The Fate of Love in the Fiction of Henry James: Variations on a Theme Proceeding from an Analysis of the Short Stories

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SUMMARY

The thesis is a study of a central theme in the fiction of Henry James: the theme of the fate of love. It analyses the fate of the hero, doomed to a frustrated experience of love, as a central situation upon which others are treated as variants, in particular the position of woman. The analysis of character typology in relation to the theme reveals that the determinants of the love-fate are primarily psychological, but are extended in their terms of reference to include circumstances in the world.

The introduction sets forth the plight of the hero and indicates the main conclusions of the study.

The first chapter on the short stories traces the development of the fate of love as it is experienced by the hero in his progress through life from youth to age. The stories are selected for their exemplification of critical points in the structure of developing lives and do not follow the chronological order of their composition. The second chapter analyses the life situation of the female by contrast with the hero, but with particular reference to that point in her life when she emerges as a personality. The third chapter follows a chronological order of composition. It is concerned with the interweaving of the lives of men and women, from the standpoint of the problematical nature of consciousness for the male in his attempt to comprehend the meaning of his life in relation to women, love and marriage.

The analysis of the novels is concerned with tracing the theme in terms of the psychological components and character types that have been illustrated in the short stories. The novels analysed indicate a progression of the theme. The novels of James's early and middle periods are taken in two discrete chapters for the male and the female, which order (with one exception - The Princess Casamassima) follows the chronological. While the novels are selected mainly for the clarity of their exposition of the theme,

they also indicate a progression in James's approach to his technique of representing his fiction through a character's subjective account of experience; for it is largely in his earlier fiction that he develops the hero as a centre of consciousness (though not a true one), and it is in his middle phase that he developes the heroine as a centre of consciousness. The analysis culminates with a chapter on the great novels of James's last phase.

The study concludes with a discussion of a section of the autobiography that epitomises the theme, showing that to the end of his life James was concerned with the fate of love, and that his imagination employed the categories suggested by the analysis of his fiction in order to render a coherent vision of his earliest recollections.

Statement

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University, and (to the best of my knowledge and belief) no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text or notes.

Acknowledgement

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Professor Charles Feidelson of Yale University whose careful consideration and support has been invaluable throughout the preparation of this thesis.

1. INTRODUCTION: THE BARMECIDE BANQUET OF LIFE

The relation of James's subjective vision to the truths of the external world is complex. At different times he thinks of his themes, the figures that signify to his imagination, as products of "the independent life of the imagination,"* facts floated into his mind "by the current of life,"(AN,43) and fabrications arising out of "the deep well of unconscious cerebration."(AN,23) He conceives of the materials of life as being like the rare pieces left in deposit by "the female amateur," life. The "wary dealer in precious odds and ends," the artist, detains, preserves, protects, enjoys, and retains them in "the dusky, crowded, heterogenous back-shop" of his mind until they arrive at usefulness.(AN,47) In any individual case, whatever may be regarded as external reality is given a particular reality by the artist's special vision of it; James acknowledges "without regret" that "from the very first" he has envisaged his "workable world all and only as an unnatural mixture"(AN,201) of his own. He observes that

> the great truth in the whole connexion {is} that one never really chooses one's general range of vision - the experience from which ideas and themes and suggestions spring: this proves ever what it has had to be, this is one with the very turn one's life has taken; so that whatever it 'gives,' whatever it makes us feel and think of, we regard very much as inevitable. The subject thus pressed upon the artist is the necessity of his case and the fruit of his consciousness; which truth makes and has ever made of any quarrel with his subject, any stupid attempt to go behind that, the true stultification of criticism .... The thing of profit is to have your experience - to recognise and understand it, and for this almost any will do; there being surely no absolute ideal about it beyond getting from it all it has to give. The artist - for it is of this strange brood we speak - has but to have his honest sense of life to find it fed at every pore even as the birds of the air are fed; with more and more to give, in turn, as a consequence, and, quite by the same law that governs

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* The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces by Henry James, ed. by Richard P. Blackmur, Scriber's, New York, 1934, p.152.

> the responsive affection of a kindly-used animal,
> in proportion as more and more is confidently asked.(AN,201)

What this study proposes is not to trace how James arrived at his sense of "the given case"(AN,41) but to set out the primary elements in the design of his chosen subject: his treatment of the theme of the fate of love and his analysis of character in relation to the situations in which this fate is incurred.

James is primarily concerned with the situation and character of the hero, and with one type of hero, "the fictive hero" who "appeals to us only as an eminent instance, as eminent as we like, of our own conscious kind,"(AN,12) "the poor sensitive gentleman."(AN,246) This hero confronts a basic situation that concerns his frustrated experience of love, whereby he is doomed to lose out on life. The hero discovers that life is for him a Barmecide banquet: the wine and the fruits seem abundantly spread forth, but only for others to enjoy. He is doomed for some perverse and obscure reason to be denied the feast, even as he seems to hold the comestibles and the cup within his grasp. At the last they are dashed from his lips. It is a situation the hero can neither wholly encompass nor resolve, to which he seems to fall the arbitrary victim. For him there is no escape. He is forever separated from the objects of his desire. It is from the direct relation to life, the love relation with a woman, that the hero is debarred, and for which the wine and fruits are symbols. Woman stands in a direct relation to life. The hero, who stands in an indirect relationship to life, can only annex it through his relationship with a woman. Moreover, the ideal of woman is conflated with other ideals - social, philosophical, and religious, as well as psychological - so that she becomes the symbol of all the goals with which the hero seeks to unite himself, though it is his frustrated relationship to her which balks him of his rightful inheritance to them. He is described as the dispossessed prince and wandering heir of life in quest of his inheritance, whose injuries in

love prevent him from living. His central experience of life hinges upon his inability to arrive at a satisfactory love relation. This failure determines his identity and affects every other aspect of his life.

The hero bears the burden of this doom. He believes he cannot escape his fate and must inevitably take the whole assault of life full in the face and courageously adopt a military stance. He experiences life primarily as a victim, born to a set of circumstances beyond his control which determine his future. He feels himself to be in some essential way a failure, for he is unable to establish the conditions necessary to his life. He experiences this failure as a palpable condition of every day living, and is so crippled emotionally by it that, given the laws of the mind, which dictate the return of the unresolved repression, his experience inevitably repeats itself. The hero becomes to some extent a born loser, who can never transform the circumstances of his life or become master of himself, his environment, or his fate.

The only manner in which the hero can "win" is intimately associated with some form of loss. James puts this most succintly in relation to the ending of The American, when he says that

> the interest of the subject was, for me, (without my being at all pessimistic) its exemplification of one of those insuperable difficulties which present themselves in people's lives and from which the only issue is by forfeiture - by losing something.*

With respect to the frustrated conclusion of the hero's love affair, James also says in this same letter to W.D. Howells, "I suspect it is the tragedies in life that arrest my attention more than the other things and say more to my imagination."(44) James felt that the theme of The American arose from "the deep well of unconscious cerebration,"(AN,23) and in rethinking its significance in the preface he most clearly defines his notion of heroism

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* Henry James: The Critical Heritage, ed. Roger Gard, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1968, pp. 43-44.

as laid down there. It is Newman's predicament to be cruelly and unjustly injured in love. His heroism lies in his acceptance of this fate: in "how he would right himself, or how, failing a remedy, he would conduct himself under his wrong."(AN,22) This includes his relinquishment of the possibility of a vindictive revenge he might have triumphantly enjoyed, for which there is no explanation but "the moral convenience, indeed the moral necessity, of his practical, but quite unappreciated magnanimity."(AN,22)

While James postulates a hero who wins by forfeiture, there is an inevitable tension between what the hero loses and what he gains, for his losses are heavy and relate to his life while his gains are those of a moral stance which belongs to the way in which he thinks about himself. This involves an opposition between material and spiritual worlds, for the hero loses material advantages to win his own soul, but there is often an unequal balance between these two aspects of his situation. The hero sometimes loses so heavily that he must die, and his moral stance appears something of a fiction to cover defects of his own nature that have concurred with his fate. Moreover, the early heroes are relatively unconscious and are precluded from understanding the meaning of their fate, blocking themselves off from a possibility of arriving at consciousness because of the depth of their ambivalence to love. Their fate seems to happen to them as an arbitrary fact, some fraud or trick which life and woman have played upon them.

The fundamental mode in which the hero's fate is understood is psychological. There is an infinitely complex number of factors that relate his fate to his nature and to his external determinants. The character of these is partly illuminated by the two fundamental circumstances in which the hero falls in love fatefully.

In the first the hero falls in love with a woman who is unattainable, for, usually unbeknown to him, she has already given her heart to a rival who therefore proves invincible. She is won by a man who is his

opposite in type and has no fear of love. The rival proves victorious and the hero becomes an eternal loser. There is a quantum in the notion of love and energy, for there is never enough love to be shared. Someone is always in competition for it, and not everyone can win. There must always be a winner and a loser. Moreover, the hero falls in love once only and forever. There can never be any substitute for the woman he has lost. He therefore invests her with an extraordinary power over him, for she may endow him with life or destroy his life potentialities. Love is always equated with power, but it never has the quality of power for the hero. Love has in it implicitly a hostile power for him.

The second way in which the hero's love is frustrated results from his experience of woman as possessed of a dual nature, as the creature who may give him life or divest him of it. In this situation he falls in love with two women of opposite temperaments, divine or diabolic, who attract and repel him in different ways, so that his consequent conflict results in a stalemate of choice which prevents him from arriving at a resolution. Either way the hero is drawn to a love which endangers him. He has an explicit fear of the sexually aggressive woman who most attracts him but who most obviously threatens him. But even the woman who promises a benign love and in this way reduces his fears, though he is less attracted to her, has the capacity to reduce and engulf him upon another plane.

Both these situations reveal the herc's ambivalence to love and demonstrate how he is drawn toward a love from which at the same time he withdraws.

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The hero James posulates is doomed by the nature of woman. It is inevitable that this situation refers back in some way to the male child's earliest experience of life and love: to what would appear to be an essentially oedipal relation. The male child is characteristically revealed to be the overpossessed son of a close-binding intimate mother to whom he

remains bound and against whose seductive power his father represents an inadequate version of male strength. Though the father is unable to help the child and is inferior to his wife in power, he is experienced from the point of view of the child as being an invincible rival for his mother's affection. For he has superior rights by virtue of his position. The male child is born the victim of this domestic situation in which he is naturally helpless, inevitably unable to attain his desires, and incapable of resolving his emotional conflict in relation to love laid down by his early injury. While it may be said that the parents are not the cause of everything, they determine the structure of the hero's neurotic behaviour, and the ways in which the life experience of this postulated hero is related to persons, notably parents, with whom he has a love relation is clear and repetitive.

The crucial issue for the hero is his equation of love with power. He is characterised psychologically by a crippling ambivalence toward winning his woman because for him love has implicitly a hostile power which threatens to engulf, deplete, or subject him, while at the same time it never has for him the character of power with which he imaginatively invests the female. There is a cluster of psychological components which follow from this. Love cannot be conceived of as an equal relation, but always threatens possession to the degree of ensuring a loss of self, identity, autonomy and independence. Sensitivity to domination together with a failure to arrive at an ability to create his own conditions of life, or to define the terms of a relationship, result in an inability to express aggressive behaviour and a susceptibility toward masochism. The power of love is intimately connected with the will and the psychic drive toward life, which is often amoral in its expression. The hero suffers from the power of others to assert this force and cannot bring himself to assert such a force over another even if he possessed it. The will and psychic energy are always unequally opposed. This is the crucial issue in marriage, for while love promises the completion

of personality, the fulfilment of desire and the liberation of spirit from determining circumstances, it at the same time threatens the subjection of the hero to a superior will in which he will find himself imprisoned and destroyed. Passion is essentially egotistic.

While the hero may feel superior to such persons because he has not asserted his will to the destruction of another, he nevertheless feels inferior because of his failure to create the grounds of a tenable existence. He is characterised by his feelings of superiority and inferiority, which also in some way relate to his far past. For he was once loved and made to feel at the centre of the world, and then cast out of paradise. His failure to renew his connection with love and life means that he fails to establish an independent sense of personal worth: in fact he has proved himself incapable of doing anything. For this cluster of characteristics, which produce in the hero a crippling emotional conflict, spills over into other relations and situations in life and inhibits his normal progress through the various stages of life. Because of this conflict, which arises out of a situation in the far past before he could be aware of it, the hero is further characterised by a psychological flaw or personal stigma, which relates to his early injuries in love. He is unable to confront life directly, and becomes a man divided within himself, separated from others, cut off from the world, and unable to achieve his goals, occupational, social or spiritual. Consequently his world becomes a "world of cleft components"* against which the hero pits his passion for order in an attempt to bring all the elements in his picture into harmony, unity and balance. The union of the separate becomes the goal of all romantic questers.

The image of woman is largely the construct of this kind of hero, and would appear to be derived from his original experience of a mother

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* Notes of a Son and Brother. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1914, p. 178.

figure who had for him a dual nature. She appears under many guises as having for him either a divine or a diabolic nature - as the dove and the eagle, the little sister of Charity or the Venus Victrix, the nurse or the mistress, the source of life or the bearer of death. Either way she is felt to be the author of his woe and to hold the key to his identity. In her most sexually potent form she is most obviously predatory, but in her benign form, although less compelling, she may by indirect and more subtle means subdue him. His image of her is hard to keep in place. Her characteristics shift are deeply ambiguous, and the ambiguity often takes on a double perspective within each type. Negative and positive aspects adhere to both types. However, either way, the hero projects his own lack of power as power in her, and he invests her with a sheer power of personality based upon her psychic energy, which is of sufficient force to terrify the world into a submission to her wishes. She is invested with the primitive world of psychic energies which exists beneath the social realm, in which it is the law of the jungle to eat or be eaten. There is in the Jamesian hero a specific dread of sexuality itself, which is equated with this kind of power to consume, a terror from which woman is exempt, having in general no ambivalence toward love and marriage herself. She is always invested with the power of the life force, which in itself contains the seeds of destruction and creation. In contemplating the "unutterable" and "abysmal" ambiguous force of life, on a visit to his sister's grave, James writes:

> Why does my pen not drop from my hand on approaching the infinite pity and tragedy of all the past? It does, poor helpless pen, with what it meets of the ineffable, what it meets of the cold-Medusa face of life, of all the life lived, on every side. Basta, basta! .....*

James frequently invests woman with the Medusa quality for his putative hero,

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* The Notebooks of Henry James, ed. F.O. Matthiessen & Kenneth B. Murdock, O.U.P., New York, 1961, p. 321.

but she remains the life which he can only annex through his relation to her.

