultural and spiritual tyranny of what they regard as an army of occupation.

Juliet cheerfully counters her teacher (*en badinant*) with feigned courteous cordiality (*comitas inter gentes*), while Pauline continues to take the situation more seriously. With unprecedented militancy and in the manner of an oath of abjuration, she trenchantly renounces and contrarily impugns those alien and arbitrarily enshrined rulers from whom the girls feel disaffected. She schismatically declares for and refuses to disavow the Borovnian alternative, being unwilling to abase herself and pay a false homage.

The girls seek the independence of Huck Finn and strive to liberate themselves from cultural and genealogical constraints, yet remain subject to "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to." Mania is followed by compensating depression. Thus, as Juliet's coughing becomes productive of blood, the mood, so wonderfully reflected in Pauline's face, suddenly swings wildly from the soul's high adventure of "The Donkey Serenade" and the Fourth World to sobering dilemma and despair.

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Pauline retires to bed, empathetically sharing Juliet's dark night of the soul in the belly of the whale. Their heroic underworld journey will result in their realization of and taking conscious control of yet another aspect of their psychic potential. Pauline's desire for tuberculosis is a foretaste of the ordeals she is willing to undergo to avoid separation from Juliet. Similar to her treatment in school, though oppositely directed, Pauline is told "Sit up" by her mother. Pauline's lack of appetite mirrors her emotional starvation. Fasting is associated with vision quest, the induction of inner states of awareness and the subduing of carnal desires. Still being able to write may be adequate from an adult perspective, but is only marginally better than nothing from Pauline's operatic point of view, and so is of little comfort. Juliet is said to be infectious and has already infected Pauline emotionally. Honora says that the Hulmes "won't be going overseas

now. They have to cancel their trip." Unbeknownst to her, the statement is untrue of the Hulmes, but aptly applies to the girls as foreshadowing.

Honora solicitously attends Pauline, who is not sick, while Hilda abandons Juliet, who is. These antiparallel situations are emphasized with a graphic match as the girls are sequentially displayed in bed, reliving, as it were, their respective episodes of childhood convalescence. Each is again a victim of illness, whether real or imagined. Already one of "the best people," Juliet accepts the martyrdom of isolation, another red badge of courage that will further bolster her credentials as spiritual aristocracy. This promises to be a stringent endurance test, but in the face of such blatant parental denial, Juliet's ambivalence is more easily appreciated. She stands up to teachers and knocks her father back into his chair. But, not wanting to disappoint, she now acquiesces to being kicked when she is down. As she begins her hospital stay, and the first installment of the "for good of your health" setup occurs, eternity is suggested when it is said that four months will fly by in "no time." This is one of the points where the film may be divided so as to form parts related by the golden ratio, discussion of which will be offered when the other such point is reached.

With the loss of Juliet, the golden girl, as with the disappearance of the golden ball in the story of the Frog King, normal life seems empty and meaningless. Juliet takes half of Pauline's life away with her. The loss of the remaining half is pending. Pauline experiences a mere foretaste of the bereavement she will suffer at the end, and appropriately wears her black school uniform at dinner, where she is deaf to her parents' hortatory suggestions, her ardor apparently spent. The girls' indolence forms a dramatic counterpoint to their earlier rambunctious vigor.

Pauline again takes the initiative by conceiving the idea of corresponding in character. She is the one to have a "brainwave" because Juliet's (literal) inspiration is compromised by illness. In her epistolary frenzy, Pauline's alacritous flick of the page is a joy all by itself. Having already experienced the Fourth World, it comes as no surprise that Juliet "has entered into the *spirit* of the thing greatly." Role playing facilitates both the displacement of sexual drives and, as at the birth of Diello, the declaration of love. Deborah can thus tell Charles, "I miss you and adore you." This may be relevant to the pending discussion of sexuality. Graham Robb, reviewing the work of Edmund White (*Los Angeles Times*, 1/23/05), writes of 1950s America, "Since no gay man could talk openly about his adventures, they had to be transformed into plausible fiction. Real men would have to be turned into imaginary women." As discussed below, Pauline could have been similarly motivated to personify the imaginary Charles.

Pauline and Juliet, as Charles and Deborah, respectively, have spawned a child of wrath, little knowing how this will reflect on them (*le style, c'est l'homme*). Necessary psychological changes may avoid the interference of a fearful and reluctant ego by originating in the shadow. The girls' animus projections are already carried by the Worthies in their proprietary pantheon. Diello emerges, later joined by Harry Lime, as the shadow counterpart of the saints. Beauvoir says that men write about women to learn about men. Perhaps the girls write about Diello to learn about their own dark side. Like all of their plasticine characters, Diello is an spontaneous expression of latent psychic powers, such that whatever practicality he may lack is made up for in symbolism. In the incarnadine tradition of Heinz 57 sauce, Diello "has killed 57 people." Charles has been known to kill, but his scion Diello seems to be outdoing him (*sequiturque patrem non passibus æquis*).

Juliet's confinement seems to be occurring at a hinge in history. One of Pauline's letters is dated 7 June 1953. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II just five days earlier parallels the turnover of royalty in Borovnia, with Charles replacing Lancelot. It was on Coronation Day that

news reached England of the conquest of Mount Everest by Edmund Hillary, who will be mentioned later in the film. The girls are beginning their climb out of a relative minimum in the trajectory of their relationship. The film's culminating events are coincident with a similar hinge, but in an astronomical sense.

Like the food in *Like Water for Chocolate*, these letters serve as effective electuaries, providing a measure of remedy that helps the correspondents endure their separation (*otium sine litteris est mors*). Pauline may be revealing her own social aspirations when, as Charles, she expresses with wonderful sarcasm a contempt for the *hoi polloi* (*odi profanum vulgus*). Pauline is eyed by John as she spends a quiet evening at home, the nurturing hearth ironically foreshadowing a later scene featuring an oven. Pauline plays scrabble, such games subtly hinting at the girls' "checkered" future. She arranges her scrabble tiles to spell PUTRID S, which is also an anagram of R STUPID.

All the talk of killing is rendered in a comical tone, underscored by the music. As earlier during the "Donkey Serenade" scene, there is again a parody of death, though now in a more extreme form and with copious collateral damage. Occasionally, such lugubrious artistic grotesquery is merely a veneer concealing genuine savagery. Pauline enthusiastically smears red paint over her drawing (So *that's* what's black and white and red all over!), foreshadowing the bloody ruination of her monochromatic anticipatory fantasy and immediately anticipating the (imagined) bloody end of a man dressed in black and white but acting as a surrogate for an appropriately colored "cardinal." This paint is a simulated, sublimated form of the real, coughed-up blood with which Juliet must cope in the hospital, a place like the bone-heaped island of the Sirens. To some extent, the girls see all of humanity (except "about ten people") as a ward of pitiful incurables. Symbolically, blood is the result of the union of the opposites of fire and water, and may represent either wrath or salvation, depending on context and subjective attitude. The blood of Christ unites God and man in communion, provides redemption from sin, and is associated with a liquid form of the philosopher's stone. Blood may serve as a mark of distinction that confers protection (Exodus 12:13), and the shedding of blood may be required for the forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22).

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Juliet's visit from the unctuous Reverend Norris within this hospital setting causes a clergyman to be associated with sickness, as in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, wherein Stephen says religion is not "a lying-in hospital." Juliet makes a mockery of the situation, yielding a *sermon joyeux*. With this treatment of religion, taken together with the preceding display of Diello's violence, the girls' correspondence assumes the character of *tremendismo*. Also recalled is the theater of panic, which involves both tragedy and religious buffoonery (*parodia sacra*). The religious tirade eventually becomes wordless. Juliet's sly irreverence in school has now developed into undisguised contempt. "If looks could kill," goes the old saying. Juliet wastes little time demonstrating that, in the best possible way, they can.

Sheldon Cashdan, reviewing *The Norton Anthology of Children's Literature* in the *Los Angeles Times*, 10/16/05, writes that "as is the case with all fairy tales, the protagonist must enter into a climactic struggle against an evil force . . . . If the hero or heroine is to survive both psychologically and physically, he or she must draw on heretofore untapped inner strengths. . . . A child's ability to access unrealized parts of the self is a key component of maturation." As

Wittgenstein puts it, "A man will be imprisoned in a room with a door that's unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to pull rather than push it."

A watershed event now occurs as Juliet benefits from a most consequential revelation, such as those said to be afforded by the philosopher's stone. As when Tita confronts her mother's ghost in *Like Water for Chocolate*, the matter is now seized by its root as aid arrives with a punctuality typical of myth. The plasticine denizens of Borovnia come to life as *poses plastiques* (the opposite of *tableaux vivant*). Bringing statues to life represents the integration of inanimate matter with mind, and perhaps wisdom with truth. These Borovnian figures almost literally have feet of clay, and such proves to be metaphorically true of Reverend Norris (*fraus pia*), just as it will of many of the girls' various enemies.

The girls write with a certain seriousness, but their anarchic Borovnia is also carnivalesque. The carnival aesthetic involves social inversion and the suspension of prohibitions, which is perfectly consistent with the girls' anti-authoritarian views, as well as their "Christian bashing." Further, utopias are incomplete and insipid unless integrated with the dark side. Ignoring the latter creates an imbalance in the unconscious. Wisdom recognizes the need for both. As Maria Tatar writes, reviewing Gregory Maguire's novel *Son of a Witch* in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 10/2/05, "Fantasy depends on the yoking of terror and beauty." Recalling the discussion of anatomical references in *Barton Fink*, the serene Fourth World and the turbulent Borovnia together represent the dichotomies of reason and instinct, culture and nature, brain and heart, and perhaps the classical gentility of Poussin and the realism of Caravaggio. Borovnia thus forms an essential complement to the Fourth World, which was first conceived of as an afterlife realm. Later, it could be reached while alive, but only twice a year. Juliet now discovers that some of these psychic resources (at least the Borovnian variety) have become available on demand. This brings to mind the original sense of the title *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistlestop Cafe*. If one's current circumstances are unsuitable, then one can mentally escape to happier places and times. This is also demonstrated in the finale of the film *Brazil*. This psychological capability (*potestas agendi*) having been found, Diello now becomes fully operational in his practical form and is pressed into service. Rising now to the full stature of his utility, he acts as protective wraith, effectively conferring on Juliet a welcome new measure of power that can be directed against her enemies.

Hypostatization is the personification of an abstraction. Just as honor can demand certain behavior, so vengeance now takes the form of Diello. A fetish involves both image and spirit. The plasticine Diello is now diabolically animate. He appears over his victim's right shoulder, screen left, and disposes of the unwelcome visiter. Though this is taken to be Juliet's subjective fantasy and no actual harm to the chaplain is inferred, he is never seen again. He ceases to be an impediment, so this marks the practical end of his episcopate. Also note that anticlericalism alone cannot constitute "Christian bashing." At his death, the Buddha observed how the clergy can function as an obstruction.

At a critical moment in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus says, tapping his brow, "But in *here* it is I must kill the priest and the king." This same wisdom (*sapientia*) has now been rediscovered by Juliet. It allows one to live in the real world (*veritas*) and cope with it. Similarly, the cartoon *In the Bleachers* by Steve Moore for 5/14/03 depicts a baseball manager yelling at an umpire. From the umpire emerges a thought cloud in which he is seen strangling the manager. The caption reads: "The umpire engages his coping mechanism." *Priest* and *king* refer equally well to Reverend Norris and Lancelot, who are killed by Diello and Charles, respectively, within

the realm of the imagination. Unlike Stephen Dedalus, however, Pauline will wrongly "tap" her mother's head rather than her own, and physically at that.

The momentum of the inherently advantageously predisposed psyche should be cultivated and yielded to. But libido, though primarily a creative impulse, can be destructive if unmitigated. Potentially degrading and destructive impulses can produce vices, but can also yield illumination if harnessed and sublimated rather than extinguished. Nietzsche warns against parting with one's demons too readily, as they may represent one's finest qualities. La Rochefoucauld says that "our virtues are, most often, only our vices disguised." The goal is to maintain the energy, zeal, and violence necessary for escape, but to redirect and refocus, keeping murderous force sequestered within. This transformation of vice into complimentary virtue via sublimation of one's animal nature is symbolized in the East by the turning about of the *shakti*. Failure of this sublimation allows inertia to overcome one's spiritual aspiration, while success facilitates experience of the divine.

The cardinal problem is to recognize the true source of the crisis. One's greatest opponent is one's own negative potentialities. Paradise is indeed found in the shadow of swords, but *jihad* is properly an inner struggle. In accordance with the Saint George imagery, it is the dragon of pride within oneself that must be slain. The ultimate remedy is the conquest of inner rather than outer demons, as in the mystical, inward-turning tradition of Kundalini yoga, wherein the upper *cakras* represent the same energies of the lower ones, but with the energy turned inward. The Buddha considered Jainism to be a physical misinterpretation of spiritual wisdom. An affirmative life is achieved not by death to the physical aspects of existence, but rather from the psychological death of desire and fear. In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell says, "The proper field of battle is not geographical but psychological." Such is the case with Tita's solution to the Mama Elena Problem in *Like Water for Chocolate*, where literal murder is impossible because Elena is already dead. One can make a virtue of limitation and succeed in the inner world such that one's outer failures may be shrugged off (*æquo animo*).

Emancipatory struggles are fruitful to the extent that they take a properly inward direction, without physical risk to those who carry one's projections, just as the breaking and burning of records demonstrate iconoclasm in which the real Mario remains unhurt. Daniel Dennett writes of the Popperian strategy where hypotheses are allowed to die in one's place. The inner freedom achieved by detachment from the external requires the wisdom to discriminate between inner and outer. Primitive aggression can then be channeled to the inner world of the psyche where it can experience proper focus and compartmentalization. Such sublimation is well found (*ben trovato*) and allows one prudent bravery and avoidance of illegality (*de minimis non curat lex*). It is this wisdom that comes to Stephen Dedalus in *Ulysses* when he realizes his bondage is psychological rather than filial, political, or ecclesiastical (*vincit qui se vincit*). In that same book it is written, "shoot him to bloody bits . . . Not hurt? O, that's all right. Shake hands." Similarly, a murder perpetrated by Diello is a victimless crime, and the literally absurd becomes psychically visionary.

Frightful images displace terror from the observer. Distanced participation also provides moral distance. Borovnizing the violence absolves Juliet of guilt. The imagination is an inexhaustible cornucopia from which to draw life-enhancing salutary illusion. The promptings of the lower instincts need not be extinguished, but may remain operative and be profitably redirected such that conflicts are transposed into this new dimension. The goal is to marshal this faculty and achieve sublimated gratification by giving full reign to oblique and stylized virtual retribution rather than to fully indulged, literal physical violence. Such diversion of base psychic

energy yields vicarious and thus inoffensive and guiltless resolution. Valuable results may thereby be achieved by seemingly evil means. It is noted above that Friar Lawrence proclaims, "Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied." He then goes on to say, "And vice sometime's by action dignified." Such is the case with homicide as it is practiced by Diello. It is not wrong when properly applied to abstracta rather than concreta.

Diello is now seen in a new light as he acquires an importance beyond his original mandate. Like Reverend Norris, he is an agent of a power greater than himself. His previously indiscriminate destruction becomes apotropaically focused, guarding Juliet against evil. The seminal event for our principals (though, under the circumstances, perhaps one should say ovular) is the auspicious recognition of the mission criticality of an imaginary assassin, thanks to whose violence the girls need not themselves be violent. The ingenuity that Juliet summons provides the solution towards which the girls have been feeling their way for some time and for which Juliet deserves moral credit. Drawn from the deep pocket of imagination, Diello is their go-to guy and he should be gone to because he personifies the "priest-and-king" wisdom that is the might that can rid one of an imaginary king or a real priest with equal dispatch. This ultimate force multiplier optimizes Juliet's benefit/detriment quotient and allows her to carry the day with a tidy, quality win at small expense, with no heavy lifting, and even with a bit of wicked delight. Outsourcing is the winning idea that confers these inestimable advantages (*sub hoc signo vinces*). To this definitive purpose was Diello spawned. Thus equipped, and playing within one's game, adversity can be serenely and assuredly taken in stride. This war-by-other-means counterattack in which Juliet engages is but an extension of the girls' drawings, paintings, writings and fantasies. It simply remained for Juliet to hit upon the foundational insight of just how much mileage can be made from discharging tension nonviolently. That hurdle overcome, and having found her psychological footing by expanding her psychological skill set, Juliet is now much better prepared to leave the hospital and cope with life in general.

Another critical lesson is expressed in the Arthurian adventure of the sword bridge, in which a river must be crossed while one is supported on a knife-edge. The motif goes back at least as far as the Upanishads and is reflected in the title of Somerset Maugham's *The Razor's Edge*. If balance between *sapientia* and *veritas* can be accomplished without one being swept away in the torrent of one's own passion, then the best of both worlds may be enjoyed. That passion can lead to catastrophe is also a lesson to be gleaned from Aristotelian tragedy.

However, maintenance of this all-too-fragile tension can be challenging. Like the balance between *yin* and *yang*, or *Sense and Sensibility*, a unified personality depends on a dynamic psychic equilibrium between imagination and intellect, intuition and logic, fantasy and reality, stagnation and anarchy, and feelings of superiority and inferiority. Finding a proper mode of relationship requires a compromise between helpless passivity and demonic aggression. The piano must include dark keys to realize its full potential, and truth is an intolerable horror without wisdom (*veritas odium parit*). The ultimate tragedy of this film results from the failure of Pauline's sword bridge adventure. This is foretold when she jumps down from her backyard fence, an action that recalls Dorothy falling into the pig pen in *The Wizard of Oz*.

In Wagner's *Ring*, the *Tarnhelm* confers upon its wearer special powers of transportation and transformation. The girls require such help neither to travel to the Fourth World, which is not physical, nor for transformation into potent beasts like dragons, as Diello is available as a proxy. It is only later when they attempt physical flight and actual murder that they are frustrated. Recalling the character Loge from Wagner's *Ring*, the Trickster archetype is an ambiguous shape shifter full of potential who, from the unconscious, gives the hero the trick needed to succeed.

Orson Welles is banished to the unconscious where he metamorphoses into Diello, the incarnation of needed wisdom. The Gnostic myth of Sophia concerns the wisdom of God, which is lost in matter, but emerges to help one cope with crises, unless the strain is just too great.

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Pauline, obviously exploiting the earliest possible opportunity for Juliet to receive visitors, burst Shiva-like through the threshold, then repeatedly turns to the left. She is perhaps prompted by the same combination of compassion and vicarious masochism that sends Leopold Bloom to visit Mina Purefoy in the maternity hospital. Pauline's protean nature is again emphasized by the juxtaposed application of different names to her. Juliet wears blue slippers and knits a red sweater that is intended for Pauline. It is as if the blood she has coughed up has colored the yarn, as it colored her school notebook and as Tita's blood colors the roses in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Thread has been thought of as symbolizing semen, but Juliet's yarn is more like the thread of life spun, measured and cut by the fates: Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, respectively. Atropos is sometimes represented by thread alone. Honora brings fruit and shows the first hint of concern about the "intensity" of the girls' relationship.

Juliet's is probably not missing much in her unopened letters. As they would be expected to be stereotypically vacuous and platitudinous, she probably need not bother. A painting of a lighthouse hangs on the wall, suggesting the wisdom and guidance of a mentor. Juliet has just employed proper "priest-and-king" wisdom, which hopefully will be imparted to Pauline. The scene ends with music like that associated with the bedridden Tristan in the third act of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

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Many artists heal themselves through their art. Pauline and Juliet reciprocally sensitize, arouse, enable and nourish each other's myth-making faculty of imagination, which is their natural endowment. Myth is the disguise in which unconscious material is cloaked when it emerges into consciousness, without which it would go unrecognized. Myths are the impersonal, collective dreams of a culture, and the conscious manifestations of archetypes, which are inherited, universal predispositions. Myths are symbolic of human potentialities, balance among which is necessary for psychic wholeness. These symbols protect the psyche and foster its maturation.

Symbols are a conscious expression of the psyche, being spontaneously derived from the archetypes. They help to reconcile thinking and feeling, and must be understood both intellectually and emotionally. Context governs their meaning. Just as Lear demonstrated truth masquerading as nonsense, fantasy characters that appear juvenile at one stage of psychic development may represent wisdom at another. Often, however, psychology is misread as history. The danger will come when Pauline makes the mistake of incarnating that which is best left metaphorical. For now, while her conscious musings will be preserved in her diary, Pauline's unconscious finds expression in plasticine figurines imprinted with her own qualities and desires.

Just as Diello is derived from Orson Welles, the fictitious continues to be abstracted from the actual. In Pauline's Borovniana-strewn room, John regards his own likeness in the form of Nicholas (who is depicted as left-handed) and offers praise to Pauline that ominously invokes damnation. When Pauline claims that "there's nothing between" Nicholas and Deborah, recall,

from the essay on *The Crying Game*, the potential significance of the word *nothing*. It is said that myths are analogs of truths, all biography is refracted autobiography, and imagination is memory. "Nicholas has got his eye on Gina" because John began eyeing Pauline on his first entrance. Nature is thus mirrored in the events of fantasy. The modeling of Borovnia on real life recalls the reassertion of the authority of experience brought about by feminist criticism. In response to her own suggestive, compendious epithet, John compliments Pauline by noting her resemblance to the "amazingly beautiful" figure. She is flattered, but immediately adds the third element of the triangle by linking the figurine to Juliet.

Pauline's reassignment of fantasy alter ego from a male to a female character is a key turning point in her psychosexual development and reflects a more complex sexual identity. In conformity with the conventional heterosexual model, one must have a male identity if one's love object is female. Pauline, therefore, assists at Diello's birth as Charles and then maintains this persona when writing to the hospitalized Juliet. Pauline identifies with the lament expressed in the aria of a male character, while Juliet will later sing the aria of a female. But self-assertion and rebellion yield emancipation when Pauline discovers that she need not abandon her biological gender identification in order to have a female love object. Also, gender depicted in myth and dream may be neither stable nor literal.

"Deborah would never go for a commoner," says Pauline. Neither would Charles. But Gina may consort with Nicholas while avoiding any misalliance or outrage to convention. In his *Dictionary of Symbols*, Tom Chetwynd offers the following insight: "The desire to play menial parts, like the maid, in sexual fantasy, could be symbolic of the need to pay more attention to the inferior function."

In the tradition of Tolkien and Baum, the girls' world-making ambitions and corporate work have resulted in the creation of a vast realm of characters, in which the genealogical relationships would be expected to reflect the structure of the psyche. Outsiders are made to feel as if they would need an orismological breviary to navigate the apparently sprawling, Byzantine, labyrinthine, mandarin, gothic, encyclopedic complexity of their *roman-fleuve*. Such a voluminous enterprise may be an example of the blasphemous literary pretension to rival divinity via shear quantity. Accordingly, John is still climbing the learning curve and not yet a Borovnia wonk. The phrase "It's all worked out" could also refer to the inexorability of fate.

Each of the girls has a comical "however," with Juliet's coming first. This has been paralleled by respective third person attributions ("Paul thought it up." "Juliet made it."). Each also says, "It's so obvious," with Pauline now having the privilege of going first when announcing John's love for her as she visits Juliet. This indeed should be obvious to her unconscious, even if consciously it is only self-flattery, as was taken to be her self-proclamation of "genius." Such self-glorification will play somewhat less comically and more plausibly during the upcoming sequence from which the film's title derives.

The situation with John is confided to Juliet because Pauline feels secure in their relationship and does not realize that Juliet's confinement has made her even more emotionally vulnerable than usual. Pauline is thus surprised to find that Juliet, as in earlier circumstances, feels threatened by the imagined rebuff. Juliet's deep wound of doubt is nicely expressed by her defensive body language. Having not been favored with a postal reply, she now worries about being displaced in Pauline's affections. Pauline quickly tries to allay Juliet's fears of being jilted. Note that Pauline's reassurance that John is "only a stupid boy" functions equally well to distinguish him from a man or from a girl. Also note that Juliet's blanket is blue even though those in the background show that this is not the only option.

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The sleeping Pauline is seen in a light that is, at first, rather greenish, like her plasticine. It then tends more toward the blue that will be used again in several later scenes. John is merely a stock character: the menacing, unwelcome suitor. Yet he comes to Pauline's room barefoot, as if treading on holy ground. The specific articles of clothing that he lacks are slippers. A glass slipper is the test that demonstrates Cinderella to be a proper mate, which John is not. Pauline is a kind of Cinderella who eventually degenerates into Ms. Hyde. John speaks of catching his death, which in a sense he will, all in good time. A minor continuity error occurs as John passes the edge of the door twice. It seems that Pauline was not just imagining what was "so obvious." John approaches his prey with care, perusing a women's magazine as if to disguise any phallic threat.

However, after allowing John into her bed, Pauline employs yet more fish imagery (fish sometimes being considered phallic symbols) when she calls one of her teachers, "Silly old trout." Pauline addresses John as Nicholas, the character for whom he is the model. She has supposedly switched her fantasy identity from the regal Charles to plebeian Gina. As Gina, she avoids the ignominy an aristocrat would suffer loving "a commoner" of "the lower classes." But she ironically alludes to the notorious affair of another royal Charles and his lower-class mistress. As a teenager, Nell Gwyn (1651-1687), the most popular mistress of Charles II, had served drinks in a brothel kept by her mother. Pauline is a teenager whose mother keeps a boarding house and whose current bedmate is named John, like the generic term of a prostitute's client. Charles II brought about the Restoration of the monarchy, while Charles of Borovnia represents the restoration to power of the girls' chosen monarch in place of the Windsors. Charles II also had an advisor named Nicholas. This name change will acquire further significance during their next encounter. Pauline repeats her teacher's observation that "these things do happen," a statement that will later seem to have a sinister echo.

Those who "don't excel in history" are doomed to repeat it. Pauline's self-referential statement alludes both to her later forgetting of the wisdom that factors so crucially into her recent history and also to what will be her own infamous place in history. Setting aside actual historical hindsight, Pauline's ultimate fate is fairly predictable. Her actions will no doubt initially incite much flapping of tongues and pouring on of scorn, to the satisfaction of petty voyeurs. Her infamy will afford a release for collective reprobation (*odium in longum jacens*) and make her a poster child for the crusade against juvenile delinquency, in accordance with the assertion of Lytton Strachey that "discretion is not the better part of biography." In what will become the uncritically received view (*idée reçue*), the girls will be thought by the gossip-mongering press, and so by the public, to constitute a putrescent nest of evil, just as the goddesses previously venerated by matriarchal societies are vilified as witches and demons when patriarchy ascends. It is easily imagined that ultimately, after exposing them to disparagement on a scale practically unknown to their forebears, society will want to forget these wastrels (amber-hued, sepia-toned nostalgia seldom lingering on such distressing things), and so will leave them in the lurch and never look back, in much the same way that Juliet casts Orson Welles into the stream. These pariahs will become an ill-remembered part of local demonology in the collective memory of New Zealand, and part of the dross and detritus of history. (A related phenomenon may be the "collective amnesia" of postwar Germany with respect to its Nazi past, as described by W.G. Sebald.) The issue will only become more complicated as time passes. Reviewing *Prime*

Green by Robert Stone in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 1/7/07, David L. Ulin attributes to Stone "the notion that memory is not orderly but kaleidoscopic," as well as the notion that "truth is elusive, and the best we can hope for is to frame a story that makes sense to us." History is what the present wants to know about the past, and Norman Maclean writes of "the mind's preference to construct history more by the principles of literature than by the canons of evidence."

Having forgotten to maintain the whispering with which the scene began, Pauline inadvertently summons her father. Even though Bert "saves" her (or at least her virginity), Pauline is unappreciative, and her relationship with her parents begins to sour in earnest. The audience is reminded that Pauline's room must be entered from the outdoors. Her situation in this peripheral appurtenance anticipates the fact that the real Pauline will be discovered in the late 1990s living in a "semi-detached home" in Kent, which also happens to be the surname of the actress playing Hilda.

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"Where's John?" asks Wendy the morning after. This will soon become an appropriate question about Juliet's brother. Pauline is to be moved inside, the physical proximity coinciding with greater emotional distance. Honora says to Pauline, "You shame me, you shame the family." Before Pauline is done, she will shame the whole nation, if not the empire. Honora scolds Pauline, but the lady dost protest too much. It emerges that, in a sense, Pauline does indeed take after her mother, justifying her mycterism and making Honora all the angrier for being reminded of it. Resentment is revealed along with hypocrisy similar to that of Elena in *Like Water for Chocolate*. As so often with parental rejection, the parental shadow is projected onto the child and the pot calls the kettle black. Hostility is often directed toward those who carry the projections of repressed wishes. Perhaps Honora is jealous of Pauline's liaison. Perhaps Henry will be jealous of the girls' "hanky-panky." Pauline, for her part, projects her own negative potentialities onto her mother and thus faces her greatest enemy: her own shadow. Pauline repudiates Honora probably in fidelity to the latter's moral influence. As the two mutually project their sexual guilt, Pauline perhaps now senses that all human umbilical cords lead back beyond one's mother to original sin. Also, the exhumation of the family secret that Honora "ran off" when she was "only 17" is possibly foreshadowed when Juliet is told to open her book to "page 17," when Pauline is run off the road by a car and when Pauline runs off the end of the pier.

Properly husbanded, resistance can be the greatest source of strength. Pauline and Tita both withdraw after being slapped by their mothers and both later confront their mothers. Tita is ultimately left with no option but to employ proper "priest-and-king" wisdom, whereas Pauline mishandles the opportunity. Just as Honora's secret is revealed by Nana Parker, the girls will be betrayed by Henry. Honora tells Pauline that she is "going to be late," which sounds like an unconscious assertion of the risk of pregnancy. This confrontation simply propels Pauline back into the arms of Nicholas.

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Pauline reports being "terribly cut up." This identifies her with the objects of cosmic sacrifice by recalling the dismemberment of Actaeon, Dionysus, Orpheus and Osiris. This imagery suggests the death of one's old, secular character in preparation for rebirth. Joseph

Campbell characterizes the dismemberment of Osiris as being "for the renovation of the world." Pauline is about to embark on her first unescorted trip to a preferred, imaginary realm. She may also regard her separation from Juliet as representing a divided whole. The cutting of the thread of life by the aforementioned Atropos would make one's destiny determined and fate sealed. Then too, there is the ominous recollection of Jezebel being eaten by dogs in I Kings 21:23 and the tearing apart of animals by maenads. More optimistically, being cut up is consistent with the agricultural imagery of certain myths in which death results in the promotion of new growth and regeneration.

Pauline turns right as she leaves her house on her way to her affair with Nicholas. When Parzival follows the right-hand path and does what he has been told, he fails. Pauline experiences a similar failure by engaging in a sexual relationship that, though premarital, is conventionally and "properly" (*patriis virtutibus*) heterosexual. She additionally commits the sin of Isolde by sleeping with a disqualified third party. (For further examples of the impropriety of blind obedience, see *Pan's Labyrinth*.)

Pauline's surreptitious journey to John's dwelling recalls the hero's approach to the inmost cave of greatest treasures and greatest fears. A fire escape is designed to allow people to escape danger by climbing down. Pauline climbs in the opposite direction to meet Nicholas. This is also a gender-inverted echo of *Rapunzel* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

Pauline has no genuine love for John, nor even for Nicholas. The affair is merely an opportunity to spite her mother and to flatter herself. The saints already act as carriers for her animus. They being too remote for her immediate purpose, she employs Nicholas as "Mr. Right Now." He will provide a kind of defiling sexuality that is avoided in *The Crying Game*, but that may possibly come to have some psychological value to Juliet, as will soon be suggested.

When John earlier asks Pauline if she loves him, she indicates her love for Nicholas. The difference between fantasy and reality is about to cause Pauline great disappointment, again foreshadowing the finale. With something like the "quasi-incestuous symmetry" observed by Janna Malamud Smith when her father, Bernard Malamud, had an affair with a woman the same age as herself, the actual name of Pauline's lover is similar to that of her pseudosister Juliet's brother. By renaming him, she avoids the appearance of incest, at least temporarily. Pauline employs the same comic tone and playful detachment that she used to describe their previous encounter. The text itself, however, is troubling, making the incident sound like date rape. It is now Pauline's turn for a comic "However." For a long moment, the camera remains outside. This gift of distance implies that the audience will be spared the details of the events occurring within. But, as in the prologue, it is not to be.

Pauline's gross physical escape from Honora is secondary to the subtle psychological escape she achieves from Nicholas. The Borovnian flowers are mostly red and blue. Most of the flowers on Pauline's dress are red. An intrinsic norm is perpetuated as plasticine is again used to embody the Borovnian citizenry. Unfortunately, the video transfer (on VHS and laserdisc) overcorrects and moderates a cinematic effect that worked well on film. In the theater, this Borovnia scene was slightly overexposed and washed out. This emphasized the fantasy nature of the situation and heightened the contrast, both physical (luminal) and emotional, with John's dark bedroom. The DVD may be somewhat closer to the film in this respect. The low frequency rumblings heard throughout the scene are the real world leaking in.

Pauline meets Charles, with whom she no longer identifies, and is recognized as Gina. The orthodox heterosexual model had demanded that she be male if her love were female. In a break with that traditional model, she maintains her female love object while accepting her

biological gender. Pauline also sticks to her guns by being on very good terms with Diello even though he is modeled in the likeness of Orson Welles, who Juliet regards as "the most hideous man alive." Within this pseudodream context, the sword wielded by Diello could symbolize penetrating, insightful intuition. Forged in transforming fire, it facilitates *viveka* (discrimination between truth and illusion). The sword is an instrument of castration by which brute impulse can be conquered by the intellect. The danger is that a sword, like Cato's, can turn on its bearer.

The music that accompanies this sequence provides a wonderful example of a telling liberty taken combined with the dramatic license one is willing to allow when one is in sympathy with a work of art. The action takes place in 1953, five years before this recording was made. Technically, this is an anachronism (specifically a prochronism) and would be considered an error by someone with a chip on their captious shoulder (*ne Jupiter quidem omnibus placet*). However, for those having been won over by this film in general and willing to meet the artist half way, the role of *amicus curiae* apologist may be willingly played, and both practical and thematic justification for the use of this recording may be sought and found.

Firstly, it may have been impossible to find an alternative better suited to the situation. Not only does this song provide the proper festive tone, it even provides a dramatic upward modulation that has been positioned within the scene most advantageously. But, there is, in addition to any impracticality of substitution, the recognition that this anachronism, however discrepant with history, is not incongruent with the context in which it is found. One of the functions of this scene is to demonstrate the power of Pauline's imagination. Given that her familiarity with the Lanza idiom has already been demonstrated, this writer is willing to stipulate that Pauline's imagination is sufficiently fertile to foresee what this song will sound like when it is eventually recorded. Additionally, this may be considered the filmmakers' dream, and dreams do not necessarily adhere to the natural temporal sequence of cause and effect. Finally, the telescoping of events in historical drama is common and should be happily embraced on dramatic grounds. Accordingly, anachronisms, of which there may be several in this film (for instance, as of this writing, the *Oxford English Dictionary* had been unable to conform that anyone went "bonkers" prior to 1957), do not detract from its significance.

Anne Perry herself has criticized this film for historical inaccuracy. As previously noted, nothing important turns on such an objection (*nihil ad rem*), as it lapses with the application of proper standards. This film is not a documentary and, as indicated earlier, contains an implicit disclaimer. Her being, of all things, a novelist makes Perry's failure to grasp this fundamental artistic concept all the more grievously disappointing.

A norm is violated as Deborah transforms from figurative plasticine to literal flesh. This literalizing is a sign of deterioration that will be seen as a developing problem in due course. In Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, Siegfried drinks a potion that causes him to forget Brünnhilde, but not absolutely. A vague resonance occurs in him when she is talked about. Similarly, in spite of her struggles to hold the spell, Pauline's will is not strong enough to keep her in the fantasy realm. She can leave the world but cannot be left alone by it. Despite her best efforts, her quest for escape to the world of imagination is ultimately frustrated when the insistent claims of the "terrifically dull" sublunary world are reasserted. In another tragedy-in-microcosm, her reverie is destroyed when fantasy is assailed, overtaken and overridden by homely actuality when her importunate suitor achieves a psychological intrusion to match his physical encroachment. Abruptly and forcibly repatriated from Borovnia in this peremptory fashion, few of her girlish illusions remain unshattered. Compared to Borovnia, reality bites. This is an echo of the prologue, in which reality shockingly intervened lest all this should be thought of as some remote

fairy tale. It is also a foretaste of the unexpected collision with *veritas* at the end. At this point, it may still be hoped that Pauline has the maturity to accept the facts and to cope.

