

**Clemence Housman's *The Were-Wolf*: A Cautionary Tale for the Progressive New Woman****Melissa Purdue, Minnesota State University-Mankato****Abstract:**

Clemence Housman's little-studied novel *The Were-Wolf* (1896) gives voice to *fin de siècle* anxieties surrounding changing roles for women. Just as other 'monstrous' texts of the period tackle these fears so too does Housman's novel, but in the unique form of a werewolf story. A great deal of scholarship has been devoted to nineteenth-century representations of vampires, but comparatively little work has been done on less-frequently occurring werewolves. The figure of the werewolf embodies contradictions and allows Housman to tackle false dichotomies that plagued women at the end of the century – dutiful wife and mother *or* single, professional woman – and highlights both the potential and the danger of the New Woman. Her werewolf identity mirrors the rupture that results from trying to embody 'conflicting' roles, and it emphasizes White Fell's inability to conform to societal expectations for women. While on the surface the novel can be read as a simple Christian allegory, it also functions as a cautionary tale for the progressive New Woman. The story warns that the New Woman's strength and deviance from accepted norms will be perceived as dangerous signs of societal decline, and that more conservative individuals will attempt to destroy her progress.

**Keywords:** Clemence Housman, werewolf, New Woman, monstrous, Gothic literature, lycanthropy

Clemence Housman's little-studied novel *The Were-Wolf* (1896) gives voice to *fin de siècle* anxieties about changing roles for women.<sup>1</sup> Just as other 'monstrous' texts of the period tackle these fears (Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), Richard Marsh's *The Beetle* (1897), and Arthur Machen's 'The Great God Pan' (1890), for example) so too does Housman's novel, but in the unique form of a werewolf story. The figure of the werewolf embodies contradictions and allows Housman to tackle false dichotomies that plagued women at the end of the century – dutiful wife and mother *or* single, professional woman – and highlights both the potential and the danger of the New Woman. The story's heroine, White Fell, is at one moment a smiling woman embracing a child and at another an axe-wielding monster. Her werewolf identity mirrors the rupture that results from trying to embody 'conflicting' roles, and it emphasizes White Fell's inability to conform to societal expectations for women. While on the surface the novel can be read as a simple Christian allegory, it also functions as a cautionary tale for the progressive New Woman.<sup>2</sup> The story warns that the New Woman's strength and deviance from accepted norms will be perceived as dangerous signs of societal decline, and that more conservative individuals will attempt to destroy her progress.

The story begins in an unidentified, remote Scandinavian location where all members of a small village are gathered together in a community lodge employed at different tasks. After strange voices can be heard calling from outside three separate times – first a child, then an elderly person, then a man – White Fell arrives at the door, a stranger to the community. She is welcomed by everyone except for a loyal dog and a man named Christian, who recognize immediately her true identity as a werewolf. Throughout this visit and subsequent ones, Christian's twin brother Sweyn, a boy named Rol, and an old woman are particularly taken with White Fell. Then, the disappearances begin. First, Rol wanders off and is believed to have been eaten by a wolf, and then the old woman Trella disappears as well. Christian is convinced that White Fell is to blame and becomes increasingly anxious throughout the story as he attempts to convince others of her true identity. He is particularly worried about his brother who refuses to heed his warnings, and he reaches his breaking point when he witnesses Sweyn and White Fell kissing. It is at this moment that the final dramatic chase scene begins. White Fell runs off into the distance and Christian follows her, intent upon her destruction. Believing that White Fell will transition into her wolf form at midnight, Christian chases her ceaselessly all night. Each time he attempts to stop her, she attacks him in self-defence and runs on. The next morning Sweyn finds

the battered dead body of his brother lying in the snow, arms outstretched, alongside the dead body of a wolf. He immediately realizes his mistake and the story ends with his guilty mourning.