One of the great problems for the hero is the capacity to perceive woman as she is, and himself in relation to her. The capacity for bewilderment creates a particular problem for the hero.

> It seems probable that if we were never bewildered there would never be a story to tell about us; we should partake of the superior nature of the all-knowing immortals whose annals are dreadfully dull so long as flurried humans are not, for the positive relief of bored Olympians, mixed up with them. (AN,63-64)

Although this is an obvious fact of life, and a principle whereby James creates tension in his portrayal of man's subjective adventure, consciousness is problematical for the hero more particularly because of his relation to woman. His ambivalence leads him to project upon women qualities she may not possess, and his fear provides a barrier which blocks him off from the consciousness which alone would lead to a possible resolution of his love fate. On the one hand he seeks knowledge, and on the other he prevents himself from attaining it. The problem of knowledge is intimately connected with the love fate, for potentially if the hero could fully understand his situation he might have the capacity to overcome it. Yet it is a retrospective illusion, where he does arrive at some knowledge, to suppose that things could have been otherwise, for at the time when he experienced his critical love issue his perception of things could not have been different. His knowledge is therefore often of an excoriating kind which comes too late for him to alter his fate, though his situation is rendered pathetic by the illusion that it might all have been different had he comprehended it better. His conflict is such that to the end of his life consciousness remains problematical.

At first, given the propensity to believe that life can only be defined in terms of love, James considers life and consciousness as opposites.

> I was under the impression - this in fact the very liveliest of what might have been called the lot - that life and knowledge were simply mutual opposites, one inconsistent with the other; though hovered about, together, at the same time, by the anomaly that when knowledge impinged upon life, pushed against her, as it were, and drove her to the wall, it was all right, and such was knowledge's way and title; whereas when life played the like tricks with knowledge nothing but shame for the ruder, even if lighter, party could accrue. There was to come to me of course in time the due perception that neither was of the least use - use to myself - without the other; but meanwhile, and even for much after, the extreme embarrassment continued: to whichever of the opposites one gave one's self it was with a sense of all but basely sacrificing the other. However, the conflict and the drama involved in the question at large was doubtless what was to make consciousness - under whichever of the two names one preferred to entertain it - supremely intense and interesting. (NSB, 26-27)

James is of course committed to a view of life in terms of dualities, dualities which can only be bridged by the encompassing power of consciousness. With the growing capacity for consciousness, it is possible to see that life can be taken in two ways, directly and indirectly.

> I really believe I was already aware - that one way of taking life was to go in for everything and everyone, which kept one abundantly occupied, quite as occupied, just with the sense and the image of it all, and on only a fifth of the actual immersion: a circumstance extremely strange. Life was taken almost equally both ways - that, I mean, seemed the strangeness; mere brute quantity and number being so much less in the one case than the other. These latter were what I should have _liked_ to go in for, had I but had the intrinsic faculties.*

James comes more and more to define life in terms of the imaginative apprehension of life.

Experience becomes "our apprehension and our measure of what happens to us as social creatures,"(AN,64-65) but it is only in his artist hero that this capacity for conscious life can be developed. The artist hero is indeed a "poor sensitive gentleman,"(AN,246) but with a way out of his dilemma as a fated lover. Yet he cannot be represented in his triumph, that is, in "the

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* _A Small Boy and Others_, Charles Scriber's Sons, New York, 1913, p. 290.

triumph of what he produces."(AN,96) For

> the privilege of the hero - that is of the martyr or of the interesting and appealing and comparatively floundering person - places him in quite a different category, belongs to him only as the artist deluded, diverted, frustrated or vanquished; when the 'amateur' in him gains, for our admiration or compassion or whatever, all the expert has to do without. (AN,96-97)

James's heroes, with the exception of Strether in The Ambassadors, who is "a comparative case"(AN,310) of "the man of imagination,"(AN,310) do not arrive at an all-embracing consciousness, though his artist figures may find in the development of their creative faculty a way of combatting their sense of less consequent upon their love fate.

James invests his characters with the elements of a life puzzle which, when seen in their entirety, are capable of being rendered meaningful. So far as the heroes of the short stories are concerned, however, their comprehension lies in little more than their awareness of their injury. For

> when you have been wronged you can be righted, when you have suffered you can be soothed; if you have that amount of grasp of the 'scene,' however humble, the drama of your life to some extent enacts itself, with the logical consequence of your being proportionately its hero and having to be taken for such. (SBO,136)

Because the heroes of the short stories are involved in living out a fate which they are largely incapable of reflecting upon, James, where he does not narrate the story himself, employs the agency of some "unnamed, unintroduced and (save by right of intrinsic wit) unwarranted participant, the impersonal author's concrete deputy or delegate, a convenient substitute or apologist for the creative power otherwise so veiled and disembodied."(AN,327) These narrators are keen observers of the love fate who watch its operation from a distance, protected themselves from immersion in it. They always have a special understanding of it based on their spiritual kinship with the hero.

In the male-centred novels the hero is still immersed in living out the love fate, and the split between participation in it and observation of it is generally maintained by the division of qualities between two males who are

opposites or spiritual brothers, each representing aspects of the composite hero. The psychological components of this fate are represented through displaced elements of the original domestic situation. The hero feels defrauded of his inheritance by the superior power of a mother figure against whose force all other male figures are likewise helpless. The figure of the rival becomes more perfunctory. The conflict in relation to love which originally split the hero in two is now represented in terms of two separate characters who together reveal its tensions. They pursue contrasting types of women whom they love in different ways. One may pursue a virtuous and noble affection while his counterpart may experience erotic passion, the former pursuing an idealized woman and the latter a woman of daemonic character. Both are doomed, though by distinguishing the hero from his counterpart James may purge him of his appearance of a psychological flaw. The main effect of these divisions of qualities, however, is to reveal the failure of the hero to arrive at a consciousness of his situation, for he is precluded from knowledge by the nature of the division. There is a characteristic split between the moral man of imagination, who represents the super-ego, and the libidinous man of passion, who represents the id, but a central ego is lacking. There is no cohesion of personality which can lead the hero to consciousness, and these male figures exist as free-floating aspects of a self in division, incapable of arriving at a love union.

The sense of division, originally experienced as an internal condition, is emphasised by the division between the worlds of America and Europe. The disinherited American and wandering heir of life is split between opposing cultures each of which makes it impossible for him to assume his inheritance in the other. James uses the defined forms of traditional European life to expose the elements in the love fate of his American hero, but his analysis of the hero's situation is now carried out into a "world of cleft components,"(NSB,178) thereby reducing the emphasis on the hero's psychological flaw as contributory to his fate. For it is the condition of

life in the world that man cannot fulfil his desire or bridge the gap between elements which refuse to be harmoniously conjoined. Nevertheless there is some move toward recognising that the hero can live upon another plane of experience than that of love, if he is to survive. It is only Hyacinth Robinson in The Princess Casamassima whose fate leads him to death, and he is totally crippled by his internal conflicts. For the hero of these novels there is no winning except by forfeiture, but his nobility is tested in the manner in which he accepts his fate, whereby he may become fully heroic. It is not so much the fact of mere endurance as the development of some power of transcendence.

The condition of the hero remains essentially the same and he maintains his identity as an injured lover who must heroically accept a perverse fate in love. The condition of women is capable of variation. In the short stories women are seen through the eyes of a male observer and are projections of the way in which the male sees them, whether they are sexually aggressive or sacrificial in type. The primary effect of this treatment is to endow the sexually aggressive female with inordinate power, to make her the true female, and to make her opposite type a version of the effete male. The true female is not ambivalent to love and has power over her circumstances. She is not generally concerned with a moral stance. Furthermore she generally uses the moral as a disguise for the exercise of her amoral psychic energy, which drives her toward the attainment of her desires irrespective of the cost to anyone else. She stands in a direct relation to life and is largely self-determining. Her only weakness is that she seeks out the effete male in order to assert her power over him and is therefore unlikely to meet her match and make a satisfactory marriage. The problem here for the male is that she spies out his weakness, giving him a greater sense of his own incapacity. However, she is not condemned to one identity alone, but may have many identities, and her capacity for life is large. As she is not split off from her own psychological nature

she has a potentiality for consciousness, though women in the short stories are seen through male eyes rather than represented in their own capacity for consciousness. Women are capable of loving passionately, and part of the problem is that they wish to be so much for their men that they deprive them of the possibility of independent existence. Yet it is possible that from the beginning they never intended their men any harm, that their propensity to injure them lay largely in the male imagination.

The power of the aggressive female is so strong that in devising the qualities of a contrasting type of woman James can only posit a character who is capable of sacrificing her will. The sacrificial woman shares the weakness of the male and is generally an asexual creature who is a reflection of the personality of the male and shares his fate. Strictly speaking, she is too much like the male to be the principle against which his identity is defined.

It is only in the later stories that James projects a kind of heroine who can save the hero from his life-long problem. He develops the redeemer figure, the woman who has always loved her man, though she has been injured by him, and who knows what he wants her to be for him. As the male incapable of love becomes a more monstrous figure in the later stories, the female becomes more divine in her capacity to save him from total defeat. There is a fabulous quality about these stories, which promise treasure in handfuls and that fulfilment of life's inheritance which the hero has so long been denied. Though this new female figure serves to resolve the life-long problems of the hero, where such redemption occurs, he has to go back to the point at which he died to life to renew his connections with life. He must find the woman out of his past to redeem him. He is, however, notably passive to her redemption, for he is too injured to help himself. She must intervene to save him. Aware of his past, she is capable of becoming the consciousness of his situation, thereby to a large extent saving him from an excoriating knowledge about himself and of his responsi-

bility for his tragic fate (though there always remains a tension between the sense in which the fate has been externally imposed and the extent to which the individual personality has concurred with those determinants).

While it is implied in James's projection of the female both in the short stories and the male-centred novels that her personality is constructed on quite different principles from that of the male, and she is largely freed from the defects he suffers, James does not take a positive advantage of this fact until he comes to make the female the centre of consciousness of his novels.

In the female-centred novels the element of distorted projection is neutralized by the heroine's capacity for consciousness. James now sees her more specifically as the counterpart of the male: a woman who suffers a similar fate in love. The reason for his development of the heroine, for which he is justly famous, may lie in her capacity for consciousness. For she has an integrated ego and stands in a realistic relation to life and the world. Her flaw lies in her innocence of the world, and her tragedy is impelled by her confrontation with the elements of evil inherent in it, by which she is at once shocked into consciousness and impelled into life. In particular, she is threatened by the fact that she represents the life force, which others want, so that they desire to appropriate life through her to the inevitable depletion of her energies. While love is still the critical issue upon which her fate hangs, her determinants lie largely in the world rather than in her own nature. The dilemma of power for her is largely that others wish to manipulate her to their own purposes, and her will runs counter to the intentions of others. She acquires her sense of identity and integrity largely by her refusal to be manipulated. Her strength lies in her capacity to love and suffer, through which she grows, changes, develops, and gains strength and a capacity for survival.

Her heroism, like the hero's, lies in her acceptance of her fate, but her acceptance involves the capacity to endure and to continue to live

in the face of it, understanding fully what this means. For her too there is no escape, and it is only the anti-heroic woman who attempts to find one. Since she has a strong constitution and is unlikely to die, her confrontation of her fate requires considerable powers of endurance. Because her goal is love and marriage, she may be cheated out of life by failing to find an adequate match, and she is generally let down by a lover who fails her, whether a marriage takes place or not. So for her also it may be a question of not living fully in the primary sense. However, though her imagination, as in the case of the hero, is the source both of her heroism and her defeat, her capacity for life and consciousness enables her further to bridge the gap between them. In this she emulates the figure of the artist, though this role is denied her.

Unlike the hero, whose goal is to become noble in order to encompass his tragic loss, the heroine's goal is to become fully human and to act, as far as possible, in an exemplary way in life. This puts her consciousness at the service of her charity. Also the suffering whereby she has earned her consciousness has given her an imaginative insight into the lives of others. Her desire for passion having been thwarted, her circumstances impel her to develop her pity for the human condition. Though the two types of women recur, the heroine is now seen from her own point of view. The image of woman remains bifurcated only in the contrast between the heroine and an older mother figure, who exemplifies the menace of the psychic drive. In herself, she is integrated and is not seen in a dual focus. At the same time, her own capacity for love includes potentially the erotic as well as the charitable emotions, and the heroine is further characterised by her capacity for maternal affection. There is no heroine who is not moved by the helplessness of the plastic male, who does not want to love and succour him and do everything for him. Her defect lies in loving too much rather than too little, though her fate is impelled more by external circumstances than by her own nature.

In the major novels there is a greater equality between the experience of men and women. James no longer projects the kind of woman who would redeem his hero. Moreover, there is a greater ambiguity about everyone's capacity for good and evil. His heroines no longer manifest either one or the other. It is Milly Theale alone, in The Wings of the Dove, who totally exemplifies the love fate and is envisaged as a woman too good for the world. While it has been characteristic of the fiction up to the female-centred novels to regard woman as an adjunct of the male personality, in the late novels it is the fate of Charlotte Stant alone, in The Golden Bowl, to be so regarded. Except in The Ambassadors, women are not seen from a male perspective, but are heroines in their own right, with their own point of view. James can even envisage in his ultimate heroine, Maggie Verver, the necessity of developing a will in order to live, provided that this is contained within the traditional orders of society. It is necessary to be self-determining to be released from the status of a victim.

In these novels James develops in an even more terrifying form the power of the mother figure of amoral psychic energy. She is invested with a limitless power which belongs not simply to her own personality, for she is invested with worldly advantages which augment her natural power to make her ability to attain her wishes know no barriers. Maud Lowder, in The Wings of the Dove, is the ultimate example of the self-seeking woman who achieves what she wants, but she extracts a terrible sacrifice from others. For others the world remains a place in which desires cannot be attained and the elements are fatally disjunct.

From the beginning James ascribed the split in the psychological nature of his hero, relating to his injuries in love, largely to over-possession and the inequality of power. He continued to reveal the division to which the hero was subject as typical of a "world of cleft components"(NSB,178 in which the union of the separate was an admirable but doomed goal. Now he returns to a more frightening analysis of the flaw in the heart of man,

whereby the world itself is split, for it is the psychic drive to power which lies behind everything and makes one will inimical to another. In The Golden Bowl, the latent flaw in the crystal, which cannot be seen but which will split open upon the application of pressure, is a symbol of the neurotic constitution of human nature. This is the way the world works and there is no way to obviate it unless it were possible to alter the structure of the personality. James's analysis of this world of split components becomes infinitely more frightening than his earlier analysis of the hero's plight. Behind it sits the woman who exemplifies the life force, invested with the power of the Fates, weaving her spells to the detriment of mankind. Yet his analysis of this social world remains realistic for all its fantastic qualities.