The sound of the toilet (or "John") flushing in the background is a reminder that her ideal Nicholas is actually merely "John" and underscores Pauline's disgust with this heterosexual experience, which may result from fear of invasion of the psyche by the animus. Even if she is not gay, Pauline is insufficiently mature to appreciate John, who, in any case, lacks the "gentle heart" and is thus unworthy of *merci*. The disappointment comes when their relationship turns physical, with what Michael Joseph Gross calls "the blunt experience of intimacy that promiscuity can sometimes bring." If she is sufficiently disciplined to distill the insight, Pauline should take the hint from this wake-up call and do no literal killing. Some impulses are best sublimated. Mythologically, having performed the refusal of the call (of her companion's initially declined invitation) and experienced the supreme ordeal of death (of her virginity), she is now on her way to her sacred marriage with Juliet.

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Pauline repeatedly turns left as she enters the dragon's lair to retrieve Juliet, whose longer hair testifies to the duration of her ordeal. Their reunion is euphoric and all seems to be well that ends well (*la patience est amère, mais son fruit est doux*). Like the homecoming of Tita to Mexico or the *nostos* of Odysseus to Ithica, Juliet begins her journey home for a fresh start. Yet, all homecomings carry the potential for disappointment because both the person and the place have inevitably changed.

Like Apsarasis (mythical lovers blissfully transported by a bird), Pauline and Juliet are borne along on a flood tide of bliss by a more modern vehicle, with Henry seemingly reduced to passive chauffeur. They are nonetheless subject to malicious reconnaissance. A mirror can imply truth and self-knowledge, symbolically allowing the confrontation of the ego with the projections of its shadow. Its equal but opposite vantage suggests the balance of wisdom and truth, as does the approximate time of year this action is occurring, which is when the sun is in or near the constellation Libra. The rear-view mirror in this scene gives Dr. Hulme only limited, narrow, tunnel vision, making his view distorted and out of context. The reversed mirror image also suggests the flip side or the down side, anticipating the imminent dramatic reversal. The optical framing afforded by the mirror may be taken as a pun for being framed, as for a crime.

In a reversal of the aforementioned theme of the transformation of frog to prince, Juliet's brother, who earlier dressed as a prince, is now replaced by (as if transformed into) a dog. The dog traditionally symbolizes fidelity, but is also associated with the masculine aggression of the unleashed animus and with war, death, one's reviled primitive nature, the familiar spirit of witches, and being "hounded," as Juliet will later be by her conscience. The three-headed dog Cerberus guards the threshold of the underworld. And remember what dogs do to Jezebel (I Kings 21:23). For now, the canine "beautiful boy" also serves as a less threatening substitute for the human "stupid boy."

After her tawdry and disappointing physical affair, Pauline retreats to the rarefied, Platonic, abstract sublimation and recaptured sanctity of refined, decorous poetry, which is the interface between nature and the radiance of eternity. Wisdom (*sapientia*) now takes the form of the Provençal *saber* (poetic skill). Pauline soliloquizes in the lyric mode, such that she is not so much heard as overheard, making the audience feel as if it is eavesdropping. Her paean is a kind of mutually laudatory hymn employing reciprocal puffery (*laudari a viro laudato*). It is in the

tradition of the *mal mariée* (a song in which a woman expresses her preference for her lover over her husband), the encomium (an elaborate song of praise in honor of a victor), the partimen (a poetic debate in which a poet presents his proposition in the courts of love), the combined sacred and profane love of the *stilnuovisti* and even the *gierasa* (African boasting poem). If the poem were solicited by Juliet, then it would also be related to the *recuesta* (a poem commissioned from a Spanish *trovador*).

In the poem, the girls are referred to in filial and familial terms, in accordance with the ideal of mystical siblinghood. This is another assertion of the esoteric nature of their relationship. From the sound of their novels, Pauline's panegyric might be expected to be a poetaster's grotesque, sentimental, viscid, treacly, decadent, bombastic, orotund, purple, euphuistic, bathetic kitsch. But, while it may not be the last word in prosody or divine afflatus (*la critique est aisée et l'art est difficile*), its elegant, pseudo-antique dignity is more than adequate for those of us caught up in the spirit of the moment as we supply the unspoken thoughts behind this passionate tone and these semaphoring faces that make the poem all but unnecessary. The framing tragedy of the prologue fades from memory and the irony of the title nearly escapes us in our distraction as the "terrifically dull" world is held in abeyance. The sense of arrival fostered by this poem surpasses even that of "The Donkey Serenade" and the discovery of the Fourth World.

Pauline trades defilement for worship, returning to her proper mate. In a Promethean act of bride theft, Juliet steals Pauline from Nicholas, as Charles stole Deborah from Lancelot. Pauline wins the girl of dearly bought gold, and they carry each other off as trophies, to the dismay of John. Emblematic of his disregard for the law, such as the one prohibiting statutory rape, John runs into a policeman. As the girls drive off in the bus, Pauline sits on their left, while condemnation of a singular example of immaturity ("only a stupid boy") gives way to a much broader indictment ("every man is a fool"). The sexual rejection of John is given expression even by the bus itself, on the side of which are the words "NO ENTRANCE HERE."

Juliet maintains her composure in John's presence. As she displays none of her earlier jealousy, Juliet is either unaware of or forgives Pauline's affair with Nicholas. Pauline may not have revealed the pertinent details (*perjuria ridet amantium Jupiter*). Juliet may simply realize that the episode was motivated not by lust but just to spite Honora. In Juliet's absence, Nicholas was merely, to quote from *Parzival*, "Love's aid for Love's distress." It is now intuitively obvious to Juliet that it is John and not she who is the fifth wheel. He is "only a stupid boy" who may have forced Pauline's person but not her love. Juliet seems to know that he could never really replace her in Pauline's affections any more than Rosaura could replace Tita in Pedro's. Perhaps Juliet understands that Pauline was principally untrue to herself when she yielded seemingly mutinously to this despoiler. Juliet's equanimity may also result from the anticipation of the disposal of this object of Pauline's indiscretion.

Sheldon R. Brivic writes that Leopold Bloom needs Molly to commit adultery "so that he can see her as mother." Perhaps Pauline's affair facilitates Juliet's seeing her as a sexual female instead of as Charles. Bloom enjoys seeing Gerty on the beach until he realizes she is lame. Molly ultimately discards her lover Boylan. Nicholas is useful, but only temporarily. Pauline's affair is regarded with Bloomian abnegation and acquiescence, without the genuine triangular torments found in *Like Water for Chocolate*.

Sexual inconstancy does not necessarily indicate inconstancy of purpose. Having been separated in the flesh but joined in the spirit, the girls appreciate the distinction between physical and psychic fidelity. Though possibly facilitated by an unconscious sense of rivalry, Pauline's dalliance involved neither defection nor desertion, and fundamental allegiance was maintained.

She has remained faithful in spirit, if not in flesh, and thus maintains, after a fashion, a vestigial, idealistic, subtle virginity. Juliet recognizes the distinction made in Julie Taymor's *Frida* between fidelity and loyalty, and may also realize that Pauline was overwhelmed by circumstances. Resentment is thus overcome and yields to inner reconciliation (*sdegno d'amante poco dura*). Transient estrangement never significantly threatened their mutual adulation, so they remain reciprocally smitten, each now seeing in the other only those positive qualities projected there. Their conspiratorial grin fuels the sexuality debate even more than those earlier exchanged, especially given the lyrics of the poem (*Amour ce petit dieu volage / Nous aprend ce muet langage. Que le regard vole et revole, / Messager de nos passions, / Et serve au lieu de la parole / Pour dire nos intentions*). Juliet remains sister and lover in spirit, just as Wendy and John, respectively, have been in the flesh.

John, however, persists as a pest, so an ambush is prepared against his return. According to proper "priest-and-king" wisdom, the girls, wisdom-flush and wisdom-drunk, jointly activate the suitor-conquering power of the imagination such that the job of killing is again delegated to Diello (*si sic omnia!*). His act recalls the killing of the suitors by Odysseus and is distanced from reality by bringing John into a Borovnian context and dispatching him in the form of a plasticine Nicholas. (As already noted in the case of Diello, the name *Nicholas* is associated with James Mason, who had played a character of that name in the 1945 film *The Seventh Veil*.) The result is that both Johns (Juliet's brother and Pauline's lover) are now functionally eliminated from the story and the girls have now achieved a concord seemingly immune to provocation. Together with Henry's pending betrayal (*fides Punica*), these events recall the infidelity and revenge that are preparatory to the final union of Siegfried and Brünnhilde in death.

Throwing stones, as during the *hajj*, is believed to cast out devils, which represent those parts of the psyche that threaten to usurp authority. Nicholas is dispatched with the aid of a stone in the form of a jewel, which represents the proper spiritual way (in this case virtual rather than real murder), perfect joy, the precious female aspect of life, maturity, individuation, stability and increased awareness of the eternal. The philosopher's stone represents actualized wisdom (*sapientia*) and mediates the transformation of base material into gold, a color associated with Juliet. There are also echoes of Jacob's stone, where the upper realm of spirit and the lower realm of matter unite, and the wish-fulfilling jewel of wisdom held by the Japanese deity Jizo Bosatsu. The stone in this scene, a somewhat less-than-precious Borovnian souvenir, arrives as Mentor's reassuring gift, which helps one through the labyrinth like Ariadne's thread. By proxy, the girls meet the seducer in combat, rather than yield to his seduction. If Nicholas was Pauline's supreme ordeal, Juliet (jewel-iet) is her reward, and both the gathering of the jewel here and its later deployment as the gimmick for the denouement are entrusted to Juliet. Pauline now stands on their left as all the girls' problems are seemingly put to flight.

For this auspicious occasion, which provides the context for the film's title, the girls appropriately appear attired in the proper, characteristic, definitive symbolic vocational colors of their mythological office: blue and red. These colors are highlighted throughout this essay as they are distributed throughout the film as cataphora and anaphora, respectively anticipating subsequent occurrences and referring back to antecedent ones.

In traditional Christian iconography, red and blue represent, respectively, the heavenly and the earthly, the divine and the human, the inner and the outer, the occult and the manifest, the noumenal and the phenomenal, the mystical and the concrete. (In the East, this distinction between eternal ethereality and temporal corporeality is embodied in the concept of solar and lunar consciousness.) The red blood of Jesus signifies the mysterious subtle potential of the male

spiritual mystery. The blue robe of Mary signifies the gross female material vessel through which the mystery is realized. The propriety of Juliet wearing "Marian blue" is also reflected in the fact that her middle name is Marion, as is her mother's. Her name thus becomes a euonymic, aptronymic epithet. Similarly, *Pauline* can be taken as an adjective, recalling the Pauline doctrine that good works are insufficient for salvation.

Red and blue are employed in the same symbolic sense in the Hindu image known as *sri yantra*. It is a meditation tool and visible analogue of a *mantra*. It represents the interplay of matter and spirit, and facilitates meditation on either creation or dissolution. In the Tantric tradition, blue is associated with sight (Juliet is the first to see the Fourth World), and red with smell (Pauline smells onions). For Kandinsky, red produced a feeling of triumph, and blue a feeling of heavenly, supernatural rest. The mixture of red and blue would yield purple, symbolizing the potent union of mind and matter (*sapientia et veritas*). Unfortunately, the girls ultimately find this union to be unstable and little purple is seen.

Blue is associated with sky, thought, deceptive simplicity, truth, security, and spiritual purity. Red is the color of new life, sanguinity, cardinality, the rose of divine grace, passion, fire, revolution, war, hate, execution, the diabolical, hostility, violence, martyrdom, sacrifice, and disorder. As will be seen, the executioner and the rose of divine grace are not mutually exclusive. In alchemy, red is associated with sulfur, which was encountered earlier. Red is the color used to reflect the sensational journalism of the "Aeolus" chapter of *Ulysses*. Parzival assumes the role of the Red Knight. Brahma is depicted as a red figure. Reviewing Amy Butler Greenfield's *A Perfect Red: Empire, Espionage, and the Quest for the Color of Desire*, John Eidinow writes, "Red signals Jezebel on the movie screen, but media advisors also tell women it is the color of confidence for the television interview."

Pauline's principal colors through most of the film are red and green, the typical colors of the earthly forces that hold the soul earthbound and battle the blue and white forces of heaven in Christian art. They are the colors of Christmas, which we twice spend with Pauline, who is also the one who will feel "night-before-Christmasish." For Joyce, green is associated with imagination, while red is associated with reality and hostility. These same two colors also have political significance in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. As the midpoint of the visible spectrum, green represents harmonious balance, the establishment of which is the ultimate goal of psychic development. (Additional references to green are made in a deleted segment of the prologue.)

The intentionality of this symbolism is not being postulated. However, the segment in *Visions of Light* where Vittorio Storaro discusses his deliberately symbolic use of color in *The Last Emperor* should dispel any thoughts of implausibility.

The title of this film is revealed to be an eponymous reference to our principal duumvirate, which may constitute an act of hubris. This film may thus be considered to carry a quotation title, though via internal self-reference, since this poem would otherwise be very little known. The title might also unhappily recall Jack Smith's 1963 film *Flaming Creatures*, "a film," writes David L. Ulin in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 2/4/07, "that was closed down by the police."

Visually isolating the girls' eyes further spiritualizes the atmosphere by eliminating the potentially prurient corporeal aspect. This mitigates any carnality in the following two shots, allowing a fusion of the sensual and the spiritual that conforms to Gottfried von Strassburg's ideal of love. Recall also H.P. Blavatsky's intellectual Doctrine of the Eye. The *cakra* of the manifestation of divine grace, *anja*, may be said to be "hidden behind" the eyes, suggesting that

the girls behold each other not merely with lust, but as mutual objects of worship. Mention is made of wisdom and to it being hidden, which it will eventually be even from the girls themselves. The poem and these glowering eyes simultaneously issue a warning to those who would dare interfere.

The girls, awash in bliss, bathe, with Pauline on the left, in the waters of the unconscious to which "It" was consigned. The bath allows further symbolic purgation of any sexual guilt and implies baptism, rebirth and the washing away of sin, while nudity implies candor and truth. And since Pauline seeks to be a kind of sister to Juliet, this amniotic image suggests not just soul mates dissolving into each other, but siblings sharing a womb, like the Gemini, the light and dark twin siblings, or Inanna and Ereshkigal, the light and dark sisters, who are the two aspects of the one goddess. In *Finnegans Wake*, Shem and Shaun are one, twin yolks of the father-egg. Medusa and Athena are, respectively, the dark negative and the radiant positive aspects of the anima. The prizes for slaying Medusa are the golden sword Chysaor and Pegasus. Pauline wins the "golden" Juliet and then sees unicorns. Athena's shield bears the image of Medusa, indicating the integration of the shadow. Diello is such a figure for the girls until the situation deteriorates.

This image of the girls bathing also recalls the mystical marriage of the hero with the goddess, or the sacred alchemical marriage of King Sol and Queen Luna who confront each other naked, unite, die and are reborn as hermaphroditic twins. For Jung, this image represents the assimilation of the shadow. More generally, it represents the union of opposites and the mystical realization that separateness is illusion. This is related to the Brunonian law of the merging and reconciliation of opposites under God, and the relationship between Christ and His church. For Pauline and Juliet, it signifies their *mariage de conscience*, which they would not think of as a morganatic *mariage de la main gauche*. Accordingly, Pauline's poem ultimately assumes the character of a prothalamion or epithalamion. The negative aspect of luxurious bathing is the complacent relaxation of defensive vigilance. This shot will be echoed when Kate Winslet finds herself similarly situated on the right side of the screen while sharing a bathtub in *The Reader*.

This idyllic episode culminates in the silent stasis of aesthetic transport as the girls reach their empyrean in a surfeit of bliss that they hold to be well-deserved (*corona veniet delectis*). Wisdom and ecstasy combine to yield a preternatural ecstasy like that experienced by Baudelaire during the prelude to Wagner's *Lohengrin*. While dwelling within the Cave of Lovers, Tristan and Isolde take no food. They sustain themselves merely by gazing at one another. Nourished by invisible manna, Pauline and Juliet hunger not. Together they constitute a self-sufficient whole. This is all that is required in a classical Hindu *Gandharva* marriage (what Joseph Campbell calls "a marriage of angels"), which is established by mutual consent and involves neither rituals nor witnesses. Informed by their chosen deities, they are themselves mutually radiant and rapt in the beatific vision of each other. With their wisdom in full flower, confident of their powers and enjoying their self-ennoblement, they gorge delightedly on the fruits of that wisdom (*Sine te non potero vivere: iam decet amorem perficere*). Along with the series of comic books that Jack Kirby produced in the 1970s called *The Fourth World*, including one titled *The New Gods*, there comes to mind the last line of the song "*Mut!*" ("Courage") from Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise*: "*Will kein Gott auf Erden sein*, / *Sind wir selber Götter!*" ("If there is no God on earth, we ourselves are gods!") Also appropriate are the finals words of the film *Tom Jones* (Horace, translated by John Dryden): "Happy the man and happy he alone, / he who can call today his own, / he who secure within can say / 'Tomorrow, do thy worst, for I have lived today.'" Its worst is precisely what tomorrow will do in the present story, but this is easily

forgotten here. The relationship of Tita and Pedro in *Like Water for Chocolate* is ultimately raised to the divine plane. Pauline and Juliet rival that consummation, falling just short.

Bliss now overflows the screen to wash over and enfold the audience. Some people aggressively insulate themselves and find these girls tedious. But we true fans are palpably enraptured and do not quite feel the ground beneath our feet. The situation is almost like the Augustinian model of the trinity as lover, beloved and love itself as the harmonizing medium (*tertium quid*). In the opera *Elektra* of Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the title character sings, "*Wir sind bei den Göttern, wir Vollbringenden*." ("We are with the gods, we who accomplish.") She also sings a series of "beatitudes" that translate, in part, as: "Happy is the one who beholds him, who recognizes him, who touches him, who holds the torch for him, who opens the door for him." So may it be for us with respect to these "Heavenly Creatures."

However, no rose is without thorns, all glory is fleeting, pride goeth before a fall, and after the feast comes the reckoning. This majestic tranquility is unsustainable and is but the calm before the storm. Realizing, in the words of Mark Swed, "that the nature of beauty is to be interrupted," John Cage warns in his *Lecture on Nothing* to "beware of that which is breathtakingly beautiful, for at any moment the telephone may ring or the airplane come down in a vacant lot." Reiner Stach writes that Kafka "blossomed and wilted at an early age." Such will be the case here. When in the Fourth World, the feeling was "us against the world." Now, though the girls are operating in the real world, their serene detachment renders it an earthly paradise in which they seem no less removed from its distractions. The Buddha cut off his topknot, disengaged himself from his secular commitments, and withstood three demonic temptations. The lovers depicted in Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben* remain oblivious even when it seems an obnoxious interruption has spoiled the moment. There is the story of the golfer who, when asked how he managed to avoid being distracted during his putt by a dog that ran across the green, replied, "What dog?" Similarly, Pauline and Juliet quit the world and are deaf to extraneous disruptions.

Unfortunately, torpid languor and blissful but world-abandoning devotion may lead to reckless disregard. This is the classic Arthurian dilemma of love and bliss in opposition to honor and responsibility. The desired solution would be what Joseph Campbell in *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space* calls "the art of living in the knowledge of transcendence without dissolving into it in a rapture of self-indulgence." But such naive wishes are overly optimistic. Our principals have progressed from adamant to militant to triumphant, but have regrettably regressed from clandestine and circumspect to overt.

The emphasis on eyes continues as the girls again fall under the male gaze, which is sometimes associated with gendered implications of violence. The rancher encountered earlier proved not to be a significant problem, but the girls now become subject to scrutiny and punishment. The percipient Henry views the girls from above through a window, just as Mark views Tristan and Isolde as they lie together in the Cave of Lovers, and as the girls "view" the lovemaking of Charles and Deborah through the windows of their sand castle. But the courtly love tradition seeks to cheat surveillance and maintain secrecy. So Tristan denies his love by placing his sword between himself and Isolde in token of their supposed chastity. The girls conduct themselves discretely in public, but when they feel themselves safely cloistered in the reclusion of the bedroom (*intra muros*)(*sub rosa*)(*unter vier Augen*)(*domus sua cuique est tutissimum refugium*), they get overconfident, let their guard down (*amar y saber no puede ser*) and do not commit the sin of Tristan. They find the courage to interact on terms of the warmest intimacy. But, alas, the enemy is near (*Hannibal ad portas*) and their risky epiphany leaves them

as vulnerable as was their sand castle (Matthew 7:6). Whatever dilatory denials may be forthcoming can only postpone the inevitable. Actions speak louder than words and love cannot be hidden.

Having tasted death, the hero is god. Having survived illnesses, parental rejection, sex and a bicycle crash, Pauline must see herself as having earned her "heavenly" title through the endurance of ordeals. The girls have progressed from enthusiasm in the "Donkey Serenade" scene to apotheosis in the Fourth World to this ultimately audacious and indiscrete epiphany. Henry was previously protected from such revelation, as from the gaze of Medusa, by his car's rear-view mirror. Now, with his direct view, he cannot cope.

The girls have also been progressing through the five orders of love, which are also discussed (and attributed to Joseph Campbell) in the essay on *The English Patient*. The first, that of slave for master, is typical of the pool of anonymous students from which Pauline and Juliet emerge. The second, that of friend for friend, is established early in their relationship. The third, that of parent for child, is experienced by the girls in their role as the parents of Diello. The fourth, that of spouse for spouse, is possibly being experienced now as a result of their implied sacred marriage. Now, having been caught by Henry (*in flagrante delicto* and/or *seducto*), they may have achieved the fifth, that of the Arthurian, courtly love tradition of rule-breaking erotics (*Quis legem det amantibus?*).

Arthurian amatory doctrine makes a clear distinction between love and marriage. It is love that validates a relationship, not the church and not the state. This will later be reflected in Pauline's story of Carmelita. There is also the Tantric principle of *parakiya*, which states that lovers possess each other outside the marriage bond. This is nicely demonstrated by Tita and Pedro in *Like Water for Chocolate*. But society is jealous of lovers, so dramatic tension is generated when Henry sees too much. The scene may actually involve Platonic (not merely platonic) desexualization as in *The Crying Game*, but Henry thinks otherwise. The adults naturally diagnose the relationship as illegitimate (*pactum illicitum*) and the girls are unwilling to appease them at the expense of personal gratification. The girls still need to learn their limitations and should take care not to overestimate their powers based on what may turn out to have been beginners' luck.

Weather in fiction may be taken as expressionistic, with atmospheric storms symbolizing inner ones, or constituting the pathetic fallacy that emotions can be attributed to inanimate nature. The lightning that punctuates the end of the scene may be positively associated with fertilizing rain bringing the promise of a fruitful relationship. These are also flashes of prophetic intuitive foresight as Henry foresees trouble, though the girls foresee no imminent thunderbolt. Lightning is also the fiery tongue of dragons not yet slain, serpents being a dark form of lightning.

In the wake of the conquest of Mount Everest (to be mentioned later), the girls have now reached the summit of their relationship and the audience has reached the apex of the drama. There now occurs an instantaneous reversal of fortune, and the buffeting winds now begin. The change in direction at this fulcral point is immediate, but the decline is not precipitous. The decay is gradual, and there remain oases of bliss to be encountered. But overall, it is now inexorably downhill all the way. There comes to mind the title of C.S. Lewis's *Pilgrim's Regress*.

Ascent and descent suggest erection and castration. The girls construct a sand castle at Port Levy, its stairs are ascended, and then it is destroyed. This dramatic structure (ascent, crisis, descent) is modelled by Freytag's Pyramid: introduction, inciting moment, rising action (protasis), climax (epitasis), falling action (catastasis), catastrophe. This pedimental pattern is

blatantly implemented, for example, in *An Alpine Symphony* by Richard Strauss. Its employment in the overall design of this film emphasizes not so much the perils of Pauline, but rather her rise and fall.

Steven Soderbergh's *King of the Hill* has the inverse emotional structure: descent followed by ascent. Aaron's situation progressively worsens until he experiences the crisis of the nadir. He then achieves catharsis when he metaphorically confronts and kills his father, represented by glass candles. Following this sublimated murder, Aaron's fortunes progressively improve. He succeeds in the hero's task of descent and return. It remains to be seen whether Pauline and Juliet can succeed at what will prove to be their supreme challenge.

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When one is on the left-hand path and beyond the bounds of tradition, demons are encountered. On the return from the special world, the hero encounters unreconciled enemies. Having just passed the apex, trouble begins immediately. Rain, a common form of the pathetic fallacy and a symbol of the id, arrives right on cue.

It has been said that straight people cannot recognize lesbians except within a pornographic context. Dr. Hulme would seem instead to be poised for a hair-trigger reaction in that direction, and now feels compelled to report what he believes is his penetration of the girls' "closetry," borrowing a term from John Rechy. He does not fear the girls' relationship on qualitative grounds, since Pauline "hasn't done anything." But, like Semele, the adults are unable to cope with the "intensity" of the radiance of this epiphany. This is reminiscent of how, in *Howards End*, those who are musical, literary and artistic are considered eccentric. Pauline may be "spirited" in the same sense that Miss Avery in *Howards End* is "touched." In refusing sherry, Henry eschews Eucharistic sanctification for his mission, revealing it to be an unholy one.

Henry's vocabulary becomes as entertaining as it is telling. Desperately periphrastic before the unspeakable, he is barely able to broach the subject. His preempting himself with diplomatic metanoia, paradiastole and litotes results in a delightful parade of officialese euphemisms he is at pains to employ. Unable to come to terms with the situation, the problem is addressed only obliquely and skittishly, and with the scrupulous avoidance of Atticism. "My wife and I feel," says Henry, but this may be as pathetically fallacious as the rain outside. The girls do most of the feeling, while the adults mostly think too much. Ironically, it is Honora who offers the most vigorous implicit defense of Pauline, though the parents unanimously refuse to be made a party to intrigue. With Dr. Hulme framed eccentrically, the context causes the hearth now to seem less domestic than infernal.

Dr. Bennett is to act ostensibly for the good of Pauline's health, but actually for that of society. Dr. Bennett is the "ideal man" because he would champion orthodox conventions (*consuetudo pro lege servatur*). His function is societal homeostasis by maintenance of the status quo. As in *Meet Me in St. Louis*, society's goal is the achievement and celebration of stability. By contrast, mythical heroes remain unswayed by winds that blow in the prevailing culture. The parents, faculty, and Dr. Bennett are all merely the villainous foreground agents and personifications (*custus morum*) of the collective values and obsessions of the orthodox society in the background. Dr. Bennett is one of the more aggressive parts of the community's enforcement apparatus, and a surrogate parental oppressor like the great and powerful Oz. Enlisting such an *ex cathedra* authority brings to the enterprise an aura not only of social respectability but of scientific legitimacy. Crucifixion symbolizes coerced conformity. The "ideal

man" will try to crucify Pauline by imposing an ideal on her. His degree of success has already been attested to by the prologue.

Having Pauline "back on track" would restore her status as an ideal (heterosexual) woman. (This ideal may be implied earlier by the physical education teacher when her students are to be "keeping those legs straight.") To be "on track" is to be following a prescribed path and not engaged in an Arthurian adventure, which is how orthodox society, with its garrison mentality, wants it (*via trita, via tuta*). Also, notice that Dr. Bennett is not to *get* her back, nor *put* her back, nor *place* her back, but "*set* her back." Paradigmatically, this is *le mot juste* because, true to Henry's word, Dr. Bennett does indeed prove to be a setback. This also recalls the fact that Pauline does not "excel *in* history," rather than *at* it.

Hilda may provide counseling, but for a member of the Hulme family to receive it would be ignominious. It therefore falls to Pauline alone to be sent to the doctor. Just as Juliet was quarantined in order to protect the general population from tuberculosis, Dr. Bennett and the parents act as a *cordon sanitaire* to defend society (*pro bono publico*) and extirpate a potential menace (*damnant quod non intelligunt*). Wandering into regions beyond the ken of the parents, Pauline becomes a convenient target onto whom collective fears may be projected. Out of their comfort zone, the adults seem united in incomprehension of this *terra incognita*. Bert has trouble grasping the thread of the conversation and Honora becomes slightly resentful. Henry, though particularly unsettled, judging by the push-in shots of him, ultimately seems pleased with himself for doing society this favor, and despite his evasion, Honora takes his meaning (*qui tacet consentit*) and signals her acceptance of the idea of deprogramming.

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Pauline and Honora are next discovered in Dr. Bennett's office. He and Reverend Norris, as pillars of the community and guardians of society's pet notions (*quis custodiet ipsos custodes*?), carry the girls' paternal authority projections. They take the part of the archetypal Bad Father or Wicked Magician, leaving the role of Good Father or Wise Old Man to be assumed (in their best moments) by Bert and Henry. The girls view adults generally as part of the shadow contingent. (As to doctors specifically, in *La Damnation de Faust* by Hector Berlioz, when Mephistopheles first appears and Faust asks who he is, the answer is that a doctor should know well enough: "*Vraiment, pour un docteur, la demande est frivole*.")

Dr. Bennett's initial questions are answered only by Pauline's moue (*par signe de mépris*). The subsequent interrogation might be called "Dr. Bennett's catechism of love" because it can be taken as distinguishing among the three forms of love: *eros*, *agape*, and *amor*. Pauline denies liking her mother, which rules out *agape*, which would exclude no one. Her denial of liking girls may be taken at face value as a denial of homosexuality. It may, however, be merely a denial of *eros*, which is indiscriminate. Homosexual *eros* would cause her to love all girls, whereas she likes Juliet in particular, not girls in general. She is never given the chance to deny liking boys, but her given response is consistent with homosexuality implemented as *amor*, which is the regard for and the selection of lovers based on their individual qualities. It is this principle that Chencha demonstrates in *Like Water for Chocolate* when she asserts the noninterchangeability of tacos and enchiladas. Consistent with the *idam* principle, as well as the subjective nature of these essays, Ludwig Wittgenstein says, "Sow a seed in my soil and it will grow differently than it would in any other soil." As demonstrated in the opening sequence of *Frida*, *amor* is the reverse of *Roma*. As such, it originally stood in opposition to the principles of

the Catholic church, but may be thought of more generally as the form of love employed by those on the left-hand path, which runs counter to all oppressive institutional dictates. Pauline ruinous mistake will come from a lack of *caritas* (charity) toward Honora.

The character of Pauline's responses should also be considered, in light of the primary concern of Dr. Bennett's inquiry. When asked if she likes her mother, Pauline demonstrates her ability to exhibit disgust by issuing an immediate, impulsive, visceral, emphatic denial. Yet, her subsequent denial of liking girls is tellingly deliberate, reflective, tentative and half-hearted. Contrast this with Fergus's vomiting in *The Crying Game*, though we will momentarily be reminded that vomiting is well within Pauline's capacity. Hesitation during free association is said to be psychoanalytically significant. Additionally, Pauline's explanation that girls are "silly" seems an implausible, or at least atypical, motive for heterosexually (*lucus a non lucendo*). If she is lying, then her *faux-naïf* attitude reflects a prudence for which the situation gives her excellent grounds (Matthew 7:6). Her denial of Juliet's silliness is also somewhat opportunistic, as she earlier called Juliet silly in the hospital. Paraphrasing Margaret in *Howards End*, "It's silliness when I say it, but not when you say it." In any case, Pauline does little in Bennett's eyes to bolster her heterosexual credentials.

The probing altercatio of this maleficent catechist is an intensification of the parents' malevolent reconnaissance. Though Bennett is no doubt one of the local nabobs, Pauline finds his officious interference performed in the exercise of his jurisdiction to be impertinent and inimical. She has little patience for such scrutineers and declines to yield. She herself will soon demonstrate similarly misguided proprietorship with respect to her own wisdom. Once Pauline's inner wisdom pierces Dr. Bennett's professional persona to reveal a genuine threat (*fænum habet in cornu, longe fuge*), it is then Diello's turn. In reply to his suggestion of "boys," Bennett gets a taste of his own medicine with a violent act of penetration as psychic events are again depicted for the benefit of the audience. Pauline may have achieved a kind of *nirvana* at the plot's apex, but she is in no such state here. A proper Buddhist would have no condemnation for enemies because love bears all. Her rejection of masculine company displays far less maturity than Siegmund's refusal of Valhalla, and recalls the girls' reluctance to leave the forest.

Prostatic character development having peaked, there now occurs the first evidence of subsequent catastatic deterioration (*per gradus*) from sublimation back to concretization. The first fantasy execution is conjured up and conducted by Juliet, while the second is jointly overseen, with both girls, acting as a tag team, reaping in life what they had sown in art. (This is not counting the Borovnian bystander split in two by Diello during Pauline's affair with "Nicholas" or any of the scores of Diello's other anonymous Borovnian victims.) Though each event is a *tour de force*, this strategy now fares less well in the revisiting. Following a sort of probationary period, responsibility has now fallen to Pauline to "solo" (*alis volat propriis*). At the end of her novitiate, the supposedly practiced postulant's *coup d'essai* is less than fully satisfactory because it results in an ineffectual *brutum fulmen*. Pauline thus fails to carry her weight (*non passibus æquis*), such that the hat trick is not quite achieved.

Diello's previous appearances give rise to stable expectations. As before, Diello is conjured up and the job is left to him. As with Reverend Norris, he again appears over his victim's right shoulder, reinforcing an intrinsic norm that allows for foregrounding. It is never thought that any actual harm comes to either Reverend Norris or to John as a result of their executions. Yet both are rendered practically dead. Both cease to be a problem and neither victim is seen again, remaining literally out of the picture. The dragons have been slain, according to Diello's *raison d'etre*. Similarly, it is assumed that the enfiled Dr. Bennett literally survives this

scene, none the worse for his encounter with Diello. But it is still surprising when, after seemingly teasing the audience with a noticeable pause before emerging from his office, he enters unscathed as the first character to "survive" a fantasy assassination and persist as a genuine problem.

Pauline may in some ways be a decisive, taboo-breaking woman, yet she is also related to Hamlet, the idealistic but ineffectual "superfluous man." Her wisdom is now found wanting, such that her invocation of Diello ultimately proves futile. Diello fails to discharge his mission fully, revealing his figurative feet of clay to match his literal feet of plasticine. In the attempt to be rid of demons, they are fought but not slain. By this point, the groundwork having been prepared, Pauline might be expected to have become a seasoned veteran in the use of "priest-and-king" wisdom, which should by now be fully debugged. But wisdom is as wisdom does. Though employed to some emotional satisfaction, it is starting to fail at the nuts-and-bolts level. It is losing its potency and no longer yields notable practical success (*telum imbelle, sine ictu*). Additionally, Reverend Norris is "killed" in the flesh, while Nicholas is "killed" as a plasticine caricature. The latter murder is all the better for being more abstract and farther removed from reality. Dr. Bennett's "murder" returns to a more naturalistic situation, which is itself a hallmark of deterioration and dissipation. Also recall that previous victims met their end in Borovnia itself, while Dr. Bennett never leaves his office.

Archetypal conflict is not usually subject to conclusive resolution. An unvanquished opponent may revive and retaliate. One decapitation is not sufficient to kill the multiheaded Hydra. This is no reason to forego optimism. Setbacks are to be expected during the tests and trials of heroic quests, and Juliet has already survived tuberculosis. But, when next the opportunity for fantasy assassination arises, this red flag will retrospectively be seen to have announced the start of an inexorable declension of wisdom and a gradual cascade of disenchantment. Some spells are not strong enough to endure. Siegfried does not absolutely forget Brünnhilde in response to Hagen's potion. This ineffectual murder also foreshadows the more difficult task of killing Honora and is a harbinger of Pauline's undoing.

