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THE TALL MAN IN THE BLUE SUIT

Witchcraft, Folklore, and Reality in Shirley Jackson's
The Lottery or, the Adventures of James Harris



A Thesis presented to
the Department of Literature, Area Studies, and European Languages
the University of Oslo
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Master of Arts degree
Spring Term 2005

Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness. Their end will match their deeds.

—2 Corinthians 11.14-15 (ca. 50 CE)

Thus Satan himself, who transfigures himself into an angel of light, when he has captured the mind of a miserable woman and has subjugated her to himself by infidelity and incredulity, immediately transforms himself into the species and similitudes of different personages and, deluding the mind which he holds captive and exhibiting things, joyous or mournful, and persons, known or unknown, leads it through devious ways, and while the spirit alone endures this, the faithless mind thinks these things happen not in the spirit but in the body. Who is there that is not led out of himself in dreams and nocturnal visions, and sees much sleeping which he had never seen waking?

—Regino of Prüm, *Canon Episcopi* (906)

Here are the Testimonies of sense, the Oaths of several credible attesters, the nice and deliberate scrutiny of quick-sighted and judicious examiners, and the judgment of an Affize upon the whole. [. . .] If such proof [of witchcraft] may not be credited, no Fact can be proved, no wickedness can be punished, no right can be determined, Law is at an end, and blind Justice cannot tell how to decide any thing.

—Joseph Glanvill, *Saducismus triumphatus* (1681)

Witchcraft is little more than the judicious administration of the bizarre.

—Shirley Jackson, *The Bird's Nest* (1954)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FIRST OF ALL, MY SUPERVISOR, Professor Per Winther, must be thanked for his efforts; the enthusiasm and good judgment he brought to this project have been a great comfort.

Colin Haines gave much valuable feedback through several conversations on the “only practicing witch in New England,” Gothic fiction, literary theory, demons, and other cheerful matters. His taking time to help while finishing his doctoral dissertation on Jackson (and grading a seemingly endless stream of exam papers) is much appreciated.

Thanks also to Dr. Gunnar W. Knutsen, who read Chapter One and gave some valuable comments on my treatment of witchcraft, and Dr. Mathilde Skoie, who helped get my highly questionable explanation of Latin case inflections right. Annette Møller Madsen at the University Library of Arts and Social Sciences helped get hold of a book that was difficult to obtain.

Fellow students and good friends Karen Bjørkan and Susan Jackman Røe read and commented on the text; I truly appreciate their constructive criticism and good company.

Last, but certainly not least, my parents, Helene and John Nørjordet, deserve my deepest gratitude for their encouragement and support over the years.

H.N.

OSLO—RAUFOSS

DECEMBER 2003 — MAY 2005

COVER ILLUSTRATION:

“Devil seducing witch.” Anonymous woodcut from Ulrich Müller [Molitor], *De Lamiis et phitonicis mulieribus* (also known as *Von den Unholden und Hexen*), originally published in Cologne, ca. 1489.

The Devil is seen trying to seduce a woman into making a pact with him. He appears to be both demonic and human, and the embrace has sexual overtones. SOURCE: Levack, plate 3.

TYPESET IN ADOBE CASLON AND DANTE IN L^AT_EX 2_ε.

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INTRODUCTION

“THE DEMON IN THE MIND”
Shirley Jackson and the Occult

Shall we never, never get rid of this Past!

—Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the
Seven Gables*

The past is never dead. It is not even past.

—William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*

The Devil's greatest triumph was convincing
the modern world that he does not exist.

—G. K. Chesterton

I have had for many years a consuming interest in magic and the supernatural. I think this is because I find there so convenient a shorthand statement of the possibilities of human adjustment to what seems to be at best an inhuman world. [. . .] Everything I write [involves] the sense I feel, of a human and not very rational order struggling inadequately to keep in check forces of great destruction, which may be the devil and may be intellectual enlightenment. (Oppenheimer 125)

SHIRLEY JACKSON (1916-1965)¹ said this in an interview in 1948, the year she became famous by publishing a shocker of a story called “The Lottery.” The remarks give us important indicators as to how we might read the supernatural aspects of her fiction, the topic of the present thesis. First of all, it establishes that the supernatural was important to her. Secondly, we learn that we are to understand her preoccupation with this material not as descriptions of supernaturalism in itself, but as a means to depict “the possibilities of human adjustment” and the ongoing struggle to “keep in check forces of great destruction.” Thirdly, she points out that she is writing about a struggle that “may be the devil and may be intellectual enlightenment.” That is: the contemporary world can be explored through the supernatural because we have always been involved in this kind of “not very rational” struggle that may or

1. Jackson's year of birth is sometimes given as 1919, a date Jackson herself used in order to seem younger than her husband; she was, however, born in 1916, on December 14 (Oppenheimer 11, 88).

may not turn out to be evil. The notion that there is a deeper purpose behind Jackson's use of the supernatural—that she is trying to say something about the world using the supernatural metaphorically, as it were—is an important premise for my discussion. In particular, I am interested in what Shirley Jackson is trying to say about reality by, paradoxically perhaps, alluding to the supernatural.

This thesis explores the relationship between the supernatural and the real in the only book of short stories Shirley Jackson published in her lifetime, *The Lottery, or the Adventures of James Harris* (1949), focusing especially on how witchcraft and folklore is used in order to say something about the “inhuman world” Jackson mentions in the quotation above. In this introduction, the author and critical reception will first be presented, before *The Lottery* itself will be discussed, beginning with an attempt to determine its genre and nature (the short story composite and the Gothic are central aspects here). The demon lover motif, its centrality to the book, Jackson's first encounter with it personally, and its literary history is then established. Then the three words that constitute the subtitle of the thesis—witchcraft, folklore, and reality—will be defined and discussed briefly. Finally, I state the aim of the thesis more clearly than I already have, present my theoretical and methodical considerations, and give a short outline of the following chapters.

Shirley Jackson: Work, Reception, Criticism

Shirley Jackson was a prolific writer. During her relatively short career, she published roughly one hundred separate short stories, one collection of stories, six novels, two humorous family “memoirs,” two children's books, some thirty non-fiction articles and book reviews, and a juvenile stage play. She was at work on her seventh novel, *Come Along With Me*, when she died while taking an afternoon nap in 1965, aged 48 (her husband published the completed parts of it in 1968, along with some previously uncollected short stories and some lectures). Her first published story, “Janice,” appeared in 1938, while she was studying at Syracuse, and since then a number of stories appeared in magazines such as *Mademoiselle*, *Harper's*, *Collier's*, *The New Republic*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Woman's Day*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *The New Yorker*; many of these stories were collected recently, in *Just an*

Ordinary Day (1996). Cited as an example of technical mastery concerning tone, foreshadowing, unreliable and detached narration, or simply as a chilling horror story, “The Lottery,” published in June 1948, is by far the most famous piece Jackson wrote. It is frequently anthologized, and regarded a classic American short story. Her first novel, *The Road Through the Wall*, also published in 1948, did not receive much attention. The only collection of short stories to appear in her lifetime, and the subject of the present thesis, was *The Lottery or, the Adventures of James Harris*, published in 1949. Throughout the fifties, Jackson published steadily, and many of her books were critically acclaimed (rather than listing them all here, I refer to Works Cited).

In contrast to her relative obscurity today, Shirley Jackson was a popular and respected writer in her own day, albeit more so with critics than with general readers, exempting her two last novels, *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. These became modest bestsellers, and the only novels still coming out in new editions. Her stories were reprinted in anthologies like *Best American Short Stories*, her books reached the *New York Times Book Review*’s “Best Fiction” lists several times, she was once nominated for the National Book Award (for *The Haunting of Hill House*), she was nominated three times for the Edgar Allan Poe Award, winning it twice, and she also won the O. Henry Award (see Hattenhauer 19513). Her admirers constitute a varied and distinguished list: Isaac Bashevis Singer, Sylvia Plath, Howard Nemerov, Joyce Carol Oates, Kurt Vonnegut, Ralph Ellison, Norman Mailer, Roald Dahl, and Stephen King (Hall xi; Hattenhauer 1). The names indicate Jackson’s diversity and reputation as a writer; at the same time one notes with sadness that while she was praised by the likes of the figures above, she was virtually forgotten only a few decades after her death. She has, however, retained her status among writers—a typical “writers’ writer.”

In her literary oeuvre we find shocking stories like “The Lottery,” amusing accounts of family life, and children’s stories. With a stylistic mastery one rarely encounters in what we might tentatively call the horror genre (the genre question will be elaborated on below), she is often able to blend the mundane with the fantastic, the cozy with the horrifying and mis-

anthropic.² Jackson's range confused some readers, and she apparently loved playing with her audience's expectations: who would expect light-hearted volumes of autobiographical family sketches behind titles like *Raising Demons* and *Life Among the Savages*? As her husband was to write seven years after her death, "Shirley Jackson wrote in a variety of forms and styles because she was, like anyone else, a complex human being, confronting the world in many different roles and moods" (Hyman, "Preface" viii). At her best, Jackson is able to let the different moods and modes of writing merge: the dark side of humanity evolves slowly and imperceptively in stories that seem ordinary, cute and mundane on the surface. This was to be her trademark; a case in point is the way she prolongs the climax of "The Lottery" through a very innocent and placid narrative tone, before evil suddenly strikes in the form of stones on the side of Tessie Hutchinson's head.

The critical attention paid to Jackson has not been vast. Lenemaja Friedman's *Shirley Jackson* (1975) was the first book-length study, an important and still useful work, despite the fact that it discounts the importance of magic and witchcraft. Judy Oppenheimer's *Private Demons: The Life of Shirley Jackson* (1988) is the only biography (Friedman and Hattenhauer provide some biographical material as well). Oppenheimer's book is not a literary study, although she tries to link Jackson's life to her fiction. She has been criticized for speculating too much, seeking the sensational rather than the factual, for instance taking the supernatural in Jackson's fiction literally in order to explain the life of its author. While laudably acknowledging the darker, occult sides of Jackson's writing, Oppenheimer ends up psychoanalyzing Jackson, speculating in possible childhood incest, for example, as instrumental to the Gothic strain in her fiction.³ The last decade or so has seen a growth in Jackson criticism. Since 1990, about a dozen articles, two book chapters, a handful of doctoral dissertations, an annotated bibliography, and a welcome book on Jackson's short stories have appeared. A new collection of Jackson's previously uncollected stories, published in 1996, got favorable reviews; it no doubt caused a renewed interest. In 2003, Darryl Hattenhauer's *Shirley Jackson's*

2. See Joshi 42-46 on Jackson's misanthropy, which he claims "informed all her writing" (13). This is possibly a too bombastic assessment: while there is certainly some misanthropy in some of her work, much is done with irony and humor, and "in good fun." It is difficult to guess what Jackson's views really were, as she gave very few interviews and rarely wrote about her own writing.

3. More on Oppenheimer and what Jackson may or may not have believed in below.

American Gothic appeared, quite a comprehensive study that considers all of Jackson's novels and collections of stories. This is the first book-length critical study of all of Jackson's works since Friedman's book from the mid-seventies.

If we look specifically at the criticism of Jackson's short fiction, one book-length study has been devoted to that: Joan Wylie Hall's *Shirley Jackson: A Study of the Short Fiction* (1993). It naturally covers *The Lottery* as well as *Come Along With Me*, but it was published too early to include *Just an Ordinary Day*. It provides excerpts from critical articles and essays on the short fiction, some of Jackson's letters to her mother about the publication of *The Lottery*, and Jackson's important outline for the story "Elizabeth." Friedman and Hattenhauer go through all of Jackson's books, devoting 20-30 pages to the short fiction. Naturally, the scope of their projects prevents them from exploring the stories to the extent that Hall does—her book is, after all, devoted solely to the short fiction (Hall spends roughly fifty pages on *The Lottery* alone). The other critical work on Jackson's short fiction can be divided into two categories: articles on "The Lottery" and articles not on "The Lottery"—the first category easily outnumbering the second. A few doctoral dissertations (Bowers, Metcalf, Parks "Possibility") deal with Jackson as a short story writer, but usually as part of studies also dealing with her novels.

The Demon Lover:

Literary and Biographical Precursors, and the Question of Belief

Lenemaja Friedman starts off her study by saying that "Miss Jackson has been little understood" due to the insistence on associating her with "witches and demons," thus obscuring her "true literary worth" (9). A fair point, but it should be possible, even necessary, I would argue, to consider *both* her true literary worth *and* her fondness of the demonic and supernatural. It is not impossible to write great literature while using demons and witches creatively; Nathaniel Hawthorne is certainly not considered a lesser writer for including references to witchcraft and demonology in his works. While Friedman's intentions (to brush the dust off a forgotten and underrated writer) are laudable, she seems to overlook one of the most central traits of Jackson's work: as so many other Gothic writers to come out of New England, she uses witchcraft, folklore, the occult, and the supernatural (often grounded in historical

events) in a modern setting, not for the sake of shock or effect, but for other, artistically motivated purposes.

For some reason, folklore and witchcraft in Jackson's work have not been investigated to any large extent. Like Friedman, most people note that there are occult elements in Jackson's fiction, but quickly dismiss these as irrelevant, before going into other aspects of her fiction—the most common approaches have been founded on poststructuralist, feminist, or psychoanalytical theories. There is no doubt that the occult was a topic that interested Shirley Jackson. Her library held around five hundred books on the subject, many of them very old and obscure, some in languages she could not even read. Objects like charms and amulets with supposed magic powers were scattered around the house (Oppenheimer 188), she was good with Tarot cards, and she told fortunes at college fairs (Friedman 33). However, we can only speculate whether she actually believed in this, or if she just saw it as an entertaining pastime. It may not be a matter of belief at all, just a general awareness of how people reasoned in the past and how these thoughts manifested themselves, for instance in horrible acts of persecution. Oppenheimer has the following to say on the issue: "Perhaps the real truth was that magic, to Shirley, was not an arcane, exotic pursuit at all, despite her collection of learned books on the subject. It was something she had domesticated, reinterpreted, and integrated into her home; it was part of her very nature" (189). Employing witchcraft and folklore in one's fiction does not necessarily require faith and belief in it, only openness and a Coleridgean suspension of disbelief, a suspension that readers of this kind of fiction usually need to exercise as well. It is more important, I would think, to recognize what witchcraft and folklore mean in *The Lottery*, than to tie its author to such beliefs. "We must, if we want poetry and drama, allow the poet his symbols," as H. D. F. Kitto says about Euripides's belief in Dionysus in relation to the *Baccae* (378).

That Jackson domesticated and reinterpreted old superstitions in her haunting stories does not mean that Jackson had a superficial, casual knowledge of these matters. Her husband Stanley Edgar Hyman, dyspeptic literary critic and professor of English at Bennington College, had the relationship between myth and literature as his area of expertise; she was his best, most persistent critic and partner in discussion on the topic—and vice versa (her

first novel, *The Road Through the Wall*, has the dedication “For Stanley, a critic”; Hyman’s book *The Armed Vision* is dedicated to Jackson, “a critic of critics of critics” [Hall 93n35].⁴ But Jackson’s interest in such matters began even before she became a well-known writer. After the publication of “The Lottery,” she received a letter from an old professor of hers at Syracuse congratulating her on the effort. She wrote him back, telling him that “it all originated from your course” (qtd. in Friedman 21). The courses in question (she had actually attended two of his courses, not just one) were entitled “Introduction to Folklore” and “American Folksong,” where classic works like James G. Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* were required reading; my guess is that the folksong course would have featured one of the most famous folksongs to have traveled across the Atlantic, “The Demon Lover,” better known as “The House-Carpenter” in America.⁵

To further explain Jackson’s interest in the demon lover motif, a look into her biography might be instructive. Before she became a writer, Jackson wrote the following piece of non-capitalized stream-of-consciousness prose in her journal:

but all i remember is that i met him (somewhere where was it in the darkness in the light was it morning were there trees flowers had i been born) and now when i think about him i only remember that he was calling margaret, as in loneliness margaret margaret, and then (did i speak to him did he look at me did we smile had we known each other once) i went away and left him (calling to me after me) calling margaret margaret. (Qtd. in Oppenheimer 49)

The demon lover, according to Oppenheimer, appeared and reappeared for years in Jackson’s mind (48), which makes sense considering the frequent appearances of such creatures in her work. Jackson had other disturbing experiences that can give some indications concerning her thoughts about the liminal, dreamy, and demonic. For instance, she would sometimes

4. According to Hattenhauer, Hyman not only influenced his wife, he controlled her: he was, at his best, “arrogant and contentious; he was usually malevolent and tyrannical” (17). He admitted himself, according to his second wife Phoebe Pettingell, that his critical talent was “mainly of a destructive order with a highly developed instinct for the jugular” (qtd. in Hattenhauer 17).
5. Jackson also took courses in abnormal psychology, which undoubtedly proved useful to her writing. Her impressive psychological insight is best witnessed in novels like *Hangsaman* and *The Bird’s Nest*, where phenomena like multiple personality disorder are convincingly portrayed—few writers of Gothic horror at the time were as well versed in Freud and other recent psychological theories as Shirley Jackson (she also went into therapy several times). While using her considerable knowledge of psychology in her fiction, Jackson was skeptical to Freudian readings of her own work. “Let me just point out right here and now,” she said, humorously, in a 1958 lecture, “that my unconscious mind has *been* unconscious for a number of years now and it is my firm intention to keep it that way. When I have nightmares about a horrid building it is the horrid building I am having nightmares about, and no one is going to talk me out of it; that is final” (“Experience and Fiction” 201).

find notes by her bed that she had written while asleep; once, she found a note reading “dead dead” (qtd. in Hattenhauer 26). Furthermore, she wrote the following in an unsent letter to her friend Howard Nemerov: “There is not a he or a she but the demon in the mind, and that demon finds guilts where it can and uses them and runs mad with laughing when it triumphs; it is the demon which is fear and we are afraid of words” (qtd. in Hattenhauer 26).⁶ One notes that she does not talk about an external demon, but an internal (ungendered) one that ferrets out her guilt and exploits it while she is asleep. Furthermore, she points out that this demonic guilt is connected to language. It is too far-fetched to claim that this is the situation with Jackson’s stories too (they were not written while she was asleep), but it is striking how these statements manage to articulate several of the problems that a reader encounters when dealing with her stories, especially problems related to the sense of reality.

Jackson’s own experiences with demons give ample reason to ask whether she actually believed in demons and other supernatural forces. Critics have different views of this; Judy Oppenheimer and Darryl Hattenhauer, for instance, disagree completely. Hattenhauer emphasizes the rational sides of Jackson’s work, using her knowledge of Marx to argue that her fiction is primarily a critique of class-consciousness, the subjection of women, and consumer society; he prefers seeing Jackson as a “complex political writer” (9). It follows from this that Jackson had the label “occultist” imposed on her involuntarily, says Hattenhauer, it was not something she herself took seriously (the perpetrator here was not the publisher, but, again, her husband Stanley Edgar Hyman, who comes off as something of a Gothic villain in Hattenhauer’s book). Hattenhauer criticizes Judy Oppenheimer for believing in “spectral evidence,” since she states as a fact that Jackson could “see beyond reality,” and “was, *in fact*, psychic: she heard conversations, even music, that no one else heard; she saw faces that no one else could see” (Oppenheimer 18, my italics). Oppenheimer’s views are, says Hattenhauer, “laughably illogical” and “sentimentalizing” (9). Hattenhauer points out that Jackson was neurotic in periods, not psychotic (she did not “see” things that were not there due to

6. In Hattenhauer’s book it seems as if the “dead dead” note mentioned above and the unsent letter to Nemerov are closely related—the letter being a reaction to finding the note—but according to Oppenheimer, the letter was written in an entirely different context: Jackson was furious to learn that her novel *Hangsaman* had been interpreted as a novel about lesbians, and she is expressing her interest in “ambivalence but [. . .] an ambivalence of the spirit, or the mind, not the sex” in this letter; the “demon in the mind” passage occurs in the same place, and there is no mention of the “dead dead” note (Oppenheimer 233).

mental illness), and that Oppenheimer claims things she cannot possibly know (9). But this assessment can easily represent Hattenhauer's own views too: how can he know that Jackson did *not* believe in any of these things, that she used them only for show, and that there is a political agenda behind her work—based on the fact that she had read Marx in college? As Paul March-Russell rightly points out in his review of Hattenhauer's book, he “over-asserts Jackson's suspicion of the supernatural, so that [he] tends to reinstate a distinction between the rational and the irrational that Jackson's fiction, in its critical use of fantastical tropes, otherwise undermines” (107). Both Oppenheimer and Hattenhauer, then, seem to be talking about things they cannot possibly know.

Jackson's own statements about these things, some of which are quoted above, merely show that she was interested in such things—whether she used her knowledge in a purely metaphorical way, or if she actually thought she was occasionally possessed by demons, is impossible to know. For my own part, I do not think that *The Lottery* is a postvisionary transcript where Jackson acts as a medium,⁷ or a political tract, or a PR-stunt. If anything, I think we are dealing with a repristination of her visions. Thus, a middle position between Oppenheimer and Hattenhauer makes more sense. There are few indications that Jackson was so deluded that she saw demons and other creatures around all the time; I also fail to see a calm, rational, political agenda behind these statements and her work. It is impossible to miss the many references to the supernatural and occult in her fiction, though, regardless of beliefs. A brief look at how frequently the demon lover motif occurs in Jackson's fiction, and in literature as such, should illustrate its importance.

Jackson's 1951 novel *Hangsaman* features a lover with demonic traits (there are no indications of a supernatural force as far as I can see). At a party at her parents' house, Natalie Waite meets a man who takes her to a place in the woods close to the house (48-54). The stranger most likely rapes her—we are not told explicitly, as there is an ellipsis at this point.

7. See Elizabeth Lee Clark, “Ghost-Writing” 61-86 for a discussion of Jackson as a “medium-authoress” (79). “Both writing and magic are vital to [Jackson's] very existence,” Clark asserts; the “vocations of authoress and sorceress” are “tightly-interwoven [*sic*]” (Clark 81). The messages from the other side supposedly “offer a sense of power that is usually inaccessible to New England housewives [*sic*] in the 1950s: the power to control the feelings and behaviors of others, whether it be through story-telling or voodoo spells” (81). Jackson's ability to “control the feelings and behaviors of others” through her writing can safely be ascribed to her imagination and technical skill, I would think, rather than to spirits.

Later on, Natalie cannot quite remember what has happened. In *The Bird's Nest* (1954), the novel's protagonist, Elizabeth Richmond as Betsy (Elizabeth suffers from multiple personality disorder, so her personality consists of Elizabeth, Beth, Betsy, and Bess) goes to New York to look for her mother—she has repressed the fact that her mother is dead—and her boyfriend Robin. Her search ends in a hotel room. Her mother is not there, of course, but a Mr. Harris is. When the door opens, Betsy spots Robin “grinning hideously from across the room,” saying “good evening” to her (259). She believes that Harris is really Robin. Betsy is frightened, and, running down the hallway, she is “praying not to stumble, not Robin again, it wasn't fair, not after all she'd done,” echoing Tessie Hutchinson's last words in “The Lottery.” She is afraid he might be downstairs, “grinning with his arms wide to catch her,” and “beside her she heard him laughing as she hurried and she put her arms up to hide her face” (259-60). As we will see, several of the details in this strange scene are reminiscent of the events connected with James Harris in *The Lottery*. One may also note that both *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest* take their titles from ballads or nursery rhymes; *Hangsaman* has the epigraph “Slack your rope, Hangsaman, / O slack it for a while, / I think I see my true love coming, / Coming many a mile,” which brings associations to the “long, long love,” i.e. James Harris, in the ballad carrying his name (FL.1).⁸ *The Bird's Nest* takes its title from an old nursery rhyme; “Elizabeth, Beth, Betsy, and Bess, they all went together to find a bird's nest.”

The name Harris, firmly connected to the demon lover idea in *The Lottery*, occurs in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962): the Harrises have stopped delivering dairy goods to the reclusive Blackwood family, forcing them to go into town to buy them at the grocery store (12), and the Harris children torment Merricat as she is going home with groceries (22-23). The name Harris is connected to the “village voice” that excludes and marginalizes certain people, not unlike Mrs. Harris in “Flower Garden” and “The Renegade.”

If we briefly consider the demon lover in literature as such, it quickly becomes clear that this creature has made frequent appearances, both in male and female forms. In Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, Mephistopheles is conjuring up illusions of the dead, among them Helen of

8. How I refer to this ballad is explained in the last section of the present chapter.

Troy. Faustus reacts to her appearance with these famous lines:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
 And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?
 Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
 [*They kiss.*]
 Her lips sucks forth my soul. See where it flies!
 Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
 [*They kiss again.*]
 Here will I dwell, for heaven be in these lips,
 And all is dross that is not Helena. (5.1.92-97)⁹

Helen, alluring and destructive, is not a ghost, but a demon—a succubus, in fact (see Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory* 156; Stephens 352-55). Helen “sucks forth” Faustus’s soul—note the pun on “succubus”—and he naturally wants it back. But in the next instance, he wants to dwell by Helen, “for heaven be in these lips.” He is still drawn to her despite having experienced her obvious destructivity. One also notes that the demon hides his own spirit in Helen’s body while making Faustus’s spirit visible (“See where it flies!”).

To mention but a few other literary demon lovers, Rochester in Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, Heathcliff in Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, Count Dracula in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, Lovelace in Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa*, Alec in Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, and The Stranger in Ibsen’s *The Lady from the Sea* all play that role, as does Frank in Joyce’s story “Eveline” from *Dubliners*. Elizabeth Bowen’s story “The Demon Lover” from *The Demon Lover and Other Stories* could have been an inspiration for Jackson; Bowen and Samuel Richardson were among her favorite writers.¹⁰ Of American treatments of the demon lover, one could mention Sylvia Plath’s poem “On Looking into the Eyes of a Demon Lover,” Eudora Welty’s novel *The Robber Bridegroom* and a few of the stories in *The Bride of Innisfallen* (which, interestingly enough, is dedicated to Elizabeth Bowen), and

9. I quote from the so-called A-text of 1604 here; in the B-text of 1616 these lines are at 5.1.94-100.

10. The form of Bowen’s book, as well as its themes (especially the theme of the title story), must have appealed to Jackson. In a postscript to *The Demon Lover*, Bowen asserts the following: “*The Demon Lover* is an organic whole: not merely a collection, but somehow—for better or worse—a book. Also, the order in which the stories stand—an order come at, I may say, casually—seems itself to have meaning, or to add a meaning, I did not foresee. [. . .] Through the stories—in the order in which they are here placed—I find a rising tide of hallucination. [. . .] The hallucinations in the stories are not a peril; nor are the stories studies of mental peril. The hallucinations are an unconscious, instinctive, saving resort on the part of the characters: life, mechanized by the controls of war-time, and emotionally torn and impoverished by changes, had to complete itself in *some way*” (192). For a more comprehensive study of the demon lover motif in British literature, see Reed.

Joyce Carol Oates's story "Where are you Going, Where Have you Been?" Having touched upon the importance and frequent portrayal of the demon lover motif in literature, and in Jackson's life and work, it is time to consider two aspects related to the genre of *The Lottery*, namely the short story composite and the American Gothic.

The Short Story Composite

The Lottery, or the Adventures of James Harris consists of twenty-five stories divided into five sections; four of them contain short stories (the fifth section, an epilogue, consists of an excerpt of Child Ballad 243, "James Harris, The Daemon Lover"). Seventeen of the stories had already appeared in periodicals, one dating as far back as 1941 ("My Life with R. H. Macy," Jackson's first national publication, appeared in the *New Republic* around Christmas that year). The fact that the stories are divided into sections alone indicates that there is a deliberate organizing principle here, inviting the reader to figure out why the stories have been placed in their respective sections.¹¹ The epigraphs that precede the sections, all taken from the same book, also invite one to search for unifying features, a search that does yield results.

Joan Wylie Hall is the only critic I have come across who identifies *The Lottery* as a short story cycle, saying it is "similar to" such classics of the genre as James Joyce's *Dubliners*, Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, and Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* (4).¹² If one reads these three books, though, one will quickly see that *The Lottery* is less unified than any of them: *Dubliners* and *Winesburg, Ohio* both have a setting that unites the stories (Dublin and Winesburg); *Winesburg, Ohio* and *In Our Time* both feature a more or less recurring main character (George Willard and Nick Adams).¹³ This calls for some problematization and a further discussion of the genre, which will hopefully lead to a more accurate and nuanced view of the nature of Jackson's book.

11. Hall finds that the different parts constitute different themes, usually dependent on the family status of the characters: the first group is about the hardships of single women, the second about children, the third deals with married women, and the last group is about married couples undergoing unusual pressures (8-9).
12. Hattenhauer usually refers to *The Lottery* as an "anthology" of stories throughout his chapter on it (29-47), calling it a "collection" once (29). "Anthology" is a rather unfortunate term, I think, since it brings associations to a set of texts by different authors assembled by an editor.
13. See Nagel 1-17 for a short history of the short story cycle (as he calls it) in American literature. Lundén discusses the "Americanness" of the short story composite (106-23).

Terms like short story sequence, short story cycle, composite novel, as well as a plethora of other terms, have been used to describe a genre featuring stories that can function on their own, but are also part of a larger whole (see Lundén 12-18). The genre can therefore be placed somewhere between the novel (tending towards unity) and the short story collection (tending towards disunity). In the first comprehensive book published on this genre, *Representative Short Story Cycles of the Twentieth Century* (1971), Forrest Ingram pays much attention to the elements that *unite* a short story cycle. A critic like Rolf Lundén, though, focuses on *disunity*, and the tension between separateness and unity: there is a “compulsion to create coherence,” he says (19). Lundén prefers “short story composite” rather than “cycle” or “sequence” because, as he says, “it manages to characterize the whole variegated spectrum of the genre” (14). It avoids the idea of cyclicity that “short story cycle” implies, as well as the focus on the order of the stories that “short story sequence” entails. Although I think Lundén focuses a bit too much on disunity at times, I find his term “composite” the most useful, since it seems the most neutral; it encompasses both very unified and less unified texts.

The degree of unity that has to be present in order to settle for the composite genre rather than the collection or novel has caused some disagreement, and some further categorization seems necessary. Lundén suggests four subgenres; on a scale from closure (unity) to openness (disunity), these are: the cycle, the sequence, the cluster, and the novella (37). Of these, the cluster seems to capture the nature of *The Lottery* best, since it denotes a “rather loosely structured subgenre, in which stories seem to be striving in various directions; in which chronology is not strictly adhered to; in which the gaps between the stories are wide; and in which some stories are not as easily integrated into a coherent whole” (38).¹⁴ With this finer distinction in mind, then, I will continue to use “composite” in the following.

Lundén also calls attention to the stories that do not fit in the overall scheme at all, calling them “fringe” stories (124-45). These are stories that are less integrated than others, constituting an “aporia [. . .] which reveals the composite’s indeterminate, discontinuous nature. [. . .] They are the very sign, though not the only one, of the disruption that charac-

14. See Lundén 37-39 on the other three subgenres.

terizes this mode of writing” (125).¹⁵ As Lundén notes, these kinds of stories have tended to be either rejected completely, forced into the whole, or elevated into a paradigmatic position within the composite (125). In *The Lottery*, a story like “My Life at R. H. Macy” seems to me less a part of the whole than many others. Including that story—a rather humorous, ironic text—at the end of a section featuring stories like “The Intoxicated” and “The Daemon Lover” could be seen as an aporia. Throughout this section, an atmosphere of terror and fear has dominated; “My Life” contradicts this in many ways, as does the, for Jackson, rare use of a first person narrator. The story can be seen as an example of the disruptive elements in *The Lottery*. I will return to how the openness, gaps, ambiguities, separateness, and disorder we meet in the composite can be said to have some thematic significance.

Joan Wylie Hall (4-8) finds three aspects that justify calling *The Lottery* a cycle (“cycle” is Hall’s term of preference; she does not problematize this choice): (1) the recurrence of a character called James Harris, (2) literary allusions that emphasize the literariness of the text, and (3) the excerpts from Glanvill’s *Saducismus triumphatus*. I am not sure literary allusions and the fact that the book is full of people reading and/or writing would constitute a short story cycle in itself; this, it seems to me, is an attempt to fictionalize and foreground the literariness of the text in order to question reality, not a unifying device. I have no problems with Hall’s other two unifying elements, though, but I would probably add the “James Harris” ballad to point 3, thus capturing the structural importance of both paratexts.¹⁶ In addition to this, I would also call attention to what Forrest Ingram calls “dynamic pattern[s] of recurrent development,” patterns that work on several levels, among them “thematic expansion” (20 ff., 200 ff.). The importance of thematic recurrence in *The Lottery* is not captured in Hall’s list. As will become clear, the presence of the paratexts and the character James Harris usually serve to add thematic depth, although some structural patterns may also be discerned at times. Generally, I might add, the short story composite is often considered an apt structural

15. As examples, Lundén mentions “Pantaloon in Black” from Faulkner’s *Go Down, Moses*, “Godliness” from Anderson’s *Winesburg, Ohio*, and “My Old Man” from Hemingway’s *In Our Time*.

16. I follow Genette’s definition of the paratextual here and in the following: “Paratexts are those liminal devices and conventions, both within and outside the book, that form part of the complex meditation between book, author, publisher, and reader: titles, forewords, epigraphs, and publishers’ jacket copy are part of a book’s private and public history” (Genette, summary on cover). See also Richard Macksey’s foreword for an explanation of how the notion of the paratextual relates to Genette’s general poetics of transtextuality (xi-xxiv).

vehicle for the portrayal of hidden fears, disorders and problems in a seemingly functional society—these themes are often prominent in composites.

Several critics note that James Harris recurs in several stories, but they rarely indulge in any further discussions on genre based on this insight; also, they often fail to see what the character has to do with the ballad of the same name, or the epigraphs. Robert Halsband's remark is representative: "Nowhere does [James Harris] show the cloven hoof that he sports in the ballad, and his lack of consistency and purpose is, one supposes, ambiguous in the Empsonian sense" (qtd. in Parks, "Possibility" 43).¹⁷ Friedman claims that Harris has "no doubt been placed in several stories to provide some semblance of unity; however, none of the in-name-only Harris characters has any relationship or likeness to the others, and he is often a minor character" (67). This lack of likeness and consistency is, I would argue, part of the point. If Harris had been a stable and consistent character, he would not make a credible demon; demons embody ambiguity and dreamy logic, not consistency (to a certain extent, I follow Lundén's hypothesis that inconsistency and disunity can be qualities rather than a weaknesses in short story composites here). As Irving Malin points out: "In Gothic, order often breaks down: chronology is confused, identity blurred, sex twisted, the buried life erupts. *The total effect is that of a dream.* [. . .] In dreams we often meet a distorted 'reflection' of ourselves. People have the wrong heads or bodies. There is a dark stranger we know we have met but we can't remember where" (9, 12).

James Harris appears in or is somehow alluded to in sixteen stories, if my counting is correct—in four stories in each of the four sections.¹⁸ The title of the collection tells us that the book, in fact, recounts the adventures of James Harris, so his repeated presence should

17. Ambiguity in the "Empsonian sense" will be revisited in Chapter Three, when "Seven Types of Ambiguity" is examined. That Jackson so overtly invokes Empson in that story indicates that "Empsonian ambiguity" is indeed a relevant part of the composite. However, she clearly uses ambiguity as a deliberate strategy, so criticizing her for this "weakness," as Halsband does, seems meaningless.
18. This, I readily admit, is a generous count. I include all stories where the name James Harris or any of its variants (Jim, Jamie, Jimmy, Mr. Harris) occur, as well as the two stories where a "Mrs. Harris" is mentioned ("The Flower Garden" and "The Renegade"). I also include "Pillar of Salt" here, based on the scene where Margaret is standing by the window and "someone" comes over to her. She complains about the noise at the party they are at, and this "someone," quite out of the blue, points out that people are always getting killed in this neighborhood and that there are drunks in the streets (240). He instantly leaves, and the first real indication of Margaret's state of mind is given directly after this: she panics, thinking the building on fire. There is no mention of the man's name or attire, but the effect of his two casual remarks is a strong indication that this is indeed James Harris at work—we will see similar behavior in other stories.

come as no surprise.¹⁹ In fact, there is no mention of genre in the first edition; from the title—*The Lottery, or the Adventures of James Harris*—one might think it is a novel, with each story constituting a chapter. It is only from the 1982 paperback reprint on that the book is titled *The Lottery and Other Stories*. The renaming—most likely an editorial decision, not an artistic one—suggests that we are dealing with a *collection* of stories, not a composite. The renaming diminishes the importance of James Harris as a recurring character,²⁰ as well as the other devices that justify calling it a composite. In the following, then, I use the original, deliberately ambiguous, 1949 title.

