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## **The Other Eve: How Reading Lilith Reveals the Maternal Gothic**

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# The Other Eye:

How Reading Lilith Reveals the  
Maternal Gothic



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### Foreword

The genesis for this capstone lies in Ellen Moers' essay "Female Gothic: The Monster's Mother" (1974). Moers defines the Female Gothic as follows: "the work that women writers have done in the literary mode that, since the eighteenth century, we have called the Gothic" (317). Moers and other second-wave feminist critics like Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, authors of the landmark work *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), needed this concept to bring works by women writers into the academic mainstream. I admire Moers and Gilbert and Gubar for their groundbreaking methods for representing works by women writers and I find their analyses fascinating, but I hope there is new work to be done. As a critic in the fourth wave of feminism, I believe that analyzing the work of women separately from the work of men, in the attic if you will, adheres to the patriarchal binaries that initially hid women's work from the literary mainstream. I rely upon but ultimately move beyond the critical feminist work of Moers and Gilbert and Gubar by comparing the anti-maternal anxieties of *Wuthering Heights* (1847), a Gothic novel by an Englishwoman, to *Dracula* (1897), a Gothic novel by an Irishman.

My AP Literature and Composition teacher, Mr. Stanton, once put me on a two-week hiatus from writing what I thought was feminist criticism. I say "what I thought" because I came to realize that I was not writing criticism; I was simply describing the status of women in novels. That hiatus taught me to search for *how* authors portray sex and gender, *why* they portray gender in certain ways, and *why* those questions matter. Am I simply describing my observations? Am I contributing to feminist literary discourse? I think about that hiatus every time I write gendered criticism, and those questions have haunted this capstone. I recognize the irony that I am finishing my English major with a work of feminist criticism when four years ago Mr. Stanton banned me from the subject, but I am confident in asserting that this capstone matters.

Part One: The Lineage of Lilith

*Of Adam's first wife, Lilith, it is told*  
*(The witch he loved before the gift of Eve,)*  
*That, ere the snake's, her sweet tongue could deceive,*  
*And her enchanted hair was the first gold.*  
*And still she sits, young while the earth is old,*  
*And, subtly of herself contemplative,*  
*Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave,*  
*Till heart and body and life are in its hold.*

- *DG Rosetti*

A stormy spirit flew across Mesopotamia in the third millennium BCE and left a trail of destruction in her wake. She slowly gained a corporeal identity and transformed into a seductive night demon who caused erotic dreams and nocturnal orgasm. By the eighth century BCE she was both a succubus\* and a child-killing witch.<sup>1</sup> She is occasionally cherubic, often monstrous, and always beautiful. Sometimes her hair is golden, sometimes it is black. Wings protrude from her back, and she stands upon owl feet. The Zohar sees her bottom half as flame. She inhabits the night with the moon as her guide. Mothers place protective amulets over cradles lest she steal their babies in darkness. Single men shut their windows so she can't creep in and steal their seed. She is Adam's first wife, a succubus, a witch. She is the consort of God, the Queen of Hell, the Mother of Demons. She is the Other Eve; she is Lilith.

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<sup>1</sup> \* denotes an entry in the glossary

The Lilith mythos is vast and contradictory, but there is one event that occurs in almost every iteration of her story: God's rejection. God creates Lilith from the earth as he does Adam, but he abandons her after she shows defiance. Either he casts her out of Eden, or he abandons her in the Red Sea. The motherless Lilith chooses to inhabit the earth who bore her, and that earth-mother provides solace in seemingly harsh environments. As Koltuv beautifully puts it: "At the dark of the Moon, there in the wilderness, away from traditional strictures and forms, a woman can connect with the elemental feminine stuff within her, and a natural process of healing can occur" (Koltuv 26). She who once was just a husk becomes the Queen of Zemargad\*. Lilith endures abandonment and transforms into a powerful figure of ascendant female sexuality.

The lineage of Lilith traces back to the Sumerian civilization of ancient Mesopotamia, but she reached her final form around the eighth-century BC when the mythology of Judaism absorbed her mythos. Raphael Patai links her to the *liludemon\** of Sumerian folklore. The Sumerian iteration of Lilith describes a woman who is "slender, well-shaped, beautiful and nude, with wings and owl feet" (Patai 222). Her epithet is "beautiful maiden," though she is also a harlot and vampire who captured her lovers and held them hostage. Lilith retains her vampirical epithet in the Babylonian Talmud, but she takes on the infanticidal tendencies of other lesser demonesses such as *Obyzouth\** and *Lamashtu\**. Howard Schwartz writes, "Lilith became such a dominant mythic figure that she absorbed the roles of the lesser known demons...and Lilith has played a powerful dual role ever since in Jewish folklore and superstition" (217). Scholars aren't sure exactly when Lilith absorbed the myths of lesser known female demons, but she developed a highly complex identity and became an infamous figure in the mythology of Judaism.

Lilith does not explicitly appear in the Bible, but the Babylonian Talmud and the Zohar both understand Lilith as the first feminine being.<sup>2</sup> Early rabbis believed the passage "Male and female He created them" contradicted the successive creation of Adam and Eve (qtd. in Schwartz 216). The passage from Genesis implies that God created male and female at the same time, but God molded Eve from Adam's rib after creating Adam. These early rabbis believed that the "them" refers to Adam and another woman rather than Adam and Eve. They named her Lilith because of a possible reference to Lilith in Isaiah 34:14, though that interpretation is so obscure that scholars refrain from considering her a biblical figure. The interpretation of Lilith as the First Eve originates in Babylonian Talmud. The Babylonian Talmud ascribes a backstory to Lilith that marries her to Adam and creates an explanation for her demonic identity. God sees that Adam is lonely and creates Lilith from dust, and thus they become husband and wife. It is very important to note that God does not create Lilith from Adam in the Babylonian Talmud; he molds her too from the Earth. The Zohar\* understands the origins of Lilith a bit differently:

God made two great lights. the two lights ascended together with the same dignity. The moon, however, was not at ease with the sun...God thereupon said to her, "Go and diminish thyself."...From that time she has had no light of her own, but derives her light from the sun. At first they were on an equality, but afterwards she diminished herself among all those grades of hers.... After the primordial light was withdrawn there was created...a k'lifah husk or shell, and this k'lifah expanded and produced another, who was Lilith (qtd. in Koltuv 2).

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<sup>2</sup> The Babylonian Talmud and the Zohar are both kabbalist texts— works of Judaic mysticism. The Babylonian Talmud dates to Jewish Babylon, and the Zohar comes from early medieval Spain. The Talmud comprises early theological debates

Lilith, a daughter of the moon, derives her nightmarish qualities from the resentment and humiliation of the moon. Unlike the Babylonian Talmud, the Zohar does not believe that Lilith emerged alongside Adam. In the Zohar, Lilith and Samael the Devil emerge together from the realm of evil as an androgynous hermaphroditic pair. Lilith exists within Samael as a "feminine transpersonal shadow" (Koltuv 6). The birth of Lilith and Samael in the spiritual realm corresponds to the birth of Adam and Eve on Earth.