This shift is marked quite subtly, occurring without much fanfare and with apparent inconsequence. But it belies serious issues and unwelcome implications that will come to loom large. It is of the utmost subsequent significance, as it is the first step on the path via which Pauline will convey herself to perdition. The comic context, though it seems not to have distracted Steve Bayliss earlier, now inhibits the audience from recognizing the thin edge of the wedge (*malis avibus*). Pauline too fails to take the oracular hint and recognize this as a wake-up call. It may be hoped that she has not forgotten that she is taking the course for credit.

Dr. Bennett's mouth serves as a portent of the gaping jaws of hell (*libera eas de ore leonis*). As such, this rictus is foreshadowed by and echoes the Borovnian gate, the portcullis of which proves deadly to Nicholas. Dr. Bennett is momentarily speechless, as was Juliet on Good Friday at Port Levy when told of her parents' trip. He finally adopts plainer speech (*nudis verbis*) than Henry's and says, with some effort, "Homosexuality," rendering what, at this time, would have been, in addition to a medical diagnosis, quite a significant indictment of Pauline as a paraphiliac, in spite of her disavowals. In his autobiography, Edmund White writes, "In the mid-1950s, when I was fourteen or fifteen, I told my mother I was homosexual; that was the word, back then, *homosexual*, in its full satanic majesty, cloaked in ether fumes, a combination of evil and sickness." He also writes, "I wanted to be king, but I also needed to die, go mad or undergo humiliation for my arrogance."

Doctors of earlier eras are notoriously easy targets, as in *The Madness of King George*. Dr. Bennett is not necessarily a complacently stupid panjandrum (*un sot à triple étage*)(*impos animi*) or idling laggard. He may be cut some slack for not being *au courant* (*quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus*) because it was just about this time that sexuality was discovered to be an orientation and not a preference, according to clinical psychological criteria. Aversion therapy can stop a lesbian from smoking, but it cannot stop her from being a lesbian, even if she can be trained to engage in and tolerate heterosexual activity. Transient conversions have been reported, but long-term studies reveal nearly universal reversion to original orientation.

Such information may take generations to diffuse through the general population. During a debate in 2004, President George W. Bush said that he did not know whether sexuality is "a choice." The situation is like that at the end of the film *Airplane!* when Howard Jarvis expresses superhuman patience. If five decades are not enough time for Mr. Bush to get the message, then he should perhaps be allowed five more, but "that's it." Still, it may be unwise to hold one's breath. In Dan Piraro's *Bizarro* cartoon of 7/20/06, a reporter declares, "Scientists announced today irrefutable proof that sexual orientation is genetic. The Boy Scouts announced today the exclusion of kids with good grades in science." Nevertheless, it was reported in June, 2007, that even Alan Chambers, director of Exodus International, possibly the largest "ex-gay" ministry in America, "has disavowed the term 'ex-gay,'" and the Reverend R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has said that if a genetic basis for sexual orientation exists, "we should not be surprised."

Similarly, this knowledge perhaps has yet to infiltrate and disabuse the medical profession (*le monde savant*) of Bennett's time and he may simply not be an early adopter. His lack of scholarship in this field may perhaps too easily be exaggerated to the point of charlatanry. His dysphemistic diagnosis, even if offensive, nevertheless comports with contemporary canonical medical practice. At the very least, Dr. Bennett would appear to be vulnerable to coasting on orthodox presupposition, a canon occasionally being no more than the enactment of assumptions (*nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*). He may not quite belong in the Theater of the Absurd, but with little more time devoted to him than to Pauline's teachers, the most must be made of this brief vignette. Dr. Bennett, therefore, cannot help, but suffer by comparison with modern physicians, with his glasses being a symptom of blindness denial, men being "such fools."

Pauline's sexual orientation may only be a phantom problem, but the adults consider the matter worthy of intervention (*dignus vindice nodus*), though they remain unaware of the risk of iatrogenic catastrophe (*noli irritare leones*)(*graviora manent*). In *Transformations of Myth Through Time*, Joseph Campbell recounts the Native American story called "Where the Two Came to Their Father," which features a character called Big Lonesome Monster, who mistakes shadow for substance (*dare pondus fumo*). First the adults and then Pauline herself will fall victim to this fault (*nil admirari*).

Homosexuality could imply narcissism, with the lover viewed as a surrogate self, or a woman's inadequate relationship with her animus. Conversely, heterosexual relationships may be an unconscious attempt to recover the contrasexual aspect of one's own psyche. Anatomical gain or loss, such as the girls' scars and the unicorns' horns, symbolizes gender ambiguity. During her affair with Nicholas, Pauline demonstrates the use of homoerotic fantasy (in the broadest sense) to tolerate heterosexual activity, a typically necessary compensatory strategy employed by recipients of reparative therapy. Stephanie Simon writes in the *Los Angeles Times*, 5/28/06, "Even the most ardent champions of ex-gay therapy acknowledge that it's not always possible to

banish unwanted attractions." She quotes a spokesman as saying that even when people are "cured" of homosexuality, "that doesn't mean they never have a homosexual thought or feeling again."

Central to the "ex-gay" lobby is the idea that (individual) sexual identity is fluid. The inventory of names applied to the girls is a reminder that identity depends on an idea and that, as in *The Crying Game*, gender, as Freud asserts, is more than anatomy. Speaking of *The Crying Game*, it was observed in the essay on that film that Dil is one of the few (until recently) gay cinematic characters to survive their film. Pauline and Juliet survive this film, but only in the biological sense.

So, is Dr. Bennett's diagnosis accurate? The girls' relationship certainly involves emotional, psychic and spiritual intimacy, and offers an abundance of material that would certainly be expected to resonate with a gay audience. But the theory of homosexuality may be taken as underspecified and underdetermined by the evidence available within the film. Elliptical hints go unsubstantiated and implications are continually undermined by rebutting heterosexual imagery, producing decidedly mixed signals. The girls kiss each other and bathe together, but these are not necessarily unacceptable behaviors for heterosexual females in their society. The girls' kiss in the forest is immediately followed by the display of their exclusively male pantheon, members of which could, however, be receiving the girls' self projections. On "the loveliest night of the year," the girls will kiss, but then immediately switch to male partners. Also, the mythological Borovnian context often distances Pauline's sexual fantasies. And according to the Arthurian template, it is the carnal aspect of a relationship that should be the last to be explored, as it is for Parzival.

Similar ambiguity is found in the film *Fried Green Tomatoes*, where homosexuality is handled much less explicitly that in the source novel. A perfectly reasonable interpretation is that Idgie realizes that Ruth is straight and that their relationship is destined to be platonic. She then dedicates herself to being Ruth's gallant, chivalrous paladin, but not her lover. Moreover, a "nineteenth-century friendship" may involve more than sexuality. In her biography of Frida Kahlo, Hayden Herrera writes, "Like Picasso, who is reported to have said that the intensity of his friendship with the poet Max Jacob made him able to imagine making love to him in order to know him more completely, Frida, when she loved someone, wanted the absolute connection of physical union." Such persons perhaps qualify as bisexual (*a la voile et a la vapeur*), at least in a practical sense. Incidentally, Ruby Rich claims that while "boys" unearth gay material by being "archeologists, the girls have to be alchemists."

Pauline and Juliet's actual sexual orientation ultimately matters little to the plot. The parents' fear, justified or not, is enough to drive the narrative. In fact, if they are wrong, then it makes for greater tragedy. In *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo's suicide is sad enough in itself. But the real tragedy is that it is needless because it is based on the mistaken belief that Juliet is dead. Shakespeare's dramatic irony gives the audience unrestricted knowledge, which ultimately yields pleasure born of frustration. Likewise, Honora's murder is provoked by the threat of separation issued by fearful parents. If that fear is unfounded because it is premised upon a misdiagnosis (*longe aberrat scopo*), then the tragedy is intensified by this parental sciamachy. This cannot be proclaimed as a final verdict. The critic should remain adaptively responsive, even if an interpretation recommends itself as obligatory. But modest reflection reveals the advantage of this interpretive inclination, whatever controversy may attend it. However much it may seem like reading against the grain, reluctance to resolve this question to the detriment of the drama is understandable.

It may be widely felt that, having seen these characters come this far and considering the emotion that may have been invested in them, denying them the opportunity to explore voluntarily any dimension within their relationship would be regrettable (*Wer könnte sie wohl strafen, wenn sie findet, was sie sucht?*). However, both history and personal expectations must yield to the inalienable priority of dramaturgical determinants (*lectio difficilior*). Audiences are undeniably dynamic and multidimensional, and not just pawns of drama. But a filmmaker's overriding duty is to render dramatic justice to a story. History may say otherwise, but, as noted earlier, the standards of journalism are misapplied to drama, which operates in "the imperfect subjunctive." Homosexuality may thus be regarded as a theoretical fiction of greater or lesser dramaturgical efficacy (*chacun à son goût*). There may be no correct answer nor any fact of the matter within the film itself, but only outside it in the realm of history, which is not a concern here and which is complicated by homosexuality being part of the insanity defense at the girls' trial. The sexuality of the historical figures on which these characters are based may be debated, though to no profit within a dramatic context, where it is not a question for verification (*per troppo dibatter la verità perde*), but a pysma or quaestium. Further discussion of this topic is for another occasion and is thus deferred to the *Fourth World* website.

In bypassing Dr. Bennett's diagnosis to enquire about vomiting, Honora demonstrates either denial or an intuitive sense of triage. She never does use the diagnosis as a weapon, perhaps because the weighty advocacy of Dr. Bennett includes the opinion that the problem is due to be outgrown. Pauline's vomiting may indicate emotional starvation, catharsis and purgation, rather than aesthetic revulsion. As a symptom of morning sickness, it also reminds us of her affair with John and the possibility of pregnancy. Pauline is also said to have "lost a lot of weight," as if her lack of emotional nourishment has led her to consume herself. (Incidentally, in the case of the real Juliet, Dr. Reginald Medlicott, in a 1965 issue of the *Journal of Medical Psychology*, diagnoses paranoia.)

Pauline is first caught in bed with John by her father, and is then caught in bed with Juliet by Dr. Hulme. She sees herself as carrying the bulk of the blame for both episodes and now considers herself a victim of misdiagnosis (*opprobrium medicorum*) by the unworthy (*coram non judice*), who are confounded by spurious problems (*parva leves capiunt animas*). Pauline would agree that she has "a loving family behind her," but in the temporal sense. Perhaps it is because Honora recognizes this that she looks up suddenly. Ariadne's thread no longer leads back to her mother, for she has cut the apron strings. The Hulme family as constituted in her monochromatic fantasy is now her model.

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The next scene begins with a voice, seemingly on the radio, using the expression "snobbish conception," which could refer either to Dr. Bennett's ideas or, again, to pregnancy.

The first of three excerpts from Puccini operas is now heard. As with the dynamic camera work, the "frightfully romantic" music of Puccini is an appropriate accompaniment to this story as Jackson and Walsh have chosen to present it. But beyond this general, superficial similarity of tone, each of the selections represents an operatic situation that specifically matches its cinematic context. Pauline is threatened with not being allowed to see Juliet again and contemplates suicide. Accompanying her lamentation is a recording of "*E Lucevan le Stelle*" from the last act of Puccini's *Tosca*. This is the lament of a man who thinks that he will soon be dead and will never see his lover again. Note that the singer in this recording is not Mario Lanza, though his

recording of this aria exists, as do at least three by Jussi Björling. Aside from practical music clearance considerations of copyright and licensing, perhaps Pauline considers Mario an exclusively positive, optimistic influence and reserves him for happy occasions. Now that she is in a depressed, despondent, pessimistic mode (*tædium vitæ*), she turns to another singer. It is actually not much of a leap for her because, as if to compensate, Pauline chooses a recording in which the name of the singer is not Mario, but the name of the character being portrayed is. This Mario's first-act aria "*Recondita Armonia*" features a text in which a dark woman and a fair one are contrasted. This parallels a portion of Pauline's poem, heard during the apex, where the girls' eyes are contrasted. Incidentally, the particular recording being employed, featuring tenor Peter Dvorsky, was made decades after the action that is being depicted, recalling the example discussed earlier.

In contemplating suicide Pauline has turned her aggression inward, at least temporarily. Such thoughts may reflect an unconscious desire for psychic transformation or an attempt to guarantee the permanent repression of unconscious material. Death, which Pauline will later call "such an easy way out," is the way to which Pauline has become accustomed by escaping to a fantasy world rather than learning to deal with reality. At this point, Pauline's *Weltschmerz* might cause her to be viewed unsympathetically as merely adept at narcissistic self-torture, self-pitying martyrdom and Wertherism.

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The story now cycles back to a familiar situation. It is Christmas again. The periodic recurrence of holidays emphasizes critical thresholds, while the continuity of routine constitutes a norm that is to be shattered. In recapitulatory fashion, Honora again receives a gold gift from Wendy, and Bert again receives socks. The families continue to converge as the resemblances between them accrue in a manner reminiscent of the Braddocks and Robinsons in *The Graduate*. A dog is now welcomed into the Rieper family as the counterpart of the Hulme's "beautiful boy."

Wendy unconsciously imitates Juliet in several ways. Wendy is blonde, wears (in this scene) a dress that is mostly blue, and gives gifts of gold, another color associated with Juliet. Wendy is also the name of a character in *Peter Pan*, reminding us that Diello can be seen as the girls' phallic dream version of themselves. Marjorie Garber observes in *Vested Interests*, "That Peter is a kind of Wendy Unbound, a re-gendered, not-quite-degendered alternative persona who can have adventures, fight pirates, smoke pipes, and cavort with redskins is certainly one feasible way of understanding him – and her. Peter can do all kinds of things that Wendy, Victorian girl-child that she is, is forbidden." Pauline will not feel such restrictions much longer, but will consider herself unbound such that Diello becomes unnecessary. This will allow her personally to commit the ultimate forbidden act.

Wendy's gold-colored gift to her mother this Christmas is an elephant. The elephant symbolizes invincibility, long memory, patience, fidelity, and kingly rank, but its hide represents ignorance. Its longevity qualifies it as a symbol of victory over death. Elephants are bearers of royalty and deities, caryatids of the world and indirectly associated with the axis of the universe. Psychoanalytically, their appearance in dreams indicates an underdeveloped relationship to reality, while the trunk is considered phallic. A white elephant appeared to Queen Maya in a dream to announce the birth of her son, who was to become the Buddha. Ganesha, who has the head of an elephant, is the Hindu god of writing as wisdom (*sapientia*) and the son of Shiva, the victor over obstacles. Christian iconography has elephants, like Saint George, trampling the

serpent underfoot. Cults have been based on an elephant forgiving the hunters who killed it. Ironically for Pauline, they may represent Temperantia, the female personification of moderation.

Honora asks if Pauline's leg is hurting. Pauline's pain, like Juliet's scars, is a feature not of her body, but of her psyche. Yet this psychological pain is mistakenly concretized and assumed to be physical. Pauline's downfall will result from a similar error.

Pauline again receives a diary for Christmas. In the southern hemisphere, Christmas occurs at the start of summer. This is the point at which the hours of daylight begin to decrease. The encroaching darkness culminates with the onset of winter six months later, when daylight is at its scarcest. At this point, we begin an astronomical descent paralleling Pauline's psychological descent.

Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh visited New Zealand at this time. It was the first visit by a reigning monarch. The Queen gave her 1953 Christmas broadcast from Auckland, the first such broadcast with the monarch away from Great Britain. It is suggested on the *Fourth World* website that during the royal couple's stay, the Hulmes may have been presented to them.

Pauline inaugurates her new diary in a different spirit from the previous year (*carpe diem*)(*dum vivimus, vivamus*). Consistent with Ecclesiastes 8:15, Pauline's motto is now to eat, drink and "be merry." If taken as pun ("be Mary"), it would be an imperative to which Juliet is complying. Pauline earlier walked through the school hallway smiling and ended up frowning while standing in a group of her classmates. She now walks, already frowning, down a school hallway and ends up frowning in a group photo.

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Pauline's neurosis makes itself manifest with her declaration of her rigid identification with a fantasy character: "My name is Gina." This alone could suffice for her behavior to be fairly regarded as approaching clinical significance. Pauline converts from the regal Charles to a plebeian figure who is closer to her own social status, indicating a dangerous trend toward literalization. The shift from a male to a female character may have first been done to accommodate the heterosexual Nicholas. It recalls Anaïs's line in *Henry and June*: "Stop pretending to be a man." Gina also makes a more illicit (and therefore more Arthurian) partner for Deborah than does Charles. Gina now becomes Pauline's *nom de guerre*. This Gina who used to be Charles is now angry at Honora, just as the symbolically castrated Hamlet directs his aggression toward Gertrude and Ophelia. The persona mediates between the conscious ego and the external world. But the wisdom associated with this has been left behind in the special world, precluding Pauline's reintegration into the ordinary world. Without that wisdom, the derived security is illusory, shielding one from both the painful and pleasurable aspects of life.

Pauline now fancies herself an autodidact. Her bad grades reveal her disdain for everything not central to her obsession. A confrontational atmosphere develops, suggesting a *scène à faire*. Honora is the first to raise her voice and fulminate, but Pauline reciprocates and peppers her mother with determined responses. Pauline is "failing English" and was said to "shame the family." The penumbra of shame will widen so far beyond the family that she will eventually be seen as failing *the* English, shamefully scandalizing, if not the entire English-speaking world, then at least the citizenry of Christchurch, the most English city in New Zealand. After imposing herself on the general attention, she will certainly not "excel in history." Her

psychological deterioration is mirrored by her descent from her earlier position at the "top of the class," a phrase that also anticipates the reference to Edmond Hillary near the end.

Burning with what David Maraniss calls "the anger of the underappreciated artist," Pauline is as reluctant to return to school as she was to leave the forest in the "Donkey Serenade" scene. She expresses Arthurian independence and individualism with her writing. Honora acts as Philistine, contemptuous of the artist. The dragon of inhibition expresses doubt about publication, but does not foresee the circumstances that will bring to light not only Pauline's novels, but even her supposedly private diary, ultimately allowing this screenplay to be derived. (It is a journal, unlike than a diary, that is intended to be public.) Rather than accusing Honora of cruelty, Pauline offers an insult framed in terms of the Eastern dichotomy of ignorance and illumination. Ironically, in her self-delusory state, it is Pauline who should be careful lest she herself deteriorate and fall victim to the Buddhist concept of *avidya*, the ignorance of true reality that results in being compelled by desire and fear.

This is the approximate location of what UCLA film professor Howard Suber calls the "one hour pivot point." He has observed that many cinematic protagonists react during the first hour of their films, but then begin to assert themselves. His explanation of the timing of this phenomenon is based on the application of the golden ratio to dream-cycle periodicity. This value, approximately 0.618, is a feature of the Fibonacci series and is also known as the golden section, golden mean and divine proportion. This film might not be expected to conform to the hallmark decorum, harmony, proportion, balance and restraint of neoclassicism. Pauline's self assertion and taking of the lead has been very gradual. Her seizing control of her own destiny will not be complete until the start of the third act, and her domination of Juliet will not be complete until near the end. Thus there is little here in the way of a discrete dramatic fulcrum.

Juliet leaves school for medical reasons. Pauline's voluntarily withdrawal from school is a left-hand refusal to submit to conformity (*non serviam*). She is nevertheless discovered in secretarial school. This is not only an opportunity for economic independence, but is also an encouraging psychological sign of adult solutions in contrast to nostalgic, regressive, infantile fantasies. Yet, ironically and vexingly, this training would probably lead to her becoming a mere tool, doing potboiler work typing the words and ideas of others, probably men, instead of her own novels. The typing school proves as unworthy an indenture as the similarly Philistine-infested waters of regular school (and as reality). This may be compared with the servitude of Barton Fink at Capital Pictures, and of several other characters spotlighted in these essays. The shadow from the school's window ominously recalls Digby O'Dell, the friendly undertaker.

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Juliet's bathroom at Ilam was first shown with chromatically neutral lighting. On this second visit, it is found bathed in a golden light, though the tonality is more subtle on video. Gold is a color associated with Juliet and, perhaps because it is her bathroom, it seems to reflect Juliet's good cheer rather than Pauline's sadness. Pauline thinks she is "going crazy." If she can still make this observation, then it is probably not too late. Juliet calls her "Gina," clearly accepting the switch from Charles. Juliet also remains Pauline's sole confidence builder. With "everyone else" being "bonkers," even greater exclusivity is expressed than when the worthy consisted of "only about ten people."

The girls now plan to leave Christchurch, having already left Christ's church. Pauline takes the initiative with the proposal that they "go overseas," which very obliquely suggests the

crossing of rivers, such as the Rubicon or even the Styx or Acheron, the crossing of these being associated with irreversibility. Pauline silently nods after Juliet asks, "You mean travel by ourselves?" They already do, psychologically. Physical flight will not provide escape from a psychological problem. The proper form of travel would be an inner journey. But having begun to lose wisdom, they misinterpret the concept of the Promised Land and fail to recognize the futility of both expatriation to Hollywood as well as physical murder. Pauline is being called Gina, attending a different school and planning to go overseas. Heroes often change masks and undertake special assignments during the approach phase of their stories. Also note that Pauline is now in the posture assumed by Juliet when told that John had fallen in love with Pauline (*fallen* being a word that will ultimately be more broadly applicable).

There are eleven candles on the sill, or what could be called a Christian's dozen, in honor of those so unfamiliar with the Gregorian calendar they were willing to be shortchanged by accepting an era labeled "two millennia" that contained only 1999 years (*mundus vult decipi*). These candles constitute about half the quantity displayed on the brick altar devoted to the saints, indicating the waning of illuminating wisdom. The number ten is reflected in human anatomical digits and is the foundation of the decimal math system. It is thus considered a perfect number. "Ten people" is also the approximate size of the elect group among which the girls include themselves. Eleven represents the transgression of going beyond the bounds, which these characters certainly will.

Now, it is a safe assumption that the crew was simply told to put "some candles" on this set. But nothing need go unexamined, and a critic need never pass up an opportunity (*tel est notre plaisir*). Authorial intentions regarding something so inconspicuous may fairly be doubted, and seeking them would simply constitute a reductive fallacy. Jung conceived of synchronicity as meaningful but acausal coincidence. Provenance is ultimately irrelevant. Whether or not an appropriate number was used here intentionally, even a fortuitous, serendipitous accident is available for appropriation as a meaningful symbol with indicative symptomatic value. Recall that objects are judged worthy of critical regard and are given due consideration at the discretion of the critic, for it falls to the critic to lavish attention on, to linger over and to answer whatever questions he cares to set himself. Also, a critical interpretation is simply an example of what something can, not must, be understood to mean. (In his commentary for the DVD of *Pan's Labyrinth*, Guillermo del Toro observes that restricting a symbol to a single meaning reduces it to a cipher and the tale in which it functions to an equation.) What matters is that it dovetail with critical intentions and be psychologically convincing, however implausible. And plausibility is merely a filter that is part of the most primitive phase of art, which is to be transcended (*le vrai n'est pas toujours vraisemblable*). The extensional possibilities of symbols reach well beyond the narrow construal of the symbols themselves. An open (but not empty) mind must be kept with respect to whatever interpretation the critic deigns to conjure up. On the other hand, in spite of their ambiguity and ambivalence, symbols cannot be arbitrary, and they are not thought to be accidental or insignificant details in myth. In this sense, responsibility may indeed fall on the filmmakers, a matter the discussion of which will be continued below.

The mere comprehension of such inconspicuous minutiae strikes some as improper. For decades, it has seemed to this writer that audiophiles would not exhibit such princess-and-the-pea behavior in the presence of better music, which would distract them from the consideration of subtle imperfections in the mediation of that music. Most people become habituated to many things and learn to ignore them. But ignoring even those facts that ordinarily escape notice does not eliminate them. Artists and scientists are the official "noticers" of society, according to

Physicist Frank Oppenheimer. For them, an opportunity to know becomes an obligation to know. This writer may simply be a victim of his unalienable scientific training. Even so, that which is discussed here represents only a minute subset of what is available to be noticed.

In *Lust for Life*, Vincent scolds Paul, saying, "You look too fast." Someone once invidiously scolded this writer for *not* looking too fast at *Heavenly Creatures*. This person asserted that one is obliged to hate any film in which anything dramatically peripheral is noticed. This uninviting proposition leaves as anomalous the devotion of the creators of the *Fourth World* website, with its detailed catalogues of horse and bridge imagery.

The perception of extraneous material during an initial viewing of a film would indeed suggest improper participation in the drama and a lack of emotional connection. But when a susceptible subject is unable to evade the charms of a work, it is that very connection that motivates and sanctions further scrutiny. And scrutiny does not entail disapproval. Melville was delighted that Hawthorne was able to "embrace the soul" of *Moby-Dick* in spite of its "imperfect body." Matthew Price writes that John Bayley "has been lucky enough to make a vocation out of fine-tuning his perceptions." "What is liberating," according to Susan Sontag, "is to notice more and more." She further says, "To be modern is to live, entranced, by the savage autonomy of the detail." Anne Fadiman says of reading and rereading, "The former had more velocity; the latter had more depth. The former shut out the world in order to focus on the story; the latter dragged in the world in order to assess the story."

Winston Churchill said that a young person who is not liberal has no heart and that an old person who is not conservative has no brain. Similarly, surrendering to the drama is certainly the best strategy for acquiring first impressions. But when analysis is the goal, the analyst is entitled to as close a reading of the analysand as occasion offers. In this context, failure to consider objective facts is simple dereliction, and apology for avoiding such failure (even if due to what Brett Douglas calls "attention surplus disorder") is unwarranted.

Henry overhears the girls in the bathroom as they take pictures and refer to movie stars. We retrospectively recognize this as part of their Hollywood audition plan. Henry will tolerate Pauline's presence, but "will not stand for any hanky-panky." Bill Perry will ironically be given much greater latitude.

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The girls resort to brigandage to make the required travel fare and ransom themselves (*rem facias, rem*)(*recte si possis, si non quocumque modo rem*). The unforeseen risks are such that the most important of the provisions they should acquire for their journey is the neglected viaticum of wisdom. This robbery is an inside job, just as the murder should be an inner, subtle event. The girls consider their actions to be spoliation in the sense of plunder in time of war. The term also denotes the unauthorized mutilation of a document, which comes to mind when considering this film's video formatting issues. In the additional sense of unrightfully taking the fruits of benefice when leaving office, Pauline may ultimately be able to salvage only memories. The music maintains the comic atmosphere against which the finale will stand in such high relief.

Pauline's phrase "my father's safe" may be read as "my father is safe." Bert poses no threat, is exonerated and will not be killed. Pauline is sure she "can get the keys to his office." The girls have already experienced an office the keys to which are restricted to "about ten people." Their prowess has deteriorated to the improper reliance on physical keys, which were shown to be unnecessary for the chosen one in *Howards End*. Keys are also an issue in *Ulysses*.

A deleted scene at this point causes the pronunciation "moider" to suffer from overuse, though it allows the concept of murder to be traced back to Juliet. Feeling "so brilliantly clever," as Pauline says, recalls the story of Electra, whose name means "the bright one," and reveals an overconfidence that perhaps borders on hubris.

In the deleted "tennis scene" at Ilam, the stone hurled in Dr. Bennett's direction indicates a tendency towards a literal approach to conflict, while the "jolly good soaking" of his "trousers" offers a rich opportunity for Freudian interpretation. Henry is then ousted from his post. Deleting this scene hides the hypocrisy of the public ceremony marking his departure.

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Pauline again finds herself in the bathroom with a man, this time Laurie, at the door. A bath should be quite welcome for Laurie, being one whose name recalls Saint Lawrence, who was martyred on a hot gridiron. The name also recalls Alison J. Laurie, coauthor with Julie (one of Juliet's nicknames) Glamuzina of the book *Parker and Hulme: A Lesbian View*. Pauline bathes in a green bathroom. When she emerges, she experiences a wordless harangue from her mother exactly like the one Juliet got from Reverend Norris immediately prior to his being dispatched by Diello. Twice before, Diello has appeared over a victim's right shoulder (see also the action in the final *Lord of the Rings* film at an elapsed time of 2:21:37). The camera now obligingly and expectantly pans over to this position in anticipation of Diello's arrival for yet another fantasy assassination. The situation has come full circle, but on a downward spiral. Diello is now discovered to have lost punctuality when he violates an intrinsic norm and disappoints whetted expectations by catalectically failing to appear to complete the scene. Properly, Diello should be used to slaughter enemies wholesale on the girls' behalf, as if part of the machinery (the dramaturgical term for work done in a story by gods). His absence marks as unexpected and as pivotal an event (*Wendepunkt*) as his successful thwarting of Reverend Norris.

Diello has already lost a certain degree of utility, the rot having begun to set in when Dr. Bennett survived what should have been his fatal encounter. This earlier truncated, attenuated misperformance proves to have been a telling one and no fluke. The comical atmosphere surrounding that earlier episode now yields to grim foreboding. (As Richard Eder writes in an unrelated book review, "Bit by bit, though, the comic veil thins into a scrim, through which graver matters appear.") It is now confirmed that deterioration has since been snowballing and now continues apace. With this continued loss of impetus, there is now evidence of a systematic recession and a robust degenerative trend. Wisdom, already on the wane, is now far advanced in decay, and Pauline has become severely wisdom-challenged. Having allowed her anger to get the better of her, this is a significant lapse and a strategic liability. In a critical sense, she has "jumped the shark."

Having been demobilized, Diello is now not even summoned, indicating that he has worn out his welcome, as has Nicholas. Diello's brief was to implement the "priest-and-king" wisdom of sublimation, a theory the employment of which previously told in Pauline's favor, but to which she can longer be said to be oversubscribing. Diello has proven to be a flash-in-the-pan and is no longer in Pauline's arsenal. The avenging angel of the church militant is now disarmed.

It may have been hoped that Pauline might have been sufficiently well larded with wisdom to sustain her to the extent of being a lifer in this program, such that Diello would become a broken record figuratively the way Mario did literally (or, in Susan Faludi's words, "[h]er feistiness would be untainted by ferocity"). But heroes who rest on their withered laurels

and neglect their captured treasures are in danger of losing those treasures. Knowledge is sometimes forgotten and a reminder is required. The way of the bodhisattva is to move within the world without being moved by it. Pauline is allowing herself to be moved and is in desperate need of reharmonization with the ordinary world (or at least apatheia) lest the worst befall her. With no assurance that the audience is simply no longer privy to her imprecation, this does not auger well for her, and her position now is precarious at best. In fact, this hoped-for return to form never occurs. The crunch comes when Diello falls into disuse and Pauline no longer heeds her own feminine intuition. This time, she more than merely checks her swing. Her wisdom is being squandered and is now all but exhausted. It has been put on hold and gone to seed. It flags to the point that she does not bother to go through what she now considers the vain motions. Pauline has perhaps gone to the well once too often and spent as much wisdom as she was capable of acquiring. She is no longer willing to delegate and will now take matters into her own hands, failing to appreciate the potential cost that attaches to such conduct. With the demotion of Diello to savior emeritus, Pauline is preparing for herself a catastrophe, showing no understanding of what is in the offing. In what she may come to regard as the pursuance of her destiny, she willingly abandons wisdom in favor of rage. Her underlying purpose will have to work itself out through the disproportions of her character, culminating in the most convincing and unignorable display of the loss of wisdom. The seeds of later sorrows are now sown as the central tragedy of the story is fairly launched.

In a deleted scene that would occur at this point, Pauline speaks of not being permitted to visit Ilam until she is "eight stone and more cheerful." At the end, seven blows are depicted with one brick, which will make her less cheerful. In this scene, both of Pauline's parents experience a fantasy death in spite of Diello's continued absence. This imagery weakens the impact of her later, merely verbal diary entries, just as her strong facial expressions here make her later ones less unique. After musing on these imaginary deaths, a wishbone breaks in her favor and she makes a wish. All this tends to deny the spontaneity of her later statement: "Suddenly, a means of ridding myself of this obstacle occurred to me." Collectively, the deleted scenes mainly contribute futile redundancy and a general stalling of narrative momentum. Having become accustomed to the sententious short version, it pains this writer to see its *consonantia* disturbed. Besides, observes Howard Suber, "Saying much with little is one of the definitions of poetry." Likewise, director Barry Sonnenfeld, in the February/March 2004 edition of *Sound & Vision*, expresses his dislike of extended edition DVDs. "Whenever I watch one, my reaction, without fail, is that you can see why they took those scenes out to begin with."

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April 23, 1954, is the day that filmmaker Michael Moore was born, the 390th birthday of William Shakespeare, the feast day of our old friend Saint George and the anniversary of the deaths of Shakespeare and Cervantes. The river running through Ilam is the Avon. Though supposedly not named after Shakespeare's river, the name nevertheless strikes a chord. Yet another is struck when Steve Bayliss is recalled from earlier in the film along with the fact that, coincidentally, the Old Vic was made famous for Shakespeare by Lilian Baylis, who became manager in 1912. Additionally, a certain Hilda M. Hulme (1914-1983), who was not the one depicted in this film, authored books titled *Explorations in Shakespeare's Language: Some Problems of Word Meaning in the Dramatic Text* and *Yours that Read Him: An Introduction to Shakespeare's Language*. In an observation germane to the earlier discussion of "noticing" and to

an upcoming one on the interpretation of symbols, this other Hilda M. Hulme notes that "when Shakespeare is writing at his best, no word in his text is meaningless or muted – put in to fill up a space."

Juliet is seen in an appropriately blue light. The deleted scenes involving Bill Perry installing himself at Ilam somewhat spoil the surprise of his being caught in bed with Hilda. In one such scene, Henry lethargically acquiesces (*annuit cæptis*) to Hilda's suggestion that Bill stay with them. After making her incursion, the countersurveillant Juliet says, "The balloon has gone up." In *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy loses the opportunity to ride the balloon home to Kansas. Freedom of religion having been achieved by Pauline and Juliet, freedom of nationality is now sought in the form of a Joycean Daedalus flight to Hollywood. (In the uncut version, this announcement is anticipated, if not spoiled, by previous talk on this topic.) Like Dorothy, the girls have already learned from their fantasy experiences that the solution lies in one's own backyard (*ubi bene, ibi patria*). Having already achieved mental escape, concrete physical escape, even to ultima Thule, adds nothing. The deliberate resolution to escape to Hollywood stands in contrast to the accidental adventure during "The Donkey Serenade," "where there was no path." If the balloon in question is a *ballon d'essai* to test the direction of the wind of public opinion, then the girls seem to have perceived no hint of the journalese headlines to which they will probably fall victim.

Juliet knows where the bodies are buried and issues her ultimatum from what she thinks is a position of advantage. She is disappointed to find that she is in no position to bargain. Hilda employs a pause to emphasize the name *Perry*. The girls have themselves already had something of their own "threesome" involving Nicholas. Henry's tolerance of Bill is a mockery of the hospitality extended to Siegmund by Hunding in Wagner's *Die Walküre*. Juliet still refers to Pauline as Paul, not Gina. Is it because Perry, as an outsider, would not be expected to understand the reference or because Juliet is lagging behind Pauline's deterioration?

Going to Hollywood will require travel to the northeast. North is the traditionally forbidden direction. The hero must break rules, go beyond the bounds of proper society, find the special world and retrieve the boon with which to save society. East is the direction of rebirth and new beginning. Movie moguls are "desperately keen to sign us up," claims Juliet. Her attempts at self-deception will prove futile and will pale in comparison with Pauline's. Juliet's parting mock-acerbic understatement continues the filmmakers' conspiracy of maintaining a lulling comic atmosphere as long as possible. Even as things turn more and more serious, comic relief will be provided almost to the very end, which will thus be all the more shocking.

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As Pauline bicycles to Juliet's, the name "Ilam" is spoken for the first time. Those poor wretches whose only experience of this film is the VHS tape are left without a clue because they were not allowed to see the sign past which Pauline cycled on the way to Juliet's house earlier. The rain again suggests the pathetic fallacy. Certain loves and certain sins are not easily washed away by any ordinary freshet. "Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens / To wash it white as snow?" asks Claudius in *Hamlet* (III.iii.).