The American Gothic

Gothic fiction can be treated both as a historically delimited genre that died around 1850, and as a cultural phenomenon, wide-ranging and still with us today after going through several revisions and changes in form and subject matter over the years (Punter, *Literature of Terror* 1: 1 ff.). The term “Gothic” is, in itself, quite problematic.²¹ It is difficult to say anything general about Gothic fiction, and the uncertainties that pervade any kind of poetics—there are always works that do not fit neatly into the categories—has caused the thinking around the Gothic to become fragmented, and full of subgenres and subcategories, some of which amount to little more than sophistry and hair-splitting (one might say that the fragmentation and distortion often seen in Gothic fiction is echoed in the difficulties connected to defining it; one often has to resort to listing what the Gothic is *not* in order to understand it, which again confirms its status as a subversive anti-establishment genre). However, in order to make sense of this vague and confusing concept, I will concentrate on three areas that seem

19. The mysterious adventurer, or wanderer, is a familiar trope in Gothic fiction. The classic work in this regard is Charles Robert Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), a novel that often marks the end of the Gothic romance proper (as a genre) in literary histories. The wanderer—a “demonic picaro”—represents the unsettled and unsettling, the restless and indeterminate, a force that rejects and disrupts the predictable and structured by being a liminal drifter without a home, literally between communities.
20. In the Shirley Jackson Papers at the Library of Congress, there is an undated manuscript of title and contents pages, probably from 1946 or 1947, for a collection named “The Intoxicated.” The manuscript lists forty stories, nine of which made their way into *The Lottery* when it was finally published in 1949 (Jackson had announced already in 1944 that she would publish a book of short stories the following year). With the instant fame the story “The Lottery” had given her, it is no wonder Jackson changed the title accordingly—whether she or the publisher initiated it (Hall 3). The idea of using James Harris as a recurring character and a thematic/structural guiding line seems to have occurred to Jackson between 1946/1947 and 1948.
21. See Williams 1–24 for an interesting reflection on the many problems in this regard, and an attempt at a definition.

most relevant to the present discussion: the American Gothic, the Female Gothic, and New England Gothic.

As Teresa A. Goddu notes, there is no founding period or a specific group of writers associated with the American Gothic, it is a less specified form of literature than is the case with the British Gothic: “As a critical category, the American gothic lacks the self-evident validity of its British counterpart” (3).²² Still, American literature is “embarrassingly, a gothic fiction, nonrealistic and negative, sadist and melodramatic—a literature of darkness and the grotesque in a land of light and affirmation” (Fiedler 29). To Fiedler and many other critics, the American Gothic is predominantly an expression of psychological states, “a Calvinist exposé of natural human corruption,” as he says (160). The idea, then, is that “because of America’s seeming lack of history and its Puritan heritage, the American gothic, [. . .] takes a turn inward, away from society and toward the psyche and the hidden blackness of the American soul” (Goddu 9).²³ Some critics, like Goddu, call for a historicization of the American Gothic, arguing that it “criticizes America’s national myth of new-world innocence by voicing the cultural contradictions that undermine the nation’s claim to purity and equality. [. . .] [and] tells of the historical horrors that make national identity possible yet must be repressed in order to sustain it” (10).²⁴ By investigating these sources, we begin to discern the historical horrors that were important to “make national identity possible,” namely the persecution and repression of women (witchcraft was an American as well as a European phenomenon), as well as the folkloric inheritance New England got from its first English settlers. The apparent contradictions between the occult and barbaric, and a modern democratic society anno 1949, may not be so apparent upon closer inspection. It seems logical, then, to historicize a genre that is so preoccupied with history and the past as the American Gothic.

The “female Gothic”—a term first used by Ellen Moers in *Literary Women* (1976)—has

22. See Lloyd-Smith 3-9 for an attempt to explain what the American Gothic is. He discusses major themes in American Gothic on pp. 65-132.
23. See Parks, “Chambers” on the “new” American Gothic in relation to Jackson. The “new” prefix is supposed to designate the focus on the psyche rather than the external horrors of the “old” American Gothic. See also Malin for a more general treatment.
24. For a listing of other critics calling for a historicizing of the Gothic, see Goddu 163n10.

been subject to a continuing debate.²⁵ For the most part, the debate has focused on whether this can be considered a separate genre, and what the characteristics of that genre might be. The differences between male and female Gothic primarily concern the relationship between the protagonist and the world they have to deal with: “Male Gothic tends to represent the male protagonist’s attempt to penetrate some encompassing interior; female Gothic more typically represents a female protagonist’s attempts to escape from a confining interior” (Punter and Byron 278). Labeling *The Lottery* “female Gothic” would be too simplistic, though. For instance, the male Gothic typically deals with questions of identity, it employs multiple points of view to destabilize and deny the reader any fixed interpretation, closure is denied, and the supernatural—if in use at all—is commonly left unexplained. In the female Gothic, the supernatural is often rationalized and explained; rather than being concerned with general identity politics, it deals specifically with (female) gender politics (Punter and Byron 278-79). Also, “male Gothic has a tragic plot. The female formula demands a happy ending” (Williams 103). These general tendencies go to show that these differences are anything but clear and absolute. Many works—such as Jackson’s *The Lottery*—employ features associated with both male and female Gothic.

Modern Gothic fiction seems to function very well within a postmodern setting, especially the Gothic written by women.²⁶ Susanne Becker points out that the Gothic “has experienced a revival that is related to the two most powerful political and aesthetic movements of our time: feminism and postmodernism,” possibly because “it shares with them a radical scepticism concerning the universalising humanist assumptions of modern thought and of classic realism” (1). One narrative strategy commonly employed by both Gothic and

25. For a brief history of the Female Gothic in academia, see Smith and Wallace

26. Darryl Hattenhauer claims that Jackson’s fiction is “proto-postmodern,” viz. “late modernist writing that shows traits of what will become postmodernism” (2). The use of intertextuality, nonrealistic modes of writing, decentering of the subject by undermining the stability of personality and identity, unreliable narration, and subject formation, he says, justify this label (4-7). It seems to me, though, that the short story composite genre itself invites several points of view, unreliable narration, if not intertextuality, certainly intratextuality, and a degree of disruption and fragmentation. Also, the Gothic mode of writing was focusing on excess, distortions, taboo, and the dark sides of humanity long before the term “postmodernism” was conceived. See March-Russell’s review of Hattenhauer for a similar critique; see also Jackson, “The Unloved Reader,” a previously unpublished review of Barthelme’s *Come Back, Dr. Caligari* and Chester’s *Behold Goliath*, where it is evident that Jackson does not like this kind of fiction. From this review we may assume that Jackson herself would not appreciate Hattenhauer’s attempt to make her part of the postmodern movement, “proto-” prefix or not.

postmodern literature is that of excess.²⁷ The moral implications of this excess are twofold: it can refer to going beyond the norm, which inevitably draws attention to the limitations of these norms, and it can refer to the unknown world beyond the limitations, an experience at once liberating and horrific (Becker 39). The sense of these limitations, the urge to transcend them while being aware of the dangers involved, is certainly relevant to the reading of *The Lottery*, where the heroines stand between conformity and the unknown, the latter represented by the elusive figure of James Harris, the daemon lover. The term excess can be used in the moral sense of the word (the portrayal of violence and “forbidden” issues), as denoting a realism that is exceeded into the realms of the supernatural, and in a structural and stylistic sense. There is excess in the use of multiple perspectives and inter- and intratextuality, and in that the characters often experience indeterminacy. Jackson’s use of the past, drawing on early modern beliefs in witchcraft and folklore, is also an excess; we are given what Becker elsewhere describes as a “secret plot from the past” that “doubles and contests—and thus problematises—the conventions of a surface narrative pattern” (11). The text becomes a multi-layered construction where the female character experiences threat and suppression through (thematic) excess, an experience that causes her to attempt an escape that sometimes means an escape into death.

The Gothic of New England can be distinguished from Southern Gothic in some ways. First of all, the region’s obvious connections to the Old Country have an impact. There is “continuity between the fears and wonders of the Old World and the folklore and literature of the new” (Ringel 3). Ringel goes on to say that the Gothic strain in New England can be

considered as part of the phenomenon of medievalism, in the survival of older traditions and in the Romantic re-creation of those traditions, since the Gothic combines nostalgia for a medieval golden age with the belief that the past, however longed for, is equally the source of horror and evil. (3)

This ambivalent view of the past is clear in the work of Hawthorne, to whom Jackson is often compared due to her parable-like stories. Hawthorne often uses historical events as the starting point for stories about hidden guilt and sins, implying that these things are somehow rooted in the past. Furthermore, New England Gothic often features the supernatural:

27. See Becker 25-33; Botting 1-13.

ghosts, witches, demons, and monsters often come back to haunt and terrorize the living, as in much of H. P. Lovecraft's fiction. This is not very common in Southern Gothic, where the grotesque is much more prominent. "Most New Englanders," says Ringel, "shared a fear of necromancy and the malevolent powers of the dead" (3). Other medieval traditions survived in New England as well: belief in fairies, elves and nature spirits, the rites of spring, and the search for signs and wonders. Significant in relation to the ballad of James Harris is the fact that at least some inhabitants of New England believed in European monsters such as "merfolk, ocean serpents and lake dwellers [. . .] and other shapechangers" (Ringel 3-4).

New England's history of supernatural beliefs sometimes resulted in outbreaks of paranoia—the Salem witch trials in 1692 is probably the most famous expression of the "failure of the Puritans' attempted Utopia" (Ringel 11).²⁸ The Fall of Man from innocence is one of the foundations of Puritan doctrine, and the dark past, combined with the belief that human sin was the reason for all kinds of horrors is a typical element in the New England Gothic. The difficulties of transferring the European Christian mythos—part of European history—to the New World made their ways into American folklore and literature, where the paranoia of a troubled past is still being portrayed by modern horror writers. In *The Lottery*, we clearly see the use of historical, supernatural, and folkloric elements in a modern setting. The inclusion of such material is an apt way of foregrounding the tensions between the past and the present—a vintage theme in Gothic fiction.²⁹

Jackson does not, I think, use the Gothic just for Gothic's sake, nor does she allude to witchcraft and folklore only to create a sense of mystery. Rather, the cause for employing it is to say something about contemporary society. Linda Trichter Metcalf writes that

in Jackson's work the "demonic" is [. . .] a metaphor which correlates to the felt powerlessness of the feminized woman. [. . .] What Jackson does is to objectify the sources of existential anxiety as demonic; and, through the terror which the demonic typically evokes, she reflects another, more universal horror: the experience of the discrepancy between "normal" outward appearance and the strange permutations that normalcy takes in the interior life. (56)

28. See Ringel 75-103 on New England witch beliefs.

29. In England, the major influences of Gothic fiction in the eighteenth century were the country's ancient (historical) heritage, medieval poetry (Chaucer, in particular), the works of Spenser and other Elizabethans, and ballads (Punter 1: 7). The supernatural moved from the old ballads into Gothic fiction—the American Gothic seems to have followed this development too; Jackson's effort within this tradition brings out these relations, while at the same time representing a renewal of the genre.

These observations are also relevant to American fiction generally: writing about American fiction between 1950 and 1970, Tony Tanner notes the “growing tendency among American novelists to refer to ghosts, demons, occult powers, and all sorts of magic when it comes to offering some account of the forces at work in the real dream, or dreamed reality, of modern life” (378).³⁰ Considering the widespread uncertainty in the world after World War II, it seems logical that a mode of writing that endorses disintegration, excess, destabilization, estrangement, insanity, confusion, and the apocalyptic should have a renaissance of sorts at this point in time.

Witchcraft, Folklore, and Reality: Definitions and Points of Departure

As Keith Thomas points out in his classic study *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, an investigation of witchcraft should ideally take place from at least three points of view: “a *psychological* explanation of the motives of the participants in the drama of witchcraft accusation, a *sociological* analysis of the situation in which such accusations tended to occur, and an *intellectual* explanation of the concepts that made such accusations plausible” (559). Thomas is mainly interested in the intellectual side, as I believe Shirley Jackson is in *The Lottery*. Clearly, the different perspectives Thomas lists are connected; the work of Joseph Glanvill, for instance, epigraphed in *The Lottery*, features both philosophical-demonological explications, and confessions from actual witch trials. Demonology, an aspect of witchcraft theory that dealt with the Devil’s manifestations in the world, is of central importance here, especially the idea of the demon lover and its corporeality. I focus on this aspect rather than the many factors that fueled the actual, historical witch trials. The concept of witchcraft was also related to magic and heresy, which I cannot go into here. Furthermore, I have limited my discussion to the male demon lover, since that concept is most relevant to the understanding of James Harris. The succubi, the Jewish night-demon Lilith, temptresses like the biblical Salome, the tricksters of various folkloric traditions, vampires, and other interesting creatures of the

30. Rollo May has an interesting observation on loneliness and demons: “Loneliness and its stepchild, alienation, can become forms of demon possession. Surrendering ourselves to the impersonal daimonic pushes us into an anonymity which is also impersonal; we serve nature’s gross purposes on the lowest common denominator, which often means with violence” (162). Demon possessions belong, at least figuratively, to the modern as well as to the early modern world.

night, have not been considered.

The stereotypical conceptions of witchcraft and demonology seen in children's books and other simplifications come from a long and complex history that represents a whole system of thought and learning. In Jackson's short story composite we find themes and subject matter that are certainly witchcraftian in nature, but in a philosophical, psychological way, not in an explicit, blatant way. Many of the characters are confused, alienated, bored, and eager to escape; they are outsiders, pressured by their community, they feel insignificant, ordinary and melancholy: mental states one might associate with a sixteenth-century woman suspected of being a witch. By including direct references to witchcraft material—not so much in the stories proper, but in the epigraphs—the connection to this intellectual, theoretical strain of witchcraft is made, and it is a connection that colors the reader's experience of the stories and the collection as a whole.

We should note that witchcraft was the product of both ecclesiastical and lay authorities, finding simultaneous expression in both popular superstition and learned demonological discourses by the intellectual elite; which witch inspired which is difficult to tell (pardon the pun). Eventually, though, the demon lover, like the Devil himself, took refuge in folklore and literature, where he had probably originated once. A ballad portraying the folkloric demon lover is included in *The Lottery*, and what I call the folkloric aspects in Jackson's book is to be understood simply as the inclusion of that ballad, i.e. the use of the central character of James Harris, and thematic-structural traits derived from that text in Jackson's stories.

Realism in literature is usually understood as either (1) stylistic conventions or a mode of writing present in texts of all ages, that seek to represent life and experience in fiction, or (2) a movement in literature that occurred in the nineteenth century (Abrams 260–61). Reality, however, is a much looser term. Jackson's short story composite is obviously a work of fiction, and it is predominantly written in a realistic mode. The Gothic strain outlined above, however, challenges the otherwise realistic narrative by introducing more or less fantastic, supernatural elements that cause the reader (and, at times, characters) to hesitate—the Gothic can be characterized by how it exploits other genres and modes of writing rather than by a set of coherent conventions. Calling *The Lottery* a solely Gothic text is unfortunate, since,

as noted above, we are dealing with a realistic text with Gothic elements. It is in the play between the Gothic and the realistic, the real and the supernatural, that I think we may situate Jackson's book. For my purposes, "reality" (and "sense of reality," as I sometimes refer to) is meant to convey the fuzzy boundaries between realism and the supernatural in Jackson's text. By placing the most overtly supernatural references in marginal positions, in the paratexts, I think Jackson calls attention to the *possibility* of evil through supernaturalism and the like, rather than its more overt representations. Furthermore, using words like "reality" and "sense of reality" allows considering not only the text's generic conventions, but also how the fictional characters perceive their own (fictional) reality. The rather wide terms "reality" and "sense of reality" are meant to accommodate these reservations.

Aims, Scope, Theoretical and Structural Considerations

The aim of the present thesis is tripartite. First, I want to trace the sources Jackson alludes to (i.e. the sources of the demon lover motif) and read these against the individual texts of *The Lottery*, as well as the composite as a whole; in other words, an intertextual (actually, a predominantly *paratextual*) exploration of the book. The paratexts, I posit, are important in our understanding of the composite. The second aim follows naturally from the first: I want to demonstrate that *The Lottery* is no mere short story collection, but a short story composite with both unifying and disunifying elements. Thirdly, the thesis attempts to show that Jackson problematizes reality in various ways in her set of short stories, and that we can begin to understand this by considering not only historical conceptions of the demon lover, but also more modern theories like Todorov's discussion of the fantastic and Freud's uncanny. All these aims begin and end with the character James Harris. One could possibly boil all these aims down to one question: who is James Harris?

The many allusions, paratextual and others, call for, at times, rather detailed explanations informed by several disciplines, not just literary criticism. The scope Jackson operates with in her book cannot be done full justice here, but I have tried to show the complexities of the ideas she presents. A discussion of the contextual data that informs the composite seems necessary in order to demonstrate how these allusions and references work in relation to

the text. Treating the parts (the individual stories) in relation to a larger whole (the book) and vice versa, invites a hermeneutic approach (I see hermeneutics as a basic attitude to reading texts rather than as a method) that considers both historical and textual context. In *The Lottery*, there are two texts in particular that need to be studied alongside the stories to provide sufficient ground for interpretation: the Glanvill treatise and the James Harris ballad, both quoted explicitly in Jackson's composite. There are allusions to other texts too, and where it seems relevant, those sources will also be discussed. My hermeneutic attitude needs one clarification: while the hermeneutician, at least after Heidegger and Gadamer, usually looks at how meaning is produced in the individual through texts or other means of communication, I follow Paul Ricoeur's notion of the "hermeneutic arc," which seeks to "integrate the opposed attitudes of explanation and understanding with an overall conception of reading as the recovery of meaning" (161). Explanation (the domain of structuralism, linguistics, and other "superficial" textual exercises) is the first step, while understanding (the traditional domain of hermeneutics) is the second step. The internal dynamic and external projection of texts therefore constitutes the twofold work of a more text-oriented attitude than one often associates with modern hermeneutics. For my purposes, this amounts to close reading of stories, discussing the structure of the composite, and the like, as well as looking at contexts, the meaning of the text, and its effect on the reader whenever applicable. The thesis alternates between text and context throughout, rather than presenting them separately. I should add that doubt and the possibility of revising one's views is a typical hermeneutic attitude, and given the amount of ambiguity in *The Lottery*, I do not want to insist too strongly on the validity of the following analyses.

Furthermore, the topic itself necessitates a historicist approach, since the historical and cultural developments of demonology, witchcraft, and folklore are of central importance when trying to understand what Jackson means when she alludes to these things (I have already noted the importance of historicizing the Gothic). In the last chapter in particular, modern ideas will be used contextually, which will hopefully bring us closer to understanding the purpose of the complex play with demonology and folklore. Thus, the thesis reads Jackson in a relational, contextualizing, historicizing way, with an eclectic and fundamentally

hermeneutic attitude to the text.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters discuss the demon lover in witchcraft and folklore, respectively, while the third looks more closely at the question of reality, and how Jackson conveys the notion of uncertainty. Obviously, the close connections between witchcraft and the folkloric d(a)emon lover call for some overlapping observations and repeated points, especially between the first two chapters; some stories could have been discussed in either chapter.

A Note on the References

References to Plato and Aristotle are given in the standard Stephanus and Bekker numerals, respectively, that refer to the standard Greek editions of Henri Estienne (1578) and Immanuel Bekker (1831). Most good editions of Plato and Aristotle provide these numbers in the margins as well as regular pagenumbers. They consist of a page number followed by column letter, and, in Aristotle's case, also a line number. Thus, Aristotle 1447a10 (page 1447, column a, line 10 in Bekker) refers to the opening line of the *Poetics*, and Plato 172a (page 172, column a in Stephanus) refers to the opening of the *Symposium*—regardless of translation and edition. Instead of using “ff.” to denote “the following pages,” the sign “+” is used to avoid confusion with the column letters in references to Plato. These reference systems are standard scholarly practice, and since they are fairly accurate, I have not provided pagenumbers to the editions I have used. For the location of the different works in the standard English collected editions of their works, see Works Cited.

I refer to all Greek tragedies using linenumbers, not pagenumbers (there are no act or scene divisions in Greek tragedy). Contrary to normal scholarly practice, and due to my “Greeklessness,” those numbers point to the English translations used, not the established Greek texts. The same goes for the references to Homer; the linenumbers here refer to the English translation listed in the bibliography.

When referring to the works of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, I give the chapter and section numbers (or book and chapter numbers) followed by a page number in brackets referring to the edition used. This is an extra precaution, since the chapter and

section numbers themselves are not always accurate enough to pinpoint the exact place.

Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus triumphatus* is a special case and my references to it require some clarification: in the first edition of that book (the edition used here), there is a preliminary part containing a note from the publisher, Henry More's letter and postscript, and an advertisement (unsigned, but probably written by the publisher), before the two parts of Glanvill's own text appear. All these three parts are numbered separately (the "Epistle Dedicatory" to "The Illustrious Charles, Duke of Richmond and Lenox" and the "Preface," each placed at the beginning of Glanvill's parts respectively, are not numbered at all). As if this is not enough, the first part of Glanvill's own text is divided into two parts: Part One ("Some Considerations about Witchcraft in a Letter to Robert Hunt, Esq.") and an "Appendage" to that part about "The true Notion of a Spirit." The appendage picks up the pagenumbers where the first part ends, but the section numbers start, again, at one(!). In my references to Glanvill, the part followed by section (called "relation" in part II) will be given in roman numerals in front of the pagenumbers unless the relevant part is clearly identified in the main text—this should also make it possible to check the references in different editions. Since there are no epigraphs in Jackson's book from the preliminary part written by More, a reference to "I.IV.19" means part one, section four, page 19 of *Glanvill's* text. Jackson does not refer to the appendage to the first part, so I have not accommodated that in my reference system. In the second and third editions, the whole book has pagenumbers running throughout (see Works Cited for references to these editions online). I have changed the occasional "f" to "s" (phrases like "the Devil sucked her blood" look slightly less bizarre that way); otherwise I have not modernized the spelling, nor have I changed Glanvill's use of italics.

The "James Harris" ballad is referred to using the variant number (A-H), followed by stanza number and line number, as in "F1.4," which refers to variant F, stanza 1, line 4. All the variants of the ballad printed in Child are reproduced in Appendix A, below.

CHAPTER ONE

“BETWEEN HERE AND THERE”

Demonology and Witchcraft

The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil, and the devil hath power
T'assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps,
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me.

—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 2.2.601-5

Witchcraft was hung, in History,
But History and I
Find all the Witchcraft that we need
Around us, every Day—

—Emily Dickinson, poem 1583

As I was going up the stair
I met a man who wasn't there;
He wasn't there again today!
I wish, I *wish* he'd stay away.

—Hughes Mearns, “Antigonish”

A HISTORIZATION OF ANY aspect of the occult necessarily has to deal with a number of areas, as it is “impossible to define the occult in a way that sets it completely apart from religion, science, and technology” (Burton and Grandy 4). In this case, it involves going behind the popular conceptions of witches and demons—which are not necessarily wrong, but certainly demystified, rationalized, and harmless—and instead focus mainly on original sources (classical literature, philosophical writings, early modern demonological dissertations, and such) in order to avoid looking at these things from our modern point of view. Much occultism seems ridiculous now, but as Burton and Grandy point out, “no occult topic is so obscure or laughable that it cannot be made compelling once the motivating assumptions are understood” (2).

This chapter considers Jackson’s stories in the context of demonology and witchcraft,

before discussing the Glanvill epigraphs. Initially, however, exactly what a daemon is needs to be explained, as the distinction between the daemonic and the demonic is of vital importance in understanding James Harris; he is, after all, referred to as a “daemon,” not a “demon,” in Jackson’s story “The Daemon Lover.”

Love, Doom, Madness, and Fate: The Greek Daemon

A daemon (Gr. *daimōn*)¹ is a non-malicious inspirational force mediating between gods and men, but an ambiguous one, since it is neither divine nor human, neither good nor evil, but all these things at once. From Homer onwards, a daemon has meant an “operator of more or less unexpected, and intrusive, events in human life” that corresponds to “supernatural power in its unpredictable, anonymous, and often frightful manifestations,” an “occult power, a force that drives man forward where no agent can be named,” an “incomprehensible yet present activity of a higher power” (“*daimōn*”; Burkert 180, 331). One aspect of the daemonic worth keeping in mind is that it is not necessarily associated with evil—that quality must be attributed to the later, Christian demon.² The ancient Greeks placed the daemons in a clearly defined cosmology, where their status and rank in relation to other gods and demigods only confirms their duality.

According to Plato’s *Epinomis*, “after [the first gods] and next in order beneath them are the *daimōns*. [They are] responsible for mediation between gods and humans, and should be highly honored in our prayers for bringing words of good tidings” (984e). Cosmologically, then, the daemons are “middle spirits—Betwixt the angelical and human kind,” as Milton

1. The meaning of the word is unclear, but its etymology indicates that it originally meant something along the lines of “divider” or “allotter.” The adjective, *daimōnios*, means “strange,” “incomprehensible,” “uncanny” (“*daimōn*”; see also Burkert 180). In the *Cratylus*, Plato takes the word to mean “wise and knowing” (398b). An illustration of the word’s ambiguity: in three different plays by Sophocles, *daimōn* is translated into three different words in English, according to its context; “fate” in the *Women of Trachis* (1025), “Genius” in the *Electra* (917), and “God” in the *Philoctetes* (1187).
2. Of importance in this regard is Xenocrates—a pupil of Plato’s—who first distinguishes between good and evil daemons (Burkert 332). Later, the good daemons were conveniently adopted by Christian theology as angels (from the Greek *angeloi*, which means “messengers,” in tune with the daemons’ role as mediators), while the evil ones became demons, or fallen angels (see Burkert 329–32). Daemons became darker and darker during antiquity too: “in the age that lies between the *Odyssey* [ca. 720 BCE] and the *Oresteia* [of Aeschylus, first performed in 458 BCE], the daemons seem to draw closer: they grow more persistent, more insidious, more sinister” (Dodds 41). Then, from Aeschylus, the oldest of the Greek tragedians, to the youngest, Euripides, there is further development: Euripides’s characters tend to “[confront] the mystery of evil, no longer as an alien thing assailing their reason from without, but as part of their own being,” their *own* “irrational selves” (Dodds 186).

described them (III.461); they could ascend into the celestial realm to accompany the gods, but they could also descend into the lower world of humans. The idea of daemons as intermediaries between gods and men is new in Plato's use of the term. Following Plato, Marsilio Ficino developed a complex system of realms and spheres to explain the daemonic presence:

The beings which inhabit the region of ethereal fire located under the moon, or that of the pure air, or that of humid air next to the water, the Platonists call daemons. The rational beings which inhabit the earth they call men. The gods are immortal, and impassible, but men are passible and mortal. Daemons are immortal, of course, but passible. The Platonists do not ascribe the passions of the body to the daemons, but certain emotions of the soul, by which they somehow love good men and hate evil men. They mix agreeably and eagerly in the governing of lower things, but especially of human affairs, and from this friendly service, they all seem good. (185)

Ficino also distinguishes between different types of daemons. In his study of Ficino's *Phaedrus* commentary, Michael J. B. Allen writes: "Closest to the star gods are the highest demons,³ sometimes referred to by the ancient Neoplatonists as angels. Then come the ranks of demons proper. Finally come the heroes, the souls of illustrious men who have achieved the demonic state" (9-10). The lowest daemons inhabited the zones of water and earth; these were "airy beings, though their bodies, erect like ours, would be particularly cloudy in the case of the water demons, or smoky in the case of the earth demons" (Allen 13). Between earth and ether is air, and this is the area—reaching as far as the orbit of the Moon—the daemons inhabit.⁴ That the daemons should be associated with air is in a way logical, since man was associated with earth, and gods with ether. Ether—the "fifth element," or the "quintessence"—is an incorruptible matter, subject to different physical laws; it exists in the heavens, which move in perfect, harmonic circles, appropriate for the gods (Shapin 23-24; see figure in Russell, *Satan* 65). But, to complicate things further, "every god can act as *daimōn*" (Burkert 180). For instance, Athena has this function in Sophocles's *Ajax*, where she causes Ajax's madness. Madness is, as we shall see shortly, associated with the daemonic.

3. Allen talks about "demons," not "daemons," but Ficino seems to mean the same beings in the *Phaedrus*-commentary as in his *Symposium*-commentary.
4. "Both these kinds of living beings—the one made of ether and the next in order, the one made of air—are wholly imperceptible. Even when they are close by we cannot see them. They have a wonderful intelligence, being of kinds that learn quickly and have good memories, and we should say that they know all our thoughts" (Plato, *Epinomis* 984e-985a).

Cosmology is one thing; another is how people believed daemons could influence their lives, and what one attributed to the workings of daemons. In their strange ambiguity, daemons could occupy many overlapping areas of belief. However, three main areas stand out.⁵ First of all, the daemonic was projected through a particular, often collective, human situation, like a famine or a plague. The actual reasons behind such catastrophes were not yet understood, so some daemonic power or other was often blamed. Of these powers were the *keres* (“fates”), powers of evil, who brought pollution, disease, old age, death, and troubles in general. Unlike the daemons mentioned already, the *keres* always bring evil, usually death. At the opening of Sophocles’s *Oedipus the King*, the city of Thebes is suffering from a God that “carries fire, / a deadly pestilence” (28-29). The reason for this plague is an earthly crime: Oedipus’s slaying of his father Laius, the king of Thebes. Thus, daemonic pestilence could be brought on a community as revenge from the gods. Sometimes the punishment could be hereditary. In the opening of Sophocles’s *Antigone*, for instance, Antigone, Oedipus’s daughter, addresses her sister as follows: “Ismene, my dear sister, / whose father was my father, can you think of any / of all the evils that stem from Oedipus / that Zeus does not bring to pass for us, yet we live?” (1-4). Punishment is brought on to the community as well as to the perpetrator’s descendants, a trait often associated with the Erinyes, the powers of retribution. Which takes us to the next category: that of individual fate.

A second type of daemon was a spiritual guardian that follows one through life, a divine, transcendental Ego (or super-ego?) within each and every human being, which determines that person’s destiny, but still under the supervision of Zeus; such a daemon is a person’s “occult self” (Dodds 139 f.). This type of daemon was also associated with luck: a lucky person was *eudaimōn* while an unlucky one was *kakodaimōn*.⁶ The Greeks had several words for fate; one is *ker*. The *keres*, or fates, are often personified and represented as birds with human heads—like the Harpies—functioning as daemonic death-spirits (when Zeus weighs

5. I roughly follow Dodds’s typology of daemons in what follows (40-43).

6. In Sophocles’s *Oedipus the King*, after Oedipus has blinded himself, the chorus exclaims: “Poor wretch, what madness came upon you! / What evil spirit leaped upon your life / to your ill-luck—a leap beyond man’s strength!” (1300-02). Both “evil spirit” and “ill-luck” are translations from the Greek *daimōn* (see Hogan 70n1300). One also notes with interest that the image of the daemon leaping upon its victim is used already in Greek mythology; it would later be taken up in the idea of the incubus/succubus demons (more on these charming creatures below).

the fates of Hector and Achilles, he puts two *keres* [literally “two portions of death” or “two death fates”] onto the scales [*Iliad* 22.209 ff.]. The *keres*, then, also seem to have had both a collective and an individual function (see Russell, *Devil* 142-43). Fate was also identified with the Furies, or Erinyes; powers of retribution that bring *atē* (usually translated as “doom” or “evil”) in the form of folly, fury, madness or vain hope from the gods (Hogan 150-51; 582-623). They carried out curses, and if guilt was not paid for in one generation, they could impose it on the next. They were seen as the souls of the dead by some, and were given vampiric habits—they suck blood—in Aeschylus’s *Eumenides* (183 f., 264 f.; see also Sophocles’s *Antigone* 584-85). Famous treatments of *atē* appear in Sophocles’s *Antigone* (640-78), where doom is described as continuing in “generation after generation / within a breed” (644-45),⁷ and in the *Ajax*, where Athena brings *atē* on Ajax for his stubbornness and pride. The Erinyes were also associated with the daemonic (Dodds 2 ff.; “Erinyes”). The concept of *atē*, which can result in momentary madness, brings us over to the third category of daemonic agency, which is probably the most relevant and interesting in relation to Jackson’s daemon lover.

Momentary lapses of rationality, such as madness, were also brought on by daemons. “[It] would have been fine to say [that] madness [is] bad, pure and simple; but in fact the best things we have come from madness, when it is given as a gift of the god,” Socrates says in Plato’s dialogue *Phaedrus* (244a). He divides this (benign) divine madness into four types: (1) prophetic madness, whose patron is Apollo, (2) telestic or ritual madness, whose patron is Dionysus, (3) poetic madness, inspired by the Muses, and (4) erotic madness, inspired by Aphrodite and Eros (244a-245a, 265b). The madness of love is the “best” one, says Socrates (265b), and, for obvious reasons, of interest when trying to understand Jackson’s daemon lover.

Eros, according to *The Oxford Dictionary of Classical Myth and Religion*, is “cunning, unmanageable, cruel,” he “comes suddenly like a wind and shakes his victims,” he is “playful, but plays with frenzies and confusion,” he is young, beautiful and sweet, and he “warms the heart” (“Eros”). Exactly what kind of love he is responsible for and what kind of status he

7. One a similar note, H. D. F. Kitto points out that in only two of Sophocles’s seven extant plays—the *Oedipus at Colonus* and the *Philoctetes*—the dead are not somehow killing the living (145).

has mythologically is far from clear. If we go back to Hesiod's *Theogony*—a genealogical poem about the Greek gods and spirits probably as old as Homer—Eros is the handsome god of love who overpowers all other gods and humans when it comes to “shrewd planning” (120-22),⁸ but in Plato's *Symposium* his powers have expanded. In Pausanias's speech we hear that there are two kinds of Love, “Heavenly” and “Common” (180d+), and in Eryximachus's speech Eros forms the world by uniting separate elements (186a-188e),⁹ not unlike James Harris, who is also both a unifying element in Jackson's short story composite and a divider who disrupts people's lives. But it is in the final, most famous speech of the *Symposium*, the one by Socrates, that Eros is finally associated with the daemonic.

Socrates talks about his meeting with Diotima, who once taught him about love. When asked by Socrates what love is, she answers that he (abstract concepts like love were often personified; Eros the god and love the emotion are usually one and the same) is a “great spirit [. . .] between god and mortal;” he is one of the daemons, who are

messengers who shuttle back and forth between the two, conveying prayer and sacrifice from men to gods, while to men they bring commands from the gods and gifts in return for sacrifices. Being in the middle of the two, they round out the whole and bind fast the all to all. Through them all divination passes, through them the art of priests in sacrifice and ritual, in enchantment, prophecy, and sorcery. Gods do not mix with men; they mingle and converse with us through spirits instead, whether we are awake or asleep. [. . .] These spirits are many and various, then, and one of them is Love. (202e-203a)

Marsilio Ficino, the star of Cosimo de Medici's influential Platonic Academy in Florence, and the coiner of the phrase “Platonic love” (Kristeller 286), gives the following summary of Plato's dialogue in his *Symposium*-commentary: “Socrates and Diotima [. . .] place [Love] in a mean position between the beautiful and the ugly, good and bad, blessed and wretched, God and man. [. . .] Love is the Median between Beauty / and its Opposite and is both

8. Cf. Sophocles's *Women of Trachis*, line 443: “He [Eros] rules even the gods as he pleases.”

9. “[Love] certainly occurs within the animal kingdom, and even in the world of plants. In fact, it occurs everywhere in the universe. Love is a deity of the greatest importance: he directs everything that occurs, not only the human domain, but also in that of the gods” (186b). Eryximachus is a doctor in the Hippocratic tradition, which among other things emphasized the importance of harmony between extreme opposites, so it should come as no surprise that his Eros controls all phenomena involving the balancing of opposites. His examples are taken from medicine (balancing properties within the body), music (harmony vs. discord), agriculture (the weather's influence on crops) and divination (interaction between man and gods). But, as the quote above shows, he expands love's influence to include “everything that occurs,” no less.

/ God and Man" (183). Ficino's Neoplatonist writings, which tried to join Platonism and Christianity, influenced the general philosophical climate in early modern Europe a great deal. His rediscovery of Plato through his translations and commentaries was therefore, indirectly at least, to inform numerous intellectuals' views on witchcraft (see Russell, *Witchcraft* 233-34).

After these introductory remarks on the historical and philosophical-theological background for the daemonic, it is time to relate these things to Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery*, and I will start with the first story, "The Intoxicated." Like Plato's *Symposium*, the setting of "The Intoxicated" is a party.¹⁰ A man—this is one of very few stories in *The Lottery* to have a male protagonist—goes to the kitchen during a private party "apparently to get ice, but actually to sober up a little" (3). There he meets the host's daughter Eileen, a seventeen-year old high school senior working on a paper about the future of the world. Eileen has nothing positive to say about the future, or the present for that matter: "I don't really think [the world]'s got much future,' she said, 'at least the way we've got it now'" (5). Her contention is that "if people had been really, honestly scared when you were young we wouldn't be so badly off today" (6). She goes on to express her fear that "maybe we in our Latin class will be the last people who ever read Cæsar" (6). To cheer her up, the man presents a more utopian version, at least in his eyes: he hopes that "liquor stores will break wide open" so that he can help himself to a case of brandy (7). Eileen responds with an assurance that "the office buildings will be just piles of broken stones" (7). Tired of all the morbidity in the room, the man eventually goes back to the party, telling Eileen that he will gladly help her with her Latin if she finds it difficult. She answers by giggling, assuring him that "I still do my homework every night" (7).

Back at the party in the living room, some guests are singing "Home on the Range," and the hostess is "deep in earnest conversation with a tall, graceful man in a blue suit" (8). James Harris has just started his adventures (in three early drafts, the man was dressed in gray [Hall

10. The title obviously refers to the drunkenness at the party, but it may also refer to witches, who were said to be intoxicated by the devil. Aristotle compares the man in a state of passion to men asleep, insane, or drunk: his reason is in suspense (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1147a11 ff.). Thus, there is an analogy between passion (Eros), drunkenness and insanity: they are all brought about by external events to which man is but a passive receiver, his reason suspended.