James remains to the end concerned with the disinherited heirs of life and more especially the disinherited prince, defrauded of his natural rights by the superior power of women. However, his heroes are no longer split by their own innate ambivalence. They are forced into untenable situations analogous to it by the operation of the wills of others upon them. His heroes are no longer inwardly divided in terms of the super-ego and id, but have attained an integrated ego. Nevertheless, they have a passivity which contributes to their perverse fate in love, allowing them to be operated upon by the superior force of women. Though they no longer have problems with the erotic per se, they are still involved in a contest between unequal powers in their love relations. Despite some blocks to consciousness, they now have the capacity to love and suffer and to rise to consciousness, albeit of an excoriating nature, yet they are never self-determining, and the capacity of consciousness to soothe through its revelation of the meaning of the fate is qualified by the sense that it leads nowhere. There is no resolution to the problem of the hero's fate.

The capacity of passion to destroy identity and to reduce the world to chaos largely explains why James has preferred the charitable

affections, which imply an imaginative understanding of the human plight. Both his heroes and heroines are distinguished by their capacity for generosity and magnanimity, their human charity and pity, and their preference for sacrificing themselves rather than taking a vindictive advantage of another. As the fate has persisted it has become increasingly important for the heroes and heroines to arrive at a comprehension of it and to attempt to live imaginatively by earning the consciousness which alone can free the individual from a total subjection to determining circumstances. From the beginning it was necessary for the hero to try to right himself under his wrong through his powers of mind and thought, to conceive, express and become conscious of his situation in an effort to make it meaningful. With the repetition of the fate it becomes increasingly so. The confrontation of the fate entails a reworking and rethinking of the whole set of inextricable circumstances that have impelled it in order to give it some meaning.

It is in their quest for consciousness that James's heroes and heroines emulate the activity of the artist. The quest is vital to life because living comes to mean living imaginatively, which is the only way in which the tragic fate can be encompassed, and is the necessity of minds that have been early blocked off from certain kinds of knowledge. James himself becomes the consciousness of those characters whom he conceives of as not having arrived at a sufficient level of awareness. Otherwise he is concerned to show the process of the individual vision arriving at comprehension. The range of awareness extends from the hero who has a minimal grasp of his own injuries, who is a "ghost" self, through characters who emulate the artist's activity, to the artist himself, who represents the intelligence most completely alive.

Throughout his writing career James's mind plays imaginatively over the categories he has created in his fiction, even reviewing his early

life in the light of what he himself has come to understand about the nature of the human condition. To the last he presents the perverse fate of the injured lover deprived of his inheritance in life and striving to assume it as against the power of the female who appears to live at his expense. However, though this fate may appear idiosyncratic of the Jamesian male in a fictionally constructed universe, it comes to stand for the plight of man in general. It illuminates not only the nature of the human mind, but also conditions in the world, which dictate that man is a creature who cannot fulfil his deepest desires. There is always a fatal conjunction between the laws of the mind and external determinants in the world. It constitutes the tragedy of existence.

2. THE SHORT STORIES: MAN

The hero whom James projects has essentially one character and one fate, and his character is related to his fate. The following stories have been selected to trace a sequence of points in the life of this putative hero, a series of critical moments from childhood to death in which the hero's fate is constituted and his character is constellated.

The hero is a prince born to a world of riches he cannot enjoy. He is defrauded of his rightful inheritance in life by his perception of the nature of woman, together with a set of related determining circumstances which make it inevitable that he will suffer a frustrated experience in love and stand only in an indirect relation to life. He is a man with a flaw, defect, stigma, or injury, built into his own nature: love has for him implicit in it a hostile power which threatens his existence and makes him incapable of love. What he desires at the same time endangers him. For him, love never has the character of power. Women, love, and life are for him the unattainable from which he is separated in a "world of cleft components".(NSB,178)

A man of complex nature or of overscrupulous soul, the hero represents little more than a certain kind of failure. There is very little sense in these stories that he wins anything by his forfeiture; his losses are too great, too essentially uncompensated. His heroism consists mainly in his acceptance of his fated defeat, and the tragic element in these stories is limited to the hero's experience of life as a creature doomed to an inevitable disaster. He has too much need for suffering, endurance, and loss, and not enough capacity to rise above his fate and transcend it, to be seen as fully tragic. The tragic sense here, unlike that in the more fully heroic variants of this postulated figure, is less dependent on the quality of the hero's acceptance of his fate than on the ambiguous relation among the determining factors themselves. The extent to which these figures are determined by factors external to themselves or by factors which are inherent

in their own psychological constitution is in question: whether they are largely determined by others or whether they do not to some extent create their own fate. With retrospective knowledge they imagine that had it not been for their response to particular circumstances their fate might have been different, whereas in fact their response was the inevitable consequence of their nature. In other words, free will is only a theoretic possibility, imputing to the hero a power over circumstances that did not exist at the time. These heroes are to an extraordinary degree immersed in their fate.

There is only one type of hero to whom a capacity for transcendence is imputed - the artist hero. Though he too stands in an indirect relation to life, he can redeem his fate by his comprehension of it, can work creatively and imaginatively with the elements of life which come to him in a reduced form. He has a further destiny, that of making much out of the little that is given him, and transcending his circumstances through his imaginative power.

For the most part, however, the heroes of these stories do not arrive at a full comprehension of themselves and are, indeed, blocked off from the possibility of apprehension by the extent to which they are threatened by love. If they could arrive at consciousness they could theoretically resolve their situation, but conversely their incapacity to resolve their conflict is largely what prevents them from arriving at a full knowledge of it. They exist mainly in terms of the tensions and conflicts to which they are subject, which are incapable of resolution, and which, as partly repressed elements, lead to a recurrence and repetition of experience as they grow older. These stories have the quality of unconscious dramas in which the contents of the unconscious act themselves out to reveal their meaning in the completion of the love-fate.

The range of characters seen in relation to this male is telescoped, and the number of ways in which the human figures who are the agents of the fate can combine and constellate themselves to his defeat is limited.

It is the original parental figures, in particular the mother, who determine the structure of the hero's neurotic behaviour, though there are a number of ways in which the hero is related to parental figures, to their substitutes, or to figures derived from them, with whom he seeks a love relation and by whom his hopes are frustrated. The psychological components of the hero's nature are laid down in the ambiguity of his original love relationship with his mother. All women to some extent reflect the dual nature she has possessed for him as the woman who first loved him and made him feel worthy and who then was felt to reject him and cast him out of paradise. Similarly, all rival figures are related to the original father in their quality as invincible rivals who assert a superior right to the woman in question, though they may also strike him as inferior to himself precisely because of their happy state.

The following stories illustrate the original situation and the characteristic variants upon it in which the hero is frustrated of his desire in his progress through life.

The Author of "Beltraffio"* (1884-85) represents at its zero point the plight of the hero injured by his mother's love. He is sacrificed to the irreconcilable conflict between his parents, unprotected by a father who is powerless to save him. Dolcino Ambient is born with a beauty "which seemed to be composed of elements too fine and pure for the breath of this world."(309) He appears like "a little invalid prince"(340) who might yet have been "an orphan, or a changeling, or stamped with some social stigma"(310)

* The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. Leon Edel, Rupert Hart-Davis, London 1961-64, 12 vols., vol. 5. For convenience, page numbers of references are given in the text throughout, the volume numbers for the stories being recorded as a footnote to their titles.

by virtue of injuries sustained as the "apple of discord"(317) between his parents. His affliction appears in the form of diptheric fever, at the height of which his mother refuses to administer the necessary medicine, preferring that he should die rather than come under his father's influence. She presses him to death in a love embrace so as not to see him die.

The telling of Dolcino's story requires the intervention of a narrator: a young American who claims a keen perception of the undercurrents of the domestic situation. His imaginative understanding of what he sees and hears makes him aware of a secret that he alone can reveal, and then only after the major characters are dead. The story achieves its effect from the deep affinity between the twenty-five-year-old narrator, the forty-year-old father, and the seven-year-old child, which rests upon a shared fear of the power of the female to deplete the male and deprive him of his source of life. There is postulated a continuum of personality that makes it meaningful to relate the sympathetic pity of the older males for the child's plight to their shared spiritual identity with him. They themselves have survived some such past as Dolcino's.

It is necessary to consider the central action in relation to the determinants through which the child-hero exists: the psychological nature of his parents; the struggle between them, and its frustration of their potentialities, of which the child is the central symbol; and the personality of the young man through whose vision the story is mediated. The narrator must be discussed first, for by siding with the father against the mother he becomes the catalyst of the tragedy.

The narrator is a young American of aesthetic temperament and critical pretensions who believes that Mark Ambient is the greatest living writer. He visits him with a letter of introduction from another great author they both know, an American poet. For him it is Mark Ambient, and not his wife, Beatrice, who is "the rose".(304) He comes as a worshipper, a fanatical

admirer of the artist's work. The writer is not represented directly as the triumphant artist but only as a man frustrated and vanquished in accordance with the common doom. His romance is "the romance he himself projects".(AN,96) The narrator sees instantly that he is "a delightful creature",(306) unlike his wife, although there seems no "obvious incongruity"(309) in his choice of her as a mate. Later he observes that Mark must simply have perceived "she was an angel, without asking himself of what".(337) However, the narrator is anxious not to represent himself as unduly prescient: "I find it important to avoid the error of appearing to have understood his situation from the first, and to have seen in him signs of things which I learnt only afterwards."(316) By denying himself the "backward light"(316) of hindsight, which orders events whose course originally bewildered him, he gives added force to his tale, as perceived oddities in the situation acquire significance. The story unfolds as if life itself were the artist. The passions in the lives of the characters work themselves out until the action attains its own meaning.

The conflict between the Ambients begins immediately the narrator is introduced to their home, which he sees as "a palace of art",(307) as it were, the original that the fictive page might copy. Mrs. Ambient holds the child. Her husband calls him to come to him, but Dolcino is held too tightly "in the maternal embrace"(308) to struggle free, and "after two or three fruitless efforts"(308) suddenly turns around to bury "his head deep in his mother's lap".(308) When she appears inconsequentially to release him, his father seizes him, holds him on high and kisses him. The narrator perceives that Dolcino is a bone of contention. At once he sees in the angelic countenance of the child the "kind of charm which is like a death-warrant",(310) "the more than mortal bloom"(309) and "the smile of innocence"(309) which suggest that Dolcino is simply "too charming to live".(310) Later he realises the extent to which he is a source of division between his parents, throwing them into opposition with one another. It is one aspect of the

situation that the child is a rival with his father for his mother's affection. Beatrice at once shows a tendency to undervalue Mark in favour of the child, who is the object of her passion. It is only after Dolcino's death that she comes at all close to her husband. The desire of each to dominate and mould the child dramatises what comes to be seen as the bottomless gulf separating persons "predestined by nature"(340) to exist in irreconcible hostility. The battle of wills is doomed to repeat itself without resolution, but it is an unequal battle in which the male is impotent against the woman's superior force. Mark admits at once that "by fighting for him"(317) "we shall probably kill him between us, before we have done with him",(317) and considers it would be best for the child to be adopted by someone else, such as the narrator. His awareness of the elements of the tragedy and inability to avert it make him a guilty party to it. His weakness before his wife makes him also an agent of the fate, a fact which the narrator never sees because of his sympathetic identification with him.

The narrator's complicity as a catalyst is more complex: as Beatrice is his rival for the object of his worship he has an irresistible impulse to precipitate the drama. He seizes upon a story that corroborates his fear of woman as a force that threatens to destroy the male. Beatrice's monstrous maternal passion arouses such anxieties in both men, who see themselves in the child, that they are terrorized into irrational behaviour. They cause their worst fears to be proven, although it is a proof they consciously wish to avert. Thereby they illustrate their own inner conflict.

When Mark attaches Dolcino to him as he wanders around the garden the narrator is left with Beatrice. He assumes towards her a role analogous to Mark's. While she criticises Mark for tiring the child out, the narrator, much to her displeasure, applauds his work. A kind of guarded enmity grows

between the two of them, resembling the hostility between the marital couple. The narrator ignores the warning of Mark's sister, Gwendolen, who tells him that Beatrice would do anything to guard the child from them and cannot even bear her husband to touch him. Matters become worse when Mark discovers that the child is really ill and that Beatrice has locked him out of the bedroom to prevent him from having any contact with him. He gains an entrance when Beatrice appears in his study. The narrator, flushed with being taken into Mark's confidence about everything, alludes "without intention"(327) and "by a kind of fatality",(340) the perversity of which had already made him insist unduly on talking with her about her husband's achievements, to his having the luck to have been given the precious proof sheets of Mark's new novel to take up to his room to read.

Dolcino appears once more. He is carried on his father's arm into the garden, an act which retrospectively appears very harmful. It is then that Mark realises the gravity of the child's condition and goes to fetch the doctor. The scene is the final showing forth of Dolcino's potentialities before he dies. He is dressed in his "festal garments",(340) "like a young prince who smiles upon his subjects, with his charming head pillowed on his mother's breast and his little crimson legs depending from her lap."(342) He does not look well. The narrator finds himself perpetually looking into his eyes, at the same time as the child's eyes are fixed upon him, with the desire to tell him something. He imputes to the child some consciousness of his situation:

> The mother that bore me and that presses me here to her bosom - sympathetic little organism that I am - has really the kind of sensibility which she has been represented to you as lacking; if you only look for it patiently and respectfully. How is it possible that she shouldn't have it? How is it possible that *I* should have so much of it (for I am quite full of it, dear strange gentleman), if it were not also in some degree in her? I am my father's child, but I am also my mother's, and I am sorry for the difference between them! (343-44)

Since the child has been represented as wanting to choose his father if only he could the remarks imputed to him indicate his ambivalent dependence

upon his mother. The narrator too sees the image of "the beautiful mother and beautiful child, interlaced there against their background of roses",(341) as a thing he should perhaps not soon see again. There is an element in him of wanting to test the case to see whether the perfect mother can be as diabolical as she threatens to be. Yet he takes up the case on behalf of the child who seems to make this plea for the reconciliation of the irreconcilable for the purpose of its own survival. The narrator finds a vision forming in his mind of putting an end to the parents' disagreement. He cannot believe that Beatrice finds Mark's writings objectionable and believes that the new novel will convert her because "all the best of him is there".(345) Of his motives he says,

> of course I expose myself to the charge of attempting to give fantastic reasons for an act which may have been the fruit of a native want of discretion; and indeed the traceable consequences of that perversity were too lamentable to leave me any desire to trifle with the question. (343)

He believes that he acts "in perfect good faith",(343) though he is aware that the project is "absurd",(344) for he already has Mark's word for it that "the gulf that divided them was well-nigh bottomless".(344)

According to Gwendolen, it is Beatrice's reading of this manuscript, after the narrator has aroused her curiosity, that induces her to let her son die. As Gwendolen says, "the book gave her a horror"(353) and "she determined to rescue him - to prevent him from ever being touched."(353) She dismisses the doctor, and when, during her vigil in a bolted room, the child's illness reaches a crisis she lets him die, the manuscript in her hand and his head against her breast. She does not even remove the unused drugs. From a rational point of view. the child could have been saved with proper care, but it is in the logic of his fateful situation that he should die. He is sacrificed to a parental conflict that has outgrown rationality. The males have contributed to the tragedy, but the mother's overwhelming passion for her son was primarily responsible for it.