Pauline expresses her fantasy of belonging to the Hulme family when she refers to Dr. Hulme as "father." By this point in the "uncut" version of the film, Pauline has done this once already. In both versions, she may address him as "Daddy" when Juliet is released from the hospital. After being symbolically castrated by Juliet, and being actually cuckolded by Hilda,

Henry poses little phallic or paternal threat to Pauline. He is ironically venerated, despite engineering the problem, because he stays in the background, delegating the dirty work to Dr. Bennett. Honora operates in the foreground and so comes to carry Pauline's shadow projections, thus becoming the scapegoat in spite of maternal solicitude and blandishments (*amor matris*). In her search for legitimate parental authority, Pauline sees Dr. Hulme as the archetypal Wise Old Man who now carries her positive animus projection, helping to explain why she does not cast a wider net and include additional victims in her plans. However, like Dr. Bennett, Pauline grossly misdiagnoses this "noblest and most wonderful person" who was in fact her betrayer. She also views the situation more in the manner of Euripides than of Aeschylus or Sophocles when she says that "a good deal depends on chance."

Hilda's expertise at the marriage guidance council fails to translate to success at home. Marriage is an ordeal that requires sacrifice not to one's spouse but to the relationship. The Hulme's are planning a divorce, but the girls are now fully invested in each other and in their relationship, so grounds for optimism may not yet be lost, though their devotion is bordering on obsession. Recognizing their mutual indispensability, these allies continue to reaffirm their mutual commitment. The trick will be to scratch each other's backs without lacerating them.

The "sink or swim" water imagery in Pauline's mission statement of solidarity anticipates almost literally the dockside scene at the end. The test will be real (*amici probantur rebus adversis*) and Pauline's determination to fight to the last ditch (*quo Fata vocant*) is not idle (*aut inveniam viam aut faciam*). With a monomaniacal resolve and a clarity, purity and tenacity of purpose (*tenax propositi*)(*imo pectore*) that she will maintain to the end, Pauline closes the second act with her steadfast avowal to make a good showing even if in a doomed cause and in spite of a throng of foes.

ACT THREE
People Die Every Day

According to Billy Wilder, "In the third act, the hero should have a choice and, hopefully, make the right one." The girls have already made the right one earlier, greatly compounding the tragedy of the wrong one that will soon be made.

As the third act begins, Dr. Hulme has his back to a mirror, as if he cannot face himself. He cannot conceal the reflection of the wringing of his hands. He was also involved with a mirror at the film's apex, and just as then, thanks to him, the tables are about to be turned. Juliet is again in bed, as she was to open the second act. She now gets with the program when she refers to Pauline as Gina. The girls earlier refused to return to the ordinary world. It is now the point in the narrative when a hero would be expected to start such a return. The girls, however, seek to fly to the special world of Hollywood, but are threatened with diversion to South Africa, which would be "going west," a euphemism for death. Juliet's parents again find it expedient to abandon her to provincial exile, and again she is to be separated from Pauline. Using the same tired excuse, the adults aim for final resolution with this final setback.

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Pauline now affects an even more funereal manner than at the start of Juliet's hospitalization. Except for fantasy sequences or when she is in pajamas, Pauline, with her ready

frown, spends the entire last act dressed in black (*exceptis excipiendis*). It is thus appropriate that the tragedienne portraying her is named Melanie. She is now, paragrammatically, the grim Rieper, and perhaps the spiritual descendant of Jack the Rieper. Pauline, as the Princess of Darkness, will be a channel for the expression of dark forces and will assume the role of dark villain.

Black is emblematic of her sepulchral mood and of the consuming abyss toward which she is moving. It identifies her with the unconscious and mysterious. Pauline becomes an incarnation of Kali, the black goddess and Great Mother in her destructive, reclaiming, consuming aspect. Kali personifies terrifying violence and sacrifice, but says, "Be not afraid." The utility of this advice will become ever more clear as the end nears. Black ambivalently expresses the absolute, whether as abundance or as the void. It is typically the color of chaos, evil and death, and is consistent with the preference of witches not to be seen easily. Kandinsky considers white to be pregnant with possibilities, and black to be without them. In this regard, note the white screen at the end of *The English Patient*. In China, black, the color now associated with Pauline, is the opposite of yellow, which recalls golden Juliet. It is also sometimes related symbolically to red, another of Pauline's colors. Pauline's principal colors (green, red and black) may be thought of as chronicling her development by representing, respectively, creation, vitality and destruction, in a manner paralleling the Hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. The alchemical Black Sun represents ruthless, animus-dominated women. Pauline is as a vampire, experiencing the living death of the negative animus that fails to transform, recalling the symbology of the toad discussed earlier. She will spend much of the remainder of the film as a mirthless *bête noire* trailing doom-laden clouds of woe, making *pall* an especially good play on her name.

Pauline again fancies herself an actual and welcome part of the Hulme family, even as the girls' magic flight is diverted from Hollywood to South Africa. With the adults increasingly frustrating the girls' ambitions, Pauline's consideration of suicide indicates that her *shakti* has already been successfully turned inward. One should metaphorically slay not another, but oneself. Danger arises when one is no longer content merely with Medusa's reflection and the issue is framed in concrete rather than psychological terms. Unfortunately, Pauline's wisdom has undergone a fundamental strategic reversal.

The event that precipitates Pauline's decision to redirect her aggression occurs when her mother says, "you can still write to each other." Honora is merely suggesting the same "brainwave" that Pauline herself earlier considered a satisfactory remedy. At that time, letters combined with wisdom enabled the girls to endure separation. But their attachment has become too strong for mere postal or telephonic correspondence alone to sustain the relationship. Being spoiled for direct, unsublimated satisfaction, Pauline now fails to displace her love for Juliet. She will not be content with table scraps.

Honora ironically refers to Pauline as "love" at a time when Pauline is initiating a state of war and adopting the persona of Thanatos, the Greek mythological personification of death. Pauline's right cheek, which Honora has previously slapped, may no longer hurt physically, but it remains an emotional sore spot (*immedicabile vulnus*). In response to Honora's gentle yet doloriferous touch (*tangere vulnus*)(*unguis in ulcere*)(*rem acu tetigisti*), Pauline's hatred percolates up from beneath the surface ("like water for chocolate") and is expressed outwardly (*surgit amari aliquid*). With her hate gaining strength from what she perceives as rejected love, Pauline's frustration radicalizes her and resolves her *philos-aphilos* ambivalence into pure hate.

A close-up again emphasizes a character's narrow perspective. Pauline's spasm of repugnance gives rise to a chillingly toxic glance of detestation as she stares daggers at Honora with unprecedented malignity. ("Now I do frown on thee with all my heart; And, if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee," says Phebe to Silvius in *As You Like It* [III.v.].) The audience is allowed to get a sense of what it is to be caught in Pauline's beams and thus to be held in such enmity. Though the viewer may find it hard not to wilt before such contempt, Honora never fully realizes the extent to which she is in the cross hairs. Pauline is sharpening her knife for Honora and the hunt is up. Given the obvious intensity of this matricidal impulse, and with Diello sidelined and off the clock (*hors de combat*), Pauline must be sorely tempted to kill Honora on the spot, and does well not to. Patricia O'Toole remarks of Theodore Roosevelt, "The border between self-restraint and self-gratification is porous, and Roosevelt easily slipped across." For Pauline, this border will soon be not merely porous, but almost totally unfortified. As Hannah Arent observes, "The humanity of the insulted and injured has never yet survived the hour of liberation by so much as a minute."

It is written in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "Whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world a mother's love is not." But psychologically, the archetypal mother-image is double-edged. The Great Mother is both the Good and the Terrible Mother. This productive, nourishing and comforting savior is also destructive ogress and divine courtesan. Pauline projects the negative aspects of the mother-image such that she sees in Honora a reflection of her own hostility. Pauline thus exaggerates Honora's culpability to the point that rebirth from this mother will become impossible. No longer appreciative of loving maternal ministrations, Pauline's relationship with Honora is now exclusively adversarial, and she is irretrievably lost to her mother. Her domestic situation (*res angusta domi*) being but the tip of the iceberg, Pauline will make no effort to re-establish the filial bonds that she feels have been treacherously desecrated.

As when Tita confronts Elena in *Like Water for Chocolate*, Pauline now finds her ordeal not worth sustaining. Her sense of injury cannot be appeased and she is provoked to rampant intolerance. Anger drowns her reason and she abandons the gentle and forgiving aspects of the feminine. Outrage and desperation can lead to a potentially disastrous alliance with the shadow. Pauline's shadow comes to dominate her psyche at the expense of her superego. As the model for the superego, parents are easy targets for projection. Pauline sanctions her hatred by projecting her shadow onto Honora, who becomes the enemy to be destroyed. This disenchantment with parental authority plus the failure of her superego lead to the improper outward redirection of energy as literal murder instead of figurative suicide. Deprived of the surrogate family that is her external sources of identity and self-esteem, Pauline succumbs to and unwittingly serves regressive and rapacious inner forces. No longer content with guidance, she yields to possession. She is but the representative of her own shadow, just as Telramund is but the public spokesman for Ortrud in Wagner's *Lohengrin*. Her dark side is given dominion over her, and her instincts are placed at its disposal. Its influence will eventually cause Juliet to become yoked indirectly to evil.

The early scene in art class demonstrates the positive value that society places on the deliberate suppression of imagination. Society should be careful for what it wishes. Pauline has now lost adaptability and has become rigid, inflexible and "pickled." She is like Daedalus trapped within his own architecture. Her attitude is now crystallized into intransigence, and her fixated ruminations will orbit around a single entrenched obsession with unprecedented gravity. Like Ahab, she is in the grip of a monomaniacal fury that she is unwilling to relinquish. As if

petrified by the sight of Medusa, Pauline is powerless to remedy this confusion of role and may thus already be lost, if not dead. In any case, the genie will not be put back in the bottle (*jacta est alea*).

Pauline discloses that "a means of ridding myself of this obstacle occurred to me." The proper means, which she has now forgotten, occurred to her long ago. Ridding herself of obstacles is becoming progressively more challenging for Pauline. Her imagination spent, her wisdom rent to shreds, she now turns, with a nod to Thomas Hardy, to desperate remedies. Since her own earlier crime was "too great for an ordinary lecture," Pauline reciprocally considers Honora's high treason (*lèse-majesté*) too great an offense for an ordinary fantasy execution. Having failed to achieve Honora's proper virtual death, her improper literal death is now considered ("If she were to die, . . ."). This subjunctive will prove to be not so much imperfect as disastrous. (The impact of this thought is severely dulled by two previous allusions to murder and/or death in the uncut version.) Pauline's grotesque proposal sets her on the most ill-considered of trajectories, and constitutes a crisis worthy of parallel synonymy, for which it is hoped this writer may be forgiven.

Children demonize their unconsciously desired parents in order to escape their influence. A parent's metaphorical death is a perfectly valid archetypal rite of passage, and rebellion against a parent achieves a therapeutic catharsis when sublimated. Pauline, however, can no longer be assuaged or appeased by mischievous imaginings. She can no longer find cause for avoiding the riskiest and most consequential behavior, and her cathectic zeal is now independent of and beyond the control of reason. Her reaction is not necessarily disproportionate, but her aggression is categorically misdirected. Striving for even greater potency, she rashly takes the decision to transfer the conflict to a wholly inappropriate dimension and ultimately acquires only impotence.

Charles kills to become king. As a self-styled spiritual aristocrat when she is not actually personifying Charles, Pauline feels entitled (*ex officio*) to resort to war (*ultima ratio regum*). She risks overestimating her license (*honos habet onus*). Even without this regal sanction, she might still act as an avenging angel just because she thinks she has the means (*jus gladii*)(*silent leges inter arma*) and just cause (*casus belli*). She may also be said to reverse the example of Aeschylus, who was a soldier who became a playwright. Regrettably, Pauline's soldiery is distinguished by a calamitous undermining of military capability (*Wehrkraftzersetzung*).

War is often used to legitimize savage impulses, elevating and directing them toward a righteous crusade against infidels. Pauline seems implicitly to invoke her high dudgeon in order to license such a campaign, which she will pursue with perfervid vigor until she ultimately bites off more than she can chew and overplays her hand. A proper hero, such as a *samurai*, participates without rancor and not for personal revenge. But Pauline is no longer able to disguise her Electral fantasy, and so will mete out justice personally. To her, not to Diello, shall Honora pay forfeit. With the loss of the cunning (*de regimine principum*) that once did the girls such credit, delegation of the task to Diello is not even entertained. Such substitutive means are not those by which Pauline's goal will be realized (*a verbis ad verbera*).

After yeoman service that stands his patrons in good stead, Diello now commands no confidence, is dismissed (*functus officio*), mustered out and becomes a sort of *deus absconditus*. In earlier scenes, Diello's lack of success and even his absence were merely unfortunate attenuations of Pauline's wisdom. This was mere prelude to the draconian banishment of all resort to that wisdom. The present state of affairs is a train wreck. The program as it is currently presented would seem to be fatally flawed, as lethal conflict is best left to the imagination, with the inner mother-image being the legitimate target. Having earlier settled for logomachy and for

plying the pen as Juliet plies the needle, Pauline should be content with the ink that has flowed into her diary and with the red paint used in her earlier bloody paintings. She should not seek to replace these with blood.

Earlier, Pauline aspired to her potential self that she saw in Juliet. It is now Diello's role that becomes the focus of Pauline's ambition. Unable to cope with her accelerating disappointment, and invested with all-consuming rage, she eschews devilry by proxy. His tenure at an end, the power of the decommissioned Diello is escheated to and devolves to Pauline. But it is hubris for her to stand in for Diello (*zapatero, á tu zapato*) if she is unable to match James Mason's feat of being "perfect as Jesus." Hubris is the sin of equating oneself with deity so as to imitate or rival the gods. ("Such state becomes the gods, and none beside," says Agamemnon in *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus.) It involves the transgression of limits, the placing oneself above the law and the commission of arrogant, irreverent acts that invite disaster. The naive ignore warnings and taboos, risking the recoil of Nemesis, the personification of divine resentment and retribution who destroys those deluded by insolent pride. More positively, Robert W. Corrigan says that although a hero's hubris "precipitates his own doom," it may be viewed as heroic protest. In any case, this film may be thought of as a study in hubris brought to grief.

Not to belabor the point, but this is where the psychological rubber meets the practical road. In *Barton Fink*, Charlie tells Barton to "put it out of your head." Such a change of venue is precisely the fatal error being made by Pauline, who now fails to follow precept with practice. Her adoption of this most infelicitous Mosaic shortcut is a nonstarter (*alia tentanda via est*), and the concept of Honora's literal murder is an even greater travesty than Klingsor's literal self-castration. Unaware of the dangers implicit in the uninspired literalism to which she is falling prey, the enormity of the potential repercussions of Pauline's drastic, take-no-prisoners attitude escapes her. Thus, the fatal step is taken unrecognized, and catastrophe is now at only one remove (*nihil obstat*). Mission creep having deprived her of a proper exit strategy, the stage is set for failure. If cheese is "the corpse of milk," then this plan is the corpse of wisdom. Oh, how the mighty hath fallen.

This story is one not only of tragically unfulfilled promise in one otherwise so admirably equipped. It is a tragedy of opportunities exploited and then squandered. Never acquiring redeeming wisdom is tragic. Acquiring that wisdom and then losing it constitutes a greater tragedy. As expressed in II Peter 2:21-2, "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

The hero's journey is properly from folly to wisdom. Of the latter, Pauline drinks deeply but, ultimately, insubstantially. Charm is no longer exerted by the wisdom that served the girls so well. It ebbs, flags, erodes and is regressively lost. Pauline finds wisdom a nice place to visit for a season, but she stultifies her previous efforts, wastes the gift and returns to folly (*hiatus valde deflendus*). Had she the presence of mind, Pauline could well ask, as does Brünnhilde, "Where is my wisdom?" The audience must sit in passive frustration and watch problem and remedy pass one another by. The hero often becomes king and rules over the unconscious. Pauline acquires this status as King Charles, but then abdicates in order to personify Gina. With this switch in her fantasy identity, she shifts from thinking (and wisdom) to irrational feeling. Her loss of wisdom and control also parallels her leaving school.

The misapplication of a symbol to physical reality is known as the concretistic fallacy. When the ego is identified with the symbol, the meaning of the symbol is enacted in reality as a

symptom rather than being consciously understood as a symbol. Wisdom having been lost, Pauline desperately, naively, tragically decides that her life should imitate her art and condemns herself to the consequences of a concrete murder (*genus est mortis male vivere*).

The literal interpretation of a symbol is sterile and futile. Consciousness is expanded when the hero *symbolically* sheds the blood of the world parents. Symbols, which properly catapult one toward transcendence rather than nature, are ultimately to be left behind. But Diello is left behind in favor of a misdirected and regressive endeavor. Without Diello, Pauline proves to be a powerless figurehead. Thanks to her, a dead metaphor (one interpreted literally) results in a dead mother, and both reality and fantasy are ruined. This parable of lost wisdom may be taken as an allegorical indictment of the Mosaic literalism that forms the foundation of Western civilization.

Recalling the "Elena problem" in *Like Water for Chocolate*, people must be distinguished from their inner image. Robert Donington warns that "the very impulse which may be heeling if experienced inwardly as a symbol may be a psychotic crime if misplaced outwardly as arson, rape or murder." (In his *Wish I Could Be There*, Allen Shawn compares the outward directing of inner anxieties by phobics and bigots, writing that unlike phobia, bigotry "is characterized primarily by aggression, and no one seeks treatment for it.") Pauline's preference for a tangible enemy and inability to overcome the obduracy of the will results in psychology and myth being misinterpreted as physics and history. Considerable dangers lie in ambush for those who disregard practical realities. Identification with the subtle body ultimately disappoints if one is still gross. Pauline identifies with the saints but is "only human" and therefore can neither cope nor forgive. This limitation also applies to some in the audience.

Pauline is now driven by demonic, self-destructive energy and an improvident confidence in oversimplified, reductive literalization (*ni firmes carta que no leas, ni bebas agua que no veas*). She is no longer willing to prosecute the war effort psychologically and to press the attack vicariously. The literalization of fantasy at the expense of sublimation will not resolve inner conflict nor even touch the problem (*similia similibus curantur*). It is giving up the ground on which to fight. The folly of taking it upon themselves to murder literally (*manu propria*) will prove to be a maze out of which the girls cannot escape. Pauline is now leaning on a weak reed and playing with fire, the latter she will metaphorically try to put out with gasoline. "These are wells without water" (II Peter 2:17), and Pauline has returned to a state described by an expression used by Joseph Campbell that will be cited again in a later essay: "Standing on a whale, fishing for minnows" (*magnas inter opes inops*)(see also Mark 8:36).

A stagnant, uncreative psychic life can lead to inflation, where the ego identifies with and is polluted by elements of the unconscious, such elements being personified in this story by Diello and Harry Lime. Other toxic effects of neglected imagination include fears and obsessions. *Barton Fink* has been called a meditation on the inability to create. For the artist, like Barton, loss of creativity is death. Loss of creativity by Pauline results in psychological death for her and literal death for her mother.

As if unconsciously impatient for death, Pauline will not yield to wisdom, from which a chasm now sunders her. Nothing now is sacred to her, save the revenge on which she broods. The battle is joined, and she will stop at nothing in a fight to the finish (*guerre à outrance*, *coûte que coûte*). Ignoring the hint from her disappointing affair with Nicholas, she refuses to trim her sails. At the mercy of an abiding passion that lends nothing to her vision and to which all other values are subordinated, she is deaf to her feminine intuition. Blinded to the glaring flaws of her *ruse de guerre*, she seems unaware of the turn that events have taken, of how little literal murder

will avail her, and of what she stands to lose. She will unfortunately trust blindly and yield to the promptings of her shadow, which will now be given a channel by which its effects will be unleashed into the real world. King Mark, according to one possible interpretation (cited in the small "essay" on *The Piano*), is at fault for being deceived because the lovers who betray him conceal nothing. Pauline may be similarly blamed for not bracing herself against what should be foreseeable problems attendant to the loss of wisdom, recalling the purblind Dil in *The Crying Game* and Donington's description of Wotan as being "blinded by his own unconscious."

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A handshake from the college's resident platitudinarian ushers out the resigning Dr. Hulme, echoing the one between Juliet and Honora.

Pauline's left hand falls limp onto the newspaper. Without the necessary wisdom, Pauline is finding herself impotent in her struggle to exploit the left-hand path. She must again communicate with Juliet from a distance, this time by telephone. Juliet sees only the need to replenish their coffers (*kein Kreuzer, kein Schweizer*), believing money is their only impediment to salvation (*non deficiente crumena*). But events soon take the decision out of their hands. Their self-sufficiency proves illusory and Juliet's predictions are disappointed. Psychic maturation requires the demise of treasured illusions, but the girls do not see the situation in such a positive light.

Honora's death has already been considered as a theoretical option, but may be unnecessary if the girls can escape to Hollywood. The crunch comes when the government makes Honora an official obstacle by paternalistically requiring parental consent for a passport. Pauline's impatience is wonderfully expressed by her stress on the word "twenty." Having not seen her parents "for five years" as a child, Juliet can well appreciate the interval represented in Pauline's exclamation. Pauline considers herself to be in a fight-or-flight situation as the prospect of flight is being denied to her (*hoc opus, hic labor est*). For her part, the real Juliet, as if to compensate, worked as an airline stewardess three years after her release from prison. New Zealand itself is becoming a prison for the girls just as Denmark is a prison for Hamlet, who is likewise given a destiny too big for him to handle.

Heroic adventures often include the crossing of the water. Fergus goes "across the water" to England in *The Crying Game*. Tita crosses the Rio Grande to Texas in *Like Water for Chocolate*. But Pauline and Juliet's adventure to Hollywood is frustrated. Literal physical flight would probably be futile, as is all physical pilgrimage if the instigating psychological problem is not addressed (*cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*). Any activity can function as a ritual when accompanied by the proper meditation. But pilgrimage or any physical act is meaningless without that meditation, whatever the benefits of a change of scenery. In the absence of wisdom, many physical resources may be expended without any advantage. Joyce's Stephen Dedalus comes to realize that he must escape not from Ireland, but from his own ego. The girls are now forgetting this.

Juliet, who stole Pauline from Nicholas, is now being stolen from Pauline. Hilda menacingly rises up from behind Juliet's right shoulder, in the manner of Diello. Juliet satisfies herself with assaulting her mother with words, allowing for later reconciliation. Pauline experiences renewed desperation and is at a loss as to how to proceed. Now fighting a rear-guard action, even retreat to her fallback position of South Africa instead of Hollywood is in doubt. With psychological flight to an imaginary pastoral retreat no longer seeming adequate, and

believing that her only alternative to murder is not going to pan out, Pauline, encountering this final impasse, is at the end of her tether.

Pauline responds to another ironic application of the epithet "love" with an unspoken refusal of the call to repent. She is in the midst of transitioning from words to blows, and regards Honora with embittered silence. She maintains her composure and defensively distances herself from her intended victim. Pauline bides her time, just as Odysseus and Tita wait for their opportunities to escape from Polyphemus and Elena, respectively. She is saving up for unmediated aggression, if necessary.

Pauline seeks to avoid physical punishment, which should be the least of her worries. She prides herself on lulling the adults into underestimating the potential physical consequences, but she herself vastly underestimates the potential psychological consequences. The enterprise is foundering and confidence in the future is eroding.

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The cut juxtaposing Honora and the falling axe recalls Electra, echoes the execution of Reverend Norris and is assumed to be foreshadowing, but is still taken as black comedy. The axe is a red herring with respect to the eventual weapon, but in it, a glimpse is caught of what was nearly forgotten, but has been looming on the horizon ever since the prologue. It is also emblematic of how Pauline has "cut [her parents] out of her life." Pauline is inaccessible and already in the belly of the whale in a sense, but the worst is yet to come. Honora appears to be stifling a laugh in response to Hilda's comic understatement about it not having been an easy time. When Hilda suggests letting the girls spend time together, the adults all underestimate the significance of the phrase "last few weeks."

The girls seem to have partially overcome their parents' begrudgery, but the long-suffering Honora's forbearance is tested and she finds herself driven to the verge of distraction. Her situation recalls H.C.E.'s inability to control the destinies of his children in *Finnegans Wake*. She perhaps sees herself involved in the adventure of the perilous bed with her goal being simply to endure. With a much grimmer ordeal awaiting her, Honora might do well to heed the advice given by Cassandra to Andromache and save her tears for sorrows yet to come.

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On June 11, 1954, the day on which was born television journalist Greta Van Susteren, the door at Ilam opens to reveal Pauline in silhouette, her physical shadow identifying her with her psychological shadow. She crosses the threshold, accepts her destiny without reservation and is immediately rewarded. Just when the girls' season of pleasure would seem to be at an end, a glorious music cue marks Juliet's entrance and immediately underlines the change in mood as it did when differentiating Pauline's fowl mood from the general happiness of the students in the art class. The situation symmetrically recalls Pauline's first visit to Ilam when she beheld Juliet on the bridge. Their black and gold clothing exemplifies the Dionysian/Apollonian duality. The dark Dionysus is associated with dismemberment, while the sunny Apollo heals and brings one to eternal life. The music obligingly features ominous minor key figures in the clarinets.

Physical escape having been precluded, fantasy may still be resorted to, at least for the moment. The girls' lost world is now revivified, as when Juliet returned home from the hospital. As when Dr. Bennett survives his fantasy execution, foregrounding again occurs when Mario

appears in the real world and in the flesh rather than plasticine. He is thus that much less abstract and archetypal. The Ruritanian pageantry of Borovnia is again encountered, presenting a spectacle like a *son et lumière*. Juliet again appears in "sisterly" gold. Once in the fantasy realm, Pauline reverts to the color of her earlier vocational raiment: red. The girls kiss but then immediately switch to male partners, again making the sexuality of the imagery ambiguous. Pauline speaks of a mutual "telepathy," a concept to be revisited later.

Pauline, perhaps rationalizing, now proclaims that she and Juliet and the saints are "mad," when before, according to Juliet, it was "everyone else who's bonkers." Dr. Hulme is also allowed the privileged position of sharing in this madness. This compliment reaffirms Pauline's affinity with her adopted father, who is here depicted as a jester. The fool represents the inner child that helps maintain psychic balance (*dulce est desipere in loco*). He reveals spiritual wisdom via spontaneity, authenticity and honesty. His checkered Harlequin costume, like the yin-yang pattern, displays the interplay of opposites, discussed more thoroughly below. His explicit appearance here also reflects the morological aspect of the style of this film. The girls are switching from female wisdom, represented by bodies of water such as Port Levy and the Fourth World fountain, to the male literalism represented by the tower. This foreshadows Pauline's succession to Mario's role of dragon slayer and Diello's role of assassin. Axes echo the ones used earlier, most recently by Bert.

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The girls return to the movie theater, where red and blue berets are to be seen in the audience. This is a visual echo of the girls in their red and blue clothes, just as the paintings in the art class were a prefiguration. The girls reflexively watch "It" in a film (*The Third Man*) as the audience watches them in this one. As when Ulysses is tied to the mast, the cinema allows a safe, vicarious experience of danger. But such will not satisfy the girls for long and they will opt for real murder.

That symbol of potency and otherness conjoined, Orson Welles, however resolutely repressed, continues his return, first symbolically as Diello, and now, hard on the heels of Mario's appearance in the flesh, he resurfaces more naturalistically as Harry Lime. This signals the girls' capacity to kill literally rather than in fantasy.

If Orson Welles does not quite look like himself, it is because the filmmakers must retrospectively interpolate their ringer into the film-within-the-film to match with his pending appearance in the real world, when this dark energy, which has been biding its time, will seem almost to be living a life of its own. Welles had a radio program called, significantly, *The Shadow*. The shadow (the neglected, misunderstood unconscious source of obsessions, compulsions, phobias) is sometimes symbolized by a villain such as Harry Lime or by the criminal underworld, which the sewers of Vienna here represent literally. This excrementitious environment is also a literal expression of *mystique de la merde*. The film that the girls watch is an externalization of their own predicament: Harry Lime is trapped in a Labyrinth, unable to escape by means of a Dedalus flight, and commits murder. Underworld figures, as is Harry Lime in the criminal sense, are indicative of underdeveloped psychic energy. His underworld journey is equivalent to one through the unconscious, and he is trapped just as when the will is bound by the unconscious and motivated by the dark side. This is when the shadow can wrest control from an ineffectual ego.

The demonic can be simultaneously attractive and repulsive. In *The Madwoman in the Attic*, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar assert that, "women writers often identify themselves with the literary characters they detest." Pauline describes "It" as "hideous," but claims to "adore him." Concern for fictional characters is proportional to recognition and identification, and Pauline's adoration is unknowingly self-referential. Like Narcissus, she loves an image that she fails to recognize as a reflection of herself, for Lime carries her narcissistic potency projections. Juliet has served as a role model for Pauline, the former receiving the latter's self projection. Now, Harry Lime fascinates Pauline because she unconsciously recognizes, appreciates and identifies with the disowned violent aspect of herself, the beast representing one's own repressed potential. She vilifies him but also makes of him an example of what David Leverenz has called "pedastaled otherness."

In the *Los Angeles Times*, 2/5/06, Rebecca Solnit writes, "[Marshall] Berman's attack on Laura Mulvey's landmark feminist essay on 'the male gaze' misses Mulvey's overstated but important point: that films depict the world from a male point of view and transform women into nonthreatening spectacles." Pauline's relationship to Harry Lime, who is mythologically akin to Diello, involves the appropriation rather than the transformation of a threatening spectacle. She will usurp Diello's role and come to personify this same destructive power, which she believes will liberate her. This is the desired, feared and heroic discovery of one's true nature. It is similar to Gnostic identification with deity.

Psychoanalytically, a woman's ultimate object of desire may actually be her own animus, her inner masculine, which she reveres indirectly via projection onto her male lover. The animus can help achieve freedom from a restricting ego, and Lime can be thought of here as an underworld guide with the capacity to transform one's inner life. But the animus may be difficult to manage. Its influence sometimes "well[e]s up" imperceptibly and takes control, such that there is a danger of being lured into the abyss, as by the Pied Piper. Like Diello and Bluebeard, Lime is a negative animus manifestation that threatens femininity.

The girls exit the theater more soberly than previously. They are "not playing any more." They walk past a sign that says, "GREYS are GREAT." It is in shades of grey that Harry Lime is about to be seen again. (This is the same "Theatre Royal" that the girls exited earlier, at which time, this sign was absent, possibly suggesting that it represents an intentional comment on black-and-white cinematography.) He (or should one say "It"?) persists outside the film like an undead vampire or a nonintegrated splinter of the psyche. Pursuit by demons often accompanies the return from the special world, and Lime pursues the girls home from the magical domain of the theater. Fear of repressed material re-emerging from the unconscious may be manifested as fear of the dead awakening. In this respect, Lime functions similarly to the ghost of Elena in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Despite the girls' screaming, a comic tone persists throughout the scene that contributes to heightening the impact of the finale. This return of Orson Welles in the flesh (even if monochromatic) instead of as a plasticine Diello indicates loss of wisdom and degeneration into erroneous literalization.

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Pauline casts not her own physical shadow on the ceiling but that of Harry Lime, the Lime in her, her Jungian psychological shadow, literally foreshadowing her metamorphosis. In discussing *Barton Fink*, the concept of crawling out of one's skin to be born again was mentioned. During the "Donkey Serenade" scene, we were reminded of this by onions and

undressing. Something of the girls' inner selves now emerges. It is not quite from Juliet's point of view that Pauline is seen to morph into Lime, as if Pauline does so voluntarily and not merely in Juliet's subjective imagination. The shadow is the same gender as the subject. However, issues of sexuality and the impersonation of male characters could allow some confusion between the shadow and the animus. Therefore, it might be permissible to say that Juliet, both physically and psychologically, projects her shadow onto Pauline.

Orson Welles, as Diello, was allowed insufficient time to develop beyond the plasticine stage. As Lime, he enjoys a longer gestation and so now resembles a real human, even if imaginary. Diello, still plasticine, also now appears and partners with Pauline, who is illuminated with a warmer light than the appropriately cooler light just seen on Juliet. Lime and Diello function not as actual physical sexual partners, as did John's Nicholas, but solely as the girls' projections, with each lover reflecting the other's psyche. Robert Donington says that Brünnhilde and Gutrune, "mutually carry one another's shadow projections." Pauline and Juliet function analogously. Diello and Lime could also be taken as their shared shadow, possibly at war with itself, disintegrating by splitting in two.

The assumption of male characters also allows the recognition, acknowledgment and thorough celebration of that monstrous aspect of themselves that was once regarded as hideous. John Matthews says, "human lovers are surrogates who allow the gods themselves to experience love in its every aspect." This film's apex consisted of the girls alone. They are now also incarnate proxies for the saints. Soon, neither Diello nor Harry Lime will be employed as proxy, as Pauline will improperly incarnate these energies in her own literal flesh and blood.

The girls conjure concupiscent images of sybaritic debauch that lull them to sexual abandon. A momentary, ribald diversion, like a Spanish *tonadilla*, returns them to immature, narcissistic gormandizing and carnivalesque irreverence, as they join with the denizens of Borovnia in a scabrous pantomimic orgy, exemplifying the kind of burlesque into which the *idee fixe* in the *Symphonie Fantastique* of Hector Berlioz deteriorates in the final movement. This sequence suggests anarchy, which can symbolize psychic disintegration and may thus be a bad omen. Pauline may also feel the Borovnian ribaldry justified because she takes after her mother. The striving of personified vices to gain control of the psyche recalls Prudentius's *Psychomachia*.

Of this evening with Juliet, Pauline tells of taking the opportunity, as is written in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "to exult with her in sin." Sinning with and without joy may constitute the distinction between meaningful and meaningless existence. This joyful sinning, accompanied by the expression of serene defiance on Pauline's face, is yet more left-hand-path behavior. (Such defiance may offer an additional alternative to the diagnosis of simple homosexuality, as Pauline seems to delight in rebelliously gorging herself at what Karen Durbin calls the forbidden-fruit stand.) Self-discovery through sin would seem to be a recognized phenomenon. But just as compassion may occur either with or without attachment, sin in this regard may be sufficient, but unnecessary. The uncut version of the film concludes this scene with the apparent association of sin and blood.

The girls regard themselves as being linked by a special sorority that is related to the many literary examples of mystical relationship: fatherhood in *Ulysses*, motherhood in *Howards End*, fairy godmotherhood in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Because of this pseudosisterhood, they may be seen as engaging in symbolic, vicarious incest. Actual incest is prohibited, but mythological incest (such as that practiced by Isis and Osiris, or Siegmund and Sieglinde) is sanctioned and sanctified due to its psychological value as an image of unity. Pauline's diary and poem make clear that they regard themselves as worthy to engage in activities reserved for the

gods, unaware of the risk of hubris. Each soul sister recognizes herself in the other, adding a narcissistic aspect to the relationship. When the mother-image is involved, incest symbolizes a return to unconsciousness that is not necessarily regressive, but may be regenerative, allowing for rebirth of the psyche in a more advanced form.

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The lighting in Juliet's bathroom, which was previously gold, is now blue, which is another of Juliet's colors. Following the same formula as before, it is expressive of Juliet's sad mood and antithetical to Pauline's confidence. Any pessimism suggested by this lighting scheme thus seems wholly attributable to Juliet, though similar coloration has been applied in previous scenes to suggest night. In *The Mythic Image*, Joseph Campbell writes of "the dull blue light of the obscuring passion of stupidity," which could be said to be at play here.

Pauline declares that she is "coming with" Juliet, who meekly agrees. As one of "only about ten people" of such "genius," Pauline is confident that punishment for any crime they commit can be avoided by fooling the stupid adults, who include "the most ignorant person" whom Pauline has ever met. Pauline does not think "too much trouble" will be necessary because she foresees none. Although this is a notion of which she will all too soon be disabused, that which looms ahead is not even dimly realized and holds no terrors for her. (Joseph Stalin said that his greatest pleasure was "to choose one's victim, prepare one's plans minutely, slake an implacable vengeance, and then go to bed. There's nothing sweeter in the world.") She is relying on her determination to carry the day (*tam Marte quam Minerva*) and mistakenly envisions an implausible mission profile based on the doomed assumption that a real murder will be as clean, easy and agreeable as were the imaginary executions (*hæc olim meminisse juvabit*). Diello's killings and Deborah's delivery of him were brutal in their own way, but occurred within a comical fantasy context such that the victim suffered no real harm and no repentance was necessary. Pauline is unrealistically optimistic (*prendre la lune avec les dents*) to expect such results from a murder that she herself would commit. With her lack of prescience and inability to foresee disaster, Pauline is an anti-Cassandra.