10]; the revision is highly significant since it shows how Jackson worked to unify the stories and develop the character of James Harris). Talking to the host about the conversation with his daughter, the man says that she is doing her Latin, which she is not: she is writing a paper on the future, not the past. The host answers with a quote from Caesar, and the story ends with the drunken man's assertion that Eileen is "a really extraordinary girl" (8). The man seems to have recognized some truth in what she has been saying at this point, but her father maintains the ignorance of his generation in his response to his guest's praise: "His host shook his head ruefully. 'Kids nowadays,' he said" (8). This is a situation that we will meet again and again throughout the composite: the strangely tense confrontations conveyed through Hemingwayesque, economic dialogue; the exposure of prejudice and ignorance; and the ambiguous, ironic endings (should we take Eileen seriously? Is she pulling the man's leg? Does she really believe her own statements, or should we see her as a prophet predicting the future?). James Harris, the "tall, graceful man in a blue suit," is mentioned only in passing here, as a kind of introduction to the adventures promised in the composite's title.

Contrasts seem to play an important role here. The joyful party is contrasted to a strangely apocalyptic conversation; a great past (references to Caesar and Latin, both associated with a golden age of western civilization) is contrasted to a present "badly off," and a future that does not look much better—a vintage theme in Gothic fiction. Also, this view recalls that of Hesiod (*The Works and Days*, lines 109–201): evil is the result of natural degradation built into the universe by the gods, who first created a golden race, then a silver, then a bronze, then the age of heroes, and finally the age Hesiod lived in, an age of iron with much baseness and decay; in the future comes the age of force, characterized by "wretched pain" and "no defense against evil" (201). A quotation from the Roman Empire rather than the golden age Hesiod talks about makes this notion of decay, here in a cultural sense, more concrete.

The Caesar quotation the host delivers "without expression," "*Gallia est omnia divisa in partes tres*" (8), is a slight misquote of the first sentence of Julius Caesar's *De bello Gallico* [*Gallic War*], meaning "Gaul is a whole divided into three parts" (Caesar 3).¹¹ This famous

11. No editions I have checked use *omnia*; it is supposed to be *omnis*. *Omnia* can only be neuter plural nominative/accusative, and is often used in the function of a noun, meaning "all things" (cf. *omnia vincit amor*,

opening—the first meeting with authentic Latin for millions of school children all over the world—is often cited as an example of concise, to-the-point narration, but while it is economic and famous, it is not very accurate. Gaul, at the time of Caesar, consisted of five, not three parts: Belgica, Celtica, Aquitania, Cisalpine Gaul, and Transalpine Gaul. Caesar refers only to the first three, the parts of Gaul that he has conquered, not “all Gaul” (normally understood as the whole geographical area of Gaul; the France and Belgium of our day).¹² Not only is the ambiguous statement by Caesar contextually significant, misquoting it helps amplify the fact that knowledge of the past is on the wane. (“Most of the occasions for the troubles of the world,” as Michel de Montaigne once observed, “are grammatical” [476]). Eileen’s father’s generation—to which our nameless, drunken protagonist also belongs, one assumes—was simply too busy chasing girls and going to parties to care about Caesar’s *De bello Gallico* or Latin case inflections, therefore doing violence to the great emperor’s words when quoting them slightly drunk at parties comes as no surprise. *The Lottery* also happens to consist of five parts, but only three of them are introduced by epigraphs, Joseph Glanvill’s “stamps of approval”—the three parts Harris, like Caesar, has “conquered” perhaps?

Nightmares and Demonic Copulation: Incubi, Succubi, and “The Daemon Lover”

In the second story of *The Lottery*, the daemonic is joined with another concept that had great significance for the understanding of witchcraft and demonology in the Christian Middle Ages and the early modern period: the demon lover.¹³ A fundamental part of witchcraft

“love conquers all” [Virgil’s tenth eclogue]); *Gallia*, being a feminine singular nominative, requires *omnis*, the feminine singular form. Since *Gallia* is feminine, one would want a feminine adjective to match, and these usually require the *-a* suffix. However, *omnis* follows the third declension, which gives *omnis*. Since *esse* is a verb of incomplete predication it requires a complement in the same case and number, not an accusative like *Omnia*. (See Greenough et. al.’s *Commentary on Caesar’s Gallic War* [1898], available on the Perseus Web at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.04.0017&query=pg_1%3D%231> [accessed 13 Jan 2005]). I strongly doubt that the host is deliberately misquoting to make a point, but there is a slight chance that Jackson is. Perhaps she wants to show that ignorance paradoxically leads to absolute certainty quite often, or that the present is already ignorant enough to pervert the past; then again, she might simply be having fun with her well-read and philologically attentive readers.

12. *Gallia*, though, was often used to denote only Transalpine Gaul, but when Caesar says “all” Gaul one might take this to mean the whole territory, with all the provinces. See Greenough et. al. for a map (the full reference is given in the previous note).
13. Contemporary witchcraft theorists—theologians, most of them—often cited the Bible to justify their views on witches (S. Clark 330 f., 567-71; Thomas 682-84), but there are probably no foundations for witchcraft in Scripture at all. The term “witch” occurs three times in some early translations: Exod 22.18, Lev 20.27, and 2 Kings 9.22. The former (“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” in the King James Version) was often

myth, at least on the continent, was the belief that demons had sex with witches on sabbats—orgies supervised by Satan himself (this belief may have originated in the Dionysian mystery cults of ancient Greece, famously described in Euripides’s *Bacchae*, where the female members were accused of excessive drinking and sexual perversions [see Levack 38-44; Russell, *The Devil* 137-42]). Sexual submission to the Devil was “a ritual act, demonstrating the witch’s servitude, in both body and soul, to the demonic familiar and to Satan, the arch-enemy of God” (Stephens 13);¹⁴ it was the ultimate sign of loyalty to the Prince of Darkness to give one’s body as well as one’s soul to him. Some theorists held that witches took immense pleasure in demonic copulation; others emphasized the utter joylessness and degraded perversity of it (Stephens 19). Either way, the idea of demonic copulation served to anthropomorphize demons, showing that demons were able to physically interact with humans. The demon lover idea thus becomes part of a larger demonological issue in this period: the question of demons’ corporeality.

Most theorists agreed that demons existed (they do, after all, occur several times in the Bible), but they were less certain about their corporeality. St. Thomas Aquinas rigorously argued that physical interaction between demons and humans was possible and that demons could acquire physical bodies, whereas one of the most important ecclesiastical documents of the Middle Ages, the *Canon Episcopi* (written in the tenth century by Regino of Prüm, it was canon law until the thirteenth century) declared that witchcraft was an illusion and that believing in it amounted to heresy.¹⁵ Aquinas says, somewhat confusingly, that demons

invoked to call for the death penalty in cases of witchcraft. The original Hebrew translated as “witch” in these instances, however, means “poisoner” or “someone who works in darkness”; it has nothing to do with the idea of witchcraft, which appeared much later. Correcting this, most modern translations use “female sorcerer,” “medium,” “necromancer,” or similar terms (see Levack 113 f.; Unger 153-61; “Witch”). I should also mention the famous “Witch of Endor”-episode at 1 Sam 28.7 ff., but the term “witch” is not to be found here either.

14. It is not until the New Testament and contemporary writing that Satan is identified as the arch-enemy of God and mankind. Jeffrey Burton Russell makes the following observation on the fundamental importance of the Devil in the New Testament: “The function of the Devil in the New Testament is as counterprinciple to Christ. The central message of the New Testament is salvation: Christ saves us. What he saves us from is the power of the Devil. If the power of the Devil is dismissed, the Christ’s saving mission becomes meaningless” (*The Devil* 229). In the Hebrew Bible, Satan is one of God’s obedient servants, an angel-messenger (angel, we recall, means messenger). True, Satan blocks people’s plans or desires (the Greek *diabolos*, later translated “devil,” literally means “one who throws something across one’s path”), but as Elaine Pagels points out, these are not necessarily malevolent acts, he may protect one from doing greater harm (40), and he always intervenes according to God’s will.
15. Deeming the *Canon Episcopi* wholly skeptical to witchcraft is slightly misleading; there are also elements in it that later became part of the concept of witchcraft (Levack 46). See also Russell, *Witchcraft* 75-80, where one will also find a translation of the most important passages (76-77), some of which is quoted in one of

(and angels) have “bodies that both are and are not real,” indicating an “in-between state of reality [. . .] accomplished by the creation of a *virtual* body” (Stephens 62). A virtual body was a body made of air, assumed by the demon in order to appear human.¹⁶ Around 1400, the question of whether demons could interact with humans took on a new urgency. Theologians looking for proof began “speculating that certain people were having sex with incubi and succubi, making pacts with demons to perform *maleficium* [deeds of harmful magic], and attending meetings of demons and humans” (Stephens 322). Theological discussions on the nature of demons, then, had made their way into witchcraft. Sex was the ultimate proof of reality, so if one could prove that this took place, the physical reality of demons could not be questioned. Demons were generally not granted procreative power, but there was one fairly bizarre way in which this could be done: “If births were to follow they would necessarily have to originate in human semen acquired by succubus devils, preserved in transit, and rapidly inseminated by their incubus colleagues” (Clark 190; see also Kieckhefer 197). The first out to present this solution was Thomas Aquinas (Stephens 64), and his explanation influenced the later theory of witchcraft and the practice of witch-hunting a great deal.¹⁷

One usually distinguishes between *incubi* (male), and *succubi* (female) demon lovers (*incubus* and *succubus* in the singular). These attacked people of their opposite sex, usually in their sleep.¹⁸ Three main features characterize their effect on their subjects: “agonizing dread, a sense of oppression or weight upon the chest interfering with respiration, and the

the epigraphs to the present thesis. Russell also reproduces two slightly different versions of the *Canon* in an Appendix (291-93), albeit in Latin.

16. In Thomistic terms: demons could not be pure being since only God can have such purity, nor could they possess materiality since they had no potentiality (evil is characterized by the lack of potentiality—evil has no ontological being in Thomistic theology, it is mere privation, and can therefore have no essence). The middle solution, a rationale Aquinas also uses for angels, is an immaterial being with potentiality; neither eternal nor of time, neither of the Devil (or God) nor of matter (see Kermode 70; Russell, *Satan* 104-05, 162).
17. “This is not to imply that Aquinas was responsible for the attempt to verify demonic corporeality through witchcraft theory and witch-hunting. He certainly did not recommend the discovery and prosecution of witches in the way in which these things were practiced after his time” (Stephens 59). One should note that contrary to what seems logical, “it is simply not the case that witchcraft theory caused ‘witch hunts’ or that its incidence influenced theirs; indeed, the reverse is much more likely to have been true” (Clark vii). This is also one of the central ideas behind Stephens’s book. For more on Aquinas, see Russell, *Lucifer* 193-207.
18. Henry Fuseli’s famous painting “Nightmare” (ca. 1791-92), showing an incubus demon sitting on a sleeping woman’s chest, grinning mischievously at the spectator, is a typical portrayal of this kind of creature. Fuseli’s painting allegedly helped inspire Mary Shelley to write *Frankenstein* (1818), and it is often reproduced in books about the Gothic and/or witchcraft, posters for Gothic movies, and the like; Freud is said to have had a reproduction of it in his apartment in the 1920s. It can be found at <http://www.ksu.edu/english/westmank/spring_00/fuseli.nightmare.html> (accessed 21 June 2004).

illusion of helpless paralysis” (Weyer 717); we meet all three during the course of *The Lottery*. The last part of the word “nightmare,” “mare,” comes from an Old English word meaning *incubus*, which in turn comes from the Latin *incubo* (which also means nightmare), a derivation of *incubare*, meaning to lie upon. Consequently, these creatures sit on people’s chests, as in Fuseli’s painting, and “ride thee a-nights like the mare,” i.e. giving them nightmares (Shakespeare, *2H4* 2.1.76-77). Hence, an incubus demon is not necessarily just a demon that copulates with women; he can also cause nightmares, illusions, or other mental disturbances (see Burton II.101 on remedies).

Thomas Aquinas, as we have seen, believed that demons could change material substances, but not that they could “affect the soul’s cognitive powers regarding the internal or external senses” (xvi.11 [503-09]). St. Augustine disagrees about the ability to change material substances,¹⁹ but the chapter in which he voices this disagreement has a few very interesting thoughts on what he calls “phantoms:”

I do not [. . .] in the least believe that either the body or the soul can be transformed into the members and lineaments of beast by the art or power of demons. Rather, I believe that a man has a phantom which, in his thoughts or dreams, assumes various forms through the influence of circumstances of innumerable kinds. This phantom is not itself a body; yet, with wondrous speed, it takes on shapes which are like material bodies; and it is this phantom, I believe, that can—in some ineffable way which I do not understand—be presented in bodily form to the senses of others, when their physical senses are asleep or suppressed. (xviii.18 [843])

This phantom, which appears to be a material body that also exists in men’s thoughts and dreams, seems to me very close to the daemon, the same entity Augustine had rejected in favor of demons—the formulation “a man has a phantom” echoes the ancient Greek contention that a man has a daemon watching over him (see above). His “phantom” is an immaterial being that can appear material not in the real world but in people’s minds. As we shall see, such an explanation may also be given for the existence of James Harris. The cosmology behind

19. Augustine did not reject *incubi* and *succubi* altogether, only their ability to assume physical shape: “it is widely reported that the gods of the woodland and fields who are commonly called *incubi* have often behaved disgracefully towards women, lusting after them and contriving to lie with them; and this has been confirmed by many people, either from their own experience or from accounts of the experience of others whose good faith there is no reason to doubt” (xv.23 [681]). I should also mention that the labels “Thomist” and “Augustinian” doctrine in contemporary discussions of demonology are more or less useless, since most theorists drew freely on both authorities (Clark 539). Here, though, distinguishing between them can help us identify the main issues in the debate, and serve to demonstrate that even learned theologians were somewhat confused about these things.

succubi/incubi demons has it that the physical intrusion of the spirit is merely an appearance, and that effects from the spirit may extend beyond the apparent potential of the manifested illusion. One also notes with interest Augustine's connection between phantoms and sleep, a connection highly relevant to the incubi/succubi and also to Shirley Jackson's stories, where the borders between sleep and wakefulness, dream and reality, are often questioned; it is not coincidental that a number of her stories open with the protagonist sleeping, waking from a night of troubled sleep, or falling asleep constantly during the course of the narrative (cf. "The Tooth," discussed in Chapter Two).

The Devil could not only form a body of air to create a demonic illusion, he could also affect the imagination of his victims; some theorists (like Jean Vineti and Bartolomeo Spina) distinguished between inner and outer illusions of the Devil (Stephens 291-96). Vineti's and Spina's explanations derive from St. Thomas Aquinas's *On Evil (De malo)*, where he discusses three related questions: "can devils alter material substances by changing the substances' forms"; "can devils cause the locomotion of material substances"; and "can devils affect the soul's cognitive powers regarding the internal or external senses" (16.9-11 [495, 500, 503]). He also points out that "devils can cause human beings to perceive things by sense perception or imagination by returning sentient spirits to the bodily organs of their external senses or their power of imagination only by first restoring such forms to actuality from potentiality" (16.11 [504]). That is: the Devil can manipulate the sensory impressions and humors already contained in the person, but he cannot introduce a completely new set of perceptions (see Stephens 295). This was a break with the authoritative opinion of St. Augustine, who several hundred years earlier did not accept that demons could change a person's body or soul, or change themselves into physical entities; he had no need for Aquinas's virtual bodies in order to explain their nature.²⁰ Like Bonaventure, Plotinus, Marsilio Ficino (see above), and Agostino Steuco, other theorists with Neoplatonist leanings, he believed that angels and demons had bodies "of their own that were real yet composed of some im-

20. Augustine's most important contribution to the debate, however, was his redefinition of all daemons as *demons*: fallen, evil angels (Augustine VIII.12-22, 1X). He declared—in defense of Christian monotheism—that the gods worshiped by the pagan Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans were all demons that had misrepresented themselves to humans. Pagan literature did not represent the gods as pure spirits: they can change their appearance at will, but they have human bodies (Stephens 61). Belief in daemons, it seems, would then amount to idolatry.

mortal material that was too insubstantial to be perceived by human senses” (Stephens 77). Elsewhere, Augustine says that

[Plotinus] considered the fact that men have mortal bodies, and are therefore not confined for ever in the misery of this mortal life, to be due to the mercy of God the Father. But the iniquity of the demons was judged unworthy of this mercy, and, in addition to the misery of a soul subject to passions, they received a body which is not mortal, as man’s is, but eternal. (IX.10 [371-72])

Demons, then, have eternal, constant bodies; hence, they cannot change into mortal bodies or take possession of them.

Drawing on the distinctions and elaborations of saints Aquinas and Augustine related above, we can perhaps begin to understand the role of James Harris better. Harris can just as well be working from inside the minds of his victims—manipulating them by appealing to their lostness, loneliness, and desire for love—as from the outside, as a solely physical entity. The problem is that he appears before more than one person in several stories; he does not, like a ghost, appear only to the person he chooses to address, being invisible to everyone else. The powers and existence of James Harris are problematized in “The Daemon Lover.”

Recalling what has been said above about the incubus demons and nightmares, consider the opening sentences of “The Daemon Lover”:

She had not slept well; from one-thirty, when Jamie left and she went lingeringly to bed, until seven, when she at last allowed herself to get up and make coffee, she had slept fitfully, stirring awake to open her eyes and look into the half-darkness, remembering over and over, slipping again into a feverish dream. She spent almost an hour over her coffee—they were to have a real breakfast on the way—and then, unless she wanted to dress early, had nothing to do. (9)

Within this very informative first paragraph we are given the following information: the protagonist (nameless throughout the story)²¹ is not just nervous before her wedding, she is sleeping fitfully and having feverish dreams, she is marrying someone called Jamie, she is

21. S. T. Joshi is clearly mistaken when he consistently calls the woman Margaret (26 ff.). His error is probably due to a quote from Jackson placed immediately before his discussion of the story, where she talks about her encounter with a demon lover who called her Margaret (quoted in the Introduction, above). Joan Wylie Hall, in the entry on Jackson in *A Reference Guide to Short Fiction*, calls her Elizabeth (Riggs 312), a mistake she does not make in her book-length study of Jackson’s short fiction. The protagonist’s namelessness is significant because, “just as she remains unknown to the reader, she is unable to know her fiancé” (Reinsch 22).

going away with him after the wedding (“they were to have a real breakfast on the way”), and, as will become more and more apparent, she drinks a lot of coffee.

Her ambivalent relationship to her soon-to-be husband is further accentuated later on. She is having problems deciding what dress to wear at the wedding (the wedding seems far from well-planned), and when she is standing in front of a mirror with one of her dresses on, she “thought with revulsion, It’s as though I was trying to make myself look prettier than I am, just for him; he’ll think I want to look younger because he’s marrying me,” and she subsequently tears off the dress “so quickly that a seam under the arm ripped”—but the dress is promptly mended (11, 12-13).²² Still later, she “could not bear the thought of Jamie’s bringing to marriage anyone who looked haggard and lined” (12). Her thoughts are on Jamie and what he will think about her appearance, not how *she* feels. Finally, she settles down, trying to think of Jamie, and, significantly, she cannot “see his face clearly, or hear his voice” (12). Adding to the nervous, claustrophobic atmosphere of the story, we learn more and more and at the same time less and less about Jamie—already in these few opening pages, an air of mystery surrounds him.

Two more pieces of information are given at this early point: Jamie is a writer hoping to establish himself professionally after their wedding, and they are preparing a “golden house-in-the-country” future (12)—his profession and the promise of a golden future with him are elements that will recur throughout *The Lottery*. The reality of all this is conveniently questioned next: she remembers “half-consciously her own voice saying last night, in the doorway: ‘Ten o’clock then. I’ll be ready. Is it really *true*?’” (12). A seemingly innocent comment showing her excitement about the wedding, but as with so many such remarks in Jackson’s fiction, our protagonist’s rhetorical question about the truth of the event is just as significant and disturbing as it is innocent. The next sentence—prominently given a

22. Joan Wylie Hall thinks the ripping of the girlish print dress and the subsequent mending has sexual undertones; she suggests that the protagonist is “uneasy that she has begun a sexual relationship with Jamie before the wedding,” and that this is what she remembers again and again in her interrupted sleep (12). Her sudden realization that she has not put clean sheets on the bed could be an indication of the same thing; of course, the very title of the story indicates that their relationship is of a sexual nature. I hesitate to agree with Hall on this point, though. It is of vital importance to our nameless protagonist that she and her apartment look just right for Harris: she seems more worried about what Harris might say if she neglects these things, than about what other people will say about their premarital sexual adventure. The mending of the dress, the changing of the sheets, and the compulsion to always have a clean towel in place indicate, to me, a rather unhealthy obsession with (and fear of) James Harris, not worries about premarital sex.

paragraph alone—is no less chilling: “And Jamie laughing down the hallway” (12). He laughs again at the end of the story, which provides structural closure in the form of circularity (more on closure below).

Drinking yet another cup of coffee—she drinks coffee like many of Hemingway’s characters drink alcohol—she feels dizzy and weak, and decides to go out. She leaves Jamie a note in case he should show up in the meantime, and yet another bad omen occurs: her pen leaks onto her fingers, and she has to go and wash it off in the bathroom “using a clean towel that she replaced”—she will change the bathroom towels three times during the course of the story (13). Outside, she drinks yet more coffee, albeit just half a cup this time, because she suddenly gets a feeling that Jamie is waiting for her in her apartment. After she returns to her empty apartment expecting to find her impatient and anxious fiancé, she opens a window and sits next to it “until she realizes that she had been asleep and it was twenty minutes to one” (13). She wakes up frightened (again, sleep is connected to fear); the cups of coffee have not worked. Paired with her obsessive attraction to Jamie, then, is a fear of him.

A woman subordinating herself to a man is perhaps not very unusual—less unusual in 1949 than today—but her compulsive changing of towels and her nightmares may suggest that this fear goes deeper than traditional subordination; it seems closer to downright oppression or obsession. For instance, when she decides to go to his apartment in a taxi, she “suddenly realized how imprudent it would be to drive brazenly up to Jamie’s door, demanding him” (14). Near the end of the story, too, after (presumably) following in Jamie’s footsteps in the maze-like city, she seems frightened when finally standing outside what she has been told is Jamie’s apartment: she thinks, “suddenly, with terror, What shall I say if Jamie is there, if he comes to the door?” (27), and she now seems “as frightened at the possibility of his presence as she is at his absence” (Hall 13). We are witnessing a very strange relationship indeed between two people about to be married: the significantly nameless woman is completely dominated and tortured mentally by the non-presence of someone that may or may not be an actual person.

When trying to find her missing fiancé—who is “rather tall,” fair, wears a blue suit “often” and is a writer (15)—at his apartment, she meets the Roysters. They have lent their apartment

to a man “who wore a blue suit a lot” while away (16). He stayed there a month, says the building’s superintendent’s wife, whereupon our protagonist answers, “A month ago is when—,” probably meaning to say that she first met Jamie a month ago (16). The meeting with the Roysters is important. They quarrel about their lodger; they are not sure whether James Harris was his real name, they disagree about who lent him the apartment (it sounds as if the wife met him first), and it ends with the wife saying to Harris’s fiancée, “That’s the way it is, day and night,” referring to the quarreling (18). There is absolutely no sign of Harris. Already, the presence or, rather, non-presence, of James Harris seems to split people up, causing quarrels, confusion and misunderstandings. The protagonist is also left in a state of confusion, of course; she cannot go home, she feels, “not with Jamie somewhere between here and there” (19). So, she asks a man at a delicatessen, a newsstand man, a florist and an old man at a shoeshine stand. They all think they might have seen him, but they are not sure; the number of tall men in blue suits passing in a big, busy city at ten o’clock in the morning is apparently high.

In her meeting with the florist, though, we get an important clue. The florist is sure that “the gentleman [she is] inquiring for came in this morning and purchased one dozen chrysanthemums,” but the woman is sure he did not, “not for an occasion like this, I’m sure” (22). Chrysanthemums symbolize death, and are commonly used in funerals. Harris, then, is for the first time linked to death. This new knowledge also makes it easier to remember the man: a tall man in a blue suit carrying a bunch of flowers is something someone might have remembered; the old man at the shoeshine stand does. He directs her to the house where her hunt ends. When she comes up to the apartment, she is sure there is someone inside because she can hear “low voices and sometimes laughter” (28).²³ But nobody comes to open the door, and she is left outside alone. The defeat seems final and absolute: her fiancé has left her, but that does not stop her or her obsession for Harris. The final sentences of the story tell of a devoted, persistent and patient woman, but they also tell of a disturbingly desperate, obsessive and compulsive woman denying defeat: “She came back, every day for the first

23. James Harris places himself behind a closed door in “Like Mother Used to Make” too, where he is also heard laughing. Few things, it seems to me, express exclusion and loneliness, and at the same time provoke curiosity and temptation, as well as the sound of someone laughing behind a closed door.

week. She came back on her way to work, in the mornings; in the evenings, on her way to dinner alone, but no matter how often or how firmly she knocked, no one ever came to the door" (28). Her constant coming back on her way to "dinner alone" indicates a strange attraction to someone she should probably hate for standing her up on her wedding day, as well as the loneliness and sadness of still clinging on to a dead dream.

Harris himself, as mentioned above, never makes an appearance in the story; he is only chased, talked about, and vaguely remembered (even his fiancée cannot remember clearly what he looks or sounds like). He is, as the nameless protagonist says at one point, "between here and there," and not just geographically: he eludes the senses, he is always just out of reach, always making people unhappy, confused, and aggressive (cf. the Royles); he is between our physical world ("here") and an unexplainable, otherworldly realm ("there"), just like the ancient *daimōns*. But does this mean that James Harris does not really exist, or that he only exists in our protagonist's tormented mind? The people she meets on her way have possibly seen him, but they are in doubt. Despite the protagonist's little quirks that border on the compulsive (such as changing the towels and her coffee-drinking), I find little evidence that she has mental problems, or that she is only imagining this. Harris's many ambiguities come together in the fact that he is called a daemon lover, not a demon lover, recalling the ancient *daimōn* and the question of demons' corporeality debated during the Middle Ages and the early modern period. Demons could work through people's imagination and they could, according to some theorists, take on human guise. Thus, the dichotomy real-unreal seems less adequate here; the protagonist of "The Daemon Lover" is not mad, nor does James Harris seem to exist like every other human being: he is both and neither, since he is physical enough to (probably) have made love to her, and metaphysical enough to never leave a trace and evade the senses. He clearly exists very much in the protagonist's mind, but that does not necessarily mean that she is mad. Neither natural nor supernatural, then, he is a being somewhere "between here and there."

The closure of the story could be said to be, on the narrative level, a kind of encapsulation, to use John Gerlach's term (7-16), since things are seen in a larger perspective at the end: the frequency of events is suddenly iterative (she came back "many times," no one "ever"

came to answer the door), causing a kind of “zooming out” effect.²⁴ On the thematic level, however, there is no closure. James Harris lingers on in the protagonist’s mind, and there are indications that he will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. She is not finished with Harris, even though the story is brought to an end by a kind of solution to the central problem—finding James Harris—but since no one ever opens the door, we do not know if she has in fact found him. The thematic significance of this manipulation of closure is obvious: even though the story ends, James Harris’s adventures have not.

Interestingly, the three first stories of the composite seen together can be said to resemble the history of demonology. “The Intoxicated” points to the daemonic of Greek antiquity; “The Daemon Lover” keeps the Greek notion of the daemonic alive with its title, but here the focus is on the existence of James Harris, resembling the debates on the corporeality of demons represented by theologians like Augustine and Aquinas; the possibility of demonic copulation is also a part of the story’s relationship to the history of demonology. In “Like Mother Used to Make,” Harris causes two people to change not only apartments, but also personalities, perhaps resembling the early modern conception of demonic possession, where the victim changes personality under demonic influence (more on this story in Chapter Three, below). In all these aspects of demonology, the ambiguity, the state of being in-between, is highlighted: between the gods and humans, spirit and body, good and evil. Through the first three stories we also see Harris coming gradually into focus: first, he is an anonymous guest at a party where he is having a conversation, but we are not told what he is saying, then he is the topic of a whole story without making an actual appearance, and last, he has a central role as conspirator in “Like Mother Used to Make,” where he also appears physically but still remaining in the background. The nature of paratexts is also to “appear physically” while “staying in the background.” In *The Lottery*, the Glanvill epigraphs are

24. According to John Gerlach, closure in short fiction is “the signal that movement may stop, that nothing more will follow” (8). Closure, still according to Gerlach, can manifest itself in five ways: (a) solution to the central problem, (b) natural termination, (c) completion of antithesis, (d) manifestation of a moral, and (e) encapsulation (8). One or several of these signals of closure occur in all stories. (Per Winther presents an alternative list of narrative closural signals [58-63]). This is not a thematic/hermeneutic concept, but a structural/narrative one; it does not occur whenever a reader imagines how the story will end based on foreshadowing or other devices that may give hints about the ending. Signals giving the reader the impression that the author *could* have ended the story at that point are called “preclosure signals.” On preclosure, see Lohafer, and Winther 65-67.

important to our understanding of the composite as a whole.

**Marginal Science:
Joseph Glanvill's *Saducismus triumphatus* (1681)**

It has been claimed that the inclusion of the Glanvill epigraphs was “an attempt by the publicity staff to make the book appear mysterious and, therefore, more salable” (Friedman 67-68). Friedman goes on to quote from a letter Jackson sent to her mother in early April 1949, where she complains that “the book [*The Lottery*] is terrible [. . .] it’s flashy and sensational and all fixed up to sell” (68).²⁵ Friedman, then, sees no connections between the epigraphs and the following stories. It seems more likely that Jackson’s disappointment had to do with how the book was presented: the cover of the first edition is indeed flashy with its yellow-and-black design, accompanied by a few rather silly blurbs.²⁶ There are, as far as I can see, no connections between Jackson’s complaints about the flashiness of the book and the function of the epigraphs. Hall, based on her findings in the Shirley Jackson Papers at the Library of Congress, also corrects Friedman in this regard, pointing out that the epigraphs were planned from the author’s side, and that they certainly have thematic relevance (7, 92n16). Moreover, the epigraphs appear in the typescript Jackson originally sent off to her publisher, so it is most unlikely that Jackson would describe something she herself wanted included as “terrible” and “flashy.” That the PR staff at Jackson’s publisher had read, let alone heard of, Joseph Glanvill—a fairly obscure figure among witchcraft theorists—and chosen the passages with such accuracy, also seems unlikely, far surpassing the normal activities of a PR-department, I would think.

25. Friedman does not reproduce the letter in full, but Hall does. It mentions no epigraphs, but the general interest in magic *The Lottery* was causing: “They’re all cashing in quite shamelessly on the press the devil has been getting recently, including half a dozen respectable books, mostly novels, which have come out in the last six months, and which use the devil as a character. Also, there have been several odd witchcraft cases in the papers, and it all mounts up into a general interest in magic and such, which Farrar and Straus are exploiting, with me in the middle” (qtd. in Hall 140). This passage follows directly after the one quoted by Friedman.
26. In a letter to her parents dated 18 December 1948—before *The Lottery*’s publication—Jackson voices her frustrations: “My book of stories is all wrong; they set it up in type all mixed up, and as a result of fixing that, the book will be delayed until April; they put through the copy for the jacket blurbs without consulting me, and made two serious errors and a number of embarrassing statements about me, which I am trying to have taken out now [. . .] their advertising campaign, which they told me about proudly, is so excruciating that I will never show my face out of Vermont again” (qtd. in Hall 137). It seems clear that Jackson was predominantly complaining about matters having to do with the book’s “packaging” and how people responded to the occult aspects of the book in the media, not the use of the epigraphs. One might speculate, though, that one of the two errors mentioned was the removal of Jackson’s first epigraph (see below).

It is difficult to say exactly what Shirley Jackson thought about Joseph Glanvill, but I find it unlikely that she epigraphed him because she agreed with his ideas; she clearly sympathizes with the accused witches.²⁷ Quoting Glanvill may reflect the view that history repeats itself and that we never seem to learn from it. The persecution of individuals, the expulsion of society's weaker members—all administered by a uniform and seemingly well-organized community—is nothing new, Jackson could be saying; just consider the witch-hunts, which were defended and rationalized even by learned men like Joseph Glanvill. That Glanvill is placed in the epigraphs and not in more subtle allusions in the main text could indicate the marginal importance of such ideas in our day and age (they have not exactly withstood the tests of time), while at the same time emphasizing the intellectual importance, historically speaking, of the same ideas. The witch-hunts were extreme, but the spurs that set them off are still alive and well, ready to be actualized again.

According to Gérard Genette, epigraphs can have four different functions. They can (a) comment, elucidate or justify the title—an example is Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, where the Donne epigraph gives the title; (b) comment on the text, emphasizing or specifying its meaning; (c) draw attention to the epigraphed author, or; (d) be a kind of intellectual password, a nod to the “right” people and the “right” period (156–60). Elaborating on the second type, Genette points out that “the attribution of relevance in such cases depends on the reader, whose hermeneutic capacity is often put to the test” (158). This is certainly true of *The Lottery*: the relevance of an obscure seventeenth-century treatise on witches is not immediately clear, and it may remain unclear unless one goes to the source to read the epigraphs in their proper contexts. Also, Jackson may not only be alluding to Glanvill's book, but to the man himself, his views, status, role, and significance in the early modern witchcraft debate (the third function). She could be using him as a representative of his era, commonly called The Scientific Revolution, which professed the New Science. Ancient truths were revalued and reevaluated, and citing ancient sources gave way to a reasoning based on experiments

27. Jackson consistently misspells both author and title: Glanvill is “Glanvil” and *Saducismus* is “*Sadducismus*.” These errors also appear in the original typescript (Hall 92n16). The misspellings may or may not be deliberate (Jackson was a perfectionist when it came to grammar and spelling—her typescripts rarely needed much editing prior to publication); either way, they seem to orthographically undermine Glanvill's authority, as it were, perhaps indicating Jackson's attitude towards him.

(see Shapin 80 ff.). “Truths” like the existence of demons were to a large extent maintained, however, but explained in new ways. As for the “intellectual password”-function, we have seen that Friedman—quite wrongly, I think—favors such an explanation by stating that the epigraphs were added just to create an air of mystery and occultism. Before discussing the epigraphs in detail, a brief presentation of the “epigraphee” and his work is needed.

Joseph Glanvill (1636–1680) was an Anglican clergyman, a fellow of the distinguished Royal Society in London (Sir Isaac Newton and Robert Boyle were also members), and a strong believer in conducting investigations of demons and witches “like any other branch of the new science” (S. Clark 297). Glanvill and his colleagues in the Society were “committed to the experiment—properly conducted, witnessed and reported—as the only way of producing accurate and ideologically safe knowledge” (Clark 300). The importance of confessions and “truthful” witness accounts to prove God’s existence is spelled out by Henry More in a letter that is printed before the first part of *Saducismus triumphatus*: “The confession of Witches against their own lives being so palpable an Evidence (besides the miraculous feats they play) that there are bad Spirits, which will necessarily open a Door to the belief that there are good ones, and lastly that there is a God” (Glanvill 16). The effects of witchcraft, one thought, were intelligible in a sensory, empirical way, but not necessarily its causes, which complies with Baconian natural philosophy—very influential at the time—that saw no problem in focusing on the rare and unusual sides of nature (Bacon’s thinking joins Neoplatonic symbolism with empirical, inductive experiments). Linking the rational with the irrational is also, as Hall points out, a “major focus” in *The Lottery* (8).

In 1668, Glanvill proposed to the Royal Society that they should take up the investigation of witches and demons armed with the new ideas of nature and science. At the time of Glanvill’s death in 1680, however, the work was still unfinished, but his friend and colleague at the Society, Henry More, compiled and wrote a foreword to the materials already prepared by Glanvill, and had them published as *Saducismus triumphatus: or, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions* in 1681. The book proved successful: two more editions, each reprinted several times, appeared during the 1680s. The book is an interesting document representing a line of thinking typical of the late seventeenth century, where the new ideas

of the Scientific Revolution are joined with irrational occultism.²⁸ As Stuart Clark writes, it was “an attempt to make demonology conform exactly to the protocols of the experimental philosophy” (308).²⁹

The first part of the book discusses the possibility of witches; it resembles the scholastic way of writing, with an initial statement that the author then attacks in the form of a medieval academic disputation—weighing *pro et contra* before reaching a conclusion, everything with frequent references to Scripture, the primary source of truth. The second part consists of “Proof of Apparitions, Spirits and Witches, from a choice Collection of modern Relations.” It contains twenty-eight such descriptions and testimonies from actual witch trials (“relations”), which counted as empirical evidence for the largely philosophical/theological discussion that comprises the first part. Glanvill is not only out to prove the existence of witches, his book is also an argument against the ideas of the Sadducees, a Jewish cult from the time of Christ, that did not believe in the afterlife—this view was interpreted as a disbelief in spirit altogether (resembling Greek and Roman materialist philosophers like Democritus, Epicurus, and Lucretius, who thought that only matter exists, as did Glanvill’s contemporary Thomas Hobbes [see *Leviathan* 77, 443, 463]).³⁰ If one denies the existence of spirit and the afterlife, one would also deny the existence of demons, angels, and—most importantly—God, which is obviously an unacceptable thought to Glanvill, the clergyman.

