Psychological Reflections on Post - Modernist Gothic Literature

Danielle Carr
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SUMMARY of THESIS SUBMITTED
FORM F

Summary of thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Writing and Literature).

Please give a brief summary of the contents of the thesis to be submitted for examination:

A critical analytical thesis Psychological Interpretations of Literature, with psychological interpretation of literature, including the short stories The Conservatory, Psychosis, and the novelette The Lady of Tangiers.

Signature: [Redacted by Library]
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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a theoretical and critical component, including psychological interpretation of literature, and a creative component, of three short stories in the published collection, *Raiders of the Headland*; ‘The Conservatory’, ‘Psychosis’ and the novelette *The Lady of Tangiers*. The aim is to identify psychological elements within these stories which evoke symbolism of the unconscious, and aspects of the individuation process as written about by C.G. Jung, as well as psychological theories of literature, by Sigmund Freud. By analysing these elements, insight may be gained into how psychic development is reflected in the process of creative writing, and literature, and therefore into the psychological development of the individual. The short stories and novella are integrated in order to link to their related theoretical analysis.

PREFACE


INTRODUCTION

The individual journey of the protagonist in narrative fiction and the themes and motifs present reflect those of the individual's personal journey through life, the obstacles encountered, and the resolution of issues thwarting progress and spiritual and psychic development. There is potential for learning about psychological development through literature and films for those interested in the relationship between film and literature and psychological analysis, if the skills of critical analysis, particularly psychological interpretation, are applied. Understanding the relationship between psychoanalytical theory and fiction contributes to self awareness and psychological growth if the psychology of the subconscious, including the symbolism of the unconscious is compared to narrative elements in literature.
The reason that this can be accomplished specifically through engagement with film and literature is because these texts simulate the progress of the individual through life events, sometimes not with satisfactory resolution, or completion of psychic development. However, in those contexts where individuation is thwarted, these stories offer keys to psychological progress by identifying those psychic elements which are not resolved, as in *Metamorphosis* (Kafka 1915), Samsa's transformation is symbolised but is not completed when the process is not recognised on an outer level. The psychological theories of transformation and its symbolism are able to be understood through reading the original texts of Sigmund Freud and C.G. Jung, but due to literature and film operating on a level of literary symbolism, as a projection of the unconscious, they are most identified and evoked in these forms.

Some of the key theories of psychology of the unconscious as written by Carl Jung, include the symbolism of the mandala, alchemy as symbolism of psychological individuation, the Shadow, including the anima and the animus, and of integration of the Self; psychic integration of archetypes, the Psyche, and Soul. Freud's theories of the unconscious and occult psychology support these theories as a foundation of understanding of psychoanalysis.

Jung's triarchic theory of personality includes the concept of ego as a layer of consciousness linking the Self, represented by the archetypes, to the personal unconscious which contains the suppressed aspects of self, including some memories, and the collective unconscious. Jung linked the logical aspects of psychological theory to parapsychology, bringing a psychological understanding to psychic phenomenon.

The theory of psychoanalysis developed by Freud included the elements of consciousness including the ego, superego and Id. In Freudian theory, the ego is a layer of consciousness which links the superego, (the conscience), to the id, (the unconscious).

'The Conservatory' belongs to the Gothic horror genre, 'Psychosis' is a psychological thriller, and the novelette, *The Lady of Tangiers* is a supernatural or spiritual thriller.

The occult symbolism of supernatural literature, the psychological elements of which are discussed by Sigmund Freud in his essay *The Uncanny*, will be examined, as well as the original Gothic romantic classic by Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw*. 
‘The Conservatory’ will be interpreted according to the analytical psychological theory of C.G. Jung, and his theories of mandala symbolism, alchemy and transformation, and theories of personality including the archetypes.

Theories of the symbolism of the unconscious, and of psychological repression, including hysteria, in Sigmund Freud's essay, *The Unconscious* will be examined in relationship to the themes present in the Gothic romantic short story ‘Psychosis’.

In addition, Diana Adesole Mafe's *Ghostly Girls In The Eerie Bush*, an essay on the feminine in postcolonial African gothic fiction, will be compared with the supernatural thriller, *The Lady of Tangiers*.

The genre of Australian Gothic representations in literature and film will be analysed in the dramatisation of Goethe's *Faust* in *The Devil in Evening Dress*, directed by George Miller (1972) in an examination of contemporary Australian Gothic fiction.

Each story discussed in this essay, ‘The Conservatory’, ‘Psychosis’ and *The Lady of Tangiers*, possess defining traits of Gothic Romantic fiction. These fictional works will be analysed using the frameworks of Romantic Modernism, and Gothic fiction, and also a particular category of Gothic fiction known as Dark Romanticism.

**Part 1: Genres of Fiction**

**THE CANON OF GOTHIC ROMANTIC FICTION**

Gothic horror is defined as a genre of literature with themes of the supernatural, and other darkly psychological themes including the otherworldly, the haunted house or castle, ghosts, witchcraft, hallucinations, and insanity.

'The Gothic sensibility takes pleasure in the bizarre and wild, the magical and arabesque...while in literature and painting it was expressed by dealing in the supernatural, with the inexplicable monsters of the forest and castle - spooks, witches, damned souls (Faust) and corpses that rise at midnight; ...it is fascinated with the abnormal and the hallucinatory...drug abuse, torture, terrorisation, the fear of the victim - the pleasure of being insane!' (Bloom 2010, p. 3.)
ROMANTIC MODERNISM

Following the period of Victorian Gothic horror, into the modern period, Alexandra Harris has identified authors, and literature, which particularly, in Britain, are part of the genre of romantic modernism and evoke romantic architecture in the writing. She explains through a selection of acclaimed modern British literature how the architecture influences and permeates the prose - 'one of the stories it tells... (Waugh, 1945) is about the transition from modernism to romance. Ryder arrives in Oxford in 1923...He puts a reproduction Van Gogh over the mantelpiece. But this is not to last. The first stage of his aesthetic conversion occurs when Sebastian opens a copy of Clive Bell's Art... "Does anyone feel the same kind of emotion for a butterfly or flower that he feels for a cathedral or a picture?" (Harris 2010, p. 273.)

The Gothic continuum throughout the Romantic Modernist period of Literature is exemplified in Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier. 'Daphne du Maurier described in Rebecca (1938), the doomed attempts of an innocent young woman to make herself at home in an old English house. Manderly is like one of (Freud's) unheimlich homes, full of accusing furniture and macabre secrets...Every room, every ornament, every menu for supper is haunted by her predecessor (Harris 2010, p. 253).

DARK ROMANTICISM

The dark romantic genre of literature, a subgenre of Gothic fiction is identifiable in some of the classic works of Gothic literature; it combines the dark psychological elements of Gothic fiction with the visionary, poetic elements of romance writing. Examples of these elements in fiction are common in the works of writers such as Edgar Allan Poe, including his short story Ligeia, and his poetry including Annabel Lee and To A Valentine.
Part 2: The Gothic Novella *The Turn of the Screw* and Freud's *The Uncanny*

'There is no doubt that this belongs to the realm of the frightening, of what evokes fear and dread. It is equally beyond doubt that the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, and so it commonly merges with what arouses fear in general'. (Freud, 1910)

*The Turn of The Screw* is a novella written by Henry James in 1898, about a governess, an anonymous narrator, who is assigned to the care of two children in an isolated Gothic mansion, Bly. *The Uncanny* (Freud 1910) is a psychological essay written in 1910 by Sigmund Freud which analysed the parapsychological elements in narrative which are essential to the Gothic genre including haunted houses, witches, and ghouls, and those elements of fiction engineering the suspense in Gothic film and fiction.

Sigmund Freud's essay, *The Uncanny* describes the different elements of the uncanny in Literature in its various usages and contexts as it originated from the German word 'unheimlich' which means, 'unhomely' or 'unfamiliar', (Freud 1910, p. 123). The idea of an 'other' is definitive of another key Freudian theory as discussed in Sigmund Freud's essay. That is the concept of the 'doppelgänger'. 'The self may thus be duplicated, divided and interchanged. The idea of the double took many forms in literature including mirror-images, shadows, guardian spirits, the doctrine of the soul and the fear of death...The double was originally an insurance against the extinction of the self or, as Rank puts it, “an energetic denial of the power of death”, and it seems likely that the 'immortal' soul was the first double of the body.' (Freud 1910, p. 142.)

In *Faust*, a classic of historical Gothic literature, the double is the doctrine of the soul, in the form of a pact with Mephistopheles, the figure of evil, and with death, and in 'The Conservatory', it is the narrator's shadow; in both stories, death and its fears shadow each protagonist, and their conflict with its inevitable forces is central to both dramas.
Part 3: South to the Circulaneum - The Conservatory - a Gothic short story

The Conservatory

They say drawings reflect our true selves, but indeed they may also be a gateway to another place, where the world may be seen very differently. Very differently, indeed.

It was summer when I arrived at the Conservatory. I carried with me the letter written in my aunt’s hand, in a beautific cursive; carefully enveloped, and from the moment I arrived, and stepped through into her immaculately tended garden, I was taken in by its intoxicating scent. The flowers, her work of over forty years, had grown into a state of delightful, unhinged beauty.

I sat down on the swing hanging from the old oaks, and rested awhile, the heat of the day bearing down on me; at my age I needed to be careful to avoid exhaustion, as I had spent the morning walking from the train station. As these kinds of gardens often have an effect on the person, I found myself overtaken, and over-indulged in the colour and cornucopia of birds and flora.

The Butterflies, too, were the most dazzling I had ever seen, I thought I saw several genus of butterfly just in those five minutes I was left waiting in the garden.

Then Mrs Gosling appeared, who lived with my aunt Vanessa, and helped her care for the garden, the house, and a mysterious, partly demolished conservatory, refurbished in parts to restore it to its antiquitous alchemical uses. She was a a clever woman renowned for her home-made medicine in the district. The familiar round, jovial face appeared above the stock flowers, and she was carrying a tray of mellow lemonade, split with pieces of lemon.

‘You must come with me into the gazebo, my last visitor fainted out here, yesterday; my neighbour Coral, in fact, though she never prepares herself very well on hot days.’ She led me in her poised, polite manner into the gazebo, where a lovely shade had settled, and smiled at me as she filled the glasses to the brim with her brewed lemon drink.
‘You have so many butterflies in this garden.’ I said. ‘I don’t think I’ve
seen so many, anywhere, except perhaps the Zoological Gardens.’

‘I’ve begun cataloguing the butterflies,’ she said, ‘at last.’

‘You know something about them, then?’

‘Well, I felt a duty to make lists of them, after all these years, my garden
has obtained quite a reputation, you know.’

‘And so many beautiful flowers.’ I remarked.

Suddenly, I shifted, and unfortunately bumped my art folio off the seat,
while my canvas pad fell to the ground, revealing an array of primitive art
works, some of which I was ashamed; I had only started learning to draw and
paint in oils recently.