As sadly noted above, this sapientista is using her wisdom as a gateway drug, opening a can of worms and raising the stakes of the contest by opting for blood sport in the mine field that is Mosaicism, while shunning a safety net with decadent nonchalance. Artur Schnabel proclaimed Mozart's music too easy for children and too difficult for artists. Pauline is being beguiled by a much more hazardous illusion of ease.

The bath water again recalls the water family of astrological signs, with the two faucets suggesting the fish of Pisces swimming on divergent paths. This perspective of separation and division, rather than union, matches Juliet's conflicting emotions, which will have her running hot and cold. And, crucially in this film, it is bath water with which the baby is proverbially thrown out.

In her article for the Fall 1995 issue of *Film Quarterly*, Luisa F. Ribeiro analyzes this scene in the vertical dimension by characterizing the girls as being "up to their necks." They will soon be in over their heads. This imagery also parallels that of the mental wisdom of the ego consciousness as the tip of the iceberg resting upon the vast, submerged unconscious. Further, in accordance with his associative and happily meandering style, this easily distracted digressor of the first rank now pauses for yet another breather in the rush of the story to devote some space to the excursive consideration of the horizontal dimension of this image. In doing so, a concept to

which attention has been given in previous essays will be revisited. “Uncertain way of gain!” says Shakespeare’s Richard III (IV.ii.), “But I am in / So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin.” In other words: in for a penny, in for a pound.

A fundamental property of nature is duality, including the ethical polarity of good and evil. The transcendence of duality is traditionally symbolized by the region between pairs of opposites, as when taking the middle path or going through the narrow gate. Examples include Poseidon’s trident and the parting of the Red Sea by Moses. In Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*, the grail is brought down from heaven not by the angels who sided with God nor by those who sided with Lucifer, but by the *neutral* angels. The name *Parzival* itself is analyzed as *Perce à val* (“piercing the valley”). Jung says that the self is symbolized as a union of opposites, which is also how an alchemical sacred marriage is construed. Recall Fergus and Dil walking in the middle of the street in *The Crying Game*. While discussing that scene, it was noted that Dante’s *Vita Nuova* provided the model to Joyce for placing the climax in the center of a book. Dil is a metaphor for the divine hermaphrodite who reconciles the cosmic split of masculine and feminine. Pauline herself has embodied both Charles and Gina. There is a Buddhist knowledge-holding deity of the middle path who is red. Pauline, the former wisdom holder, has been associated with the color red. On the U.S. one dollar bill there is found the eye of Horus, the eye of illumination, which opens where the opposite sides of the pyramid converge and are reconciled in a synthesis and mutual annihilation of polar opposites. Joseph Campbell refers to this as the eye of the disengaged, impartial tennis referee, transcendent of polar conflicts. Petrarch made liberal use of oxymoron and paradox, which are self-contradictory but contain truth that reconciles the conflicting opposites. Niels Bohr’s principle of complementarity states that an understanding of physics involves necessary but irreconcilable complementary concepts. Also to be thought of are Hegel’s dialectical synthesis of contraries and Derrida’s attempted transcendence of dichotomies.

Good and evil are subtly interdependent, such that the diabolical is the underside of the divine. Absolute good and evil are absent in the archetypal dimension. Wotan and Alberich are, respectively, the light and dark aspects of the same energy. Hamlet says (II.ii.), “for there is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” Kandinsky says, “At the call of the inner need that which is outwardly foul may be inwardly pure and vice versa.” In René Girard’s book *Violence and the Sacred*, the two are inseparable. This is related to the critical concept of *supplément*, in which a term needs its opposite, which is omnipresent, for definition.

Joseph Campbell illustrates Eastern thinking by saying that when the lion lies down with the lamb, it does not mean that the lamb is not going to be eaten. Of course it is. Such things occur “every day.” But such violence is illusory, as are cinema and the shadows in Plato’s cave. This act is to be recognized not as ultimate reality, but as a figment (*ceci n’est pas une pipe*), a phenomenon underlying which is a noumenal, metaphysical bliss beyond the reach of physical suffering and horror. The goal is to avoid distraction by the unpleasantness of mere material, phenomenal mirages, however tenacious the illusion. Only then may one achieve *claritas* and have a genuine experience of tragedy.

Compassion is the recognition of the self in the other. Yoga teaches that the self should be recognized in all objects. Ultimately, lover, beloved, and love are one. Also revealed by this realization is the identity between the slayer and the slain. This can be made to harmonize with Juliet’s picture of St. George and the Dragon. In *The Mythic Image*, Campbell says, “Slayer and Dragon, sacrificer and victim are of one mind behind the scenes where there is no polarity of contraries.” In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Campbell says, “Virtue is but the pedagogical

prelude to the culminating insight, which goes beyond all pairs of opposites." In that same work he explains that mystical participation is a covenant with nature in which one accepts life as it is. He quotes Heraclitus as saying, "To God all things are good, but men hold some things to be wrong." He later goes on to say, "The problem of the hero going to meet the father is to open his soul beyond terror to such a degree that he will be ripe to understand how the sickening and insane tragedies of this vast and ruthless cosmos are completely validated in the majesty of Being." He says of Kali, "Only geniuses capable of the highest realization can support the full revelation of the sublimity of this goddess. For lesser men she reduces her effulgence and permits herself to appear in forms concordant with their undeveloped powers. Fully to behold her would be a terrible accident for any person not spiritually prepared." Kali personifies terrifying violence and sacrifice, but, like the Buddha, gives the *abhaya mudra* and says, "Be not afraid." (When Miss Waller says, "Put up your hand," it could be taken as an order to make just such a gesture.) Violence is needed to break the ego. By trampling one's animal nature, Kali facilitates spiritual emancipation and is thus a vehicle of salvation and a symbol of compassion, even if full appreciation of her powers is reserved for "about ten people." Blake too says, "The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword, are portions of eternity too great for the eye of man."

As discussed during the consideration of *Barton Fink*, unprepared persons experience all psychic change as terror, an example being the wrathful deities of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The appearance of a deity is typically blissful if the subject is open, but horrific otherwise. The sublime monster who transcends ethics can make for a truly unhinging epiphany. Dakinis are terrifying female deities who represent knowledge of unveiled reality in all its gory detail. Pauline's behavior will also appear horrendous. But the achievement of dramatic terror requires seeing through the superficial instrumentality to experience what Joyce calls "the secret cause." St. Augustine says that Jesus went to the cross like a bridegroom to the bride. Bodhisattvas joyfully participate in the sorrows of the world. We mere mortals have a harder time finding and holding the still point. When detachment threatens to fail, comfort may be taken from the assurance (also noted in the essay on *Barton Fink*) that, according to a Muslim expression, the angel of death is terrible when approaching but blissful upon arrival.

Pauline minimizes her proposal of murder with the rationalization that "People die every day." She seems to be placing herself beyond ethics, though only superficially, and not in the metaphysical sense addressed above. This, then, is hubris, which will be punished. But this statement also functions as an implicit appeal to the audience to look past the illusory foreground horror of the murder and realize the noumenal bliss underlying the violence. Pauline thus, even if unknowingly, dares the viewer to penetrate the mystery, to be distracted by neither desire nor fear (*nec cupias, nec metuas*) and to seek the god behind the abomination. Given all that, what better than to have Pauline deliver this line as her head lies between the hot and cold faucets, in perfect accord with millennia of symbolism? Whether by coincidence or by design, this imagery rings true, at least to this symbolically inclined writer, who considers this to be the film's *coup de maître* (*me judice*). (See also Rev 3:15, 16.) This imagery recalls Buddhism's Middle Way and may be taken as a warning against immoderate behavior (*ne quid nimis*), a warning that Pauline is ignoring. Both Pauline's words and her supine attitude are comically prefigured when she earlier says to John, "These things do happen." In the extended version of the film, Pauline's statement is severely blunted by her earlier having said, "Dozens of people are dying all the time – thousands."

This interpretation, though personal, is in no way fanciful or idiosyncratic. Its application is licensed and reinforced by consonance with a vast constellation of related symbols. It is cognate with an ancient, ubiquitous, canonical, paradigm device, differing only in treatment (*salvo sensu*). This correspondence to a mytheme of such antiquity and universality makes this interpretation available for deployment as simply one of the tools of the trade. This hypothesis is not only distinguished by its rhetorical force but, it could be asserted, is contextually implied and is too potent, suggestive and compelling to go unconsidered. It at least has an orthodox ancestry and a reputable pedigree, whether persuasive or not. Ultimately, it can be no more dramatically and symbolically convincing than the reader will allow and can be made to look silly if the reader feels the need so to do. It is simply another liberty that this writer permits himself (*hodie mihi, cras tibi*) in accordance with "the imperfect subjunctive" (*pacta conventa*), which leaves all at liberty to make the best personal sense possible of whatever they consider an appropriate topic for analysis.

The reader is again reminded that the only concern here is with personal critical utility (*meo periculo*), with no conjecture about authorial purposes (*hypotheses non fingo*). Andrew Sarris holds that what matters is not what the author puts in, but what the critic can get out. What an author actually does is more important than what he intends, and that which is found is more important than what is meant to be expressed. Discussing John Cage. in the winter 2012 issue of *Listen* magazine, Paul Griffiths writes, "Listening becomes a matter not of following some line placed in the music by the composer but of finding one's own line — for though Cage often declared he had nothing to say, that does not mean the listener has nothing to receive . . . . It only means that what the listener receives is not foreordained." The correspondence between *The Wizard of Oz* and *Dark Side of the Moon* is fun regardless of the cause. The empirical fact remains that the imagery in this film is in conformity with traditional iconography whether or not it is consciously allusive and whether or not the filmmakers realize all the meanings potentially ascribable to it.

On the other hand, although symptomatic meanings are stipulated to be unintentional, Kandinsky claims that "art is not vague production." Some would hold the sculptor responsible for all aspects that a statue could present from all possible points of view. Similarly, there is a sense in which narrators must bear authorial responsibility even for inadvertent properties of their narratives. In *Julius Caesar* (IV.iii.), Cassius says, "Of your philosophy you make no use, / If you give place to accidental evils." Thus, any object in film may be taken as the extension of a concept.

Art regularly transcends the purposes of its creator. An artist can only contribute to and constrain meaning, but not determine it absolutely. An artist lacks a privileged position of analysis with respect to unconscious influences. (David Mamet is quoted by Diane Haithman in the *Los Angeles Times*, 2/5/06, as saying, "English departments all over the country have instilled the heresy that artists know what the hell they're doing. . . . How do you get your ideas? No artist who is honest can answer.") The artist's is only one among an infinite number of possible reference systems. It is no less biased and unreliable than any one else's and should not be accepted uncritically as the last word. An artist may even lie, making it the tale and not the teller that should be trusted. The notion (the intentional fallacy) that it is even possible to determine an author's intended meaning is at odds with modern critical theory. Exploration beyond ultimately inscrutable authorial purpose is a normal part of spectatorial and critical function, and the post-structuralist reader is at liberty to exploit textual plurality.

Some critics did not understand what David Lynch's *Mulholland Dr.* was "about." Art is often about that which is not immediately understood. What cannot be said or should not be overstated must be shown by symbolism. Symbols represent inner realities, but also, technically, have a real existence, as opposed to allegorical creatures such as the golden goose or unicorn. A symbol is a comprehensible vehicle for the connotative revelation of meaning, and an occasion to yield to the normal human narrative compunction. But symbols are neither univocal (*quot homines, tot sententiæ*) nor self-explanatory, and can even be self-contradictory. Symbols conceal subsidiary meanings from direct view as they simultaneously reveal that which is obscured by the more explicit modes of communication to which nonartists are enslaved. Moreover, deconstructive criticism alleges the indeterminacy of meaning and holds that the interpretation of any text is perpetually in doubt.

Metaphor cannot be understood passively, not only because a symbol does not wear its meaning on its sleeve, but because meaning is a subjective construct, not a discovery. Jonathan Culler asserts that making a text intelligible is the job of the reader. This involves the field of pragmatics, which is the study of the relation of signs to their interpreters. As an accomplice in the process of art, it is the subject who must ultimately supply a context within which a particular symbol may be invested with significance, just as it is assumed that the subject will furnish any unstated premises and conventions required to get a joke. Judgments of salience are made at the discretion of the receptor, on whose commitments, motivations, allegiances, interests, intentions and expectations reference fixation and interpretation depend. Once a work has left the artist's care, the receptor is left to do with it as he or she pleases (*ad gustum*).

Many people would rather concede the unintelligibility of a work of art rather than risk exegetical overreaching. The assumption here is that as long as an interpretation has factual support and enhances critical pleasure, discretion places few additional constrains on interpretive inclination and prerogative. Kenneth Burke declares that the critic is without limits. *Écriture feminine* (feminine writing) involves the subversion of all interpretive constraints. Plurisignation, holophrasis, intertextuality and referential synonymy ensure rewards in proportion to whatever competence is brought to the task of active, creative comprehension. If one is unprepared for any function of a symbol, and if no use is found for it, then that symbol is not understood. But interpretive opportunities abound in the face of systematic referential instability. The current matter may simply be taken as reflecting what Frederick Crews calls "the psychoanalytic anticipation that even the most anomalous details in a work of art will prove psychically functional."

Returning to the consideration of the explicit, denotative aspects of this scene, Pauline has made a bold and seemingly unforgivable proposal. Assertion of autonomy via an inflated act may be necessary to achieve individuation and higher levels of consciousness. But this challenges identification with the collective and is thus viewed as a crime against the old system until that system is recognized as obsolete. Only then are independence and individuality retrospectively considered heroic. This does not mean that murder is good. It means that genuinely heroic progress would not be viewed any more sympathetically in real time. Inflation may also be followed by compensatory deflation, and the higher they go, the farther they fall. The girls achieve escape, but ultimately in the manner of Icarus rather than Daedalus. The affair with Nicholas foreshadows Pauline's subsequent higher flight and bigger crash.

The association of symbols with myths is a conventional part of Jungian amplification. Myth contains a rich tradition of female taboo breakers, including Psyche, Semele, Pandora, Eve and Brünnhilde. The intuitive female realizes that an omelet cannot be made without breaking

eggs, while the short-sighted male sees only the broken eggs. However, it would seem like flattery to suggest that Pauline has the foresight to see grief as the price to be paid for advancing to her next developmental stage. Superficially, she cannot see the forest for the trees. But, like *Sapientia et Veritas*, her observation about people dying every day becomes an enabling slogan indicative of a deeper understanding of what is to be (*Vorverständnis*).

Western civilization is the story of matriarchy overthrown by patriarchy. Venerated goddesses become witches, seductresses and fools, yielding such figures as Medea, Medusa and Circe. One must look deep to reveal their original power and significance. Similarly, although yellow journalism would view her superficially as just a brat at the mercy of her appetites and aversions, there may be more to Pauline than meets the eye. She may be serving dramatic purposes greater than herself and may possess potential lying beneath the surface that should not be dismissed too hastily. In *Wings of Art*, Joseph Campbell says of Picasso's portraits, "They certainly don't look like anyone you'd like to meet, but you'd like that picture. The *picture* is formally organized and interesting." Hayden Herrera writes of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera that "friends remembered them as 'sacred monsters.' Their escapades and eccentricities were beyond the petty censurings of ordinary morality; not simply condoned, they were treasured and mythologized." As will be discussed later, proper aesthetic experience sometimes requires an active effort to avoid certain disqualifying distractions. Pauline certainly owes Honora something better. But perhaps we owe this Pauline (if not the historical one) something better as well.

Pauline bathes but is not purged of death. The bath offers physical but not psychic cleansing, and she wallows in water as in sin. Pauline looks determined, but Juliet shows no enthusiasm and seems trapped into onerous participation by an implied code of honor and silence (*omertà*) to which she is in thrall. It is unnecessary for Pauline to taunt Juliet with cowardice. Her resistance thoroughly undermined and all her passion spent, the lank and exhausted Juliet has no moves left. Siegmund can at least temporarily sustain the pretense of the free hero. Juliet no longer can. She cannot withstand Pauline's influence, but is also a victim of her own corrosive self-doubt. Too weary to disentangle herself from Pauline's tentacles, Juliet passively acquiesces, being not so much persuaded as overpowered. It is not so much that Juliet withholds protestations as that she is powerless to sound a single note of protest. Pauline may already be so far gone that she reads this as untroubled assent and silent ratification.

Pauline earlier nodded silently to Juliet as they bathed together. The roles of agent and patient have now been completely reversed. Juliet has been Pauline's muse, but Pauline is now Juliet's siren. In a state of abject followership due her lack of will (abulia, akrasia), Juliet now vests authority in Pauline, and will, with no further coercion, behave as she is bidden to do, however reluctantly. Unhindered (*nemine dissentiente*) and endowed with an abiding but misguided confidence, Pauline is now the leader and will do the thinking for both of them.

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Unicorns are again seen (except of course by those viewing the VHS tape), but now incongruously on the grounds of Ilam, as the music ironically denotes juvenile innocence. Unicorns are normal inhabitants of the Fourth World, perhaps indicating that this is one of the two days each year that the girls can visit.

A Mario Lanza record was accidentally broken earlier by an external negative masculine force. The girls subsequently discovered such a force within themselves and are now mistakenly, immaturely externalizing it. Pauline usurps the role of dragon slayer from Mario, just as Charles

displaces Lancelot and as Elizabeth II has just succeeded George VI. Juliet may no longer be the leader, but she willingly participates in the intentional burning of the remaining records and follows Pauline's lead by sharing Pauline's darker fashion palette. This ritual foreshadows the sacrifice of Honora and of themselves.

There comes a point when instruction becomes burdensome and iconoclasm is required. This is when the alchemist is told to destroy his books and when the goddess Kali decapitates herself. Meister Eckhart says that artificial means of salvation are dispensable once identification with divinity is achieved. It is not the gods but their graces that are to be sought. This current act of iconoclasm is a natural extension of that already demonstrated by the girls' employment of the *idam* principle.

The renunciation of material possessions signals victory over one's secular nature, the death of one's old character, and a general breaking with the past. Having shed their clothing in the "Donkey Serenade" scene, the girls now divest themselves of their records. Also, a propitiating, expiatory offering at a critical threshold may be required to sanctify a heroic mission. On the return from the special world, guiding deities are ultimately left behind and pursuing demons are escaped by leaving behind a valuable sacrifice. Here, unfortunately, their wisdom is left behind as well.

A sacrifice may be acceptable (Phil 4:18), unacceptable (Jer 6:20), inappropriate (Hos 6:6), or evil (Eccl 5:1). Some sacrifices, like that of Saul's oxen (I Sam 11:7), are meant to achieve tribal unity and solidarity. (Regarding this last example, Pauline believes that she can somehow avoid suspicion following Honora's death, and so she never explicitly suggests killing in order to scare or coerce people. But she may unconsciously hope that her deed will intimidate the remaining adults such that they will refrain from interfering with the girls' relationship.) Performance of a sacrifice can even lead to identification with and acquisition of the consuming power of the sacrifice. One is then no longer subject to the power of death, but is master of it.

In his book *Elbow Room*, Daniel Dennett theorizes that indebtedness to ancestors gives rise to a creditor God. When such debt becomes an intolerable burden, God sacrifices Himself to pay Himself. But neither the burning of records nor any mere financial suicide will sufficiently substitute for actual blood. Honora is still required as a victim.

Fire is one of the ways in which the animus can be represented. This particular fire first seems to indicate burning desire and destruction. This incineration of what amounts to a saint's effigy foretokens the Calderonian horror to come. The burning of "records" is also done when invasion by an enemy is immanent. It is also as if the girls were ritually incensing themselves. Thus they inflame themselves with self-pity and arm themselves with the rage that will allow them to do what they feel they must.

Fire may be regarded either as dangerous and as a property of hell and Tophet (the Old Testament site of human sacrifice by fire), or as the alchemical womb of transformation. In this more positive aspect, it is the gift of Isis that burns away both one's physical nature and the veil of time, imparting immortality and revealing eternity. In cremation, fire is the medium of purification, renewal, and transformation of matter into spirit in preparation for rebirth at a higher level. Purgation, also achieved by bathing and vomiting, may be a prerequisite for revelation and resurrection. It is only after purgation by fire that Barton Fink is ready to meet Beauty. (Also, if fire is a necessary agent on the path to paradise, as hypothesized in the essay on *Barton Fink*, then Mario, being consumed by flames, may be leading the way and preparing a place for his worshippers.) Fire figures prominently in *Like Water Chocolate*, both in the finale and in the transforming fire of Tita's cooking. This burning of Mario Lanza records echoes the immolation

of Hercules and Brünnhilde and the dismemberment of Osiris and Dionysus. A magic fire guards Brünnhilde as she lies in suspended animation. This one could be guarding Mario until he returns to be a comforting influence during the credits and beyond. Brünnhilde joins Siegfried on his funeral pyre. The girls may be preparing to follow their hero in a similar manner. One of the great Hindu realizations is that offerings fed into fire to invoke divine sanction and assistance are unnecessary if one can turn inward and rely on one's own inner fire. This is reflected in the wisdom of reliance on the inner murder of "the priest and the king." What has been said of fire applies equally well to the shadow: It is a good servant but a bad master.

The girls presumptuously, impertinently, arrogantly rank themselves among "the best people," who may be coextensive with the "about ten people" who have "the key." Fighting "against all obstacles" is a fundamental aspect of the Arthurian concept of love, and the girls consider themselves to be experiencing the fifth magnitude of love (referred to above), where all barriers dissolve. Therefore, instead of renouncing escapism and courageously accepting the situation, they remain undaunted and resolve to fight. Even if "in pursuit of happiness," they are "not playing anymore." Business before pleasure. After feeling helpless earlier, Juliet now holds Pauline's hands. Juliet will again come to feel trapped, such that she would welcome manumission.

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Image and voice-over diverge as Pauline describes herself as being "sweet and good." Peter Jackson here takes a courageous personal interpretive stance on the left-hand path. A structuralist interpretation is imposed, dissociating the text from the author's intention. Working beyond the realm of documentary, he exploits his dramatic license by creating an overlay of rhetorical and dramatic irony, as per "the imperfect subjunctive." As with the Arthurian authors, the story is not invented but received. The retelling provides the chance to grind one's own axe in whatever manner floats one's boat. Jackson, therefore, does not feel bound by his source material and instead overrules, contradicts and subverts it, denying his Pauline the opportunity to hide behind the diary of the historical Pauline. Thus is her disguise compromised, her face standing in rebuttal to her words. This is in accord with Brecht's concept of estrangement, which is a tool for revealing what a character may be concealing, as opposed to identification, which allows for the discovery of only as much as a character is willing to disclose.

In an example of unreliable autonarratology, Pauline exhibits her less sunny properties while pretending to brightness, seeing her own diabolical attributes not in herself, but only in others via projection. This simultaneous assertion and denial establishes a blatant aporia that forces Pauline to mean something other than what she wishes to say. Like the passively aggressive consideration shots of Evie in *Howards End* and Rosaura in *Like Water for Chocolate*, Pauline ironizes herself, saving the audience the trouble. As when she first caught sight of Juliet at Ilam, Pauline's facial expression speaks volumes, so that for the audience, the charade is futile and revealed as counterfeit. Though she believes herself to be wearing a mask of affective opacity, Pauline's face, unable to censor her feelings, gives truer utterance than her narration. Despite her diary, her true thoughts are in evidence and almost palpable, such that we practically divine them before she does. She intends her persona to be a stalking horse, but it is lame. Her unrealistic romantic temper simply cannot be camouflaged to resemble a classically calm acceptance of the world.

For Arthur Miller, "tragedy is the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly." Pauline here misrepresents herself and would probably fight against the tendency for her not to "excel in history." She self-flatteringly regards herself as a duplicitous, dissembling, Janus-faced Machiavel and imagines herself to be successfully husbanding her rage and deluding others with her supposedly angelic composure. Prudence would seem to be in order, since the adults have, after all, collectively taught Pauline what happens to those who wear their heart on their sleeve (Matt 7:6). But is she deceiving herself by misjudging her persona? Has she no misgivings or is she in denial about them or committed to the program in spite of them? She ignores such feelings at her peril. Self-deception may be necessary for self-tolerance, and happiness, according to Jonathan Swift, may depend on it. Nothing, said Ludwig Wittgenstein, is so difficult as not deceiving oneself. In any case, her looks betray her and her mask of feigned rectitude and probity has been seen through.

It may be that Pauline in fact has a poker face as good as Iago's, but is telepathically expressing and making conspicuous to the audience what remains hidden to those within the diagetic realm of the film. Perhaps the camera is operating subjectively, as it does with respect to Jody's photograph in *The Crying Game*. Perhaps her face is indicative of her unconscious state of mind, of which she herself is not aware.

Pauline says, "I have worked out a little more of our plan." Such calculation and premeditation, as expected of animus-dominated women, are but the caricature of male reason (*stat pro ratione voluntas*). Just as Juliet does not entertain the least concern about knocking down her father, nor does Pauline worry about knocking *off* her mother. Pauline will not only follow the example of Juliet's swaggering self-assurance but will outdo Juliet by exhibiting demented bravado. Having "no qualms," Pauline is like the unheroic aspect of Siegfried before he comes to know fear. That she finds this "peculiar" is a healthy sign, but, tragically, nowhere near "enough." As a self-proclaimed genius, she perhaps sees herself as having a certain moral prestige that armors her against guilt and entitles her to murder. She may also be turning her superego against Honora and blaming her for sexual misconduct, though this is something that they have in common and that gives rise to reciprocal projection. In any case, Pauline is now beyond the reach of reason and remains obstinate even in the face of catastrophe (*suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*). This is yet another example of dramatic irony, as the audience knows from the prologue what Pauline cannot foresee. As a reminder of her former self, she rides in a car with brown upholstery that is a pale imitation of the red with which she was previously associated.

There is yet more irony as Pauline describes herself as helping "vigorously," when her vigor has obviously been consumed by hatred. The "rock in a stocking" recalls the stone wrapped in swaddling clothes that was given to Cronos to swallow. Though "keyed up," she is no longer satisfied to escape by using the key to the Fourth World. She keeps the mood light with talk about a "surprise party" and "happy event" as, with sangfroid, she coolly observes her unsuspecting quarry. The real surprise, of course, will be on her. Believing that her mother is playing into her hands, she says that her mother has "fallen in" with everything, unaware of the fall that she herself will take. Whether by delusion or willful ignorance, she has been delivered of incertitude and complacently fails to anticipate any adverse consequences of murder, in spite of the recent profound disappointment of the thwarted Hollywood trip. Except possibly for Juliet, catastrophe is foreseen by no one, and least of all by Pauline. Not surprisingly, then, Pauline demonstrates myopic foresight when she inaccurately asserts that "next time I write in this diary mother will be dead."

The clothesline is revisited where Pauline was earlier seen wearing a happy smirk inspired by thoughts of escape. The current prospects are "pleasing," but are not guaranteed (*ante victoriam ne canas triumphum*). Pauline wears a somber face as she gathers a stocking that may in fact be part of the actual murder weapon. Echoing the references to Rutherford and onions, a sheet is pulled away to reveal evil lying just beneath the surface of what Pauline takes to be her seraphic exterior (*Mars gravior sub pace latet*). As George Costanza of *Seinfeld* says of onions, "The more layers you peel, the more it stinks."

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Pauline may have no qualms, but Juliet seems to have fallen prey to misgivings, as expressed in her tearful singing of Mimi's aria "*Sono Andati*" from the fourth act of Puccini's *La Boheme*. Appropriately, this is the final declaration of love from a consumptive female lover who is about to be lost forever. As such, it expresses a pessimism that does not seem attributable to the resolute Pauline. This makes it unlikely that this vision of the singing Juliet is solely a product of Pauline's mind, though it was earlier stipulated that Pauline is perfectly capable of imagining such things on her own. Equally important here is the fact that she is also capable of self-delusion and false optimism. Therefore, since telepathy has already been mentioned by Pauline, and is therefore internally, textually sanctioned, it may be inferred that this aria is a promissory note being sent by Juliet and that the girls are psychically linked as if by Ariadne's thread, sharing a bond that goes beyond even the shorthand common between twins. Perhaps this is a test of character of the kind that Wotan passes and Macbeth fails. Wotan is warned by his feminine intuition in the person of Erda. But this is the very wisdom that Pauline has lost, so she can no longer take a hint. Kate Winslet sings the aria herself on the soundtrack, further emphasizing that this message is a direct personal declaration of Juliet's sentiments, mediated neither by the character of Mimi nor by a singer like Mario. This echoes the failure to delegate killing to Diello. And as with "*E Lucevan le Stelle*," a singer other than Mario is used to express sad feelings.

The aria asks, "Are they gone?" Honora has just left the shot, leaving Pauline alone with Juliet psychically and spiritually, if not spatially. Juliet pronounces *andati* as if it were *andate*. This phantom word is almost certainly accidental (*lapsus linguæ*) rather than an intentional attempt to alter the meaning. However, Freud maintains that slips of the tongue are intentional and meaningfully expressive. Just as *Ilam* suggests *idam*, various proximal misspellings of this Italian phrase suggest a variety of pessimistic questions: Are we lost? Is all lost? Is our wisdom depleted? Are we obsolete? Are we done for? Is there no rest for the wicked? Will bygones be bygones? If nothing else, it serves as a reminder to us, if not to Pauline, that after pronouncing each other consanguine hierophants, Pauline then mispronounces herself a proper substitute for Diello. The remaining lyrics include sleep and sea imagery, and their "intensity" helps fuel the sexuality debate. However entranced she may be by Juliet's voice, Pauline seems unreached, or at least unmoved, by the actual text. The very slightly amber light illuminating Juliet when she is first seen, like that seen in her bathroom, may be taken as an implication of optimism consistent with Pauline's determination. But the physical explanation would seem to be that Juliet is watching the setting sun, implying pessimism.

The monochrome imagery of the girls running on the deck of a ship, which was featured in the prologue, is revisited. It now appears in its proper dramatic context as a premonitory or proleptic dream of the culminating reward anticipated by the girls for their struggles (*laborum*

dulce lenimen). (Note how Richard speaks proleptically of his prize in *The Hours*.) In this vision of a hoped-for future situation, Pauline continues to consider herself part of the Hulme family, and both girls address Hilda as "Mummy," which is also a distortion of the name of the operatic character whose words Juliet is singing in the background. Pauline's yearning to be in what she believes is her proper place (*maladie du pays*) may represent that craving for the impossible that Victor Brombert calls bovarysm. In a deleted line from the scene at Port Levy, Hilda promotes this when she calls Pauline her "foster daughter."

If both girls now escape to this dream realm, then their physical separation is annihilated by the telepathic transcendence of the personal self, helping what might otherwise have been a Gethsemane-like vigil to pass quickly. What is sorely lacking is clairvoyance. This speculative foresight should be tempered with the lesson learned from Miss Waller that the subjunctive may be imperfect. It was already demonstrated, at least for the audience, that this very dream can degenerate into nightmare, when, during the prologue, this idealized monochromatic fantasy was intercut with frantic bloody color material. In the end, this wishful thinking will be shown to have been a forlorn hope.

L. Frank Baum was a member of the Theosophical Society, and in an article titled "*The Wizard of Oz*: The Perilous Journey" (*The Quest*. vol. 6, no. 2, 1993), John Algeo shows how that film may be read as a theosophical allegory. The colorful Oz represents *samsara*, the seductive world of earthly beauty. Kansas is a colorless, flat, featureless landscape symbolizing the permanent truth and perfect peace of *nirvana*. Dorothy's time in Oz is spent on an Orphic journey of retrieval. Her goal is to return to monochromatic Kansas. Similarly, though her real, epic quest may be said to begin as the film ends, Pauline must often strive to reconnect with Juliet when the two are separated. Pauline seeks to escape to the situation pictured in her monochrome fantasy, with its flat-decked ship floating on the flat ocean. As this ship floats on the ocean in a dream, it also recalls Vishnu dreaming as he floats on the cosmic ocean, an image that Joseph Campbell suggests was to be the basis of James Joyce's fourth novel.

The beauty of Oz and the blandness of Kansas are both illusory. Viewed properly, Oz *is* Kansas, just as *samsara* is *nirvana*. The extended version of the prologue attributes to Christchurch both aspects when the narrator says, "Every city street is flat, so there are bicycles everywhere. This is a city of cycling." "Flat" conforms to the portrayal of Kansas as *nirvana*, while periodicity and the circuit of rebirth are suggested by "cycling." The change in psychological attitude that conquers this illusion makes accessible the Fourth World, but also the abyss. When the girls encounter the Fourth World, they discover that they already have the key, just as Dorothy always has the power to return to Kansas, but lacks the intuition to realize that the answer is within her. Dorothy's homecoming is achieved when she realizes that she is already home. The girls experience a similar realization, not at the end of the film like Dorothy, but in the middle. They then proceed to lose this wisdom as it devolves from thinking to feeling to doing. Dorothy is an ordinary protagonist who seems harmless, but kills two witches. Pauline goes from a face in the crowd to committing murder. The cycle of birth, death and rebirth is suggested by Dorothy's cyclone (to which she has a special affinity, as surname is *Gale*) and by Pauline's bicycle. *The Wizard of Oz* may be seen as a parody of authority in general. Satirizing the universal humbuggery and unthinking sense of privilege among external teachers encourages spiritual self-reliance, which is one of the cardinal principles of Theosophy. This is also the Arthurian tradition of traveling alone on one's own proprietary path rather than on a "closer walk" with anyone else. Alas, the girls resolve to go to Hollywood instead of properly journeying within themselves.

Having functioned as a serenade, *chanson*, *sevdalinke* (fatalistic Bosnian love song) and lullaby, Juliet's aria, its flow seemingly governed by interior time, spans the intervening hours until the next morning, becoming a crepuscular aubade. Pauline is adversely possessed by her animus. So rather than awakening as from sin, as symbolized in the German *geistliche Tageweise* song, her self-righteousness blinds her to her folly. When the final day dawns, she awakens and displays the determined eye of a sedulous raptor, ready for the fray. Juliet displays her ambivalence by awaking dazed and confused. This is also another Juliet/Wendy parallel, recalling when the latter awoke when breakfast was brought to her in bed. Juliet, in fact, awakes, as it says in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "like a sinful city summoned from its sleep to hear its doom." Also, fittingly, her clock is framed in a slightly greenish blue. The Buddha was the one who woke spiritually. Here the girls wake physically, but not spiritually, as they did when first experiencing the Fourth World. Their awakening betokens what an eye opener the coming day will be for New Zealand.

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Having developed from the attraction of opposites to the transcendence of duality, a return to an emphasis on polarity may now be inferred. A thematic parallel and antiparallel have been made between the critical events of this story and a certain realization by Stephen Dedalus in *Ulysses*. The relationship of these events in space and time may now be considered. Stephen acquires "priest-and-king" wisdom on (or immediately following) June 16, 1904, in Dublin. The definitive demonstration of its loss in this story occurs on June 22, 1954, in Christchurch, almost exactly half a century later and half a world away. Mario's records have a flip-side, and in moving the locale "down under," the story has been turned upside down in every way, revealing the misdirected down side or underside of the girls' energy. The distance between Dublin and Christchurch, like the voyage from Scotland to New Zealand in *The Piano*, represents the longest possible journey and greatest possible separation, also symbolized in *Ulysses* by Stephen playing "empty fifths" on the pianola. He explains, "The reason is because the fundamental and the dominant are separated by the greatest possible interval which . . . Is the greatest possible ellipse. Consistent with. The ultimate return. The octave." Another line from the extended prologue ("Mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters all on wheels.") maximally separates *mothers* and *daughters*. ("Wheel" is also one translation of the word *cakra*.) The girls' pending actions are polarly opposed to their previous wisdom. Reflection on geographic and temporal distance is also a reminder that, even with the allowances granted by reception theory, the ending of this film can still shock audiences enjoying the benefit of an aesthetic distance unavailable to the contemporary local Christchurch community depicted in the story.