As we have seen, Jackson’s publisher probably did not choose the epigraphs that went in, but they may have had something to do with the *removal* of the one that was supposed to introduce the first section. In the first, and all subsequent, American editions, there is no epigraph here, but for some reason there is one in the first British edition, entitled *The Lottery, or the Adventures of the Phantom Lover*. It looked like this:

She saith, That after their Meetings, they all make very low Obeyances to the Devil, who appears in black Cloaths, and a little Band. He bids them Welcome at their coming, and brings Wine or Beer, Cakes, Meat, or the like. He sits at the higher end. . . . They

28. For more on the Scientific Revolution and its relations to demonology and witchcraft, see Burton and Grandy 149–82; Clark, part II (esp. ch. 19); Muchembled 153–61; Thurston 160–62. Shapin gives a general survey of the movement.
29. “Experimental,” in the seventeenth-century sense of the word, meant that “knowledge of nature and matter of fact should be the product of direct experience” (Clark 295).
30. See Matthew 3.7 f., 22.23 f.; Mark 12.18 f.; Acts 23. Glanvill had written on this topic earlier, in “A Blow at Modern Sadducism” that appeared in *Some Philosophical Considerations about Witchcraft* (1668).

eat, Drink, Dance and have Musick. At their parting they use to say, *Merry meet, merry part.* (Qtd. in Hall 7)

In the second part of Glanvill's book, this passage occurs twice: first, in Relation III, in the middle of the confession of Elizabeth Style (139-41), and then in Relation IV, the examination of Alice Duke (151). Duke and Style were accused of having met the Devil with other local witches and some cases of *maleficia*. That the passage occurs twice is not surprising, as they both describe the same meetings; furthermore, many confessions have certain formulaic elements that are rhetorically repeated in order to convince—a nocturnal meeting with the Devil is certainly such a standard element. It is also possible that the examiners and/or the author did not bother nuancing and elaborating on what was seen as well-known “facts,” so they simply used the same descriptions again and again (we know that standard questionnaires were used in interrogations, very leading questions were asked, and the questions were often based on earlier confessions [see Russell, *Witchcraft* 42-43]). Jackson's epigraph follows Duke's examination more closely than the corresponding one in Style's confession, Style's being more detailed. The fifth examination (there are eight in all) in the case against Style concerns her confession, dated January 26th, January 30th, and February 7th, 1664 (136-42). Style admits that ten years ago, the Devil appeared to her “in the shape of a handsome Man, and after of a black Dog” (136). He promised her money, and that she “should live gallantly, and have the pleasure of the World for Twelve years, if she would with her Blood sign his Paper, which was to give her Soul to him, and observe his Laws, and that he might suck her blood” (136). The promise has a striking resemblance to the ones James Harris give several places in *The Lottery*. We may also note the reference to sucking blood, which recalls the vampire-like Erinyes in Greek mythology. When she has the desire to do harm, Style calls the Devil by saying “O Sathan give me my purpose,” whereupon he appears (136). Of interest is the meeting between Elizabeth Style, Alice Duke, Anne Bishop, and Mary Penny—other witches—and “a Man in black Clothes” (137). They bring him pictures in wax, which were “baptized” by the Devil; the person this picture represents is then manipulated by sticking thorns in it, and the *maleficium* is carried out without the witches having to be physically present at the scene of the crime. It is these meetings, which allegedly took place regularly, that the epigraph quoted above describes.

The Lottery starts off with a party, as we have seen, in “The Intoxicated,” where they indeed “eat, Drink, Dance and have Musick.” The first section of *The Lottery*, which the Elizabeth Style epigraph was probably supposed to have introduced,³¹ is dominated by what will become recurring themes throughout the composite: “the menace embodied by James Harris and other strangers in the first group of stories spreads through the rest of the book as friends and family compound such outside threats to the delicately balanced protagonists” (Hall 20). Meetings in the night and threatening strangers are the very themes of the epigraph, but it is significant in another way too: In Jackson’s story “Elizabeth,” placed in the third section, we meet a woman who happens to be called Elizabeth Style.³²

Elizabeth works for Robert Shax at a tiny literary agency.³³ Shax hires a new secretary, Daphne Hill (the surname appears as Elizabeth Hill, one of Style’s victims, in *Glanvill*; Robert Hunt, the judge in *Glanvill*, is the name given to Elizabeth’s uncle), who Elizabeth feels threatened by—she is young and attractive, and she is interested in Shax, who is Elizabeth’s lover as well as her employer. Since Elizabeth is working at a literary agency, it should come as no surprise that writer James Harris makes an appearance—here, he is the only successful writer the small agency has handled before he moved on to another firm.³⁴ *Glanvill*’s Elizabeth Style allegedly torments Elizabeth Hill with *maleficium*; Jackson’s Elizabeth Style torments Daphne Hill with sarcasm and condescension. In her desperation—jealousy of Daphne, disappointment in Shax—Elizabeth calls Harris, wanting his company again. He has not been forgotten since he left the firm: a signed photograph of him is on display

31. Since “Elizabeth” is placed in Section III, Jackson may have wanted the epigraph removed because it no longer would have introduced the section in which the related story occurs. Also, the inclusion of a seventeenth-century work could be said to disrupt the seemingly chronological exposition of demonology and witchcraft witnessed in the first three stories (from the daemonic of ancient Greece to the early modern conceptions of the devil discussed above).
32. Jackson originally planned a novel about Elizabeth Style. As she states at the beginning of her outline for it: “The novel is the story of one climactic day in the life of a woman who has figuratively leagued herself with the devil, and her figurative destruction. The story parallels in detail the discovery and condemnation of a witch” (“Outline” 143). “Elizabeth” covers about half the novel’s plot outline (Hall 93n30).
33. Shax, incidentally, is the name of a demon—a high marquis of Hell, no less—that “governs 30 legions [and] appears as a stock-dove with a hoarse voice. He can cause blindness, deafness, or lack of understanding. [. . .] He also knows of hidden things not kept by wicked spirits. Shax must be summoned into a triangle or he tells lies” (<<http://www.deliriumsrealm.com/delirium/mythology/shax.asp>> [accessed 25 Jul 2004]). One of Jackson’s many cats was also called Shax (Oppenheimer 116).
34. In the manuscript version of “Elizabeth,” James Harris is called Mr. Vining, a name that also appears in the section of *Saducismus triumphatus* dealing with Elizabeth Style: Richard Vining, a butcher, testifies against Style, claiming that his wife Agnes had been bewitched by her (*Glanvill* 132–36; Hall 93n30).

in Shax's office, symbolizing his continuous, simultaneous non-presence and omnipresence. But Harris seems as unwilling to form an alliance with a desperate woman here as in "The Daemon Lover," and we leave Elizabeth dreaming about her future, as the women around Harris commonly do, and looking forward to meeting him (like in "The Daemon Lover," Harris never appears physically in this story). The informative and beautifully written last paragraph offers a compelling description of Elizabeth's complex and ambiguous relationship to James Harris:

She needed a new apartment, a pleasant open place with big windows and pale furniture, with the sun coming in all day. To get a new apartment she needed more money, she needed a new job, and Jim Harris would have to help her; tonight would be only the first of many exciting dinners together, building into a lovely friendship that would get her a job and a sunny apartment; while she was planning her new life she forgot Jim Harris, his heavy face, his thin voice; he was a stranger, a gallant dark man with knowing eyes who watched her across a room, he was someone who loved her, he was a quiet troubled man who needed sunlight, a warm garden, green lawns. . . . (191)

Elizabeth is said to forget Harris at first, but the remainder of the paragraph, including the final ellipsis, gives the impression that she cannot think of anything *but* him. Like the protagonist in "The Daemon Lover" she cannot remember his physical features, his face, etc., but the sense that he loves her is still there. Her dreams for the future (a new apartment, a new job) and her affection for Harris converge while her memory of his physical features gives way (after the last semicolon) to a reflection on his strangeness, gallant behavior, and his love for her. Knowing the ways of James Harris, there is no reason to believe that he will keep his appointment, or that it will be very pleasant if it eventually does take place. Elizabeth, though, already under his spell without even having met him yet, naïvely seems to think that happiness is inevitable and imminent. An investigation into the original source of the missing epigraph also gives us an indication of how Jackson makes use of her occult sources; in "Elizabeth," she uses names from an actual trial for her characters, and a condemnation-of-a-witch plot is used, somewhat covertly.

Stories about children and racism dominate the second section of *The Lottery*;³⁵ in contrast to the first section, which focuses mostly on single women, the second focuses on family

35. See Parks, "Possibility" 44 ff. for more on the role of children in *The Lottery*.

situations (Hall 20). The epigraph introducing these stories is from the first part of *Saducismus triumphatus*; the chapter it is taken from argues that it is “sufficient if the thing be well *prov'd*, though the design be not known” (1.x.34). Glanvill then goes on to say that “the *Devil* is a name for a *Body Politick*, in which there are very different *Orders* and *Degrees* of *Spirits*, and perhaps as much variety of *place and state*, as among our selves” (35). The same Devil does not tempt everyone (the many guises of James Harris come to mind). The meaning could also be that the Devil is just as omnipresent as God; having been one of his angels, he knows all the secrets and mysteries of the natural world, and he is always out to tempt those who are weak in faith over to his side (Thomas 560).

But it is in the last part of this chapter that a more explicit thematic connection with Jackson's stories can be found. The relationship between the Devil and those he has successfully tempted is compared to the relationship between “those Slaves that a man has *purchas'd*, [. . .] his peculiar Goods, and the Vassals of his will” (36). And further down: “Or rather those deluding Fiends are like the seducing fellows we call *Spirits*, who inveigle Children by their false and flattering promises, and carry them away to the *Plantations* of *America*, to be severely employed there in the works of their profit and advantage” (36-37). These children are lured onto ships, “out of the reach of those that might rescue them” (37). “In like manner,” says Glanvill, “the more *mischievous Tempter* studies to gratifie, please, and accommodate those he deals with in his kind, till death hath lanch'd them into the *Deep* [. . .] For though the matter be not as I have conjectur'd, yet 'twill suggest a way how it may be *conceiv'd*; which nulls the pretence, that the *Design* is *unconceivable*” (37). The references to children tempted onto ships, slavery, and a spirit whose designs are unclear must certainly have some relevance to the stories that comprise the second section of *The Lottery*. Moreover, the mention of sinking ships is relevant to the James Harris ballad, which will become clear in Chapter Two.

The first of the seven stories in section II of *The Lottery* has the promising title “The Witch.” It is about a mother and her two small children—a four-year-old boy and a baby girl—on a train. Johnny, the boy, is “looking out the window and eating a cookie, and the mother [is] reading quietly, answering the little boy's questions without looking up” (63).

Then he sees a witch. “There was a big old ugly bad old witch outside,” he says to his mother (64).³⁶ “Fine,” is the answer. Then, as he is making up a more elaborate story—the witch threatens to eat him, but he is able to chase her away—a man comes into the car. He has a pleasant face (cf. “The Villager”), he wears a blue suit (cf. “The Daemon Lover”) and he smokes a cigar (cf. “Like Mother Used to Make”). He soon asks Johnny if he loves his sister; “‘Tell me about your sister,’ the little boy said. ‘Was she a witch?’ ‘Maybe,’ the man said.” He says he loved his sister very much, so he bought her a rockinghorse and a million lollipops, “and then I put my hands around her neck and I pinched her and I pinched her until she was dead” (66).³⁷ Then he “cut off her head and her hands and her feet and her hair and her nose [. . .] and I hit her with a stick and I killed her” (66). The boy’s mother, hearing all this, naturally gets more and more upset, and she threatens to call the conductor. “The conductor will *eat* my mommy,” says the boy, “We’ll chop her head off.” “And little sister’s head, too,” says the man (67). Again, women are victimized. The stranger—clearly none other than James Harris—then makes an abrupt exit, and the mother bribes her son with a lollipop, adding “urgently” that the man was “just *teasing*” (67). “‘Prob’ly,’ the little boy said [. . .] ‘Prob’ly he was a witch’” (67). This last remark is a calm, matter-of-fact statement, not an imaginative outburst like his claims to have seen an ugly witch from the train window (see Kelly 1205). Witches are no longer creatures invented to catch his mother’s attention; they are real.

This development towards what could be seen as a more genuine belief in the supernatural is an indication of James Harris’s abilities to convince and manipulate. It is as if the boy and the stranger share a secret—Harris is not the only character whose thoughts and motivations are unclear here, which recalls the following from the epigraph: “We are in the Dark to *one another’s* Purposes and Intendments; and there are a thousand Intrigues in our little Matters, which will not presently confess their Design, even to *sagacious Inquisitors*

36. Robert L. Kelly thinks that the boy sees his mother’s reflection in the window, and that she is the “witch” (1205).

37. The word “pinched” recalls the pinching or pricking the witches in Glanvill do to their victims, often on voodoo-like dolls. Pinching an accused witch with a needle in order to find the “Devil’s mark,” a mark on the witch’s body where no pain could be felt, was used to prove legally that someone was a witch (Clark 591; Levack 27; Thomas 530). Supposed to remind the witch of the pact with him, the Devil made the mark by raking his claw across her flesh or poking her with a hot iron. Moles, scars and birthmarks were often identified as the Devil’s “signature.”

(Glanvill 35). Of other stories in this section, “Charles,” “After You, my Dear Alphonse,” “Dorothy and my Grandmother and the Sailors,” and “Afternoon in Linen” deal with rebellious or disobedient children, often with a proud mother that ends up shocked and terrified: in epiphanic moments, they learn new, often disturbing, things about their children. Fathers and husbands are either non-present or of less importance.

“Flower Garden” and “After you, My Dear Alphonse” are both about racism. These stories are of interest since they tie in nicely with the slavery examples Glanvill uses in the epigraphed chapter; they can also be said to provide nuance to the theme of loneliness, expulsion, and alienation, giving it a racial dimension. “Flower Garden” is about a woman who has the nerve to hire a black man to take care of her beautiful garden. She has recently moved to the village, and she soon finds out what the tightly knit community, headed by the authoritative opinions of the old, aptly named Winning-family, thinks about newcomers, especially those who have the audacity to befriend blacks. The garden becomes a powerful symbol: at first it is beautiful and blossoming in the hands of the capable gardener, but as hatred towards the woman builds up because of her friendship with the gardener, the garden becomes more and more bleak—the grass turns brown and the roses die—until a storm destroys it altogether. The villagers have won the “battle,” the woman becomes an outcast, and the black man is driven away. This story can be seen as a more full-fledged version of “The Lottery”; like that story, “Flower Garden” also deals with a village rejecting an individual, but it is given a more allegorical treatment: where “The Lottery” offers no explanations or fully developed metaphors or symbols at all, only beginnings of and hints at such elements, “Flower Garden” has powerful, almost too obvious, imagery and symbolism throughout. “After You, My Dear Alphonse” is about a boy who brings his new, black friend home from school. The boy’s mother starts being overly caring towards him; she offers him her son’s old clothes, for example. Although full of good intentions, her prejudice and ignorance quickly shine through. Her surprise at learning that the black boy’s father is not a worker at the factory but a foreman, and that his sister is in college, is telling of her compassionate condescension (87).

A number of curious connections can be made between the epigraph placed before the

third section of *The Lottery*, the stories it introduces and, in fact, Shirley Jackson's own life. The epigraph involves the confession of one Margaret Jackson. She claims that she met with the Devil some "fourty years ago," when he gave her the spirit name Locas (Glanvill II.XXVIII.296). This epigraph is the only one in *The Lottery* that explicitly mentions the Devil as a lover: "in the night-time when she awaked, she found a man to be in bed with her, whom she supposed to have been her Husband, though her Husband had been dead twenty years or thereby, and that the man immediately disappeared: and [she] declares that this man who disappeared was the Devil" (296). The case of Margaret Jackson is the last one in Glanvill's book, carrying the heading "*The confessions of certain Scotch Witches, taken out of an authentick Copy of their Trial at the Affizes held at Paisley in Scotland, Feb. 15. 1678, touching the bewitching of Sir George Maxwel*" (291). It concerns Jannet Mathie, Bessie Weir, Margaret Cragie, and Margaret Jackson, who confessed to having met with the Devil and put pins in a picture of wax and a figure of clay to harm and kill George Maxwel—the figure was discovered and confiscated before the tormenting ended in death (292 f.).

First of all, one notices that this witness account deals with a witch trial in Scotland, and that the Devil is portrayed not only as a dark man, but also as a lover. The ballad of James Harris, at least some variants of it, is also Scottish, but that is not the only Celtic link here; "Come Dance with Me in Ireland," placed in this section, is obviously a very Irish story (more on that in Chapter Two). Another thing worth noticing is the name of the accused witch—Margaret Jackson. In Shirley Jackson's first meeting with a demon lover, long before she had become a writer, he called her Margaret (see Introduction, above).

Thematically, the epigraph again emphasizes the witch's role as outsider. The first story in this section, "Colloquy," deals precisely with this. Mrs. Arnold goes to a new doctor because she does not want her husband to worry about her—her regular doctor would probably tell him if something is wrong, she thinks. She cannot understand the world any longer, and fears she is going crazy. For instance, her husband not long ago came home without the *Times*, which he usually buys every day, and this break with routine upsets her. "When I was a girl," she keeps saying, things were not as confusing (146). The last paragraph is telling: "Disoriented,' Mrs. Arnold said. She stood up. 'Alienation,' she said. 'Reality.'

Before the doctor could stop her she walked to the door and opened it. ‘Reality,’ she said, and went out” (147). The visit ends in her total collapse, both in terms of communication and mental state.³⁸ Mrs. Arnold’s confused, alienated, and disoriented state culminates in—interestingly enough—doubts about reality, hence the repeated “reality” between seemingly unrelated words like “alienation” and “disorientation.” The pressure of the modern world has damaged her sense of reality, and she wants to go back to when she was a little girl. The feeling of not belonging, of losing one’s grip on reality, could be said to be a modern condition, but I imagine the “witches” that Glanvill so “authentically” discusses must have had some of those feelings too. Many of them might have been mentally disturbed (some contemporary skeptics thought so), and they were often seen as outsiders even before charges of witchcraft were brought against them (for instance, unmarried and childless women living alone were highly suspect). In Glanvill’s day, courts of law took “confessions” about meeting and/or sleeping with the Devil to be the truth, not evidence of a mental condition.³⁹

The fourth section holds the *The Lottery*’s grimmest texts, and James Harris appears in three of the six stories. Most of them involve extremism in some form or other. In the opening story, “Of Course,” Mrs. Tylor tries to make friends with the family that has just moved in next door, the Harrises. Mrs. Tylor’s daughter Carol and the Harris-boy, James, are about the same age, and she asks if she can bring James along with her and Carol to the movies while Mrs. Harris is busy moving in. It turns out that James is not allowed to go to the movies because they are, like radio and newspapers, “intellectually retarding” (231). Their previous neighbors deliberately harassed them, Mrs. Harris claims, by turning up the radio too loud and leaving the *New York Times* on their doorstep three times; “Once James nearly got to it,” she says (233). The only accepted pastime in the Harris household is *The New*

38. Parks, referring to the work of the British psychiatrist R. D. Laing, writes that the story is an anticipation of the idea that “it is the height of madness to try to adjust to a mad world” (“Possibility” 55).

39. It should be noted, though, that there were contemporary skeptics of witchcraft, too. The most famous skeptic was Johann Weyer, doctor and demonologist. He argues in his *De praestigiis daemonum* (1563) that many supposed witches were, in reality, “innocent melancholics, and that even the guilty ones were mere tools of Satan, incapable of doing harm by their own activities” (Thomas 693). Weyer did not, however, deny the existence of the Devil, nor did he say that *melancholia*—seen as a female disease of the uterus—and/or mental illness made women think they were witches, and therefore innocent of witchcraft charges; rather, he thought that melancholy made them more vulnerable to the Devil’s powers. Furthermore, he insisted that none were to be put to death if found guilty of witchcraft, since, according to the Roman law, the pact with the Devil was not a valid pact.

Republic, which they subscribed to for a number of years, “when we were first married, of course[,] before James was born,” and plays, “Pre-Elizabethan, of course” (233). Not even a friendly game of bridge is acceptable to Mrs. Harris. The increasingly baffled Mrs. Tylor can only respond “of course” each time Mrs. Harris explains—in her matter-of-fact way—the strange, extremist views of the Harris family, of which the absent Mr. Harris is the chief architect. He is a scholar who writes monographs; presumably, they are intellectually uplifting enough. Academic elitism has replaced common sense completely here; a mild form of extremism, some (especially academics!) might argue, but it is an apt introduction to the theme of extremism that resonates and accumulates through practically the whole section. The shocking and unforgettable “The Lottery” follows as the last story of the composite; undoubtedly an enjoyable conclusion for James Harris and his adventure—an extreme and shocking one for everyone else. Hall is quite right, I think, in calling this section “The Triumph of James Harris” (42).

An extreme case of lostness, paralyzation, and confusion is presented in the aptly titled “A Pillar of Salt” (the title makes intertextual play with the story of Lot’s wife from the Bible, who disobediently looks back upon God’s destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and becomes a pillar of salt [Gen 19.24-26]). “Pillar of Salt” is a strange and slightly surreal story about Margaret (recall Margaret Jackson in the Glanvill epigraph for section three) and her husband Brad, who are on a two-week vacation in New York. They go to a party at some friends’ place one evening, and Margaret leans out of the window, high above the streets of New York. Someone shouts “Lady, your house is on fire!” and Margaret panics (240). She shouts that they have to get out, but nobody listens, Brad is out of sight, so is the host, and “the people around her were strangers” (241). Down on the street it turns out that the fire is two houses away: Margaret’s panic is an early indication of what is to come. The next day she goes by herself on the bus to get Christmas gifts for the children. The bus is crowded and she is unable to get off at the right stop. Afterwards, when she is walking in the crowded streets, a long paragraph describes how Margaret perceives New York: “The buses were cracking open [. . .] Corners of the buildings seemed to be crumbling away into the fine dust that drifted downward [. . .] the people seemed hurled on in a frantic action that made

every hour forty-five minutes long, every day nine hours, every year fourteen days” (243). New York is a city of decay, disintegration, stress, chaos, and crowds to her. When Brad and Margaret visit friends on Long Island, another symbol of decay appears: while they are strolling on the beach, a human leg is found, and Brad calls the police. Afterwards, Margaret says, “abruptly, ‘I suppose it starts to happen first in the suburbs,’ and when Brad said ‘What starts to happen?’ she said hysterically, ‘People starting to come apart’” (248). This coming apart, as we quickly understand, not only refers to the severed leg, but also to Margaret’s mental state.

Margaret hums a tune to herself, a “symbol of the golden world she escaped into to avoid the everyday dreariness” (246), but the story ends in total confusion, not in some golden world. Brad goes out one day by himself, while Margaret rests. She thinks about the leg, telling herself again and again “as though it were a charm against witches,” that there is no sense worrying (250). Not unlike the compulsions of the nameless protagonist in “The Daemon Lover,” she strips the blankets and sheets off the bed, and remakes it (249). She then goes out to get breakfast and is caught in the crowd. In another long paragraph near the end, she is pushed back and forth by the crowd, cars frighten her back onto the curb when she tries to cross the street, and she does not quite know where she is. She is paralyzed, turned into a pillar of salt, by the speed and chaos of a modern city. However, she is able to enter a drugstore, where she calls her husband, begging him to come and get her (253).

In the epigraph introducing this section of extremism, we get the sense that evil—certainly an extreme force—has won. Not only is Glanvill warning against the powers of evil as he commonly does, he also claims that the good powers, the Angels, might leave the floor to evil forces, leaving humanity to fend for itself: “it may well enough be thought, that sometimes [the better Spirits] may take their leave of such as are swallowed up by *Malice*, *Envie*, and *desire of Revenge* [. . .] and leave them exposed to the *invasion* and *solicitations* of those wicked *Spirits*, to whom such hateful *Attributes* make them very *sutable* (Glanvill I.XI.38). Good no longer protects us, leaving us exposed to and unprotected from evil. The fourth section of *The Lottery*, one might say, shows us the outcome of Harris’s “going to and fro on the earth, and [. . .] walking up and down on it,” to quote Satan’s famous reply to

God (Job 1.7). The ritual stoning of a human being at the end is a return to a barbaric, intolerant past, a “successful” end to the “adventures” referred to in the composite’s subtitle. Jackson leaves us with a dismal view of the world, then: evil, represented by James Harris, has won, an outcome the epigraphs, especially the last one, hint at. The last section, the epilogue, contains an excerpt of the James Harris ballad, the second paratextual element in *The Lottery*, which continues the narrative of Harris and his adventures after the last story has ended. This ballad will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

“BLOOD TO DRINK”
Folklore and Rituals

So went he suited to his watery tomb.
If spirits can assume both form and suit,
You come to fright us.

—William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*
5.1.230–32

The prince of darkness is a gentleman.

—William Shakespeare, *King Lear* 3.4.139

Among the rest a seaman brave
Unto her a wooing came;
A comely proper youth he was,
James Harris calld by name.

—Child 243, “James Harris” (A3)

GOTHIC LITERATURE OFTEN alludes to ballads and other folkloric expressions,¹ and *The Lottery* is no exception: the British ballad “The Daemon Lover,” also known as “James Harris,” and “The House-Carpenter,” is given much space in the composite.² This ballad is frequently performed (Joan Baez and Bob Dylan have both recorded it), and the same basic story is found in folklore worldwide.³ The most common versions of the ballad are collected in Francis James Child’s pioneering five-volume *The Ballads of Ireland and Scotland*

1. See Williams 4 ff. These excerpts often “compete” with the main narrative, disturbing its flow while being remotely relevant to it. Thus, a Gothic narrative is often seen as a “hybrid” or “bastard” genre consisting of several narratives, voices, and genres. This emphasizes that a subject’s life is not linear, at least not only linear; it has depth, lacunae and aporias that can only be expressed through the intrusion of other voices, as well as a complicated web of myth, symbol, and metaphor to make the narrative sufficiently complex.
2. To avoid confusion with Jackson’s story “The Daemon Lover,” the ballad is called “James Harris” in the following.
3. One might briefly mention a few texts that share at least some elements with Child 243: the Norwegian ballads “Agnete og Havmanden,” “Margit Hjuke,” “Olav Liljekrans,” the folktale “Gjengangeren” from Nordland, Norway (probably an inspiration for Ibsen’s *The Lady of the Sea*), the Norwegian “Draug,” a dead sailor who comes back to haunt people on land because he has not been given a Christian burial (seeing or hearing him means imminent death), the Danish ballads “Nøkkens svig” and “Ribold og Guldborg,” and G. A. Bürger’s poem “Lenore” (which has given name to a whole cycle of tales). The material is also present in Slavic folktales. See Alnæs 296–98, 304; Gardner-Medwin 416–17; Parks, “Possibility” 42.

(1882-98), where it appears in the fourth volume as ballad number 243 out of 305.⁴ The plot consists of these main elements: a man who was presumed dead comes back to a woman he has made a vow of marriage to several (usually seven) years before. The woman, however, has since married another man, and she is now torn between the two men. She leaves on a ship with the man from the past, her demon lover, who reveals his true demonic identity before he sinks the ship, taking the woman with him; one might see this outcome as a warning against letting oneself be seduced or a critique of male dominance.⁵ The ballad is written in “ballad stanza” (quatrains rhyming abcb with alternating tetrametrical and trimetrical lines), it contains much dialogue and action and not much editorial comment, which makes it a very condensed narrative poem that relies on inference and use of formulaic elements common in oral poetry. Ambiguity surrounding the demon lover is central to the ballad, as it is in most of the later literary works that allude to it.⁶ Jackson no doubt knew the ballad very well; her husband was an expert on ballads, and she had studied folklore in college (see Introduction, above). It seems reasonable to assume, then, that Shirley Jackson uses James Harris as a method to deliberately invoke an uncanny uncertainty that goes through the whole composite. It does not depreciate the literary talents of Shirley Jackson to argue that she not so much adds meaning to the themes she draws from folktales and ballads as displays unique insight into how deep and far-ranging these themes are: she is adapting, tweaking, and re-interpreting these myths in a new context rather than simply lifting the old sources into the current text.

While its importance to *The Lottery* is undisputed—part of it is reproduced in the Epi-

4. The ballad, with all the variants recorded in Child, is reproduced in Appendix A, below.
5. “The term *seduction* originally meant *carrying off*. *Seducere* derives from the Latin *sed*, combined with *ducerem*, where the morpheme *sed* stands for ‘a part.’ In German the word *seduction* (*Verführung*) has a similar composition: the morpheme *-führung* in fact comes from *fugren* = *ducere* (that is, conduct), and the prefix *ver-* has an analogous meaning to that of the Latin prefix *sed*. What comes to mind is ‘divert’ or ‘turn aside.’ *Seducere* means therefore ‘to conduct away.’ Thus, the seduced individual is captured, seized by an irresistible force, removed from a precise order of meanings, and conducted ‘elsewhere’” (Carotenuto 2).
6. One example of literary cultivation of the ballad is Henrik Ibsen’s *The Lady of the Sea* (*Fruen fra havet*). The author’s comment on the character The Stranger (who happens to be wearing a Scottish cap) in that play is instructive: “Nobody is to know *who* he is or what he is actually called. Precisely this uncertainty is the main thing in the method I have chosen for this occasion” (467). This underlying uncertainty is thus a deliberate *method* for Ibsen, just as his use of myth is deliberate and methodical; his use of the folkloric material does not follow its sources exactly, since there is a relatively happy ending, but the uncertainty and the fear of the unknown is there, as it is in Jackson’s short story composite. See Hemmer 396-400; for more on Ibsen’s use of folklore in this play, see Alnæs 286-331; Holtan 67 ff.; Jacobsen and Leavy *passim*.

logue (305-06)—the influence of the “James Harris” ballad on Jackson’s stories is more difficult to demonstrate than the influence of witchcraft. My contention is that Jackson uses this ballad as a kind of door opener into a larger discourse that involves witchcraft and occultism in broader terms, allowing her to draw on the more obscure sources outlined in the previous chapter. The ballad provides a name and a character that personifies the demon lover motif, “ready-made” so to speak, as well as a particular plotline that can be found in a few stories, most notably in “The Tooth.” Contextualizing and examining the ballad itself is the first thing that needs to be done, before two of its aspects, the links to Ireland and the sea, will be discussed in relation to “Dorothy and my Grandmother and the Sailors” and “Come Dance with Me in Ireland”—two stories that incidentally close their respective sections (II and III). Then, a reading of “The Tooth” focusing on its similarities to the ballad and the sources of a few curious references in it is given. Despite its marginal relation to the ballad, a reading of “The Lottery” dealing with its ritualistic aspects concludes the chapter.

Ireland and the Sea: The Contexts of Child 243

Much work has been done to establish an approximate date for “James Harris,” one of the most famous Child ballads. The first extant version, Child A, appeared in print in London as early as 1657 and was collected by Samuel Pepys in 1685 (a time when people were still being executed for witchcraft; this decade, we recall, also saw the publication of Glanvill’s *Saducismus triumphatus* in several editions). The country of origin for this particular ballad, then, seems to have been England.⁷ The American version, entitled “The House-Carpenter,” probably has its origins in version B, which must have reached America through Scotch-Irish immigrants at some point, probably between 1750 and 1800 (Burrison 273; Gardner-Medwin 426). The American versions lost most of the supernatural elements; none of the American variants of “James Harris” keep the lover “convincingly demonic or retains his cloven hoof” (Hyman, “Child Ballad” 236). Hyman has few nice things to say about the transition; the American versions of the ballad, he writes, “lose not only the tragic movement [. . .] but any

7. It later made its way into Scotland; version C is probably a Scottish remaking of the English version A (Burrison 273). To be more specific, the Scottish “branch” of the ballad consists of versions C, D, E, F (which may also be Irish) and G (a fragment) (Gardner-Medwin 415). Reed states that “in general, Scottish ballads deal more with the supernatural than do English ballads” (57).

narrative or dramatic movement at all,” some are even examples of “meaningless nonsense,” “inadequate narrative, abortive drama, happy-ending tragedy, corrupt and meaningless verbiage, and bad poetry in general” (237, 238, 239).⁸

Luckily, we only have to deal with one version here: the ballad Shirley Jackson quotes in the Epilogue to *The Lottery* is recognizably the F variant of Child 243, taken from the fifth edition of Sir Walter Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1812). With its fifteen stanzas, the F variant is considerably shorter than the others, exempting G and H, which are mere fragments; Jackson quotes stanzas 9 through 15. Interestingly, stanza 8 reads, “She has taken up her two little babes, / Kissd them baith cheek and chin: / ‘O fair ye weel, my ain two babes, / For I’ll never see you again’,” a stark contrast to the preceding story, “The Lottery,” where Mrs. Hutchinson has no time to say goodbye to her children before the stones hit her, where someone gives her son Davy “a few pebbles” to hurl at his mother (301).

A few interesting differences between the different versions should still be noted. As Alisoun Gardner-Medwin has shown, there are two elements in particular that tend to differ: the demonic nature of the seducer, and the place he promises to take the woman (416). In Child A, stanzas 16–17, James Harris is referred to as a “spirit” that “spake like a man.” In only three variants does he have a “cloven foot” (E11, F11, G7), identifying him as the Devil himself. American variants tend to be less supernatural than their British (especially Scottish) ancestors; here, the demon lover is closer to being a regular man. Generally, the supernatural elements are fewer as the different variants get more recent, and the lover’s character thus gets more and more ambivalent.⁹ The place names naturally differ; in some American versions places like Mississippi are mentioned, but usually the place is Italy. In only two versions is the place associated with a vision of the hills of heaven and hell (F13–14, E14–15). This element makes the ballad resemble other visionary texts, like *The Vision of Tondale*, *Saint Patrick’s Purgatory*, and Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, texts about a mortal performing a

8. See Wilgus for an, as far as I can tell, justified attack on Hyman’s article. In addition to the points in Wilgus’s article, one could simply state the obvious: we are dealing with ballads here, a genre that is largely based on oral transmission and fragmentary texts, not “high art.” Therefore operating with a list of “aesthetic criteria,” and accusing ballads of being “bad poetry” and “inadequate narrative[s]” seems to me overly elitist and ignorant of the genre’s characteristics. By which I obviously do not mean to diminish the value of ballads in any way, only to suggest that one might need other “criteria” when judging ballads than is the case with more “literary” poetry.
9. See Wimberly 226–39 on how the supernatural is treated in ballads, and the function of “the living dead man.”

katabasis, a descent into Hell or Purgatory and then returning to the living.¹⁰ The motivation for the lover's return, the vow, is referred to in D, E, and F, and explicitly mentioned in C20: "I brought you away to punish you / For the breaking of your vows to me" (see Wimberly 258). Several smaller details also differ (see Reed 46-71, esp. the table on pages 65-68). Child F is the only variant believed, at least by some, to be of Irish origin (Reed 63), primarily due to stanza 3 line 3, "I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground." The story that most explicitly deals with Ireland in *The Lottery* is "Come Dance with Me in Ireland."

In this story, an impoverished man called John O'Flaherty comes to Mrs. Archer's house to sell shoelaces. He is treated badly by the three ladies present: like Mrs. Wilson in "After You, My Dear Alphonse," the Concord women in "A Fine Old Firm," and the Winning women in "Flower Garden," the three women's apparent altruism and compassion turn out to be nothing but acts of selfishness, ignorance and prejudice. The man claims to have known W. B. Yeats (the story's title is a line from one of his poems, which is in turn borrowed from a medieval ballad),¹¹ and he leaves by accusing the women of having served him bad sherry. "Just as Jackson will use Harris to figure women's illusions, so here a male character is trapped in his own illusion," says Hattenhauer (35); his illusion involves feeling superior, but he is not as intellectually superior as he thinks, as "part of the humor is that he is feeling superior to others for their foolishness" (34). Thus, the old man is really a manipulator, taking advantage of the women's guilt in order to sell them his shoelaces; on the other hand, he ends up as a victim himself in the end. He is, as Hattenhauer points out, a "victim then victimizer then victim" (35). Again, Jackson shows how selfishness is sometimes disguised as its opposite, and she does this partly by manipulating perspective in a masterful way. As Hattenhauer notes: "The narration seems dependable but really is not. By taking the old man as point-of-view character and yet keeping the vantage point outside of his head, Jackson dislocates

10. See Wimberly 132-34 for a discussion of the underworld in "James Harris," one of few ballads where this realm is associated with a mountain.

11. The allusion is to an anonymous fourteenth-century verse that goes like this: "Ich am of Irlaunde / Ant of the holy londe of irlande / Gode sir pray ich ye / For of saynte charite / Come ant daunce wyt me / In irlaunde" (Ricks 1). Yeats's poem uses this ballad as a chorus; the two first stanzas of Yeats's own text read, "One man, one man alone / In that outlandish gear, / One solitary man / Of all that rambled there // Had turned his stately head. / 'That is a long way off, / And time runs on,' he said, / 'And the night grows rough.'" (Yeats 276, lines 6-13).

the reader by showing that the reader will identify with the women" (35).¹² Coming with O'Flaherty to Ireland would perhaps involve a sea voyage, and the sea—an important setting for the ballad—is significant in the last story in the second section ("Come Dance with Me in Ireland" closes the third).

"Dorothy and my Grandmother and the Sailors" is one of very few stories set in Burlingame, near San Francisco, California, where Jackson was born and spent most of her childhood. There is reason to believe, then, that at least part of the story is based on her own experiences as a child, when her best friend's name was indeed called Dorothy (Hall 32; Oppenheimer 24-28). Like "Charles" and "My Life with R. H. Macy," also autobiographical stories, "Dorothy" employs a first-person narrator, a point of view Jackson commonly reserves for stories of this kind. It is the thirteenth story of twenty-five, thus placed right in the middle, which may be significant. Also, it is the only story that features a sailor (actually, it features several) and a maritime environment, which connects it to the "James Harris" ballad. As opposed to the ballad, though, the sailor does not succeed in taking anyone out to sea with him in "Dorothy." Furthermore, the story reads more like a humorous account of meaningless childhood fears than a terrifying story about a demon lover, thus making it more difficult to catch the decidedly "James Harris" related imagery in it.