Beatrice is seen from the point of view of a narrator who cannot penetrate the mysteries of her state of mind, and who sees her as the mother who paradoxically takes away the life she has created. Gwendolen believes that she sees herself as a perfect mother and nurse. In fact, she is a good woman who has a thoroughly malignant effect on her son's life. She is a "wonderfully cultivated human plant",(337) comes from a fine family, represents the values of official morality, the church, and society, and is a Philistine about art. In fact, she uses official morality as a weapon in her battle against her husband, a disguise for a fundamentally amoral psychic drive. She appears as a woman of little passion, with a cold eye and compressed lips, and only a "cold thin flame".(336) Yet her appearance masks a passion of Medean proportions, which manifests itself in an unspeakably horrifying way.

Beatrice is a victim of her own passions. From one point of view she looks like a woman who has repressed her own desire for life, which is suggested in her fragile beauty, the way in which she encapsulates her hair in a fine net, and by her whole demeanour. She seems to suppress her own emotions by adopting conventional attitudes and inhibiting forms of behaviour. Yet this intensifies the one situation in which she allows her passions a free reign: in her devotion for her son. Whatever the disappointments of her marriage it is the maternal passion which predominates, yet in destroying her son she destroys her own life. Her grief is frantic. She is like a "wounded tigress",(354) and fails rapidly after Dolcino's death, consumed by the life energies she has so perversely fulfilled. She has become exhausted in completing herself, in living out what she so terribly is, and in fulfilling the logic of her own life she has achieved her end.

Some of the narrator's underlying fear of women is projected onto Gwendolen, Mark's sister. He senses a potential threat to himself in his

interpretation of her as a restless, yearning, spinster in search of marriage. But she, too, is seen as a rival for Mark's friendship, and the narrator is irritated by her use of "we", my brother and I, as if she sought to prove her superior right to pair herself with Mark. By virtue of his spiritual affinity with Mark, and his understanding of his "ideas",(322) the narrator feels that he is the one chosen for Mark's affection. He regards Gwendolen as an effete version of her brother's aestheticism, which is reduced to the adoption of Michael Angelesque attitudes and Rosetti poses. He believes that these affectations tarnish her brother's reputation in the world. His view is an exaggeration, at once elevating Mark himself above criticism and betraying the narrator's fear of women as potentially emasculating.

Gwendolen is a part pathetic, part comic, figure of a woman who shares certain affinities with the male. Dejected and disillusioned, she has seen too much too early of the tragedies of life, and yet wishes to live in relation to the ideal. Once the domestic tragedy is complete, she retires from the world to join a Sisterhood, which the narrator explains by her desire to expiate her "guilty participation"(355) in the drama. Although she dislikes Beatrice, it is difficult to accept that she should bear a heavier burden of complicity than the men, whom the narrator holds blameless. He seems to assume that the sibylline element in Gwendolen makes the mysteries of the female constitution amenable to her, whereas the male stands helpless before the exhibition of incomprehensible elements of feminine feeling.

This is a story of frustrated potentialities in the lives of all the main protagonists. However, the female is seen through Beatrice - Gwendolen is in a sense a male counterpart - to exhaust her own passion in living out her nature, whereas the male is frustrated of his potentialities by falling subject to her power. Mark's portrait is essentially that of the effete male, henpecked and helpless before a wife whose mastery is

manifested in a puzzling form. She seems gentle, reserved, upright, sensible, and the embodiment of traditional values: yet her qualities are a snare to entrap the male. She does not seem sexually aggressive but her virtues seduce him into supposing he is safe, until he finds himself confronted by her self-assertion in another form. The narrator is puzzled by Mark's attitude toward her. Mark seems to adopt a different tone when he speaks of her. His comments, which are both critical and appreciative, confuse the young man, who is perhaps too young to understand the complexity of human feelings and emphasises his extreme youthfulness at the time of the story. However, it is clear that Mark is displaced in the home, that for Beatrice the role of wife is secondary to that of mother. Further, she treats Mark as if he were an overgrown child who likes plums and wants to be loved. Mark is incapable of protecting his son against the seductive attractiveness of his mother, and his terror at the overmothering of the boy expresses his own ambivalence toward the woman who represents life for him in a form that cripples his own initiative.

Mark's art allows him to avoid confronting life, and Beatrice, directly. He weaves what he knows to be fantasies about Beatrice in his fiction. The reconciliation, for instance, of the two women in Ginistrella could not happen in life, any more than could that of Beatrice and Gwendolen. The narrator sees him as a man who has an imaginative contact with "all life",(333) yet Mark himself admits - as his own story illustrates - that he cannot imitate life's impudent tricks. He wants more than anything to see things as they are, and his point of view is that of "the artist to whom every manifestation of human energy"(323) is "a thrilling spectacle".(323) The narrator sees at once that Beatrice herself must have been the original for the images in his art whereby he makes the real fanciful and the fanciful real. Mark is a man who feels for ever the desire to resolve his experience into literary form. He feels life primarily as literary material, which is a protective device against confronting it. His writing seems to be independent of accepted

morality and purports to deal directly with life; yet he places himself at a remove from it. His passion for perfection of artistic form represents the search for the holy grail in an area where completeness, harmony, beauty and the conjunction of ideals are perhaps possible. In his life union and harmony are unattainable, and he is faced by a violently disjunct experience of opposites that refuse to be conjoined. Life defies him to be real enough, and he is critical of his efforts to arrange things too much, to make them appear smoothed down, rounded off and tucked in. He wants in his future work to be truer than he has been before, and to give the impression of life itself. It is an unnerving feature of the story that while the drama unfolds he and the narrator chat about paradoxes in life and art in the warmth and protection of his study, or upon country rambles in the decent English air. The narrator is enchanted by his introduction to "real talk"(322) to "distinction, culture, experience",(322) and he delights in all Mark's comments about society and art, which reveal his talent for ironical and humourous portraiture. Yet the talk is Mark's escape from the realities of his situation and but represents another aspect of his impotence. He talks about the difference between his wife and himself as representing opposed views of life that can be roughly equated with the Christian and the Pagan, the one making little of this world with a view to living in the hereafter, the other wishing to make the most of the present. He seeks fulfilment by transforming his experience into art, and by representing life indirectly, as a reflection in the polished plate of his surfaces and forms. But his artistic success is not represented as mitigating his losses in life, which reveal his failure as a man. While his wife's views are a mask for her life energies, his are an escape from life.

The young man feels that the world is glorified by his contact with the great man. He feels transported by his experience and finds signs of Mark's genius everywhere. Mark is presented through the filter of his adulation, yet there is a tension in his narrative between his delight at

being accepted as his friend and his sense of grim reality behind Mark's appearance. He is struck by certain contradictions in his face, a tendency to look old and young, and grave and gay at the same time. Behind the narrative lies the portrait of the henpecked husband, the man who runs about the house helplessly trying to right things when it is too late, and submissive to his wife's will beneath the appearance of self-possession, suggested by his English talent for keeping up protective forms of behaviour. Unquestionably Beatrice represents life for him, for when she dies he loses his central meaning. He dies himself within five years of the tragedy. It is the paradox of his situation that he has needed protection and independence from Beatrice in order to live, and yet is deprived of his source of life when she dies. She has, however, to a large extent consumed his life energies, and he emerges from the tragedy weakened and depleted with less of himself to muster, and slowly winds down. The narrator is never certain that he completely understands the meaning of his life. He inclines to believe that he never did perceive the secret, but if he did he took "the line of absolute negation of the matter to himself"(351) which would reveal "an immense effort of the will."(351) It seems that this is probably the case, because Mark is shown to be fully aware of the nature of the struggle between his wife and himself.

Dolcino was born into an illusory paradise. Everywhere the narrator observes the beauty and natural simplicity of a world which represents transmitted values and a long heritage. The natural setting encourages him to think that the world is a paradise in which man can attain his desires, but he shows in his story that man is fatally separated from the goals which he seeks, which remain unattainable to him. It is a story in which everyone loses totally in a tragic set of circumstances which are interconnected. The events in the lives of the adults refer back to the central story of the child, who presents the paradigm of the love fate. The content of

the lives of the adults is more ambiguous and inaccessible. It is obscured by protective forms and manners. But what happens to the child is direct and unequivocal. Dolcino is the innocent victim of the destructive force of a mother's seductive love in a situation in which his father is powerless to protect him, and the general impotence of the male before the power of the female brings the experience of all the males in the story together.

Master Eustace* (1871) takes the plight of the male a step further in tracing the development to manhood of a young prince Hamlet, who is forced to recognise on coming of age that he is the disinherited heir of life in conequence of bearing an oedipal burden. Eustace is brought up and educated "en prince"(347) as the sole flower of his widowed mother's affections, subject to a passion for himself that has given him "an indefeasible conviction"(344) that he is "number one among men".(344) When he comes to rise to his estate as a man and to take his place by his mother's side, he finds that she has married and presented him with an invincible rival. Moreover, this man has been the silent monitor of his life all along, without his knowledge, for he is his own father. The stigma of Eustace's birth is the sign of the emotional injury he has suffered at the hands of a mother whose seductive love has turned against him and blasted his rights and blighted his life. His anger and outrage explode to disastrous effect, for his mother dies from the blow of his rejection, but he is left injured, incomplete, divided within himself and unable to love. He has no hope of resolving or redeeming his situation.

The story can only come to the reader through the mediation of a narrator capable of foreseeing his fate, and in a position to follow it

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* Tales, Vol. 2.

through to the moment in which it is constellated. Eustace himself is presented with a shock for which he is totally unprepared. He is the unconscious hero of his own drama, which is enacted without his having any control over events. The narrator is the only daughter of a mother whom she lost at the age of twenty-five. Without money, beauty, social status, or parental protection, she was without a situation in life, and had to look for one in becoming a nurse, governess or general factotum. She enters the Garnyer household to become Eustace's first instructress and Mrs. Garnyer's trusted friend. She too offers herself as a narrator who is peculiarly attuned to the situation she has observed, by virtue of her special insight into it, and her long association with the persons concerned. This vision she shares with no one else, and she only recounts its secrets to a friend long after the tragedy is complete. Her attitude to romance is ambiguous. On the one hand she has never married and assumes that she has no story of her own to tell, that the romance she projects must be "the romance of others".[341] She is "desperately fond of a bit of romance"[342] and "plainly never to have one of {her} own".[342] On the other hand she characterises herself as one who distrusts romance and who does not believe that passion is everything. This gives her a particular perspective on the story, for she is not, like the mother and son, sunk in a world of fantasy. She has a sharper sense of realities and a curiosity about the whole matter which puts her in possession of the facts and permits her to foresee the inevitable doom. She identifies with a situation which is of particular purport to her, the case of "a revelation of maternal passion"[353] in terms of its destructive effects upon a child. She sees that the mother sows for herself a crop of dragon's teeth in her treatment of her son, which makes it inevitable that as a man he will rise up against her to avenge himself. She too acts her part as a catalyst with an impulse to precipitate the tragedy.

The narrator first encounters Eustace when he is five. As he outgrows

her ability to instruct him she stays on as his mother's companion, friend, guest, housekeeper, seamstress, factotum. She sees her function in relation to Eustace as the opposite of his mother's, for she wishes to introduce reality into his life of pleasure. She tries to set him on his feet intellectually, and to become a kind of "prince's jester"(351) or "licensed old-time friend",(351) who can present realities to counterbalance his illusions. However, for Eustace she is a nonentity, and she is powerless to protect him from the seductive influence of his mother's love.

Since Eustace's fate is dependent on his mother's attitude to him the narrator is anxious to unlock the secret that underlies Mrs. Garnyer's life and the extremity of her love for him. She sees Mrs. Garnyer as a beautiful woman surrounded by mysteries related to love. She seems to exude a longing for love that contradicts her rejection of all suitors. She seems "sorrow-laden"(342) behind her "tremulous reserve"(355) and isolation from the world. Her hands stray over the piano as if seeking a lost love theme that symbolizes her devotional or even mystical aspirations. She has clearly suffered through love. She is a rose with its petals plucked, but her attitude is suffused with a "tender, pensive sufferance modified by hopes -",(343) "a certain half-mystical hope"(343) that seems akin to, but is not entirely, religion. Love is for her the supreme good or it is nothing:

> "It's either a passion ... or it's nothing. You can know it by being willing to give up everything for it - name and fame, past and future, this world and the next. Do you keep back a feather's weight of tenderness or trust? Then you are not in love. You must risk everything, for you get everything - if you are happy." (347)

The narrator is alerted to the fact that she has had a secret lover, that her friend has drunk at the "crystal head-spring"(347) and cannot therefore taste "standing water".(347) She also observes in the extremity of her maternal devotion a quality of expiation, of "penance"(353) or "pledge",(353) as if she had something for which to compensate her son, and some promise of fulfilment which she can only presently enjoy through him.

Her suspicions are later confirmed when she learns that Eustace is the son of Mr. Cope, her one true love, and not her husband whose name he bears. Behind Eustace's story lie his mother's frustrated hopes of a marriage of true love, and it is her fate to lose her chance of happiness twice. It appears that she fell in love as a young girl and was unable to defy her parents' wishes in order to assert her own right to happiness. She was judged weak by her lover, who "half in spite, half in despair"(359) married and went abroad. Her parents married her to a dissolute man who squandered her funds and died after three years, leaving her untidy affairs in the hands of unprincipled agents. The husband's tragedy also lies behind Eustace's: he died after a life of dissipation, encouraged to destroy himself by the knowledge that his wife loved another, the father of his "son". This is to some extent to speculate about the situation, but the indications are there. The intervention of Mrs. Garnyer's parents is like an arbitrary stroke of fate to reveal the impossibility of a marriage of true love. Though Mrs. Garnyer is soon released by her husband's death, Mr. Cope has to wait twenty years for the death of his own wife. When he returns it is with the melancholy air of a man who asks no favours of fate. Both lovers are imbued with the idea that the bliss they seek is unattainable. Their eventual marriage while Eustace is abroad, is a sad event, like a sacrifice to some unknown god who shall prove a jealous god of vengeance and strike them down in their moment of happiness. This is indeed what happens with Eustace's return, recalled from his travels by a letter from the narrator, who feels that he ought to be forewarned. It is Eustace who is the jealous god, who frustrates the hopes of his parents in circumstances which reveal that for them their fate is reconstituted and rendered final.