This antipodal irony is supplemented and amplified by the film's final quotation from Pauline's diary, which is probably the film's most ironic line. As she begins the day in which she will descend to the edge of the abyss and then plunge into it, Pauline writes a line the irony of which is almost beyond what can be borne: "I am about to rise." Pauline precedes this with an allusion to Christmas, antithetically referring to the other solstice, which is the start of summer in the southern hemisphere. But from the perspective of Christmas in the northern hemisphere, it appropriately expresses the optimistic theme of moving from darkness to light. With this reference and with Pauline being "about to rise," Christmas and Easter are again juxtaposed as they were at Port Levy. Pauline had thought Honora would be dead before more would be written in her diary. She will also be wrong about the anticipated ease of the murder. Pauline's

blanket looks blue, but is nearly black, contrasting with the white and floral one she had before moving into the main house. One of the drawings on the wall behind her features figures dressed in red and blue.

The culmination of the story on June 22 provides the perfect calendric metaphor. The 1954 summer solstice for the northern hemisphere occurred on June 21 at 10:55 PM Greenwich time. Our film has now reached the morning on which occurs the winter solstice for the southern hemisphere, making the previous night the longest and this day the shortest of the year in terms of sunlight. Following the winter solstice near midday, when the sun reaches its lowest point in declination, it then begins a further local descent in the sky toward sunset. We have descended into the realm of maximum literal, astronomical darkness. A similar reference to the winter solstice occurs in *The English Patient*. In addition to the semicentennial noted above, June 22 is also the anniversary of the surrender of France (1940), the start of Operation Barbarosa (1941), the defeat of Max Schmeling by Joe Louis (1938), and the second abdication of Napoleon (1815). The final period during which the girls are allowed to interact is June 11-22, in the midst of which is Bloomsday (June 16), which also coincides with the action of Richard Linklater's film *Before Sunrise*. The 1947 *Encyclopedia Britannica* recounts that on June 22, 1633, after examination by the Inquisition, "Galileo recanted and was sentenced to incarceration at the pleasure of the tribunal." The girls will soon be incarcerated at the pleasure of a queen. Also note that Giacomo Puccini, whose music is prominently featured in this film, was born on December 22, corresponding to the winter solstice.

The equation of light with innocence and shadow with guilt is irresistible. This is the day on which objects cast the longest shadows at any given time of day. The actions taken by the girls today will cast the longest shadows of any events in their lives, and doubts have already begun to "shadow" Juliet, as they will continue to do throughout the day. The solstices are the two times in the year when the sun is motionless in declination. A stationary sun implies time standing still or a moment beyond time. Being beyond time, as the poet is said to be, implies transcendence of all duality, including the ethical duality of good and evil. This comports with Pauline having found the still point between the pairs of thermal opposites of hot and cold when she says, "People die every day." Moreover, in the extended version of the film, Pauline's poem places the girls outside the temporal flow, saying, "and passively, they watch the race of men decay and change," though the girls themselves change names regularly. On Good Friday at Port Levy, the sun appeared in its aspect as masculine conscious ego bringing order out of chaos. Now, at the winter solstice, it is the black sun of woman's unconscious animus. Joyce's Stephen Dedalus declares that tragedy involves the "grave and constant in human suffering." The sun at the winter solstice is grave, and the light of the sun, unlike that of the moon, is constant. The sun rises daily, culminates, sets, and dwells in transcendence during the night until reborn the following day. A psychological analogy may be made with the astronomical solar course such that the plot of this film may be seen to parallel this formula. Such solar wisdom may provide consolation and even optimism at the end.

This is also the time of the zodiacal transition from Gemini to Cancer. Astrologically, Gemini (the twins, the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, mortal and immortal, respectively) is a mutable air sign. Our protean principals in some sense see themselves as twins, but are soon to be separated. Horoscopically, Geminis are lofty and ingenious, but easily bored and frustrated. They are compromising and adaptable, but unstable. They are ruled by Mercury, but the once-mercurial girls have left their "brilliantly clever" days behind them. Cancer, the crab, is associated with home, mother and emotional intensity, which are among Pauline's main

concerns. It is a cardinal water sign that calls for consideration of what lies beneath the surface, as was taken to be the sense of "People die every day." A crab was part of the girls' destroyed sand castle, perhaps foretelling disaster at this time of year. Also, during this discussion of temporal issues, it is worth remembering that this story occurs within a mere two-year compass.

In *Psychoanalysis and Literary Process* (edited by Frederick Crews), David Leverenz writes of how, in *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael recalls being dragged out of a chimney and "sent to bed at two P.M., on 'the longest day in the year in our hemisphere.'" Ishmael then awakes in darkness. "What began as an aggressive, phallic act (ascending the chimney) lost its sunlight and in the darkness became pure impotent terror. . . . To be 'wrapped in outer darkness' left him 'frozen,' with none of the chimney's heat he was striving to emulate." Honora will partially enter her oven on the shortest day of the year in her hemisphere, echoing Ishmael in the chimney. Juliet will be dropped off by her father and then walk past a sign for Frosty Jack Ice Cream. She will then feel the heat in Pauline's room, but will later be warned about getting a chill just before the murder. The film will end with Pauline impotent in the dark.

The time scale on this last day is dilated such that the emphasis switches from dates to times of day. Clocks are reminders of the inexorability of fate. Like the image of a skeleton holding an hourglass, they suggest the theme of time running out (*tempus fugit*), the ticking of a time bomb, and the approach of destiny. Preoccupation with time, symbolized by the drum in the hand of the dancing Shiva, impedes the perception of eternity. Shiva also holds fire that burns through the veil of time and reveals eternity. Advice against such distraction has already been issued the phrase "People die every day," and fire is soon to be supplied by Honora's oven. The clocks and the black clothes combine to recall the goddess Kali, whose name means both "black" and "time." Proximity to the solstice makes it seem as if the murder must not be too far removed from it, as if the window of opportunity to kill will pass with the waning of the powers of darkness, whose aid is needed.

Juliet chooses a brick from a pile that probably served as the source for the altar of the saints. The girls employ nothing less than consecrated material for what Pauline, at least, considers a sanctified mission. Their shrine becomes a tabernacle, such that divine power may be housed in an artifact that can be transported. "I thought I'd lost you," says Henry prematurely. (Earlier, Diello speaks of having "almost lost" Pauline.) Juliet can still feel the pull exerted by the umbilical cord. Having been at daggers drawn, she sets aside asperity, seeks *rapprochement*, initiates a reconciliation and manages to reach an *entente cordiale* with her mother, perhaps in response to Electral guilt. What is more urgently needed is a psychic reconciliation of Juliet with herself. Wagner's Brünnhilde ultimately relinquishes the ring in acceptance of catastrophe, not to avoid it. Juliet may have similarly few illusions about her conciliatory gesture.

The car and Hilda's clothes are blue, while Juliet is dressed in somber gray. Juliet is disengaging from the family and its color. She is said to have roses in her cheeks. The rose is a Western equivalent of the lotus, the flower of divine grace. Juliet manages to feign optimism as she departs. She enters the car at 10:36 and arrives at Pauline's at 11:05. The solstice occurs in the interim at 10:55, possibly when Juliet passes the Frosty Jack's sign. Technically, the sun has now begun its clime in declination.

The Rieper's kitchen features the colors green and red. The black comedy continues, extending to the thud of Juliet's purse, a gag that again diffuses the tense atmosphere. Honora looks into the oven and offers the girls the same opportunity afforded to Hansel and Gretel. Seeing Honora in the role of a witch helps the girls rationalize their plan. The oven recalls the burning of Mario Lanza records and, as mentioned then, may be viewed optimistically as the fire

with which Isis burns away one's physical nature and imparts immortality. To the extent that it recalls the death of Hermann Gromek in Alfred Hitchkock's 1966 film *Torn Curtain*, the image of Honora with her head in the oven also anticipates the difficulty the girls will have killing her. It was on this very day on the other side of the world that CBS newscaster Don Hollenbeck died from inhaling natural gas from the oven in his Manhattan apartment. The brick and oven also act as reminders of Honora's motherhood, as they resemble, respectively, rock and cave, which are maternal symbols. Honora seems to dodge a bullet when she turns around to be faced with a reciprocal gift of fruit from Juliet, matching and repaying the fruit that Honora had given to Juliet in the hospital.

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In the kitchen, both girls are scared of being caught. In her bedroom, Pauline converses nonchalantly while Juliet is "sweaty." Sweat is associated with penance, purgation and purification. Barton Fink sweats through a fire that readies him to encounter Beauty. Pauline refers to her opera as "a three-act story with a tragic end." It would be hard not to take this as self-referential, being so appropriate. Cassandra foretells the future, but is not believed. Pauline unconsciously foresees tragedy, but refuses to be shaken in her resolve and confidently anticipates triumph, while it is Juliet who sweats. As one is yet again reluctant to attribute conscious pessimism to Pauline, her opera's "tragic end" could be yet another instance of telepathy from Juliet.

Juliet carries Pauline's fears as Mime carries Siegfried's. Juliet not ungrudgingly assents to Pauline's plans, but is none too eager to share in Pauline's guilt. Juliet feels the double bind of contradictory emotional demands derived from the chivalrous loyalty and shame of which Wolfram writes. Rejecting self-expostulation, she battles to assuage her scruples by seeing Honora as a willing victim (*volenti non fit injuria*). Juliet feels that she has no room to maneuver and is preoccupied with making a brave effort to justify the crime (*semper timidum scelus*). She comes near to recognizing the folly of the situation as she hovers in the vicinity of asking to be excused from participation. The erratically attentive girls talk past each other, Pauline being deaf to Juliet's desperate rationalizing and blind to her not-even-thinly veiled trepidation. Perhaps Juliet realizes that Pauline is beyond compromise and that attempts to dissuade her would be futile. If Juliet can regard this situation as a test of her devotion, then she can dismiss her ambivalence as casuistry. In any case, it will soon be time for her either to recant or make good on any promissory notes.

Pauline decides against an orthodox marriage between Bernard and Carmelita. Affairs are more exciting and more Arthurian as well. As explained in the essay on *The English Patient*, fictional adultery is merely one of the standard tools of the trade, and objections to it pressed on behalf of ethical theories are a misapplication of rules proper to a different realm. By contrast, Deborah had been free to accept a proposal of marriage after Charles had defeated a knight named Lancelot and raced up the right-hand stairs in the sand castle. The situation has now progressed from the naive, orthodox conformity of Cligés to the defiant, left-hand path, courtly love mode of Lancelot. As Etienne de Meaux put it in the 13th century, "Not for all the riches of the Cistercians should a loving woman with a passionate heart have a husband. She should have a lover instead." (This Arthurian theme extends into the next scene, where the topic of conversation is a distinguished mountaineer whose middle name is Percival.) With the application of this latter formula, the girls stop talking past each other such that Juliet is drawn

into Pauline's side of the conversation and concurs. Juliet's top sometimes appears blue when directly compared to Pauline's. Juliet may be maintaining her proper color, but in a very dark form.

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The girls suffer from church laughter as an ironic reference is made to Sir Edmond Hillary. Being the first man to reach the summit of Mount Everest (5/29/53) has made him New Zealand's most celebrated explorer of the physical heights. The allusion is made as Pauline is about to become, at least momentarily, New Zealand's most famous explorer of the psychological depths. Compared to Hillary, Pauline may have been even higher psychologically, if not physically. But the higher they go, deeper they fall. Resulting in a symmetry of extremes, Pauline will go from summit to nadir. Hillary's achievement is the conquest of the world's tallest mountain. The mountain was earlier seen as the junction of earth and heaven. Now it seems to be a temptation to inflation and to biting off more than one can chew, as did Icarus. The reference to Hillary harmonizes with Pauline's final diary entry, with the reference to Rutherford in the prologue, and with the name later adopted by Pauline in real life: Hilary Nathan.

With the mention of "thermal underwear," comic relief continues to be sustained even as the end nears. Hillary is said to be "a credit to the nation" on the same day that the girls will bring discredit upon themselves. Unlike Hillary, they will not "excel in history," but will instead receive its very unfavorable verdict and will soon be twisting from history's gibbet. For her earlier transgression, Pauline was told, "You shame me. You shame the family." Pauline is about to step up into the big leagues and greatly expand the range and scope of this shame. This opprobrium is unlikely to evoke indifference. A groundswell of contempt may be anticipated, with the girls likely having to endure a storm of condemnation with people climbing over each other to vilify them. It will be in this atmosphere that the girls' writings will be blazoned to the world, with the makers of this film serving as somewhat less hostile literary executors (or midwives), bringing these works to the attention of an ever-widening audience and rescuing their story from obscurity. Even though their novels would probably not otherwise have attracted general attention, this notoriety (*fama clamosa*) will not be that which they were striving to secure.

Bert anticipates a line of Honora's when he says, "I'd better be getting back." He the wishes them "a nice outing," which could easily refer either to the revelation of homosexuality or to release from prison. It is also proper that Honora be made "more presentable," both for the undertaker and to meet her maker.

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The word "CASHMERE" on the front of the bus harmonizes at least with the concept of Juliet's sweater, regardless of its actual material. As a metaphor for how they will not "excel in history," the girls sit in the back of the bus. During their last bus ride, Pauline sat to Juliet's left, perhaps indicating the unorthodox nature of their relationship as expressed in Pauline's poem. This time, Pauline is on Juliet's right, as she is now the one leading the way to literal murder. The bus is red, which is Pauline's old color and a reminder of how good things used to be. This could be taken as yet another pathetic fallacy imploring Pauline to revisit and adopt her old wisdom. She ignores it, still holding fast and refusing to be derailed, yet unaware that, for her, there is a

world at stake. Further reminders will soon arise in the forms of a green roof and red curtains. Pauline's "Come on, Mummy" maintains the atmosphere of black comedy. Honora diverts the plot and unknowingly grants herself a temporary stay of execution. As when she opts to sing "A Closer Walk with Thee," Pauline has little choice but to temporize. This retardation prevents the action at this point from moving too quickly, allows Pauline to become impatient and frustrated, and heightens Juliet's anxiety. It also allows the audience to catch its breath and to lament the fact that Pauline is looking neither back nor forward (*principiis obsta*)(*respice finem*). Can she not still be diverted from a path fraught with danger and retreat from what can only lead to disaster? Cannot some detour be taken and some accommodation be found?

The final Puccini selection employed on the soundtrack is the "Humming Chorus" from *Madama Butterfly*. In the opera, it accompanies the final wait before a long-anticipated "happy event" that turns out tragic instead. There, the arrival of a ship is expected. Here, one is to sail away. If this music is taken as subjective for the girls, as was "*Sono Andati*," then it would be yet another expression of Pauline's misplaced optimism contrasted with Juliet's informed pessimism. Pauline is again ignoring a warning about pending disappointment, her slow-brewing hatred standing in contrast to the music's hushed expectancy. Still unable to disenthrall herself from literal murder, she is about to discover that she may have bitten of more than she can chew (*qui trop embrasse, mal étreint*).

Pauline can rationalize a delay for "a cup of tea first," as the condemned is entitled to a last meal. What foods would be symbolically appropriate for this meal? Pauline might eat pork, since the boar represents the destructive aspect of the Great Mother, and the pig represents refusal to adapt, resistance to change, inertia, stagnation, and brutish conservatism. Juliet says that Honora is "not fat," making her unqualified to play the role of the fatted calf. To remedy this and to make of Honora a proper sacrifice, Pauline encourages her to fatten herself. If Honora is what she eats, then becoming the fatted calf would seem to call for veal. Lamb would also be appropriate for Honora in her role as scapegoat. Their meal notwithstanding, the girls are about to set out on a mission for which they are improperly provisioned (*s'embarquer sans biscuit*). Also, the setting brings to mind *Tearoom Trade* by Laud Humphreys, which deals with gay sex.

Honora is watching her figure because she "put on a lot of weight over Christmas." Since this was half a year ago, we are by now well "over" the true spirit of giving. Assuming our ration of comic relief must surely by now have been exhausted, some may be unprepared when, even now as murder is looming on the horizon, the drama is still thus tempered, again heightening the final tragedy by contrast. For Walter Benjamin, "all great works of literature found a genre or dissolve one – that they are, in other words, special cases." *Heavenly Creatures* is variously characterized on eBay and could be said to participate in various genres, which are narrative systems built around a set of stable conventions (its chronotope) that are diversely realized. In the *Los Angeles Times*, 2/12/06, Charles McNulty observes, "Comedy, unlike tragedy, is all about second chances." Unfortunately, such chances are about to be forsworn.

Pauline's decidedly rough and rude sense of gallows humor is expressed with wonderfully malignant mordancy (*risum teneatis, amici?*) when she says, "Treat yourself." At this point, with the audience possibly whistling past the graveyard, every last joke (and this is the last) is welcome (*desipere in loco*), though small delight can be taken in the humor if the prologue is recalled. Irony marks Pauline's supposed dissimulation when claiming to be "sweet and good." She is now enacting a bit of cosmic irony, wherein she inwardly laughs at her mother's pending misfortune as, unbeknownst to her, she herself is about to take a fall. Her actions are also about to feature an ironic incongruity of intentions and results. Honora, as

before, is included in this "private function" and is not told to "go away." She should nevertheless be wary of this solicitous generosity (*timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*). Until now, death has been experienced in the symbolic forms of fasting, visions and feigned executions. The time has come for eating and literal death. Like the first stasimon in the *Choephori* of Aeschylus, this respite also gives Pauline a chance to simmer and come almost to a boil (like water for chocolate). It is also a chance to work up courage, like Orestes, though she does not seem to need it, appearing to harbor no concern that she will "shame the family."

Back outside, Pauline passes through the narrow gap in the hedge, turns left and begins a physical descent that parallels both her psychological descent and the astronomical descent of the sun. Her descent contrasts with Hillary's famous ascent. The left turn is but another unheeded recommendation. The hedge recalls Christ's crown of thorns and Sleeping Beauty's hedge of thorns, which parts for the right youth. As in *Howards End*, the barrier yields to the chosen one and becomes a walkover, or in this case a walkthrough. The hedge also recalls hedge mazes, obliquely suggesting the Minotaur in the labyrinth, and, by extension, the dark and destructive passions that dwell in the unconscious. This gap in the hedge is appropriately traversed on the day of the solstice, as the final passage to the supreme ordeal is narrow and dark. So too is the birth canal, through which one emerges into the light, a special kind of which awaits Honora, as will soon be discovered. Like the Symplegades, this threshold is in the form of the narrow gate, where the pairs of opposites withdraw, as when the Red Sea parts and the waters are crossed. This same symbolism was discussed when Pauline said, "People die every day." The middle path suggests Kundalini yoga's neutral central nerve *sushumna*, which runs between the respectively lunar and solar nerves *ida* and *pingala*. On her walk down the path, Honora is positioned between a lunar brunette and a solar blonde. Honora could also be said to be walking between the female monsters of Scylla and Charybdis. Scylla, the rock of logic, is represented by the brick to which Honora falls victim. Charybdis, the abyssal vortex, is Pauline's destination. The middle path is exemplified by the trident of Poseidon, to whose waters Orson Welles was consigned by Juliet, who, in a sense, will presently be similarly consigned. Poseidon is also the god of horses, with which the girls have associated themselves. A *paso* procession reenacts the Passion of Christ, with an innocent victim accompanied by two criminals. Honora is innocent, the girls are on their way to being criminals, and the three are, in a sense, about to constitute a crucified triumvirate.

Feet are again visually emphasized, as they were at the beginning. Having visited the heights, Pauline has now regressed to the initial base psychological state. Honora is lent a hand by Pauline, on whom the irony of the moment is not lost. A futile attempt is made to negotiate mud and avoid being caught and sullied. The plasticine that the girls use for modeling has the ambiguous, ambivalent potential to be both source and sink, like the goddess Kali. The negative aspect of this potential is reflected in this mud, which constitutes a literal slippery slope emblematic of the deteriorating situation. Composed of the grosser elements of earth and water, it is symbolic of the quagmire of sin and evasion in which the girls wallow. Like the web of fate in which the house of Atreus is enmeshed, it reflects the internal logic of the predicament in which they are trapped. It stands in defiant and insistent opposition to the clothesline where Pauline is sometimes seen contemplating the future. It also recalls Jane Campion's *The Piano*, New Zealand's principal cinematic contribution from the previous year. Fittingly, it is Honora who steps in the mud least and Pauline most. However little the girls sink into the mud, they are nevertheless metaphorically again "up to their necks." This crucial final exam should yield catharsis and purification. Instead, the mud foretells that the adventure will fail. Without

Ariadne's thread, Pauline will not make it out of the Labyrinth, but will be caught in the tangled web that she, if not Clotho, has spun.

Amidst a growing sense of urgency among angst-ridden members of the audience, as well as Juliet, a special light now reassuringly laurels Honora. Nearly every time she is seen in this sequence, the sun flares the lens, bathing her in a beatific light of benediction. As the tension mounts, it is as if heaven takes pity on Honora, offering omniscient recognition of her innocence and acknowledgment that she is guiltless (*rectus in curia*). The constant, invincible sun (*Sol invictus*) is now appreciated for its inferred qualities of salvific redemption (*Sol salutis*) and of justice and righteousness (*Sol iustitiae*). But on the physical plane, the sun remains remote and will not descend in the form of Medea's chariot from the sun god as a *deus ex machina* to save Honora and provide a happy ending as in *The Piano* (*dis aliter visum*). Instead it serves as an outward sign of inward grace, allaying our dread. The sun that helped usher the girls into the Fourth World envelopes Honora with the promise of the "peace and bliss" of Paradise. A celestial voice in Verdi's *Don Carlo* offers assurance of the salvation of the heretics about to be burned at the stake. Similar assurance is offered by the exonerating (ex*Honora*ting?) sun that embraces Honora. The implicit admonition of "People die every day" is worth remembering. Just as exile to a Borstal or to the demimonde should have been the least of Pauline's worries, in this transcendental, mystical sense, Honora's fate should be the least of ours (and hers). The proper role for the observer is not to fear, but to look beyond the illusory physical dimension and meditate on dissolution. For Pauline, the realization should be that this is the same sun too close to which Icarus flew. This warning is being ignored as were all the others.

At a loss to resolve the tug of war involving conflicting obligations and contrary psychic forces, and lacking Pauline's sense of divine righteousness and appointment, Juliet is not exactly falling to with a will and has not yet begun to warm to the task. She remains irresolute (*nolens volens*), seems to dither and is lacking *partynost*. She is torn, just as Pauline was "terribly cut up." Her hand-wringing trepidation reflects our concerns as we shiver in expectation. "Leave wringing of your hands," says Hamlet (III.iv.), "And let me wring your heart." No longer the bellwether and unable to escape the tendrils of Pauline's influence, Juliet, however unwillingly, falls in with Pauline's lead, tows the line and gets with the program. Both Juliet and the audience are about to have their mettle tested.

Even with the bloody prologue still fresh in memory, it is not always recalled that all was doomed from the start. It may still be hoped that there remains one last chance to redeem the situation and that things need not go horribly wrong if only Pauline would bid Diello return. But, as movingly foretold in the prologue, that ship has sailed, and it is too late (*elapso tempore*). At the final critical threshold, physically marked by the branch of a tree, the saturnine Pauline passes resolutely, having proclaimed herself, to borrow a phrase from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "ready to shed the last drop." She had feared "going crazy." She now considers herself, at worst, crazy like a fox. If she thinks that her skills have been honed to a perfect edge, then she is about to discover otherwise. Honora passes nonchalantly, not suspecting the extent of her daughter's treachery. Honora may be unaware of her impending death, but the audience should not be unaware of the situation's more affirmative possibilities, to be discussed below. It is only the unsteady and uncertain Juliet who hesitates, actually clutching the branch at the boundary.

This is the point of no return. There is now a sort of inevitability to this tragic trajectory. Stuart Kauffman's *The Origins of Order* features an account of how evolution can have an irresistible momentum that natural selection is powerless to stop. Despite the bridge imagery (see

the *Fourth World* website), the girls leave behind them a chasm that cannot be bridged (*vestigia nulla retrorsum*). Their leap of faith is now irrevocable and their momentary physical reversal will prove futile. Now, at the physical nadir, Pauline will assume the role of the abyssal monster in her wrathful aspect. Teetering at the edge of the abyss, a line from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is recalled: "falling, falling but not yet fallen, still unfallen but about to fall."

There now occurs another of the irredeemably heinous omissions in the VHS version. If looks could kill, then Pauline's world-class *mal occhio*, prompted by her impatience about the glacial pace of the proceedings, would render the brick unnecessary. Her glares, which alone were, for this writer, always worth the price of admission, fall victim to reformatting and are lost on VHS. Instead of reframing the shot by panning to the left, the telecine operator has chosen to show only the back of Honora's head. It is appreciated that this is about to become a focal point of the scene as "ground zero," but it is doubtful that any such subtle aesthetic judgment was involved in the reasoning behind this result.

A jewel is now deployed to distract Honora. If this is to be thought of as the same stone that was used to tempt the plasticine Nicholas (an online version of the screenplay refers to both as "a small pink stone"), then it reinforces the fact that the girls persist in wrongly interpreting their fantasy literally instead of symbolically. The Jesus/Barton conflation in *Barton Fink* is echoed in Honora's ironic juxtaposition of "Yvonne" and "Love." To Honora, Pauline ironically personifies love. Pauline sees Honora as Terrible Mother. Both are projecting. Honora says, "We should be going back." Pauline should be going back to her old wisdom, but is not. Resurrection should involve purification, with wisdom retained and death left behind. Like the sun, which has just reversed its direction in declination, the characters likewise turn around and begin a physical ascent, but have time to advance only a few steps. Though seemingly moving back from the brink, the return to light for them is not to be (*Fata obstant*). Honora says that they "don't want to miss the bus." But having abandoned wisdom, the girls miss the bus profoundly. The irony continues as Honora warns Juliet that she might "get a chill." Honora herself is about to get the Big Chill.

Pauline points out the jewel dropped by Juliet, and the gimmick from the fantasy assassination of Nicholas is recognized. But that was then and this is now. This symbol of the spirit is now accompanied by a brick, a symbol of erroneous concretization, mere worthless physicality, orderly male existence and death. The jewel and the brick represent the rigidity of the psyche when the feminine is lacking. Since the jewel was last employed, the situation has regressively degenerated from delegation to Diello and the Jungian alchemical ascent to truth (*sublimatio*) to the current descent to concretizing the archetype (*coagulatio*). The jewel is actually cheap, like the illusory pipe dream that real murder will be as easy as in fantasy.

Pauline has just looked over her shoulder at Juliet, who now returns the favor. Having embarked on an abyssal descent, as does Orpheus, the girls take turns looking back at each other, recalling the dire consequences that befall both Orpheus and Lot's wife. Juliet's conscience constantly threatens to intervene, and an 18th century-style change of heart seems imminent. It does not come. Even if Diello is still invitable, he is uninvited. We now stand at the precipice.

Pauline launches her attack with her sacred weapon (*malleus maleficarum*) and the film is washed clean of its romantic incrustations by Honora's blood. Diello had only a name but no material presence. Pauline is now the incarnate assassin. Idea becomes word becomes plasticine becomes flesh. Honora might well say to Pauline, and ultimately to Diello, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" The distinction between subtle mind and gross body is now starkly and painfully displayed. Additionally, as if to confirm that Murphy's Law cannot be circumvented, Honora,

like Orson Welles, will not be easily discarded. Pauline may enjoy an exalted spiritual stature and be "brilliantly clever," but she is insufficiently strong to dispatch her mother quickly. The brick, at least initially, proves little more potent than the splinters to which Wotan's spear is ultimately reduced.

"I am weak," says the song with which the film begins. These words now come back to haunt us. In *The Wings of the Dove*, Kate fails to anticipate the complications caused by her own emotions. Pauline, due either to a lack of self-scrutiny or to willful naiveté, has left her own ineffectual physicality out of the reckoning. Her current experience constitutes a type of discovery, the climactic revelation of hitherto unknown facts to a character. Alternatively, Pauline's failure to make short work of Honora could be partly due to her premeditation. As Parzival learns, the redeeming act must be spontaneous, intuitive and instinctive. Her pathetically feeble efforts recall the title of an earlier Peter Jackson film: *Meet the Feebles*. Consequently, Honora suffers a death as protracted as that of the witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz*. As Mark Antony says in *Julius Caesar* (III.ii.), "Ambition should be made of sterner stuff." Donald Hebb (quoted in *Consciousness Explained* by Daniel Dennett) could have been describing this situation when he said, "If it isn't worth doing, it isn't worth doing well." As noted by the Marquis de Vauvenargues, it is the greatest of misfortunes to be endowed with ambition that exceeds one's resources. Again, it is folly to attempt a physical resolution to a psychological problem, just as it is hubris to undertake a task that is beyond one's abilities (*ne tentes, aut perfice*) and presumptuous for the improperly initiated to re-enact the deeds of heroes literally. Would that Pauline did not have to learn this lesson the hard way (*eventus stultorum magister*).

In *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell writes, "[E]very failure to cope with a life situation must be laid, in the end, to a restriction of consciousness." Pauline has narrowed her consciousness so as to exclude Diello. Once this wisdom is lost, she is no longer up to the task (*par oneri*) of bearing the burden she has undertaken. The situation is like that described by Richard Eder in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 2/17/08, when he writes of *The life of the Skies* by Jonathan Rosen as a book "of trapezes swung for and caught, and now and then a trapeze too far."

Disparity between reach and grasp may be useful, but assuming a mission for which one is not yet qualified often results in failure. The unprepared adventurer who does not realize how much remains to be learned may be undone. And, as many characters such as Hamlet and Medea find, vigilante filial vengeance may come with a heavy price. Identification with the mind or the subtle body may be dangerous if relevant physical factors are ignored. Recall that Stephen Dedalus and Barton Fink each points to his head just before being punched. In pursuit of a romantic dream, there eventually comes a confrontation with reality with which Pauline is unable to cope. She is tested as an adult, if not tried as one, and fails life's tests, perhaps making this the story of an innocent tempted beyond her powers (*ne sutor supra crepidam*)(*ne puero gladium*).

Meanwhile, Juliet can no longer pretend that she does not have the tiger by the tail. As her vacillating, divided self argues with itself, the situation produced by her tangled motivations may be described by a pun in which two competing forms of (ethical) vice have her clamped in a vice until her will solidifies. She is put to a test of devotion as her help is urgently solicited by the victim. Juliet has several times seemed so near to reprieving Honora. But, try as she may to oppose Pauline's influence, Juliet feels herself to be honor-constrained and under great obligation. None will escape the grip of contingencies. Like Pauline during her affair with Nicholas, Juliet has "no option," and, in an extremity of panic, the last of her resistance fails her. Juliet, in token of the value she sets on Pauline, dares to cast her lot with Pauline and to cast

herself into a sea of troubles that she may be able to say that she was true to her love. Juliet's reluctance makes her a point-of-reference, voice-of-reason character until, in the heat of the moment and despite the horror, she, in an act of solidarity and faith, joins Pauline in the terrible business of assailing Honora. Decades later, the real Juliet will say that in going to South Africa without Pauline, she would have been abandoning someone who had stood by her when she was hospitalized, and that she feared that Pauline would commit suicide. Now, discharging all debts incurred when she bought into this irrational allegiance, and discharging her solemn duty to respond when Pauline calls in a favor, the opportunity to avoid sin is shunned and scruples are swept away. As Juliet sees it, dereliction crosses fidelity, and the latter wins. Stepping into the breach and allowing circumstances to decide for her, golden Juliet, like bright Lucifer, falls (*la beauté sans vertu est une fleur sans parfum*). *Et tu*, Juliet?

Perhaps Juliet, like Tristan and Siegmund, is accepting what she sees as her tragic but heroic destiny. She may not fully understand what she is doing, but she, like Adam, simply cannot find the moral courage to resist. It may also be that she is driven by the same demon as Pauline, just to a different degree and at a different rate. Perhaps, like Huck Finn, she chooses to "go to hell" rather than betray her friend, thus defying all law, both sacred and secular. Such cultic devotion could, in fact, be taken as a demonstration of the fifth magnitude of love (*le couer a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point*), but also demonstrates the coercive power of loyalty that has deteriorated into destructive possessiveness.

In the most abstract terms, phase transitions in a system's behavior occur abruptly and discontinuously as a determining parameter crosses a critical threshold. Many physical systems are characterized by a maximum size maintained by negative feedback that holds growth in check by causing its rate to be proportional to distance from the maximum value. The behavior of complex dynamic systems is typically influenced by basins of attraction bounded by repellors. Pauline seems to cross the critical psychological threshold rather gradually and undeterred, coming then under the influence of an abnormal attractor. By contrast, Juliet's is an even less simple, incremental, coherent, predictable behavioral trajectory. Her mind, as in chaos theory, seems to suffer a somewhat more sudden catastrophic loss of containment, similar to that observed in avalanches and other instances of self-organized criticality. This could be taken as an example of bifurcation, the chaotic shift from periodic, oscillatory behavior.

Ultimately, faced with their previously unrecognized inadequacies, the girls only now realize the hubris of putting on Diello's mantle when they lack his abilities. Earlier, they were together borne on a wave of wisdom. They are now drowned in unison by its absence. Ahab says, "I turn my body from the sun." He becomes cut off from all but grief. His harpoon flies, but the line fouls. Similarly, the girls find real murder to be difficult and horrifying, unlike the easy and satisfying fantasy assassinations.

Juliet has seemed to be foreseeing a bad outcome, and as Deborah, she in this respect recalls her biblical namesake, who was a prophetess of Israel (Judges 4:4). Additionally, the biblical Deborah says (Judges 4:7) that she will lure an enemy (Sisera) and deliver him into the hands of a colleague (Barak). On Barak's insistence, she accompanies him on the mission to kill Sisera (Judges 4:9), who dies from a head wound inflicted by a woman (Judges 4:21).

Pauline has abandoned wisdom and has pinned her hopes on literal murder. Those remedies that were once such triumphs are no longer available (*fuit Ilium*). The chickens now come home to roost, all the dominoes fall, and Pauline jumps out of the frying pan and into the fire (*se jeter dans l'eau de peur de la pluie*).

This scene of murder is intercut with a nightmarish variant of the monochrome ship fantasy. Psychological escape to this realm seems to be achieved, but the situation there is no more satisfying than the reality left behind. Pauline fails to cling to her fantasy during her affair with Nicholas, and she is now trapped in a fantasy that is not worth the possession. James Joyce once claimed to be doing the same experiments with language as was his schizophrenic daughter, to which Carl Jung replied, "The difference is, you're diving and she's sinking." A similar distinction is to be made regarding the current situation. With neither reality nor fantasy offering solace, she finds herself fighting for her psychic life and losing. As Claudius observes in *Hamlet* (IV.ii.), "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, / But in battalions!" (*Benedetto è quel male che vien solo*.) Venus hides her son Cupid from Psyche and bashes Psyche's head. Psyche's revenge now seems to be visited on Pauline.

The marine context of the fantasy suggests crossing to the further bank with Charon, the infernal boatman. In accord with all the Puccini selections previously heard, Juliet finds herself in a position to jump from a high place, in imitation of Tosca, but opts to linger above. It is written in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "Zeal without prudence is like a ship adrift." The ship bearing Juliet is as unstoppable as the intractable "grave and constant" forces of life, and can no longer be relied upon to make a happy port. Thus Juliet embarks on a mythical night-sea journey, later to become Anne Perry in real life. Pauline, now a rudderless ship, is left behind to sink into obscurity. As if anticipating this, the people on the dock ignore Pauline, just as the crashing Icarus is ignored in Breughel's painting *The Fall of Icarus*. The title of Helen Oyeyemi's novel *The Icarus Girl* could easily apply to Pauline. Commenting on a similar scene at the end of Benjamin Britten's *Billy Budd*, John Culshaw writes in his liner notes for a recording of the opera that he produced, "The herd retreats into known pastures and known conditions and known injustices which, however uncomfortable and unfair, are somehow less disturbing than the unknown." It may also be noted that these events that now shake Pauline's psyche loose from its moorings as she also perhaps begins feeling the effects of the currents of history are occurring in the Port Hills.