‘They’re quite interesting, your paintings,’ she said, as I struggled to pick
them all up, again, ‘and yes they are beautiful flowers, so much so, that I have
started extracting essential elements from them for perfume, and medicines to
sell. In the Conservatory, just around the corner of the path, here.’

I looked down the path, but could see nothing but overgrown shrub.

‘Those are interesting faces, you’ve drawn. Your paintings have a…shall
I say, a wild quality to them.

‘I’ve only just started taking art classes,’ I said, ‘I’m only a beginner. I’m
not very experienced.’

‘I see you’ve got quite a style coming on there,’ she said.

‘I have?’ I looked at the strangely shaped faces and wondered if they had
really come from within me. I envied the other students who could draw
pastures and people in detail, like Constable.

‘Would you like me to show you the Conservatory?’

I found myself embarrassed with delight that I should be invited to know
the secrets of my aunt Vanessa’s garden.

‘That would be wonderful,’ I found myself smiling, gleefully.

‘Just leave your artwork, here, it will be fine, and follow me down the
path...’

She rose, and I followed her through the empyrean shade. A little way to
what appeared to be a rounded glass house, through a door and beyond, to an
annexe, a cross between a green house and a store room. There were shelves
lining the walls, some decrepit and worn away, but stacked in clusters aboard
these shelves were dusty antiquated bottles. Inside I could detect a murky substance, some turned a pungent jade after having been left to ferment for long periods.

‘It was my husband’s favourite room,’ she despaired, as probably the contents of the room brought forgotten memories to consciousness.

‘You say that these materials are actually extractions from the ingredients of flowers?’ I asked.

‘Only certain species,’ she corrected. We walked again out into the garden, an overtangled mess of thorned rose bushes and winding vines, the deeper one stepped into it.

‘Will you wait here for me,’ she said, as we paused under the oak spreading its branches thickly across a sky of noxious blue. The woman disappeared before I could answer. I opened my sketch book and contemplated my paintings with frustration. I took my watch chain which I kept under my lapel. It swung back and forth in pendulous ecstasy, I flipped it open and looked at the time held captive inside its mortal chamber. How clever Mrs Gosling was that she gauged such useful properties from the flora in her garden.

The wandering figure of someone I thought could be a society sort of the district, stopped in front of me. He saw my drawings and looked up at me, I folded them up immediately in embarrassment.

‘You certainly have a style, a little fauve.’

‘Thank you,’ I said, disbelievingly. The fact is I cannot draw. Artists study for many years; I have only taken up the hobby recently.’

‘I saw you there looking at your watch,’ he said, ‘and I thought he really does not know that the most sensible instrument with which to navigate the surface of the garden is this,’ he flipped open his compass and showed me its exacting measurements. He then looked up at the sky.

‘You’re close to the Conservatory,’ he said, ‘Ah, there it is,’ he smiled and nodded at the partly demolished conservatory, ‘I trust that Mrs Gosling has showed you her chamber of wonders.’

‘Yes, she is practising alchemy there, in fact,’ I said.

‘Just a word of advice, don’t stay for too long, there, as Mrs Gosling said, the elixirs are too strong. They have a kind of shall I say, anaesthetic quality.’
‘Yes sir,’ I said, not fully understanding what he meant. He looked again at his compass, ‘South it says, to the Circulanum.’

Whatever did he mean? It sounded like an old Latin word. After he had left, a certain kind of feeling remained. When he had mentioned that the Conservatory featured an elixir, I realised I had to return. As much of a gentleman as I was, I had entered the age of wisdom. When he had opened his compass following the unlatching of my own watch, I had been reminded how time is equal to distance, the hours I had travelled as I approached my declining years. Perhaps his compass stated that youth lay in the direction of the Conservatory.

Mrs Gosling was capable of such marvellous accomplishments when she put her mind to the task. I turned around and walked back towards the windows of fractured glass. The white screen door creaked as I opened it, and I walked between the arching necks of hydrangeas and acacias in the conservatory.

A step down again, only a step, and I was amongst the bottles of queer shapes again. They were labelled in a rather indistinct fashion. My eyes gleaned over the shelves, Nightingale, Lavender, Opulent Midnight, the names grew stranger, Veiled Vertigo, Nascent Nectar; I stopped at a bottle which claimed the title of Essence of Enmity. I found myself laughing, the shrill strains of it echoed with a depraved musicality. I stopped. The echo seemed macabre to me, in its nature. What did I know about this house, really? Or Mrs Gosling for that matter? I searched frantically through the bottle looking for the mention of youth. It must be here, I cursed, then an odd kind of anger travelled to the surface of an already affected mind. It was a palpable desire to pull back the hands of time, to regain the years that I had lost. How pitiful I was; I had dropped my sketchbook carelessly to the floor of the Conservatory.

The pages fluttered open until they landed on the face of a man. I stood back in shock. Through the thick deafening thunder of my heart in my ears, I saw the illustration of a gentleman on the precipice of his final years, in dismay I realised that his features were completely askew.

‘It must be my style,’ I lamented. Then suddenly, I heard footsteps.

In the developing haze of the room I imagined that the portrait of the man had come to life, and he was now coming to find me. I turned around, but the footsteps must have come from another section of the house, as no-one
appeared. I continued to look for the elixir which Mrs Gosling had mentioned. I threw the bottles onto the floor in frustration. I was surprised by my own wrath, but the desire for youth is like a hunger, a passion for the valuable secrets of time, itself. One unexpectedly crashed and splintered across the wood boards. I hoped that no-one in the house heard. I began to feel saturated with sweat as the heat in the conservatory section of a house often increased dramatically. I wished now that the man with the compass would return. Maybe it was his footsteps I had heard in the direction of the conservatory. Why did I think that he knew where the elixir was? Because he seemed to be the one who knew all things, with his faded compass swinging from his waistcoat, as he had appeared in his refined attire. He looked a gentleman, from a moneyed family.

In the madness which had gripped me, I stumbled upon an interesting container with the label, ‘For the hysterical.’ I opened it and a scintillating scent emanated from its effaced tube. I smelled it first, as I had learnt once, in a lecture in home medicines that inhaling the contents of a substance has just a resonant effect as ingesting them.

A wave of pleasant peacefulness overcame me, and I rested in the wicker chair for a moment. Finally, my temporary madness abated. The footsteps however, penetrated my reverie. They could be heard one by one, as they descended the steps from the conservatory. The scent in the apothecary was thicker, now, because I was tranquillised. I could not lift myself from my trance to greet the visitor. I looked at the broken glass around me. How would I ever explain to Mrs Gosling that I had been taken over by some force, would she ever believe me when I claimed that I felt that the house itself had possessed me? Would she find it an insult considering she took such pride in her house and garden? I picked up the sketch book and gazed at the drawing. The subject’s features were completely out of proportion. I would visit him, and take better notes of him next time.

A shadow crossed the page, and a butterfly fluttered above my heart in the dingy enclave of depraved dreams. The scent was suffocating, now, as I looked up to see the man in the picture. I found his presence with the poison, entombed us both in the part which was the prominent feature of Mrs Gosling’s house. There was something I recognised about him, whether I had drawn him once, or he had appeared in my nightmares.
A broken stem lay bleeding on the frayed boards of the floor. The mid afternoon Antipodean light was blinding me from the position where I sat in the wicker chair. The potion brimmed with potency. The man walked away; it was a moment before I realised I was dying, the flowers wilted in morbid reference to my downfall.

The visit to the Conservatory had ended in the dissolution of my soul, where it had begun in such untampered beauty and magnificence of mind.
THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MANDALA IN THE CONSERVATORY

The mandala symbolism in ‘The Conservatory’ is present from the beginning with the arrival of Mrs Gosling, who invites the narrator into her gazebo. 'She led me in her poised, polite manner into the gazebo, where a lovely shade had been settling all day,' (p. 86). The Macmillan Dictionary defines the gazebo as 'a room with glass walls and a glass roof, built next to a house and used for relaxing in and growing plants.' Often gazebos are circular in the architecture, in the construction of the window frames, with angular corners. The psychologist C.G. Jung observed that 'mandala means 'circle'.

'Their basic motif is the premonition of the centre of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy. The energy of the central point is manifested in the...urge to become what one is...' (Jung, 1959, p. 73).

ARCHETYPAL SYMBOLISM OF TRANSFORMATION IN THE CONSERVATORY; A JUNGIAN INTERPRETATION

Jung theorised that alchemy, a practice which reached its peak in the eighteenth century, featured in Goethe's play Faust, was symbolic of the process of the integration of archetypes, forming the Self. Metaphorically, it represented the mining of psychic 'gold', the personality attributes and cognitive abilities, the attributes of the archetypes which were necessary to 'wholeness' or individuation of the Self. 'Alchemy is pre-eminently concerned with the seed of unity which lies hidden...the seed of unity has a trinitarian character in Christian alchemy and a triadic character in pagan alchemy. According to other authorities it corresponds to the unity of four elements and is therefore a quarternity.' (Jung 1921, p. 26). The four archetypal functions of this quarternity Jung refers to are thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition.

‘The Conservatory’ is about a man who seeks youth through the alchemical powers harboured in a conservatory in an overgrown heavily scented garden, in an unidentified part of the world, with the wilderness reminiscent of Australia, and yet European and otherworldly in its architecture; en route to the Circulaneum, a mysterious circular
vision of a building never reached. Instead he languishes within the Conservatory, a
glassed in greenhouse annexed to the main house, surrounded by odd elixirs with poetic
titles. The protagonist remains anonymous just as the governess is in The Turn of the
Screw (James, 1898).

From its earliest representation in literature the garden is represented as a setting
of innocence, due to its connection with Eden, as a place of paradise, in biblical legend.
In Literature it is represented as a 'point of compromise and of contact between two
oppositions: those of...enclosure and exposure,' (Beck 2002, p. 12). The narrator
immediately comments on the overwhelming toxicity and beauty of his surroundings,
'from the moment I arrived, and stepped through into her immaculately tended garden…
(p. 85) I found myself overtaken, and over-indulged in the colour and cornucopia of
birds and flora.'

The narrator is overwhelmed by the beauty and scents of the surrounding flowers,
birds and butterflies, in the beginning, when this richly scented garden is a kind of
Eden, a place of innocence, and a sense that he is within a hidden enclosure, a place
annexed, or separated from the outside world.

From the opening of 'The Conservatory' the idea of drawing and self portrait as a
reflection of the person's inner psychology is introduced. 'They say drawings reflect our
true selves, but indeed they may also be a gateway to another place, where the world
may be seen very differently. Very differently, indeed.' (p. 85). The opening line
positions the reader to anticipate entrance into the other world, and the idea of a
drawing as representation of the self is introduced.

'The pages fluttered open until they landed on the face of a man...I saw the
illustration of a gentleman on the precipice of his final years, in dismay I
realised that his features were completely askew,' pp. 91-92.