Although the story has been read as a Christian allegory, it is important to consider alternate readings informed by Housman's involvement in women's rights organizations. This involvement uniquely positions her to comment on *fin de siècle* tensions surrounding women and thus a more nuanced reading of White Fell's 'monstrous' character in particular is necessary. Housman was devoted to the cause of women's suffrage, 'subscribed to the Women's Social and Political Union', and in 1909 was a co-founder of the Suffrage Atelier, 'a feminist organization of writers, artists, and actors' (Crawford 2004: 293; Easley & Scott 2013: 205). She designed engravings and embroideries for the suffragette cause, and her studio was often a meeting place for other artists and activists associated with the movement.<sup>3</sup> Further, *The Were-Wolf* was originally published in *Atalanta*, a periodical for young women. *Atalanta* was carried by public libraries and was read by 'country-house girls and the daughters of the merchants and professional men' (Mitchell 1995: 112). It included adventure fiction by authors such as H. Rider Haggard and Robert Louis Stevenson, articles on higher education and careers for women, and was edited by the popular author of girls' fiction L. T. Meade. The magazine included 'frequent stories about brave girls [who] were almost always placed in colonial or historical settings, which made it possible to imagine acts inconceivable in contemporary England' (Mitchell 1995: 112). Housman's story follows this trend of using a remote and foreign setting to feature an alternate portrayal of femininity. Her activism and choice of magazine in which to publish her story complicate any simple reading of *The Were-Wolf*, as does her careful construction of White Fell as a 'New Woman' character.

Considering her extensive background with women's rights organisations, Housman's decision to publish *The Were-Wolf* in a magazine specifically for young women during a time in which debates about the New Woman were well-known seems a purposeful one.<sup>4</sup> Young women of the period would have been familiar with the forceful backlash against the New Woman, and White Fell's identity as one would have been easily recognisable. As Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis argue in their introduction to *The New Woman in Fiction and Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms* (2001), '...the late nineteenth-century media reduction of New Women to stereotypes might be considered a strategy of control, aimed at containing the threat they posed to the status quo' (28). Housman takes the frequently stereotyped figure of the New Woman and alters her

portrayal in *The Were-Wolf* to comment upon the restrictive nature of prescriptive gender roles. Further, Housman's decision to publish a subsequent edition of the novel with John Lane accompanied by illustrations by her brother Laurence serves as further evidence that she sought to comment upon traditional gender roles for both men and women in her story. As Reychelle Christie points in 'The Politics of Representation and Illustration in Clemence Housman's *The Were-Wolf*' (2011), while the original drawings published with the story by Everard Hopkins reinforce conventional depictions of masculinity and femininity, 'Laurence's images for *The Were-Wolf* in the Lane illustrated edition instigate a dialogue between image and text that reflects Clemence's passion for a community free from gender constraints and social hierarchies' (61). As an artist herself, having attended the South London School of Technical Art to learn wood engraving, she would have been fully aware of the impact of the visual messages accompanying her story. Thus, Laurence's depiction of White Fell as a strong, not overtly sexualized New Woman – almost androgynous – aligns with Clemence's story more fully and supports her alternate messages about *fin de siècle* femininity.

White Fell has many of the markers of a New Woman character. She is physically strong, wears clothing that allows her freedom of movement ('half masculine, but not unwomanly' (Houseman 2013: 214)), lives an independent life of a 'bold free huntress' (214), and does not participate in traditional roles for women like wife and mother (214). Further, her werewolf identity accommodates the conflicting traits that New Women were accused of possessing. Richardson and Willis point out:

The New Woman was by turns: a mannish amazon and a Womanly woman; she was oversexed, undersexed, or same sex identified; she was anti-maternal, or a racial supermother; she was male-identified, or manhatting and/or man-eating or self-appointed saviour of benighted masculinity; she was anti-domestic or she sought to make domestic values prevail; she was radical, socialist or revolutionary, or she was reactionary and conservative; she was the agent of social and/or racial regeneration, or symptom and agent of decline. (2001: xii)

The figure of the werewolf is an appropriate choice to embody these conflicting descriptions as its hybrid identity can conveniently mirror the above anxieties about New Women. As Chantal Bourgault du Coudray explains in 'Upright Citizens on All Fours: Nineteenth Century Identity and the Image of the Werewolf' (2002), 'Werewolves consistently embodied difference in their

human forms, and their transformation into the animal form of a wolf distanced them still further from the model of the white, middle-class male which was assumed to represent the “human” in most nineteenth-century discourse’ (2). The changing and conflicting identity of a werewolf makes it a convenient vehicle to tackle stereotypes about the New Woman of the *fin de siècle*.