Though there are discrepancies among the accounts of her birth, the origin stories of Lilith all have several unifying factors: promiscuity, the rejection of Adam, and the flight from Eden. Lilith of the Talmud looks like one of the Cherubim, but she is anything but an angelic servant of God. God creates Adam and Lilith from the same dust, and they were meant to be man and wife. The pair quarrels often because Lilith refused to lie beneath Adam: "Why should I lie beneath you when I am your equal, since both of us were created from dust?" (Patai 223). Adam attempts to overpower Lilith, but she utters the name of God and flies to a cave by the Red Sea—a place of lascivious energies, crawling with incubi and succubae. Lilith takes these demons for lovers and bears them hundreds of demon offspring. Adam complains to God that Lilith left him, and God sends three angels to return Lilith to Adam. Lilith refuses, and the angels threaten to kill one hundred of her demon offspring daily, but she again refuses. Lilith eventually offers a compromise that shows how she absorbs the myths of the child-eating Obyzouth and Lamashtu. Lilith tells the angels that her mission is to weaken human babies: "if it is a male, I have power over him from the moment of his birth until the eighth day of his life, and if a girl, until the twentieth day" (224).<sup>3</sup> Lilith concedes that she will leave the woman and child alone if she sees an amulet inscribed with the names of the angels,

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<sup>3</sup> A baby boy will be circumcised after the eighth day, so apparently circumcision protects baby boys. I have not come across anything in my research that suggests circumcision protects adult men from Lilith's nightly visits.

Lilith of the Zohar is so lonely after her birth that she flies into the sky in search of "male companionship" (231). She reaches the Cherubim, child-like angels, who surround God's throne and attaches herself to them. Lilith refuses to separate from the Cherubim until God creates man and wrenches Lilith from the Cherubim and casts her down to Earth with the expectation that she "become Adam's helpmate" (231). Lilith sees the complete picture of Adam and Eve together, and she tries to fly back to her beloved Cherubim. However, Lilith finds the gates of Heaven barred. God, disappointed in Lilith's flight, banishes her to the Red Sea. God condemns Lilith to imprisonment beneath the ocean, but he is so angry after The Fall<sup>4</sup> that he freed her from her briny cage. Free to roam the world, Lilith resides in shadows during the day and emerges in the night. Lilith grows lonely again and returns to Adam who impregnates her after she lies with him, though late medieval mystical literature writes that Lilith overcomes Adam "against his will" (232). Lilith leaves Adam once again because she is not a suitable "helpmate" (232), and she eventually bears demon offspring with Cain\*. No matter the interpretation, Lilith is almost always characterized as lascivious, dominant, and perseverant.

Lilith rises from her humiliation and abandonment in the wilderness to become the Queen of Hell and mate of Samael. In some stories, Lilith rises to the skies and rules Heaven as the Consort of God. Additionally, the existence of Two Liliths arises in this era of her mythos. Thirteenth-century Kabbalists believed that there were Two Liliths: Lilith the Elder and Lilith the Younger. Lilith the Younger is not necessarily a descendant of Lilith, but she does resemble Lilith the Elder: "from head to navel, and from the navel downward is flaming fire—like mother,

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<sup>4</sup> God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and forbade them from eating fruit from the tree of knowledge. A serpent, possibly Samael or the Devil, tempts Eve to Eat the Fruit. Eve shares the fruit with Adam, and God banishes them from Eden. The Midrash, an ancient biblical exegesis, wonders if *Lilith* is the serpent. Depending on the myth, however, Lilith is by the Red Sea when Eve eats the apple.

like daughter" (Patai 247).<sup>5</sup> This resemblance attracts Samael to Lilith the younger, but Samael and Lilith the Great have more than a bodily connection. The Zohar portrays Lilith as the feminine shadow of Samael; they emerge into the world together as an androgynous pair: "So intertwined are they with each other, that they are compared to the way Adam and Eve were created male and female at the same time, back to back" (qtd. in Schwartz 139). Samael and Lilith came into the world together, mated, intertwined. While the Zohar understands Lilith and Samael as one soul split between two bodies, other texts believe that the Blind Dragon\* unites them. After Lilith finds solace by the Red Sea, the Blind Dragon functions as "the intermediary between Samael and Lilith" (246) or a link between their subconscious. In the Talmud, Lilith and Samael may not have emerge into the world as a pair, but their destinies are bound together. However, the marriage between Lilith and Samael, complicated as it is, cannot last forever. God, upset with their demonic progeny, castrates Samael. Lilith, unable to procreate with Samael, goes back into the earthly realm to create offspring from the seed of man.

The next iteration of Lilith is the strange combination of Mother of Demons and child-eating witch. When the sky is dark, Lilith the succubus flies through opened windows into the bedrooms of single young men. Lilith, the incarnation of lust, causes nighttime ejaculations by visiting the dreams of men with her long red or black hair flowing around her naked body. She steals their semen and impregnates herself with more demonic offspring. Fears of dream visits from Lilith prompted early Rabbis to warn against men sleeping alone in a house. Though Lilith is infamous for her dreamy seduction, she also seduces waking men. She adorns herself with long red hair, scarlet robes, and many pieces of jewelry. She is serpentine in her seduction: "her

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<sup>5</sup> Further, just as Lilith the Elder couples with Samael, King of Hell, Lilith the Younger couples with Ashmodai\*, King of Demons. Not only does Lilith the Younger physically resemble her elder double, her mythological trajectory follows the same path.

tongue is sharp like a sword, her words are smooth like oil, her lips red like a rose and sweetened by all the sweetness of the world" (233). After Lilith's victim fornicates with her and falls asleep, Lilith appears before him clothed in nothing but flames. Then, she kills him. The succubus identity relates to Lilith's original promiscuity, but the child-killing witch is an odd piece of her mythos. The Zohar states that after the Cherubim reject Lilith, Lilith roams "the world to seek out the children who deserve to be punished. And she smiles at them and kills them" (237). Lilith cannot punish the Cherubim who reside in Heaven, but she can punish their earthly imitations. Human children replace the Cherubim Lilith loved so at the start of her life, and she attaches their souls to her own. Fear of Lilith the child-killer continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century; tradition-bound Jewish mothers placed protective amulets over their children's beds and spoke protective prayers, spells, and incantations over newborn babies.<sup>6</sup>

Lilith has been a figure of counterculture since the nineteenth century. There was a small Jewish community in London at the start of the nineteenth century that slowly grew throughout the century.<sup>7</sup> Protestant Christianity was the backbone of morality in Victorian England, so Judaic mythology countered traditional Christian teachings. Lilith seduced Victorians who fought back against rigid morality, and she slowly became a figure of deviant femininity. She confused the "Angel in the House" and "Fallen Woman" binary.<sup>8</sup> Lilith seduced the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and became an especially fascinating figure to Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

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<sup>6</sup> The Zohar recommends that parents wake children who smile or laugh in their sleep because "the smile of Lilith is reflected in the smile that one can observe in the face of sleeping children" (330). As Lilith told the three angels God sent after her, a protective amulet above the child's bed will protect them from her. These amulets appear in ancient archaeological sites and still exist today.

<sup>7</sup> Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Jewish population of England rose tenfold. Jews received the right to vote in 1835, and Sir David Salomons was elected Lord Mayor of London in 1857. Benjamin Disraeli, an Anglican convert became Prime Minister in 1868. Dickens places Fagin, antisemitic Jewish caricature, in *Oliver Twist* (1837) but presents the honorable Mr. Riah almost twenty-years later in *Our Mutual Friend* (1864). Protestant Christianity was the basis of Victorian morality, so Jewishness was a sign of otherness.

<sup>8</sup> Angel in the House refers to good, domestic women and Fallen Woman refers to promiscuous, immoral women. I further address these terms in Part Three: The Maternal Gothic.

In "Body's Beauty" (1881), Rossetti adheres to the Talmudic interpretation of Lilith as Adam's first wife. He calls her a witch with a deceptive "sweet tongue" (Rossetti 3) and enchanting hair. She "draws men to watch the bright web she can weave, till heart and body and life are in its hold" (7-8). Rossetti inscribed "Body's Beauty" on his 1867 painting *Lady Lilith* (see fig. 1). Lilith sits brushing her long red hair and gazes into a hand-mirror. She wears a white nightdress which shows off her shoulders, collar bone, and part of her breasts. There is a red ribbon the color of her lips tied to her wrist, but white blossoms surround her. Rossetti dresses Lilith in both red the color of seduction and white the color of purity which further signifies how Lilith confuses female stereotypes.<sup>9</sup> Lilith is a perfect embodiment of Victorian anxieties: she is a bestial figure of deviant femininity from an "other" religion who threatens the foundation of Victorian morality. Lilith appears by name in several Victorian works, but I am interested in how nineteenth-century authors used her legacy to create new myths. Just as Lilith absorbed the myths of lesser demons, nineteenth-century Gothic novels absorb the myths of Lilith. Lilith appears in *Wuthering Heights* (1847) as the Queen of Hell and her younger double. She appears in *Dracula* (1897) as the child-killing succubus and Mother of Demons. Looking for Lilith provides a new way to analyze anxieties surrounding female sexuality and maternity in Victorian Gothic novels.