Through his shocked reaction to the portrait of a gentleman who is unrecognisable to
him, the narrator is confronted by his shadow self, corresponding in Faust, with the
character of Mephistopheles, who serves as a symbol of Faust's shadow, his darkness,
his repressed side, with those desires and instincts which are not allowed consciousness.
The importance of the shadow in the development of the self is described by Jung as, 'a moral problem that confronts the whole ego - personality for no-one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort...This act...is the essential condition for any kind of self - knowledge, and it therefore, as a rule, meets with considerable resistance.' (Jung 1938/1955, p. 158.). The anonymous narrator in 'The Conservatory' therefore meets his confrontation with the shadow, with reluctance and abhorrence; 'I stood back in shock. Through the thick deafening thunder of my heart in my ears, I saw the illustration of a gentleman...' (p. 91).

The artist in 'The Conservatory' possesses an untrained but naturally expressionistic, abstract quality in his work, Mrs Gosling comments on his artistic development, 'Those are interesting faces you've drawn. Your paintings have a...shall I say, a wild quality to them.' (p. 87), perhaps also referring figuratively to the development of his self, which is still in its early stages.

Mrs Gosling invites the artist to her conservatory. The conservatory is described as exhibiting mandala like symbolism, circular in shape, 'I followed her... to what appeared to be a rounded glass house, through a door and beyond which was like an annexe to the house, crossed between a green house and a store room.' (p.88) It appears to be the mysterious harbour of unusual alchemical substances.

There is a suggestion of a psychic element to this added dimension of the house; ' “It was my husband's favourite room,” ’she despaired, as probably the contents of the room 'brought indelible memories to consciousness.' (p. 88).

As he stands just outside the conservatory, in Mrs Gosling's exotic garden, the unknown protagonist is conscious of time, as signified by a containing instrument, a watch chain, 'held captive inside its mortal chamber,' (p. 89), and a mysterious male figure appears within the garden, 'The wandering figure of someone I thought could be a society sort of the distinct, stopped in front of me.' The theme of time is symbolised in 'The Conservatory' by the Navigator with the compass, 'When he had opened his compass...I had been reminded how time is equal to distance, the hours I had travelled as I approached my declining years.' (p. 90)

He suggests a sense of direction for the protagonist, 'the most sensible instrument with which to navigate the surface of the garden is this,' and he produces a compass, used for calculating direction by explorers.

The symbolism of the journey into the centre of the self is continued in the...
corresponding circular shapes of the watch and the compass. ' "South it says, to the Circulaneum." ' p. 90. The garden, and the conservatory are essentially enclosures, 'The best and most significant mandalas are found in the sphere of Tibetan Buddhism...known...as a yantra,' Jung describes this universally present shape in its elements, including a 'courtyard with four gates. It signifies sacred seclusion and concentration. Then,...marked off by another magic circle, comes the centre as the essential object or goal of contemplation.' Jung, 1959. p. 72.

The developing Faustian themes occur in the mysterious figure's reference to Mrs Gosling's 'chamber of wonders', the protagonist observes, '"she is practising alchemy there, in fact." ' p. 90. When he steps down, again, into the conservatory, he finds the oddly shaped bottles are labelled with poetic titles, one in particular foretells the Gothic twist to the story, *Essence of Enmity*, p. 91, and it is then that the Faustian elements of the story are revealed. 'I searched frantically through the bottle looking for the mention of youth.'

The art work represents the shadow. His mind is confused by 'the developing haze of the room,' (p. 92) suggesting that his mental state exists on the fringes of imagination and reality, although he has realised that he is the subject of the portrait. The figure in the drawing resembles the narrator's subconscious fears. It is a representation of himself.

It is at this point that the Gothic elements become particularly charged, 'In the madness which had gripped me, I stumbled upon an interesting container with the label, "For the hysterical." ' (pp. 92-93). The narrator's passion to turn back the clock and recapture his youth results in a psychic crisis, partly influenced by the drug like scents contained in the bottles in the conservatory. The Gothic state of madness is surpassed by a dream like experience which enables the narrator to confront the parts of himself which so far have remained hidden from him. Jung called the stage between wakefulness and sleep when hypnagogic images appear as the 'active imagination'. 'As one falls asleep, one's fading power of judgement leaves the imagination free to construct more and more vivid forms. Hypnagogic images arise in this way. Naturally the chief share falls to the imagination, which is why highly imaginative people are particularly subject to them. It is very probable that hypnagogic images are identical with the dream-images of normal sleep, or that they form their visual foundation.' p. 59, Jung, 1902.
The subconscious contents which remain latent or repressed may be accessed through an engagement with the active imagination, as explained by Jung, 'Finally a third danger- and this may in certain circumstances be any serious matter- is that the subliminal contents already possess such a high energy charge that, when afforded an outlet by the active imagination, they may overpower the conscious mind and take possession of the personality.' p. 338, Jung, 1958.

The Gothic horror of the story intensifies as he succumbs to the powers of the alchemical substances; 'How would I ever explain to Mrs Gosling that I had been taken over by some force, would she ever believe me when I claimed that the house itself had possessed me?' (p.93)

The house has become a symbol of his self, and in the Gothic tradition influences his sanity, to the degree that a dissolution of self is occurring; his shadow as depicted in the drawing overwhelms him, p. 94. 'The scent was suffocating, now, as I looked up to see the man in the picture. I found his presence with the poison, entombed us...There was something I recognised about him, whether I had drawn him once, or he had appeared in my nightmares.'

The process of transformation, or the abrupt interruption of it occurs, pp. 93-94, 'A shadow crossed the page, and a butterfly fluttered above my heart in the dingy enclave of depraved dreams.' The butterfly in dream symbolism is the symbol of transition, phases, and transformation.' (Wagaman 2011)

The Faustian themes of the descent of the soul into an underworld are evoked in the final sentence, 'The visit to the conservatory had ended in the dissolution of my soul, where it had begun in such untampered beauty and magnificence of mind.' (p. 94). This ending also fulfils the requirements of the Gothic Romantic genre, in which Gothic horror is framed by a romantic setting, in ‘The Conservatory’ it is the idyllic garden with its rich cornucopia of insects and plant life, in which the themes of dreams, madness, alchemy and spiritual conflict are explored.
Part 4: Gothic Historical Fiction

ALCHEMICAL THEMES IN GOETHE'S FAUST

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Faust was finished in 1790 and published in 1808, and first performed in 1819, an era in which alchemy was at the pinnacle of its exploration as an alternative science. Faust is an alchemist who has exhausted the pathways of knowledge including science, philosophy and religion in the understanding of self, and therefore turns to magic in the search for meaning on the eve of Walpurgisnacht, the witches sabbath coinciding in Germany with May Day. 'I've studied now Philosophy, And Jurisprudence, Medicine, Wherefore, from Magic I seek assistance... Through spirit-power and spirit-speech,' Goethe, 1819, pp. 43-44.

In Faust, the contemplative Faust during a dark night of reflection in his room, a study described as an evocative Gothic setting, in the first part of the tragedy, '(A lofty arched, narrow, Gothic chamber. FAUST, in a chair at his desk, restless.)' (Taylor, 2005)

Mephistopheles, a representative figure of the shadow of the human psyche, appears from an alcove, and offers Faust assistance, in the form of a potion which transforms him into a young man to pursue the affections of Gretchen. 'I come, a squire of high degree, in scarlet cloak with golden trimming, a cloak in silken lustre trimming.' Goethe, 1819, p. 92.

The age of the anonymous narrator in 'The Conservatory' is also prevalent in the early stages, 'at my age I needed to be careful to avoid exhaustion,' (p. 85) and later, in the garden, the narrator says, 'When he had mentioned that the Conservatory featured an elixir, I realised I had to return. As much of a gentleman as I was, I had entered the age of wisdom.' (p. 90) suggesting that the cultural and social context of the gentleman's life brought expectations associated with the later phase of life, with it the possibility of attainment of knowledge through experience, just as Faust in Faust states at the beginning of Act One, on the precipice of his declining years; ‘“From end to end, with labor keen; And here, poor Fool! with all my lore I stand no wiser than before.” ’ Goethe, 1808, p. 74. Faust has reached the end of his life but he sees the only possibility of finding direction, in a return to youth.
Jungian theory is that the Shadow is the part of the Self which is subconscious and separated from the persona, which held within it both the unfulfilled aspects of the individual, his wills, instincts and desires, and also the aspect of mankind at its worst, and in some literature as the vampire, 'the conception of magic as communication "with spirits" is, of course, traditional, but Goethe adheres verbally to...the Faust legend in particular with the use of the word "spirit" (Geist/ Geister)... Indicate that the spirits involved are evil spirits...and Faust is fully aware of this.' Hamlin 1976, p. 485.

AUSTRALIAN GOTHIC, PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS - THE DEVIL IN EVENING DRESS, Kennedy-Miller, 1972

'When men die they pass close to the memories of those who remain, and then sooner or later, into oblivion. But for some men it is not enough to be just dead and buried, they were torn to insinuate themselves into the minds of the living in the most extraordinary ways. Such was to be the case with Federici.' (The Devil in Evening Dress, 1975)

This line suggests that Federici's death became entwined with the public imagination; the Federici legend will be remembered throughout history due to the circumstances of his death and the reported encounters of the staff and performers from the performance of Faust in 1988, onwards.

The thread of Gothic historical fiction originating in Faust permeates Australian Gothic in the legend of Federici, The Devil in Evening Dress (Kennedy-Miller 1972). There are identifiable links between performances of Faust and the canon of Australian supernatural literature and film. In 1972 George Miller directed a documentary drama about the famous theatre ghost, Frederick Baker, also known as Federici, an example of Australian Gothic in film. The legend of the ghost and its retelling, narrated by Frank Thring in suitably elaborate poetic monologue, and the gloom laden Gothic arches of Melbourne provide framing and description for the story of the opera singer under the illustrious stage name, Federici. Against a backdrop of a bustling colonial city, Melbourne in its early days is vibrant and exciting following the discovery of gold. A city in its developmental stages, it was in need of entertainment for the hard working individuals who were developing the city’s infrastructure.
Federici, an imported English baritone had already performed in some of Gilbert and Sullivan's popular operetta, including *Princess Ida* and *The Mikado*, and invested much emotion and effort in preparation for his upcoming debut in the English translation of Gounud's opera version of the German *Faust* story, previously written in subsequent, different drafts by Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Thring narrates scenes of Federici and his family at their terraced Melbourne home, the evening before. A return to youth promised to him through the powers of alchemy by Federici's character Mephistopheles, the alchemist Faust collapses during his dramatic descent through the trap door, in a blaze of smoke and fire, part of the original ending of Goethe's *Faust*. Federici claims Faust's soul, accompanying him into the underworld following Faust's seduction of Marguerite (Gretchen), and her subsequent decline. Following is a dramatic Gothic scene of tumbling coaches, approaching the funeral, laden with actors and dignitaries from the theatre world of Melbourne.

As they gather around the grave, the clergyman reciting the elegy is suddenly struck with emotion and it is as though he is overcome by the spirit of Federici and the emotion surrounding his death. As the coffin is lowered into the grave; he suffers from a heart attack and has to be treated by the same doctor who assisted Federici backstage at the Princess Theatre. It is suggested that the circumstances within which Federici died, the labour and emotion which accompanied the anticipated debut performance, including the play in which he performed, *Faust*, led to a haunting which continued through the years, affecting many leading actors and theatre personnel, who maintain that Federici is a positive, but perpetual spiritual occupant of the theatre, supportive of their theatrical interests.