A seemingly irrational, hysterical fear of sailors (an attitude that could remind one of the groundless fear people had of witches) that roam the streets of San Francisco whenever the fleet is in is established early in the story: "when we walked with our backs to the ocean we could feel the battleships riding somewhere behind and beyond us," the narrator says, and Dorothy's (Dot's) mother warns them, "Don't go near any sailors, you two," as do the narrator's mother and grandmother (they know "what kind of girls who follow [. . .] sailors") (135-36). The coming of the sailors is an event that, ritual-like, takes place annually and is associated with windy weather. Dot, the narrator, the narrator's mother, grandmother, and Uncle Oliver (an ex-sailor himself) go down to the harbor to look at the ships that have come in. While they are walking up the stairway to one of the battleships, the narrator's mother warns the girls that they should "keep [their] skirts down," making it clear that the

12. Some of the tricks Jackson uses to dislocate the reader are discussed in Chapter Three, below.

fear of the sailors is sexually founded (138). The battleship serves as a metaphor for “the broader male realm,” as Hall suggests (33); a threatening place where women are given little attention.¹³

While Uncle Oliver is giving some of the other sightseers a lecture on his experiences in the First World War, where he was a radio-operator, the narrator gets lost. Luckily, she finds a “tall man in a uniform with lots of braid” that she thinks looks important enough to be the captain; he may also, because of his height, be yet another manifestation of James Harris. In the ballad there is no mention of anything blue related to Harris—except, maybe, the sea?—but his considerable height is prominent in the last stanza: “He strack the tap-mast wi his hand, / The fore-mast wi his knee, / And he brake that gallant ship in twain, / And sank her in the sea” (F15.1-4). The captain does not abduct the narrator in “Dorothy,” he calmly takes her back to her mother and grandmother. The reunion is not altogether happy: her mother shakes her arm and asks if she is not ashamed of herself; confused, the narrator begins explaining that the man she was with was the captain (he quickly makes his exit when the girl’s relatives have been located). “He might have *said* he was a captain, [. . .] but he was a marine,” her grandmother attests (139); this “shocking” news causes them to leave the ship, the incident even results in Dot and the narrator not being allowed to go and see the fleet again. The grandmother rejoices, though, that the narrator was found “in time” (139), a choice of words that underlines her fears that her granddaughter could have been raped and/or taken out to sea by the sailor. Thus, the grandmother voices fears and expectations the reader might also have at this point: a well-founded skepticism to everyone tall and dressed in blue. In this context, though, her worries come off as un-grounded hysteria, and as a character she resembles the authoritarian grandmothers in “Afternoon in Linen” and “Flower Garden,” who expect the younger generation to meet their antiquated standards.

After the near-disaster on the battleship, they go to see a movie. When the two seats next to Dot are emptied, two sailors occupy them just as the mother and grandmother are coming down the aisle; “You leave those girls alone,” the grandmother says loudly (140), but

13. We may see an expression of this notion in Uncle Oliver; he touches the ship “affectionately” (137), he talks passionately about the radio-equipment on board to some other visitors, but he fails to notice his niece’s disappearance.

nothing happens. The sailors are not doing much, except watching the movie, but panic still overwhelms the two girls, and they flee the theater. Dot sat closest to the two sailors in the theater, so she is more upset than the narrator (interestingly, one sailor appears when the narrator is alone, but when she is with Dot, there are always two of them). To calm Dot down, they go to a tea room next to the movie theater, where they have some hot chocolate; “Dot had started to cheer up a little when the door of the tea room opened and two sailors walked in” (141). Panic-stricken, Dot clings to the narrator’s grandmother; “Don’t let them get me,’ she wailed” (141). The mother accuses the sailors of having followed them, and the story ends with the narrator informing us that Dot had to stay at her house that night (141). The focus shifts from the narrator’s experiences on the ship to both the narrator and Dot’s encounter in the movie theater, and then to Dot’s reaction to the encounter in the tea room.

The most interesting thing about the scene in the tea room is perhaps the choice of words. Dot “wails” that they should not let the two sailors get her. This could easily be seen as an allusion to one of the most famous references to a demon lover in literary history, namely the line in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan” that tells of a “woman wailing for her demon-lover” (line 16).¹⁴ The difference is striking, though: while the woman in Coleridge’s poem is calling for her demon lover, Dot is calling for no less than two assumed demon lovers to stay away from her. This difference is important; it helps emphasize that this story is an inverted version of the “James Harris” ballad. The girls in this story are presumably too young to feel any lust or longing for a demon lover, and their inherent fear of sailors (and given that the tall captain/marine is indeed James Harris) makes Harris’s adventure a flop in this case. These things are difficult to discern from the story alone, one must consider it in light of the demon lover motif that its maritime setting invites. Furthermore, the fact

14. Interestingly, “Kubla Khan” is subtitled “A Vision in a Dream.” Coleridge allegedly wrote the poem in an opium-induced haze after sleeping; it is, appropriately enough, a fragment. As mentioned several times, the daemonic is often associated with intoxication and dreams (see Patterson for an interesting reading of the daemonic in this poem). Thomas Copeland suggests that Coleridge drew on the apocryphal Book of Tobit for this passage (Coleridge was planning an essay about the book around the time he wrote “Kubla Khan”) (87-88). Thematically, too, this poem is of interest: it deals with an earthly paradise, “a hidden and confined garden-spot of the world, infinitely beautiful and enfolding within itself the secret of immortal happiness, and yet also in the midst of its bliss aware of its own possible destruction,” which is suggested by an underground river, Aleph, beneath the bright surface of the garden (Copeland 88). The ambiguity is also preserved in Coleridge’s original spelling “daemon” instead of “demon” (Patterson 1036, 1040n4). We will meet the same ambivalent death-in-beauty in the city of Samarkand, which will be discussed in the section about Jackson’s story “The Tooth” below.

that “Dorothy” is placed in the middle of the composite could indicate that it is meant as a potential turning point, a climax those who are familiar with the “James Harris” ballad might expect. Instead, we get an inverted version of the ballad with a comparatively happy ending rather than a tragic abduction.

Jackson may have set up this “trap” to play with the readers’ expectations; one is deprived of the expected closure to the story, and the adventures of James Harris go on. This is yet another indication that Jackson takes certain artistic liberties with her folkloric material. By inviting a comparison between “Dorothy” and the ballad, mainly through its setting, but denying it at the end, Jackson sets the reader in a state of hesitation and confusion. As we have seen, stories like “The Daemon Lover” also deal with the demon lover motif, but without providing the closure one might expect. Roughly halfway through the ballad—stanza nine in version F—the woman sets her foot on the ship; exactly halfway through Jackson’s short story composite a girl does the same. We are not, however, told about any violent deaths in the composite until “The Lottery,” the very last story, and even here the reader has to infer the stones hitting. It seems to me that the main points of the ballad’s plotline—stepping onto the ship in the middle, dying violently in the end—are followed in Jackson’s text, but without providing the “correct” settings for these happenings. The story “The Tooth,” though, seems to have more in common with the ballad structurally as well as thematically.

The Triumph of James Harris: “The Tooth”

Like “The Daemon Lover” and the ballad, “The Tooth” is about a journey. Clara Spencer, the story’s protagonist, is going to New York by bus to take care of a toothache. When leaving her husband she points out no fewer than four times within the first two pages (in a “he said-she said” dialogue that resembles Hemingway’s “Hills Like White Elephants” stylistically and, to a certain extent, thematically) that she feels “funny”; her first line of dialogue is, in fact, “I feel so funny” (265). Her feeling funny is no doubt due to the dope, says her husband, “all that codeine, and the whisky, and nothing to eat all day” (266). The combination of whisky, painkillers, a sleeping pill, and no food as an explanation for her

state of mind has caused several critics to say that the following events are due solely to hallucinations brought on by drugs and alcohol, or creations of Clara's overstrained mind (Friedman 49; Pascal 136). Regardless of cause, we may observe that Clara Spencer's dreamy and nervous state of mind is emphasized right from the start, as is the strange mix of dream, fantasy, and reality.¹⁵

Another important detail given in these opening pages, before Clara gets on the bus, is her husband's remark that this is not the first time she has had problems with this particular tooth: "at least six or seven times since I've known you you've had trouble with that tooth. [. . .] You had a toothache on our honeymoon,' he finished accusingly" (267). "Did I?" Clara answers, before starting to talk about something else. The mention of their presumably ruined honeymoon establishes, more or less directly, a connection between the tooth and sex (see Willingham-Sirmans and Lowe-Evans for a Freudian reading of the story). One is reminded of the demon lover in the apocryphal Book of Tobit here, where Asmodeus prevents Sarah from having sex with her husband on their wedding-night.¹⁶ A toothache is not as dramatic as Asmodeus's actions in the Book of Tobit, but judging from Clara's husband's accusatory tone, her toothache may have caused some marital strife; at least these remarks suggest that the toothache has symbolic implications. Sarah's seven husbands in Tobit could remind one of Clara's "six or seven" earlier toothaches, the seven years that passed between the last time James Harris and the woman has met at the ballad's opening, and the seven ships he has "upon the sea" (F7.1). That Clara seems to have forgotten her previous toothache could indicate that she was either so drugged that she has no recollection of it in the story's present, or that she was under a daemonic spell that clouded her judgment and memory. Furthermore, the notion that marital incompatibility was caused by a jealous

15. On this story, Hattenhauer notes that "even if a character is in the unconscious the experience is not necessarily delusional. Just because she dreamed it does not necessarily mean it did not happen" (44). As in "Come Dance with Me in Ireland," Jackson uses "deceptive third-person narration in league with destabilized characterization" (Hattenhauer 44): we have a seemingly neutral narrator, but we only get Clara's point of view, and she is clearly not in a very reliable state of mind. This, along with several other devices, helps deceive the reader, and blur the lines between the conscious and unconscious, dream and reality.
16. Asmodeus kills seven men on their wedding nights; they have all, in succession, married Sarah (3.8). The eighth husband, Tobias, is advised by the angel Raphael to burn the heart and liver of a fish in the bridal chamber (6.17-18); the odor drives the demon lover all the way to "the remotest parts of Egypt," where Raphael binds him "hand and foot" (8.1-3). Nowhere does the text say that Asmodeus has sex with Sarah; he is simply keeping her from having relations with men (see Stephens 63).

demon was well known in medieval demonology (Russell, *Witchcraft* 110).

On the bus, Clara quickly falls into a “fantastic” sleep (an interesting choice of words; the fantastic will be explored in Chapter Three), and when she wakes up the bus has stopped for a break. The passengers move into an all-night restaurant for a quick snack. Clara sits down at the end of the counter, falls asleep yet again, and wakes up when a stranger touches her arm, asking her if she is traveling far. The stranger, as one might suspect, is tall, and he wears a blue suit; significantly, “she could not focus her eyes to see any more” (270). Then, while she is drinking coffee, the stranger begins his temptation strategies: “even farther than Samarkand, [. . .] and the waves ringing on the shore like bells,” he says, completely out of the blue; he continues when they get back on the bus by saying that “the flutes play all night, [. . .] and the stars are as big as the moon and the moon is as big as a lake” (270, 271). An important ingredient in the ballad is the promise made between the woman and the demon lover at an earlier point in time; the demon lover’s appearance is motivated by his wanting to see the fulfillment of that promise. As the narrator comments in Elizabeth Bowen’s “The Demon Lover,” “she [. . .] felt that unnatural promise drive down between her and the rest of all human kind. No other way of having given herself could have made her feel so apart, lost and foresworn. She could not have plighted a more sinister troth” (84). The promises in “The Tooth” are made in the story’s present, and they are promises made by the demon lover, there is no consensus between both parties. In the ballad, the demon lover most commonly promises to show the woman “how the lilies grow / On the banks of Italy” (F12.3-4). This place of hopes and dreams is transformed into Samarkand in “The Tooth.”

Samarkand is interesting for several reasons. Samarkand (or “Samarquand”), today the second largest city of Uzbekistan, is one of the oldest and most important cities in the region of Central Asia known as Transoxiana, and along the famous Silk Road. The city has become something of a legend, with an extraordinary attraction on people that bears comparison with Babylon, Baghdad or Rome, and it has lent its legends and myths to many a literary work—just mentioning its name seems to create an air of exotic orientalism and mysticism.¹⁷ Seen

17. James Elroy Flecker’s poem “The Golden Journey to Samarkand” (1913) is one example. A merchant in that poem explains: “For lust of knowing what should not be known / We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand” (93). Something forbidden and unknowable drives them on. The prologue’s first part focuses on beauty, “marvellous tales,” and the “huge white-bearded kings” who rest in the “dim glades”—romantic visions of the

as “the paradise of this world” in its heyday in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Juvaini 116), the legend of Samarkand is inextricably connected to its famous Tartar ruler Timur (1336-1405), or Tamerlane (a western abstraction of Timur-i-Lenk, “Timur the lame”), immortalized through Christopher Marlowe’s play *Tamburlaine the Great* (1590),¹⁸ and Edgar Allan Poe’s poem “Tamerlane” (1827). Timur was a gruesome ruler whose mere name was associated with fear throughout Asia for decades, yet during his reign the city of Samarkand soared as a center of trade, culture, art, and architecture. Artists and other creative individuals were, in fact, among the few the emperor spared on his many conquests—usually he ordered people beheaded, using their skulls for practical purposes like building material for towers, walls, and roads (Kapuściński 78).

The point of this little historical digression is to show that “there is something incomprehensible [. . .] in the notion that this city, with all its beauty and composition [. . .] was created by such a cruel demon, marauder, and despot as was Timur” (Kapuściński 77). Kapuściński provides an apt metaphor for this strange duality: “Timur’s scissors had two blades—the blade of creation and the blade of destruction. These two blades define the limits of every man’s activity. Ordinarily, though, the scissors are barely open. Sometimes they are open a little more. In Timur’s case they were open as far as they could go” (79). The same can probably be said of James Harris. Timur’s creative-destructive Samarkand seems like a perfect city for Jackson’s writer-demon, but he wants to take Clara even farther than the ancient city, to a place where he can open the scissors’ blades even more. The reference to Samarkand then becomes an early indication of a tragic ending, while at the same time suggesting a better and more exciting life.

coveted city (90). The second part, however, opens on a more somber note: “[. . .] Death has no repose / Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand / Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those / Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand” (90). The ambiguous co-existence of death and destruction and fruitful creativity and beauty is central to the legend of Samarkand.

18. In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Stephen Greenblatt makes this observation on the play: “Marlowe’s heroes seem at first to embrace [evil for evil’s own sake]: they freely proclaim their immense hunger for something which takes on the status of a personal absolute, and they relentlessly pursue this absolute. [. . .] It is as if Marlowe’s heroes wanted to be wholly perverse, in Augustine’s sense, but were incapable of such perversity, as if they could not finally desire anything for itself. For Marlowe [this inability] springs from the suspicion that *all objects of desire are fictions, theatrical illusions shaped by human subjects*. And those subjects are themselves fictions, fashioned in reiterated acts of self-naming” (218-19, my italics). James Harris could also be an illusion shaped and projected by human subjects whose desire makes their own personalities disintegrate; they are splitting, re-creating and re-naming themselves to accommodate Harris’s manipulative strategies.

Back in the bus, Clara keeps falling asleep with the stranger who calls himself Jim beside her. Again, there is a break, and Jim asks her to “come along”; the restaurant seems to be the same one as before to the sleepy, confused Clara Spencer (271). At the table, Harris continues his strange story, “and while we were sailing past the island we heard a voice calling us” (272). Again, they board the bus, again Clara falls asleep, again she wakes up frightened, and again Jim takes her out to another restaurant, where she now forgets her bottle of codeine on the table. Back on the bus, she puts her head on Jim’s shoulder (they are getting more and more intimate) while he is telling her that “the sand is so white it looks like snow, but it’s hot, even at night it’s hot under your feet” (273). After a journey full of dreamlike, strange conversations with Jim, constantly falling asleep, and eating pills, Clara arrives in New York, and Jim exits temporarily—of course, she manages to fall asleep yet again in the waiting-room at Pennsylvania Terminal. When she wakes up, Jim mysteriously appears again; “the grass is so green and so soft,” he now tells her, and “the sky is bluer than anything you’ve ever seen, and the songs. . .” (274). She steps away from him and moves out onto the street. Jim follows her, presenting her with “a handful of pearls” (274), a strange gesture that ends this first section of the story.

This section obviously comes off as rather confusing; it is difficult to separate dream from reality. We are not told explicitly that Clara is dreaming, we are only told about her falling asleep, going out to restaurants, and listening to Jim’s odd, poetic lines. She may have dreamt Jim altogether, or parts of their conversations, or none of it. It is tempting, based on what has been said before about the workings of the demon lover, to say that Jim exists, that he does indeed enter the bus, sit down next to Clara and take her out to eat at a restaurant, at least the first restaurant; the things he says to her, though, the enticing, tempting lines about a paradise “farther than Samarkand,” may be coming to Clara in a dream, as could be the case with the numerous stops at restaurants. However, such an interpretation is as good or bad as any other, since there is little if any evidence in this delightfully vague, ambivalent, and hazy story to support it. The repetitions—the going in and out of the bus, the falling asleep, the seemingly irrelevant drivel that Jim comes up with—give the first section of the story an almost hypnotic quality that emphasizes Clara’s state of mind stylistically (see Chapter

Three, below, on repetition in relation to Freud's notion of the uncanny). Repetition with small details changing each time (incremental repetition) is a common device in fairytales and ballads.

The next section opens, not surprisingly perhaps, at a restaurant, where Clara again falls asleep, and is wakened by a waitress; "You was asleep,' the waitress said accusingly" (274). (This is the second time something is said "accusingly" to Clara; the first time, we recall, concerned Clara's toothache during her and her husband's honeymoon.) While Clara is on the street waiting for the light to change we learn that Harris has started playing with her mind even though he is not there: somebody falls behind her as she is crossing the street, and she immediately assumes it is Jim; "she walked on without looking up, staring resentfully at the sidewalk, her tooth burning her, and then she looked up, but there was no blue suit among the people pressing by on either side" (275). She has already come to expect his company. At the dentist's office, she starts feeling increasingly uncomfortable; she seems to be losing her sense of self. After she has had her X-ray photos taken, an important passage reads: "Her tooth, which had brought her here unerringly, seemed now the only part of her to have any identity. It seemed to have had its picture taken without her; it was the important creature which must be recorded and examined and gratified; she was only its unwilling vehicle" (276). She has lost her sense of identity, and there is a "creature" inside her that she has to "gratify"—an exact description of a woman's relationship to her demon lover.

The dentist refers her to a surgeon to have her lower molar extracted. In the taxi from the dentist's to the surgeon she falls asleep again. At the surgeon's office she is led through "labyrinths and passages" before reaching the waiting room, where she spends almost an hour "half-sleeping" (279). "Come along," the nurse then says, echoing Jim's words (she repeats it on p. 283), and Clara finds herself in the chair "more quickly than she was able to see" (279). Anesthetized, she thinks she can see Jim again; "and then the whirling music, the ringing confusedly loud music that went on and on, around and around, and she was running as fast as she could down a long horribly clear hallway [. . .] and at the end of the hallway was Jim, holding out his hands and laughing, and calling something she could never hear because of

the loud music” (280).¹⁹ Waking up, she asks the nurse what she said. “You said ‘I’m not afraid,’ the nurse said soothingly,” but the answer does not satisfy Clara, she wants to know if she said where Jim is (281). Her longing for Jim is getting stronger, she desperately wants to see him again; it is as if an obsession with Jim has taken over, inserted itself in exchange for the tooth. In her sleep while the tooth is being removed she finally overcomes her fear (she often woke up frightened next to Jim on the bus), implying that Harris has taken over her soul completely—the tooth associated with her husband (and their presumably troublesome sexlife), is replaced by the apparent comfort of a demon lover. A strange statement bringing associations to witchcraft and the Apocalypse ends the second section: “God has given me blood to drink,” Clara says to the nurse when recuperating in a cubicle (281).

The line about “blood to drink” is also found in the opening of Hawthorne’s Gothic novel *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), where Matthew Maule, accused of witchcraft, is about to be hanged. Colonel Pyncheon is watching the execution when the following happens:

At the moment of execution—with the halter about his neck, and while Colonel Pyncheon sat on horseback, grimly gazing at the scene—Maule had addressed him from the scaffold, and uttered a prophecy, of which history, as well as fireside tradition, has preserved the very words.—“God,” said the dying man, pointing his finger with a ghastly look at the undismayed countenance of his enemy, “God will give him blood to drink!” (Hawthorne 357-58)

This curse sets off the novel’s action, whose main theme is that “the wrong-doing of one generation lives into the successive ones,” as Hawthorne puts it in his famous preface (352). By alluding to Hawthorne, and thereby the historical and biblical material Hawthorne in turn refers to here,²⁰ Jackson again actualizes the past: the past comes back to haunt us. In

19. Cf. Child F, stanza 7, which mentions Harris’s seven ships, with “four-and-twenty bold mariners, / And music on every hand” (lines 3-4). There are no references to music in any of the other versions. Ironically, music was used to calm hysteria in antiquity—the followers of Pythagoras, for instance, “used catharsis of the body by means of medicine, and of the soul by means of music” (Aristoxenus, fragment 26). Hearing music in her head is how the increasingly delusional Margaret in “Pillar of Salt” escapes reality. See Chapter One, above.
20. Sarah Good, hanged as a witch in Salem in 1692, allegedly pronounced this curse on the Reverend Nicholas Noyes, a judge at the trials, when he urged her to confess. “You are a liar,” she said, “I am no more a witch, than you are a wizard;—and if you take away my life, God will give you blood to drink.” According to tradition, Noyes died of a stroke decades later, choking on his own blood (Hawthorne 1262-63). The source is the Revelation of John, where seven angels pour bowls containing the seven plagues of God. The third angel pours his bowl into a river, which then turns to blood (the third plague, says Exodus 8.16-19, was gnats, or mosquitoes, who of course suck blood. Earlier, in 7.14-24, the first plague caused all the water in Egypt to turn to blood). The “angel of the waters” then says “You are just, O Holy One, who are and were, for you have judged these things; because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!” (Rev 16.4-6).

this reading, our protagonist would be pulled between the promise of a better future with a demon lover, and the notion of a past that may come back with a vengeance—the thought of her previous, miserable, life with her husband perhaps? Also implied is a fear of the future: one never knows when a past curse kicks in, and knowing that it will eventually actualize itself only increases the fear (who knows how long Clara and Jim will be happy together before he strikes?). The Hawthorne reference also ties the story to the Salem witch trials, making it one of few references to actual cases of witchcraft in the stories proper. The removal of the tooth (Clara’s soul) gets a mythic and ritualistic status with this double reference to the Apocalypse and the Salem witch trials.

Interestingly, Clara’s words are “God has given *me* blood to drink”—she is not making a threat against someone else, as Maule did in Hawthorne’s novel; she refers to herself. In the Bible, those who have “shed the blood of saints and prophets” are given “blood to drink” by God; a punishment that matches the crime, or *contrapasso* as Dante calls that kind of retribution (*Inf.* xxviii.142). The implication is that Clara feels, for some reason, that she has been punished, and justly so.²¹ This could be punishment for having impure thoughts about Jim or, as Richard Pascal suggests, “an act of expiation, though more in payment than atonement, for the sin of choosing to live for herself” (138). Pascal goes on to claim that Clara is “self-sufficient” and that she can “cope almost calmly” with her loss of identity (138). This reading misses the central point that Clara is not running away from her husband, she is running towards Jim, the demon lover. The text implies that there has been some problems between Clara and her husband that are sexually founded, but nowhere does it say that Clara is consciously running away—if she is using the toothache as an excuse to leave her husband for good, I fail to see the textual evidence. She is decidedly running away in the end—from this world perhaps, not just her husband—but this seems like a forced act under Jim’s influence rather than a deliberate escape from her old life. So, she is not “choosing” to

21. In Revelation, the drinking of blood is connected to the judgment of the great whore of Babylon, who is “drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus” (17:5-6). That a demon lover is tempting the protagonist, establishes a link to the judgment of the whore and the pouring of the third bowl of plagues in Revelation (the sexual element and the sucking of blood recalls the succubus demon, which also gave inspiration to the vampire myth, as well as the Erinyes in Greek mythology; see above). When Clara runs away with Jim she is condemned, both in the biblical sense of sin and in analogy with the fate of Sarah Good, hanged as a witch and a victim of male control.

live for herself, as Pascal says; she is driven into Harris's arms as a consequence of his careful, deliberate, and demonic manipulation—she is captured, not liberated. And how “calmly” she acts after losing her tooth/soul is debatable—even though she remains calm physically, her mind is certainly anything but calm. Finally, Pascal asserts that “Jim is a fantasy and she may be insane” (138), a bombastic claim that clearly, in my opinion, overlooks the importance and nature of James Harris as he emerges from the other stories and the ballad.

The image of drinking blood can also be found in Sophoclean tragedy. Consider lines 707-08 of the *Oedipus at Colonus*: “[. . .] my body hidden in earth and sleeping / will coldly drink their hot blood.” The meaning is that Oedipus, in the future, will receive libations (one used to sacrifice animals and pour their blood on altars and other sacred places to worship the gods and heroes), so Oedipus is not only thinking of his own death and the bloodshed that is to follow (in Thebes his sons Polyneices and Eteocles will kill each other in a battle over the city, so Oedipus is functioning as a prophet here), he is also talking about his aftermath: the fact that he will be given heroic status and immortality after his death. It can also be interpreted as a reflection on the pleasant revenge it will be for Oedipus to see the earth soaked in his enemies' blood (Bowra 312). Later on (765-813), the chorus praises the landscapes of Colonus and Attica; the nightingale's “constant trilling song” is mentioned (769), as well as the “lovely-clustered” narcissus and “golden gleaming” crocus (778, 780). As a matter of fact, this apparent celebration of Athens is an ode of lament: the nightingale is the bird of lamentation, the narcissus is irrevocably linked to Persephone and her doom (thus, a flower of death), and the crocus used to be planted on graves (Knox 155). Persephone was picking flowers, narcissus and crocus among them, when Hades took her. The context of the Sophoclean tragedy suggests that Jackson has Clara saying this not only as a reference to her bleeding mouth, or Hawthorne, or the Bible, but also to the Oedipus and Persephone myths.

The relevance of the Persephone myth becomes less far-fetched when we consider the fact that Shirley Jackson originally called the story “Persephone” (Hall 45). In that myth (recorded in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*), Hades, god of the underworld, appears above ground in a golden chariot, and abducts Demeter's daughter Persephone (West 33 f.). Hades

takes Persephone down to the underworld to be his queen,²² and the hymn is primarily about Demeter trying to get her daughter back—while she is not allowed by the gods to see her daughter, she makes the crops fail, bringing famine on mankind (West 57). In the end she manages a compromise of sorts: the gods allow Persephone to roam the earth for two thirds of the year, while spending the rest of the time in the land of the dead, thus explaining the cycle of the seasons (Burkert 160-61; Morford and Lenardon 319 ff.; “Persephone/Kore”). Persephone is kidnapped by the personification of the underworld, so she is firmly associated with death in Greek mythology, but in a slightly ambivalent way: is she carried away to be married to Hades, or to death, or both? The marriage to Hades also becomes a metaphor for death. As Walter Burkert observes, the myth founds “a double existence between the upper world and the underworld: a dimension of death is introduced into life, and a dimension of life is introduced into death” (161). Death in marriage and marriage in death (the Eros-Thanatos dichotomy in Greek mythology) is exactly what Clara Spencer is on her way to when she walks happily away with James Harris. The Hades-Persephone myth is closely connected to the demon lover motif.

The third section of “The Tooth” opens with Clara waking up in her cubicle. She moves down a long hallway resembling the one in her dream, but this time she ends up in the ladies’ room, not in Jim’s arms. This is the setting for what is probably one of the most disturbing scenes in *The Lottery*: “it was when she stepped a little aside to let someone else get to the basin and stood up and glanced into the mirror that she realized with as slight stinging shock that she had no idea which face was hers” (283). (Note how the lack of punctuation and the relatively staccato rhythm of the sentence underline Clara’s irrationality and disbelief). A long paragraph then starts with Clara realizing, as if for the first time, that her name is Clara, before she starts examining her purse to find out who and what she is (284-85). Dissatisfied with the way she looks—she is too pale, she thinks—she puts on some lipstick and rouge, thus “painting” a new identity for herself to replace the old one, which has disappeared with

22. Recall the descent into the underworld implied in the “James Harris” ballad already noted. The celebrations in Demeter’s temple at Eleusis—the so-called Eleusinian mysteries—are not well known, but some think that the initiates to the cult had to go through a re-enactment of the events described in the Hymn, such as simulating a trip to the Underworld (Morford and Lenardon 323).

her tooth.²³ After getting out of the room and the building, she stands outside waiting, and “after a few minutes Jim came out of a crowd of people passing and came over to her and took her hand” (286). The last paragraph tells of a woman completely under Harris’s control:

Somewhere between here and there was her bottle of codeine pills, upstairs on the floor of the ladies’ room she had left a little slip of paper headed “Extraction”; seven floors below, oblivious of the people who stepped sharply along the sidewalk, not noticing their occasional curious glances, her hand in Jim’s and her hair down on her shoulders, she ran barefoot through hot sand. (286)

Her delusion and obsession with her demon lover is now so strong that she thinks New York City is full of the hot sand Jim has mentioned earlier. We may also note the repetition of the phrase “between here and there” from “The Daemon Lover,” and the fact that the extraction of her tooth has taken place seven floors above ground—the number of years between the parting of the demon lover and his return in the ballad (stanza F1). It should be unnecessary to point out the significance of the number seven in magic and occult contexts, as well as in fairy-tales, ballads, and other kinds of literatures that often rely on numerological formulas.

The use of Jim in “The Tooth” is not only informed by Jackson’s interest in the past and its place in the present; it comes, I think, from a conviction that the episodes in the ballad represent and re-present the tragic dilemma of her own time and place. Themes like the fragmented sense of self, the relativity of reality, angst, males controlling females, and the tranquilized suburban conformity that gives a superficial sense of happiness, can all be read into “The Tooth.” Jackson has not only borrowed the name James Harris from a ballad, but a set of themes and events—an archetypal mythic narrative—that are more or less overtly reenacted in *The Lottery*. His triumph in “The Tooth” resembles the ballad’s course of action more than most of the other stories in *The Lottery*, since Harris is finally seen leading a woman away, presumably to “the mountain of hell” (F14.3). Why does he succeed here? Clara Spencer is married, while several of the other women that have encountered Harris are single; a point that no variant of the “James Harris” ballad fails to make is that the seduced

23. Assuming a new identity is a topic that interested Jackson throughout her career. In the novel she was working on at the time of her death, *Come Along with Me*, the heroine states that “I erased my old name and took my initials off everything, and I got on the train and I left” (4). This resembles the train journey in “Pillar of Salt,” and the bus journeys in “The Tooth” and the end of her novel *Hangsaman*—trips ending in breakdowns, mental- or demon-induced, connected to erasing one’s identity and assuming another.

woman is taken away from a husband and, usually, her children. The promises Jim makes in the first section comply with the promises made in the ballad; the middle section revisits witchcraft, the Bible, and Greek mythology through its reference to the drinking of blood; the third brings Jim back, and his success at the end is depicted using typical Gothic imagery (loss of identity, mirroring, and fragmentation of self, and so forth). “The Lottery,” the last story in the composite, also deals with religion, blood and, in a very subtle way, witchcraft.

Between Archaic Rituals and Modern Democracy: “The Lottery”

“The Lottery” first appeared in *The New Yorker* in June 1948,²⁴ immediately causing a sensation. Some people cancelled their subscriptions, rudely questioning the morals of the magazine and the author; others asked politely what the meaning of the story might be, yet others wondered where people still did such horrible things.²⁵ Part of the reason for this massive reaction was the shockingly violent ending, but also the fact that its intentions are at best unclear. There is no “key” to understanding it, as the author herself repeated several times, both in interviews and in writing—she preferred to answer that “it’s just a story I wrote” when asked about its meaning or authenticity (Jackson, “Biography” 212). Richard M. Eastman is probably right when he identifies the story as an “open parable,” a kind of writing characterized by “instability of detail [that] hinders the reader in making out a simple analogic structure to the story” which causes the reader to “drift as in a dream, straining to see the latent shapes behind the distorted manifest content of the tale” (17). No meaning

24. There is some confusion about the exact date of publication. Jackson, in her lecture “Biography of a Story,” states that the only change the fiction editor at *The New Yorker* requested, was changing the date in the first sentence of “The Lottery” so that it coincided with the magazine’s publication date. Jackson gives this date as June 28th 1948 (212). But the story as we have it reads June 27th, so one might assume that *The New Yorker* instead came out on this date. Joan Wylie Hall states that the publication date was actually June 26th, and she goes on to say that the first four pages of Jackson’s manuscript in The Shirley Jackson Papers at the Library of Congress are missing, so there is no way of telling what date Jackson originally preferred (50). Oppenheimer also gives June 26th (128), Friedman takes Jackson’s word for it and gives June 28th (63), and Hattenhauer states that Jackson’s first version read June 26th (which he cannot know if we are to believe Hall when she says that the relevant manuscript page is missing), but changed it to June 27th, which he also identifies as the date of publication (45). This may appear to be nitpicking, but as we shall see, the date given in the story is of importance; critics have linked it to a number of religious and occult events.
25. See Jackson, “Biography of a Story” 214-24 for an assortment of quotations from these letters. My personal favorites are: “Was the sole purpose just to give the reader a nasty impact?”; “Surely it is only a bad dream the author had?”; “Please tell us it was all in good fun”; “What happened to the paragraph that tells what the devil is going on?”; “Tell Miss Jackson to stay out of Canada”; “My only comment is what the hell?”; “I expect a personal apology from the author”; and “‘The Lottery’ interested some of us and made the rest plain mad.”

appears as *the* meaning—thus, the open parable can “present a single ethical motif with variations of indefinite number and strength,” which is why the author of such stories often refuse to explain their work; it would limit the references and defeat the “artistic end of the form itself” (18). What is clear, though, is that there are elements of folklore in it: the ritualistic execution of the lottery and Mrs. Hutchinson can easily be traced back to ancient fertility and sacrificial rites. The reference to fertility rites is evident in “The Lottery” through Old Man Warner’s reminder: “Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon” (297).²⁶

A folklore-in-literature reading of “The Lottery” should, as Barbara Allen points out, focus less on identifying “specific items of folklore in works of literature” than on interpreting the folkloric elements as “integral to the meaning of particular literary creations” (119). Alan Dundes—a prominent figure in American folklore studies—touches upon the same thing when he identifies two steps in the study of folklore, the first being “objective and empirical,” the second “subjective and speculative. The first might be termed identification and the second interpretation” (28). He then criticizes literary critics for using folklore in the wrong way; they spend too much time on the first step, he thinks, without attempting to “evaluate how an author has used folkloristic elements and more specifically, how these folklore elements function in the particular literary work as a whole” (28). Bearing these points in mind, my aim in this particular discussion is to look for ways in which Jackson adds layers of meaning to her story through the use of folklore. In particular, the folkloric elements that point in the direction of duality and ambiguity, features already pointed out several times in relation to James Harris, will be examined. Since the story decidedly takes place in a modern context,²⁷ the folkloric references can hopefully give us a few indications as to what Jackson is trying to say about her own day and age.

A description of the preparations to the lottery and how these were carried out in the past is given quite a lot of attention in the story, a whole paragraph in fact, which deserves to be quoted in full:

26. On fertility rites, see Eliade 331-66.

27. There is talk about “tractors and taxes” (291), a “teen-age club” (292), and Mrs. Hutchinson says the following when she arrives late at the lottery: “Wouldn’t have me leave m’dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?” (295). These were not the concerns of an archaic, pre-Christian village, I would think.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up—of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper *swearing-in* of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a *recital* of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless *chant* that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to *walk among the people*, but years and years ago this part of the *ritual* had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a *ritual salute*, which the official of the lottery had had to use in *addressing each person who came up* to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins. (293-94, my italics)

The words and phrases italicized in the above quotation all help underscore the fact that this is no ordinary lottery; it is a lottery of religious-mythic significance. Jackson is clearly using vocabulary connected to religious ceremonies and ancient rituals here: there are “ritual salutes,” “recitals” and “chants” (the word “ritual” is used in two consecutive sentences), and then there is the mention of the official walking “among the people,” which indicates his high status; a phrase like “the people”—not just “people”—collectively separates them from the official, emphasizing his important role. He—the ironically named Mr. Summers—is above the people, like a high priest of some ancient cult; he even needs to be sworn in (by the postmaster, of all people). Furthermore, talking to each villager as they arrive reminds us of a priest, nodding and saying hello to his parishioners as they enter or leave his church. Mr. Summers is indeed very “proper and important” as he stands there, waiting for his “congregation” with his one hand resting eerily on the black box holding the paper slips that will decide the villagers’ fates. The lottery has the function of a church gathering, Mr. Summers the function of a priest.

The paragraph quoted above also shows that many of the traditions have been lost over the years; it is a nostalgic description of the ceremoniousness of earlier times. Now, in the story’s present, only the black box that the paper notes are drawn from survives from an earlier era: “The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new

box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box” (292-93). The stoning itself makes the ending of *The Lottery* read like a return to a barbaric, brutal past (yet again, a frightening aspect of the past is brought into a modern setting to create suspense, shock, and disgust).²⁸ Here, as in “The Tooth” and the *Oedipus at Colonus*, someone or something is given blood to drink.