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<sup>9</sup> Robert Browning also tries his hand at describing Lilith in his poem "Adam, Lilith, and Eve," but Browning's version of Lilith is different from Rossetti's. Browning does not delineate between Lilith and Eve, so there is an ambiguity about which of the original women is speaking. Is it Eve who tricks Adam into licking venom from her lips, or is it Lilith? Browning muddies the binaries of female morality with his ambiguous language. Though Rossetti and Browning portray contrasting versions of Lilith, she still combats traditional morality; Lilith remains a figure of counterculture. For further Victorian images of Lilith, see fig. 2 and fig. 3.

Part Two: Reading Lilith  
**Unearthly Love and Dual Spirits in *Wuthering Heights***

Lilith and Samael wander the Yorkshire moors in Emily Brontë's multigenerational, incestuous, hellish, and only novel: *Wuthering Heights*. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue that *Wuthering Heights* is Emily Brontë's feminist response to Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667). They read Brontë's novel as "a topsy-turvy retelling of Milton's and Western culture's central tale of the fall of woman and her shadow self, Satan" (359). The Original Catherine is their topsy-turvy Eve. Gilbert and Gubar argue that *Wuthering Heights* outlines an ascent from sin to purity rather than a fall from grace. I find Gilbert and Gubar's argument compelling, though I am hesitant to view Catherine as an Eve-like figure. If *Wuthering Heights* ended immediately after Catherine's death, and Brontë wrote a clean ending that made clear her intent to reunite Eve with "her fiery original self" (368), then perhaps Gilbert and Gubar's reading would satisfy me. I contest Gilbert and Gubar's reading of Eve's fall with my reading of the Lilith, the other Eve, who rises from wandering demon to the Queen of Hell.

The moors of *Wuthering Heights* represent the Red Sea desert and Hell: the two domains of Lilith. Catherine and Lilith, both motherless daughters, go into the wilderness for comfort when they experience paternal rejection. When Lilith feels the pang of paternal rejection, the earth who bore her welcomes her home. Catherine, too, experiences diminishment in the eyes of her father. Mr. Earnshaw places Heathcliff above Catherine who is "far too mischievous and wayward for a favourite" (31). The cast-aside Catherine finds joy in the harsh heath just as the diminished Lilith finds solace by the desolate and demon-infested Red Sea. Both women find comfort in inhospitable landscapes because their wild spirits need space to rule and roam. The connection between the moors and Hell appears in Catherine's dream: "Heaven did not seem to be my home; and I broke my heart with weeping to come back to earth; and the angels were so

angry that they flung me out, into the middle of the heath on the top of Wuthering Heights; where I woke sobbing for joy” (63). God and the cherubim block Lilith from Heaven, the angels toss Catherine back onto the moors, and Brontë brings Hell to Yorkshire.

If the moors are Hell, then Heathcliff and Catherine are their Samael and Lilith. The Zohar and Talmud present different origin stories, but they both understand that Lilith and Samael must unite; whether the Blind Dragon brings them together or they enter the world as the inverted Adam and Eve, Lilith and Samael are destined to unite and rule Hell together. Catherine and Heathcliff do not enter the world as an androgynous pair, but there is a preternatural connection amongst them and the moors. Nelly notes that Catherine and Heathcliff almost immediately bond after Mr. Earnshaw brings Heathcliff to Wuthering Heights. Catherine asks for a whip, and she receives the devil himself.<sup>10</sup> Heathcliff, whose heart is an “earthly Hell” (246), is undeniably the Devil in Brontë’s Hell.<sup>11</sup> We see that fiery hell-bound soul burning behind both of their eyes. Heathcliff has eyes that spark “black fire” (75), and Catherine has eyes that “flash” (121). Their love is unearthly; it is amoral. Hellfire fuels their devotion. Following her dream about Heaven and Hell and the heath, Catherine asserts: “Nelly, I am Heathcliff” (64). Presumably, Heathcliff is she. Heathcliff professes the same unnatural sentiment after he learns of Catherine’s death: “Oh, God! It is unutterable! I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!” (130). Catherine and Heathcliff are more than just kindred spirits; they are one

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<sup>10</sup> Gilbert and Gubar brilliantly assert that Heathcliff is, in fact, the whip that Catherine so desires. He functions as a whip just as Catherine hoped by “smashing her rival-brother’s fiddle and making a desirable third among the brother’s domination” (362).

<sup>11</sup> Charlotte Brontë writes in her 1850 preface that Heathcliff’s love for Catherine “is a sentiment fierce and inhuman: a passion such as might boil and glow in the bad essence of some evil genius; a fire that might form the tormented centre— the ever-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world: and by its quenchless and ceaseless ravage effect the execution of the decree which dooms him to carry Hell within him.” He is “a man’s shape animated by demon life— a Ghoul— an Afreet” (309).

soul split between two bodies. When Catherine dies, Heathcliff must live with half of his soul buried under the moors.

Brontë kills Catherine giving birth to Edgar Linton's daughter thus weakening Gilbert and Gubar's assertion that Catherine is the Eve of Brontë's Bible of Hell. Gilbert and Gubar argue that Catherine, by marrying Linton, falls *into* rather than *from* grace. Catherine rejects the Hell and the devil and accepts a place in Heaven with her Adam when she chooses to marry the decent Edgar Linton rather than "that devil Heathcliff" (216).<sup>12</sup> No longer does Catherine roam the wild moors; she instead languishes under the "pure white ceiling bordered by gold" of Thrushcross Grange (38). She lets the fire in her soul burn out such that her once flashing eyes become melancholy and focused on something "far beyond— you would have said out of this world" (121). It is possible that Catherine gazes toward some heavenly light, but we know that Catherine is not going to Heaven. Brontë uses Catherine's dream to foreshadow that Heaven will reject her. Gilbert and Gubar's argument falters here because the ultimate ascent would be for the motherless Catherine to fulfill her maternal mission and raise moral children in the heavenly Thrushcross Grange.<sup>13</sup> Instead, Catherine dies without her dual spirit. Heathcliff understands that Catherine dies because she attempts to untether their souls:

*Why* did you betray your own heart, Cathy? I have not one word of comfort. You deserve this. You have killed yourself... You loved me—then what *right* had you to leave me? What right—answer me—for the poor fancy you felt for Linton? Because misery and degradation, and death, and nothing that God or Satan could inflict would have parted us,

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<sup>12</sup> This decision further separates Catherine from Eve because she rejects a man who loves her, not a man who seduces her. I discuss this further in Part Four.

<sup>13</sup> Sarah Stickney Ellis and John Ruskin agree that a woman's role is to raise moral Englishmen and women. Men must go out into the world and defend the empire, so women must keep England in order. For further reading see *The Women of England* by Sarah Stickney Ellis and *Sesame and Lilies* by John Ruskin.