Actors, crew and employees of the theatre maintain that although the ghost is a familial presence, there is a sense that it may have been the version of *Faust* in which Federici performed which may have contributed to the events which occurred afterwards. *Faust part 1* by Goethe ends in Faust descending into the underworld with Mephistopheles. The possibility is raised that this led to remaining caught within the boundaries of the theatre, becoming a part of it.

If Goethe's story is about alchemy and essentially about archetypal integration, then it could be interpreted that in the ending of *Faust part 1*, Faust's process of archetypal integration is not completed. *Faust part II* by Goethe, in which Faust awakens to a new beginning, offers an ending of redemption of the soul.

*Psychological Reflections on Post-Modernist Gothic Literature*  
Danielle Carr
In this setting, Faust is not overcome by the Shadow, represented by Mephistopheles, but reaches a stage of transformation. The version performed by Federici is one of the last to feature the earlier ending, following versions performed included the ending of the second version.

‘Life’s pulses beating now, with new existence,
Greet the mild ethereal half-light round me:
You, Earth, stood firm tonight, as well: I sense
Your breath is quickening all the things about me,
Already, with that joy you give, beginning,
To stir the strengthening resolution in me,’ (Goethe, 1832)
Part 5   The Colour of Memory   The psychological thriller, Psychosis

Psychosis

After each visit, the young patient drifted into hallucinations. Should I place my hands upon her shoulders and shake her awake from this catatonic scene, these nightmares of blackening, blistering scope, the figure which lay waiting in the corridors ready to suck the soul out of her - in the Sepulchre of dreadful dreams, a room with no shape or memory. She was blinded by the visions which crept upwards from the subconscious to meet with her in this bare, blank room.

These episodes in the Heywood Sanatorium always resulted in these unforgiving scenes. For many months, I had visited with my bag of loose, wilted flowers and propped them in a vase next to her bed, hoping for some response. She never lifted her head, once, in those first few months. The doctor said she would wake up when the time was right, when she was ready.

After three months, I sat and kept a journal. I wrote about the house, and the strange man she had met at the corner store. I thought you might think that no-one will know who you are, that no-one will catch you, but I will bring you to justice. I looked around me at the faces of the other visitors; I thought, it could be any one of you, any citizen of this tiny village. I felt I could find out what really happened to Melinda, if I could recapture some of her memory.

One morning I had registered at 10 am and I had only just pressed my pen to paper when her pupils began to flicker back and forth, and just as the new spring flowers I had placed next to her bedstead began to open their buds, the petals outstretched, her eyes opened to the harsh light of the globe hanging from the sanatorium ceiling. I reached forward to lay my hand upon her palm, but the entire ward was eclipsed by the sound of her gutteral scream, when the memory of the killer was brought to surface by the vivid colour of flowers. Perhaps the colour of blood in the red carnations returned the killer's face, and her body lifted and convulsed backwards onto the bed, I wrote into my notes.

I lived in hope all the following mornings that Melinda would raise her head from the pillow, once more and perhaps utter a word, a name, some detail or
description which would lead me to her killer, but she never awakened. I sat and wrote in my notebook all the details of her attack that evening, when she became more conscious, and all the events which had led to that fateful incident. She had mentioned a man who had followed her out of the corner store that morning, who had followed her to her car.

Melinda looked behind her, but he was gone by the time she had reached her dark blue 1978 Commodore, gone in the dust and the heat and memories.

As she drove home, the police said Melinda was probably followed again, because she had turned her head to glance over her shoulder and noticed the grey Ford fade in and out of view through the rain flecked rear window. When she arrived, he had waited, probably in a side yard, waited until she had entered, and maybe found an entrance after his victim had unlocked all the doors.

On the Tuesday afternoon after I had written my name on the register, and hopefully placed the bouquet of carnations upon the sheet covering her legs, I sat down in my regular spot, opened the journal and scanned the notes. I picked up the pen, but before I could begin, she turned suddenly between the sheets and groaned. I looked up at her. Her body began to writhe, and I could see as she became more conscious, the painful scenes rose up, and her moans turned to shrieking. The eyes opened and took in the scorching fluorescence of the wards, and she cried,

‘No! No! Don’t come near me.’ With both my arms I fell forward upon her to keep out the terrifying emotion, but she began to fight me, and threw me back into the chair with a violent lurch.

‘Poor Melinda,’ I said, ‘don’t try to remember, now, just lie down and rest.’

The next visit, I found that she was awake, but instructions were strictly administered not to excite her senses. I still brought a bouquet of flowers hoping that they would add some colour to the sparse hospital ward. Even when conscious, it appeared that she preferred a different world to the one in the Sanatorium, and even my subtle attempts at conversation went unnoticed. The carnations were beginning to wilt, and I stuffed a floral bouquet in the ceramic vase atop the set of drawers.

‘Are you ready to remember, now?’ I closed my book and looked at her.

Her eyes stared glassily at the blank ceiling.
‘Just a little at a time. No pressure. What did you see that night?’

‘A - a man..’

‘What kind of man? Tall, short, fat, skinny, did he wear a moustache, or was he clean shaven?’

Tears formed in the corners of her eyes, then her body began to writhe, slowly, again in the bed. The nurse appeared, immediately.

‘Can you please leave? You’re upsetting her.’

I snapped at the nurse, ‘I’ve only come here to help.’ I said. I looked up as suddenly a butterfly distracted me, flying in through the opened window and settling on a cornice of flowing lines, in the cold white ceiling.

‘I won’t tolerate your disrespect for the institution’s staff,’ she said.

The next afternoon I returned sheepishly, and signed my name into the register. I walked through to the women’s ward and was shocked when I found Melinda’s bed empty. I grabbed the young nurse by the elbow in a sudden panic, as she walked past, ‘Where’s Melinda Barber?’ I asked. She looked at me as though I was as mad as their inpatients.

‘She’s in the sun room, at the opposite end of the ward,’ she said firmly, and pulled away from me. I turned and looked all the way down the long aisles of beds and saw two windows opening outwards, in the distance. The sun room. I had never noticed it, before. I discovered an attached conservatory, the walls and windows painted in distinct white. The butterflies hovered in blissful stillness about the leaves and I saw Melinda in the centre, sitting in a wicker chair. She was weaving a tapestry in differently coloured strands, perfectly awake and aware.

I handed her the newest collection of flowers, and sat down in an opposite chair. We did not speak for some minutes, as she did not appear to acknowledge me at all, continuing her weaving.

‘You enjoy that, don’t you?’ I said, and managed a smile. She said nothing, focussing only on the threads of wool undulating in the hessian cloth. I placed my hand on hers, partly to comfort her, and she looked up at me with a disturbing vacancy in her eyes. I froze, and sat back into the wicker chair. Melinda continued with her slow weaving, and then paused for a moment looking sorrowfully through
the glass of water next to her. I took my journal from out of my bag, unhooking the fountain pen, and poised it uncertainly above the lined paper.

‘Now, Melinda, that night, you drove home, there was a man who followed you.’

Tears welled in the corners of her eyes, ‘I opened the door, and walked to the end of the house to let in the dog, releasing the chain on the back door, and then returned to the living room. I turned the hi-fi up really loud,’ the painful memory of emotion overwhelmed her.

‘Melinda, if you can face your demons, then you will be on the first step to recovery.’

‘He must have been out there, all that time,’ she sobbed.

I walked over to the glass of water, and handed it to her. The sleeves of her dress rose up a little at the hem, revealing long sharp cuts which could have been made with a knife along the underside of her arms.

‘I began to dance, and get lost in the music. I heard the back door creak a little but I thought it was the dog. I grew tired, and thought that I would climb the stairs to bed, listen to music some more up in my bedroom. I started up the stairs. I heard a sound and I stopped for a moment, waited, all was silence. I continued up to my room, and collapsed onto the bed.’

‘So that’s when the attack happened?’

‘I had been sleeping for hours, then at three o’clock I was woken by loud music. I returned downstairs to the stereo, and reached to the button to switch it off,’ she said and gazed into the flowers.

‘You must try to remember.’ I placed my hand on hers, and the pressure of it must have hurt her, but in her trance, it did not, as she gazed into the flowers, through the rooms of memory. Then suddenly, she began to flail her arms, and scream, and she pushed me back away from her. The nurse took my arm, and steered me backwards.

‘That will be enough for today,’ said the nurse.

An old woman staggered over to switch on the conservatory music player, turning the dial until she found some restful music. The sound of any music
seemed to cause Melinda to shake, and I released the glass of water from the grip she had tightened around it.

‘Then what?’ I asked, before the nurse grabbed her ready to take her back to the ward.

‘I don’t remember, everything just ... went blank,’ she said. Maybe tomorrow, when I return, I thought, and rested the pen down. The nurse suddenly appeared, ‘Time’s up,’ she said, ‘Only half an hour visit a day allowed for each patient.’

I hurried my last details into the journal. The patient’s psychology kept neatly, succinctly between my own hands and the pen moving gently across the surface of the page. The butterfly dipped and darted between the petals, and then flew to the window of the sun room, immediately caught in the fly wire.

Themes of psychoanalysis in the short story ‘Psychosis’

'Should I place my hands upon my shoulders and shake her awake from this catatonic scene - these nightmares of blackening, blistering scope... She was blinded by the visions which crept upwards from the subconscious to meet with her...' p. 109. This Gothic opening introduces us to Melinda, a victim of an unsolved crime, who lies in the sanatorium wondering whether her killer will find her.

Her repression of the anxiety following her attack causes symbolic images to rise up from the subconscious, not of her attack but possibly tinged with the colour red, and so anything in her surroundings which is coloured red could trigger a similar reaction, 'the entire ward was eclipsed by the sound of her guttural scream when the memory of the killer was brought to surface by the vivid colour of flowers...the colour of blood in the red carnations returned the killer's face...' p. 110. Red as a colour symbolises passion, anger, interest, libido, and romance in the Gothic tradition (the Red Room in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*), 'vigour, strength, energy, life and power,' and as blood, 'represents the life carrier, or the life force.' (Wagaman 2010).
'Our experience of transference neuroses in psychoanalysis leads us further to conclude that repression is not one of the original defence mechanisms, that it cannot occur until a sharp division has been established between conscious and unconscious psychic activity, and that its essence consists simply in the act of turning - and keeping - something away from the conscious.' (Freud 2005, pp. 144-145)

Freud suggests that repression is not a natural mechanism, that in order for it to occur there must be a separation of the two mental states, consciousness and the unconscious, in *Psychosis* in the character Melinda the separation has occurred following her collapse. However the memory of the attack still exists subliminally on the fringe of consciousness, and even represents itself in symbolism to the individual as it does in the colour of blood in the red carnations.