The things James G. Frazer has to say about the public scapegoat and ancient fertility rites seem immediately relevant to “The Lottery,” and his famous discussion on these matters has frequently been cited as one of Jackson’s main inspirations for the story. Here he is on the scapegoat in ancient Greece:

For a whole year [the scapegoat] was maintained at the public expense, being fed on choice and pure food. At the expiry of the year he was dressed in sacred garments, decked with holy branches, and led through the whole city, while prayers were uttered that all the evils of the people might fall on his head. He was then cast out of the city or stoned to death by the people outside of the walls. (694)²⁹

An important difference between the scapegoat rituals Frazer talks about and the ritual we witness in “The Lottery” is that Jackson’s story does not involve any prior worship or idolization (or mocking, for that matter) of the victim; Mrs. Hutchinson is simply selected at random and immediately stoned without any “sacred garments” or the utterance of prayers. This indicates that it is the killing itself that matters, that there is no established protocol to be followed apart from the rules that govern the lottery itself, no gods are invoked; Old Man Warner’s chant “Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon” is a remnant of such activities, though. The majority of the villagers sacrifice because it is tradition, not because they seriously be-

28. Sources for this outcome may not only be found in “primitive” pagan rituals but also in the Bible, where such punishment is usually related to adultery (see, for example, Deut 22.23-24), but both parties involved were usually stoned in such cases (“Adultery”). James M. Gibson sees the stoning of the unfaithful Achan in Josh 7.10-26 as analogous to “The Lottery” because the two stories “follow the same plot, use the same plan for the lottery, and end with the same stoning for the winner” (195). I find this curious. To begin with, there is no “same stoning for the winner,” since Achan is in fact stoned along with his family. Furthermore, there is no “same plan for the lottery,” since the punishment in Joshua is performed by divine command, not randomly through a lottery. Thirdly, Achan is a man; as we shall see, the victimization of women might again be a concern for Jackson here. There are certainly parallels between Joshua and “The Lottery”—the dividing Israel into tribes, clans, and households to find the guilty part, for instance—but Gibson’s idea that these two cases are exact parallels seems exaggerated to me. A link of sorts to Christianity and martyrdom is perhaps established through the name of Mrs. Delacroix (“of the cross”), though. See Cervo on significance of the Delacroix name and its “Dellacroy” corruption.
29. See Burkert 82-84 on Greek purification- and scapegoat rituals. See also Bremmer 33-37, where the scapegoat ritual is traced back to Ebla in the 3rd millennium BCE.

lieve that it will serve any good. The importance of doing this together as a community also seems to be more important than the meaning of the ceremony. As Jackson writes in her novel *The Bird's Nest*: “Each life [. . .] asks the devouring of other lives for its own continuance; the radical aspect of ritual sacrifice, the performance of a group, its great step ahead, was in organization; *sharing* the victim was so eminently practical” (378). The merely ceremonial, traditional, and communal aspects of the lottery have dwarfed heartfelt belief in it, not unlike the fate of the witch trials as they lost momentum in the late seventeenth century.³⁰

“The Lottery” presents us with a “comprehensive, compassionate, and fearful understanding of man trapped in the web spun from his own need to explain and control the incomprehensible universe around him, a need no longer answered by the web of old traditions” (Schaub 85). It is not just a simple story about scapegoatism and the tendency to punish innocent people for a whole community’s collective sins. It is also about modernization and improvement—the lottery has steadily become more efficiently organized. They are talking about discontinuing the lottery in the north village, says Mr. Adams, a name firmly associated with the Founding Fathers (297). The answer comes from Old Man Warner (another symbolic name): “there’s *always* been a lottery,” he says, and he repeats twice that the people talking about shutting it down are a “pack of fools,” and that quitting brings nothing but “trouble” (297). The modernization has caused the village to lose contact with ancient beliefs, and to discontinue it altogether would break all ties to the past. Modernization and progress paradoxically entails more barbarity and less belief/meaning.

The importance of setting is more prevalent in this story than in most other stories in *The Lottery*. The event takes place on the town square, where one usually finds a church in most American towns no matter how small.³¹ We are given the exact time—June 27th

30. Fritz Oehlschlaeger makes the interesting point that Tessie Hutchinson “conforms rather well to the profile of women found to be witches,” partly because “the ages of Tessie’s four children indicate that she is past the years of her peak fertility” (263).
31. It is possible that the events in “The Lottery” are prefigured in the first story, “The Intoxicated,” where the demise of the church is also mentioned. The drunk man in that story thinks about “gladiators fighting wild beasts,” which could point to the sacrifice of people for entertainment’s sake, more precisely, perhaps, the Christian martyrs (5). Eileen, the pessimistic girl in the kitchen, says that “I think of the churches as going first, before even the Empire State building [. . .] The office buildings will be just piles of broken stones” (6, 7). The church goes even before business, just as the church has gone away in “The Lottery,” leaving the businessmen in charge—the lottery takes place “between the post office and the bank” (291). The reference to

between ten o'clock and noon—and the listing of the names of the village's citizens gives the story a strong sense of community; the community rather than Tess Hutchinson (the name brings associations to Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and Anne Hutchinson, who was suspected of witchcraft in Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1637) seems to be the story's main character, indeed, it seems to be a story of mankind (Brooks and Warren 172). Jackson's matter-of-fact, artless style throughout the story, and the beautiful descriptions of the "clear and sunny" morning when the children are playfully gathering stones in their pockets (the first couple of pages are steeped in prolepses), give the story a cozy, pastoral feel. It is not until the very ending, when we realize that Tessie Hutchinson's "prize" involves getting a load of stones flung at her by her fellow villagers—a shocking, unexpected ending if there ever was one—that we realize we are dealing with more complicated issues than lotteries in small-town America.

As we have seen, many of the stories in the composite deal with the function of history, ambiguity, duality, and uncertainty, especially whenever James Harris makes an appearance. In "The Lottery" there is a certain amount of duality, even without the presence of Harris, and again the present's relationship to history is significant. An indication of this is given already in the very first sentence. The story famously begins with "The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day" (293). Several critics have pointed out that June 27th is the date of summer solstice (Nebeker 102; Schaub 82 f.), but summer solstice, an important date in ancient, especially occult, rituals is (usually) on June 21st. This fact alone amounts to little more than what Allen warns about; simply identifying elements in a story that correspond to folkloric data (see a previous note on the problems with the date). The date could, however, be of importance since it is between two other dates.

June 27th falls right between the summer solstice (June 21st) and Independence Day (July 4th). In a remarkably simple and subtle way, Jackson is able to convey the feeling that we

"piles of broken stones" is obvious. The religious overtones in Eileen's comments is evident when she says that "it isn't as though we didn't *know* about it in advance," and later, "if only you could know exactly what *minute* it will come" (5, 7). The "it"s in these two sentences are unspecified, but it seems to me that Eileen is talking about the end of the world; the apocalypse as described in the Book of Revelation and elsewhere. Imagery from Revelation is also evoked in "The Tooth," as we have seen.

are both in a pagan, brutal past characterized by ancient rituals involving human sacrifice, and a modern era of democracy,³² symbolized by the American Independence Day; the date in the first sentence “bisects the two weeks between these dichotomous dates and may well embody the contrast between superstitious paganism and rational democracy” (Yarmove 243). Also, of course, July Fourth symbolizes the replacement of the old rule with a new and better one. As Jay A. Yarmove concludes his article on the date, location, and names in “The Lottery”: “despite modernity, democracy, and American neighborliness, the primitive, selfish, superstitious ghost of paganism has been allowed to rear its ugly head and destroy one of its own” (245).

A set of terms that may be useful in explaining the residual after-effects of pagan rituals in modern democratic civilization, is Nietzsche’s notion of the Apolline and the Dionysiac from his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872). Stephen King claims that the tension between these two elements exists in all horror fiction (252). The birth of American Gothic fiction could certainly be associated with this tension: this kind of irrational and subversive literature started flourishing in American in the late eighteenth century, a time that is characterized by Enlightenment, liberty, and optimism for the new nation.³³ In “The Lottery,” we witness order, apparent democracy, barbarity, and meaninglessness at the same time. Gang mentality and collective ecstasy is associated with the Dionysiac, writes Nietzsche, which “pays no heed to the individual, but [. . .] seeks to destroy individuality and redeem it with a mystical sense of unity” (18). One is tempted to relate this to “The Lottery”: the community needs to

32. This duality even makes sense if we connect the ritual in “The Lottery” to the most famous scapegoat ritual in literature: the Day of Atonement recorded in the Bible (Lev 16). Here, God instructs Moses on how Aaron, who has just lost his two sons, is to perform a purification rite: “He shall take the two goats and set them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting; and Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel [“a scapegoat” in other renditions]. Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord, and offer it as a sin offering; but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel” (Lev 16.7-10). Azazel is a very cryptic word, but it is probably a demonic figure (cf. 17.7), contrasting God (see “Azazel”; Barton and Muddiman 101). It is important to note, though, that the focus of this particular ritual is on the purification of the sanctuary, not repentance for the individual.
33. The standard story is that the Gothic was simply a reaction to these attitudes, giving voice to the dark, nightmarish side of society that was kept silent by progress, liberty, rationalism, and optimism. As Eric Savoy points out, though, this situation should be nuanced slightly, as it makes more sense to see the Gothic as interacting and interfusing with the overly rational contemporary society rather than rejecting and distancing itself entirely from society (167). These two perceptions of culture and society existed side by side; as I will come back to in the next chapter, the Gothic is rarely an inversion of or escape from reality or society; it presents a slightly distorted and decidedly darker “commentary” to the same reality or society. Its uncanny and disturbing effect if done well relies, I think, on the reader’s conscious or subconscious recognition of these mechanisms.

destroy the individual for somehow not complying with the village rules; Mrs. Hutchinson's coming too late and protesting just before she meets her fate could back up this reading. But there are several things that oppose such an interpretation. First of all, she *runs* to the lottery, is eager to get to it, and she is very enthusiastic once she gets there; secondly, when it dawns on her that she has been chosen, she proposes to sacrifice her child instead: not exactly acts of protest by a dissident. Clearly, the village as a unity destroys an individual, but it happens totally at random: it is not a gesture of protest or punishment. It is a lottery striking randomly without any other motivation behind it than tradition. This, I think, makes the whole ritual even more disturbing.

A few things should be said about the ritual of stoning itself, and the religious significance of stones. Stones are often given magic properties in magic and occultism. Pebbles scattered on a floor were said to prevent witches from entering a house (like garlic against vampires), and round, smooth stones are, ironically, considered lucky in folk magic. The stones that the children gather at the opening of the story are the "smoothest and roundest" ones (291), and little Davy Hutchinson is given "a few pebbles" at the end (301). Stones often have some importance in "primitive" religions partly because a stone is seen as strong and permanent, thus transcending the precariousness of humanity (see Eliade 216-38). Lastly, during some cases of demonic possession and outbursts of psychic phenomena, stones seemingly coming from nowhere have been reported to rain down on the accursed. In Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*, Eleanor, the protagonist, experiences a shower of stones that continues for three days, displaying her special psychic powers that subsequently grants her a place in Dr. Montague's experiment at Hill House (7). Stephen King probably alludes to this episode in *Hill House* in his debut novel *Carrie* (1974), where stones fall on the telekinetic title character's house while she is furious at her mother (Eleanor's sister's name in *Hill House* is Carrie).³⁴

"The Lottery" is, as has been mentioned several times already, the last story of *The Lot-*

34. King has expressed his debt to Jackson several times. In *Danse Macabre*, he says that *The Haunting of Hill House* is one of the best horror novels of all time; he dedicated *Firestarter* to her ("To Shirley Jackson, for never having to raise her voice," a description of her style as good as any), and epigraphed *Hill House* in *Salem's Lot* (1975). Furthermore, his television miniseries *Rose Red* has much in common with *Hill House* (such as the mentioned falling stones, and the idea of a psychic experiment in an old mansion), and the episode he wrote for *The X-Files*, entitled "Chinga," is also supposed to have a few links to Jackson, especially to her novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (see Reinsch 351).

tery, the gruesome *finale* that “violently reinforces the theme of female impotence and male control” (Hall 47); the epilogue containing the James Harris ballad, which also has a somewhat shocking ending, comes next. Jackson does not reproduce the whole ballad, as the ellipsis before the first line shows. However, there is another possible interpretation of these three dots: they can be seen as a connective device showing that the ballad is to be read as a continuation of “The Lottery.” As any reader of that story knows, it ends with Mrs. Hutchinson screaming “it isn’t fair,” before “they [are] upon her” (302). The first line of the ballad that Jackson quotes is “she set her foot upon a ship,” a line that could indicate that after her death by stoning, poor Mrs. Hutchinson is (figuratively) taken out to sea by her demon lover. A far-fetched reading perhaps, but we should remember that the ending of “The Lottery” does not, technically speaking, end in death, just a very strong sense that that will inevitably be the outcome; Jackson cuts off her narrative just as the deadly stones hit. Just as the link between many of the other stories and the supernatural is established through something *outside* the texts—the paratexts—the violence in “The Lottery” takes place outside the text; in this case, in the reader’s imagination. Inferring the link to “James Harris” is, in a way, just as logical as inferring the stoning.

The epilogue could also be read as a continuation not only of “The Lottery” but of many of the other stories as well. It is easy to imagine that Clara Spencer in “The Tooth,” after running barefoot through hot sand on her way to the illusory Samarkand with Harris, boards the (figurative) ship that leads to her death: the ballad excerpt represents the closure Jackson has hitherto denied us. The potentially ambiguous use of ellipsis that introduces the ballad, along with the fact that the ballad excerpt is prominently given an entire, though necessarily short, section alone, makes it connect structurally to many of the previous stories, not just the one immediately before it.

CHAPTER THREE

“DEATH IS NEVER REAL TO THEM”
The Sense of Reality

Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream.

—William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer
Night's Dream* 4.1.191-93

The lover [in Coleridge's "Kubla Khan"] is a
demon-lover because he doesn't exist.

—Margaret Atwood, *The Blind Assassin*

No live organism can continue for long to
exist sanely under conditions of absolute
reality; even larks and katydids are supposed,
by some, to dream.

—Shirley Jackson, *The Haunting of Hill
House*

WE HAVE SEEN IN THE two previous chapters that ambiguity abounds in *The Lottery*, especially concerning the possibility of an evil and/or supernatural presence. How does this affect the characters' sense of reality? And what about the reader's sense of reality? In this chapter, I first look into the many literary references in Jackson's texts, arguing that while her style is not characterized by the excess we know from other writers of Gothic fiction, the many instances of characters reading and writing, and intertextual links, help "fictionalize the fiction," thus obscuring the boundaries between the real and the unreal. Then, I look at Freud's influential text "The Uncanny," and show how it may be applied to Jackson's composite. Dreams are often seen as expressing the unconscious, and as people dream and sleep a lot in *The Lottery*, I discuss dreams and memory next, and how these things relate to the short story composite genre. Lastly, I look at Todorov's notion of the fantastic, while also pointing to Jackson's style, manipulation of point of view, etc. as a means to question reality. My assumption is that Jackson, through diverse strategies, seeks to destabilize the reader's

sense of reality, sometimes by also destabilizing her characters.

Reading and Writing as Gothic Reflexivity

People seem to read and/or write a lot in *The Lottery*. As I have pointed out several times already, James Harris is invariably associated with literature, being a writer most of the time. But many of the protagonists in these stories are also associated with literature and/or writing.¹ To mention but a few examples: In “The Intoxicated,” Eileen is writing an essay on the future. As we saw in Chapter One, her writing sets off a discussion of apocalyptic proportions. “The Daemon Lover” starts off, after a description of the nameless heroine’s lack of sleep the previous night, with her sitting down to read, but deciding instead to write a letter to her sister. But after writing a few lines (“I can hardly believe it myself,” she says about her wedding [9]), she hesitates over what to say next, and tears it up. She is unable to describe her relationship with James Harris: marrying him is so strange and irrational that she cannot describe it in writing. That she writes the letter “in her finest handwriting” (9), a writing-act slower than enthusiastic scribbling, only emphasizes her hesitation about the wedding. “Got a Letter From Jimmy” opens with a reflection on whether men are quite sane, before we are told that a couple has received a letter from Jimmy. The story centers on whether they—a man and his wife, presumably, but they are just “he” and “she” in the story—should open it or not. “He finally broke down and wrote you,” thinks the woman, “maybe now it will be all right, everything will be settled and friendly again” (287). The man, though, wants to return it unopened. The letter is associated with possible reconciliation, but as in “The Daemon Lover,” a connection between people is deferred, this time by the man’s reluctance to open the letter. In “Afternoon in Linen,” a woman reads her grandchild Harriet’s (a female Harris?) poem “The Evening Star,” but after Howard, a little boy present, has mocked Harriet, she admits that she has copied it out of *The Home Book of Verse* (100-02).² And in “The

1. Hattenhauer focuses on acts of reading and writing throughout his chapter on *The Lottery* (29-47), but his approach differs slightly from mine. Instead of interpreting the stories’ “writerliness” as problematizing the relations between reality and fiction in various ways, he is more oriented towards psychoanalysis. Writing, to Hattenhauer, is closely related to the splitting of the self, subject formation, and the like.
2. Another possible interpretation is that Harriet is so embarrassed about having her poetry read aloud that she simply claims to have plagiarized the poem so that Howard will stop mocking her. She has to think for a moment before she remembers where she has copied it from, and she ends up taking the papers away from her grandmother, holding them “in back of her, away from everyone” (102), which could suggest that she is only

Lottery,” the survival of the community hinges on the annual writing of a dot on a piece of paper—the act of writing gives the village its identity and connects it to a past that most of the villagers have lost sight of.

In “The Villager” and “Seven Types of Ambiguity,” the titles of a magazine and a book have given the stories their titles; these publications even figure prominently within the stories. In “The Villager,” one of the first things we learn about Miss Clarence is that she carries a copy of Stendhal’s *The Charterhouse of Parma* with her in her purse, but she carries it “only for effect,” she has only read up to page fifty (49). The novel is mentioned again in the last paragraph (56), neatly enveloping the story, presumably to emphasize its importance in Miss Clarence’s life (see Gerlach 10 on circularity as a closural signal). She has taken courses in typing and shorthand, she has worked as a stenographer, and she is currently employed as a secretary (49). Within the first couple of paragraphs, then, the importance of writing and reading is firmly established. Just as Miss Clarence has not really read Stendhal’s novel, she does not really want to be a secretary either; after twelve years as a secretary with the same company, she still dreams of being a dancer, which is the reason she moved to the Village in the first place. Reading is associated with escapism and falseness here, while writing is a substitute for a dream that remains unfulfilled. It is also through writing/reading (an ad in the *Villager*) that Miss Clarence encounters James Harris. But it is “Seven Types of Ambiguity” that is the most overtly “literary” of the stories, with its many references to nineteenth-century realistic fiction, and the most important movements in literary criticism in Jackson’s day.

In “Seven Types of Ambiguity,” a couple enters Mr. Harris’s bookstore. They, or at least the husband, want sets of books, so they enter the basement, where the sets, mostly classics, are kept (the top floor is devoted to best sellers and art books). Harris himself and a sole customer, a college student, are in the basement; a girl minds the ground floor. The student, Mr. Clark,³ repeatedly asks Mr. Harris to have a look at “the Empson,” which is kept in

making up the reference to this book. I have checked *The Home Book of Verse* (the Stevenson entry in Works Cited) without finding the poem. However, I checked the ninth edition, published in 1953, obviously not the edition Harriet would have used, so there is still a chance she is telling the truth.

3. Dennis M. Welch, in one of few non-“Lottery” articles written on Jackson’s short fiction, points out that the student’s name “implies both scholarliness and salesmanship and links him to Harris, who is also a ‘sales-clerk’” (28).

a “glass-doored bookcase” behind Harris’s desk; it is a “good book,” he says twice (211, 212), but he cannot afford it himself. The man, who is rather naïve and does not know much about literature, takes an interest, and in the end he buys the Empson in addition to the sets of British nineteenth-century fiction that the well-read student has helped him pick out (Dickens, Meredith, Thackeray, and Austen). The wife’s only request is Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (Harris equips them with a whole set of the Brontës). As Harris makes a list of the sets the man has requested, the latter asks Harris to also include the Empson, depriving the student of “his” book.

“Seven Types of Ambiguity” takes its title and central symbol from William Empson’s book by the same name. In normal prose, ambiguity usually represents some stylistic fault; Empson, however, pointed out that this can be a deliberate poetic device—multiple meanings are present in the text themselves, not only in the acts of interpretation (Abrams 10-11; Gallagher and Greenblatt 26). Furthermore, Empson used the term “ambiguity” in a wider sense than is customary, defining it as “any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language” (1). Empson’s book was very influential, so the claim made by both Harris and Clark in Jackson’s story about *Seven Types of Ambiguity* being “scarce” seems odd unless it is a signed deluxe edition or something of that sort—we are never told what is so special about it (212, 214). *Seven Types of Ambiguity* was used in many universities when *The Lottery* was published (first published in 1930, a second edition of the book was published in 1947, and reprinted in 1949; a third revised edition was published in 1953).

It is understood that the man will never read the Empson, let alone understand it, and how we are to interpret the story’s ending is far from clear, quite in tune with the topic of Empson’s book. The last of Empson’s seven types of ambiguity “occurs when the two meanings of the word, the two values of the ambiguity, are the two opposite meanings defined by the context” (192), a kind of ambiguity relevant to the story’s ending. The student seems to be the victim here, since he is deprived of the book, but a closer reading suggests, as Welch convincingly argues, “that the young man in a ruse with the store owner plays a humorous game of manipulation whereby they get an ignorant customer to buy a hard-to-sell book

which he will never read” (27). The student’s interruptions and the exchange of words between Harris and Clark in front of the customer indicate a manipulative scheme involving them both. While I agree with Welch’s reading of the story in isolation, I am more in doubt when considering the other stories in the composite. If we understand Mr. Harris as James Harris, the demon lover—and there is no reason to think otherwise—his cooperating with someone seems unlikely. Harris does not cooperate with anyone in other stories; he is perfectly capable of manipulating people on his own. Then again, he might have manipulated the student to do his “dirty work” for him to begin with. The possible readings are many. The man’s reasons for buying the book, for example, are also rather unclear; he could be buying it for himself, or he could be buying it to please the boy in appreciation of his having helped out. However, the books are to be delivered to the man’s home address later, an unpractical arrangement if the man wants the college student to have the book; it is therefore likely that he is indeed buying it for himself. There is narrative closure here, since Empson’s book—a coveted item throughout the story—is finally bought (“solution to the central problem” in Gerlach’s terms), but the “wrong” person buys it. Thus, hermeneutic closure is problematic; the roles and intentions of Harris and the student are rather unclear, as is the significance of William Empson’s book in the middle of all this.

The story could be said to be a critique of the kind of literary criticism William Empson (and Jackson’s husband Stanley Edgar Hyman) represented.⁴ Significantly, the basement in Harris’s bookstore is connected to the ground floor by a spiral staircase, and Harris warns the couple as they are coming down the stairs: “watch the bottom step. There’s one more than people think” (210)—the phrase is repeated when the couple is leaving (217); again, Jackson uses circularity to signal narrative closure. This is a rather apt metaphor for Empson’s critical practice—or so his critics might say (see Hall 40). Spiraling down into more and more

4. Stanley Edgar Hyman represents the “anthropological” criticism that was closely related to the myth criticism of the sixties. Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* was the movement’s bible, Northrop Frye its patron saint. Hyman’s colleague at Bennington (and one of few critics he could stand), Kenneth Burke, is another representative of this school. This kind of criticism was in many ways a reaction against New Criticism, which was seen as too restrictive; one therefore focused on tracing the mythical origins in a literary text—like historicism, it was primarily a contextual theory. Needless to say, this kind of criticism can easily be dismissed as “gold-digging in Fort Knox,” since just about every element of plot, symbolism, characterization, etc. in a literary work can be traced back to some ancient myth. Although Empson and Hyman can be placed in two different critical traditions (New Criticism and anthropological criticism), they were criticized for the same propensity to over-interpret texts. This tendency is possibly one reason why they are less fashionable today.

obscure points when interpreting poetry, advocating the view that every single, seemingly insignificant, detail is of importance, is a striking feature of Empson's book.⁵ As he says under his second type of ambiguity, "my seven types, so far as they are not merely a convenient framework, are intended as stages of advancing logical disorder" (48). Thus, the interpreter moves, paradoxically, further and further away from the text by interpreting it "to death" while achieving more and more "logical disorder." This implies that the critic is moving further and further away from reality, too: when "anything goes" it removes the critic from the "reality" of the text that is discussed, as s/he spirals down yet another "bottom step," of which there is always "one more" to examine. The other possible interpretation of this story is that it is the exact opposite of a critique of a particular kind of literary criticism; rather, Empson's book serves as a metafictional pointer to Jackson's own strategies in *The Lottery*: that of using various types of ambiguity to affect the reader.⁶ The point, I think, is ambiguity in itself; therefore, favoring one interpretation over another makes little sense.

Reading and writing often represent some kind of wish or dream that the characters in *The Lottery* strive for, but cannot fulfill. Their loneliness and longing for love are filled artificially, through reading and writing.⁷ These "fictionalizing" activities can also be seen as attempts to make the real, everyday evil appear less dangerous by escaping/distorting it, and/or by personifying it—not unlike the fate of the witch as symbol of evil.⁸ Harris, in either case, manifests his ambiguous position between reality and fiction by "entering" a world that has been filled by literature and writing thus far: as a writer or book salesman, and as a

5. Empson, in his preface to the second edition, admits that his method might seem to embrace irrelevancies and over-interpretation. He quotes a critic, a James Smith, who criticizes Empson for including "a number of irrelevancies," and a "vagueness as to the nature and scope of ambiguity" (xii). Empson spends most of this preface defending his views, but he also agrees with some of the criticism his book has been met with. Near the end of the preface he in fact admits that "I am ready to believe that the methods I was developing [in the first edition] would often be irrelevant to the demonstration" (xv).
6. Welch touches upon this: "Just as there are no direct clues in Jackson's 'Daemon Lover' as to whether the lover is a real man or a phantom, so there are no such clues as to the collusion between the teen-ager and Mr. Harris—clues that would surely destroy a subtle and comic ambiguity" (28).
7. Anne Williams writes that "as narratives of an 'otherness' distant in time and space, Gothic fictions necessarily emphasize writing rather than speech. [. . .] Writing is inherently a sign of absence, even as it records the signs of a past presence. [. . .] Gothic is a discourse that shows the cracks in the system that constitutes consciousness, 'reality'" (66).
8. "In our efforts to avoid facing the realities of human evil, we have tamed the witch and made her comic, dressing her up in a peaked cap and setting her on a broom for the amusement of children at Hallowe'en. Thus made silly she can easily be exorcised from our minds, and we can convince our children—and ourselves—that 'there is no such thing as a witch'" (Russell, *Witchcraft* 1).

demon lover that appears in the characters' real world, not just through a book or a ballad anymore, Harris represents both the fictional and the real. Furthermore, we might say that the excessive mention of book titles in Jackson's stories supports the claim that the fictionality of fiction is underlined, and that she is using writing and reading to question reality. It would seem, then, that many of Jackson's characters experience a diminished sense of reality, which is replaced by a subconscious belief in the fictional and (possibly) supernatural. Literature and James Harris have replaced a traditionally rational and realistic sense of reality, reminding us, perhaps, that our reality may be no more than the stories we tell ourselves to make sense of the world. There can only be subjective truths about what reality is and is not; as we have seen, one's sense of reality can be manipulated if it is already shaky, either by internal agents (mental illness and so forth) or by external ones, such as the people around us, or by external-internal agents such as "demons" that tamper with our dreams and wishes, tempting us to do things we normally would not do; spiritual forces that are invisible but at the same time intimately linked to human agents, operating through both mind and body.

Using literature inter- and paratextually to emphasize fictionality could be said to exemplify Gothic self-consciousness and reflexivity. In a recent book on the subject, *Gothic Reflections*, Peter K. Garrett distinguishes between the reflexivity we find in other genres, and Gothic reflexivity:

The typically comic self-consciousness of metanarrative reflexivity, of Shandyism in either its eighteenth-century or its postmodern versions, defamiliarizes narrative with its playful disruptions of continuity and ironic subversions of representation. Gothic reflections work differently, in part because the uncanny events and effects of Gothic already estrange us from the familiar; their reflexivity is always linked with the problematic relations of subjectivity and the social, their self-consciousness always in tension with the forces of the unconscious. (9)

Garrett's focus is nineteenth-century Gothic, but I think his main argument can be extended to include twentieth-century Gothic as well, since the effect of defamiliarization through the uncanny is important in the twentieth century too, and the "problematic relations of subjectivity and the social" is also an aspect of one's sense of reality. In *The Lottery*, the play with para- and intertextuality, readerliness and writerliness, affects the relations between characters and their conception of reality. Reading Gothic reflexively also exposes the dialogue

that is always going on between the Gothic itself and the realism to which it is often opposed (Garrett 27). In other words: through inter- and paratextuality, dramatized narration, and, as we will see in the next section, structural disruption through the use of the short story composite genre, Shirley Jackson has us questioning her narratives by—consciously or not—reading them against our conceptions of reality and realism, comparing the two modes, reflecting on the boundaries between them. Furthermore, the structure of *The Lottery*—it being a short story composite—gives several perspectives and voices to the narrative; a looseness that requires a considerable amount of reader involvement, which again actualizes reflexivity, this time as a dialogue between the text and a reader that is constantly deprived of the “full” meaning of the text.

The Uncanny: The “Double,” Animism, and Repetition

One of the most influential texts in Gothic literary criticism is Sigmund Freud’s essay “The ‘Uncanny’” (1919).⁹ At the beginning of this essay, Freud states that “the uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar” (220).¹⁰ He then shows how this is the case by investigating the etymology of the German word *unheimlich* (of which the English “uncanny” is a translation; literally it means “un-homely”). After this lengthy preliminary investigation (comprising approximately seven pages in the Standard edition), he concludes that “*heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in

9. “The psychoanalytical perspectives opened by Freud have proved very useful in understanding the Gothic, not so much through their application to the lives of authors (an example is Marie Bonaparte’s study of Edgar Allan Poe), as in the interpretation of particular works, and in the tropes of Gothic more generally. That may be in part because Freud himself drew on Gothic texts in reaching his conclusions, for in many respects the Gothic seems to have prefigured and shaped his ideas about the unconscious, the role of paternal figures, automatic behaviors, and so on” (Lloyd-Smith 140). Peter K. Garrett similarly observes that “both the psychoanalytic and the Gothic narratives tell of an uncertain or incomplete development threatened by the return of a repressed past” (49). Post-Freudian psychoanalysis is also popular in Gothic criticism—Lacan and Kristeva’s theories, in particular, are often used in poststructuralist/feminist/postmodernist/gender-oriented studies (see Lloyd-Smith 140–60 for a brief and readable presentation of these unreadable theorists). Freud’s essay has also, of course, been criticized; see Cixous for one critical assessment.
10. Near the end of his essay, Freud states that “an uncanny experience occurs either when infantile complexes which have been repressed are once more revived by some impression, or when primitive beliefs which have been surmounted seem once more to be confirmed” (249). It is important to note that Freud distinguishes between uncanny experiences and the uncanny in literature. Of fiction, he makes the obvious but necessary observation that “we adapt our judgement to the imaginary reality imposed on us by the writer, and regard souls, spirits and ghosts as though their existence had the same validity as our own has in material reality” (250). A fictional world where strange things happen is not in itself uncanny; it is when a writer first creates a realistic world, and then introduces decidedly unrealistic elements, that we may talk about uncanny effects in literature.

the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*" (226).¹¹ The uncanny, then, is a frightening experience that is "homely" at first, before it develops into something "un-homely" through ambivalence. The overall effect on the reader is one of hesitation and doubt, as the search for a stable meaning is continually frustrated. Freud mentions three things that might produce an uncanny effect: the double, repetition, and animism, also referred to as "the omnipotence of thought."¹² These elements are relevant to Shirley Jackson, and much Gothic fiction in general. James Harris himself, for example, is an uncanny character because he defies a purely supernatural explanation—by playing with and questioning his existence, Shirley Jackson makes the un-homely homely, the homely un-homely, the supernatural natural, and the natural supernatural. Furthermore, the idea that the homely is made less so through doubt is also relevant if one takes it literally; most of Jackson's stories are concerned with domestic, everyday events that are made ambiguous and frightening.¹³ The uncanny destabilizes the reader's sense of reality (Freud is mostly concerned with the effect on the reader), but it can also cause a similar effect in a character in some instances. In the following I will briefly look at a few stories from *The Lottery* to illustrate the three aspects of the uncanny mentioned by Freud.

The double, commonly a device that disrupts the notion of a unified subject, has been explored at great length in Gothic criticism. Here, I want to look at one story in particular, "Like Mother Used to Make," which uses doubles to question gender roles. As Susanne Becker points out, "defamiliarising often means enforcing the domestic, the homely, the everyday experience, to an excess," and this way of contextualizing experience "can be both comic and horrific, but it always questions the easy acceptance of what we consider to be the real—gender roles included" (24).¹⁴ In "Like Mother Used to Make," two identical

11. *Heimlich* denotes something belonging to the house, something homely and familiar, but it can also, paradoxically, mean concealed, withheld from others.
12. Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle extend the list somewhat: "repetition (including the doublings of déjà vu and the *Doppelgänger*); coincidence and fate; animism; anthropomorphism; automatism; uncertainty about sexual identity; fear of being buried alive; silence; telepathy; death" (37-40).
13. See Egan; Parks, "Chambers." See also Joshi 20-25 on how Jackson turns the domestic into "weird."
14. "Defamiliarization" (in the sense adopted by the Russian Formalists, who thought that all great poetry was characterized by the quality of rendering the familiar strange) as I understand it is very close to the "uncanny." They both deal with making the familiar unfamiliar, the homely un-homely, the familiar strange. But the "uncanny" also involves something concealed resurfacing. Freud quotes Schelling's definition of the *Unheimlich*: "everything is *unheimlich* that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light" (225). This idea of some past secret knowledge that makes its way from the unconscious, where it has been confined to through

apartments are contrasted with the two people that occupy them. David is a neat and tidy homemaker who loves cooking; his neighbor Marcia is a forgetful, careless person whose apartment across the hall from David's is a complete mess. David invites Marcia over for dinner, and we follow him through his meticulous preparations at the beginning of the story. We are told at length about the décor of his apartment, his silverware, and so forth; he has clearly taken great care to make everything about his apartment suit his taste perfectly (29-33). When they have finished eating and are well into their coffee, Marcia hears her doorbell ring. Thinking it is the landlord (she has not paid her rent), she uses David's buzzer to open the downstairs door. It is not the landlord, however, it is a Mr. Harris from her office, "a very large man" (35). He enters David's apartment thinking it is Marcia's, and that she has invited David over for dinner.

As Harris enters, Marcia starts treating David like a waiter, making herself the hostess. David is not having as much fun with this as Marcia, though: "David's desire to get rid of Mr. Harris had slid imperceptibly into an urgency to be rid of them both; his clean house, his nice silver, were not meant as vehicles for the kind of fatuous banter Marcia and Mr. Harris were playing at together" (37). Jackson uses the same word as in "The Intoxicated" to describe the conversation between Harris and the "hostess": they are talking "earnestly" (38). Things get unbearable for David when James Harris (we learn his first name on p. 38) has the nerve to light up a cigar in his apartment, after having asked Marcia if she minds him smoking, and she has replied by shaking her head (the stranger in "The Witch" is also characterized by his cigar). David stands up, prepared to say something along the lines of "Mr. Harris, I'll thank you to..." but it comes out as "Guess I better be getting along, Marcia" (39). Harris stands up and says, "heartily," that he has enjoyed meeting him (39). David has lost. He has been forced to kick himself out of his own apartment, congratulating Marcia on "a simply *wonderful* dinner" that he has prepared himself (39). David enters Marcia's messy, cold, and dirty apartment, and starts picking up the papers scattered all over the floor. Like the woman in "The Daemon Lover," he hears Harris's laughter behind a closed door, the

repression, to the conscious, is not part of the Formalist term, which primarily deals with how language makes the meaning of literature, particularly poetry, strange. Repetition, which I will come back to, is one such Formalist defamiliarization-strategy (Abrams 103).

difference being that he hears it outside the door of his “own warm home” (40).¹⁵

“With Harris as the agent of change,” Hattenhauer writes, “Marcia and David become even more oppositely gendered” (30). He is able to set the two neighbors against each other, causing them to swap not only apartments in the end, but also gender roles and personalities, simply by turning up (we are never told the reason for his visit).¹⁶ Especially for David—whose last name is, significantly, Turner—this is not a pleasant turn of events (his first name is also significant; like his biblical namesake he is dwarfed by his counterpart [Hattenhauer 30]). Marcia looks at David as though they are “conspirators against Mr. Harris” (37), but the so-called conspiracy ends in the conspirators conspiring against each other: Marcia and Harris, by already knowing each other, her verbal innuendo, and his smoking, join forces to kick David out. We can imagine Harris laughing behind the door at the end not only because of Marcia’s good company, but also because he has succeeded in setting the two good neighbors against each other—inverting their roles, even—and sending an unwanted element literally into the cold. “Since Marcia clearly tells [David] goodnight,” says Hall, “he may be providing the setting of the latest of ‘the adventures of James Harris’” (16). Harris and Marcia’s conversation tells something about the real objective here: it is certainly not company or conversation: “‘James and I were just talking about. . .’ Marcia began and then stopped and laughed. ‘What *were* we talking about?’ she asked, turning to Mr. Harris. ‘Nothing much,’ Mr. Harris said. He was still watching David” (38-39). His looking at David could be interpreted as an indication that he wants him out, that he is only biding his

15. Hall notes that an earlier draft of the story ended somewhat differently: here, David (called Jamie Turner) “giggles down the hall to Marcia’s apartment, elated that they have together made ‘a fool out of a big guy like that.’ The ‘big guy’ is innocently named Harold Lang in this early form” (Hall 15). Jackson revised several stories to include James Harris to a larger extent, and, as is the case here, to make endings darker and more ambiguous.
16. Freud, following Otto Rank, says that the double “was originally an insurance against the destruction of the ego,” but this develops into “unbounded self-love, [. . .] the primary narcissism which dominates the mind of the child and of primitive man.” Thus, “the ‘double’ reverses its aspect. From having been an assurance of immortality, it becomes the uncanny harbinger of death” (235). Furthermore, Freud mentions another kind of ego-disturbance with connections to the double: “a regression to a time when the ego had not yet marked itself off sharply from the external world and from other people” (236). Using this insight, we might say that David and Marcia have regressed to a primal state where the gender roles imposed on the ego by “the external world and from other people” have not yet kicked in. Gender roles are not really inverted, then, they are made irrelevant. Doubling can be extended to other stories here too: In “The Villager,” Miss Clarence pretends to own an apartment she does not own when Mr. Harris turns up. In “Trial by Combat,” Emily Johnson enters Mrs. Allen’s apartment, looking for handkerchiefs she thinks the latter has stolen. At the end, we are left wondering who has been stealing from whom. These two stories appear in section 1, as does “Like Mother Used to Make.”

time until David is safely out of the way, and that this accomplishment is more important than the conversation with Marcia.