*you*, of your own will, did it... What kind of living will it be when you—oh, God! would *you* like to live with your soul in the grave? It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands... Kiss me again; and don't let me see your eyes! I forgive what you have done to me. I love *my* murderer— but *yours*! How can I? (125-126)

It is Catherine, and Catherine alone, who cuts Heathcliff from her soul. Catherine attempts to be a good wife just as Lilith attempts to be Adam's handmaiden, but she relinquishes her spirit in the process. The amputation is too much for her. Without the added strength of Heathcliff's soul, her body cannot bear harboring her daughter. Catherine dies in the golden Thrushcross Grange, away from her beloved hellish moors, but her spirit haunts the heath.

The first generation fails to unite Lilith and Samael, so Brontë must act as the Blind Dragon and create a second generation to satisfy destiny. Young Catherine is now in the role of Lilith, Hareton is now in the role of Samael, and Linton assumes the role of Adam. While the first generation follows the Zoharic interpretation of the Samael and Lilith, the second generation follows the Talmudic story. The original Catherine and Heathcliff unite as children, but Young Catherine first pairs with Linton rather than Hareton. Young Catherine does not truly love Linton. She knows that he loves her, and for that reason she loves him (217). There is no eternal passion between Young Catherine and Linton, and he is too weak to live alongside her flaming spirit. Hareton and Young Catherine do not unite for quite a while, but he fascinates her from their first meeting. Heathcliff attempts to pit Young Catherine against Hareton when he introduces them, but he cannot stop their strange connection. When she sees Hareton, her cousin, for the first time, Young Catherine looks "queer" (167). She cannot stop taking sly looks of small admiration at him, but she cannot comprehend his "bathos of coarseness and ignorance" (167). Young Catherine tries to reject Hareton like her mother rejects Heathcliff, but she cannot ward

off destiny forever. The Two Catherines, like the Two Liliths, share the same wild spirit from the moors. Though Young Catherine does not physically resemble her mother, her face is “just like the landscape—shadows and sunshine flitting over it, in rapid succession” (201). The moors give the Two Catherines their spirit, and that ferocious soul also exists within Hareton. Young Catherine and Hareton possess the brilliant black eyes that burn with the unholy passion between Catherine and Heathcliff. The souls of the second generation are doppelgängers of the first. Nelly recognizes the spirit of Catherine when she sees Young Catherine and Hareton by firelight: “The red firelight glowed on their two bonny heads, and revealed their faces, animated with the eager interest of children... They lifted their eyes together, to encounter Mr. Heathcliff. Perhaps you have never remarked that their eyes are precisely similar, and they are those of Catherine Earnshaw” (244). Hareton and Young Catherine are adults, but they are incomplete. They are immature and childlike because their dual spirits have not yet combined.

Lilith and Samael finally unite when Hareton and Young Catherine unite, and Heathcliff and Catherine retreat to their infernal Kingdom. Heathcliff weakens as the intimacy between Young Catherine and Hareton strengthens; he stops eating, he turns pale, he trembles (247). He has lived a half-life since the death of his dual spirit, and that incomplete existence flickers away while the second generation kindles their own complete happiness.<sup>14</sup> Soon his soul’s bliss will kill his body (252), and he will attain infernal love. When Heathcliff finally dies, his eyes continue burning with a “frightening, life-like gaze of exultation” (254). He is like the living but without that spark of life. The ferocious soul escapes its human trappings and searches for its mate. No longer does Catherine disturb Heathcliff’s dreams; no longer must Heathcliff replenish his soul by crawling into her coffin. The corpse of Heathcliff joins the remains of Catherine

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<sup>14</sup> For further reading on Young Catherine, Hareton, and Lilith, see Appendix A.

among the eternal rocks beneath the moors, and their spirits roam the Hell of their youth. The country-folk see “Heathcliff and a woman” on the moor and in *Wuthering Heights* (255), but never at the heavenly Thrushcross Grange. Brontë’s final image, however, suggests that Catherine and Heathcliff are finally at peace. Lockwood visits by their mossy graves and wonders “how any one could ever imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth” (256). The once “sleet-laden wind” (219) blows gently. The sky, once dark and stormy, is clear. Catherine implies that the moors are an earthly Hell in her dream, and Brontë certainly depicts violence in the landscape, but it seems that Hell retreats below the earth when Heathcliff reunites with Catherine. The original Lilith and Samael no longer tether Hell to the moors, and the balance between Heaven and Hell restores; the earth is just the earth.

### **The Anti-Mother and Demonic Fertility in *Dracula***

Lilith the succubus and child-killing witch is the most familiar and long-lasting version of Lilith. She is a seductive demon of the night who steals into quiet bedrooms and seduces quiet sleepers, and she feels no remorse when she takes infantile lives. *Dracula* is a novel full of seduction, promiscuity, demons of the night, and gender confusion. It is a novel about anti-maternity and demonic fertility. Children die, and vampires breastfeed. Lilith lives between the lines of Bram Stoker's fin-de-siècle masterpiece.<sup>15</sup> She is there in the promiscuous Lucy, but I find reading *Dracula* himself as Stoker's Lilith most compelling.

Lucy exhibits Lilith's traits even before *Dracula* turns her into a vampire, though she transforms into an imperfect replica of Lilith after her transformation. Lucy's voice first appears

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<sup>15</sup> *Fin de siècle* is a French term meaning “the end of an age.” Late Victorians used this term as an expression of the uncertainty and anxiety they felt toward the end of the century. Aestheticism and Decadence were terms that described art, literature, and lifestyles that seemed to reject Victorian morality. Art was meaningless, therefore purely aesthetic, and morals decayed in the Post-Darwin world— hence the term “decadence.” *Dracula*, with its sex, gore, and Gothic castle is a novel about decadence.

in two consecutive letters to Mina that reveal her promiscuous thoughts. Mina asks Lucy in one of her letters about a certain possible suitor, and Lucy responds in a coy manner that shows this man is not Lucy's only prospect: "As to the tall, curly-haired man, I suppose it was the one who was with me at the last Pop" (Stoker 56). Lucy's supposed confusion borders on facetiousness and cluelessness. Lucy references the specific event at which someone may have seen her with Mr. Holmwood, which implies she has gone out with other suitors. The second letter corroborates my reading of Lucy's promiscuous subtext. Lucy writes, "I never had a proposal till today, not a real proposal, and today I have had three" (57). Again, Lucy makes a statement on the border between facetious and clueless. Lucy says she has never had a proposal before, then remembers at least one moment that might constitute a proposal. Stoker adds the qualifier "real" to show Lucy's previous superficial dalliances. Lucy fully displays her promiscuity in the subsequent pages of her letter when she laments that she can't "marry three men" (60) and writes that as soon as Arthur came into her room, he had her in his arms and was kissing her. As critic Christopher Craft notes, the kiss is the most sensual act in *Dracula*. Lucy reveals her most lascivious moment when she confesses that Arthur kissed her in an empty room.