Pauline is tormented by having to watch her desideratum sail away. In earlier versions of the fantasy, intervening distance vanished such that she and Juliet together enjoyed the ship and its promise of deliverance. Now, a gulf is imposed and Pauline shares the fate of Lucifer, excluded from some upper region (in Pauline's case the ship), cast down amongst the "terrifically dull" lower classes and forever bereft of her beloved (Juliet) because she would not submit to a being of lower rank (her mother).

Previously, the girls have been immediate intimates, at least in spirit (and whatever the exact nature of any consummation they achieve), and could be united inwardly even if separated outwardly. Now, they are separated in fantasy, and their outward status seems irrelevant. Like Francesca da Rimini and Paolo Malatesta in Dante's *Inferno*, they face anything but "a closer walk with" each other. "Hell is other people," says Jean-Paul Sartre. It can also be the absence of particular ones (*Sans vous je m'afflige si fort / Qu'il m'est impossible de vivre*)(*Je ne me puis resoudre à souffrir cette absence / Je veux que la douleur prepare mon tombeau*). The place of eternal separation from one's beloved is hell, which is traditionally considered in terms of an afterlife. The Fourth World is, like *nirvana*, a state of mind, which can be achieved prior to death. It is in this inner, subjective, personal sense that Pauline is now swallowed by the maw of hell foreshadowed by Dr. Bennett's mouth (*sic transit gloria mundi*). Dissuasive accounts of hell deter neither Tristan nor Huck Finn. But even if the girls have previously achieved a love of this magnitude, they have not yet had their fill (*hinc illæ lacrimæ*). It makes little difference to

Pauline whether the horrors she experiences are real or imaginary. The chasm is unbridgeable. Paradise is lost (see also Jonah 2:4). With disappointment now compounded by hopelessness, Pauline is left having to hunger for someone unpossessable who can only be remembered, perhaps as if recalling a previous life via anamnesis. "Reality takes shape in the memory alone," according to Proust. Pauline, however, can hardly be expected to satisfy herself with memories.

Juliet's last words are "I'm sorry." For what does she apologize? Does she regret her participation in the murder? Even if restitution could be made via remorse, forgiveness for the murder would require true contrition. Does Juliet's palinode express adequate recantation in this regard? Does she regret awakening and fostering Pauline's monstrous potential, or merely that her realization of this error has come too late? She may very well be apologizing only for her involuntary leavetaking. By contrast, in the tradition of Lancelot and Don Giovanni, for whom the price of forgiveness is too great, the impenitent Pauline experiences no contrition and apologizes for nothing. This distinguishes her from such ultimately cowed characters as Dawn Wiener in *Welcome to the Dollhouse* and Sor Juana in *Yo, la Peor de Todas*. In the *Los Angeles Times*, 10/22/06, Charles Taylor (referring to Marie Antoinette, with whom Juliet was earlier associated) writes of Victoria Holt's *The Queen's Confession*, "The older, wiser Marie looks back on her life, able to see what her naïveté cast her, the black clouds she wrongly thought would blow over – and Holt does it all without forcing the indignity of an apology on her heroine."

If Pauline was previously up to her neck, then she is now going under, and the end is punctuated with her disembodied scream from the abyss (*de profundis*). Her valedictory *cris de coeur* from the Stygian depths is a cry, not of terror, but of impotent despair. As Joyce writes in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "It broke from him like a wail of despair from a hell of sufferers and died in a wail of furious entreaty, a cry for an iniquitous abandonment." The last spoken word in the film is "No!" This is yet again the antithesis of *Ulysses*, which ends with the word "Yes."

In the "long" version, with Pauline's last scream, an additional shot shows her in the real world with a bloody face. This could be the outer expression of her inner distress, but it is in the real world that she is *not* separated from Juliet. Rather, it is in the monochromatically depicted fantasy realm that the real tragedy is occurring, such that reconnection with reality seems grossly irrelevant. The final parts of the prologue and of the Nicholas affair both feature alternation between the real and the imaginary, finally settling on the former. After similar oscillation, this concluding sequence settles on the latter. Therefore, once the bloody murder scene is left behind, its aftermath seems to be best relegated to the prologue and not recapitulated.

Finally (at least in the "short" version), for Pauline, all connections are severed, not just with Juliet, but with the world. She experiences utter dissolution into extinction and final conclusive isolation. She becomes as unconjurable as Diello and must go it alone where angels fear to tread. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* describes the doors that close behind the soul of the dying person whose consciousness drops below the level of the fourth *cakra*. Similarly, Pauline has left behind the Fourth World and seems consigned to the Pit. (Curiously, the real Juliet was sent to Mount *Eden* Prison, but a character in her later novels is named Charlotte *Pitt*.) Various people and fantasy characters in this story have been set aside, discarded or submerged into the unconscious. Now it is Pauline herself who is silenced. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* features words appropriate to Pauline's situation: "One soul was lost; a tiny soul: his. It flickered once and went out, forgotten, lost. The end: black cold void waste." Her seemingly irretrievable annihilation occurs adjacent to the sea, and in the "Proteus" chapter of *Ulysses*, Stephen thinks, "I could not save her. Waters: bitter death: lost." Coincidentally, the word *galleys* refers both to

ships and to literary drafts, and Pauline seems to have lost both the chance to escape on an ocean liner and the hope of publishing her novels.

In *The Hours*, when Virginia speaks of wrestling "alone in the dark, in the deep dark," the word *deep* would seem to refer beyond the literally luminal. Pauline, her eyes already dimmed by tears, is descended upon by and benighted in darkness that is but an outer expression of her inner desolation and utter abjection of spirit. Whether or not this condition is to afflict her without surcease, there is no getting around the fact that for now, no news is bad news. Too late Pauline realizes the futility of her triumph. Her earlier suicidal musings become redundant as she unwittingly commits a kind of murder/suicide in which she finds herself dying (*in articulo mortis*), at least psychologically if not physically, due to a self-inflicted *coup de grâce*. Honora is biologically dead, but Pauline loses her life while still living it, and is now being left to twist in the wind. Compared to Tita in *Like Water for Chocolate*, she offers quite a different treatise on the art of dying (*ars moriendi*). Nothing can console her for this internecine, Pyrrhic victory in which all are casualties, Honora being only the most conspicuous.

The girls reach a gloriously solipsistic state beyond the call of duty at the film's apex. Their current leap of faith into the abyss is less obviously promising. In *Like Water for Chocolate*, the lovers experience outward, physical death and yet triumph on the spiritual plane. Pauline's inward, spiritual, psychic death turns any triumph she might have enjoyed into metaphysical catastrophe. It was noted above, when considering Honora's circumstances, that a celestial voice welcomes to heaven those about to be executed in Verdi's *Don Carlo*. The conclusion of the present film offers no such assurance that these "creatures" are anything more than nominally "heavenly," at least until the credits roll.

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Postludial graphics serve as an epilogue that eases the audience's return to normal world. The story recedes back into the past from which it was conjured in the prologue, like similar transitions near the end of *L'Enfance du Christ* by Berlioz and *Fantasia para un gentilhombre* by Rodrigo.

The word "mystery" was used in the marketing for this film, though it is now reported that the case proves to be no mystery for the police. There remains, perhaps, something of a psychological mystery. Given history and the film's own prologue, neither the murder nor the identity of the murderers comes as a surprise. This psychodrama may thus be taken as a whydunit in which Jackson and Walsh try to explain, as much to themselves as to the audience, the underlying psychological tectonics. They do provide context, but not necessarily pretext, perhaps leaving some questions unsatisfactorily answered.

The Parker/Rieper confusion is finally resolved, and Honora's Puritanical harangue becomes ironic when it is revealed that she never married Bert, making her every bit as matrimonially disreputable as her daughter. It is then reported how the girls were tried, convicted and sentenced. Their trial no doubt helped to politicize certain issues integral to this story. It was in the aftermath of this *cause célèbre* that Oswald Mazengarb's *Morals Report* was issued in November 1954, resulting in media restrictions intended to curb juvenile delinquency.

The girls are released from prison in the fall of 1959 into a world newly bereft of Mario Lanza, who will have died only weeks earlier, having not reached the age of 40. In less than a year, the world will also be deprived of Jussi Björling ("That"), who will not live to the age of 50. The girls may as well take an interest in tenor Fritz Wunderlich, who will die a few years

later at 36. They also may as well have found a place in their affections for conductor Guido Cantelli (1920-1956), who will have already died at 36. In the mean time, there will have been the killing of Johnny Stompanato by Lana Turner's daughter Cheryl Crane, and the killing spree of Charles Starkweather and Caril Fugate. By then, the girls may not seem quite so extraordinary.

The "acting coach" credit for Sarah Peirse is explained on the *Fourth World* website. The citation of the song "How Much is that Doggie in the Window" reflects a deleted scene in which the song is sung in the car on the way to Port Levy, adding mirthful counterpoint to the solemnity in the car on the way home. It augments the existing dog references and is a song that Kate Winslet will encounter again later in the film *Iris*. A bit of the melody remains on the soundtrack as the girls run on the pier. The lyrics include "I must take a trip to California / And leave my poor sweetheart alone." This corresponds to the planned trip to Hollywood and the various separations. Later in the song, beyond the portion sung in the long version of the film, there is reference to "robbers . . . in the dark," recalling the girls stealing things from Ilam at night in order to afford their Hollywood adventure.

At the end of this film, Honora is not the only one to be surprised. Again caught off guard, as at the apex, the girls too are appalled when they find to their horror that Honora is as tough to kill as were Rasputin and the previously mentioned Gromek in *Torn Curtain*. (Recall also such ineffective suicide attempts as that of Sébastien-Roch Nicolas Chamfort.) Pauline considers herself as familiar with the threshold of death as a shaman because of her medical history and bicycle crash. She expects Electral *Schadenfreude*. To her disappointment, Honora's death does not remedy her problem any more than Elena's death remedies Tita's in *Like Water for Chocolate* (*male parta, male dilabuntur*). Pauline is a confidence trickster who fools herself such that she fatally misreads the potential of literal murder to liberate her and fails to foresee that it will ill serve her ends. As during her affair with Nicholas, she is ultimately ambushed by stubborn reality (*veritas prevalebit*), collision with which can come as a great shock to one who has become accustomed to fantasy. Reality indeed bites, especially when the cure is worse than the disease (*le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*)(*graviora quædam sunt remedia periculis*).

The audience too may be caught off guard and taken by surprise, with any complacency on their part magnifying the impact of the final disaster. (As an external example of how such complacency may be influenced by the setting, in *The Hours*, when Laura says,"Kitty, it's going to be all right," Kitty responds with a look of astonishment and replies, "Of course it is," as if saying that because these are the 1950s, no other options dare be admitted.) The caricatures and whimsical atmosphere may have effaced the memory of the proleptic prologue (*obsta principiis*) and of the foreshadowing of the girls' potential. Some viewers may have felt implicitly assured of success for Dr. Bennett's mission, or may have been lulled into hoping that either the murder would be mercifully brief or that they might be spared the details. There was perhaps the expectation either of a tasteful, bowdlerized version, of some preparatory amblysia less remote than the prologue, or at least that Honora would be afforded the protection of some sort of green baize. Some perhaps supposed that the blood of the prologue, like the ship imagery, could have been a dream, such that they allowed themselves to think, like Hamlet, "We defy augury." To their consternation, these expectations come the grief, and the comforts of a more traditional palliative resolution are denied them. Wisdom having been lost, the film cannot end otherwise than in the singularly disquieting brutality of Senecan tragedy and with wretched excess like that of John Webster. In the manner of a Zen *satori*, the audience is struck by the raw force of truth, as the film, like Virgil's *Aeneid*, ends abruptly with an act of killing.

Relaxed and permeable viewers have been known to forget that this is a tragedy with comic relief. When tragic aggravation overwhelms the comedy, their expectations are defied and they find it difficult to maintain active engagement. Following their intimate participation, they recoil as their detachment dissolves, ultimately concluding that a bit more emotional distance would have been welcome. All their laughter up until now is forgotten (*le coût ôte le goût*). They feel a sense of betrayal (*ir por lana y volver transquilado*) when the film refuses to stoop to some crude, implausible contrivance (*jeu de théâtre*). But Jackson and Walsh are above such glib appeasement. ("Woe to him who seeks to please rather than to appall," says Herman Melville.) By not cosmeticizing the dire immediacy, traumatic ferocity and authentic horror of Honora's death, the scene's cringe-inducing frankness helps demonstrate T.S. Eliot's claim that "human kind cannot bear very much reality."

Part of the shock may be due to the "sugar-and-spice" factor, the preconception that allows the girls to escape profiling. Neither the parents nor perhaps even the audience suspect such violence from the girls (*tantæne animis cælestibus iræ*?) because women, according to certain gendered genre conventions, are stereotypically nonsexual and nonviolent (*non posse peccare*). Like a wolf in sheep's clothing (*anguis in herba*), a "sweet and good" exterior is not expected to hide a *fille fatale* (*non ogni fiore fa buon odore*). Gottfried writes in his *Tristan*, "Too blindly have we reared a viper for a nightingale, and ground corn for the raven that was meant for the dove." This is the same order of surprise that is exemplified by the death of Nicholas, whose last word is "Pretty." Surprise, however, should not be taken for granted, as there is also an opposing perspective that should be recognized. Reviewing *Normal People Don't Live Like This* by Dylan Landis, Susan Salter Reynolds writes in the *Los Angeles Times*, 10/25/09, "Any book that begins with 13-year-old girls . . . is going to feel dangerous. Forget about smoking guns. Thirteen-year-old girls are bound to go off."

Mickey Mantel made a clear distinction between a hero and a role model. He recognized that mature minds are able to resist imitating bad behavior, even when it is prescribed. Ken Burns, speaking of Jack Johnson, says, "A hero isn't perfect. They have extraordinary strengths and also inevitable weaknesses. The heroism is the negotiation between those strengths and weaknesses." "Within a Brechtian aesthetic," observes Robert Stam, characters can be "presented not as role models but as the sites of contradiction." "A biographer is, of course, a narrator, not a judge," writes Steven Bach in the *Los Angeles Times*, 4/13/07, but then adds that "an 'objective' refusal to judge" is "nothing less than denial" and that Leni Riefenstahl's life can serve as "an object lesson."

The goal in art is to see beyond superficial unpleasantries in order to achieve proper aesthetic experience despite propagandistic pressures. But some people commit the affective fallacy by judging a work emotionally, or, content to judge a book erroneously by its cover, will condemn films solely on the basis of "mature themes" and "adult situations." Though there is nothing wrong with works that appeal to the child in all of us, a utilitarian discontinuity is to be recognized between such works and those that appeal to the adult in some of us. No quantity of base, primitive pleasures can substitutes for the quality of sophisticated ones. Ignorance is indeed bliss, but ignorance normally outlives its value, and there are also other forms of bliss attainable only through knowledge.

In a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*, 6/9/07, Jeanette Weidner writes, "My 10-year-old granddaughter and I looked forward to 'Gracie.' She loves soccer and I love sharing movies with her. Imagine our disappointment when we saw the PG-13 rating. We'll see lots of other movies waiting for her to be 13. Too bad. Why does it have to be this way?" Why does what have to be

what way? Why do movies get made with content that earns age-restrictive ratings? It is because entertainment is needed not just by children but also by adults. Why do theaters prohibit children under 13 from seeing PG-13 rated films? They do not. Children are welcome to see such films if accompanied by an adult. Why does Weidner not do just that? She obviously has her own answer. Why do studios tease youngsters with tempting subject matter while keeping the MPAA rating secret? This writer is unaware of any such phenomenon.

In a letter to the *Los Angeles Times*, 12/22/07, commenting on reviews of the film *Sweeney Todd*, Ed Golden writes, "For a blood-saturated musical 'based on a 19th century legend of a serial killer who slices throats' to be called a 'Sondheim masterpiece' is sick, perverse, ghoulish and tastelessly subjective, offering no redeeming social value." Linguistically, Golden attributes the lack of "redeeming social value" to the label of "masterpiece," though it is probable that he meant it to apply to the film. The subjectivity of any supposed lack of "redeeming social value" in the original musical would be demonstrated by the fact that it has been staged by many opera companies, their subjective impression being the opposite of Golden's. And if a lack of "redeeming social value" results merely from the presence of blood, then, as cited below, out the window go many of the highest artistic achievements of our species.

In a similar letter, John Holmsrom writes, "But what does it say about a society that pays to sit in the dark to eat popcorn and view a film of 'cinemagrotesquerie style, full of viscous slashes of blood' by a serial killer who slices (tongue-in-cheek?) throats?" It may say that its people have healthily sublimated their aggression such that they do not themselves engage in said activities but merely "view" them, the theatrical slicing of throats being ethically superior to the actual variety.

Additionally, in an article published 1/07/08 in the *New York Times*, Peter S. Goodman writes:

> A paper presented by two researchers over the weekend to the annual meeting of the American Economic Association here challenges the conventional wisdom, concluding that violent films prevent violent crime by attracting would-be assailants and keeping them cloistered in darkened, alcohol-free environs. Instead of fueling up at bars and then roaming around looking for trouble, potential criminals pass the prime hours for mayhem eating popcorn and watching celluloid villains slay in their stead. "You're taking a lot of violent people off the streets and putting them inside movie theaters," said one of the authors of the study, Gordon Dahl, an economist at the University of California, San Diego. "In the short run, if you take away violent movies, you're going to increase violent crime." . . . "Economics is about choice," Professor Dahl said. "What would these people have done if they had not chosen to go and see a movie? Whatever they would have done would have had a greater tendency to involve alcohol. If you can incapacitate a large group of potentially violent people, that's a good thing." Professor [Stefano] DellaVigna added, "It's not as if these people watching violent movies would otherwise be home reading a book." . . . Analyzing the data, the authors found that "on days with a high audience for violent movies, violent crime is lower." From 6 p.m. to midnight on weekends — when the largest numbers of people are in theaters — violent crimes decreased 1.3 percent for every million people watching a strongly violent movie, the study found. Violent crimes dropped 1.1 percent for every million seeing a mildly violent film.

Discussion of this topic continues in the essay on *The English Patient*.

Mythical threshold guardians create disagreeable ordeals to test aspirants and to ward off the unworthy. Those who are deterrable fail to earn the boons that lie beyond the threshold. Christopher Vogler, in *The Writer's Journey*, writes, "Those who are put off by outward appearances cannot enter the Special World, but those who can see past surface impressions to the inner reality are welcome." Film viewers who fail to overcome their own such aversion have been similarly disqualified. The MPAA exists to protect the vulnerable from Trojan horses. But, to the extent that the viewer's responsibility to use such resources is shirked, complaints about adult content are without merit.

Some art is simply not intended for the unconcerned, and may be, as Wolfram von Eschenbach says, "too swift for unripe wits." An uncritical audience satisfied with the mere passive consumption of cultural commodities volunteers for colonization by the mass distraction industry. It sanctions and deserves to be catered to not with art that appeals to the lowest common denominator, but with art at the level of the lowest *possible* denominator, common or otherwise.

Motion without resistance is of no consequence. Physicist David L. Goldstein has said, "Feynman's lectures are like Mozart's symphonies. The more demanding they are, the more exhilarating the result." Great art simultaneously cultivates and challenges an audience, making emotional as well as intellectual demands and requiring a degree of personal involvement. An emotional cost may be associated with some films just as there is a monetary price to be paid for admission to their exhibition. The civilized viewer does not necessarily seek such cost, but is prepared to accept it as the price of cultural enrichment. The faint-hearted are at liberty to abstain from what others consider pleasing challenges, but those for whom the furnace is too hot should not impede those venturesome persons who would be tempered in it.

Art is merely ornamental and of little psychological value unless it is provocative and affords some libidinal liberty. Many temptations are properly resisted in normal social life, but properly accepted in drama. However wrong murder may be in real life, its symbolic value has priority when it occurs in art. In *Wings of Art*, Joseph Campbell cities the example of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and distinguishes superficial, sociological journalism ("Oh, this should not have happened!") from tragedy ("I too should die this way!"). Many myths are based on transgressive heroes who commit some forbidden act that is necessary for maturation. And ultimately, the ontological status of fictional characters (*absente reo*) makes their punishment problematic (*quid faciendum?*). The essay on *The English Patient* will continue the discussion of these issues, including the standards to which fictional characters are answerable.

Classical tragedy is central to the foundations of Western civilization. The gory plays and poems of Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Virgil are explorations of the irrational that are today held in the highest esteem (T.S. Eliot called Virgil's *Aenead* the most civilizing poem possible). But the centuries have blunted their impact and tolerance has developed. Drama has failed if one does not react to shocking events with shock, so drama must be updated to contemporary standards if it is to be sufficiently disturbing to achieve the necessary effect. Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, says, "The aim of tragedy . . . is to bring about a catharsis of the spectators – to arouse in them sensations of pity and fear, and purge them of these emotions so that they leave the theater feeling cleansed and uplifted, with a heightened understanding of the ways of gods and men." He goes on to say that familial crime is best for this purpose, perhaps making Pauline comparable to a tragic hero like Oedipus. More recently, Antonin Artaud asserted that theater must disturb in order to free the unconscious. Kafka suggested that art is an

axe with which to break up the frozen sea within us. "As Nietzsche knew perhaps better than any other," writes Adam Bresnick in the *Los Angeles Times*, 8/1/04, "tragedy provides a sacrificial pleasure for the trembling onlooker, only to usher her out of the theater, counting her blessings on all 10 fingers." Christian Metz maintains that disagreeable films ultimately reassure "because they give material form to our fears." According to Wassily Kandinsky, "So-called indecent pictures are either incapable of causing vibrations of the soul (in which case they are not art) or they are so capable. In the latter case they are not to be spurned absolutely, even though at the same time they gratify what nowadays we are pleased to call the 'lower bodily tastes.'" Brad Gooch reports that "[Flannery] O'Connor said that modern writers must often tell 'perverse' stories to 'shock' a morally blind world." Robert Donington writes, "Sentimentalizing life's tragedies is one way of rendering them unfruitful. We may contrive to evade the pain; but there is a maturer happiness which comes only to those who have had to accept suffering and yet not been destroyed by it." (*Aucun chemin de fleurs ne conduit à la gloire*.) "The moral function of war is to recall humans to the reality of the core of existence: the violence that is part of our nature," writes William Pfaff in *The Bullet's Song: Romantic Violence and Utopia*, while Joseph Campbell observes that tragedy "precipitates metaphysical realization." In this sense, Pauline has been called to experience horror for the benefit of the rest of us. Fear of one's own repressed psychic material often obstructs involvement. But investment yields dividends to those willing to take the dare and experience therapeutic confrontation with their own worst impulses. Submitting to and coping with such challenges is part of what makes one an adult in the psychological sense.

On a related note, in the *Los Angeles Times*, 6/29/08, Jim Holt writes:

> The whole point of humor, Freud thought, is to get around our inhibitions. Most of us in our daily lives expend a certain amount of psychic energy in keeping our sexual impulses at bay. (If we didn't, civilization would be rather a mess.) A naughty joke – whether verbal or visual – catches our inner censor off guard and liberates these dangerous impulses, if only for a moment. . . . A dirty joke is an uprising against the bourgeois morality that enslaves most of us most of the time (and a good thing too). We can rejoice in its defeat only because that defeat is brief and inconsequential.

David Hare acknowledges the possibility of "universal resonance beneath the particular narrative." This film's prologue hints at aspirations to universality in spite of cultural specificity. As with *Like Water for Chocolate* and *Whale Rider*, such universality is shown to be possible concurrent with and extending beyond the narrow localism of regionalist cinema. Without much strain, this story, which is set in a distinctive time and place, can transcend its immediate, provincial situation such that all may enjoy and profit from it (*ab uno disce omnes*). With a propulsive tension between the personal and the collective, it is simply a vernacular expression of widespread problems and interests (*hic et ubique*), however far removed it may seem.

At the same time, universality should be neither overestimated nor allowed to obscure the uniqueness of the past. James Marcus writes of Gore Vidal in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 11/5/06, "*Einfühlen* is the word he has used, borrowing it from the German philosopher Johann Gottfreid von Herder. In a 1999 interview, Vidal defined it as 'an ability to get into the past, while realizing that it's not just another aspect of the present, with people you know dressed up in funny clothes.'"

The great are often just ordinary people caught up in the tides of history, notwithstanding Thomas Carlyle's great-man theory. Philip Zimbardo, famous for his Stanford Prison Experiment, writes of "the banality of heroism," contending that both heroism and evil are less the products of character than of circumstances. The exotic is often just the familiar in disguise. Any hero whose potential is shared by everyone is able to represent everyone. The story of such a hero is simply ours writ large. Pauline's crime may be one in a million, but she herself is one *of* a million.

Tragic characters are often extraordinary people whose noble qualities cannot save them. Their downfall is due not to degeneracy or wickedness but to an error in judgment. Recalling that tragedy developed from a ritual sacrifice in honor of Dionysus, it could be argued that the depiction of Pauline in this film is that of a sacrificial figure guilty of such an error. However, both love and hate are expressions of concern, which fictional characters evoke only to the extent that the audience recognizes the resemblance between those characters and themselves. A character's flaw (Aristotle's *hamartia*) allows for this recognition, which fosters sympathy and even admiration, and arouses pity in the event of an ironic reversal of fortune (Aristotle's *peripeteia*). Those who symbolize universal tragic flaws are destined for disaster. David Treuer describes a hero as one who "suffers and retains his goodness." Pauline may be seen as a tragic anti-heroine because she is overwhelmed and vanquished by a flaw that she is unable to master, while losing an important aspect of her goodness in the process.

The girls see themselves as elite aristocracy, and so might, therefore, think of their own tragedy in classical terms. Switching from the regal Charles to the common Gina aligns Pauline's story with tragedy in the more modern sense. It also qualifies the story as classical comedy because, in Aristotle's *Poetics*, it is said that tragedy involves characters of high social rank, while comedy involves social inferiors. Pauline, though, is more than an anonymous underdog. She is in the tradition of tragic, relentless, plebeian heroes such as Captain Ahab and Willy Loman, and of artist-heroes such as Stephen Dedalus and, one could add, Tita in *Like Water for Chocolate*, though she may see herself as more of a Byronic poet-revolutionary. Just as Odysseus is more human than his fellow heroes (and Leopold Bloom even more so), it does not take much of a stretch to see Pauline as Everywoman (*mutato nomine de te fabula narratur*), and to think, "There, but for the grace of God, go I." It is in just this way that imagination can promote continuity of the individual soul with the global soul, according to Thomas Moore.

Theatrical tragedy entails tranquillity because destiny removes uncertainty and leaves no room for deceptive hope. Killer and killed are equally innocent, each merely playing their respective part. This same inevitability is provided by this film's prologue, which makes the end a foregone conclusion. Indeed, it sometimes seems that events proceed of their own momentum and that fate can never be diverted. (*The Hours* will be a good example of characters largely ambushed by a narrative's structure.) Perhaps Pauline and Juliet are ill-starred hostages to fortune possessed and felled by a destiny they cannot escape (*ducunt volentem Fata, nolentem trahunt*). Perhaps it is foreordained that they will find each other and that Juliet will ferret out and refine this diamond in the rough. That the first man who sees Tita will want to marry her and that she will never marry are foretold in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Yet that film offers an example of ultimate triumph despite the inexorability of fate.

The girls are certainly victims of unintended consequences, if nothing else, just as neither Oedipus nor Barton Fink intends harm to his parents. But beyond this, Pauline clearly contributes to her own anguish. Heroes sometimes experience recoil, wherein they bring about their own doom. Pauline is, if not foredoomed, then self-doomed. She brings herself low with self-inflicted

misery and self-elected martyrdom. Shiva is the destroyer of worlds. Pauline, like the self-consuming Ouroboros, destroys herself. Nevertheless, as hinted at below, the future could also hold the possibility of self-administered redemption.

There is no denying that both Pauline and Juliet are guilty of murder (*particeps criminis*) (*par nobile fratrum*), and the influence of each on the other may be overemphasized. Whether Juliet is complicit or merely compliant, guilt ties each to the same post. Each has been a willing accomplice in her own and each other's downfall. In a sense, Juliet acts as a catalyst in the creation of a monster, but simply by cultivating a natural tendency and by derepressing a universal potential. She merely stokes an existing spark and fans an existing flame, and Pauline must still shoulder the responsibility for her actions. For Aristotle, pity comes from unmerited misfortune, while fear comes from identification. Because her hands are dirty and guilt may be laid at her door, Pauline's misfortune is earned. If she does not deserve pity, then the possibility of identification with her makes fear a proper response.

Pauline and Juliet are not simply evil (*malum in se*). Nor are there two Paulines, but one who is evil in addition to being "sweet and good." The various aspects of the girls' potential are foreshadowed by their many name changes, which function like the thinly veiled disguises of a *livre à clef*. In any event, evil may ultimately have to be dealt with by reconciliation.

"I am human; I think nothing human is alien to me," writes the African Roman playwright Terence. ("*Homo sum, humani a me nihil alienum puto*.") In "Fancy's Show Box," one of his *Twice Told Tales*, Nathaniel Hawthorne writes, "Man shall not disclaim his brotherhood, even with the guiltiest." And forget not the beam that is in thine own eye (Matthew 7:3-5), for Mr. Hyde, Diello and Harry Lime are to be discovered in one's own psyche. Mythical pantheons are catalogues of human potential. Robert Donington observes that the ring in Wagner's *Ring* cycle could do no harm if the gods were not already ripe for evil. Humanity embodies all the gods. Pauline bears witness to the horrible prospect implicit in the former recruiting slogan of the U.S. Army: "Be all that you can be." (After the character called "Hit-and-run son" runs over his mother in *Slacker*, he is seen to be wearing a shirt bearing this same slogan.) Fortunately, the potential for monstrosity, though ubiquitous and able to hide in plain sight, is seldom realized. As for art, according to Ned Rorem, it does not change us, but only reminds us. Finding this unwelcome, many may join Jean Cocteau in saying,"Mirrors would do well to reflect a little more before sending back images."

Despite whatever emotional investment may have been made in the principal characters, ambivalence is naturally evoked by their crime. Empathy is compromised, enthusiasm is tempered, and admiration ebbs. Effort may be required to overcome antipathy, such that the more petulant and obdurate viewers may remain unmoved (*les bras croisés*) by the girls' distress at the end. Such viewers have been known to take issue with the duration of the girls' incarceration. Having risen to the bait and vexed themselves about whether accounts tally, they complain that the girls' punishment was less than was their due, and are tempted to say, as in the old joke, "Britannia waves the rules."

Such preoccupations are forgivable, and everyone is entitled to his or her opinion (*te judice*). Granted, the girls' actions are not such as to do them much credit. But this censorious clamor for justice rings very badly in the present circumstances (*ignorantio elenchi*). Those who would bemoan what they see as insufficiently harsh sentences must be careful to avoid the same confusion between fantasy and reality that afflicts Pauline. Even if Pauline Parker killed her mother, Melanie Lynskey did not kill Sarah Peirse. And, ultimately, regardless of whether the actual historical Pauline properly paid her debt to society, the fictional character depicted in this

film is lost in the abyss and may, at least initially, be totally written off. Thus, in the context of this film, the murder is *a* tragedy but it is not *the* tragedy.

It is known from the prologue that the girls ascend from the crime scene physically, but it is suggested at the end that no such ascent from the abyss occurs psychologically. Dire psychological punishment befalls Pauline faster than that rendered by society (*culpam pœna premit comes*). Her world dies well before she does. The brutal toll exacted from her is much in evidence, and the film licenses an inference that her penalty is more than adequately severe. Psychologically at least, her perdition would seem to be amply vouched for. As Wolfram von Eschenbach writes in his *Parzival*, "[H]er gay spirit was drowned at sorrow's ford." The desolation she experiences is well described by a line from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "This is the greatest torment which the created soul is capable of bearing, *pœna damni*, the pain of loss." Pauline suffers this loss and is, in turn, lost to the audience. Viewers who feel what they consider to be great sympathy for Pauline should recall the words of Frida Kahlo: "Diego knows how much I suffer, but to know is different from suffering *with* me."

"People die every day," but it is not every day that one suffers a fate *worse* than death. What punishment can be exacted upon one who has nothing left to lose? (*cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator.*) For Pauline, at least as she is depicted here at the end, external facts are of vanishing interest, for she is now past hearing and caring. As a prisoner of grief as unalloyed as the bliss she knew earlier, the punitive rigors of society's judicial punishment are irrelevant to her. What she will face before the tribunal of history is as nothing to her. Consistent with the fifth magnitude of love explained above, the threatened adverse effects of neither scandal nor carceral confinement can compare to her inner plight. Devils are not particularly frightening when they are in hell and integral to the landscape.

Consideration of prison term lengths is thus an anticlimactic afterthought properly relegated to a postscript in the epilogue. Ultimately, contentions regarding the sufficiency of the girls' punishment, like those regarding the historical veracity of their homosexuality, constitute a challenge that need not be met and that may be ignored with impunity, for precious little is achieved in the attempt to resolve these issues.

Allegations of leniency and poetic injustice may also be directed at the filmmakers. It might be protested that the film presents the girls' case in too rosy a light and that any sympathy lavished on such villains is wasted. Jackson and Walsh might be accused of deferentially pulling their punches, of the pernicious neutrality of Pilate-like silence or even of smiling down on their characters to purvey a positive portrait and crowning the film with a romantic halo that constitutes a tendentious glorification of sainted martyrs to love. They may be taken to task for cunningly exploiting viewers' susceptibilities such that the audience is tricked into sympathizing with murderers. Such apologetics, stacking of the deck and spinning of the pitch toward innocence might be blamed on some sort of Stockholm syndrome, in which love beclouds judgment and excuses faults.

Again, viewers are at liberty to react as they may and are entitled to interpret a work of art without intrusive authorial (or critical) intervention. But compassion does not entail admiration, and neither endorsement nor dismissal is offered by the filmmakers wholesale. The work is testimony to the suffering of its protagonists, but is not necessarily a paean or a ringing affirmation. It is neither heroarchy nor martyrology nor celebratory valentine, but is instead the complex, measured and humane response of an obviously sensitive and not completely merciless observer who invests these characters with humanity, but is prepared to allow the audience to find and fix blame accordingly within a just, warts-and-all portrait that neither elides nor denies

the worst. (Reviewing *The Edge of Love* in the *Los Angeles Times*, 3/13/09, Kenneth Turan writes, "When Joyce Carol Oates popularized the term 'pathography' to describe biography that relishes 'the sensational underside of its subject's life,' this is what she had in mind.") It may simply be that the filmmakers are insisting that the events of the narrative be considered from a nonprosecutorial perspective (*nolle prosequi*) like that implicitly requested by the girls during the prologue, minimally obscured by social and political agendas, and resistant to oversimplified explanations resulting from reductive psychologizing (*audi alteram partem*). (Commenting on *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus, Richmond Lattimore writes, "The tragedy is no simple matter of right and wrong.") Or, rather than allowing his characters to explain themselves before the bar of history, a Shakespearean "strategic opacity" is perhaps being employed behind which characters are acting with what Coleridge calls "motiveless malignancy." Nevertheless, there will probably always be those who, looking at the rose through world-colored glasses, will say that the filmmakers' strategy was to convey an insufficiently pejorative judgment (*judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur*).