The circumstances whereby Eustace is brought up in ignorance of his true father presents an extremely significant fact. Here, it is the case not only that a son who is injured by his mother's total devotion is never protected adequately by his father, but that a lover falls in love without

knowing that his woman has already given her heart to another man, who therefore becomes an invincible rival. Eustace's situation presents the prototype of which other stories present variants. His supposed father is dead, and his mother's silence about him denies Eustace any realistic sense of his father, leaving him unprepared for the truth. Moreover, three of his tutors are dismissed because they wish to marry his mother, giving her the appearance of having made every sacrifice for him. Her seductive love is intensified by her own multiple motives for making him the totality of her duty. He is raised on the principle

> that love, love, pure love, is the sum and substance of maternal duty, and that the love which reasons and requires and refuses is cruel and wicked. (344)

Eustace is brought up in a hot house of fantasy and female domination, and from the first is treated as an "heir-apparent".(349) His birthday takes the form of a festival which dramatises his relation with his mother:

> On this occasion she would put on a faded balldress, overload herself with jewels and trinkets, dress her hair with flowers. Eustace, too, she would trick out in a suit of crimson velvet, and in this singular guise the pair would walk with prodigious gravity about the garden and up and down the avenue. Every now and then she would stoop and give him a convulsive hug. The child himself seemed to feel the magnitude of this festival, and played his part with precocious effect. He would appear at dusk with the curl still in his hair, his velvet trousers unstained, his ruffles uncrumpled. In the evening the coachman let off rockets in the garden; we feasted on ice-cream and a bottle of champagne was sent to the kitchen. No wonder Master Eustace carried himself like an heir-apparent! (349)

His very name means "that he should have the best of everything - the prettiest clothes, the prettiest playthings and the prettiest name".(343) He is the apple of his mother's eye and has only to snap his fingers to get what he wants, which makes him think he can have the moon by crying for it. As he grows up his characteristic posture is to lounge for hours in a chair, letting his imagination run riot, until his mother "after watching him for a while in these moods, would steal up behind him and kiss him softly on the forehead, as if to marry his sweet illusions to a sweeter reality".(351)

It seems to the narrator

> that there were even moments when he turned dizzy on the edge of this awful gulf of his mother's self-sacrifice. Fixing his eyes, then, an instant, to steady himself, he took comfort in the thought that she had ceased to suffer - her personal ambition lay dead at the bottom. He could vaguely see them - distant, dim, motionless. It was to be hoped that no adventurous ghost of those shuffled-off passions would climb upward to the light. (353)

His will operates on the level of fantasy and retains its infantile basis. It acts like a "steel spring"(344), but it is curiously undirected, for it is endless, a kind of fantasy of oceanic drives that can never be complete. He exists in terms of insatiable wants. He feels superior because his mother's love places him firmly at the centre of the world, yet he has very real weaknesses precisely because he is totally dependent on her for his identity. He has a contempt for tears and an admiration for independence and strength. The narrator discovers that by adopting a posture of strength she can readily turn the tables on him and expose his own sense of weakness.

Eustace is too self-centred to realize how he appears to others. Yet he is aware that his world is too "womanish",(354) that he needs to complete himself, and gain a "knowledge of the world".(354) For this he needs masculine identification, which he seeks in his conception of his father. He knows only that he made the tour of Europe, that he was "a man of pleasure",(353) and is therefore a "charming"(353) model for himself. He possesses his pistol and a book of poems by Parny purchased by him in Paris. As he knows nothing of Mr. Garnyer's real life, he creates "a portrait in ideal hues",(353) which will support him in his ambitions. Because his model is his own creation it nourishes his fantasies. In deciding to follow his father's footsteps in Europe he expects to become a man and return to claim his rightful place at his mother's side. He also wishes to test her love, for he says, "there's little enough merit in loving me when I am here; I wish to be loved in my absence."(356) He sets off for Europe as the heir apparent about to assume his inheritance in life.

It is some few months later that the first Mrs. Cope dies and the "far-away monitor"(355) of his life, whom his mother has concealed from him, manifests himself. Mr. Cope has had "to live for years without the thing {they} once fancied gave life its only value", love. (360) He now sees no reason to postpone the marriage until Eustace's return. Mrs. Garnyer herself would like to think that at last they might marry and be happy but she fears Eustace's reaction. A view of life as tempered by the experience of inevitable disappointments, sufferings and failures, overhangs the situation. The marriage occurs under the shadow of her knowledge that "unutterable"(357) joy is unattainable.

Eustace returns to discover from the narrator that his mother is already married. He is "absolutely rabid"(367) and "almost insane in his resentment".(367) For him it is like "a horrible dream",(366) and he cries out through his "fiery tears"(366) like an injured child.

> "Did she hope to keep it a secret? Did she hope to hide away her husband in a cupboard? Her husband! And I - I - I - what has she done with me? Where am I in this devil's game? Standing here like a schoolboy for a cut finger - for the bitterest of disappointments! She has blighted my life - she has blasted my rights. She has insulted me - dishonoured me. Am I a man to treat in that fashion? Am I a man to be made light of? Brought up as a flower and trampled on as a weed! Wrapped in cotton and then exposed - you needn't speak" - I had tried, for pity, to remonstrate - "you can say nothing that is not idiotic. There's nothing to be said but this - that I'm <u>insulted</u>." He uttered the word with a concentrated rancour of vanity. "I guessed it from the first. I knew it was coming. Mr. Cope - Mr. Cope - always Mr. Cope! It poisoned my journey - it poisoned my pleasure - it poisoned Italy.... You see an angry man, an outraged man, but a man, mind you! He means to act as one." (366-67)

Eustace's "sovereign merit"(351) has been said to be the magnificent candour which allows him to express his passions without impediment. He is an unconscious hero who acts out the passions which are his fate, and which are too explosive to be contained. He sets out in the heat of the night to ride off some of the heat of his feelings, but when he returns to find his mother and her husband, everything explodes within him. His mother

is rejected and denied in a "mad peal of imprecations"(369) in which the note of vanity still rings out most clearly. Her strength deserts her and she cries out "He has killed me!"(369) She cannot speak to him lest she should kill him by exposing the secrets he does not yet know. She sends her husband to try to cure him of his madness, but she is dying of a broken heart, knowing that she herself has made him hard, cruel and heartless, blind with vanity and egotism. Eustace takes up his father's pistol and lets it off at the moment he hears the truth from Mr. Cope - that there is "a blot on your scutcheon".(372) The pistol shot prevents the word that would describe the stigma of his birth from being heard. In rapid sequence his mother dies, believing he has killed his father; the horror-stricken narrator announces that he has killed his mother; and Mr. Cope makes it clear that Eustace has in fact shattered a glass, which is in some sense the mirror image of himself. Eustace's anger against his fate erupts uncontrollably. It is as if his vindictive desire to kill his mother in revenge for the outrageous trick she has played him in depriving him of his life has in fact been fulfilled. Again, his sense of himself as the perfect son of a perfect mother, means that herfall finds its corollary in his own. His self-image and his world are so shattered that he cannot put them together again.

The fates of mother and son are here conjoined. It is inevitable that the son will turn on the "gentle creature"(351) who fed his vanity "with the delusive wine of her love",(351) and that the injury her love inflicts should condemn him to a fragmented existence. Eustace has no heroic qualities, and is merely vengeful. His mother accepts her guilt and remorse and seems to desire to expiate her wrongs by dying. Nothing can save her, but the situation itself may be saved. Her fate is fulfilled in the completion of the drama of her maternal passion. This is the life she has lived, for she has never had her life with Mr. Cope. Her energies are exhausted, and she has completed herself in living them out. However,

from her son's point of view, she remains the paradoxical mother who gave him life yet took it away. She has been unselfish, uncalculating, undemanding. She has never sought power over anything. Yet she has ensnared her son, and all her goodness has yielded evil, while he has never perceived the menace of his dependence upon her for his sense of life and self.

With her death both men are deprived of life. They give the appearance of being two partial men split, who should be conjoined and who never will be. The father forgives the son, but the son is never reconciled with the father. They are condemned to wander the earth separately as two figures who cannot complete themselves. They have lost their connection with the woman who was the source of life to them and who gave their existence meaning. The male personality is divided within itself, cut off from the source, and prevented from attaining an ideal union. Mr. Cope remains a shadowy figure of a man, gentle, weak, and flawed. Eustace discovers the flaw in his own nature, which is largely the result of his parental handling. His neurotic behaviour is determined by his mother and reinforced by his lack of a father and his consequent illusions, for which he is not to blame. He is born the victim of this situation and his fate is predestined by it. His mother is a more heroic tragic figure because she is the victim of her own nature as well as her circumstances, and acknowledges it. Eustace is not redeemed but he is to some extent excused because he is so fully determined.

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In A Most Extraordinary Case* (1868) the theme of the love fate is taken a step further. The hero is introduced at an age when he might marry. A mother figure is substituted for a real mother, and she is an accidental

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* Tales, Vol. 1.

agent of the fate rather than central to it. The young hero has received his symbolic wound in the honourable cause of war. He has considerable potentialities, which are frustrated by the circumstances in which he falls in love only to discover that he is preceded by a superior rival. He is still a victim of circumstances, yet there is some ambiguity about the reasons for his death and some possibility of a concurrence between his determining conditions and elements within his own nature which impel his inevitable fate. The story is narrated in the third person, partly because James wishes to portray the hero at that moment when he is caught in a half dreamy state between fantasy and reality, with the glimmerings of intelligence to comprehend his situation.

The hero, Ferdinand Mason, is a young officer whose health has run down in the service of his country. Because of his loss of vitality, and lack of care, he is drawn toward death while desiring to live if only he could. At first he is presented as like a sick child crying for a mother to make him well. She comes to him in the shape of an aunt, Mrs. Mason, who, having discovered his plight, wishes to take her turn at "hero-nursing".[323] She takes him home to a place which betrays "the uncontested dominion of women".[327] There he falls in love with her niece, Caroline Hofmann, whom his aunt has already said would never consider him. She has "something of the inviolable strength of the goddess"[345] about her, which makes him feel unfit for her and doubly wounded. His real "blow",[358] "sharp as a sabre-cut",[358] comes when he is formally told of her engagement to an undisputably superior rival, a man who has loved "like a man who was not ashamed of what he was doing",[359] in fact his own doctor.

Ferdinand's failure to rise to the challenge of his love would seem to derive from his fear of the maternal devotion he so profoundly desires. The prospect of her niece's marriage frees Mrs. Mason to make a good deal of her nephew, whereby she hopes to enrich her own life. However, Ferdinand is

in search of a wife and not merely a mother. Moreover, Mrs. Mason's offer of real devotion cannot save him from his fate, but rather impels him toward it. His doctor is confirmed in the belief that if he dies it will be because he has chosen not to offer sufficient resistance to the disease within him. By implication Ferdinand himself believes that he is deprived of his ground of existence by Caroline. The fragments of his will dissolve before the vision of his losses and under the confirmed conviction that in losing her he has lost his life force. There are elements of truth in both points of view: that he is subject to external conditions which determine his inevitable doom and that his nature contributes to it.

Ferdinand's story proceeds through a series of critical moments or revelations which lead toward the crisis of his death. The introductory scene in which Mrs. Mason comes to his bedside in a New York hotel is striking. She appears as a kind of "philanthropist" promising untold riches to the young soldier, demoralised by solitude, loss of time, money, energy and purpose, in an overconscientious execution of his duties. He is rendered "speechless from the very fulness of his heart".(325)

> Finally, after a lapse of years, he too was being cared for. He let his head sink into the pillow, and silently inhaled the fragrance of her good manners and good nature. He was on the point of taking her dress in his hand and asking her not to leave him - now that solitude would be so much more dismal. His eyes, I suppose, betrayed this touching apprehension - doubly touching in a war-wasted young officer. As she prepared to bid him farewell, Mrs. Mason stooped and kissed his forehead. He listened to the rustle of her dress across the carpet, to the gentle closing of the door and to her retreating footsteps. And then, giving way to his weakness, he put his hands over his face and cried like a homesick schoolboy. He had been reminded of the exquisite side of life.(325-26)

The scene is fraught with intensely remembered details of childhood experience. Mrs. Mason herself recalls nursing him as a schoolboy with measles, after his father's death, when his mother was dead and he had been left inconsolable. Now she dimply represents the "heavenly intimation of comfort"(321) from which he has been so long separated that he has forgotten what it feels like

to be loved. Yet in the phrases that describe her manner of offering him a home James reflects the ambiguity of maternal passion in its effect upon the young man. They convey the hero's fear of the threat to him that is involved in Mrs. Mason's offer. She will take him to his "journey's end",(325) where he need only let himself be "'done for'"(324) by becoming her "property".(325)

Once ensconced in Mrs. Mason's home, he meets the characters who minister to his fate - his unattainable woman, Caroline, and his superior rival, Dr. Knight - and further definition is given to his state of mind. Before he came "home" he had ceased to care about the world and his own survival. It had "seemed better to die easy than to die hard".(329-30) Now he remains indifferent to pain, but not to pleasure. Reminders of the exquisite pleasures he has lost makes him want to live. Moreover he recovers a sense of life's potentialities - whether enjoying himself vegetating, thinking and reading or becoming sociable - which, given his sense of lost time and diminished opportunity (except for work), stimulate his desire to make something of himself. However, under these conditions his real sickness, his injuries in love, also manifests itself. He finds himself "dying of kindness"(340) in a world saturated with female power, which saps him of his own strength. He becomes increasingly aware that he cannot touch life and health except through Caroline, and that the more she asserts her essential vitality the more he is deprived of his own strength and will to live. The dramatic effect of his situation lies partly in his being not totally aware of it until too late, so that he retains the sense that he has a chance while at the same time he does not feel obliged to take it. It is only in these conditions that his latent ambivalence can become manifest, so that the reader may come to understand, under the author's direction, the meaning of his life and death.