'The general fate of the *idea* representing the drive can hardly be anything but to disappear from consciousness...A brief survey of psychoanalytical experience tells us that the *quantitative* element of the drive representative can experience three kinds of fate: the drive is either completely suppressed so that no trace of it is visible, or it manifests itself as an emotion coloured by some or other quality, or it is transformed into anxiety...the transformation of the psychic energies of *drives* into *emotions* - especially *anxiety* - as a new kind of drive fate,'(Freud 2010, p.158).

Freud explains how memories never completely disappear from consciousness but can manifest themselves as emotion colouring other emotions, and that any form of psychic energy can be channelled into emotion, particularly anxiety. ‘The picture presented to us by true *conversion hysteria* requires a quite different assessment of the process of repression. The salient feature here is that the emotive charge can be made to disappear entirely. The patient then exhibits towards his symptoms what Charcot called “*la belle indifférence des hysteriques*”...this suppression is not so completely successful - some distressing feelings attach to the symptoms themselves, or it proves impossible to avoid a partial release of anxiety, which in turn sets in motion the mechanism of phobia formation.’ (Freud 2010, p. 164)
In ‘Psychosis’ the condition of hysteria resulting from suppression of emotion is clearly visible in Melinda, upon waking from the deep unconscious state into which she lapsed following her attack, ‘Her body began to writhe, and I could see as the mind broached brutal consciousness, the painful scenes rose up, and her moans turned to shrieking.’ (p. 111), but that condition has not ceased at the stage of conversion hysteria, it has advanced to anxiety hysteria as in these scenes of hysterical fits experienced by Melinda Barber in ‘Psychosis’. ‘The process of repression in conversion hysteria terminates with the formation of the symptom and does not have to proceed to a second phase ...as it does in anxiety hysteria.’ (Freud 2010, pp. 164-5).

In ‘Psychosis’, Melinda's inability to remember any of the details of the crime of which she was a victim, results in the thwarting of her individuation process, as symbolised by the trapped butterfly in the last paragraph, 'I hurried my last details into the journal. The patient's psychology kept neatly, succinctly between my own hands and the pen moving gently across the surface of the page. The butterfly dipped and darted between the petals, and then flew to the window of the sun room, immediately caught in the fly wire.' (‘Psychosis’ p. 116).

Jung's theory was that the symbolism of dreams directly represented psychological process in the individual. Symbols such as the spider, for example, represented the eight possibilities of archetypal combinations, four each of the anima and animus types, or aspects of the self. The shape of the mandala, a circle within a square, found within all global cultures represented integration of these opposite functions, and therefore wholeness. The spider was symbolic of the mandala, the symbol of wholeness, or psychic integration of the archetypes. The butterfly represents freedom, and transformation of the individual in its symbolism of metamorphosis from a caterpillar into a beautiful winged creature. 'The psychic life-force, the libido, symbolises itself in the sun or personifies itself in figures of heroes with solar attributes...on a late Babylonian gem from Lajard's collection. In the middle stands an androgynous deity. On the masculine side there is a snake with a sun halo around its head; on the feminine side another snake with a sickle moon above it.' (Jung 1956, p. 202) Similar reference to the gods of nature and their symbolism are to be found in Goethe! when poet Johann von Goethe, the author of Faust recites his poetry under a tree, (Huettner 2010) mentioning the Sun god, 'der Sonnen Gott'; in his poem The Sublime Type, the polytheism of nature is an analogy of love, - 'The Sun, whom Grecian
helms call, His heavenly path with pride doth tread...Thou modest from me, dearest one, and were I helms e'en, the Great, what would avail his chariot throne?"
Part 6: A Vision in Violet – the novelette The Lady of Tangiers

The Lady of Tangiers

Normandy 1915

The nurse was breathless, in the tightly stitched bodice of her uniform as she pushed the stretcher down the rain washed streets; she carried a soldier who now wounded, held no hope, for the blood seeped out into the streets, the tiny droplets streaming down a pathway in the gutter. The nurse, in a startling bold red-belt embracing her starched gown, hurried him through to a quiet makeshift ward, but as she stepped away, he grabbed her hand, and said, ‘Before you go, will you stay a little while longer?’ and it was then, as she looked into his deep hazel eyes that she found herself pulled away to a previous setting of his life before: a time of merriment, of perpetual joy, when the little candelabras twinkled under their etched ceramic lanterns. Many years ago in Morocco, when she had stood out on the densely laden steps covered in sand under a glass-beaded parasol and watched the gypsy-like party dissipate across the barren hills. It had been a time of war, but also a time of enchantment, when one could look longingly into the flames, against the richness of orchestral music. This was the privileged life of the colonial, and the wonderment of a young individual in the search for identity. Now, she stood over the patient, and contemplated her powers, as she realised the depth of her duty to save his life.

He lent forward and whispered to her, ‘do you remember? Can you tell me what it was like?’ and she asked, ‘what? what do you speak of?’ and he said, ‘the old life. Can you just tell me again, of what it was like?’

‘Of course, you will get better,’ she said, placing her palm in his, ‘you mustn’t speak of that, now,‘

‘Just one more passage,’ he said. She looked across to where his eyes fell and she saw the journal.

She cautiously loosened her grip on the man’s hand and picked it up to read it. Opening it up at the page, she found it read, ‘1909. The Encampment. Tangiers.’ Puzzled, she continued to read aloud, ‘In my long lingering days of reflection, I had
taken it upon myself to understand why I had come to this family, that in fact returning to the Rise was a return to my inner hopes and dreams; to come to this house, and find so many people who had endeared themselves to me.’ As she read it appeared a whole new world seemed to unfold with the pages. The heat, poverty and tyranny of the African frontier were as described, but there was something else within the passages which she recognised; she felt that these passages came from within her own self, her own emotional landscape, and the further she moved through the text, she could learn how to master her own destiny, to overcome the ravages of war, and the demands of this position she had undertaken.

Morocco 1909

‘We all had in fact, fallen for her. Myself and the gentleman, Mr. George Rhodes, who never failed her. All of them surrounded her by day and by evening. Whether it was by the gleaming beckon of the ornate Edwardian candelabras which lit the hallways of the grand establishment, Eccleston Rise, as it was known, or in the shadow of the candy striped canopies which bordered the fringes of the village, where, in the evening, the locals in the evening hunched over warmed bowls of rice, washing their dry throats down with wine, in their encampment further down the slopes of the valley. That evening she had held out her arm for me, to escort her through into the dining room. There, one looked upon such a decorated spectacle as could be created from plates of shining food, of roast chickens and glistening carrots, along with a serving of traditional Moroccan dishes made with a collection of spices from the markets. I hoped that then and there, in front of her family, I did her the justice that she deserved; of having an educated and impeccable suitor abroad her arm.

Master Rhodes’ family all seemed to have the same qualities in common, a certain debonair handsomeness which accompanied the natural sense of style afforded them through having been born into aristocracy, and also a slight snobbishness in the upturned chin, and brow - but only when you transgressed the rules of the miniature culture amidst the magnificence of their colonial homestead.

‘Do be seated, my boy,’ said Lord Rhodes, ‘you mustn’t keep us waiting too much longer.’ He smiled which let me know that I was quite welcome because I was
a friend of the family.

All throughout the dinner conversation, Charlotte sat across from me, so as not to invite suspicion that she was any more than an acquaintance, since her position as daughter of the English ambassador to Morocco forbade her, at least to some extent, to completely entangle herself in my affairs. Despite our distance, except for my meeting her demands as social escort, I found myself dazzled by her almond shaped green eyes and ivory skin, the heart-shaped diamond ear-rings which dangled about her languorous neck. I could see that George was besotted with her, but he kept it very carefully to himself. ‘Well, my boy, what is it you plan to do in the valley? What is your vocation, may I ask?’ the Lord Rhodes asked. ‘I am merely a student, I am afraid. I don't really plan to have a vocation, not one that I could really care for, anyway.’ With her usual charm and vivacity, Charlotte asserted for him, ‘He is here on a field trip. He studies Anthropology at Oxford.’ As always she had saved him, and he delighted in her efforts. ‘Ah, wonderful, my boy, every young man must have a vocation, isn't that true, George?’ He looked towards his seemingly wayward son, who had wasted all his years at public school, having the luxury of a wealthy lineage to support him even through the most ambitious course of study. Embarrassed, George just feigned a laugh, and returned to holding Charlotte’s hand and smiling demurely at her. Like every gentleman in that room, he was transfixed by her, but because of it, it meant he was vulnerable to a certain failing of character. Every man who came into her presence was both enchanted by her, but that enchantment often led to dangerous distraction.

As the evening drew to a close, amidst banter about hunting trips and foxing haunts remembered of olde England, it did not occur to him, that within that circle of gregarious laughter and stories of the mythical homeland which they had left behind, that some hint of a spectacle was imminent. At any moment, at the closing of long passages of reminiscent dialogue, he was about to venture into another chapter of his life, in which change would eventually overpower him, and he, with that ship sinking into an ancient aristocratic sea, would be drawn down with all the previous dalliances and delights which had once persuaded him. It was now or never; could he request her hand that evening, as he so wanted to do, to walk
amongst the chanting of the Moroccan villagers, and look up at the vast and starred skies that brimmed their horizon, drink in the mysterious perfumed smoke which curled up, in entrancing clouds, from the tents? If he didn’t, he swore he would feel lost for all that spring at the frontier.

He would return to England and she would never think of him, again. If he would, then this moment would surely be his only chance to win her affections, and hopefully he might remain enamoured, entrapped within the veil of her hypnotic influence of nobility and sophistication. He excused himself from the table, as the family’s conversation turned to war, and walked out onto the balcony. He flicked the cigarette from its casement, and with an elegant air, struck the end of it and drew flame, simulating the fires of transient tribes, glittering against the darkened sky. It was only a moment, or two, and as the orchestra resumed its melodic backdrop, her shawl falling gently over her arms, Charlotte approached him unexpectedly, her presence seemed to soften the still, harsh atmosphere.

‘I was proud of you, in there, when you spoke of what you did,’ she said, her eyes dancing delighted, reflecting the flames dotted across the hills.

‘I tried to present myself at my best, as only I know how to do,’ he heard his own self-effacing tone in his voice, and he was surprised that he could detect humour in it. She laced her arm through his; he accepted it was a gesture of friendship, but she noticed the reflection in his eyes that denoted a self-consciousness when in the presence of his betters. ‘Would you like me to accompany you tomorrow when you visit the nomads?’ She referred to the field trip amongst the indigenous tribes of the surrounding villages. He nodded, looking downward, at the silver tipped cigarette, and its ensuing smoke. Has his arm hung limply over the balcony, dropping ash, to be swept up by the dust. The moment had come that, he would be proud to escort the lady on yet another excursion, throughout which the people of the countryside would admire her, as she totally eclipsed him, as usual, with her silken camomile shawl and ebullient charm. Ever a gentleman, he knew, deep down, that at the heart of matters, he feared losing that gentlemanly status, in a land he couldn’t begin to comprehend.

The nurse rested the diary in her lap and checked her patient, again; the lantern glazed across his eyes, and she saw just the fluttering of movement, of reaction to its...
glow, then she placed it back down on the table next to him.