It is inferred from the Mozart Effect that products of intelligence may also endow intelligence. In *Culture and Value*, Ludwig Wittgenstein writes, "People think that musicians exist to give them pleasure. The idea that they have something to teach them – that does not occur to them." Evan Wright refers to "what military strategists call 'turning the map' – entering the mind of your enemy and viewing your position through his eyes in order to better defeat him." Beyond the superficial entertainment value of this film, there is to be recognized significant didactic import. It is a cautionary parable, offering both aesthetic and editorial aspects. It is both engaging and instructive, displaying both the right and wrong way to behave. It can teach as well as move, as it contains elements of both the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. It is related to the thesis novel and the *Lehrstück*. Without the self-consciously rhetorical sermonizing and normative prescription of a psychologically naive Morality Play, an object lesson is provided by way of admonitory Manichean exemplum. The film in no way glamorizes, valorizes or trivializes violence. It is an exhibition of ghastly errors *and* their consequences. It counts the costs of folly by showing the girls crash and burn (*in terrorem*). In practical terms, as a homily from which ethical injunctions may be gleaned (*verbum sat sapienti*), it makes quite a positive contribution by extolling the advantages of "priest-and-king" wisdom by showing that the strategy of killing the priest and the king is misapplied to physical reality. Thus, the pragmatic, utilitarian message of the film regarding literal murder is: "Don't try this at home." Because of its harmony of content (including its deontic message) and form, the film is an example of neither the communication fallacy, which states that the didactic is necessarily at odds with the aesthetic, nor the communication heresy, which asserts that the transmission of concepts is primary.

Let it be said at once that the iniquity of the crime (*ultra licitum*) is acknowledged. Neither veniality nor supererogation is being asserted and neither mitigation nor extenuation is being offered. Neither Jansenism nor *force majeure* is being presented as an expedient excuse. Neither condonation nor endorsement nor absolution nor exoneration nor exculpation nor forgiveness nor even compassion is being solicited (*fiat justitia, ruat cælum*). Neither the global extension of mercy (Rom 11:32), nor the abolition of judgment (Matt 7:11) is being advocated. No case is being made for the girls being "more sinned against than sinning." Retrocession on the behalf of actual historical criminals for the rehabilitation of their reputation is not being attempted, as history is not at issue (*violà une autre chose*). Nor is there being peddled the Panglossian view that everything that occurs is for the best, even in fiction. The objective is the

facilitation of the aesthetic experience of pity as a proper tragic emotion without discounting the magnitude of any actual atrocity. The filmmakers have attempted to render this story comprehensibly, such that certain issues are illuminated, if not settled. Joseph Campbell contends that the contemplation of *sri yantra* helps one to understand one's relationship to the mystery of creation and dissolution, but does not disbar one from seeking nuclear nonproliferation. Spectatorial passivity is not the exercise of charity. Transgression can be witnessed without being condoned. Understanding does not entail excuse. Bearing all this in mind, while granting the girls' dreadful trespass, an analytic perspective is adopted that recognizes that *hero* and *heroine* are nonjudgmental critical terms referring to a central character, whether good or evil.

Do not decide these things too hastily (*tout court*), as Dr. Bennett does. Do not dwell on the murder, but instead remember the context within which it is enshrined. Fend off misconstruction of the central argument (*nervus probandi*), remember the sunlight enveloping Honora as it flares the lens and recall the implicit injunction of "People die every day." Pursue the proper aesthetic experience and find and yield to that psychological reality transcendent of superficial physical instrumentality.

To treat a work as proper art is to seek the stasis of aesthetic arrest and not be moved. This requires that the object be isolated and regarded as art, not as life. The affective fallacy, which is a confusion between a work of art and its effects, is to be avoided. Aestheticism asserts that art should not be judged by nonaesthetic standards. Drama that is not appreciated aesthetically is too easily confused with reality because symbolism does not discriminate between fact and fiction. Concern with the sociological and ethical diverts from the appreciation of artistic merits and excites loathing, which is the recourse of divided souls (*spero meliora*) (*paulo majora canamus*). A properly engaged participant remains disinterested in the superficial side-show, and benefits from a Brechtian alienation effect, it being "only a movie." And even if it were not, those who would heed the Bible (and Romans 12:19 particularly) should consider: vengeance is *whose*?

Samuel Johnson says of Shakespeare that he has "faults sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit." So it is with the improper aesthetic response, which should not be allowed to vitiate one's objectivity. Any such meretricious inclination, like that toward literal murder, should be resisted. Rather, the audience should apply the girls' "priest-and-king" wisdom. Judicious critical detachment allows both indulgence in cinematic forbidden pleasures and immunity from guilt. Loss of aesthetic distance is Pauline's tragedy. Let it not be ours.

Even if it takes a special effort to remind ourselves, there is a sense in which Honora's death is no less a figment than the "deaths" of Diello's victims. To paraphrase Diderot and Magritte, *Ceci n'est pas un meurtre*. *Viveka* is the act of discriminating the eternal from the merely temporal. *Maya* is the delusion that distracts from eternity. *Nirvana* is the extinguishing of this delusion. But it is only the conscious mind that is deluded. *Anandamayakosha*, the bliss sheath, is that aspect of the body that is involved with the transcendent peace that is represented by the silent fourth element of *aum*. It is to this silence that Honora has returned.

According to the chorus in *The Choephori* by Aeschylus, there is no greater danger on earth than "the reckless passion of woman." Classical myth and drama feature many women – including Althea, Scylla and Clytaemestra – who are punished for murdering family members. Particularly relevant here are those stories involving Electra, a modern version of which being the opera *Elektra* of Strauss and Hofmannsthal.

Electra exhibits intense determination, an exaggerated sense of martyrdom and operates from purely personal motives. Self-pity clouds her objectivity and she callously disregards her

mother's good qualities. She is not considered a tragic figure because the audience does not identify with her. Sympathy for the Electra of Euripides is further weakened because her mother Clytemnestra has saved Electra's life and because Aegisthus, who is not such a bad guy, is stabbed from behind. Similarly, Honora nurses Pauline back to health and Pauline strikes her from behind.

Juliet's brother Jonathan is essentially out of the loop, but could, if necessary, provide an echo of Electra's brother Orestes, who is sent into exile and then returns home to kill his mother. Orson Welles is exiled, returns as Diello, the "son and heir," and becomes an imaginary assassin. Both Pauline and Juliet experience exile in the form of hospitalization and then return home to become real killers. While Orestes is away, Electra stays home to bear witness to her mother's crimes. While Juliet is hospitalized, Pauline stays home and patiently chronicles events in her diary. Electra delegates matricide to Orestes, but Pauline does not delegate it to Diello. Borrowing an idea from Mary Louise Hart, Pauline has not just the will but the way.

Clytaemestra is proud, confident and defiant, as is Elena in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Honora is a more sympathetic figure and much less of a caricature. In Aeschylus, Clytaemestra feigns welcome for Agamemnon and grief for Orestes. Electra ironically cautions her mother not to stain her robe just before killing her. Pauline disingenuously offers Honora a helping hand as they try to avoid mud just prior to the murder. Elektra tries to have Clytemestra killed with the same axe that was used to kill Agamemnon. The girls use a jewel to snare Honora after having earlier used one (possibly the same one) to entrap Nicholas. Diello is allowed to "wield the axe himself" and Bert is seen using an axe to chop wood. Hofmannsthal's Elektra plans matricide and has a pseudo-incestuous relationship with her sister Chrysothemis. Pauline plans matricide and has a pseudo-incestuous relationship with her pseudosister Juliet. Chrysothemis is hesitant. Orestes also hesitates, but acts because Electra's frenzy is so strong. Juliet is irresolute, but ultimately complies.

Clytaemestra laughs with sadistic joy during Agamemnon's murder. Electra expects to dance joyously after her mother's death. Pauline has similar expectations until the murder, when she loses her composure like Nietzsche's "pale criminal." Pauline expects Honora to die in silent dignity, as do Cassandra and Clytaemestra, but she is surprised when Honora screams like Agamemnon and Aegisthus. Electra and her sibling Orestes wear "robes of blood" after killing their mother, as do Pauline and her pseudosibling Juliet. Electra does not expect to feel guilt or remorse, but matricide provides peace neither for Electra nor Orestes nor Pauline. The Electra of Sophocles perishes after her mother's death, as does Pauline in her own way.

Aeschylus places the psychological burden on Orestes. For Sophocles, it is Electra who is emotionally destroyed. The corresponding ordeal in this film is that of Pauline. Orestes considers his victory to be worthless, and is pursued by Furies. The Furies (Alecto, Tisiphone and Megaera) are feminine spirits of guilt and remorse who represent the old law (*lex talionis*) for which young gods lack respect. They dress in black, as does Pauline in the third act. Pauline too may come to be harried by invisible demons. The Furies do not harass Clytaemestra because her victim Agamemnon was not related to her by blood. If Pauline seems to be taking it harder than Juliet at the end, it may be because Honora was Pauline's blood relation and because Juliet apologizes ("Apollo-gizes?").

Orestes is, to some extent, an instrument of Apollo, who encourages and defends matricide. Apollo is god of the sun, which is encountered on Good Friday as the girls are about to visit the Fourth World. He promises Orestes that he will not be forsaken, and orders Hermes to

guard Orestes. Hermes is the guide to transcendent knowledge and is the champion of travelers, perhaps even of those who would travel to Hollywood and the Fourth World.

In Euripides, Apollo is not there to take the blame, but Athena offers sanctuary to Orestes. Castor tells Orestes that he may again be happy after suffering sufficient punishment. An implicit offer to Pauline and Juliet of such reassurance will be discussed below. Nevertheless, the Dioscuri advise that it is wrong to take the law into ones own hands. Influenced neither by the curse of the house of Atreus nor by orders from Apollo, Pauline spontaneously takes the initiative.

The girls can also claim Medea among their literary ancestors. Medea is dominated by and is a tragic victim of her own irrational passions. She is impetuous and does not consider consequences. Alone in her room, Medea prays for death. No music or poetry can put an end to her grief. Pauline repeatedly considers suicide. Medea faces exile. Juliet has been repeatedly exiled and faces exile to South Africa. Medea plans to flee to Athens. The girls plan to flee to Hollywood. Medea begins conflicted but ends not only resolute but savage. Pauline becomes equally resolute. Euripides' Medea predicts Jason will die from a blow to the head from a piece of his ship. Honora is killed by the same material used to construct the girls' altar, which for them is a kind of spiritual vehicle. Medea's poker face allows her to avoid suspicion. Pauline imagines the same about herself. The nurse says that the greatest people fall the farthest. The girls count themselves among "only about 10" of "the best people." Medea says, "when once [a woman] is wronged in the matter of love, no other soul can hold so many thoughts of blood." Medea resolves to kill even at the cost of her own life, but Pauline does not anticipate "too much trouble." Medea and Jason represent the separation of wisdom and love. In the present case, it is the harmonious union of wisdom and truth that is sought, found and lost. In the ancient story, the divine will is portrayed as arbitrary relative to human morality. The chorus says, as well it might at the close of this film, "Many things the gods achieve beyond our judgment."

Various elements of the seven fundamental plots may be recognized in this film. Like Cinderella, the girls go from rags to riches in a psychological sense. Their parents come to see them as engaging in forbidden love, prototypes for which include *Tristan and Isolde* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Their relationship may be said to develop into a mutual Faustian pact. Mosaic literalism is the Circean lure that tempts and ruins them. Susceptibility to this temptation is their Achilles' heel. Immediately prior to the murder, the girls take turns looking back at each other. They then lose each other, as Orpheus lost his Eurydice after looking behind himself.

Even an interpretation based on Kundalini yoga is conceivable. The early commands to sit and Mrs. Collins's naive standards of academic art are expressions of *cakra* 1 (*muladhara*). John's lust exemplifies *cakra* 2 (*svadhisthana*). Diello, through his aggression, personifies *cakra* 3 (*manipura*). The story's apex could represent the crucial breakthrough of *cakra* 4 (*anahata*). Pauline's vomiting and the burning of records reflect the influence of *cakra* 5 (*visuddha*). The closeup of eyes at the apex, and the film's title imply *cakra* 6 (*ajna*). Honora's wound coincides with *cakra* 7 (*sahasrara*). Thus, one could construe this story as progressing along this path, with ultimate catastrophe due to a misguided and perverted approach to the final goal.

In a similar vein, the film's southern hemisphere location, gold, jewel, and horses all recall Ratnasambhava, the Dhyani Buddha of the South, who is depicted in yellow, bearing a jewel and seated on a horse throne.

The influence of the muses may also be said to be felt throughout. The girls' novels may be inspired by Calliope, the muse of epic poetry. The film's prologue and Pauline's failure to "excel in history" may be inspired by Clio, the muse of history. Pauline's poem at the film's apex

may be inspired by Erato, the muse of love poetry. Pauline's diary (and perhaps the poem just mentioned) may be inspired by Euterpe, the muse of lyric poetry. Pauline's opera and the film overall may be inspired by Melpomene, the muse of tragedy. The girls' worship of their pantheon may be inspired by Polyhymnia, the muse of songs of praise to the gods. The girls' actions during "The Donkey Serenade" and "The Loveliest Night of the Year" may be inspired by Terpsichore, the muse of dancing. The film's film humor may be inspired by Thalia, the muse of comedy. The coincidence of a solstice near the climax may be inspired by Urania, the muse of astronomy.

The girls also participate in all of the three temporal arts of poetry, music and dance, as well as in all of the three spatial arts of painting, sculpture and architecture, their sand castle qualifying them in this last category.

Once again exerting his prerogative to define the territory of critical focus, this writer allows himself "A Pilgrim's Digress," to borrow the title of a book by John D. Spalding, to comment briefly on his favorite performance in the film. Perhaps seeing Jane Carr's Mary MacGregor in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brody* decades ago predisposed this observer to a resonant appreciation of Melanie Lynskey's equally alliterative Pauline Parker.

John Gielgud disliked the star system, preferring a "well-balanced cast headed by actors who can be trusted not to throw the play out of proportion." Artist Lucian Freud has said, "I don't use professional models, because they have been stared at so much they have grown another skin. When they take their clothes off, they are not naked; their skin has become another form of clothing." As an anonymous newcomer not subject to damaging overexposure, Miss Lynskey avoids bringing distracting transtextual baggage to her portrayal. But when a celebrity is imposed between a character and the audience (*lucri causa*), suspension of disbelief is often inhibited and occasionally prohibited by what Michael Palin calls "all the impedimenta of notoriety."

The poster for Columbia TriStar's 1994 *Little Women* (a story that, incidentally, like *Heavenly Creatures*, features a male character named Laurie) displays, along with much of its prestige cast, Winona Ryder's name above the title. Just as one might be thinking, "That is Jo March," the studio interrupts and says, "No, it isn't. It's WINONA RYDER!" Ironically, it is to Jo March (or should one say WINONA RYDER!?) in this very film that the idea is suggested of transcending oneself in spite of not achieving perfection. Whatever technical imperfections or faults of intonation, inflection or focus may be found in her performance (*ars est celare artem*), Melanie Lynskey achieves a kind of self-transcendence this writer has yet to experience in the work of many supposedly more polished performers with greater marquee value.

As with Birgit Nilsson's Elektra, a persona ideally benefits from both the strengths and weaknesses of the performer. Such is the case with Melanie Lynskey's Pauline. Her performance is, if not pitch-perfect, then at least pitch-sincere, such that every color registers truly. Whatever may be lacking in delicacy of execution, there is on display, if not the entire gamut of human experience, then at least an impressive variety of emotions and many endearing details. Even if art only reminds, as was suggested above, Lynskey gives one the chance to be put in remembrance of a very great deal. We are given at least a taste of all nine desirable "flavors" of the Indian Bhava-Rasa aesthetic theory for expressing emotion: erotic, heroic, violent, piteous, comic, frightful, repulsive, wondrous and peaceful. And in certain narrow, technical areas, such as laughing, her performance is frequently brilliant (*mirum in modum*), with little suggestion of calculation.

Critics marveled at the courage of Heather Matarazzo's performance in *Welcome to the Dollhouse*. Melanie's here is no less courageous. Being an actor means sometimes having to ask oneself questions the answers to which one would rather not know. We are privileged to have Miss Lynskey bravely ask such questions on our behalf. Beyond merely filling what must have been a crucifying role, at least emotionally, she inhabits and occupies it. She tunes to her character and channels Pauline, delineating her fault lines with tactile immediacy, honesty and unidealized individuality. So few professional tricks seem to be employed in the fleshing out of the character that the role is distilled to its purest essence. Playing a simplicity of style against a complexity of character achieves a gradual, modulated (and thus plausible) personal transformation from elation to melancholy to menace and points beyond.

A melody is an abstract pattern of notes that becomes concrete only when such parameters as key, register and tempo are determined and realized in sound at a particular place and time by a musician functioning as conduit between composer and audience. Acting too involves the implementation and incarnation of abstractions in the concrete domain. Authorial intention and dramatic potential are only realized in the act of performance. With respect to the *idam* principle and the concept of epiphany, there is a certain sense in which an actor's performance allows the spectator to partake of divinity.

Identification with the characters of drama allows many psychic problems to be vicariously resolved. Self-knowledge may also result as we are revealed to ourselves via their emotions. The role of Pauline is an opportunity not only for Miss Lynskey's talent to be shown to great advantage, but also for us to learn about ourselves. Within this white-knuckle performance that jumps off the screen, there dwells a character whose journey we recognize. In her role as an Everywoman on whom to project (*la fortune passe partout*), she serves as a concrete universal who facilitates identification and compels our allegiance, at least in proportion to the indulgence we are willing to volunteer. She allows us to find in her a reflection of ourselves, just as she must be reflected in us. As in any great portrayal, insight resonates at a biological level in spite of the culturally specific context. Verdi wept and loved for all of us, not just Italians. We need not ask for whom the bell tolls. The personal becomes coextensive with the collective, bringing the audience into immediate complicity and allowing direct emotional contact.

It could be argued that Miss Lynskey's performance is not luminous in itself, but that its luster is due to the reflected light of the director. No doubt she benefitted substantially from the theatrical craftsmanship of Peter Jackson and others who coaxed a good performance from her and helped refine her characterization. But it is on her that the ultimate accolade must fall. Her textured portrayal, whether spontaneous or not, testifies to her ability to claim the text, to find Pauline's emotional center and to express it persuasively. She is a dramatic instrument that the filmmakers were lucky to have found. Posterity is so well served by this single formidable performance, which is endearing, touching and inspiring by turns, that this writer would allow her to retire on pension. The performance values that she contributes to this film will not soon be forgotten. As Richard Schickel puts it, "Action, the cliché holds, is character. And action – not ancient gossip, not self-serving recollections, not travel itineraries – is what movie actors most significantly leave behind them. Find the truly telling details in their performances and you will find – and reanimate – them." As if in tribute to her, Melanie Lynskey has since appeared in *The Frighteners*, in which Trini Alvarado's character is named Dr. Lynskey, and in *Sweet Home Alabama*, in which Reese Witherspoon's character is named Melanie.

In *The Song of the Lark* by Willa Cather, a man smiles in appreciation of Thea Kronberg's talent. Cather writes, "If [she] was wondering what was the good of it all, that smile,

could she have seen it, would have answered her." May Melanie Lynskey rest assured of similar recognition.

Returning to the consideration of the final status of our principal characters, some concluding thoughts will now be offered.

D.H. Lawrence wrote of "the darkly lost." This recalls the situation from which freedom is sought in the liturgy of the requiem (*Libera animas fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni et de profundo lacu. Libera eas de ore leonis, ne absorbeat tartarus, ne cadant in obscurum.*) As Pauline is swamped by uncompromising abyssal darkness, she seems to be despairing of ever again seeing the light of day. She survives disease, being knocked down by Jonathan, and plunging into Port Levy. But not all survive the miracle of the second birth, and optimism may prove false. The final fade to black seems to sound the death knell, but cerements and obituaries may be premature. Is this really the last word or might it be too soon to close the book on Pauline? Has Elvis irrevocably left the building or can something be salvaged? Might Pauline's psychological death be one of transformation, as in *Like Water for Chocolate*, allowing the Platonic recovery of lost knowledge?

One must ultimately be guided by such conspicuous cardinal factors as the film's title, which may not be totally ironic. Like the scars on her legs, Pauline's future may yet prove to be a testament to life's peculiar resilience. A field is not idle when fallow. The fall of a hero may be the sewing of a seed in anticipation of a future harvest. Such events are as fertilizer for the next generation, which will be groomed for greater things. Then again, simple recovery and reclamation may be excessively modest aspirations. Dare one be even more ambitious?

The seed of a victory is inherent in every defeat. "Some falls are means the happier to arise," says Shakespeare's Caius Lucius (*Cymbeline*, IV.ii.). St. Augustine celebrates the fall of Adam and Eve with, "O felix culpa." Joyce reworks and generalizes this as, "felixed is who culpas does." The opening of Pandora's box allows the spirit of hope to emerge. Thinking of Honora's cranial injuries, it is recalled that when Zeus has his head split open, it results in the birth of Athena.

In addition to the film's title, another obvious clue is the song playing during the credits (*finis coronat opus*). As with earlier examples of microcosmic foreshadowing, the future may be implicit, if not confirmed, in the present. The portals of hell declare the futility of hope (*lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate*). But "You'll Never Walk Alone" suggests otherwise. To a first approximation, the song is a futile gesture of consolation if addressed to the cinematic Pauline and Juliet, but would make sense as a transtextually motivated offering to their actual historical counterparts. However, in the tradition of the *planh* (a Provençal funeral lament for a patron), the song may be the filmmakers' tribute to Pauline (*pro memoria*), even though she "survives" the end of the film. But instead of establishing the grave, elegiac mood of a despairing dirge, plaint or threnody, the song sounds an optimistic note. This would seem to be authorial commentary in keeping with the epic style, and an indication of favoring winds (*omen faustum*). This rather sympathetic parabasis is an antidote to fatalism, and yields a coda that is, at worst, unresolved (*re infecta*). Mario Lanza is the singer, bringing fertilizing male illumination into the female darkness. This peroration is thus something like a *sandhya*, which is a Hindu "twilight prayer" appropriate for a pregnant threshold. It is a concluding dedicatory *tornada* that may be taken as anodyne and consolation for the real people and for the fictional characters as well as for the audience.

It may be said of Peter Jackson, as Robert Donington says of Richard Wagner, that he "gives the violence of the tragedy full scope, yet tempers this violence by intimations of the dignity of human suffering." Donington also says of Wagner's work, "It is a genuine expression of grief because it suppresses neither the suffering nor the victory over the suffering."

Grief lived through can resolve into strength. But Pauline cannot be expected to foresee this healing potential, as the ego is prone to perceive change as annihilation. Flannery O'Connor tells us, "All human nature vigorously resists grace because grace changes us and the change is painful." Nevertheless, truth, however distressing, remedies delusion. Barton Fink demonstrates that the drastic measures sometimes required to break a rigid ego may look like disaster, but may ultimately work to the subject's benefit. Change may be glacial, but the human spirit may be indomitable. Though patience be a tired mare, yet she will plod.

That one will "never walk alone" is, alas, sometimes the problem. Certain characters are plagued by the Furies. In *Orestes* by Euripides, Furies are girls with "eyes of blood" who drive one insane. According to Aeschylus, the vengeful Furies eventually become the merciful Eumenides (the kindly ones). The Furies are propitiated by Athena, the spirit of wisdom. Wisdom is only acquired through suffering. It may be hoped that Pauline and Juliet will regain their lost wisdom.

Excellence is seldom achievable without a series of arduous trials. Mythologically, inner potential and readiness are met by outer circumstance. In *Ego and Archetype*, Edward Edinger writes, "The favorites of God receive the severest ordeals, i.e., it is one's potential for individuation that causes the test." John Donne maintains, "The best men have had most laid upon them." Perhaps "only the best people" are tested and endure (*ignis aurum probat, miseria fortes viros*). St. Anthony wondered why God did not intervene during his struggles. God told him that He was waiting to see whether Anthony would lose his resolve. Anthony passed the test and was assured that God would always be there to help.

Plato, in his *Phaedo*, says, "Whoever goes uninitiated and unsanctified to the other world will lie in the mire, but he who arrives there initiated and purified will dwell with the gods." Pauline is currently mired in the mud (at least psychologically, if not materially). However, because it experiences rebirth from mud, the lotus is an earthly reflection of the celestial. Recalling Pauline's floral dress, funeral flowers express the hope that grief can flower again with new life. For example, Elena's funeral in *Like Water for Chocolate* triggers Esperanza's birth. The girls believe themselves ennobled by disease. Their mutual affinity partly results from their respective infirmities, scars of which they already bear. Their current plight may be no worse than a chastening ordeal, like the fire at the end of *Like Water for Chocolate*. At best, it could prove to be a rather extreme right of passage.

Pauline may be viewed as a pathetic if not a tragic figure. Peter Abelard claims that the suffering of Christ makes Him the redeemer by evoking compassion. Pauline may function similarly (*in persona Christi*), and has already been seen to dress the part (in red). Having already glamorized their suffering as a prestigious privilege, the girls might not feel uncomfortable comparing their alienation and pain to the Passion of Christ. They would see no sacrilege in calling their ordeal a Calvary. But having nailed themselves to the crosses they bore, they will probably be missed by as few people as mourn the passing of Peter Grimes. Even if one must be lost to be appreciated, no amount of self-mortification would seem sufficient to cause society to welcome the return of their prodigal daughters.

The girls make Honora their scapegoat. Though their actions are uncontroversially condemnable, they risk becoming scapegoats for society's collective sins, not just their own.

Such is the social function served by the stereotypical loner. Their punishment, though deserved, in turn provides society with vicarious atonement. The girls may be sacrificed on the altar of ideology and may rank themselves among such sacrificial heroes as Oedipus, Agamemnon and Hamlet. But the most important sacrifice to be made is that of immature aspects of the psyche that retard progress.

Some mythical murderers assume the spirit of their victim. (Related concepts are the cannibalistic appropriation of another's strength via anthropophagy, and the assumption of another's place via what Harold Bloom terms apophrades.) In Wagner's *Ring*, Fafner kills his brother Fasolt and then acquires something of his victim's more docile nature. Siegfried kills Fafner, tastes the dragon's blood and assimilates his wisdom. Siegfried is then able to transcend his human abilities and understand the voice of nature, exemplified by the song of a bird. Perhaps Pauline will be similarly enlightened by her mother's blood and will acquire her gentleness. It could also be that when Juliet symbolically kills Reverend Norris, she assimilates his clerical power, allowing the girls' relationship to be self-legitimized. Also in *The Ring*, Brünnhilde, like Sleeping Beauty, is reborn from a death-like sleep. Likewise, the blackness now engulfing Pauline may only be temporary. Fragments of the sword Nothung are gathered up, preserved and reforged. Pauline may yet be able to rebuild her life even out of the ruins of her failed sword bridge adventure.

Death can be a symbolic opportunity for transfiguration, as seen in *Like Water for Chocolate*. Myths feature meaningful deaths that prepare the way for change. The grail represents the transformation of death into life. The alchemical *nigrendo* phase of putrefaction is an initiatory death that lays the groundwork for revelations. In *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, the initiate must die, descend through progressively obscure regions (like the skins of an onion), and experience inward transformation in the unconscious, where all things become their opposite. It is then from the unconscious that one can, like Diello, experience rebirth. A regenerative return to and rebirth from the womb of the unconscious may still be possible for Pauline. The Great Mother is not necessarily barren, even if one's biological mother is dead.

The final scene of this film features water imagery in the form of a ship on the ocean. Rain is life-giving, and water may cleanse rather than drown. The ocean may yet serve as a renewing womb of rebirth from which "something rich and strange" may issue, even if it is currently too treacherous to navigate. To drink of the waters of Lethe, one of the rivers of Hades, is to forget and to submerge, like Orson Welles in the stream, into oblivion. Dissolution into the unconscious may result in incubation, renewal, and ecstatic resurgence. Jonah, like Christ, is not destroyed but reborn. Juliet is swallowed Jonah-like by the hospital, but survives her night-sea journey, emerging like Jonah from the belly of the whale. Her own experience may thus serve as model of separation, metamorphosis and restoration.

Like the ocean, prison may be a tomb or the womb of rebirth. It has been argued that nothing as superficial as prison could be relevant to Pauline once she is lost in the abyss. But if she can collect herself and see this as a healing opportunity, having been left to walk the corridors of despair and pick over her psychic refuse at her leisure, then perhaps she may yet triumph as did Tita in *Like Water for Chocolate*, not having anticipated the depths to which she would sink in order to secure such insight. The abyss is the dark and chaotic realm of the unconscious, a place of mortification, dissolution, the drowning of ego, and mystical union with the absolute. It represents the end of the world but also its origin. It can be thought of in feminine terms as the womb to which one returns and which, like the girls' plasticine, harbors unformed potential. It is the terrifying yet loving mother who both consumes and issues forth. And it is the

eternal feminine that leads us onward and upward. A successful heroic adventure involves return from the abyss. The girls seem to be failing to bring their redemptive odyssey to a satisfactory conclusion. But they successfully ascend out of the abyss of childhood illness and escape the labyrinths of school and home by using "wings of art." If they can stay their tears, come to terms with reality and somehow gather their strength while groping in the dark, then there is at least the prospect of hope that they may yet ascend again.

In the programmatic *Symphonie Fantastic* of Hector Berlioz, a man is consigned to hell and dragged there by his beloved. Pauline and Juliet may be considered, more positively, to engage in a form of *suttee*, in which husband and wife are one, and both are brought to eternity through her heroic act. The death of Beatrice moves Dante's poetry onto a higher plane, and in a paradoxical reconciliation of opposites, perhaps now Pauline may fully realize life via symbolic death. The Port Levy scene refers specifically to Easter, which commemorates Christ's journey to hell *and back*. This associates the girls with the resurrections of such figures as Osiris and Lazarus, and the returns of such kings as Arthur and Sebastian.

The hero's terrible and glorious journey is marked by perilous descent and return. Thought it would seem to be an impossible quest for Pauline to emerge from her present state, to surmount such obstacles and prevail is the nature of heroic endeavors. Trevrizent tells Parzival, "A greater marvel never occurred, in that, after all, with your defiance you have wrung the concession from God that His everlasting Trinity has given you your wish." The girls' fortunes reversed direction at the apex, may yet again (*omnia vincit amor*).

Heroes such as Orpheus (and Barton Fink and Fergus) are allowed to voyage into the underworld or visit the home of the dead and return alive and wiser (*quæ nocent, docent*). Having fallen from the pneumatic realm of the Fourth World, Pauline is now in the chthonic, Plutonic abyss. Persephone descends to this domain and returns. With the guiding aid of Persephone's torch and Ariadne's thread, descent (*kathodos*) into the womb of the Great Mother that is the underworld may be followed by re-emergence (*anodos*). During this gestation, awaiting rebirth into adult maturity, Pauline may be purified, cleansed and purged. And there is mythological precedence for women being rescued from the underworld, as Semele is from Tartarus. Pauline may suffer Tartarean agonies, but perhaps ultimately to her advantage.

Countering Adorno's idea of the impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz is the belief that nothing can hold back the dawn, though with so much wreckage with which to deal, this may be expected to come later rather than sooner for the characters in the present story. "Tragedy is the shadow cast by the protagonist on the surrounding world," writes Richard Eder in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 4/8/07, yet radiance contrasts with shadow such that it is all the brighter for it (*clarior e tenebris*). Pauline and Juliet may yet emerge, like Harry Lime, from the shadows. It is darkest before the dawn, with dusk and dawn, respectively, symbolizing death and birth. Crisis precedes awakening, and a death/life pun is implicit in the word *wake*. Dante's ascent to light is preceded by a descent into the depths. The valley of the shadow of death must sometimes be traversed in order to reach the land of eternal light. Chosen people (perhaps "only about ten" of "the best people") are brought from that darkness to that light (I Peter 2:9). An appropriate symbol here might be the swan, like the one in Wagner's *Lohengrin*. The swan is said to draw the sun under the world by night, exploring the unconscious realm underlying consciousness. In alchemy, it symbolizes transformation, transcendence and the integration the male and female principles.

Martin Luther says that when a man believes himself to be utterly lost, light breaks. He also says that whom God would make alive he must first kill. Honora's salvation has already

been telegraphed, if not vouchsafed. There is hope for Pauline as well, and the wisdom of "People die every day" applies equally to her. Tragedy usually produces a hero who is sadder but wiser. After being unable to sustain the wisdom that she had already gained, Pauline ultimately achieves a sadness that now seems beyond consolation, but which could yet be productive. There comes to mind Robert Kennedy's misquotation of Edith Hamilton's 1930 translation of *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus, which Kennedy offered on the occasion of the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King on April 4, 1968: "Even in our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God." The horror with which Pauline is consumed may only be purgatorial and not infernal. Peace is attainable through such experiences if one is psychologically prepared to receive wisdom. And though her disgrace seems to know no limit, the power of forgiveness is not to be underestimated. No horror can survive the divine radiance of transcendent knowledge, and not even the abyss is beyond the reach of the compassion of Avalokiteshvara or Jesus or Jizo Bosatsu. Hope shines through the valley of death. If such knowledge can make Pauline again receptive to wisdom, then there may be hope for solace, healing and resolution, unless she subverts her own recovery. The insight implicit in her statement that "people die every day" could help Pauline achieve illumination through the realization that even horror can tell of rapture. Pauline may at least be granted the hindsight to which G.W.F. Hegel refers when he writes in the preface to his *Philosophy of Right*, "The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk."

Sin gives birth to wisdom (*yas klésas so bodhi*). It is only through sin that grace is experienced. Where sin overfloweth, there overfloweth grace. Thus did Martin Luther advise to sin boldly ("*Fortiter pecca!*") in the hope of forgiveness proportional to the magnitude of the sin. In "The Dead," Joyce writes, "Better pass boldly into that other world, in the full glory of some passion, than fade and wither dismally with age." In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Phaëthon undertakes a task beyond his capacities, loses control and crashes into the sea. Pauline might appreciate his epitaph: "Great was his fall, yet did he greatly dare." One is even free to adopt the romantic view expressed by Kate Winslet herself in *Sense and Sensibility*: "To die for love. What could be more glorious?"

In Hinduism, the whole universe is subject to destruction, but it recycles and is re-created (*letum non omnia finit*). Cataclysm, as at the end of *Götterdämmerung*, allows for rebuilding on a firmer foundation. Great fires have cleared the way for grander versions of such things as St. Paul's cathedral and the modern city of Chicago. The grave may support the garden. Apocalypse and dissolution may be but the precursor of liberation.

In Wagner's *Parsifal*, it is the redeemer who receives redemption. The alchemical king calls for his son to rescue him. Pauline, as Charles, should have called again for Diello to be her savior. Robert Donington observes that after Brünnhilde conspires in Siegfried's murder, she becomes the instrument of his redemption. "[S]he can now accept both good and evil in herself (and others), without either flattering or despising herself (or them)." The Virgin Mary is seen by some as "co-redemptrix" with Jesus. Juliet *Marion* Hulme may be capable of Marian intercession (*matrem clementiae*), and her remorse, though undermined by its belatedness, may not be in vain. The girls will hopefully at least come to have compassion for others (*non ignara mali, miseris succurere disco*).

As demonstrated by Wagnerian characters like Senta, Isolde and Brünnhilde, submersion back into the unconscious is an opportunity for expiation and redemption. Robert Donington refers to Siegfried as Wotan doubly reborn. Similarly, Pauline's annihilation may simply be

incubation in preparation for rebirth. The girls have already been reborn from various hospitals and have experienced multiple name changes. Rebirth is always meaningful, but may need to be repeated to be sufficiently consequential. Perhaps Pauline can renew her initiative and find a way to be reborn from the abyss.

Orson Welles returns after being discarded. Mario's records are burned, but he returns phoenix-like to sing at the end. Pauline feared being in a Borstal. The Borstal Institution published a quarterly review, which, after January 1925, was known as *The Phoenix*. As in *Howards End*, dreams are perhaps only deferred rather than denied.

The outlook is not as immediately promising as at the end of *Like Water for Chocolate*, and, as in *King of the Hill*, things may have to get worse before they can get better. But hope may be held out for a trampoline effect to counter the warning issued at the film's apex. With luck, the deeper they fall, the higher they rise. Such optimism may be naive, recalling Samuel Johnson's description of remarriage as "the triumph of hope over experience." Even so, one is left to take one's cue from the song being heard and, as at the end of *Barton Fink*, to hope for the best.

SATIS VERBORUM
NIL DESPERANDUM
MAGNANIMITER CRUCEM SUSTINE
LEVE FIT QUOD BENE FERTUR ONUS
MACTE VIRTUTE
FATA VIAM INVENIENT