New Women characters often possessed strong bodies and White Fell is no exception. Although the first thing that people notice about White Fell is her beauty, they soon after recognize a startling strength within her. When she enters the story we are told that she is ‘Living – beautiful – young,’ but she is immediately marked as unique when the community learns that she is traveling alone and fears ‘neither man nor beast’ (Housman 2013: 213-14). Her ability to move freely and to defend herself against any threat is a direct comment upon ‘...the public’s fear centered on women’s increasing independence’ and mobility (Marks 1990: 116). The embodied contrasts continue with further descriptions of her physical appearance: ‘Wonderful and beautiful was that wrist, slender and steel-strong; also the smooth shapely hand, that curved so fast and firm, ready to deal instant death’ (Housman 2013: 228). White Fell possesses more traditional markers of feminine beauty (slender wrists and shapely hands) but beneath her body’s surface beauty lies a dangerous strength. A deceptive physical appearance is certainly common in female monsters of the period and White Fell is no exception. Consider the beautiful yet sinister Helen Vaughan in Arthur Machen’s ‘The Great God Pan’ (1894), or the lovely but ‘degenerate’ Harriet Brandt in Florence Marryat’s *The Blood of the Vampire* (1897). These *fin de siècle* monsters can pass as traditionally feminine while possessing hidden, dangerous powers. White Fell’s captivating surface disguises a supposed evil hiding within – ‘a corrupt femininity’ (Coudray 2002: 6). Through White Fell’s interactions with other characters, the story warns its readers that strength in women will be accepted and admired by some, but deeply feared by others.

White Fell’s character further illuminates the plight of the New Woman through her interactions with the child Rol as well. She is both drawn to him and is supposedly responsible for his death. When they first meet, Rol is immediately taken with her. He climbs into her lap, kisses her, and gazes at her with affection. When asked if the child is bothering her, she quickly answers ‘no’ with ‘an earnestness so intense as to seem disproportionate to the occasion’ (Housman 216). Of course, on the surface she is a monster hungering for a potential victim and her intense interest in the child is evidence of her animal lust for prey. Yet, the interaction can

also be read as commentary on the New Woman's tenuous relationship with motherhood. As Patricia Marks explains in *Bicycles, Bangs, and Bloomers: The New Woman in the Popular Press* (1990), the major argument that New Women had to contend with was the accusation that 'their "selfish" desires for education and recreation that developed their minds and talents' jeopardized the next generation through a loss of maternal abilities (116). As women pushed for further career and education opportunities, there were increasing pressures for them to remain in the home and embrace the duties of motherhood. The mad glint in White Fell's eyes as she embraces the child reflects the New Woman's conflicting desires and the conflicting expectations placed upon her. She at once delights in Rol's affection and rejects the traditional role of mother. It is also interesting that Rol's death occurs 'off stage'. Rol wanders away one day and is never heard from again. Christian assumes that White Fell is to blame, but we are given no explicit death scene: 'Rol was never found, nor any trace of him. Where he had perished was never known' (Housman 2013: 225). Here the New Woman, often accused of shirking her womanly duties and implicitly harming the next generation, is explicitly connected to the child's death – but her involvement is only conjecture. We never see her harbouring any ill-will for the boy. Again, we can read this moment as Housman's warning to progressive *fin de siècle* young women. If a woman chooses not to embrace motherhood, she might be viewed as a 'murderer' of the next generation.<sup>5</sup> Sally Ledger explains in *The New Woman: Fiction and Feminism at the fin de siècle* (1997), 'the repeated assertion that the New Woman rejected motherhood had a profound political significance at the *fin de siècle*: such a rejection was regarded by some not merely as a rebellious whim but as a threat to the English "race"' (18). Housman tackles the problematic messages about progressive women and motherhood through her creation of a character that both desires a child's affection and its destruction.

The mournful song that White Fell sings later in the story also gives insight into the New Woman's struggle with expectations of motherhood. The song details the pained reflections of a mother grieving her dying child: 'Far up the plain/ Moans on a voice of pain:/ "Where shall my babe be lain?"' (Housman 2013: 229). The child in the song finds peace in the end, but the narrator does not. The song contains the mother's repeated plea to be released from her grief: 'Oh, let me go!' (Housman 2103: 229). Yet, this request also evokes sympathy for White Fell who performs the song. Her mournful cry also becomes a plea to Christian, and others like him, to 'let her go'. The plea suggests that the New Woman's relationship with motherhood is more

complicated than contemporaneous critics acknowledged and that a rejection of traditional gendered roles is no easy decision. The mother in the song yearns for her child but also asks to be set free, mirroring both expectations for White Fell and New Women in general.