‘W - write for me.’ She heard the rasping voice rise up from under his throat, through which he gasped. She looked at him, puzzled, the rush of doctors who wound around her gave a dizzying effect to proceedings, but she lent forward to try and hear him. ‘Do you know, now, what happened?’

She shook her head. The journal appeared to be more than a memoir of high society. ‘You were at a dinner...’ she interpreted events for him, ‘do you remember?’

‘Yes,’ his eyes wavered forlornly, ‘but that is not all...’

She looked down at the black cover of the journal to cue her memory and then up again, ‘you went on a field trip.’ ‘There is more...’ he closed his eyes because the effort was too great for him, and his head fell back on the pillow.

Great Eastern Erg June 14 1912

‘I followed the party of travellers canopied by huge round parasols with beaded trimming through the desert. It was easy for a man to perish out here, but I am lucky as I have the strength of the Baudeliers, who as race and family possessed quite an abundance of integrity. The farther we graduated into the very heart of the desert, the more that I tossed over in my mind, the complexities of a discourse which could inevitably lead to disaster, unless I weighted my argument with a solicitude which could alter my position in life. I watched her as she flirted with George, but then it was true that she also bowed over the natives with her infinite graces, they did not refrain from waiting on her hand and foot, handing her a glass of water when she demanded they rest for a while. The head of the expedition, Sir Walter, bent over and examined his pocket watch and instruments, tucked it inside his waistcoat, and then said, ‘Charlotte, darling, my compass says that we are almost there. Just a little while, longer.’

George wandered off haphazardly with a magnifying glass to examine desert plant life. It had come to my attention, earlier that morning as we stood outside the Cote D’Autour Hotel that the purpose of our expedition was to chart the desert, and
if antiquities were discovered inside the little caves found within the mountains then we were to document them, along with other details of the excursion, dialects of Moorish natives in the villages scattered across it. We struggled onward until we discovered the Great Rock. It was really the side of a mountain and upwards the slope; inside of it carved out was a cave, the magnificence of which slowly revealed itself and some of us were relieved to rest under its shade, as Sir Phillip took his compass and his camera from place to place, committing the megalith to record, taking notes in his little battered book.

I took this moment to endear myself to Lady Charlotte whose servant had already taken her parasol and closed it, resting it against the cave wall.

'I do hope that I haven't put you to too much trouble bringing you out all this distance,' she said, 'when I invited you last night.'

'Not at all, Charlotte,' I said, 'I looked forward to it.'

I sensed some stiffening of her posture, but I intended to continue on with my bumbling interlude. I had planned so long before this moment what I would actually say, so that when I was ready to say it, it seemed to tumble out awkwardly,

'Charlotte, ever since we came to Algiers, you have always presented me with some of the most stunning moments of my life.' I guess I hoped that she would join me back in England, but somehow I sensed that this could not be possible, with a war looming. With so many diplomats and the newspapers were already talking about it, and considering my station in life it would be foolhardy not to think of the consequences of such a change of direction in world affairs.

There was such a long pause between us, that I staggered on, and interrupted the silence with my stumbling words, 'no matter what future may come between us,' I said, 'I did want to say -'

I felt her hand clasp mine, suddenly, and press it so tight, and then something in my heart seemed to give way and collapse beneath me. Anticipating her response, I noticed the jewels of tears in her eyes, and then her lips, full with a redness, parted.

'You must forgive me for not making a decision which could very well tear my heart apart -' she said, 'over the season we were here in Algiers, you recognised that although you were not one of us, you had easily become accepted, being a university student from England and myself from a landed aristocratic family who
go back years in tradition; no it is not the difference which pulls us apart, as you so
dissuaded me from the beginning.’ I looked at her puzzled as for so long I had
known we were not of the same class, but despite an entire circle of men who had
surrounded her and entertained her, we had formed an enviable intimacy,
nonetheless, I had thought.

‘I’m afraid I cannot indulge this liaison as it would bring such anguish to the
family, if I were to refuse George. It is as uncomplicated as that, but you must
understand that it was you that I had held in my affections for so long. Not George.’

I knew I was puzzled because I had known George to be a prospective suitor
but no more than any of her company who she had dazzled from evening to evening.
I had known subconsciously that he must have been holding her dance card all
along, but I had laid my own cards on the table, long before. Still I felt a sinking
sensation within me, so that the floor of the cave seemed to move up and down
beneath my feet, and the walls close in, upon me,

‘You must excuse me.’ I walked out under the blazing Moroccan sun, and
looked out at the horizon which stretched before us indefinitely. Sir Walter had
gathered up all of his equipment, and was sitting looking dehydrated, loosening his
tie, under a tree. The sirocco wind which was building escaped into my throat, and I
choked...’

The nurse stopped, folded the book shut, and looked at her charge. She feared there
was no more life in him, as his breathing seemed to be laboured, passing softly
between his lips, charred partially with blood from the variety of wounds he had
gained in the battle field. She found, too, that she could not continue to read. She felt
his eyes on her, though.

Suddenly a flash of light exploded around her, and she was momentarily
blinded. Nurses rushed around her, and as the smoke lifted, she found that the man
had vanished. She panicked, but she glimpsed only the diary on the ground, as the
force of air pushed the pages over, flapping together. The nurse quickly picked it up
amidst the madness that swept the hospital. A matron gruffly told her to ‘hurry up’
and tore at her sleeve in a prompt to move her quickly, far from the tent, now, as it
was a danger zone. The medical personnel dashed out into the cobbled street, and
she could hear their voices compelling her to go north, back toward the coastal area.
She turned her head back to the tent hospital, but it was hit again by a grenade, and there was no sign of any of the patients.

‘But I left someone behind,’ she pleaded to the matron, not much older than her.

‘For your life, girl, you had better follow us. Other staff will have taken the patients away for their protection.’

Sahara Desert October 9 1912

The wind accelerated gradually as they crossed the desert, tuffets forming into tiny zephyrs. Through the haze of his own melancholy, Edmund did not notice the commotion developing around him. Sir Walter had realised after looking at calendars and guide books that the sirocco could be very dangerous if the expedition became caught up in it, and he had already organised his train to unfold a travelling bed for Charlotte.

Edmund opened up his little silver cigarette case, and smoked despite the situation to calm his nerves, but the sands were circling around him like sprites, ghosts of his own creation.

‘I really think that we should probably just seek shelter in the cave until it has all blown over,’ said Colonel Waring. The servants watched with perplexed, olive-skinned faces, but their culture required that they exhibit patience.

Edmund turned around and looked back at the Lady, who had already lifted herself into the travelling bed, and though she appeared challenged, she urged the party to continue home.

‘It could be dangerous for you, my dear,’ said Sir Walter.

‘Well I’m going to stay here until it’s ended. There is much more work to be done,’ said the Colonel, and he ordered the Moroccan who travelled with him to carry his belongings up into the cave.

‘What will you do?’ asked Sir Walter of Edmund, ‘my boy, you seem to be completely somewhere else.’

Edmund felt that he didn’t much care at this point - his whole world was imploding with the storm, which he saw in the distance had lifted a beige Bedouin

*Psychological Reflections on Post-Modernist Gothic Literature*  
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tent. George disappeared on his grey mare, in the direction of the villages on the outskirts. However, if he looked inside of himself, he could find the courage to advance along the shifting sands of his life, even if he knew not what it had in store for him, and with rumours of impending chaos at home, he needed to bring his own thoughts into a kind of order. He flicked the golden flame of his cigarette away into the sand, and turned back to the party, only to find that the sunken face of Charlotte which he had only cast his eyes upon a minute ago, had disappeared into the sirocco. He walked along the angle at which he had last seen her perched upon her bed, but there was no sign of her, or her personal maid. He envisioned walking forever after her, to follow her, but even himself in his own determination, could not force his own body weight against the hurricane which had now descended.

He held little duty of care for his own being, but he felt Sir Walter haul him backwards, and he was pushed toward the direction of the cave. He sat there, with his lantern, as the Colonel and Sir Walter whiled away the hours, respectively checking equipment, and filling in a log book. The wind eventually abated, the sands cleared, and the sun beat across the horizon like a furious scorpion, and so they set off back to Eccleston Rise, to the colonial mansion.

They arrived safely, but found the servants in an emotional state, and when Lord Rhodes appeared from his study his manner was severe.

‘Where is the Lady?’ he asked.

Edmund looked askance at him, then curiously at the servants.

‘Whatever do you mean? She returned to the house.’ The manservant, Sir Walter followed behind himself and the Colonel.

‘Well, she's not arrived, yet. Her mother had the table all set for dinner, and George is dying to greet her.’

Sir Walter at this stage, represented the party on their behalf, ‘She chose to leave with her maid, in the travelling bed. She insisted upon it.’

‘That is utterly the most outrageous thing you have done yet, allowing a Lady to return through the desert without a male chaperone, in this heat, and in a foreign land. I would be of a right mind to fire you this very instant.’

‘I am sorry, your grace, but we made the decisions as best we could in the circumstances, and the Lady was most anxious to be at home.’
‘An utter disgrace, but as you are a most respected gentleman and sociologist, of course there is much action which can be taken, your services are most required here. But I am ashamed of you, Edmund, because you are her most trusted friend.’

Edmund found that blight most ached his soul.

Eccleston Rise August 27, 1913

They were summoned for dinner in the fine establishment’s dining room. Charlotte’s place was empty and her absence felt acutely. In his own heart, she was missing, but was also physically absent; edging upon all this detail, was the realisation that Edmund himself, especially with the latest news of his status in her affections would have to leave, too. Lord Rhodes flung the newspaper upon the table amongst the silver ware, the caption read, ‘Allies Prepare For War.’ All good Englishmen would be enlisted.

‘Are you brave enough, my boy, to join your countrymen?’ Lord Rhodes sat at the top of the table, and tucked into his duck au orange.

At eleven o’clock when the entire house had gone to bed, Edmund heard a tapping, rose, put on his dressing gown and slipped into the hallway where only a small candle twinkled. As he opened the oak door, the maid held up a glowing shroud, but just faintly in the glimmer of flame, he discerned a familiar figure.

‘Charlotte,’ he said.

Then he suddenly awoke in a sweat. He looked around him; he was in his same bedroom, the doors opening onto the terrace, were a little ajar; he got up, and drew them closed. He heard the rasping voice of someone near, but he could only just make out the words, like a breath which came from deep within the desert. He walked out onto the terrace, and up and down, past the wicker chairs. He could see the fires rising up from the gypsy camp, but the rest of the surrounding landscape seemed to be lulled into a dead quietness. He walked back and he shut the doors firmly, behind him, and shivered. The temperatures plummeted in the Sahara; he retreated back to his bed but he sat on the edge of it for a while thinking about the voice he thought he heard.

‘Did we fail you, Charlotte?’ he asked, softly.
The next morning at breakfast, as they sat around the Wedgwood tea set eating toast and marmalade, he asked Lord Rhodes if he had heard any more about Lady Charlotte.

‘Nothing at all, my boy.’

‘Last night, I thought I heard a voice, like a raspish whisper, but I could not make out any kind of words which made sense.’