When Lucy undergoes her vampiric rebirth, she joins the anti-maternal lineage of Lilith. Her choice of cherubic sustenance resembles Lilith's own taste for children, and she gains Lilith's seductively "wicked mouth" (191). Stoker includes newspaper clippings about a mysterious woman, Lucy, who lures children to her and feeds from them. He describes the physical brutality they endure under Lucy's ill-care: "It was terribly weak, and looked quite emaciated" (Stoker 160). Just as Lilith captures the souls of human children to fuel her longevity, Lucy feeds upon human children. Lucy has no sympathy for children, and Lilith sacrifices her own offspring to avoid assassination. Stoker creates in Lucy what Auerbach calls a "lethal anti-

mother" who threatens "woman's maternal mission" (188n4). Lucy is a double threat because not only does she kill the children of England, but she will bear no children of her own. Her actions are anti-maternal, but so is her body. The only children she might create would be monsters such as herself. Lucy was always promiscuous, but her lasciviousness grows even more potent after her vampiric rebirth. She gains the seductive silver tongue that graces both Lilith and Dracula himself and finds that she can lure men to her with just a few "diabolically sweet" (188) tones. When the men first go to her lair in Hampstead Heath, Lucy's vampire voice rings "through the brains" of Van Helsing, Quincy Morris, and Dr Seward, and Arthur advances toward her as if "under a spell" (188). It is in this instance that they see the antimaternal monster Lucy has become. Lucy has a "carnal and unspiritual appearance" that seems like "a devilish mockery" of her human self:

When Lucy— I call the thing that was before us Lucy because it bore her shape- saw us she drew back with an angry snarl, such as a cat gives when taken unawares; then her eyes ranged over us. Lucy's eyes in form and colour; but Lucy's eyes unclean and full of hell-fire, instead of the pure, gentle orbs we knew... As she looked, her eyes blazed with unholy light, and the face became wreathed with a voluptuous smile... With a careless motion, she flung to the ground, callous as a devil, the child that up to now she had clutched strenuously to her breast, growling over it as a dog growls over a bone. (188)

Stoker describes Lucy as a hellish figure, which again links her to Lilith. Her eyes burn with the hellfire that flares out of the Zoharic Lilith. She is bestial devil who growls and snarls like a lowly animal. She is a "foul Thing" (192), not a woman. Arthur and the "little band of men" (326) eventually kill Lucy and end her Un-Dead state, but her sensuality evades death. Van Helsing says to Arthur: "and now, my child, you may kiss

her. Kiss her dead lips if you will, as she would have you to, if for her to choose" (193).

The antimother may die, but she is not done steering men away from the path of morality.

Lilith is a figure of fluidity; she shapeshifts from demon, to witch, to screech-owl, to flaming fire. She is ancient but not immortal; God will kill her in the end of days. Dracula can shift as well from old to young, vampire to bat, human to monster, European to British. He is old, but he is not invincible. Apart from biological sex, Dracula shares many of Lilith's traits. He enters dreams, he seduces, he tricks, he creates demonic daughters. His luscious lips and his procreative abilities confuse his maleness and mark him as a figure of femininity. I would not be the first to read Dracula as a figure of inversion; Christopher Craft beautifully articulates how Stoker displays late Victorian anxieties surrounding "the relationship between desire and gender" (Craft 444). I aim to use Craft's gendered analysis to show how Lilith lives on in the infamous Dracula

Craft focuses on the vampiric mouth as evidence of gender fluidity in *Dracula*, and I believe those sensual, gender-fluid red lips place Dracula among the lineage of Lilith. The vampire mouth is both an orifice and a penetrator: "Luring at first with an inviting orifice, a promise of red softness, but delivering instead a piercing bone, the vampire mouth fuses and confuses...the gender-based categories of the penetrating and the receptive" (445). Vampire teeth penetrate both the female body and the male body. Vampire tongues lick the blood of men and the blood of women. Vampire lips kiss the skin and mouths of their victims regardless of gender. The vampire mouth is "the primary site of erotic experience in *Dracula*" (445). Jonathan Harker first describes the vampire mouth when the "weird sisters" (Stoker 51), Dracula's vampiric daughter-brides, attempt to seduce and feed from him: "All three had brilliant white teeth, that shone like pearls against the ruby of their voluptuous lips... I felt in my heart a wicked, burning

desire that they would kiss me with those red lips" (42). Jonathan Harker does not describe an attraction to their female attributes. Their scarlet lips excite that wicked desire in Jonathan, not their womanly forms. These gender-fluid blood-red lips belong to the ultimate vampiric anti-mother himself: Dracula.

The sexual language Stoker employs when Dr. Seward and Van Helsing find Dracula and Mina in a compromising position feminizes Dracula and links him to Lilith the succubus. Dr. Seward, who succumbs to Lucy's seduction, sees Dracula's gender-fluid mouth after Dracula feeds from Mina: "the white sharp teeth, behind the full lips of the blood-dripping mouth, champed together like those of a wild beast" (247). The full mouth is warm with bodily fluid. The sharp teeth penetrated Mina's skin and drew forth her essence. Craft discusses that the presence of both penetrators—teeth—and an orifice—the mouth—creates gender confusion, but I would go further and say that Dracula's entire face is a place of inversion. Before describing the vampire mouth, Dr. Seward sees how "the great nostrils of the white aquiline nose opened wide and quivered at the edge" (247). It may seem a stretch to read Dracula's nose like female genitalia, but Stoker specifically writes that the nostrils "opened wide" and "quivered."<sup>16</sup> I do not think it takes too much strength of the imagination to see that the unnatural motion of Dracula's nostrils mimics female arousal. Physiognomy fails to identify Dracula as male or female because his features display masculinity and femininity. His gender dissipates alongside his corporeal form.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Stoker often mentions nostrils quivering and twitching as a sign of extreme emotion, but the nostrils often open wide. The erotic nature of the encounter and the extreme passion of the scene make it impossible for a reader to ignore this rather odd description of a nose. Further, Stoker makes a point of calling it an "aquiline," or eagle-like, nose. The beaked shape of Dracula's nose harkens to Lilith's original iteration: the screech owl.

<sup>17</sup> Upon discovery, Dracula flies out the window leaving behind "nothing but a faint vapor" (247). His misty form allows him to enter bedrooms and dreams just like Lilith. The ability to shapeshift further relates Dracula to Lilith because, as I mentioned in Part One, Lilith has many forms. Gender fluidity is just one instance of Dracula's ability to shapeshift, but he also shifts into a bat, a wolf, and the mist throughout the novel. Dracula's shapeshifting abilities support my contention that Dracula is a part of the Lilith lineage.

The gender-fluid Dracula possesses a monstrous maternal capability that suggests he Queen of Hell burns beneath his shapeshifting skin. Dracula biting Mina is an undeniably masculine act, but Dracula allowing Mina to feed from his breast is strangely maternal. He wants Mina to feed from his body. This exchange of blood is especially disturbing because it is simultaneously sexual and maternal. Dr. Seward and Van Helsing see Mina kneeling on the edge of the bed clad in a white nightdress smeared with blood; Dracula holding her hands and neck, forcing her face onto his "bare breast which was shown by his torn-open dress" (247). Dracula attempts to "compel" (247) Mina to drink his blood as he drank hers. The vampire kiss is erotic and serves as a vehicle for Stoker to write sex in the late nineteenth-century, but the exchange of vampire blood acts like breastfeeding. As Craft notes, there is a relationship "between blood and semen, milk and blood" (446) throughout *Dracula*. Mina could be performing oral sex, but she could also be nursing. Stoker himself makes the comparison from blood to milk when Seward says Dracula and Mina resemble "a child forcing a kitten's nose into a saucer of milk to compel it to drink" (247). Interrupted, Dracula quivers with unfulfilled desire while Mina screams and wails like a hungry child. Not yet a vampire, Mina cannot give Dracula the sexual vampire kiss. Dracula, however, can feed Mina with his blood-milk.

### Part Three: The Maternal Gothic

Literary discourse is everchanging, so terminology and definitions from thirty years ago may not have relevance today. While I find Moers and Gilbert and Gubar's work inspiring, I do not agree with everything they write. During the second wave of feminism it was important to identify the Female Gothic, but it is limiting to define a mode by the gender of its authors. How can we explain the presence of what feels like the Female Gothic in works by non-female authors? How can we compare works of the Female Gothic with works outside the Female

Gothic? The Gothic identity of a work comes from its ability to excite fear in its readers, so shouldn't we qualify Gothic with the *thing* that scares? The Imperial Gothic mode is at play when a work exploits fear of reverse imperialism, and the Southern Gothic mode exists in works that display the grotesque underbelly of the American South. A woman wrote *Wuthering Heights*, and a man wrote *Dracula*. Why, then, do those two novels of seemingly different Gothic modes feel related to one another? Why do they feel related to the non-Victorian *Frankenstein*? A reading of Lilith in *Wuthering Heights* and *Dracula* helps show that both novels are motherless creation myths that threaten the maternal mission of Victorian women. My solution to the problem of the Female Gothic lies in the use of anti-maternity as a source of fear. I present the Maternal Gothic.