White Fell's connection to Trella's death also plays into stereotypes about the progressive New Woman who was often depicted as at odds with her Victorian mother in an attempt to strike out on her own path.<sup>6</sup> This trope plays out in Housman's story as well in Christian's belief that White Fell is also responsible for the old woman's death. Trella, whose eyesight is failing due to her advanced age, mistakes White Fell for her own daughter. White Fell's singing voice is so moving, and so close to that of Trella's memory of her daughter, that she reaches out to White Fell and kisses her. Trella disappears shortly afterward, venturing out beyond the fir grove, and is never heard from again. Like Rol, her end is a 'mystery' (Housman 2013: 233). Once again Christian believes that White Fell is responsible, but we are given no details. Housman tackles another fear about the New Woman through White Fell's symbolic destruction of the previous generation, yet here again Housman also complicates the stereotype rather than reaffirming it. It is important that in each of these encounters – with Rol and with Trella – the victims both seek out and desire contact with White Fell. Both feel great affection for her and she seems to return those feelings as well. Although she is the 'monster' of the story, she is also at times portrayed quite sympathetically. Her werewolf identity is key in this conflicting construction. She is at once both beastly and human. The figure of the werewolf embodies various cultural anxieties about social change through its shifting identity. This anxiety surrounding New Women and motherhood was very much tied to fears about women's sexual liberation. Many New Women in realist and gothic fiction of the period were often portrayed as *femme fatales* – seductive women ensnaring lovers and caring little for any maternal duties.<sup>7</sup>

Frank admissions of desire were common in fictional depictions of the hyper-sexualised New Woman. In Housman's careful construction of the New Woman, however, White Fell is never the sexual aggressor. Housman pushes back against the rhetoric of the over-sexed New Woman through her careful construction of White Fell's interactions with Sweyn. It is Sweyn, for example, who seeks out White Fell's attention repeatedly, 'frankly and boldly' courting her favour while she remains unconscious of his admiration (Housman 2013: 228). He learns that she is not a woman to be wooed by 'tender whispers and sighs' but rather prefers bold conversations about brave feats (Housman 2013: 228). She does not attempt to seduce him, is not

portrayed as flirtatious or coquettish, and does not wish to be courted by him in traditional ways either. This is an interesting departure from both other monstrous texts and New Woman fiction of the period.<sup>8</sup> White Fell is no overly sexualized temptress and is instead the object of Sweyn's lust. While many *fin de siècle* female monsters give in to their animal desires, Housman seems to purposely distance her New Woman character from these stereotypes. Building on ‘visualizations of the “divided” self, representations of lycanthropy have been consistently conceptualised around the related poles of civilized-primitive, rational-instinctual, public-private and masculine-feminine’ (du Coudray 2006: 3), the female werewolf’s animal side often giving voice to the ‘civilised’ side’s suppressed desires. Yet, White Fell’s character is carefully constructed so that we never see her animal sexuality. We are led to believe that Sweyn and White Fell eventually kiss, but we only learn of this moment from a livid Christian who interrupts the two together. It is Christian who is most fearful of Sweyn and White Fell’s potential coupling. Although on the surface they seem well-suited (they are both strong and beautiful), Christian fears the monstrous repercussions of such a union. Through Christian, Housman addresses societal fears about the dangerous potential of women’s sexuality, but she also pushes against them by portraying White Fell’s careful (not overtly sexual) responses to Sweyn’s advances.

Although she is admired by most of the people she encounters in the story, Christian is only able to see White Fell as a vile monster. To him, she is not even a woman – she is a ‘dreadful Thing in their midst, that was veiled from their knowledge by womanly beauty’ (Housman 2013: 231). As Kelly Hurley points out in *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration at the Fin de Siècle* (1996), this language of degeneration is common in monstrous texts of the period. ‘The evacuation of female subjectivity...renders the woman a Thing: a body that is at best imperfectly animated by a “human mind” and a “human spirit”’ (Hurley 1996: 120). She is a dangerous force – a disease that might infect society and hasten its decline – ‘against which modern society had to police itself’ (Hurley 1999: 71). Housman shows through Christian’s language and reduction of White Fell to a ‘thing’ the extreme backlash against those who do not fit into traditional gender roles. Christian, whose very name signifies alignment with these more traditional and conservative members of society, believes it is his duty to defend his brother and his community from White Fell’s contagion. Yet, his inability to recognize White Fell’s humanity also serves as a further warning to readers about reductive

reactions to the New Woman. If one does not fulfil the stereotypical duties of a woman, is one even a woman? Housman's story answers in the affirmative and attempts to create space for new constructions of femininity.