Ferdinand takes to sitting on the verandah beside the house,

"sheltered from the observation of visitors",(335) share his nebulous impressions of his new domestic world begin to take shape. From here he can watch Caroline half defined in the cool obscurity of the house, listen to the strains of her piano playing, and allow the female image to become the constant object of his "half-dreamy contemplation".(336) He thinks of himself as learning something "from direct observation, of the vie intime of cultivated, intelligent women".(335-36) Yet at the same time he thinks of Caroline as exemplifying the life force, "vagabond Nature".(337) Apologizing for his sense of being an inadequate male companion and under the impression that she finds him so, he indirectly declares his need of her:

> "I sit here deaf and dumb, and blind and halt, patiently waiting to be healed - waiting till vagabond Nature strolls my way and brushes me with the hem of her garment."(336-37)

For the second time he is brushed by life in the shape of a woman and deems himself unworthy to touch the hem of her skirt, partly through his weakness, his fear of her, which he projects as power in her, and in this case the power of rejection which would mean the loss of life. He hopes constantly that she will reveal feelings for him which will allow him to confess his love without a fear of rejection. Her replies seem to him ambiguous for he is uncertain whether they are merely polite or mask deeper feelings.

His crisis advances when, waking one day from a doze, in the transition to consciousness, he becomes aware of an intense moment of intimacy between Caroline and Dr. Knight, bent silently over the piano trying to decipher a difficult piece of music. He consciously suppresses the meaning of the scene, but indirectly acknowledges it later when he tells the doctor that, despite moments of "sickening apprehension"(339) in which he fears to enquire too closely into his state, he now has "a positive wish to recover".(339) His unconscious realization diminishes his fear of commitment and he promises to get well.

However, his conflict is not reduced when, after he has scrutinized his image in a mirror and declared himself "unfit for the business of life",(341-42) Caroline goes to a dance with Dr. Knight. Immediately he suffers "a general collapse,"(344) fearing that her dance of life means his "dance of death".(343) He suspects that "she needs a man who has defended his country without breaking down - a being complete, intact, well-seasoned, invulnerable"(346) - in other words, Dr. Knight. Afterwards Horace Knight confirms Ferdinand's perception that Caroline possesses "vitality"(345) and a "quiet buoyancy".(345) As a doctor he pronounces her to have "a magnificent organisation";(345) as "a man of fancy"(345) he imagines her as a Diana moving gracefully upon the forest leaves. The image embodies her threat as an exemplar of the wonderful-terrible power of life. Should she be won by a man strong enough to arouse her latent passion, he imagines her life force would vibrate endlessly and for one man alone.

> Her soul is an instrument of a hundred strings, only it will take a strong hand to draw sound. Once really touched, they will reverberate for ever and ever. (346)

While Caroline becomes more fully defined as the life force that Ferdinand needs, and as capable of yielding it to a better man, he comes to realize what he has previously denied: that he is actually "in love". An unhappy scene follows in which his suppressed feelings become clear to her from his tone and attitude, from the look in his eyes rather than his words:

> the words in which he sought to tell her that he loved her were fluttering there like frightened birds in a storm-shaken cage. Whether his lips would form them or not depended on the next words she uttered. (352)

Ferdinand gets what he thinks he wants in that she is not specifically encouraging. The episode prefigures his death scene, in which it is implied that he reveals to her that he is dying of love. Here he merely says:

> "What if I do catch cold.... I am tempted to purchase one short hour of enjoyment, of happiness, at the cost - well, at the cost of my life, if necessary!" (351)

He falls into a fever in anticipation of his fate, while Caroline becomes privately engaged to Dr. Knight. On her return after an absence, when she clearly shows symptoms of having fallen in love herself, he feels "the stir of his old intellectual life",[355] and "swaggers"[356] a good deal before her in the display of his mental powers, consenting "to make her in some degree the confidant of his intellectual purposes".[355-56] It is when he learns from Mrs. Mason that Caroline has definitely accepted Dr. Knight that he receives his final blow. His immediate response is to announce that "'The funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.'"[358] He feels cheated, as if his friend had gone behind his back and secretly stolen his treasure, and marvels at the way in which the engagement has been covertly achieved. He becomes aware of an ambiguity in his fate. On the one hand it is determined by the circumstances with which he is presented, on the other hand he is forced to realise that "he had been a besotted day-dreamer, while his friend had simply come to the point"[359] as he himself might have done. He did not come to the point because he feared rejection, but either way she seems to threaten his destruction.

One of the reasons for Ferdinand's extreme helplessness lies in the superiority of his rival, which makes Dr. Knight a very unusual figure. He is a particularly potent rival whose supremacy contributes to the hero's emotional acceptance of his own defeat. He has no unworthy characteristics and his only failure is his inability to read the mysteries of Ferdinand's overscrupulous soul, which prevents him from understanding why he dies. In projecting such a figure James acknowledges that the fate which characterises his heroes is not the fate of men thoroughly other, who have a different constitution, and are not prevented from attaining their desires. Dr. Knight is a man of "good birth, good looks, good faculties, and good intentions",[328] who can take a supportive role in the home or on the battlefront. He has been an army surgeon and comes to the country to look

after his aging mother, without fear of competing with the old local practitioner who "has survived the glory of his prime".(328) He suffers no conflict and knows no weakness in relation to his situation. He reasonably considers that he can make his name and fortune in an area where there are many families of good income, even if it is in the country. He seems knowledgeable about the world, is a man of science and a man of fancy, and is highly civilized. He can win a wife and pursue a career. Goals for him do not seem mutually exclusive nor life energies limited. He is perhaps a little less complex than Ferdinand, who is characterised as a man of meditation, morals and metaphysics, since he has a great simplicity in pursuing his goals. Ferdinand admires him as the kind of man he would have liked to have been himself. Yet when Ferdinand bequeaths him a considerable fortune the gesture is ambiguous. It gracefully acknowledges his superiority while faintly suggesting that he himself possessed the right to Caroline by virtue of his inheritance. The money is the only way in which he can show his capacity to provide for Caroline and is a substitute for his inability to support her emotionally and to love her unequivocally.

Caroline herself is largely a male projection of a power that is quite opposed to his own weakness, and which threatens his depletion. She is experienced only from the point of the view of the hero. From the first she is seen as a woman of independence and strength, for she has completely remade the circumstances into which she was born. Her mother died in her infancy. Her father was a drunkard, gambler and rake, who was outlawed by decent society. With her aunt's assistance, and the benefits of an expensive education, finished off by a European tour, at twenty-five she is "beautiful, accomplished and conscious of good investments".(333) She had made the most of her advantages. As her chaperon in Europe Mrs. Mason is aware of how many lovers Caroline has rejected. She reveals to Ferdinand that she had once fallen in love in a situation in which her hopes were frustrated, which confirm Ferdinand's eventual suspicion that her marriage

is not a match of overwhelming passion. Her character does undergo some change for Ferdinand. In the beginning she looks fragile and her beauty is warm and sympathetic. As her power over him develops she appears to him to be colder and more in command of herself. When she has accepted Dr. Knight she becomes a more overtly threatening figure, an "inscrutable"(359) woman whose motives may not be penetrated, who dresses in a riding habit and carries a whip. Nevertheless she always appears considerate to Ferdinand, though rather in the spirit of pity and charity toward a sick man hopelessly in love than anything else.

Because Caroline is the primary agent of Ferdinand's fate, Mrs. Mason is a less important figure. Her function in the text is partly as a bridge between the hero's remote and putative past and his present experience, indicating through the fear her mothering arouses in him some of the reasons why Caroline presents such a threat to him. Caroline's primary function is to be the cause of his frustrated potentialities, whereas Mrs. Mason brings out her appreciation of the young man in terms of the greatness of his possibilities. She thinks him "the most brilliant, the most promising of the new generation".(362)

> She looked to the day when his name would be on men's lips, and it would be a great piece of good fortune to have inadvertently married his uncle. Herself a great observer of men and manners, she wished to give him advantages which had been sterile in her own case.(362)

It is partly the sense of her having her own purposes and intentions, of rewards to be got out of Ferdinand, that makes him sensitive to her power to deplete him. She seems a woman of sense and sentiment. She is described as having a warm, capacious heart, and a fair mind. In her charity she is practical, successful and sensible. She offers Ferdinand love, friendship, the solicitude of real affection, and "a certain passionate devotedness."(332)

Ferdinand himself shows forth his own possibilities in one half-hour of glory after he receives his "blow"(358) and before he dies. It is at a party at the Stapletons, which precisely matches the occasion upon which

Caroline herself made her triumphant entry into society at Dr. Knight's side, when their engagement was still a secret. Here Ferdinand becomes an object of awe to himself, enjoying his brief half-hour of light, though fortified by wine and looking as if he were about to die. Here Edith Stapleton (her brother, George, was thought to have been Caroline's choice) falls in love with him, and here Caroline herself makes him feel as he might have done had she been his.

> There he beheld Miss Hofmann, shining like a queen and fronted by a semi-circle of half-a-dozen men. Her head and shoulders were serene from the vaporous surge of her white dress, and she looked and listened with that half-abstracted air which is pardonable in a woman beset by admirers. When Caroline's eyes fell upon her friend she stared a moment, surprised, and then made him the friendliest bow in the world - a bow so friendly that her little circle divided to let it pass and looked round to see where the deuce it was going. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Miss Hofmann advanced several steps. Ferdinand went towards her, and there, in sight of all the company, she gave him her hand and smiled at him with extraordinary sweetness. (363)

He feels the glory that might have been his and shows his capacity and desire for life. Yet he is already living by mere force of will, mustering his diminishing forces for the last time. His strength rapidly ebbs and "the shattered fragments of his long-resisting will"(365) float down "to its shallow current in dissolution".(365) His last act after making his will is to see Caroline alone. The scene is not represented, but she emerges from it with "pale"(366) face and sufficiently "discomposed"(366) to make her "very silent and thoughtful"(367) during the period preceding her nuptials. The implication is that Ferdinand has told her that he is dying of love for her. In one sense this is his inevitable fate. In another he dies blaming her for it, indicating a responsibility for which she would inevitably feel certain guilts. He expresses his own suppressed resentment at the fact of his being unable to live, when he could so easily have done so if only he had been loved.

Dr. Knight pronounces his death "a most extraordinary case".(366) He

finds no medical reason sufficient to explain it. He is aware of the time at which Ferdinand lost his power of recovery but does not relate the occasion to the announcement of his own engagement. James indicates the complexity of the situation in which the fate is both imposed on and chosen by his young hero. He is deprived of his life by a woman, and he does not choose to get well. He desires Caroline and yet fears her sufficiently to recoil. He believes that he deserves his injury because of his defects. A man must be complete to love another, and Ferdinand is but half alive. His war wound stands partly as a symbol for the injury he must have suffered from his first experience of love. His experience at twenty-seven is a repetition of the love fate, in which he now finds himself doubly wounded. Ferdinand is an almost wholly weak hero. His military training helps him to adopt a military posture before the battle of life: it is easier to take life stoically than to make a bid for the prizes he knows he must lose. He has been "the hero of a hundred fights",[337] but confronts a situation in which he cannot win. Even with respect to his rival he is ambivalent, for Horace Knight exposes his own weaknesses, and yet he cannot withhold a sympathetic admiration for his strength. Women are to him half-dreamy objects of contemplation. They are mythic creatures who represent life and nature and whose power over him he exaggerates. He is half in love with desire and half in love with death. His fear and resentment of women defeats him.

In Benvolio* (1875) James portrays another hero of complex character at the moment of establishing love relationships that could lead to marriage. The whole family situation lies behind the configuration of the story, but it is treated at a higher level of abstraction. The mother and rival

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* Tales, Vol. 3

figures are no longer necessary, and the hero exists in terms of the tensions within himself expressed by his pursuit of two different women, whose qualities and effects are counterbalanced in his mind. The hero floats free and needs his energies to be gathered to a point, though it is not in his interest to destroy the mechanism whereby he resolves his conflict in relation to love. The mechanism, basically designed to prevent choice, fails mainly because the dominant woman in the case refuses to accept it.

The hero, Benvolio, is a fairy prince in seach of life's inheritance, who finds himself in a world of good things he cannot possess. This is an aspect of a predetermined psychological structure in which his sense of self division is reflected in his idea of woman as possessing irreconcilable qualities which cannot be conjoined. He finds a kind of equilibrium in pursuing her double image. There is a sense in which he is not in any real way engaged with either woman representing the double face of woman, so that the spectacle of his divided allegiance is a manner of portraying his inability to arrive at union, or his obstruction in terms of a love relationship. Supervening upon his situation as a doomed lover is his special role as an artist. He appears as a special version of the sensitive hero doomed to a frustrated love experience, one who has an extraordinary way out of his problem through his ability to transfigure his experience of life into an imaginative realm. Yet there is an ambiguous relation between his two situations. He may profit as an artist from his emotional conflict, however crippling it is in life, in so far as he can write out his tension, but the imagination in order to be effective must draw upon the true source of life, the woman who represents life, and here lies the problem.

Benvolio is attracted to a Countess, representing life, energy and passion, whom he cannot bring himself to marry. In dramatising her attraction and repulsion for him he seeks her opposite, a scholar's daughter whose name is Scholastica, a woman representing mind, whose qualities are those

of a male in disguise rather than of a woman. The Countess uses her power to destroy her rival in order to secure her lover once and for all. In so doing she destroys the ground on which he has been able to approach her - containing her threatening qualities by counterbalancing them with apparently benign feminine qualities - and closes down the one avenue whereby he has approached life's source. It is she who tricks him out of his inheritance and forces him to settle for his mental alternative to life. His marriage to Scholastica is not a real marriage. It represents living with his head in a closet. Benvolio settles for a mode of life that puts him out of contact with woman, life, love, and the world of actuality, in consequence of which he becomes a dull poet.

Since Benvolio exists only in terms of the tensions which he acts out it is necessary for James to narrate his story in the third person and to provide himself the counters required to make a coherent experience of his story. From the beginning he presents Benvolio as a fairy prince with leisure to enjoy "the sweets of life"(352) but unable to arrive at them. He suffers from ennui, dissatisfaction, and a sense of the staleness of things. This is all the more mysterious because he imagines himself as universally attractive and capable of bending the world to his desires. His voice has a "sweet, clear, lingering, caressing tone ... the voice as it were of a man whose fortune has been made for him",(352) and he has a "frank, expressive smile",(351) which ought to be "the magic key, or the enchanted ring, or the wishing-cap"(351) that puts the world at his service. However, the only world he can command is a world of his own fictions, in which his fantasies can be transformed by his poetic imagination. This in itself is a source of pleasure.

> It gave him immense satisfactions; it transfigured the world; it made very common objects sometimes seem radiantly beautiful, and it converted beautiful ones into infinite sources of intoxication. (352)

But he must live in a world of actuality and accept "the cruel limitations of the human mind"(384) which prevent him from achieving his imaginative aims

in toto. His story is an allegory depicting the mental block that prevents him from attaining his desires: his mental apprehension of woman.