‘You are bound to imagine many wonders in the North African Sahara,’ said Lord Rhodes.

Two days had passed, and Edmund kept expecting Lady Charlotte to appear, just in the state as she had been in her dream, or maybe perfectly well, but they heard nothing. There was a knock on the door, on the third day of her disappearance, and they opened it to find the Moroccan constabulary, dressed in a crisp white uniform, with a red sash binding his waist. When the Lady and the maid had not showed, Lord Rhodes had asked the police to send out a search party. Maybe they had made a discovery.

‘I am sorry to say, that we have reported your Lady and her maid are missing, presumed dead, as she has not been seen in the vicinity of Tangiers, or the approximate desert areas for over twenty four hours.’

Lord Rhodes furiously shook his fist at him, ‘then you should have mounted your investigation, earlier,’ he cried. ‘Look harder! She could be in a cave, somewhere, her throat slashed, or maybe someone has kidnapped her!’

‘Whatever the case, Monsieur, we have formally registered her as a missing person, and if she appears here, again, at the house, then you must contact us immediately.’

‘But what if she never returns?’ cried Lord Rhodes, exasperated, ‘What will we do? Where will we go to?’

The policeman turned around, and said, ‘If she never returns, Monsieur, then I hold grave fears for you and your family, as it is most likely that she is dead.’ He swept off into the distance on his camel, accompanied by what looked to be
members of the gypsy people employed by the forces, their multi-laden scarfs floating out behind them in the wind.

Lord Rhodes looked at Edmund. ‘Perhaps she came to you that night, and begged you to let her in,’ he said, ‘She must have been dehydrated. There must be some barrier preventing her.’ He marched back inside, leaving Edmund aghast on the front porch.

Whatever did Lord Rhodes mean? He felt terrible, as if he had somehow let them down, or been responsible, as if his own concerns about class and the possibility of romance with the aristocracy of Tangiers had led to this dreadful event.

As he sat in the drawing room, Edmund wrote copious details in his journal, and pasted the newspaper report about the missing countess next to his entries. He looked out of the window between his writings and he saw the violet sash flickering outwards from the turning figure as it receded past the horizon, it could be a woman, but she could be just part of the whirling desert sands. He had to take a few moments to close his eyes and centre, again. Then he looked back; of course the desert was infamous for creating illusion, the sky, and the edge of the world were blurring into one another, as one life blurs into the next, and it seemed his dazzling memory of the elegant lady of Tangiers could never be retrieved.

Eccleston Rise November 18 1913

Edmund walked into the study of the Lord of Tangiers and stood waiting for his reception. He was a shaken man, now, and it was hard for him to hold his head high amongst the villagers who seemed to accuse him of losing a fragile woman to the unforgiving Sahara. They cursed and spat at him when he last walked through the market, and he had to return in shame, on a camel.

He looked up when Edmund entered.

'Yes?'

'I must say to you, Lord Rhodes, that I have not been the same since Lady
Charlotte did not survive the desert. I also have a confession to make, that many of us did have feelings for her, as her beauty I am no doubt that you are aware, was renowned, and she had a charisma about her, tales of which travelled throughout the encampments and the villages of Algeria. My confession is that I told her of my love for her, that day, no different perhaps from the love of all her other friends and acquaintances, but in it I hoped that I would gain a sense of permanence from my disclosing of such personal feelings. I fear, however, that such a heavy statement may have caused her emotional upset, and led to her making such an uninformed decision to cross the desert in the Zephyr.'

Lord Rhodes dipped his fountain pen back into the ink well.

'I do not think that any of us are responsible for bringing her to harm that day, I myself feel blame because I even let her attend the excursion in a hot and arid land. A woman of her constitution and a skin so delicate, she was never anywhere without a parasol. You mustn’t blame yourself, Edmund, for she has been captured by the desert dreamscape.'

'I don’t understand, Sir.'

'It is a gypsy legend that the desert has its own secrets of which we know very little.'

'But Lord Rhodes, we cannot explain these things away with cultural myths. It is a matter of duty of care, and as such, leading her to make such a hasty and ill-advised decision, it is with this knowledge now that I know what I must do.'

Lord Rhodes pain was visible in his etched, weary face, his eyes were dark and shallow as he glanced up at Edmund.

'I have decided to make my voyage back to England.'

'My boy, you can't, have you not seen the English newspapers I have imported? The world is on the verge of a major war.'

'It would be dishonourable of me to stay,' said Edmund. 'I have made up my mind.'

'I am sure in some place deep within her she held a reserve of respect for you, if not some substantial affection.' Lord Rhodes contended.

'We were of a different station in life, it was not possible for her to marry me,
in that I made a mistake, which surely led her to the grave.'

'No, no, it is not so, Edmund, you were always a trustworthy confidante of the family. You have been my rock throughout our time in Algeria. George could not have developed the strength he did without having you as a guide. He is the weakest of my sons, I must admit. With your education as a model he was able to cultivate ambition he would never have demonstrated at home, and now, with all of this mess going on, I implore you to stay, as I fear I am on the path to devastation, having finally lost Charlotte.'

'Please don't despair,' said Edmund, 'you mustn't despair, for Charlotte would not have wanted you to. I know she will appear, soon, I am sure of it. She is out there, somewhere.'

Lord Rhodes shook his head.

'I cannot hold out hope, if even the police are advising me not to. So we will not see you either, Edmund?'

'No doubt I will be called up. Every man in England should soon know of his fate.'

'But perhaps you could have hid away here, and worked under my supervision.'

'It would be of no use. The objective of my pilgrimage is to display my courage. But it does not mean we will never meet, because as wars begin, they also end, and I am sure I will find you and your family, again, one day, and also then, you will have Charlotte back with you.'

Lord Rhodes was silent, and then he said, 'I think I will have to launch my own search, as I believe something very strange has happened. I don't believe she is dead.'

'I thought I heard her the other night, I believe she is close. She will soon be found,' suggested Edmund.

As he walked through the village, Edmund was taken aback by the poster of Charlotte on the walls of the mud dwellings. 'Have you seen this woman? Daughter
of the English Ambassador. Lady Charlotte, missing two days.’ He felt a chill through his heart, on the edge tossed dust devils as caravans of nomads led their camels into a thickening desert, and he thought about the gravity of events under which he took the journey back to his homeland. He peered into every corner, every shadow of each abode or market stall that he passed, hoping to see the emerald eyes smiling back at him but every corner vacant. In some ways he feared leaving Algeria, in case he missed her reappearance, but in other ways he knew he had to leave because events were dire for him.

A peasant stopped, and frantically questioned him, ‘The missing countess! What has happened to her?! Did you leave her out in the wilderness, English lady in the Cancerian sun! It is no place for a woman!’ No doubt he had seen the posters because they were on every corner of every mud slab dwelling.

‘We lie in wait for her,’ he assured the man, ‘we anticipate she will reappear, soon.’

‘It’s a tragedy,’ he surmised, and disappeared back into the crowds. Edmund looked after him but it was hard to capture people in Tangiers, they vanished into a swell of colour.

A caravan of Bedouin floated past, and six wives or relatives, one of them shone back at him opalescent green eyes, and bore a lighter complexion. His heart stopped, as he followed her a little way, but then he was surprised when the woman he followed turned, alarmed, again to look at this man who was staring at her, sharply. It was not her. It was a pale-skinned Bedouin woman, of probably mixed Celtic/Arab heritage. After looking at some ornaments, he thought he would turn into a bar and perhaps order a liquor to drown his angst. No sooner had he stepped into the alley, then he felt a knife at his throat, and he was pulled into the shadows.

He was punched and kicked, but he tried desperately to ascertain the face of his attacker. He wore a head - dress, but he spoke with a refined English accent. Not so different to public school educated George. Something about the onslaught evoked a forbidden world behind his veil, and he began to pull him away into the abyss, but Edmund felt for the gold pinned revolver which lay inside his pocket which as a man about to go to war, and previously in the cavalry, he now kept on his person at all times. He pointed it directly at the man, who fled down the opposite end of the alleyway. After he regained his breath at the cafe in the main
thoroughfare, Edmund felt there was a familiarity in the voice, which penetrated further beneath the culturally similar exterior of its clipped tone. Thinking more deeply, he imagined that the attacker could have some clue to the fate of the missing countess.

Edmund counted down the final minutes to his exit from Tangiers. It was as though he knew of her. He could see her, sailing in her sun-kissed boat across the sands, with her accessories, and she appears weary and flustered with the heat and dryness of the day. Then the mirage ahead turns burnt umber, and then deep purple, and the wind is too strong, so that they rest the carriage. The desert sands are burning bright, and rotating so fast, until the horizon is eclipsed.

‘What is it?’ shrieked Lady Charlotte, her anxiety by now uncontainable, and she is worn down by sand which ripples the blanched canopy of her wind-blown chariot.

The maid was frightened, and said, ‘Oh no, we have come so far, but we need to turn back to the cave.’

‘What on earth is the matter?’ groaned Lady Charlotte.

‘The sirocco is deepening,’ said the manservant.

‘We are almost there,’ said the other, whose personality was more forceful, ‘don’t halt the carriage, we will get the Lady to Tangiers home, but we mustn’t stop, now, as we will be engulfed by sand.’

They continued to push the canopy bed but then they were surprised; a desert horizon usually evades the individual, the closer it appears, but this time the party was eclipsed in a vein of dust speckled golden light which seemed to blend with the Lady’s cream skirts and violet veil.

Edmund woke up in a sweat, and looked at the antique clock next to his pillow. It was nearly three o’clock, and he tossed and turned, the image still vivid in his mind.

The next morning on the verandah, Lord Rhodes said, ‘you must tell me the reason for your scar, Edmund.’

Edmund had no idea that he had been wounded for he had gone to bed directly following the attack in the market. He raced down the hallway to the bathroom and
examined himself in the looking glass. The neat red slash across his cheek was
evident, as in the haste to defend himself, he did not notice the wounds he had
gained in the scuffle. Back out on the porch, the Count drank his ice water with a
slice of lemon and ice cubes, luxuriantly, and he said, ‘there are secrets which you
hold from my ear, I can see. Which of them do you wish to divulge first?’

Edmund thought hard. His attacker had been English yet the only English
people he knew were living here in this mansion. His sweetheart had disappeared,
and there was no more gaiety in the house. It had been robbed of its splendour. The
Lady hung like a willowy spectre over the place, now, in loose flowing garments in
which she had last been seen, brightened by a purple veil which she had wrapped
around her being. More and more, he wished to leave.

‘There was a riot in the street,’ he lied, ‘I had to protect a Moor.’
‘Over what, pray I ask?’
‘A commercial exchange.’

The Count looked dubiously at him.

‘This family and this house never cease to warrant trouble from the wrong
kinds of people. You had better be careful of the natives, as you don’t know all
about their customs, and you may cross some boundaries, if you don’t.’

Edmund was tempted then to blurt out that he had been accosted by an
Englishman disguised by a veil. But he no longer trusted the corners of the house
which seemed to narrow in on him, in all its riches, its decorative vases and
reflective crystal goblets.