I define the Maternal Gothic as follows: a mode of the gothic that incites fear by threatening maternity. The threat to maternity can appear as female sexual desire, femicide, or a corrupt creation myth. The Maternal Gothic manifests in deviant, absent, surrogate, and monstrous mothers. There is often a strong connection between the female spirit and natural sublimity.<sup>18</sup> A Maternal Gothic novel must explore morality in a motherless world. As Mary Shelley writes, "frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavor to mock the stupendous mechanism of the creator of the world" (168).<sup>19</sup> Lilith is deeply connected to the Maternal Gothic because she is the original threat to maternity. Lilith refuses to lie beneath Adam because she wants to fulfill her sexual desire rather than procreate.

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<sup>18</sup> Sublimity here refers to images of the Sublime in nature: vast, haunting moors, enormous mountains, endless skies. *Frankenstein*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Jane Eyre* in particular feminize the sublime and use sublime landscapes as refuge for humiliated, abandoned, and diminished women.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Shelley's "hideous progeny" (Shelley 169) is another novel that I place in the Maternal Gothic. After Victor Frankenstein creates his monster, he effectively kills the biological mother. Consequently, Shelley eliminates the potential for maternity by killing off the women in his life. For further reading on *Frankenstein* and maternity and the Gothic see "Female Gothic: The Monster's Mother" by Ellen Moers and "Possessing Nature: The Female in *Frankenstein*" (1988) by Anne K. Mellor.

She steals human semen in the night to produce her demonic horde of offspring. She is Adam's first wife, the anti-mother, the other Eve. The absence of Lilith excludes novels like *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1885) and *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1898). While both novels deal with corrupted creation, they do not explore the social effects of eliminating the mother. Locating Lilith is the most important moment in unveiling the Maternal Gothic because where Lilith lies so too does anti-maternity, demonic fertility, and female sexual desire. We have already found Lilith in the pages of *Wuthering Heights* and *Dracula*, so we must now search for why she is there. What is Lilith doing on the Yorkshire Moors? Why is Lilith in the body of a seemingly male vampire?

The Maternal Gothic is a product of the nineteenth-century obsession with morality and motherhood. There are two common female stereotypes in Victorian literature: The Angel in the House, and the Fallen Woman. The Fallen Woman, as her name suggests, refers to Eve who succumbs to temptations and causes the expulsion from Paradise— otherwise known as the fall of man. The Angel in the House, conversely, refers to Mary the Holy virgin who willingly makes herself a surrogate for God. The Fallen Woman is spoiled, and the Angel of the House is pure.<sup>20</sup> Though Eve represents sin and Mary represents obedience, they are both mothers. Eve is the mother of humanity, and Mary is the mother of the messiah. Additionally, a third stereotype arose in the late nineteenth century: The New Woman. Her independence and ambition masculinize her, and she is most definitely not a mother.<sup>21</sup> The New Woman is a highly specific

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<sup>20</sup> Christina Rossetti captures the duality of literary Victorian womanhood in her narrative poem "Goblin Market." The poem follows two sisters, Lizzie and Laura, as they attempt to avoid the temptations of goblin fruits. The goblin men seduce the curious Laura, but the moral Lizzie resists the alluring songs. Laura succumbs, but Lizzie is willing to sacrifice her own innocence to save her sister. Lizzie's sacrifice cleans Laura of her sins, and both women marry to fulfil their maternal mission. For further narrative images of the Fallen Woman, see the paintings "The Awakening Conscience" (1851-53) by William Holman Hunt and "Past and Present" (1858) by Augustus Egg.

<sup>21</sup> Lyndall of Olive Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm* is a wonderful example of the New Woman. She is educated and independent, and she has no desire to bear children. She dies after childbirth because she, like Catherine Earnshaw, is not meant to live as an Angel in the House. Lyndall is a writer and a thinker above all else.

archetype that cannot refer to female characters from the middle of the century. We now have three archetypes of women in Victorian literature, but what of those women who seem to slip between types? The masculinized third archetype does not eliminate the categorical problems of the original binary because it reinforces the ideology that women are either good or evil. Lilith, that other Original Mother, is a figure of amorality, fluidity, anti-maternity, and agency. Through Lilith, we better understand characters who do not fit the Angel in the House, Fallen Woman, and New Woman trichotomy.<sup>22</sup>

The figure of Lilith helps us understand sexual women who do not adhere to female stereotypes like Catherine Earnshaw of *Wuthering Heights* and Lucy Westenra of *Dracula*. Catherine is certainly no Angel in the House, and she predates the New Woman by several decades. Gilbert and Gubar would have us understand Catherine as an Eve-like figure, but she is not a Fallen Woman. The Devil seduces Eve and convinces her to eat the forbidden fruit, but Heathcliff does not seduce Catherine. Only Heathcliff can satiate Catherine's own passions, which is why she proclaims, "Ellen, shut the window. I'm starving" after Heathcliff leaves *Wuthering Heights* (68). She shivers in the cold winds without the added warmth of Heathcliff's soul. She is empty. Her body and soul yearn for their other half, and so Catherine feels hungry.<sup>23</sup> Lucy, too, confuses the trichotomous stereotypes. Her physical transformation embodies her fall from purity to sin: "the sweetness was turned to adamant, heartless cruelty, and the purity to voluptuous wantonness" (Stoker 187). Her hair that shines in sunny ripples turns dark. We have already closely read Lucy's letters to Mina, so we know that she was never actually pure and

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<sup>22</sup> There were other categories for women such as the Odd or Eccentric Woman and the Governess. Those categories are not particularly relevant to the relationship between sexuality, morality, and maternity, but they do express the Victorian obsession with categorizing and explaining deviant femininity.

<sup>23</sup> Charlotte Brontë uses a similar metaphor for sexual longing in *Jane Eyre*. Jane experiences hunger and fever when Mr. Rochester leaves Thornfield Hall. Similarly, the vampire brides of *Dracula* feed on men as an expression of sexual desire. Female sexual desire presents as hunger and consumption.

sweet. Her desire verges on perversion when she writes to Mina that she desires a polyamorous marriage. The transformation from flirtatious woman to ravenous vampire just enhances Lucy's already existent sexual desire. To put it simply, Catherine and Lucy both want nonprocreative sex. Lilith may be the Mother of Demons, but she initially seeks male companionship to cure her loneliness. She goes to the Cherubim, Adam, and Samael to fill empty space. Catherine and Lucy desire sex without pregnancy; they are antimothers.

Lilith occurs in *Wuthering Heights* and *Dracula*, both motherless novels full of corrupt creation and matricide, and directly threatens Victorian morality with her anti-maternity; therefore, they are a part of the Maternal Gothic. The demonic fertility in *Dracula* eliminates the biological and social role of mothers.<sup>24</sup> Vampire procreation is the inverse of human procreation. Human birth creates the living; Vampire birth creates the un-Dead. Dracula turns only women into vampires, and in doing so he weakens human maternity. Stoker essentially kills the biological mother.<sup>25</sup> Dracula is as Van Helsing says, "the father or furtherer of a new order of beings" (263). He creates monstrosity. Lucy is the epitome of an anti-mother because she feasts on children, but none of Dracula's daughters are fertile in the human sense. It is unclear whether they are demonically fertile like Dracula because none of Dracula's daughters reproduce in the novel, but Lucy's reproductive potential is one of Van Helsing's greatest fears:

"Friend Arthur, if you had met that kiss which you know of before poor Lucy die...you would in time, when you had died, have become *nosferatu*...and would all time make more of those Un-Deads that so have fill us with horror...Those children whose blood she

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<sup>24</sup> Sarah Stickney Ellis writes in *The Women of England* that women "establish in his [man's] character that higher tone of feeling, without which he can enjoy nothing beyond a kind of animal existence" (Ellis 50). Women must instill moral values in their sons to ensure that England remains a moral and civil nation.