Benvolio is a "complex character"[(360)] as a result of his psychology. Here lies his flaw and the reason for his dualistic existence. He is "a mixture of inconsistencies"[(352)] and "a tissue of contradictions".[(352)]

> It was as if the souls of the two very different men had been placed together to make the voyage of life in the same boat, and had agreed for convenience' sake to take the helm in alternation. (353)

His capacity to manage indeed depends upon his ability to block out one part of himself while he gives reign to the other. He makes no effort to come to terms with this rending conflict, which prevents him from becoming a man and at one with himself. He lacks a central ego to hold together his passional and mental aspects. He demonstrates the split in the male between id and superego, which prevents him from establishing a coherent identity. As a direct result of his conflict in love the thing he desires threatens at the same time to destroy him. Benvolio is presented as a man who falls victim to his own nature. His emotional pendulum sets up its own motion, whereby one set of feelings inevitably implies the contradictory set. Whichever direction he pursues, his emotions inevitably recoil upon themselves and set him off in the other direction.

These "contradictions" run through his whole nature, and are "perfectly apparent in his habits, in his manners, in his conversation, and even in his physiognomy".[(352-53)] At home he lives in two chambers, a sitting room and a sleeping room. The sitting room windows command a view of "a wide public square"[(354)] where "half the life of the great town"[(354)] may be observed. Benvolio gazes out on life from this room, where his friends visit him, he entertains, and conducts his commerce with the world. In his sleeping room nobody can visit him. Here he is alone with himself, his thoughts, and his writing. His desk stands in a large bay-window "looking out upon a tangled, silent, moss-grown garden".[(354)] The rooms symbolise the two modes

in which he experiences life, direct and indirect. He needs a direct experience of life and the world to satisfy certain personal and social needs, and to cull materials for his art so that he may retire to his "monastic cell"(354) and render an imaginative account of it. In his sleeping room, he not only reflects upon and renders his experience of life indirectly. He also draws upon the depths of his own psyche, out of which inspiration comes to him, symbolised by the secret garden in which Scholastica wanders, herself engaged in reading and reflecting upon his poetry. There is an inevitable relation between these two modes of experience, each dependent upon the other, but Benvolio cannot make the transition easily. After social entertainment he must wander through the empty streets of the town before he can return to his private quarters and enter the world of "transcendent abstraction".(375)

There is a tension between two modes of experience which is related to his pursuit of the two women, and there is a further tension in each case as to which is the more fulfilling and depleting. Life, the world, and the Countess fascinate him, but this pursuit involves a kind of squandering of his mental energies, which prevents him from developing his best faculties. The life of the mind, and the pursuit of Scholastica, puts him in touch with the ideal and with higher orders of reality, but ends in sterile abstractions and forces a return to life in order to be nourished. The idea that the imaginative life is to be preferred, the point from which Benvolio starts, would seem to involve an illusion which is intimately related to his life - or love-problem. The woman who reflects his psyche, his anima or complement, is in fact a pale reflection of himself, a version of his own recessive nature, and cannot therefore put him in touch with the source. Her mind is "as clear and still and natural as a woodland pool"(377) and gives back "an exact and definite image of everything"(377) presented to it. His mind seems redolent of "that vague magical murmur - the voice of the infinite - which lurks in the involutions of a sea-shell".(377) On the other hand, the secret garden,

in which his fancy loves to wander and his happiest thoughts come to him, and where he expects to encounter his own soul, fulfil his longing for the infinite, and his infinite longing, is owned by Scholastica's miser-uncle, a man with moneybags who wishes to defraud his niece out of her inheritance - both his money and support and the right to love and be loved by Benvolio. This circumstance indirectly reflects Bonvolio's own sense of being tricked by fate out of his inheritance to life and love.

The Countess also has a walled garden. This wall Benvolio is dramatically represented as scaling illegitimately because he is not her "real" lover, and has no intention of offering her marriage once he has got over the impediment of the wall. It is in relation to the Countess that his real ambivalence lies. One of the many ways in which this is suggested is through the symbolism of the painting which Benvolio purchases, and upon which he endlessly reflects, representing

> ... in a fantastic way, the story of Perseus and Andromeda - the beautiful naked maiden chained to a rock, on which, with picturesque incongruity, a wild fig-tree was growing; the green Adriatic tumbling at her feet, and a splendid brown-limbed youth in a curious helmet hovering near her on a winged horse. (366)

Benvolio is a Perseus who has not yet performed his feats. He has not yet slain his Medusa or released his idea of woman from the monster who has her in thrall. Even upon the winged horse of his imaginative passion he can only hover above her, seeing her so close and yet so inaccessible to him. She is there is all her naked beauty with her wild fig tree - life itself - set in an ambiguous medium, the tumbling sea, which indicates her power to charm, sustain, and yet to destroy him. It is significant that Benvolio's fame in the world comes to him through his dramatic art and not through his poetry. He writes his plays under the inspiration of the Countess - with her as leading lady and actress - and the works are the more compelling because she has put him more into relation with life. In drama people are the vehicle and medium for the expression of ideas. It is an art form that seems more

directly related to life than poetry, whose vehicle is only words, which may take the poet into the realm of his own abstractions. Benvolio becomes a dull poet because he loses contact with life.

Benvolio knows that "there is one relation with life which is a better antidote to ennui than any other - the relation established with a charming woman"[357] and it is the Countess whom he actively seeks. (He finds Scholastica because she appears in the garden one day as an aspect of his mind.) The Countess is a young widow, passionately pleasure-loving and admired. Benvolio finds her an "oasis of luxury and privacy, in the midst of common toil and traffic".[358] She is blessed with the gifts of nature and fortune. The fact that her power to enthrall men fails to work completely with him enhances his charm for her. He would represent a special triumph. She is excited by his "negative quality"[359] at the same time that she regards it as a "permanent offence"[359] that he does not come to the point. She has everything - beauty, money, luxury - except genius. She regards Benvolio as her harmonious counterpart because, potentially a great man, he can supply this necessary ingredient to her fulfilment. She has a strong will capable of appropriate expression, as passion, domination, jealousy or revenge. Although James says there is "strictly speaking"[359] "no suit",[359] she manipulates him into a position of appearing to offer marriage, by which she acquires rights over him. She takes the initiative and forces the issue with Scholastica because she can no longer bear the spectacle of Benvolio's "divided allegiance".[398] But by arranging for Scholastica's removal from the scene she presses him too hard, and he recoils to the safer though less seductive woman. Thus she denies him his possibility of life. Though she tricks herself out of her own future, she could not have foreseen the failure of a ruse that would have worked with most men. Left to himself Benvolio would rather sing her praises and go no further. In so doing he suggests how his image is conflated with other ideals:

> "You represent the world and everything that the world can give, and you represent them at their best - in their most generous, most graceful, most inspiring form. If a man were a revolutionist, you would reconcile him to society. You are a divine embodiment of all the amenities, the refinements, the complexities of life! You are the flower of urbanity, of culture, of tradition! You are the product of so many influences that it widens one's horizon to know you; of you too it is true that to admire you is a liberal education! Your charm is irresistible; I assure you I don't resist it!" (364)

By contrast Scholastica is not a woman. She is asexual, a creature of veils and nun-like demureness, raised in an austere environment remote from the world and emprisoning. She is the daughter of a blind Neo-Platonist who has spent fifty years in study. He has brought her up essentially as a boy, but allowing her no personal feelings and denying her any relationship in life except that of his own help-mate. Her mother died in infancy, and her father has been "her nurse, her playmate, her teacher, her life-long companion, her only friend".(377)

> He taught her the Greek alphabet before she knew her own, and fed her with the crumbs from his scholastic revels. She had taken submissively what was given her, and, without knowing it, she grew up a little handmaid of science. (377)

This makes her the kind of "woman" Benvolio can deal with. She is "exquisitely constituted for helping a man".(377) He grows to like her "as a man likes a thing but once in his life",(377) but he never loves her. She understands him and listens to him with ecstasy and admiration. However, she gives herself so totally that he becomes irritated by her apparent lack of personality and humanity. He thinks of her "as a neat little mechanical toy, wound up to turn pages and write a pretty hand, but with neither a head nor a heart that was capable of human ailments".(379) She does in fact make considerable sacrifices for him, and acquiesces in his neglect of her. But though she does not reproach him for his absences her increasing reserve towards him suggests resentment rather than trustful resignation. He destroys her peace of mind, and the disasters that befall her deepen her secret misery. Her father dies. Her uncle refuses to allow her to accept Benvolio's

attentions. Benvolio leaves her. She has to live in a convent, and in the end to accept the Countess's arrangement of an appointment as tutor to the family of a Governor's lady in the Antipodes. By the time Benvolio "marries" her she is dull, angular, unhappy, "old", and presumably resentful. The marriage does not suggest an extension, liberation or completion of his self. Benvolio has wished to multiply his relations with life. He arrives at the dead blank walls of limitation and confinement, in a situation which challenges his earlier view that he can turn his mental closet into a world.

The story exemplifies the special problem of the sensitive and imaginative man in relation to love, and presents schematically the ambivalence to women that inhibits his choice. It is clear to Benvolio that he is "a poet"(356) and not "a man of action".(356)

> A fine fellow of the latter stamp would have solved the problem without knowing it, and bequeathed to his fellow men not frigid formulas but vivid examples.(356)

He is born "to imagine great things - not to do them",(356) and he believes that a poet, according to his superior destiny, ought to be able to "run all risks - even that one for which the poet is perhaps most cruel"(383) - and that "he ought to escape them all".(383) He is a man with an "intellectual passion"(357) whose safety lies in pursuing "the voice of the muse"(389) and finding "profit"(389) in his emotion, even when it lacerates and suffocates him. Because he finds life threatening and is divided within himself, he is forced to lead a double life, symbolised by his pursuit of the double nature of woman. Yet he is doomed to lose in both cases. His relationship with the Countess is one "of mutual resentment and devotion",(389) in which they adore and hate each other at the same time. This paralyzes his power of work. Nevertheless the woman he seeks as her alternative, contrast and *repoussoir*, turns out to have the same effect on him. She is not sexually aggressive and is less obviously threatening to him, but she too can confine his mind and soul. His creativity depends on the equilibrium he sets up

between the two women, the two modes of experience, and the two types of love he experiences (though Scholastica's reflection of his own mind weakens the spiritual contrast to his passion). His vitality is dependent on the interaction between his direct experience of life and his indirect appreciation of it. He loves the Countess "only by contrast",[401] and when she destroys that by despatching her ante-type she destroys him. Though in the end he prefers his own mind, it is a mind reduced to sterility for lack of any connection with life. Benvolio is specifically the victim of the Countess. It is she who destroys the means whereby he has encompassed his life problems. Yet at the same time he is the victim of his own nature. The coalescence of the effects of her intervention and the consequences of his own nature make him seem utterly fated. His losses in life are reflected in his failure as an artist. In spite of his creative genius, he is frustrated in both modes of existence by his failure to solve his love problem. He cannot rise to a redeeming consciousness of his situation because his personality lacks integration. He cannot grow or develop. He exists only in terms of the tensions in his own nature which must work his fate.

In The Lesson of the Master* (1888) James treats the question of the perverse fate of love from the point of view of an artist hero at a further remove, not only because he offers a more detached perspective on the fate, but because he centres the action in the relationship between the males in the story, to which the females become appurtenances. The hero's mother has recently died, releasing him for his experience of life. The story portrays him at the most sensitive hour of his life, facing the decision whether to

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* Tales, Vol. 7

marry or follow his literary muse. The woman he might marry is, in a sense, a theoretic possibility, and his fate is dependent on his relationship with his rival, who is an essentially ambiguous figure. He is the catalyst of the hero's tragedy. He is the agent of a double fate: as a castrating father figure he steals the young man's girl and frustrates his life potentialities; as a true prophet, a father figure whom the young man would emulate, he advises him to follow his literary muse and encourages the successful development of his art. The relationship between the hero and his rival is still ambivalent, involving admiration and envy as well as distrust and distaste, but it is more mystifying because the rival is a father figure. However, in mediating the experience of woman through the filter of a male experience the threat of woman herself is to some extent reduced.

Paul Overt's flaw, like that of Benvolio, lies in his "complicated artistic soul".(279) He too is "in a false position"(269) vis-à-vis life. He is invited to a country house party where he meets Marian Fancourt, a beautiful young girl who loves literature and admires his work, and Henry St. George, the author to whom he is most indebted. St. George is the embodiment of success, though while he has written voluminously he has not fulfilled his early promise of greatness. Paul ascribes the shortfall to the demands that his wife has made upon his strength. Although his wife is with him St. George appears to be a follower of Marian's, and the young girl is given the pleasant opportunity of introducing her hero to the great man. In a sense, Paul is more interested in pursuing his relationship with the master, but on their return to London he finds himself in a situation of covert rivalry with him. St. George seems to have privileges as the père de famille to take Marian about to artistic occasions and to visit her on Sundays. However, Marian also invites Paul to visit her at home on Sundays, a circumstance which makes the older man defer to his superior rights. Paul is aware of his fear of women, but Marian suggests "no sort of sisterhood with the 'fast' girl."(253) Yet he finds her "too good to be real",(253)

and cannot believe that he has stumbled on "a crystal well",(253) when "the law of life"(253) is that he should be presented with a "desert".(253) It is "too rare an accident"(253) and Marian's aspirations seem both "too extravagant to be real"(253) and "too intelligent to be false".(253) Nevertheless he falls in love with her. Yet he believes that the artist is condemned to a false position, that he is a "mere disenfranchised monk"(269) who can "produce his effect only by giving up personal happiness".(269) St. George's own vision of Paul's dilemma, and his interest in looking after the young girl, whose father leaves her notoriously free, impels him to discover his intention. As a result of their discussion, in which the young man is inspired by the older man's belief in his capacity to achieve the greatest perfection in art, Paul leaves immediately for Europe, where he spends the next couple of years on his new novel. During his absence Mrs. St. George dies. When he returns to London, triumphant at completing his book, he expects to see Marian. However, at that moment her engagement to St. George is compacted, and he is faced with St. George's triumph, which calls in question his sincerity as Paul's counsellor. He feels cheated of the prize that was rightfully his. Moreover, Marian should have at her side a vigorous young man with a future, not a middle aged one with his talents exhausted. In their final interview St. George continues to affirm the young man's strength, which by dint of his own behaviour makes him seem a "mocking fiend".(282)

Paul is submerged in his puzzling situation and struggling for self-awareness. He experiences the torment of conflicting feelings as he strives toward a comprehension of the truth. However, James knows more than Paul, and places him deliberately in an ambiguous position in which everything that happens to him can be read in two ways, depending upon the perspective adopted. He invests his young hero with the same assumptions that he himself makes about the relation of the artist to life, and constructs his story on the principle that whatever the artist forfeits he will gain something. This

story goes beyond the artist's plight in Benvolio, for in failing to marry Paul may pursue perfection in art, and in marrying St. George may sacrifice his artistic quality. Either way there is something to be won and lost. Yet St. George is not James's hero. There is no story in his possible success. James is identified with the young hero who experiences a frustrated love fate; at the same time he tests that fate against the case of somebody for whom this fate might be entirely irrelevant. This implies a distanced perspective, which reduces the mere quality of fatedness while preserving a sense of pathos for the young man in his bewilderment.