As in the case of “The Intoxicated,” “Like Mother Used to Make” can also be said to problematize the past. David does things “like mother used to”—significantly, he reads a letter from his mother before dinner (33); see the section on reading and writing above—but this does not work any more; his skills are no longer wanted. When he acts like a mother at dinner, Marcia quickly changes the subject: “‘You *ought* to keep your home neater,’ David said. ‘You ought to get curtains at least, and keep your windows shut.’ ‘I never remember,’ she said. ‘Davie, you are the most *wonderful* cook.’” (34). His motherly advice is not appreciated, probably because it comes from what most people would say is the wrong person, since his personality and gender do not match; in a sense, then, David is already playing a part, pretending to be something he is not: a mother. And this “falseness” is, again, linked to reading.

By inverting traditional gender roles in this story, Jackson could be said to foreground the view that these roles can be transcended and questioned, and that the distinction between man and woman—in the biological, sexual, and social sense—is anything but stable and clear. At the opening, the story’s two main characters represent untraditional gender roles; with the coming of Harris, they are inverted, changed to more “expected” roles, but it ends with David cleaning Marcia’s apartment, a sign that his feminine role has been re-established: he is a male expelled from his “female” sphere, but maintains his femininity and old-fashioned antics in Marcia’s “male” apartment. Thus, gender roles are not only inverted, they are perverted, exceeded or transcended, made ambiguous, free floating, irrelevant.¹⁷ In addition to displaying Harris’s manipulative talents, his intrusion transcends sexuality: the roles have moved onto the level of perversion, where fantasy and reality, dream and body, man and woman, are in constant, unstable, movement.

Another uncanny effect is achieved when there is doubt about whether “an apparently

17. Hattenhauer gives a fairly credible Marxist reading: “The gender reversal shows Jackson’s Marxist notion that the central factor in [. . .] social formation is not sex but class—the power in the literal economy. The dominator and the dominated can be of either sex. Also, Jackson does not gloat over the empowerment of a woman or the feminization of a man” (31). That Jackson does not “gloat” over such things, I might add, is one reason why I have not focused much on gender, sexuality, and feminist interpretations elsewhere in this thesis.

animate being is really alive; or conversely, whether a lifeless object might not be in fact animate" (Freud 226). Referring to Jentsch, Freud mentions "epileptic fits" and "manifestations of insanity," that "excite in the spectator the impression of automatic, mechanical processes at work behind the ordinary appearance of mental activity" (226). Not unlike demonic possession, then, these things are uncanny because they show a person losing control and surrendering to some other force. Jentsch's prime example of uncanny animism is a doll that appears in E. T. A. Hoffmann's story "The Sand-Man" (227-33). The reader is left wondering whether the doll is living or inanimate.¹⁸ In *The Lottery*, there is a story that fits nicely with this sort of discussion: "The Dummy." This story opens at a "respectable" and "well-padded" restaurant (199). "Well-padded" is a curious word to describe a restaurant; one is reminded of the padded cells in lunatic asylums. Mental illness is emphasized right from the beginning. Two women, Mrs. Wilkins and Mrs. Straw, enter this restaurant, and after some discussion they are able to find a table. A ventriloquist is performing with a "grotesque wooden copy" of himself (203), and the ladies are not very satisfied with the show. After the performance, the man sits down next to a woman with a green dress.¹⁹ The two start arguing, and curiously, the man lets his dummy do the talking, and making it "nod in agreement" when he makes his points (205). Clearly, the man is using the dummy to say rude things to the woman, he is too much of a coward to say them to her face: "'Why don't you make the old deadhead shut up?' the dummy said to the man, 'always making a fuss when she sees someone having a good time. Why don't you tell her to shut up?'" (206). After listening to this strange argument, Mrs. Wilkins decides to interfere. She gets up, walks over to the ventriloquist's table, and "slap[s] the dummy sharply across the face" (207)—a scene that

18. I should note that Freud disagrees with Jentsch's interpretation here: "Uncertainty whether an object is living or inanimate, which admittedly applie[s] to the doll Olympia [in "The Sand-Man"], is quite irrelevant in connection with this other, more striking instance of uncanniness" (230). This more relevant uncanniness is, according to Freud, "the theme of the 'Sand-Man' who tears out children's eyes," which is connected to "the fear of going blind [. . .] a substitute for the dread of being castrated" (227, 231). Freud does not dismiss the fact that there is uncertainty about the doll and that this is indeed uncanny, but he thinks it less important than the eye/castration motif in this particular story by Hoffmann.
19. As Hattenhauer observes, "The Dummy" is also a story about doubles (two sets of them, in fact, not unlike "The Villager"): The two ladies are doubles of the ventriloquist and his partner, Mrs. Wilkins is a double of Mrs. Straw (they repeat each other's words and mannerisms). Hattenhauer also connects the "scripted quality of the performance" and "the audience's response" story to the ritualistic: "As it often is in Jackson's fiction, writing here is the basis of ritual. Indeed, ventriloquists and dummies evolved from ritual dolls" (33). See Hall 38 on how the two ladies also appear like dummies.

mixes the uncanny with ludicrous slapstick humor (cf. Parks, “Possibility” 49). Mrs. Wilkins seems to think that it is really the dummy that insults the woman (a woman the two ladies themselves have had few nice things to say about), not the ventriloquist; therefore, she slaps the dummy, not the man. Mrs. Wilkins’s sense of reality is probably the theme here—not unlike the woman in “Colloquy,” a story placed in the same section as “The Dummy,” she has replaced a rational, logical reality with a fictional one; here, that world includes talking dummies.²⁰ Interestingly, both “Seven Types of Ambiguity,” “The Dummy,” and, possibly, “Colloquy”—all placed in section III—are about self-reflexivity and doubling in some shape or form.

Repetition is the last one of Freud’s three examples of the uncanny. He has this to say about it:

It is possible to recognize the dominance in the unconscious mind of a “compulsion to repeat” proceeding from the instinctual impulses and probably inherent in the very nature of the instincts—a compulsion powerful enough to overrule the pleasure principle, lending to certain aspects of the mind their daemonic character. [. . .] If psycho-analytic theory is correct in maintaining that every affect belonging to an emotional impulse, whatever its kind, is transformed, if it is repressed, into anxiety, then among instances of frightening things there must be one class [i.e. the uncanny] in which the frightening things can be shown to be something repressed which *recurs*. (238, 241)

I have already shown, to a certain extent, how repetition makes Clara Spencer’s bus ride in “The Tooth” strange, and how it helps underline the unnamed woman’s desperation in “The Daemon Lover,” as she goes from place to place in a claustrophobic city looking for her fiancé. In “The Lottery,” the repetition of names and preliminary formalities before the stoning suddenly takes place could also be said to foreground the instinctive and daemonic that Freud talks about. Repetitions help wrap the stories in a shroud of helplessness, mystery, and doubt, giving them a dreamlike, hypnotic structure that makes it difficult for the reader to separate dream and/or imagination from reality, and the workings of the demon lover from rationality (“The Tooth,” again, is a good example of this effect gained from repetition). Repetition, says Freud, “forces upon us the idea of something fateful and inescapable” (237), which fits with our expectations that James Harris will show up in “The Daemon Lover.”

20. For Mrs. Arnold in “Colloquy,” language has become meaningless and mechanic, indeed separated from humanity; the language of a dummy could be a representation of the same phenomenon (cf. Hall 39).

Moreover, that women will fall for Harris's traps seems inescapable, an expectation stemming from the "James Harris" ballad.

Dreams and the Lack of Memory as Structuring Principles

In affluent postwar America, the temptation was strong to accept the easy rewards of suburban comfort, an undemanding job, and fill the emptiness that followed with dreams of potential greatness or adventure. But the adventures of Jackson's protagonists, the pathetic longing for love that drives them into the arms of a demon lover, end in tragedy, as we learn from the many allusions to the "James Harris" ballad, and through the many disturbingly ambivalent closures of individual stories. The importance of dream, adventure, and love is foregrounded by several references to people sleeping and dreaming. The tone and structure of the composite as a whole also suggests an analogy to dreams. Dreams, to state the obvious, can be said to exist between the imagination and reality in that they are not controlled or willfully brought on by the dreamer—they "attack" the dreamer while asleep, and impose images on the dreamer that are often based associatively on experiences the dreamer has had while awake; in this sense, they are reminiscent of daemonic possession. Attacking people while in a rather helpless state and giving them (false) ideas about reality, the reality of love in particular, is the demon lover's domain.

According to Aristotle, dreams are daemonic (see Burkert 332).²¹ When discussing the interpretation of dreams, he says that

dream images are analogous to the forms reflected in water. [. . .] If the motion in the water be great, the reflexion has no resemblance to its original, nor do the forms resemble the real objects. [. . .] Skilful, indeed, would he be in interpreting such reflexions who could rapidly discern, and at a glance comprehend, the scattered and distorted fragments of such forms [. . .] for the internal movement effaces the clearness of the dream. (*On Divination in Sleep* 464b9-16)

The fragmentary yet somehow strangely coherent nature of dreams finds its literary expression in the short story composite; the daemonic finds its expression in dreams and desires,

21. Cf. Camille Paglia, who claims that Freud's unconscious is a "daemonic realm," where day represents the social, benign side of the daemon, while night gives way to a dark and lawless realm of dreams and irrationality. Sex, too, she holds, is daemonic (3-4). Freud, of course, saw the interpretation of dreams as a means to understand the unconscious, and his interpretations often involved sex in some way.

and, ultimately, death. Dreams, then, become a vehicle for subversive desires, to use Rosemary Jackson's terms.²²

Clare Hanson has argued, with support in Lyotard and his critique of Freud's theories on dreams, that the short story is the most literary form of all because it is "the narrative art form most closely associated with dream" (26). Short stories, she says, can be structured like dreams, "by unconscious forces," rather than logic and rationality (27). Furthermore, the short story shares "its combination of the elements of strangeness and familiarity" with the dream, because it channels the "expression of repressed or unconscious desire," making this genre "the narrative form most closely implicated with desire" (27, 30).²³ This dreamlike feel, I would add, is even stronger in a short story composite, where not only the events of the individual story may be structured like a dream, but the book as a whole invites, even forces, the reader to associate, compare, and map the connections between the stories,²⁴ usually ending up with some stories that seem more relevant and central than others. This, of course, is how dreams tend to work: some elements of a dream may be very "life-like" and recognizable before the mind makes an associative leap, and an object in one scene morphs into, say, a person in another scene. The dream constituents may carry themselves through several situations, but they may not carry the same meaning and status throughout. A loosely connected Gothic short story composite like *The Lottery* could be said to echo this logic fairly mimetically.

John Ryan Haule, a Jungian analyst, asserts that "the demon lover represents a distortion of the unity, balance, wholeness, and life of romantic love," and he is a "crystallization of everything that is unfinished, unwhole, and unbalanced in us. We fall in love with them

22. "Like dreams, with which they have many similarities, literary fantasies are made up of many elements recombined, and are inevitably determined by the range of those constitutive elements available to the author/dreamer. [. . .] Fantasy has not to do with inventing another non-human world: it is not transcendental. It has to do with inverting elements of this world, re-combining its constitutive features in new relations to produce something strange, unfamiliar and apparently 'new' absolutely 'other' and different" (R. Jackson 8). Inversion rather than invention, then, is central to Rosemary Jackson. Her use of the term fantasy encompasses, among other things, Gothic fiction (she discusses Gothic tales and novels in particular on pp. 96-122). More on Rosemary Jackson and the fantastic below.
23. See Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy* 1 ff. on the importance of desire in fantasy literature (a term that includes the Gothic in her vocabulary).
24. Wolfgang Iser points out that the function of gaps between chapters in a novel—and, by analogue, gaps between stories in a short story composite—is "not separation so much as a tacit invitation to find the missing link" (197). The gaps, then, can *create* meaning rather than destroy it, in that they call for a certain amount of involvement from the reader. See also Lundén 82-105 on indeterminacy and openness in short story composites.

because we rightly see in them the secret of our potential wholeness” (n. pag). These traits fit nicely, both with the short story composite genre, which is always exploring the relations between the whole and the part, unity and disunity, and the Gothic, often interested in distortions, transgressions, and the crossing of boundaries. The quest for “potential wholeness” is prevalent in *The Lottery*, but it ends up as a sad, distorted version of reality, a reality that is fragmented and unbalanced or, perhaps, not a reality at all.

As has been pointed out several times already, people in *The Lottery* have a tendency to sleep a lot, doubt the world they live in, and occasionally go crazy because the real world does not correspond to the world in their heads. James Harris appears to be a dreamlike, ambiguous, undecided, and vague character, morphing from one role to another, with only empty identifiers like his suit, his name, and his height to identify him. Structurally, the pattern of dreams could be an apt metaphor of Jackson’s technique here. The paratextual sources she has consulted—Glanvill and “James Harris”—are used in an associative way, supplying themes and inspiration to the stories, not exact templates; a practice that is suggestive and constantly changing, causing the idea of the demon lover to be constantly re-evaluated and emended. The idea of the demon lover ends up being dreamlike and hazy; strangely logical, then, that he—in his medieval manifestation, the *incubus*—used to enter people’s dreams to “shake” them and give them nightmares. This recycling and mixing of ideas of such creatures takes place within Jackson’s book, but it also takes place in the reader; asking oneself what and who the demon lover is, is part of the reading process. The reader has to question reality, repeatedly move in and out of, and between, fact and fiction to follow Jackson’s thinking. For a book that moves on the margins of reality it should come as no surprise that the crucial pieces of information in the hermeneutic process appear as paratexts, marginal texts between text and non-text. As stated above, Jackson’s choice of genre, the short story composite, could alone justify comparing it to the structure of dreams. Hanson’s point that short stories in their dreamlike state implicate desire is also relevant; Harris’s desire to reach his goal, and the unfortunate women’s desire for the demon lover are central forces at work in this book.

The focus on dreams as a repository of “daemoniac” fantasies and desires can also give expression to the “lover” aspects of the demon lover motif that recurs throughout *The Lottery*.

The love felt by the women in *The Lottery* does not seem to be of an erotic, irrational nature. At the same time, it does not seem to have anything to do with rationality either, usually seen as the opposite of erotic love. One might say—based on the descriptions of these women and their behavior—that we are dealing with cerebral and mental, not physical and genital, love; a kind of compulsion or obsession (or possession?) that has nothing to do with love as we commonly understand it. There are few, if any, descriptions of feelings of that kind in *The Lottery*, and there are certainly no overtly erotic scenes between the seducer and his victims. Not only a sign of the times, this, to me, is yet another indication that the character of Harris serves to create an illusion in the senses and the brain that makes these women actually believe that he loves them and that they love him. He becomes a demonic *idée fixe* in his victims' minds, not a Casanova or Don Juan-like object of erotic lust.²⁵ This does not necessarily mean that Harris exists only inside these women's minds, nor does it mean that concepts like passion and seduction are irrelevant.

E. R. Dodds makes some interesting observations on the projections of gods in the *Iliad* that might be helpful in understanding James Harris:

Ought we not perhaps to say [. . .] that the divine machinery 'duplicates' a psychic intervention—that is, presents it in a concrete pictorial form? [. . .] I suggest that in general the inward monition, or the sudden unaccountable feeling of power, or the sudden unaccountable loss of judgement, is the germ out of which the divine machinery developed [which in turn results in the projection, or pictorial expression, of gods]." (14)

This could serve to explain how the inner daemon becomes visible, if only to the person in possession of that daemon (Dodds's example is Book 1 of the *Iliad*, where Athena plucks Achilles's hair to prevent him from killing Agamemnon; Homer states explicitly that she is invisible to everybody but Achilles [line 198]). Transferred to the present context, this line of thinking would amount to explaining James Harris as the projection of the psyche of a series of unhappy, lonely, confused women—certainly not an uncommon idea in modern psychology, or in Jackson criticism. But one quickly sees that that explanation does not quite add up: unlike the encounter between Achilles and Athena in the *Iliad*, several people

25. In antiquity, there was not necessarily a difference: "The Greek had always felt the experience of passion as something mysterious and frightening, the experience of a force that was in him, possessing him, rather than possessed by him. The very word *pathos* testifies to that: like its Latin equivalent *passio*, it means something that 'happens to' a man, something of which he is the passive victim" (Dodds 185).

see and interact with Harris at the same time; he is very rarely presented in a one-to-one relationship with someone throughout a story, others do see him and acknowledge him as part of their reality. He causes a certain amount of loss of judgment and/or a (false) feeling of power in his victims, and he certainly represents a psychic intervention (people are seemingly obsessed with him), but his physical presence does not seem to be a mere mental projection.

Memory is related to dream, but many of the protagonists in *The Lottery* seem to have surprisingly little of it. The nameless woman in “The Daemon Lover” has only a vague memory of the man she is about to marry, Clara Spencer in “The Tooth” cannot remember that she has had toothaches before, and the villagers in “The Lottery” have forgotten why they are performing the stoning ritual. Memory differs from dream in that they are images of something that has actually happened. In Jackson’s composite, then, it seems as if the ability to remember has been replaced by an ability to tap into the vague, illogical world of dreams without the rationalization-“filter” we associate with the waking mind. This could suggest that James Harris—usually the object of the dreams and the reason for the lack of memory—is an *idea* of love (recall Ficino’s notion of “Platonic love” discussed in Chapter One), not the “earthly” yet incomprehensible love we usually fall victim to.

In an article about magic and memory in short story composites by Louise Erdrich and Gloria Naylor, Karen Castellucci Cox has a few interesting observations on the nature of the short story composite (which she calls “story cycle”) that can shed some light on Jackson’s composite as well. Reading Erdrich’s *Love Medicine* and Naylor’s *The Women of Brewster Place* as books about communal memory, Cox argues that these authors employ the “hybrid construction of the story cycle to guide a diverse audience through the vagaries of cultural interpretation,” and that this genre underlines the fact that communal memory “exists outside historical progression in a netherworld of dreams and desires meant to shape the whole,” and that these narratives construct their stories “from the material of family secrets, folk legends, ghost tales, and the like” (158, 159). The intrusion of supernatural elements also disturbs the notion of a realistic, linear narrative. Thus, Cox argues, the two authors are able to “challenge [. . .] the foundations of an already ‘authorized’ American history,” and the use of the short story composite genre helps “articulate new ways of imagining historically fixed

narratives, freeing their fictions to tell a different story about lost lives” (157).

Shirley Jackson’s revision of history is not related to a clearly defined ethnic or geographical community, but to women as such. Jackson challenges the “authorized” accounts of women as loving mothers and wives by showing the possibilities of evil even in normal, usually domestic, everyday circumstances. By bringing in stories of female suppression and male control—the Glanvill epigraphs and the “James Harris” ballad—and writing in a style that “seduces the reader into regarding as dependable something that clearly emerges as issuing primarily from the subject’s Imaginary—and from the reader’s as well” (Hattenhauer 51), i.e. challenging what subject and reader perceive as “real,” Jackson gives us an alternative “women’s history” that emphasizes the irrational, the victimization, but at the same time telling a story about “lost lives” that lies outside the standard historical accounts. Shirley Jackson presents us with a dreamvision—or, rather, nightmare-vision—of modern (female) life: hoping, getting seduced by something that is not what it purports to be, and paying the ultimate price for making such a mistake; in this sense, we might say that she wants to problematize the naivety of women, not just their being victims of male suppression. References to witchcraft, balladry, reading and writing, sleeping and dreaming, and literature constitute this dark vision’s formal expression; in the last instance, these elements challenge the texts’ otherwise realistic outlook. In addition, by choosing the short story composite genre, and a loosely structured one at that, Jackson forces the reader to think associatively and impulsively rather than logically, and James Harris, like a dream existing independently of the dreamer, personifies this ambiguous, multifaceted quality. The question remains, though: what should we call such a text—and how does Shirley Jackson accomplish the effects discussed above stylistically?

The Fantastic

Tzvetan Todorov’s book *The Fantastic*, published in French in 1970 as *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*, is probably among the most influential and provocative contributions to the theory and criticism of genres like the Gothic—along with Freud’s “The Uncanny” it has served as a theoretical point of reference for many a critical work on the Gothic. Todorov

is not only concerned with the Gothic, though; science fiction and fantasy literature are examples of genres in which Todorov's ideas are also useful. *The Fantastic* predominantly takes its examples from nineteenth-century fiction, so Todorov's categories need, I think, some modification in order to work on more modern fiction. First, though, Todorov's categories need to be briefly introduced, before Rosemary Jackson's alternative is presented.

Todorov says that the fantastic is not an autonomous genre, as it is "located on the frontier of two genres, the marvelous and the uncanny"; the uncanny is "the supernatural explained," and the marvelous is the "supernatural accepted" (41-42).²⁶ With some subdivisions, Todorov ends up with the following diagram (44):

UNCANNY	FANTASTIC-UNCANNY	FANTASTIC-MARVELOUS	MARVELOUS
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Whereas the uncanny and the marvelous may exist in "pure" form, the fantastic has to rely on those two modes for its existence. In *The Lottery* we are presented with a possibly supernatural character that moves a story that initially seems uncanny into the fantastic.²⁷ There is no acceptance of the supernatural as such, which would render the stories marvelous. Rather, there is hesitation surrounding the supernatural, a feature that is central to Todorov's definition of the fantastic:

First, the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation to the events described. Second, this hesitation may also be experienced by a character; thus the reader's role is so to speak entrusted to a character, and at the same time the

26. The uncanny sounds like Freud again, but Freud, in his definition of the uncanny, focuses on the ambiguities that Todorov would probably associate with his "fantastic." This confusion is possibly due to the English translation; in French the three terms are *le merveilleux*, *l'étrange*, and *le fantastique*. "Strange" or something similar might be a better translation of *l'étrange*, since "uncanny" carries such strong Freudian associations. Also, "fantastic" is usually an unambiguous opposite to "real" in English.
27. Paul N. Reinsch insists on a fantastic reading of Jackson's work, claiming that her texts have been merely "marketed" as Gothic, and that a Gothic reading "can cause the reader to mis-read the fantastic text by choosing the supernatural explanation" (8-9). "Gothic' implies a specific and limited response," he claims, "and this leads readers away from the fantastic" (14). Had Reinsch read up on the Gothic, he would quickly find that there is nothing "specific" or "limited" about it; it consists of a number of theories and nuances, among them the fantastic, which he seems to want to separate as an autonomous genre, contrary to what Todorov—Reinsch's main theoretical point of reference—intended. The doubt and hesitation Todorov talks about can easily be incorporated into a Gothic context (more on this below), and Gothic does not always, contrary to what Reinsch thinks, insist on supernatural explanations.

hesitation is represented, the actual reader identifies himself with the character. Third, the reader must adopt a certain attitude with regard to the text: he will reject allegorical as well as “poetic” interpretations. These three requirements do not have an equal value. The first and the third actually constitute the genre; the second may not be fulfilled. (33)

If we read the stories in *The Lottery*, at least a good portion of them, as allegories describing deteriorating minds (Todorov is strongly opposed to allegorical readings [58-74]), we are dealing with uncanny stories (in Todorov’s terms, not Freud’s). But most of them also have elements of ambiguity that would place them in the “fantastic” category.

One story that plays with such ambiguities is “The Renegade.” In this story, Mrs. Walpole²⁸ receives a phone call one morning from Mrs. Harris.²⁹ She accuses the Walpoles’ dog Lady of killing some of her chickens. Mrs. Walpole goes out for a walk (recall the protagonist’s journey in “The Daemon Lover”), finding that the news of her dog’s killing precedes her, no doubt thanks to the Harrises (Hall 23). She asks the other villagers for advice on how to make her dog stop misbehaving, and the advice gets increasingly violent: first, she is advised to place a dead chicken under the dog’s collar (77-78), then to put a rotting egg in the dog’s mouth (80), then to let a hen scratch its eyes out (80-81), and, finally, to put spikes on the inside of the dog’s collar so that when the collar tightens, its head will be cut off (82-83). This last solution is presented to Mrs. Walpole by her own children Jack and Judy, who have heard this trick from a Mr. Shepherd. One detail near the end of the story reminds us of the “The Witch,” where the focus changes from the stranger’s sister to the little boy’s own mother near the end, and where they also discuss cutting somebody’s head off: Jack, referring to Lady, remarks: “The spikes cut her head off.” The he says, “Cut *your* head right off,” making it difficult to tell whether he is still talking about the dog or his mother (83, my italics). “The difference in these sentences suggest either the difference between the

28. The name Walpole carries a special meaning to anyone familiar with Gothic fiction: Horace Walpole wrote what is known as the first Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, in 1764. The second edition of that novel, published the same year, was subtitled “A Gothic Story”; marking the first time “Gothic” was used to describe a literary work. Walpole’s novel comes off as rather pathetic, melodramatic, and silly today, and is mainly of historical interest. Reinsch also notes the possible reference to Horace Walpole (37n21).
29. A Mrs. Harris also occurs in “Flower Garden.” She too acts as the “village voice” when she pesters Mrs. Winning about being friends with Mrs. MacLane, who has hired a black handyman to take care of her garden. The elder Mrs. Winning says: “Nothing wrong with Lucy Harris getting away from that man of hers wouldn’t cure” (125), once again associating the name Harris with something frightening. In “The Renegade,” Jackson originally called the family Kittredge, but changed it to Harris. As Hall points out, “the narrator calls attention to the family name by obscuring it when Mrs. Harris phones with the bad news” (4). The text reads: “The voice—it was a woman—said, ‘I’m sorry to bother you, but this is—’ and gave an unrecognizable name” (71).

narrator's and Mrs. Walpole's perception or Mrs. Walpole's sudden change of mental state" (Reinsch 27).

The last paragraph of the story indicates that Mrs. Walpole certainly thinks his last remark was meant for her: "Everything was quiet and lovely in the sunlight, the peaceful sky, the gentle line of the hills. Mrs. Walpole closed her eyes, suddenly feeling the harsh hands pulling her down, the sharp points closing in on her throat" (83). Mrs. Walpole clearly identifies with Lady here, and her reaction points in the direction of a sudden epiphany: a sense of immediate identification and sympathy for the dog hits her (her children, in contrast, are carelessly laughing when they talk about having Lady shot or beheaded).³⁰ Jackson twists the story towards the frightening within the very last sentence; the calm mood of the first sentence quoted above, which states that "everything was quiet and lovely," is contrasted with the ironically poetic phrase "suddenly feeling the harsh hands." Is this feeling present only for a moment, or does it indicate a madness that will last for a while? The reader is left hesitating, whereas Mrs. Walpole is not, as far as I can tell. Does this apparent paralysis result from pity for the dog, is it the final straw for an overworked and unappreciated mother and wife, or is it the conspiracies of the Harris family (or the entire village) that are to be blamed? The appearance of the Harris name again, and Jackson's neat trick to make us notice the name (see above), could favor the last explanation; a conspiracy against an innocent, overworked, and newly moved in housewife, orchestrated by an entire village, is nothing new in Jackson's fiction ("The Flower Garden," a story placed in the same section as "The Renegade," comes to mind—the name "Mrs. Harris" occurs in this story too; see above). This explanation would not necessarily contradict the indications that Mrs. Walpole is losing her grip on reality; both interpretations are possible, the conspiracy perhaps leading to her state of mind at the end. The point is, again, the hesitation between these two interpretations. As Reinsch says, "while the story seems to be uncanny, Jackson twists it into the fantastic" (28). And it all happens within the very last sentence.

Todorov's typology, to return to that, has been criticized and modified by several crit-

30. "Children don't realize, Mrs. Walpole told herself, *death is never real to them*" (82, my italics). This is her reaction to hearing that Lady might get shot. But then, in the next sentence, we get the impression that it may be Mrs. Walpole herself who is losing her grip on reality: "Try to be sensible, she told herself" (82). Clearly, the events surrounding Lady's (possible) transgressions shatter Mrs. Walpole's sense of reality.

ics, most notably Rosemary Jackson and Neil Cornwell.³¹ Whereas Todorov's approach is purely structuralist, Rosemary Jackson shows that psychoanalysis can easily be linked to the fantastic, or "fantasy," as she calls it, which she sees as a dreamlike literature of seduction and subversion (1 ff.). "Fantasy in literature deals so blatantly and repeatedly with unconscious material that it seems rather absurd to try to understand its significance without some reference to psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic readings of texts," she asserts (6). A quick look at Todorov reveals that he uses examples mainly from nineteenth-century fiction, and his definition of the fantastic fits works from that period better than more modern literature. Thus, his definition needs updating to be of use when dealing with more recent fiction. Rosemary Jackson's necessary revisions of Todorov make the task of dealing with and classifying modern fantastic fiction, including Gothic fiction, much easier. She presents the following diagram (25):



The marvelous dominates where belief in the supernatural is central; in the fantastic mode ("fantasy" in Rosemary Jackson's terms) no explanation is given, the events are unnatural; and, in the uncanny, the frightening effect has natural causes, i.e. the return of repressed emotions that Freud discusses in his essay. Thus, Freud's sense of the uncanny has been restored and made relevant—indeed central—to the understanding of fantastic fiction, as opposed to the simple "supernaturalism explained" function it has in Todorov. The arrows in Jackson's diagram, I should add, refer to literary history: the marvelous dominated literature up to the eighteenth century; the fantastic took over in the nineteenth, making the real world "strange," and the twentieth century is more oriented towards the uncanny, with its wish to present psychological explanations to strange events, and where aspects of the "modern condition" like alienation, defamiliarization, and a deeper understanding of mental illness

31. Here, I only go into Jackson's argument, the most influential of the two. Cornwell's is a much more complex understanding of the fantastic; see Cornwell 39 for his alternative model. He also provides a comprehensive overview of the backgrounds, definitions, and theories of the fantastic that have been presented (1-43).

abound (things Todorov never mentions at all).³² Literary history, then, has evolved from left to right in Jackson's diagram. Shirley Jackson would then fit in the "Uncanny/Natural" category.

Leaving Todorov's categories and his critics, I want to briefly focus on his discussion of how a narrator can express ambiguity through two stylistic devices: imperfect tense and modalization (38 ff.). The latter category, modalization, means that little phrases like "seemed to," "perhaps," "I felt," "I had the sense that," and so forth are inserted (I cannot go into the imperfect tense here; besides, modalization is much easier to demonstrate in this context). Although Todorov focuses upon first-person narratives in this regard, modalization is relevant to at least some of the stories by Jackson discussed here. In "Pillar of Salt," for instance, we find phrases like "for some reason" (235), "it seemed" (249, 251), "she heard" (240), "she saw," "she thought," and "she had begun to notice" (243). An example: "She stopped suddenly when *it seemed to her* that the windowsill she had just passed had soundlessly crumpled and fallen into fine sand; when *she looked back* it was there as before but then *it seemed to be* the windowsill above and to the right, and finally a corner of the roof" (249, my italics). These little markers tell us that these events may be Margaret's projections, not actual events (see Hattenhauer 40).³³ Through such devices, then, Jackson is able to problematize not only the distance between the narrator and the character, but also the degree of reality in the narrator's account. A master of manipulating voice and point of view, Jackson makes the narrative seem authoritative and objective, but a close reading shows that we are given only a limited point of view (Margaret's in this case), and that placing the point of view with an obviously disturbed protagonist may not render the narrative as objective as it seems at first glance. This again underlines the notion that the sense of reality is subjective, individual,

32. Todorov's Gothic examples are texts that focus on the known and familiar; the Freudian un-homely, the strange and unknown, central themes in Gothic fiction, are overlooked. Hesitation, which he spends much time on, is of central importance to the Gothic, but just one of many aspects; Todorov's view of Gothic- and horror fiction, then, becomes rather narrow and too simplistic. However, he does not set out to describe this kind of literature only, but a much wider field.
33. The phrase "no sense" (as in "it makes no sense to...") is used three times in two pages near the end of the story, and attributed to Margaret's attempts to reason her way out of her growing panic (251, 252), emphasizing perhaps that Margaret is losing her sense (of reality?). Immediately after the last use of this phrase, Margaret looks "longingly" at a cigar store (Harris is often seen with a cigar), and she finally admits to herself that she is lost (252).

and relative, not objective.³⁴

Reflections like these warrant a few remarks about the role of the narrator in *The Lottery*. As noted already, we meet a third-person narrator in most stories (in twenty-two of twenty-five stories, to be precise), usually a limited third-person narrator with unreliable traits. An unreliable narrator in texts with this point of view is almost a contradiction in terms, as they tend to be first-person narrators that are part of the story they tell, but the little phrases discussed above and the strange situations where we sympathize with unsympathetic characters due to slight shifts in perspective (as in “Come Dance with Me in Ireland”) might lead us to call the narrator just that.³⁵ Much classic nineteenth-century Gothic fiction relies on an unreliable first-person narrator or some intimate documents (letters, diary excerpts, ancient manuscripts, confessions, and the like) to destabilize the reader. Poe’s fiction, with its frequently mad narrators, is a *locus classicus*; the reader is led to wonder if the story is about the events recounted, the narrator’s madness, or the narrator’s own reaction to the story he tells. Jackson does not need these devices, which have become clichés of Gothic fiction, she simply explores the distance between a third-person limited narrator and the character whose perspective we are given, a strategy that requires considerable skill on the author’s part. Distance to characters is also exercised by invariably referring to people using their nominal prefixes followed by their surname. Only children and people spoken of with affection are referred to by their first name (“Jamie,” “Jimmy”), otherwise it is usually “Mrs.” “Miss” or Mr.” followed by the surname.

Jackson’s calm tone and her use of the detached but limited third-person point of view make it difficult to assess the impressions the characters are having; had we been given first-person narratives with the protagonists as focalizers it would be much easier to dismiss their visions of James Harris as hallucinations brought on by a developing madness. The third-

34. The effect, paradoxically enough, is that the reader feels closer to the protagonist. As Wayne Booth points out, “the effect of deliberate confusion require a nearly complete union of the narrator and reader in a common endeavor, with the author silent and invisible but implicitly concurring, perhaps even sharing his narrator’s plight” (300). It seems that the narrator shares the reader’s doubts and hesitations by letting the protagonist’s point of view come forward more strongly than it would appear when first reading the story. The absence of authorial intervention secures this deceptive play with voice and point of view.
35. See Metcalf 71-142 for a discussion on the implied narrator in relation to eight short stories by Jackson; her chapter on *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, entitled “A Search for the Narrator,” is also of interest (198-247). The standard critical work on this term, where it is indeed introduced for the first time, is of course Wayne C. Booth’s *The Rhetoric of Fiction*; see esp. 211 ff., 339-74.

person narrative somehow makes the stories seem more “objective” and “real,” but the mixing of a narrative style and point of view associated with realistic fiction, with unrealistic elements, serves the thematic purpose of confusion, ambiguity, hesitation, and alienation. Thus, through narrative technique and the introduction of a character that—through our reading of the book’s paratexts—is linked to the supernatural, Shirley Jackson explores the boundaries between fact and fiction, the real and the unreal. Jackson does not show us an alternative, distant world that represents an escape from this world; she shows us the inherent possibility of evil in this world, and how easily happiness and tranquility can change into their opposites. As in much Gothic fiction, we do not escape reality here; our reality is inverted, subverted, and distorted.

Rather than preferring either the supernatural explanation or the psychological one, I think it makes more sense to focus on how Jackson plays with the middle ground between these. The ambiguities produced by the fantastic as Todorov defines it, the uncanny as Freud describes it, the self-reflexivity created by many inter-, intra-, and paratextual references, the use of a deceptively unreliable yet seemingly reliable narrator, and the dreamlike structure of the composite are there to make the reader hesitate and question the reality and realism of the texts. Paul Reinsch writes that “in a sense, Jackson’s fantastic work illustrates the modern world’s reaction to the supernatural” (33), and I think this is true.³⁶ However, we are not only dealing with modernity’s reaction to the supernatural, but the reaction to a whole repository of myth, folktales, and prejudice dealing with the domestic and its relation to the outside world, women and their relation to men, as well as the supernatural and its relation to the real and the rational. These reactions and oppositions are never resolved. Had they been resolved, the effect would have been entirely different, because, as Peter Garrett notes, “it is [. . .] part of the nature of Gothic to play with terror, though not to master it” (44). If anything, *The Lottery* displays a reality that is subjective, and, borrowing Bakhtin’s term, polyphonic. The theories of Freud and Todorov discussed above are useful in explaining these mechanisms. Returning to the contexts of the first chapter of the present thesis, a

36. Cf. the blending of the barbaric and the civilized in “The Lottery.” This view is further developed and understood in relation to postmodernism by Jean-François Lyotard: “Modernity, in whatever age it appears, cannot exist without a shattering of belief and without discovery of the ‘lack of reality’ of reality, together with the invention of other realities” (77).

historian of witchcraft calls this rather odd sense of reality a “subjective” reality:

For persons in a state of hopelessness attachments to the Devil symbolized their alienation from a society to which they had little cause to be grateful. In this sense the idea of devil-worship was not a total fantasy. It had what has been called “subjective reality.” When she saw herself as going over to the Devil, the witch was surrendering to passions with which everyone was familiar and on whose repression society depended. (Thomas 623)

The acting out of something that society represses by inverting—not escaping from—established norms is just as clearly a part of witchcraft myth as it is of Gothic fiction. Sexual and romantic dreams and desires cause the sense of reality to hinge on what the reader makes of James Harris in *The Lottery*, whether he is a demon, a symbol of the characters’ alienation, and/or beginning madness. As I hope the present chapter has shown, it is in the play *between* these opposites that one may explore the ambiguities that Jackson wishes to problematize—but not explain.