<sup>25</sup> Mary Shelley also kills the biological mother in *Frankenstein*. After Victor Frankenstein creates his monster, the women in his life all start to die. Shelley lessens the potential for maternity as punishment for Frankenstein's corrupt reproduction.

suck are not as yet so much the worse; but if she live on, Un-Dead, more and more they lose their blood, and by her power over them they come to her; and so she draw their blood with that so wicked mouth. (191).

If Lucy were to create a horde of vampire children, she would prove to be more a figure of Lilith than Dracula. Stoker, however, kills even the potential for monstrous maternity when he kills Lucy. Until the final pages of the novel, Dracula is the only character who can reproduce. Mina who ingested vampire blood cannot fulfill her maternal mission until after Dracula the anti-mother dies. Van Helsing's fears are correct; human maternity is under constant threat while the anti-mother roams the earth.

Let us now explore the matricidal patterns in *Wuthering Heights*; a novel in which pregnancies end in death, and children grow up without moral guidance. Emily Brontë lost her own mother as a child, so it is unsurprising that her only novel explores maternal loss.<sup>26</sup> Mrs. Earnshaw dies less than two years after Heathcliff, that "imp of Satan" (32), enters *Wuthering Heights*. Hindley's wife dies after giving birth to Hareton. Catherine dies giving birth to Young Catherine.<sup>27</sup> Isabella dies before Linton reaches adolescence. Nelly our narrator never mentions her mother. *Wuthering Heights* is a story about children who grow up without maternal guidance. Since the Victorian woman's maternal mission meant raising moral British citizens, motherless children grow up without morals. Heathcliff and Hareton grow up without maternal guidance and become animalistic men: Heathcliff gnashes and foams "like a mad dog" during his brief reunion with the pregnant Catherine (Brontë 125), and Hareton too is just "like a dog" (235). The Two

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<sup>26</sup> Maria Branwell Brontë died in 1821, leaving her six children without a mother. Maria and Elizabeth Brontë, the eldest Brontë children, died in 1825.

<sup>27</sup> Lilith's mythological predecessor Lamashtu was considered a harbinger of miscarriage and maternal mortality. Catherine and Hindley's wife both die from labor complications. Isabel survives pregnancy, but she does not survive motherhood. Is Lamashtu roaming the moors alongside Lilith?

Catherines, who grow up without mothers, are also not completely human. Lockwood calls the original Catherine who appears to him in a dream a “minx” and a “changeling” (22), and Brontë often calls Young Catherine a “witch” (217).<sup>28</sup> The motherless children have nowhere to run except for the hellish moors; they become unholy, unhuman creatures.

Brontë concludes her Maternal Gothic narrative when she lifts the threat to maternity and fulfils the destined union between Lilith and Samael. Catherine dies in childbirth, but her daughter doesn't grow up completely motherless. Nelly briefly cares for Hareton when he is young, but Hindley and Heathcliff prevent her from raising him. With the moral guidance of Nelly, Young Catherine avoids becoming an anti-mother like the original Catherine. Nelly berates Young Catherine when she is rude to Hareton, which is often, and accuses her of “bad breeding” (190). That bad breeding is the ferocious soul of Catherine Earnshaw burning behind the eyes of Young Catherine and causing her to experience incestuous desire. Brontë perpetually reminds us that Young Catherine only desires her relations. She marries Linton, first cousin on her paternal side, then Hareton, first cousin on her maternal side. Cousin marriages were still legal and acceptable in the nineteenth century, but Young Catherine's singular attraction to blood relations is disturbing.<sup>29</sup> The love Young Catherine holds for Linton is little more than that of a sibling, which she herself admits.<sup>30</sup> Linton does not survive his marriage to Young Catherine because he is too weak for her spirit, and Nelly helps Young Catherine mend her bond with Hareton. Young Catherine and Hareton burn with the same hellfire as the original Catherine, but

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<sup>28</sup> Joseph, Lockwood, Heathcliff, and others call Young Catherine a witch several times throughout the story. Joseph first accuses her of witchcraft in the first chapter, and she plays along pretending to practice necromancy. We often think of witches as married to the Devil, which further supports a reading of Lilith in *Wuthering Heights*.

<sup>29</sup> Lockwood, Brontë's narrator, is not a Linton or an Earnshaw. He is not of the moors. Thus, Young Catherine does not pursue him.

<sup>30</sup> “Pretty Linton! I wish you were my brother” (181). In contrast, Young Catherine says this to Hareton, “Come, you shall take notice of me, Hareton—you are my cousin, and you shall own me” (237). Both statements are incestuous, but the latter shows the blood-bond between Hareton and Young Catherine.

Nelly's moral influence keeps them good—Hareton even cries over the corpse of Heathcliff despite years of cruelty and diminishment. While the fiery spirit of Catherine never disappears—Young Catherine and Hareton do seem to have sadomasochistic tendencies—they end the cycle of matricide. The motherless Young Catherine spends the rest of her life with a man who shares not only the soul, but the blood of her mother.

Stoker ends his Maternal Gothic by killing Lilith and restoring maternity to its natural order. God will kill Lilith and Samael in the end of days, so Stoker kills Dracula. After Jonathan Harker and Quincy Morris shear their knives through Dracula's throat and heart, the vampire's body turns to dust (325). Lilith came from the dust, and back to dust she returns. Van Helsing butchers the vampire daughters in their un-Dead slumber, and they, too, turn to dust (321). With one Lilith dead already, Lucy, the deaths of Dracula and his daughters concludes the threat of the anti-mother. The children of England are safe from the bloofer lady, and women of the world are safe from Dracula. Stoker then restores maternity to Mina, and "every trace of all that had been was blotted out" (326). Mina who once drank from the breast of a vampire now feeds her own child from her maternal, human breast.

*Wuthering Heights* and *Dracula* are seemingly unrelated texts but reading Lilith and the anti-mother places them both in what I call the Maternal Gothic. The Female Gothic was necessary for second-wave feminist literary critics to discuss how women authors express patriarchal anxieties, but this is a binary way of thinking that excludes the intersectionality modern feminist critics strive to achieve. In the Female Gothic framework, we cannot compare *Wuthering Heights* to *Dracula* because only Emily Brontë expresses a woman's "fear of ambiguity and patriarchal structures" (Fleenor 7). The Maternal Gothic as I define it has nothing to do with an identity. Brontë and Stoker are of different generations, genders, and nationalities,

but their novels express the same cultural anxiety surrounding maternity, morality, and sexual desire. Perhaps the life-like corpse of Heathcliff resurrects in the vampire Dracula; perhaps the flashing eyes of Catherine reignite in the blazing eyes of Lucy; or perhaps Lilith the Queen of Hell, the Mother of Demons, the Other Eve continues the spread of her maternal chaos.

### Afterword

I must admit that writing this capstone from home has been one of the hardest tasks of my twenty-two years. Home has been a place for break these past four years, and it has been difficult reorienting. There were three weeks when I could barely do any work because I couldn't stop thinking: *what does this matter during the apocalypse?* But we are not in the apocalypse. The world is still turning, and I am still graduating...somehow. It seems juvenile, but I keep thinking about the song "The Next Right Thing" from *Frozen II*: "With the dawn, what comes then? When it's clear that everything will never be the same again. Then I'll make that choice, and here that voice, and do the next right thing" (Anderson- Lopez). There have been days when all I can think about what I *should* be doing in my last semester at Skidmore: my last game night, my last chorus concert, my voice recital. My recital would have been the capstone of my music major; I practiced for months, crafted the perfect program, and bought a pretty dress. I am glad to sacrifice the highlights of my senior year to preserve public health, but my grief persists.