Christian is the most ardent defender of gender boundaries throughout the story, and he becomes an interesting choice as the story repeatedly questions his own masculinity. His character is marked by signs of degeneration, and he is continually contrasted with his twin brother. While Sweyn is strong and physically well-formed, Christian is found lacking: 'Sweyn's features were perfect as a young god's, while Christian's showed faulty detail' (Housman 2013: 219). Just as the New Woman's strength or supposed 'manliness' was viewed as evidence of her degeneration, so too were effeminate qualities in men believed to be markers of society's decline. As Jonathan Rutherford explains in *Forever England: Reflections on Race, Masculinity and Empire* (1997), 'the trial of Oscar Wilde in 1895, and the frequent public attacks on decadence, signaled the reassertion of a sound manly character in public life' (27). Deviance in men came to be signified by 'feminine traits and characteristics' (Rutherford 1997: 27). It is an important twist then that Christian is repeatedly portrayed as more stereotypically feminine. He is given to day dreams, has a 'weak obstinacy of mind', seems prone to hysteria, and is even told by his own brother to 'be a man' (Housman 2013: 225; 223). It is *Christian's* behaviour that is read as inappropriate and non-conforming throughout the bulk of the story and so very few heed his warnings about White Fell's monstrosity.

The implications of Christian's 'degenerate' characteristics are two-fold. First, the text suggests that those who believe the New Women to be a danger to society's progress are in fact the ones who are less evolved. Second, Housman seems to be questioning ideals of masculinity in the story as well. Perhaps Christian's lack of masculine qualities suggests a projection of his fears about his own identity onto White Fell. That is, he easily recognizes her 'monstrosity' because he does not conform either. In her article, 'The Politics of Representation and Illustration in Clemence Housman's *The Were-Wolf*' (2007), Rechelle Christie argues that the story 'reflects Clemence's passion for a community free from gender constraints and social hierarchies' (Christie 2007: 63). Christian himself questions gendered constructions of identity in a fascinating passage during his final pursuit of White Fell:

He grew bewildered, uncertain of his own identity, doubting of his own true form. He could not really be a man, no more than that running Thing was really a woman; his real form was only hidden under embodiment of a man, but what he was he did not know. And Sweyn's real form he did not know (Housman 2013: 243).

Christian comes to understand that his identity and worth are not reflected in his outward appearance or his inability to meet narrow definitions of masculinity. Further, 'in the end, Sweyn must live with the knowledge that his overbearing masculinity pales in comparison to Christian's compassion and sacrifice' (Christie 2007: 57-58). Housman's 'androgynous hero' represents the need to question 'the limitations of gender codes and serves as a model for women and men alike' (Christie 2007: 66). Even as he rigidly patrol's White Fell's behaviour, he recognizes that societal expectations do not match his own identity and yearns for a 'true form'.

An early passage in the story featuring the child Rol also gives voice to anxiety surrounding restrictive gendered expectations. In this scene, Rol plays under a table where many men from the village sit and work. He carefully considers each of their legs and regards his own short legs critically in comparison. He admires Sweyn's legs above all others and grows solemn at the 'thought of the innumerable days to come before his legs could be as long and strong' (Housman 2013: 209). On one hand Sweyn's physical perfection is a sign of his, and his society's, evolution away from the animal form – an attainment of an advanced evolutionary state. Yet, Housman pushes back against this eugenic rhetoric. We see here the ways in which the language of evolution and its particular messages about masculinity are internalized at a young age. Rol contrasts his body with Sweyn's, anticipating the way in which Christian's body is later found lacking in comparison. Yet, neither's outward appearance accurately reflects their internal ideas of self and the rupture results in confusion and pain.

Although Christian experiences an epiphany about his own identity, he still continues to pursue White Fell, intent upon her destruction. The story closes with a dramatic and lengthy chase scene in which Christian attempts to expose the threat White Fell poses once and for all. He runs, hour after hour, chasing her and attempting to kill her. He reaches out to attack her more than once and she breaks both of his arms with her axe in return. In his final attempt to stop her, without the use of his arms, he uses only his teeth to bite her tunic. In this moment he ironically morphs into the animal he fears resides within his enemy. Christian becomes the symbolic destroyer of progress and in doing so is rendered less evolved. White Fell strikes his

neck in retaliation (still using her tool instead of her animal form) and is ultimately defeated by his blood upon her skin: ‘no holy-water could be more holy, more potent to destroy an evil thing than the life-blood of a pure heart poured out for another in free willing devotion’ (Housman 2013: 245). White Fell is finally transformed by Christian’s blood, and dies as a wolf. His ceaseless pursuit of her ultimately turns her into the ‘monster’ he believes her to be. Yet, it is significant that this is the only point in the story where we see this transformation. Housman is careful to concentrate on White Fell’s humanity throughout and only depicts her in animal form after her spirit is freed from her body, and after Christian has engaged in animal-like violence.