He was writing by the fire in the evening, the embers darted and dropped upon
the carpet and they reminded him of the fires the Bedouin and the gypsy lit to
illuminate the desert. He wrote a letter home, to his aunt, warning of his revisiting
England and to prepare a bed for him. Then there was a gush of wind, and fearing a
sirocco he secured his papers and placed them back in the roller drawer. Then the
French windows blasted open, as the wind and dust blew across the furniture, and he
stumbled and fell. As he looked up it seemed he was blinded by a vision, the
swirling zephyr conjured the image of the woman lost amidst the mirage. His heart
lifted, as he saw her pale and drawn face.

‘Charlotte! You’ve finally come back! Oh, please come in my darling, join me
by the fire, and escape the freezing desert night!’ The woman stepped inside the sitting room. He noticed her ankles and parts of her skirts were stained with blood, and her muslin torn, as such a delicate material would not hold against the savage wilderness she had crossed. He approached her to embrace her, and she held out her arms to him, sand particles and rain water dripped from her onto the carpet, but there was a distance in her eyes. Her hair was still wet and hung limply over her shoulders. Her body fell against him in a cold shudder, and as he clasped her tightly, she whispered in his ear, words which haunted him, ‘I love you,’ but then she pulled back from him, and turned around, and began walking out the doors into the night.

‘Charlotte! Where are you going? Please, don’t go! Not into the darkening desert!’ She didn’t hear him, but seemed to gravitate towards the ebony embedded sky bordering the mansion.

He followed the little grains of her footsteps to see if he could catch her, and shake her back to her senses, place her in a warm bed to sleep off the days and hours she had spent wandering the desert, but as soon as he was outside, there was no sign of her; she had come from the Sarcophagus of Night, and returned to it. The horizon stretched off into eternity.

Whether plucked from words in his journal which he left behind in the drawers, following his internment in England, or because the natives created their own stories, a poem was written by either a Bedouin or European of undisclosed identity lauding the charming powers of the ‘Lady of Tangiers’.

The nurse carefully folded the book shut as she read it, in the candlelight, framed by the tent folds. She wondered if she would ever meet the soldier again – and yet through reading his story she had come to know the sparkling world which she had first glanced in his eyes, before he was a soldier, he had been a gentleman. Outside the tent the tufts of dust flew up from the trucks which passed by carrying ammunition, soldiers, and medical personnel. As she drifted into slumber, she felt herself spinning. She found herself surrounded by a swirl of dust, a figure in the twilight. Lord Rhodes’ sprawling homestead appeared, and there seemed to be a party, on the verandah - she could hear their laughter against the tinkling of crystal as they talked, and she felt her heart pulled back, to a setting dazzling in its wealth and beauty and colour.

*Psychological Reflections on Post-Modernist Gothic Literature*  
Danielle Carr
Psychological and supernatural themes in the gothic romance *The Lady of Tangiers*.

'The uncanny effects associated with the omnipotence of thoughts, instantaneous wish-fulfilment, secret harmful forces and the return of the dead...we - or our primitive forbears - once regarded such things as real possibilities; we were convinced that they really happened.'

(Freud 2003, p. 154.)

Freud suggests that these elements of the uncanny in literature and cinema are part of humankind's primeval history, and that in fact instead of denied, were believed by primitive humans. All of these elements are quintessentially the core ingredients of Gothic romantic fiction of the supernatural, and in *The Lady of Tangiers* the latter element surfaces towards the later part of the novelette. 'Many things that would be uncanny if they occurred in real life are not uncanny in literature, and ... in literature there are many opportunities to achieve uncanny effects that are absent in real life,'

(Freud 1919, p. 156.)

The narrator of *The Lady of Tangiers*, Edmund, an Oxford educated social dilettante, harbours a secret passion for the aristocratic Charlotte, the daughter of an English ambassador to Morocco, stationed in Tangiers. When he accompanies the Rhodes family on an excursion into the desert, he engages Lady Charlotte in conversation and tries to tell her of his feelings for her, but he feels the social divisions of class prevent any possibility of romance.

'I guess I hoped that she would join me back in England, but somehow I sensed that this could not be possible, with a war looming...I felt her hand clasp mine, suddenly, and press it so tight, and then something in my heart seemed to give way and collapse beneath me, anticipating her response, I noticed the jewels of tears in her eyes, and then her lips, full with a redness, parted.' (p. 145).

He becomes distracted by the emotions swirling within him, partly symbolised by a surrounding zephyr, creating wind and dust which envelops the party. Charlotte attempts to leave with her servants, but she mysteriously disappears into the oncoming storm, never to be retraced. Edmund feels cursed from then on by the tragedy, feeling.
somehow his confession of his affections for her somehow contributed to her disappearance.

'They continued to push the canopy bed but then they were surprised; a desert horizon usually evades the individual, the closer it appears, but this time the party was eclipsed in a vein of dust speckled golden light which seemed to blend with the Lady's cream skirts and violet veil.' (p. 162).

Some of Freud's theory of the primitive origins of The Uncanny in literature can be identified in critical theoretical writing about transnational post-modernist Gothic literature such as Helen Oeyemi's The Icarus Girl, also an African story, 'In his study African Oral Literature Isadore Okepewho describes the Yoruba oral tradition of 'tales told by hunters of extraordinary confrontations with supernatural creatures and spirits in the eerie bush.' The desert as a setting for supernatural occurrences as a collective cultural theme is introduced. (Mafe, 2012)

'Like her literary predecessors, Oyeyemi characterises the bush as a treacherous realm that must be carefully navigated. (Jessamy Harrison) must traverse the bush in order to restore balance to her soul. Also like the bush landscapes of earlier writers, Oyeyemi's wilderness of the mind integrates Yoruba belief systems with western myths, literatures and technologies.' (Mafe, 2012, p.21)

Both The Icarus Girl and The Lady of Tangiers feature associated symbolism of the desert as a place of spiritual odyssey, and initiation, 'a place of quiet, and divine revelation.' (Ball 2010) "Reading the female Gothic through Freud's Studies on Hysteria, Dora and Das Unheimliche, as well as through Lacan and Kristeva, critics equated the Gothic with the female unconscious, the semiotic, the imaginary, or the pre-Oedipal mother tongue into language." ' (p. 23). Mafe links the Gothic feminine in post-modernist literature directly what the theories of Freud on the subconscious, anxiety hysteria, and the occult, 'the uncanny.' p. 155 - 'the uncanny element we know from experience arises either when repressed childhood complexes are revived by some impression, or when primitive beliefs that have been “surmounted” (italics), appear once again to be confirmed.' Mafe draws on Freud's theories in her definition of those elements of Gothic text as 'uncanny', 'let me simply reiterate that Gothic themes such as haunted (patriarchal) houses, terrified and (sometimes terrifying) women, and monstrous origins, are also about suppressed and yet pervasive female agency.' (p. 23)
*The Lady of Tangiers* features the English colonial experience in Tangiers as a setting; Edmund and the party of English colonials navigating an untamed landscape in which they are a foreign entity, a transposed culture onto a land that is ancient and unknown, a wilderness which could potentially overwhelm the senses, 'It had come to my attention, earlier that morning, as we stood outside the Cote d'Autour Hotel that the purpose of our expedition was to chart the desert, and if antiquities were discovered inside the little caves...we were to document them, along with other details of the excursion...' (p. 144), 'The post colonial Gothic text is literally haunted by the colonial experience and its aftermath. Indeed, the Gothic genre lends corporeality to the ghosts of the colonial past, as well as materiality to the abstract and often ambiguous condition of the post-colonial present.' (Mafe 2012, p. 23)

Edmund remains so haunted by the image of his lost lady, that he begins to hallucinate her presence even when there is no evidence of it. 'A caravan of Bedouin floated past...one of them shone back at him opalescent green eyes, and bore a lighter complexion...but then he was surprised when the woman he followed turned, alarmed, again to look at the man who was staring at her, sharply. It was not her.' (p. 160).

Though it seems certain that Charlotte has disappeared completely without trace into an endless, and dangerous desert landscape, her image, of his dark, repressed feminine continues to haunt him, and his emotions, though he attempts to suppress them, rise up even more violently. By the ending chapter, she returns to him in the form of a wraith, as if she has come directly from the desert, itself, 'Then the French windows blasted open, as the wind and dust blew across the furniture...As he looked up it seemed he was blinded by a vision, the swirling zephyr conjured the image of the woman lost amidst the mirage.' (p. 164).

In this way the ethereal nature of Charlotte's reappearance, caught upon the precipice of the mortal world and the next, bearing remnants of the way in which she died, is like the appearance of Mrs Jessel in James' *Turn of the Screw*, 'Suddenly, in these circumstances, I became aware that on the side of the Sea of Azof, we had an interested spectator...a figure whose right of presence I instantly, passionately questioned.' (James 1898, p. 116). Edmond 'noticed her ankles and parts of her skirts were stained with blood, and her muslin torn, as such a delicate material would not hold against the savage wilderness she had crossed.' (p. 164-5) could be interpreted as an awakening in the sense that Charlotte is transformed. 'While the novel does not guarantee a happy ending for the protagonist or the "post-world" she inhabits, it does
promise an awakening. Jess's own awakening at the end of the novel is thus symbolic, hinting at a broader awakening in her new millennial post-colonial landscape.' (p. 33). However, just as in James' *The Turn of the Screw*, depending on whether the interpretation is Apparitionist, or Freudian, (Parkinson 2013), it is not completely known whether Charlotte is a ghost or an hallucination of Edmund's imagination, stirred up by the forbidding landscape of the desert which the colonial presence seeks to harness, its uncertain, displaced imagery, its zephyrs, whirling dusts and mirages.

**CONCLUSION**

Each of the three stories, 'The Conservatory', 'Psychosis', and *The Lady of Tangiers*, can be considered romantic modernist fiction, as defined by Alexandra Harris (2010).

In tracing the Romantic Gothic tradition from Goethe, in central Germany, in his long dramatic poem, *Faust*, there are identifiable links to the psychological theories of C.G. Jung in the alchemical symbolism of individuation.

Freud's theory of the unconscious is identifiable throughout Gothic fiction, and particularly, the supernatural thriller, and his theory of the unconscious is central to the psychological thriller, observed in the short story 'Psychosis'.

Analysis of these fictions according to their psychological symbolism of the unconscious, and theories of transformation and individuation, indicates and raises possibilities for further research into how fictions, whether textual or film, reflect in projection, the personal journey of the individual, in psychological progress. A narrative fiction in which an individual's progress is thwarted, or transformed, with an accompanying thesis presenting psychological perspectives, for the reader when analysing or discussing the fiction, is reflective of the inner psychological development of the individual. It is possible for the reader to contextualise their individual path within the framework of these psychological theories, developed within the study of psychoanalysis, as in the case studies of C.G. Jung and Sigmund Freud.

A critical analysis of psychic integration and the journey to individuation reflected in fiction and film, may assist in an interpretation of literature, providing insight into the personal and collective unconscious, and the Self, contributing to psychic development.
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