CONCLUSION

“A HAUNTING NOTE”
James Harris Revisited

Had we but World enough, and Time. . .

—Andrew Marvell, “To His Coy Mistress”

“Can’t repeat the past?” he cried
incredulously. “Why of course you can!”

He looked around him wildly, as if the
past were lurking here in the shadow of his
house, just out of reach of his hand.

—F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

—T. S. Eliot, “Little Gidding”

CHAPTERS ONE AND TWO OF THE present thesis tried to explain historical, theological, philosophical, and folkloric theories about the notion of the demon lover, and to show how these contexts are relevant to the stories that comprise *The Lottery*. While it might seem to some that Jackson simply uses the “James Harris” ballad to give a recurring character a name and a motivation, and a few epigraphs from a more or less obscure seventeenth-century witchcraft thesis to create a sense of mystery and occultism, the two first chapters hopefully showed that Jackson’s book is informed by far more complex notions— notions that provide nuance to the textual handling of the demon lover idea. The sense of reality was the subject in Chapter Three, where an investigation into stylistic and structural features revealed several strategies that make the reader hesitate and question the boundaries between the real and the un-real/supernatural. The characters’ sense of reality is often challenged as their alienated, lonely selves disintegrate (“Colloquy,” “Pillar of Salt,” “The Dummy”). Having her characters dream, read, and write a lot, Jackson explores the powers of the unconscious

mind and the act of realizing oneself through fiction; fiction acts as a replacement for a disintegrated sense of reality, and as a catalyst for the expression of subconscious desires and dreams. By way of conclusion, I would like to discuss how the three topics I have focused on above can be said to be aspects of the same artistic expression rather than three completely separate features of the text, and how we may be supposed to understand the tall man in the blue suit.

Paratexts and Reality

The Lottery dramatizes the horrors of liminality, historical and psychological paralysis, and the transgression of boundaries through the use of witchcraft and folklore. Transgressing reality is a typical Gothic trope that is often orchestrated through intrusions and disruptions of realism, a strategy that frequently causes the reader's sense of reality to be transgressed, challenged, and questioned as well. The hesitation in the reader revolves around the question of psychological versus supernatural explanations. This hermeneutic headache is present in the paratexts, too; as Paul Reinsch points out in relation to "The Daemon Lover," "the possibilities [of a supernatural or psychological explanation] float on the outskirts of the narrative. The supernatural interpretation quite literally floats outside the narrative in the form of the title and its link to the poem at the back of the text" (20). I might add that the other paratext, the Glanvill epigraphs, also "float on the outskirts of the narrative" to the same effect. As we saw in Chapter One, they exemplify the idea that witchcraft, usually seen as thoroughly unscientific, can be proved scientifically, with witness-accounts presented as solid evidence. The mix of supernatural and scientific elements echoes the very same mix in Jackson's own stories.¹

Shirley Jackson explores ambiguity by making the familiar unfamiliar and vice versa. In one of few interviews she gave, Jackson said the following about how she came up with the idea for "The Daemon Lover," a statement that may be seen as a description of her compositional method generally:

- i. The play between the realistic and the non-realistic is, of course, nothing new. In fact, "the development of the short story as a literary genre [which we may date as far back as Boccaccio's *Decameron*, written in the mid fourteenth century] has always been characterized by a tension between the traditional mythic origins of the form and the increasing pressures of modernism to depict 'real life'" (May, *The Short Story* 20).

Someone told me an anecdote, just a few sentences. (Sort of like Henry James, you know.) I like thinking about it, turning it around, thinking of ways to use a situation like that in order to get a haunting note. It gets quite real. I think of what other thing it will go with, while I'm washing the dishes. But I do it because it's fun, because I like it. (Qtd. in Hall II)

In order to get a “haunting note,” then, she (paradoxically, perhaps) needs to get it “quite real,” she needs to link it to something else. James Harris, the first and foremost supernatural element in *The Lottery*, is also made quite real; he does not possess a cloven hoof or other obviously demonic features. Strictly speaking, he performs no supernatural acts in any of the stories: it is his ability to always be in the right place at the right time, his manipulative talents, and the like, that give him a supernatural strain. His manipulations usually cause people to do things that are less than nice and polite, such as pretending one has cooked a meal one has not, but they are not overtly evil. It is when we consider the paratexts and the composite as a whole that we realize that Harris's own actions and those he makes others perform have some kind of accumulative, supernatural significance that is in turn linked to certain historical and folkloric ideas.

A recurring theme in the composite, and in Jackson's work in general, is the discovery of the possibility of evil in seemingly sympathetic people and communities, particularly in male love objects (see Hattenhauer 39)—this is echoed in the paratexts' status between text and non-text; representing more explicit connections to witchcraft and the demon lover idea, they have not yet “taken over” the main text. The evil of these love objects surfaces as empty, utopian promises (cf. the promise of Samarkand in “The Tooth” and the promise of “the banks of Italy” in the ballad). The fact that the women actually fall for these empty, obviously exaggerated promises, does not exactly speak in favor of their sense of judgment—unless one attributes their seeming weakness not to their personalities but to daemonic influence. By making the premises for a relationship with a demonic lover and a woman so un-worldly, Jackson accentuates both the supernatural powers of her character James Harris and the problem of dealing with such a creature in an otherwise realistic narrative. Rather than seeking to describe the unreliability and latent evil in men or the naivety in women, Jackson seems to point to the attraction—experienced by both sexes, I would think—of the unknown, the dangerous, the mysterious, and uncertain.

The Past, the Present, and Reality

In several stories we get the sense that the past is somehow threatening and ever-present while at the same time a source for respect. Harris himself—again through the epigraphs—appears like a ghost from the past. The many intertextual references also remind us of the past, as well as the notion that literature is assembled from texts already written. This view of the past may lead us to conclude that Shirley Jackson is a reactionary writer, and that she wants to show us wonderful things about the past and how corrupted they have become in the present (cf. the focus on the decaying city in “Pillar of Salt”). But this is only partly true: the aspects of the past that she alludes to—the witch trials, pagan human sacrifice, etc.—are predominantly frightening aspects any civilized society is glad to have gotten rid of. Still, sexist, racist, and prejudiced (“witchcraft-like”) things still happen in the stories’ present. Thus, Jackson’s views of the past and how it functions in the composite seem far from clear; they are, in fact, as ambiguous as everything else seems to be.

Manipulating closure is one way in which these things are problematized; while the end is thought to be imminent in some stories (cf. the apocalyptic imagery in several of them), structural closure is at times not compliant with thematic closure, rendering the endings ambiguous: How happy is Clara Spencer’s happy ending in “The Tooth” for instance? How do we assess the price the villagers in “The Lottery” have to pay to keep going as a community—why do they not end their barbarity when many of them clearly express a wish to do just that? The short story composite echoes this through its autonomous yet interrelated structure; a finished story is not necessarily the end, the adventures of James Harris go on even when the final word is written, as we see particularly well in the closure of “The Daemon Lover.” We could also interpret such a strategy as an attempt to problematize time, making the past, frightening yet enticing, part of the present, the end always near yet unreachable—just like James Harris himself.

The use of myth, folklore, and historical happenings like the witch trials help universalize the ideas and themes of the composite. The intrusion of other texts and the focus on literature in the texts proper helps fictionalize the fiction, making it polyphonous and complex; Jackson borrows from other sources to show that seemingly outdated notions of women and

evil are still alive and well. The stories are universalized and turned into metafiction through the references to witchcraft, folklore, and through different strategies of questioning reality and destabilizing the reader. It is thus a fairly complex narrative, but it is not complex for the sake of complexity (that would amount to bad writing); these strategies serve a function. The reader becomes a collaborator in the narrative, forced to consider not only the structural challenges that a short story composite poses, but also the many ambiguities concerning reality, and the function of the paratexts and allusions to literature, history, and religion. We are dealing with a complexity and an anti-teleology that goes well with the so-called modern condition that Jackson could be said to depict here.²

The early post-war years “reflected the ambivalence of a nation powerful and prospering yet unnerved by Cold War anxiety and nuclear fears” (Boyer 88). Fear of the atom bomb and McCarthy’s communist witch-hunt mingled with prosperity; “beneath the popular culture’s bland, escapist surface eddied currents of apprehension vaguely connected with the nuclear threat, Cold War alarms, and fears of domestic subversion” (Boyer 90). This is the historical and cultural reality Shirley Jackson’s *The Lottery*, published the same year as George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-four*, springs out of. Using the Gothic to express contemporary fears is perhaps more efficient than a realistic account would have been. As Alan Lloyd-Smith rightly points out, the Gothic is “perhaps more able than realism to incorporate unresolved contradictions within the culture, or to express as in dream logic the hidden desires and fears that more considered and ‘reasonable’ perspectives would shrug off or repress” (34). The demon lover lives and works on the outskirts of society, in the subconscious sphere of our minds, just as the clues that inform our understanding of the stories in *The Lottery* are placed in the margins of the texts—in the paratexts. At a time that has been called “The Age of Doubt” and “The Age of Anxiety,”³ using an old figure like the demon lover to give voice to the silent, repressed, marginalized, and tranquilized social fears that haunt society, to express the ambiguity that Boyer talks about, is perhaps not so strange and anachronistic after all.

2. See Lundén 86-89 on the anti-teleology in short story composites. His discussion of the importance of discontinuity (89-94) is also relevant here.
3. William S. Graebner, *The Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne, 1991); W. H. Auden, “The Age of Anxiety: A Baroque Eclogue,” *Collected Poems*, ed. Edward Mendelson (New York: Vintage-Random House, 1991) 447-536.

The Demon Lover and Reality

Sadly, but not surprisingly, perhaps, I have not been able to completely comprehend who or what James Harris is after writing these chapters. But, considering the ambiguity surrounding this character I should probably not be too disappointed; not understanding him and his nature may well be the whole point. Thus, the question “who is James Harris?” that I asked in the Introduction requires several answers, none of them definite or conclusive. Jackson may have intended her demon lover as a metaphor. The encounters with Harris would then be a troubled person’s confrontation with their inner demons. *The Lottery* could then, to some extent, be said to be about control, desire, and seduction. Male control over women is exemplified through the powers of Harris, the demon lover, and the references to the witch-hunts through the Glanvill epigraphs. “The demon-lover motif,” writes Toni Reed, “has recurred through the ages because it demonstrates the power of men as well as the powerlessness of women and serves as a warning to women who would assert themselves” (140).

If we pursue these power relations further, and consider them a wider context, James Harris could also be intended to serve as a reflection of how we perceive ourselves and those we call “others.” Binary oppositions like “us/them” and “human/nonhuman” are often correlated, so that “us” equals “human” and “them” equals “nonhuman,” a kind of thinking that was probably an important factor during the witch-hunts in medieval and early modern Europe, and is still with us, often in relation to warfare, where certain groups are “demonized.”⁴ The many ambiguities surrounding Harris problematize these dichotomies, as he seems to be neither “other/nonhuman” nor “human”—like the Greek *daimōn* he is between us and them. The point would then be that there are no hard lines drawn between the two opposites, obliterating the “us” and “them” dichotomy, which surfaces in *The Lottery* as a way of exposing prejudice and cruelty (many stories deal with intolerance, racism, and the like).

Harris also personifies the complicated mechanisms of seduction, the combined danger and pleasure of love. In Plato’s *Symposium*, that classic treatise on love, love represents, as was

4. For a discussion of this kind of thinking related to the perception of Satan, see Pagels xviii, 35 ff.; for its significance in early modern demonology, see S. Clark, Part I, esp. chapters 1, 3, and 5.

mentioned briefly in Chapter One, a pursuit of wholeness, a quest for a love that transcends the carnal; “platonic love.” Diotima recommends that one should first love the beauty of one body, then move on to see the beauty of other bodies as well, then, at last, acquire the love of wisdom, seeing the soul as the most beautiful of all—it has Beauty with a capital B—residing in the world of ideas (210b-211d; see Nussbaum 179-80). A lover ascends from the physical love of the one to an intellectual love of the whole. This tension between the part and the whole in love is analogous to the genre Shirley Jackson chose for her book, the short story composite, but in *The Lottery* it would seem that physical lust wins, since James Harris can be said to triumph in the end; we end up with a descent to “the mountain of hell” rather than an ascent to Plato’s sphere of ideas (Child F14.3). Harris could then represent the tension between the platonic and the physical. Love and dreams, “natural” though they may seem, are given supernatural significance through the demon lover; the supernatural is made natural by subordinating it to a domestic, everyday environment, where it is allowed to surface briefly but significantly in subtle, ambiguous ways. The natural and the supernatural are given complementary status through metaphor.

The Short Story Composite

As for the genre question, I think it is fair to say, after the present investigation, that we are dealing with an open, loosely unified short story composite rather than a mere short story collection. We may detect recurring thematic developments and a recurring character that provide some unity. The paratexts, I have argued, provide important information about both theme and James Harris, thus contributing to unify the composite. But, as we have seen, James Harris, the character carrying the most unifying role in the composite, cannot be said to be a very stable unifier, since his role and significance change from story to story; the only two stable characteristics about Harris are his height and his blue suit. This structure reflects Lundén’s emphasis on disunity, and one can possibly place the composite in his “cluster” subcategory; the emphasis of Ingram and others on unity and coherence in what he calls the short story cycle does not seem applicable here. James Harris and the paratexts, then, work as unifying devices; the sense of reality we are presented with causes hesitation and disunity.

The composite genre helps underline this hesitant, incoherent, fragmented, dreamlike sense of reality. (James Harris himself is, of course, also a composite of sorts; an enigmatic character consisting of mythic-religious and folkloric currents that are traceable back to antiquity, currents that helped form western intellectual and religious history.)

It is probably in relation to genre studies that I would have wanted to probe further into the complexity of Shirley Jackson's text. It would, for example, be very interesting to look into how Jackson worked in order to transfer her independently published and non-related stories to a book with some degree of unity. Joan Wylie Hall notes how Jackson changed names (from something else to Harris, in many cases), words and phrases—sometimes rewriting whole passages, especially endings—to achieve this (*passim*). A detailed study of her manuscripts for the periodical pieces, the printed periodical pieces, the reworked manuscripts prepared for book publication, and the book, would tell us quite a lot, I think, about how *The Lottery* evolved as a composite.⁵ (I am not sure *The Lottery* has acquired a canonic enough status to warrant a variorum edition just yet, useful though it would be.) Also, through my work on this thesis, I have found many similarities between the Gothic as a literary mode/set of stylistic conventions/phenomenon, and the short story composite as a genre (disunity, closural manipulations, openness, fragmentation, etc.). These two theoretical starting points proved useful here, and I think it is time for other Gothic short story composites—or books that have previously been categorized as novels or short story collections—to receive the same kind of attention. This might be another possible point of departure for further study.

Like the occasional structural intrusions of the paratexts and the seemingly random appearances of James Harris, the stories in *The Lottery* represent a distortion of reality that “works on the margins of reality, in the ‘dangerous edge’ of the unknown” (Hanson 26), not an escape from it. It is my conviction that our understanding of the composite is heavily influenced by the paratexts—their status between text and non-text echo the many other ambiguities and

5. The manuscripts for *The Lottery* are part of The Shirley Jackson Papers in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. A full inventory of the 51 boxes (boxes 46 and 48 look particularly promising) is to be found at <<http://www.loc.gov/rr/mss/text/jackson.html>> (accessed 30 Mar 2005). A peek at Jackson's correspondence with her publisher might be useful, too. With luck, this might tell us if there were significant editorial decisions to speak of, and what Jackson originally intended.

dualities we are presented with, both thematically and stylistically. This influence causes the reader to hesitate and doubt the narrative. Thematically, this liminality could point to several things: the strange relationship between love and death/danger, control and submission, the real and the unreal/supernatural, the past and the present, and “the thin red line” between madness and sanity. The supernatural, as Jackson herself said, is indeed a “convenient shorthand statement of the possibilities of human adjustments to what seems to be at best an inhuman world” (Oppenheimer 125). The paratexts, the stylistic/thematic play with reality, and the short story composite genre all contribute to such an interpretation of the only book of short stories Shirley Jackson published in her lifetime.

APPENDIX A

CHILD BALLAD 243

“James Harris (The Daemon Lover)”

ALL VARIANTS OF THE James Harris ballad presented in Child (4:360-9) are reproduced below, numbered A to H.¹ These are not all known versions of the ballad, others have been discovered after Child; see Reed’s appendices B-C for some versions taken from other ballad compilations. In addition, Burrison presents four variants not found in Child (275 ff.). Text within brackets are Child’s own emendations.

A

“A Warning for Married Women, being an example of Mrs Jane Reynolds (a West-country woman), born near Plymouth, who, having plighted her troth to a Seaman, was afterwards married to a Carpenter, and at last carried away by a Spirit, the manner how shall presently be recited,” Pepys Ballads, iv, 101; from a copy in Percy’s papers.²

A.1

1 THERE dwelt a fair maid in the West,
2 Of worthy birth and fame,
3 Neer unto Plimouth, stately town,
4 Jane Reynolds was her name.

A.2

1 This damsel dearly was belovd
2 By many a proper youth,
3 And what of her is to be said
4 In known for very truth.

A.3

1 Among the rest a seaman brave
2 Unto her a wooing came;
3 A comely proper youth he was,
4 James Harris calld by name.

A.4

1 The maid and young man was agreed,
2 As time did them allow,

3 And to each other secretly
4 They made a solemn vow,

A.5

1 That they would ever faithfull be
2 Whilst Heaven afforded life;
3 He was to be her husband kind,
4 And she his faithfull wife.

A.6

1 A day appointed was also
2 When they was to be married;
3 But before these things were brought to pass
4 Matters were strangely carried.

A.7

1 All you that faithfull lovers be
2 Give ear and hearken well,
3 And what of them became at last
4 I will directly tell.

1. The source is an electronic text prepared by Cathy Lynn Preston at the University of Colorado, found at <<http://www.colorado.edu/ArtsSciences/CCRH/Ballads/ballads.html>> (accessed 1 July 2004). On this webpage one will also find a handy concordance and a word-frequency list.
2. Information about original sources is taken directly from Child, they do not appear in Preston’s text.

A.8

1 The young man he was prest to sea,
 2 And forcëd was to go;
 3 His sweet-heart she must stay behind,
 4 Whether she would or no.

A.9

1 And after he was from her gone
 2 She three years for him staid,
 3 Expecting of his comeing home,
 4 And kept herself a maid.

A.10

1 At last news came that he was dead
 2 Within a forraign land,
 3 And how that he was buried
 4 She well did understand,

A.11

1 For whose sweet sake the maiden she
 2 Lamented many a day,
 3 And never was she known at all
 4 The wanton for to play.

A.12

1 A carpenter that livd hard by,
 2 When he heard of the same,
 3 Like as the other had done before,
 4 To her a wooing came.

A.13

1 But when that he had gained her love
 2 They married were with speed,
 3 And four years space, being man and wife,
 4 They loveingly agreed.

A.14

1 Three pritty children in this time
 2 This loving couple had,
 3 Which made their father's heart rejoyce,
 4 And mother wondrous glad.

A.15

1 But as occasion servd, one time
 2 The good man took his way
 3 Some three days journey from his home,
 4 Intending not to stay.

A.16

1 But, whilst that he was gone away,
 2 A spirit in the night
 3 Came to the window of his wife,
 4 And did her sorely fright.

A.17

1 Which spirit spake like to a man,
 2 And unto her did say,

3 'My dear and onely love,' quoth he,
 4 'Prepare and come away.'

A.18

1 'James Harris is my name,' quoth he,
 2 'Whom thou didst love so dear,
 3 And I have traveld for thy sake
 4 At least this seven year.'

A.19

1 'And now I am returnd again,
 2 To take thee to my wife,
 3 And thou with me shalt go to sea,
 4 To end all further strife.'

A.20

1 'O tempt me not, sweet James,' quoth she,
 2 'With thee away to go;
 3 If I should leave my children small,
 4 Alas! what would they do?'

A.21

1 'My husband is a carpenter,
 2 A carpenter of great fame;
 3 I would not for five hundred pounds
 4 That he should know the same.'

A.22

1 'I might have had a king's daughter,
 2 And she would have married me;
 3 But I forsook her golden crown,
 4 And for the love of thee.'

A.23

1 'Therefore, if thou'lt thy husband forsake,
 2 And thy children three also,
 3 I will forgive the[e] what is past,
 4 If thou wilt with me go.'

A.24

1 'If I forsake my husband and
 2 My little children three,
 3 What means hast thou to bring me to,
 4 If I should go with thee?'

A.25

1 'I have seven ships upon the sea;
 2 When they are come to land,
 3 Both marriners and marchandize
 4 Shall be at thy command.'

A.26

1 'The ship wherein my love shall sail
 2 Is glorious to behold;
 3 The sails shall be of finest silk,
 4 And the mast of shining gold.'

A.27

- 1 When he had told her these fair tales,
- 2 To love him she began,
- 3 Because he was in human shape,
- 4 Much like unto a man.

A.28

- 1 And so together away they went
- 2 From off the English shore,
- 3 And since that time the woman-kind
- 4 Was never seen no more.

A.29

- 1 But when her husband he come home
- 2 And found his wife was gone,
- 3 And left her three sweet pretty babes
- 4 Within the house alone,

A.30

- 1 He beat his breast, he tore his hair,
- 2 The tears fell from his eyes,
- 3 And in the open streets he run
- 4 With heavy doleful cries.

A.31

- 1 And in this sad distracted case
- 2 He hangd himself for woe
- 3 Upon a tree near to the place;
- 4 The truth of all is so.

A.32

- 1 The children now are fatherless,
- 2 And left without a guide,
- 3 But yet no doubt the heavenly powers
- 4 Will for them well provide

B

“The Distressed Ship-Carpenter,” The Rambler’s Garland, British Museum, 11621, c. 4 (57).
1785 (?)

B.1

1 ‘WELL met, well met, my own true love,
2 Long time I have been seeking thee;
3 I am lately come from the salt sea,
4 And all for the sake, love, of thee.

B.2

1 ‘I might have had a king’s daughter,
2 And fain she would have married me;
3 But I’ve forsaken all her crowns of gold,
4 And all for the sake, love, of thee.’

B.3

1 ‘If you might have had a king’s daughter,
2 I think you much to blame;
3 I would not for five hundred pounds
4 That my husband should hear the same.

B.4

1 ‘For my husband is a carpenter,
2 And a young ship-carpenter is he,
3 And by him I have a little son,
4 Or else, love, I’d go along with thee.

B.5

1 ‘But if I should leave my husband dear,
2 Likewise my little son also,
3 What have you to maintain me withal,
4 If I along with you should go?’

B.6

1 ‘I have seven ships upon the seas,
2 And one of them brought me to land,
3 And seventeen mariners to wait on thee,
4 For to be, love, at your command.

B.7

1 ‘A pair of slippers thou shalt have,
2 They shall be mad of beaten gold,

3 Nay and be lin’d with velvet soft,
4 For to keep thy feet from cold.

B.8

1 ‘A gilded boat thou then shall have,
2 The oars shall gilded be also,
3 And mariners to row the[e] along,
4 For to keep thee from thy overthrow.’

B.9

1 They had not been long upon the sea
2 Before that she began to weep:
3 ‘What, weep you for my gold?’ he said,
4 ‘Or do you weep for my fee?’

B.10

1 ‘Or do you weep for some other young man
2 That you love much better than me?’
3 ‘No, I do weep for my little son,
4 That should have come along with me.’

B.11

1 She had not been upon the seas
2 Passing days three or four
3 But the mariner and she were drowned,
4 And never were heard of more.

B.12

1 When tidings to old England came
2 The ship-carpenter’s wife was drown’d,
3 He wrung his hands and tore his hair,
4 And grievously fell in a swoon.

B.13

1 ‘Oh cursed be those mariners!
2 For they do lead a wicked life;
3 They ruind me, a ship-carpenter,
4 Be deluding away my wife.’

C

“James Herries,” Buchan’s Ballads of the North of Scotland, 1, 214.

C.1

1 ‘O ARE ye my father? Or are ye my mother?
2 Or are ye my brother John?
3 Or are ye James Herries, my first true-love,
4 Come back to Scotland again?’

C.2

1 ‘I am not your father, I am not your mother,
2 Nor am I your brother John;
3 But I’m James Herries, your first true-love,
4 Come back to Scotland again.’

C.3

1 ‘Awa, awa, ye former lovers,
2 Had far awa frae me!
3 For now I am another man’s wife
4 Ye’ll neer see joy o me.’

C.4

1 ‘Had I kent that ere I came here,
2 I neer had come to thee;
3 For I might hae married the king’s daughter,
4 Sae fain she woud had me.

C.5

1 ‘I despised the crown o gold,
2 The yellow silk also,
3 And I am come to my true-love,
4 But with me she’ll not go.’

C.6

1 ‘My husband he is a carpenter,
2 Makes his bread on dry land,
3 And I hae born him a young son;
4 Wi you I will not gang.’

C.7

1 ‘You must forsake your dear husband,
2 Your little young son also,
3 Wi me to sail the raging seas,
4 Where the stormy winds do blow.’

C.8

1 ‘O what hae you to keep me wi,
2 If I should with you go,
3 If I’d forsake my dear husband,
4 My little young son also?’

C.9

1 ‘See ye not yon seven pretty ships?
2 The eighth brought me to land,
3 With merchandize and mariners,
4 And wealth in every hand.’

C.10

1 She turnd her round upon the shore
2 Her love’s ships to behold;
3 Their topmasts and their mainyards
4 Were coverd oer wi gold.

C.11

1 Then she’s gane to her little young son,
2 And kissd him cheek and chin;
3 Sae has she to her sleeping husband,
4 And dune the same to him.

C.12

1 ‘O sleep ye, wake ye, my husband?
2 I wish ye wake in time!
3 I woudna for ten thousand pounds
4 This night ye knew my mind.’

C.13

1 She’s drawn the slippers on her feet,
2 Were coverd oer wi gold,
3 Well lined within wi velvet fine,
4 To had her frae the cold.

C.14

1 She hadna sailed upon the sea
2 A league but barely three
3 Till she minded on her dear husband,
4 Her little young son tee.

C.15

1 ‘O gin I were at land again,
2 At land where I woud be,
3 The woman neer shoud bear the son
4 Shoud gar me sail the sea.’

C.16

1 ‘O hold your tongue, my sprightly flower,
2 Let a’ your mourning be;
3 I’ll show you how the liles grow
4 On the banks o Italy.’

C.17

1 She hadna sailed on the sea
2 A day but barely ane
3 Till the thoughts o grief came in her mind,
4 And she langd for to be hame.

C.18

1 ‘O gentle death, come cut my breath,
2 I may be dead ere morn!
3 I may be buried in Scottish ground,
4 Where I was bred and born!’

C.19

1 'O hold your tongue, my lily leesome thing,
 2 Let a' your mourning be;
 3 But for a while we'll stay at Rose Isle,
 4 Then see a far countrie.

C.20

1 Ye'se neer be buried in Scottish ground,
 2 Nor land ye's nae mair see;
 3 I brought you away to punish you
 4 For the breaking your vows to me.

C.21

1 'I said ye shoud see the lilies grow
 2 On the banks o Italy;
 3 But I'll let you see the fishes swim,
 4 In the bottom o the sea.'

C.22

1 He reached his hand to the topmast,
 2 Made a' the sails gae down,
 3 And in the twinkling o an ee
 4 Baith ship and crew did drown.

C.23

1 The fatal flight o this wretched maid
 2 Did reach her ain countrie;
 3 Her husband then distracted ran,
 4 And this lament made he:

C.24

1 'O wae be to the ship, the ship,
 2 And wae be to the sea,
 3 And wae be to the mariners
 4 Took Jeanie Douglas frae me!

C.25

1 'O bonny, bonny was my love,
 2 A pleasure to behold;
 3 The very hair o my love's head
 4 Was like the threads o gold.

C.26

1 'O bonny was her cheek, her cheek,
 2 And bonny was her chin,
 3 And bonny was the bride she was,
 4 The day she was made mine!'

D

“The Carpenter’s Wife,” Kinoch MSS, 1, 297; from the recitation of T. Kinnear, Stonehaven.

D.1

1 ‘O WHARE hae ye been, my dearest dear,
2 These seven lang years and more?’
3 ‘O I am come to seek my former vows,
4 That ye promisd me before.’

D.2

1 ‘Awa wi your former vows,’ she says,
2 ‘Or else ye will breed strife;
3 Awa wi your former vows,’ she says,
4 ‘For I’m become a wife.’

D.3

1 ‘I am married to a ship-carpenter,
2 A ship-carpenter he’s bound;
3 I wadna he kend my mind this nicht
4 For twice five hundred pound.’ ’ ’ ’ ’ ’

D.4

1 She has put her foot on gude ship-board,
2 And on ship-board she’s gane,
3 And the veil that hung oure her face
4 Was a’ wi gowd begane.

D.5

1 She had na sailed a league, a league,
2 A league, but barely twa,

3 Till she did mind on the husband she left,
4 And her wee young son alsua.

D.6

1 ‘O haud your tongue, my dearest dear,
2 Let all your follies abee;
3 I’ll show whare the white lillies grow,
4 On the banks of Italie.’

D.7

1 She has na sailed a league, a league,
2 A league but barely three,
3 Till grim, grim grew his countenance,
4 And gurly grew the sea.

D.8

1 ‘O haud your tongue, my dearest dear,
2 Let all your follies abee;
3 I’ll show whare the white lillies grow,
4 In the bottom of the sea.’

D.9

1 He’s tane her by the milk-white hand,
2 And he’s thrown her in the main;
3 And full five-and-twenty hundred ships
4 Perishd all on the coast of Spain

E

“The Dæmon Lover,” Motherwell’s ms., p. 97

E.1

1 ‘WHERE have you been, my long lost lover,
2 This seven long years and more?’
3 ‘I’ve been seeking gold for thee, my love,
4 And riches of great store.

E.2

1 ‘Now I’m come for the vows you promised me,
2 You promised me long ago;’
3 ‘My former vows you must forgive,
4 For I’m a wedded wife.’

E.3

1 ‘I might have been married to a king’s daughter,
2 Far, far ayont the sea;
3 But I refused the crown of gold,
4 And it’s all for the love of thee.’

E.4

1 ‘If you might have married a king’s daughter,
2 Yourself you have to blame;
3 For I’m married to a ship’s-carpenter,
4 And to him I have a son.

E.5

1 ‘Have you any place to put me in,
2 If I with you should gang?’
3 ‘I’ve seven brave ships upon the sea,
4 All laden to the brim.

E.6

1 ‘I’ll build my love a bridge of steel,
2 All for to help her oer;
3 Likewise webs of silk down by her side,
4 To keep my love from the cold.’

E.7

1 She took her eldest son into her arms,
2 And sweetly did him kiss:
3 ‘My blessing go with you, and your father too,
4 For little does he know of this.’

E.8

1 As they were walking up the street,
2 Most beautiful for to Behold,
3 He cast a glamour oer her face,
4 And it shone like the brightest gold.

E.9

1 As they were walking along the sea-side,
2 Where his gallant ship lay in,
3 So ready was the chair of gold
4 To welcome this lady in.

E.10

1 They had not sailed a league, a league,
2 A league but scarsely three,
3 Till altered grew his countenance,
4 And raging grew the sea.

E.11

1 When they came to yon sea-side,
2 She set her down to rest;
3 It’s then she spied his cloven foot,
4 Most bitterly she wept.

E.12

1 ‘O is it for gold that you do weep?
2 Or is it for fear?
3 Or is it for the man you left behind
4 When that you did come here?’

E.13

1 ‘It is not for gold that I do weep,
2 O no, nor yet for fear;
3 But it is for the man I left behind
4 When that I did come here.

E.14

1 ‘O what a bright, bright hill is yon,
2 That shines so clear to see?’
3 ‘O it is the hill of heaven,’ he said
4 ‘Where you shall never be.’

E.15

1 ‘O what a black, dark hill is yon,
2 That looks so dark to me?’
3 ‘O it is the hill of hell,’ he said,
4 ‘Where you and I shall be.

E.16

1 ‘Would you wish to see the fishes swim
2 In the bottom of the sea,
3 Or wish to see the leaves grow green
4 On the banks of Italy?’

E.17

1 ‘I hope I’ll never see the fishes swim
2 On the bottom of the sea,
3 But I hope to see the leaves grow green
4 On the banks of Italy.’

E.18

1 He took her up to the topmast high,
2 To see what she could see;
3 He sunk the ship in a flash of fire,
4 To the bottom of the sea.

F

“The Dæmon Lover,” Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, fifth edition 1812, II, 427;
taken down from the recitation of Walter Grieve by William Laidlaw.

F.1

1 ‘O WHERE have you been, my long, long love,
2 This long seven years and mair?’
3 ‘O I’m come to seek my former vows
4 Ye granted me before.’

F.2

1 ‘O hold your tongue of your former vows,
2 For they will breed sad strife;
3 O hold your tongue of your former vows,
4 For I am become a wife.’

F.3

1 He turned him right and round about,
2 And the tear blinded his ee:
3 ‘I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,
4 If it had not been for thee.

F.4

1 ‘I might hae had a king’s daughter,
2 Far, far beyond the sea;
3 I might have had a king’s daughter,
4 Had it not been for love o thee.’

F.5

1 ‘If ye might have had a king’s daughter,
2 Yer sel ye had to blame;
3 Ye might have taken the king’s daughter,
4 For ye kend that I was nane.

F.6

1 ‘If I was to leave my husband dear,
2 And my two babes also,
3 O what have you to take me to,
4 If with you I should go?’

F.7

1 ‘I hae seven ships upon the sea——
2 The eighth brought me to land——
3 With four-and-twenty bold mariners,
4 And music on every hand.’

F.8

1 She has taken up her two little babes,
2 Kissd them baith cheek and chin:

3 ‘O fair ye weel, my ain two babes,
4 For I’ll never see you again.’

F.9

1 She set her foot upon the ship,
2 No mariners could she behold;
3 But the sails were o the taffetie,
4 And the masts o the beaten gold.

F.10

1 She had not sailed a league, a league,
2 A league but barely three,
3 When dismal grew his countenance,
4 And drumlie grew his ee.

F.11

1 They had not saild a league, a league,
2 A league but barely three,
3 Until she espied his cloven foot,
4 And she wept right bitterlie.

F.12

1 ‘O hold your tongue of your weeping,’ says he,
2 ‘Of your weeping now let me be;
3 I will shew you how the lilies grow
4 On the banks of Italy.’

F.13

1 ‘O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
2 That the sun shines sweetly on?’
3 ‘O you are the hills of heaven,’ he said,
4 ‘Where you will never win.’

F.14

1 ‘O whaten a mountain is yon,’ she said,
2 ‘All so dreary wi frost and snow?’
3 ‘O yon is the mountain of hell,’ he cried,
4 ‘Where you and I will go.’

F.15

1 He strack the tap-mast wi his hand,
2 The fore-mast wi his knee,
3 And he brake that gallant ship in twain,
4 And sank her in the sea.

G

“The Dæmon Lover,” Motherwell’s *Minstrelsy*, p. 93.

G.1

1 ‘I HAVE seven ships upon the sea,
2 Laden with the finest gold,
3 And mariners to wait us upon;
4 All these you may behold.

G.2

1 ‘And I have shoes for my love’s feet,
2 Beaten of the purest gold,
3 And linēd wi the velvet soft,
4 To keep my love’s feet from the cold.

G.3

1 ‘O how do you love the ship?’ he said,
2 ‘Or how do you love the sea?
3 And how do you love the bold mariners
4 That wait upon thee and me?’

G.4

1 ‘O I do love the ship,’ she said,
2 ‘And I do love the sea;
3 But woe be to the dim mariners,
4 That nowhere I can see!’

G.5

1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but one,

3 When she bagan to weep and mourn,
4 And to think on her little wee son.

G.6

1 ‘O hold your tongue, my dear,’ he said,
2 ‘And let all your weeping abee,
3 For I’ll soon show to you how the lilies grow
4 On the banks of Italy.’

G.7

1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but two,
3 Until she espied his cloven foot,
4 From his gay robes sticking thro.

G.8

1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but three,
3 When dark, dark, grew his eerie looks,
4 And raging grew the sea.

G.9

1 They had not sailed a mile awa,
2 Never a mile but four,
3 When the little wee ship ran round about,
4 And never was seen more.

H

“The Banks of Italy,” Christie, Traditional Ballad Airs, 1, 138; taken down by the editor’s father from the singing of an aged relative.

H.1

- 1 HE’S given her a pair of shoes,
- 2 To hold her frae the cold;
- 3 The one side of them was velvaret,
- 4 And the other beaten gold.

H.2

- 1 Up she has taen her little wee son,
- 2 And given him kisses three;
- 3 Says, Fare ye weel, my little wee son,
- 4 I’m gaun to sail the sea.

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