The next day Sweyn follows their tracks in the snow and eventually finds the dead body of his brother, ‘the figure of one crucified’, lying next to the dead body of White Fell in wolf form (Housman 2013: 250). Here the religious message of the story is overtly expressed: ‘to him Christian had been as Christ, and had suffered and died to save him from his sins’ (Housman 2013: 251). Sweyn realizes too late his mistake and is horrified by the remembrance of his kiss with White Fell. ‘In its wolfish incarnation, the werewolf was so intensely Other that it no longer even resembled a human being, embodying instead the slavery to instinctive drives which was perceived to differentiate the animal world from human civilisation’ (Coudray 2002: 7). He is disgusted by his own inability to recognize the animal within her. White Fell’s death ultimately contains the threat of her aberrant femininity, yet the story’s fairly sympathetic portrayal of her character throughout complicates the tidy ending. Like many other nineteenth-century texts, this neat ending does not counteract the revolutionary messages found elsewhere in the story. Further, Christian’s own devolution into animal-like behaviour during the pursuit raises questions about who the true ‘monster’ in the story might be. Unhappy endings are certainly common for heroines in New Woman fiction,<sup>9</sup> yet the revolutionary potential of these stories are not undercut by the deaths of their progressive characters.

White Fell is a clear New Woman character, but she is no simple monster. The story repeatedly suggests that White Fell is not inherently evil but that society – particularly those invested in traditional Christian ideologies – views and reacts to her as such. It is the repeated insistence that White Fell is not ‘normal’ and that she poses a threat, and Christian’s ultimate physical attack of her, that finally change her into a true monster. Through her use of the mutable identity of the werewolf, Clemence Housman addresses societal fears about women’s changing roles and advocates freeing both men and women from restrictive, gendered expectations.

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<sup>1</sup> There are only a handful of articles on Housman, mainly discussing her in relation to her more famous brothers A. E. Housman and Laurence Housman, with very little devoted to her own work. In order to keep the focus on Clemence in this essay, her familial connections will not be highlighted but simply mentioned to emphasize that she was a part of important literary and artistic circles of the day.

<sup>2</sup> In her article, ‘The Motif of the Double in Clemence Housman’s *The Were-Wolf*’ (1991), Shari Hodges argues that the novel is ‘a simple religious parable’ (57). Hodges claims that Housman uses the structure of opposing doubles ‘to represent the nature of man and of the universe as being torn between conflicting good and evil impulses and to present the Christian allegory of man’s redemption from this divided state’ (1991: 57).

<sup>3</sup> For more biographical information about Housman, see Reychelle Christie’s excellent dissertation, *Here Be Dragons: Gothic Inversion in Women’s Writing of the Fin De Siècle* (2011).

<sup>4</sup> As Ann Ardis points out in *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism* (1990), over one hundred novels were written about the New Woman between 1883 and 1900 (4).

<sup>5</sup> One need only read Grant Allen’s ‘Plain Words on the Woman Question’ to understand how fully motherhood was tied to the health of the nation. In it he argues that ‘almost all must become wives and mothers, and almost all must bear at least four or five children’ for the good of the race and the nation (450).

<sup>6</sup> Consider Beth’s troubled relationship with her mother in Sarah Grand’s *The Beth Book* (1897), for example.

<sup>7</sup> This tradition begins early in Gothic fiction. Consider the Rosario/Matilda/demon character in Matthew Lewis’ *The Monk* (1796), for example. Her sole purpose is to lead Ambrosio astray and she purposefully uses her sexuality to do so.

<sup>8</sup> For example, Arthur Machen’s ‘The Great God Pan,’ Florence Marryat’s *The Blood of the Vampire* (1897), Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* (1872), Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897), and Richard Marsh’s *The Beetle* all contain female ‘monsters’ with blatant sexual appetites.

<sup>9</sup> Consider both the deaths of Lyndall and her child in Olive Schreiner’s *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), Edith Beale’s contraction of venereal disease in Sarah Grand’s *The Heavenly Twins* (1893), or Hadria’s dashed dreams in Mona Caird’s *The Daughters of Danaus* (1894).

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