At some point I realized that immersing myself in this capstone distracted me from the constant feelings of loss and worry looping through my mind, and I threw myself into telling Lilith's story and defining the Maternal Gothic. I was not about to throw all the preparations for capstone to the wayside like my recital. This capstone means a lot to me because it is likely the last major literary analysis I will write for a long time, so I had to do it right. I can confidently say that this capstone shows how I've grown academically and intellectually in the four years since Mr. Stanton banned me from writing feminist criticism. I am eternally grateful to Dr. Black and Dr. Golden for their guidance these past few years. As I write these final sentences of my Skidmore career, I feel a bittersweet satisfaction. It feels wrong to not print and staple in Scribner Library one last time, but I am proud of my work. So, why did writing this capstone during what feels like the end of the world as I know it matter? It was the next *right* thing.

## Glossary

## Ashmodai:

The King of Demons and one of the seven princes of Hell. In the Babylonian Talmud, King Solomon rules over men and demons and orders Ashmodai before him. Ashmodai outwits the king and possesses him in his old age. He appears in popular culture such as the television shows *Supernatural* and *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina*, and Cassandra Clare's popular YA book series *The Mortal Instruments*.

*also known as Asmodeuus, Ashmedei.*

## Blind Dragon:

An evil cosmic entity from the Babylonian Talmud, perhaps a Leviathan. He is the steed of Lilith, "the mechanism by which evil is activated. In the end of days God will slay the Blind Dragon along with Lilith and Samael.

*Also known as Tanin'iver*

## Cherubim:

An attendant of god, often a small creature with a human head, wings, and a lion's body. The Zohar calls the Cherubim small faces because they have the visage of human children.

## Lamashtu:

An Akkadian demoness who kills children and drinks the blood of men. She causes miscarriage in women and nightmares in men. She is often portrayed as a hybrid of beasts such a lion, serpent, bird, donkey, dog, and pig.

Liludemon:

A Mesopotamian night demon. *Lilu*, or the feminine *lilitu*, refers to the vampire class of demon. Gilgamesh's father was a liludemon. Some scholars believe the name Lilith derives from *lilitu*, and that is why Lilith is a succubus.

Obyzouth:

A Mesopotamian demon responsible for miscarriages and infant mortality. She strangles newborns and steals children every night.

*Also known as Abyzou, Byzou*

Samael:

A prince of hell and king of demons. In the Zohar, Samael is Adam's evil pair. He tempts Eve in the Garden of Eden, appearing as a serpent. He is often considered synonymous with the Christian Satan and is occasionally referred to as a fallen angel.

Succubus:

A female demon that enters the dreams of sleeping men, arouses them, and causes nocturnal emissions. The emissions are used to breed new demons. The Four Queens of Hell are Succubae: Lilith, Maskith, Naamah, and Igrath.

Zemargad:

An unspecified location, though it is likely a desert. Lilith is the Queen of Sheba and Zemargad, so Zemargad likely just refers to a desert

## Appendix A: The Odd Marriage of Young Catherine and Hareton Earnshaw

Lilith is the ultimate figure of female dominance. She flees Eden because she refuses to lie beneath Adam, she seduces men in their slumber, and she rules Hell. Unlike Eve, whom God creates from Adam's rib, Lilith comes from the same dust as Adam. They are equals. Lilith submits to neither God nor Adam; therefore, she asserts herself as a woman with agency. Emily Brontë additionally reflects the defiant spirit of Lilith in *Wuthering Heights* by rewarding the assertive Young Catherine with a happy marriage.

The relationship between Young Catherine and Hareton is odd for the Victorian Age because Young Catherine seems to be the dominant partner. Throughout much of their acquaintance, Young Catherine laughs at Hareton's ignorance. Her mockery keeps Hareton at a distance, and he in turn becomes cross and rough. Thus, it is up to Young Catherine to "remedy the injury" (Brontë 236). After the death of Linton, her first husband—her Adam, Young Catherine persistently apologizes to Hareton and demands that he befriend her: "you are my cousin, and you shall own me" (237). This demand obviously displays the incestuous desires of Young Catherine, which we examined in Part Three, but it also creates a curious power dynamic between Young Catherine and Hareton. Young Catherine seemingly wants Hareton to possess her, but she uses assertive language. She does not say 'please,' or 'I beg of you.' She says, "you shall." Young Catherine does not simply ask Hareton to see her; she commands him to own her.

Young Catherine appears demure when she finally seduces Hareton, but it is just a mask. She uses the serpentine, seductive, silvery tongue of Lilith to ensnare him: "So, you won't be my friend?" she said, smiling as sweet as honey, and creeping close up" (238). Young Catherine, head bowed on the table, murmurs her petition for forgiveness and love, but several diction choices show us that this new mellifluousness is just an air. Before Young Catherine makes this

final appeal for friendship and forgiveness, she stops and gives Hareton a “gentle kiss” on the cheek (237). Nelly, who narrates this event, sees that Catherine calculates this switch: “the little rogue thought I had not seen her, and, drawing back, she took her former station by the window, quite demurely” (237). She is a rogue and therefore calculating. Though this slippery sweetness convinces Hareton of her affections, their later interactions show that it is Young Catherine’s assertiveness that continually arouses his affections.

What ensues between Young Catherine and Hareton resembles that of a teacher and pupil, albeit with the addition of romance. Brontë places Young Catherine in the role of teacher, thus making her the dominant partner. The clearest instance of Young Catherine as the teacher and dominant partner is when Lockwood sees her teaching Hareton to read:

His eyes kept impatiently wandering from the page to a small white hand over his shoulder, which recalled him by a smart slap on the cheek, whenever his owner detected such signs of inattention... the pupil claimed a reward, and received at least five kisses, which, however, he generously returned. (232)

Hareton displays obvious attraction, but he knows that any chance of a romantic encounter lies in those hands that slap his cheek when desire distracts him. Hareton may claim his reward, but it is Young Catherine who bestows those kisses. Perhaps Young Catherine’s initial command fails because Hareton knows he can never own her.

Rather than punish Young Catherine’s assertive personality, Brontë lets her triumph in the role of the dominant wife. She obtains a husband who accepts and admires her assertiveness. Young Catherine will never submit to her husband, so she is no Angel of the House. We do not know if Hareton and Young Catherine produce offspring, but we do know that any pregnancies will be on her terms. Young Catherine, like Lilith, controls her relationship and body.

## Appendix B: Victorian Images of Lilith



Figure 1. Rossetti, Dante. *Lady Lilith*. 1867. *Victorian Web*.

Rossetti's contrast of red in white in this painting shows that Lilith does not belong to any category. She is a seductress dressed like an angel. The combination of roses and poppy flowers signifies her identity as a succubus who seduces men in their sleep. Further, the foxglove on the table symbolizes insincerity, and the daisy chain on her lap represents cast off innocence.



Figure 2 Collier, John. Lilith. 1887. Victorian Web.

Collier, like Rossetti, portrays Lilith with Red hair. This image is reminiscent of the intertwined Lilith and Samael, especially given the fact that some myths portray Samael as the serpent who tempts Eve. As Samael and Lilith are the inverse of Adam and Eve, it appears as though Collier has placed them in a dismal Garden of Eden.



Figure 3 Gyles, Althea. *Lilith*. 1898, Victorian Web.

Gyles, like Collier, portrays Lilith next to some sort of serpent. She and her serpent, who may be Samael or the Devil, do seem to be in a demented garden of sorts. Unlike the previous figures, this Lilith does not have long and loose hair. She lies nude on the ground, but she does not seem to be in any seductive pose. Gyles presents an amoral depiction of Lilith which reflects the amorality of *fin de siècle* art.

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