Paul starts with the assumption that woman is the dragon the hero must slay in order to survive. Yet there is a comic air, which is a function of James's overall perspective, about the way in which Mrs. St. George as "the dragon"(231) is seen to consume and reduce her husband. Paul encounters a situation which is possibly a parody of the theme of the powerful female who consumes her male and establishes herself by his energies. When Paul meets her he is attracted immediately. Were it not for her "profane allusions"(224) to her husband he would have liked her. She tells Marian that she made St. George burn his autobiography, which seems tantamount to saying that she has destroyed the author. Paul is horrified, but later St. George says that the book was probably a mistake and that he would prefer Paul to write his biography. Nevertheless her influence upon her husband seems to the young man deeply ambiguous. She prevents him from smoking and drinking from concern for his health, but his refusals are gay: "my wife doesn't let me".(236) She appears to confine him to a study which excludes "the outer world".(260) There he has to stand up at a desk between ten and one daily to put down his thoughts as they come, as if novels could be written two a penny. But St. George says that this routine shakes up his imagination, and even Paul imagines the bare cell as a "charming place"(260) to help the artist project the figures of his imagination.

Under this dispensation St. George has produced "forty volumes of life, of observation, of magnificent vitality".(262) His wife is a good administrator who humours her husband while harnessing his energies. She is consummate at bargaining with his publishers and takes care of all practical matters. The writer has amassed a considerable amount of money, for his wife "has known how to take care of it, to use it without wasting it, to put a good bit of it by, to make it fructify".(263) She is symbolically connected with his good fortune, whatever her motives in driving him to success. Women are dangerous, St. George says, when they seem to sympathise with the position of the artist qua artist, because they all have fundamentally the same idea - "that you shall do a great lot and get a great lot of money. Their great nobleness, and virtue, their exemplary conscientiousness as British females, is in keeping you up to that".(264) Paul never knows quite how to take St. George's comments about his wife, because he seems to talk out of both sides of his mouth at the same time. He exaggerates what he perceives as the resentment of an artist with a "tragic intellectual secret".(229) He is surprised when after her death St. George writes to him in her praise:

> "She took everything off my hands - off my mind. She carried on our life with the greatest art, the rarest devotion, and I was free, as few men can have been, to drive my pen, to shut myself up with my trade. This was a rare service - the highest she could have rendered me. Would I could have acknowledged it more fitly!" (273)

The ambiguity of her portrait is not lessened by the fact that it is she who dies and whose life energies have become exhausted. She can be seen as a brave little woman who looks death in the eye and carries on the business of living. The first time Paul meets her their hostess observes that she is too ill to decently accept other people's invitations. Nevertheless she takes pleasure in social life - giving big dinner parties, meeting celebrities, making visits - and enjoys being wife to a man who represents "the honourable image of success"(245) and "material rewards".(245) Everyone pronounces her "charming"(219) and Paul would have found her alert, intelligent and accommodating, had his perceptions been less clouded by his concern about her

relationship with her husband and its implications for his own life.

There is less contrast between Marian and Mrs. St. George than would at first appear, partly because Marian is seen as a potential Mrs. St. George. Their psychological affinity is emphasised by Marian's eventual marriage. Marian essentially represents life and is meant for the world, though she is not sexually aggressive like Mrs. St. George, and her youth and innocence allay Paul's fears rather than arouse his suspicions. She has a most beautiful face and carries her beauty with "a sense of generosity"(223) and "enthusiasm".(223) She is natural and spontaneous, and quickens responsiveness in others. She so overflows with "life"(243) that she gives herself unreservedly. She seems to promise the fulfilment rather than threaten the depletion of others. Paul, remembering a discussion in her "bright, red, sociable, talkative room"(252) on the subject of perfection in art, has even the rare delight of feeling that "their conversation was a full interchange."(252) Marian even promises an equality of relationship. James observes that

> this episode will have lived for years in his memory and even in his wonder; it had the quality that fortune distils in a single drop at a time - the quality that lubricates ensuing weeks and months. (252)

It is through his memory of her that Paul is put in touch with life again. St. George's comments are wonderfully admiring, suggesting that she is a potent source of life and image of it. As he says, she enhances the artist's importance so that even to himself he seems larger than life:

> "She's first-rate herself and she expends herself on the second-rate. She's life herself and she takes a rare interest in imitations. She mixes all things up, but there are none in regard to which she hasn't perceptions. She sees things in a perspective - as if from the top of the Himalayas - and she enlarges everything she touches. Above all, she exaggerates - to herself, I mean. She exaggerates you and me!" (243)

She enjoys everything, and invests everything with a significance of her own. She represents the richest life St. George has ever seen. Only after she is lost to him does Paul fully acknowledge her quality. Previously he tends to

think of her as an "immature",[229] gushing girl, slightly stupid in her happiness. Yet she develops from the rather odd Colonial girl, just arrived in London with her father, a retired Indian army officer, into a mature, independent, responsible girl of considerable strength and force of personality.

One aspect of the case that emphasises the male relationship is that the woman is not responsible for precipitating the fate. It is never suggested that she prefers St. George, but rather that she likes Paul very much and is free to marry whom she chooses. She gives Paul repeated openings that he does not take up, and he leaves for Europe without telling her. Had he pursued her she might have accepted him, but he prefers to regard her as a theoretic option in reserve. She therefore seems as though she has been disappointed by a defective lover, though she makes no such observation, and indeed leaves Paul remarkably free to make his own choice. The unqualified presentation of her character underlines the fact that Paul projects his fear upon her. The lack of any development in their relation leaves her as a mere symbol, standing for the thing which he fears.

It is important that until his return to England when she died (a year earlier) Paul was totally under the domination of his mother, escorting her from one European health resort to another. His long absence explains why he had never met St. George. The fatal aspect of the meeting now is that it coincides with his meeting Marian, and precipitates the crisis that determines his future. Previously he was preoccupied with his literary inheritance, regarding St. George as a "fine original source"[215] to whom his debt has been "immense".[215] When they first meet, Paul expects to see signs of the "fine frenzy"[222] of the artistic creator in his eyes. Instead, he finds something of "the happy human being"[280] about him, which is irritating. He prefers St. George's face in repose rather than in laughter. If St. George has a "happy personal art"[232] of appearing to conjure away the "false position"[232] that Paul associates with the artist <u>vis-à-vis</u>

life, nevertheless he would like him to have some "tragic intellectual secret".[229]

> He would have his reasons for his psychology _à fleur de peau_, and these reasons could only be cruel ones, such as would make him dearer to those who already were fond of him.[229]

Paul is looking for a father figure with a kindred spiritual and psychological make-up. This is why St. George's "lesson" makes such an impression upon him. "Don't become in your old age what I am in mine - the depressing, the deplorable illustration of the worship of false gods!"[239] St. George has led a "mercenary muse"[262] to the altar of literature, one who has made his life a hell, and he has worshipped "the idols of the market-place".[239] In actuality, whatever sacrifice he has made seems minimal. As Paul himself says, his writings "are a mine of gold even as they stand".[251] He sits on his treasure trove - his real and direct connection with life, love, fortune and literary success - lamenting philosophically the failure of his literary alchemy. He lends himself to the myth by suggesting that through all those things which represent "the full, rich, masculine, human, general life"[265] have given him "subjects without number ... they've taken away at the same time the power to use them".[265-66] Holding that the artist is his own sole arbiter, he maintains that he has failed his better self. One must work for

> ... oneself - one's conscience, one's idea, the singleness of one's aim. I think of that pure spirit as a man thinks of a woman whom, in some detested hour of his youth, he has loved and forsaken. She haunts him with reproachful eyes, she lives for ever before him.[261-62]

St. George does not necessarily believe that perfection in art is attainable or even desirable. What he says about the conflict between art and life is dependent upon the particular perspective he adopts. St. George has the enigmatic quality of a father figure with contradictory aspects, who utters oracles confusing and ambiguous, the more so in that his own motives are obscure. Paul's failure to grasp his tone is related to the older man's appearance as an apparition of a father, unknowable to a son lacking the

means of giving substance to his past. The elder man is in a superior position because he discerns the young man's conflict. Paul's confusion is exacerbated by his own heightened emotions, which filter the advice that he wants from the welter of St. George's talk. At the critical moment in this exchange Paul cuts off his power to think and lets his emotions sift the information given him in order to arrive at the truth he unconsciously seeks. It is partly that being too young to accept the responsibility for choosing he wants St. George to do it for him, and partly that he seeks verification as an artist, confirmation from "the master" that he has the potential for artistic success. St. George himself says that he has no doubt that Paul is a "gentleman"(270) and "a man of genius",(270) who might do something fine and yet like himself have everything. But if he wants to seek perfection, he is undoubtedly one of the rare few with the talent and the strength to do it. Paul believes that whatever his shortcomings as a man St. George will be "infallible"(261) as an adviser. He is in the posture of a "pilgrim of old"(261) consulting his "oracle",(261) and the answer makes him as happy as "a happy little boy when the schoolmaster is gay".(261) For St. George supports him by acknowledging that there is a real alternative to his own supposed failure, that the pursuit of the pure muse of perfection is possible, and that loving her will represent living "in the greatest sense"(270) a life of "intense"(270) passion. In this he upholds the assumption of James himself that Nature has perhaps dedicated Paul "to intellectual, not to personal passion".(284) Miraculously Paul gets the advice he wants, which confirms him in doing what he thinks is best for him. His doom is therefore not an overwhelming or desolating thing, because he has another destiny, the capacity to project his experience to make imaginative capital out of the small stock his life gives him. Paul is no longer a hero who is the tragic victim who loses everything through a set of circumstances. He can live differently and even perhaps with greater intensity in the pursuit of his intellectual passion.

Paul is a frustrated lover whose loss of personal happiness has a happy outcome for his art. The ambiguity in the double aspect of the ambivalent lover's fate - as both imposed upon him and the result of his psychological nature - is here treated from a comic standpoint and more explicitly. Paul fails to propose, vanishes without an explanation and returns to find himself outraged because someone else has stolen his treasure! He is shown to have some self knowledge because it is "necessary to his sore spirit to believe for the hour"(283) that he has a grievance - "all the more cruel for not being a legal one".(283) Yet he cannot say he has not brought his fate on himself to some degree or that he is not to some extent satisfied with the outcome.

The ambiguity which surrounds his situation is related to St. George. On the one hand St. George is the father triumphant, who suddenly steals his woman. Standing beside Marian he looks handsome and young, a man with a rich capacity and "a great fund of life",(280) exhibiting "the ripeness of his successful manhood".(283) On the other hand, he is a kind of failure, who represents abdication and superannuation, and who has "ceased to count"(280) definitely for the young man. He is to some extent a young man's projection of a father figure who has certain god-like qualities. Yet he is too insolent a figure if he is totally triumphant, one who exposes his young admirer's weakness as against his own eternal energy and power, who thereby reinforces the injury already done him. It is one thing if he is a true prophet who has understood Paul's conflict, given him the right advice, and slain his dragon-woman for him, releasing him for the experience of life he ultimately seeks. But because he propounds the myth that it is impossible to marry and to seek perfection in art, and brings about its fulfilment for Paul while seeming himself to gain everything, he becomes a sinister, "mocking fiend".(282) When Paul's book comes out the St. Georges pronounce it "really magnificent".(284) To that time St. George himself has published nothing more. But Paul does not feel safe, fearing that given his new source

of life the old man will yet put forth his best work. Paul has indeed to be strong to contemplate the possibility that a writer may have everything and still pursue his muse. There is a certain envy of a man who is so different and so happy, who can escape the dilemmas of a false position. The realization of this possibility would destroy the categories of the story and leave Paul no standing ground. He assumes that a writer who pursues everying must in the end fail to count. The illusion is to suppose that such a man could produce writing of quality. Even St. George himself, in the crucial scene of their discussion, gives some indication that his writing is not so great, even if the fact is not generally appreciated. Something of the successful charlatan attaches to St. George. Paul finds it inconceivable that St. George will now put forth works of his old quality. Yet the possibility remains to mock him.

If St. George is a satanic figure, Paul is his victim, but there is no real suggestion that his advice was calculated to reserve Marian for himself. Paul is not blindly accusing in the manner of earlier and weaker heroes toward their rivals. He is aware that he is the bearer of his own fate. His story is rendered as if he had some choice, though he may still feel his fate to be forced upon him. His is an either-or situation in which everything can be viewed from a double perspective. The tension is such that at any moment the set of terms which put together his picture of life might slip and turn into the other set, descriptive of a different picture of life. A sense of "which is it?" overhangs the tale, although James's own set of co-ordinates is established and his hero's fate is in this sense predetermined, thus giving a certain potency to the alternative. James stands behind his surrogate hero, sympathising with the young man struggling with his conflict and his recognition, suffering his torment and seeing everything from a double perspective. Yet he stands at a further distance from the action, aware of his own mental proclivities for creating such stories, and indulging in a kind of _jeu d'esprit_ with his own imaginative

categories. He presents Paul with the possibility that the myth with which he is invested is an explanation and account of his situation, and then throws up the mocking possibility that this is not at all the case. The young man's fate is qualified by his redemptive consciousness and by the comic distance which is placed upon his whole story. Whether St. George is destroyed or made by his marriage, and whatever the extent of his failure or success, he is a prototype of the rival figure who is a castrating father (even where he may confirm and protect his son) and demonstrates the way in which the father is a catalyst and agent of the perverse fate in love.

In The Wheel of Time* (1892-93) James shows not only how the fate repeats itself in the life of a man who is rising fifty, but how, with an increasing sense of the perversity of it, the hero-victim has hallucinations that threaten his existence and those about him. He is forced into perverse interpretations of his experience, while the intensity of his fantasies obliterates his capacity for human feeling. He turns into a monster, incapable of ordinary kindness or love. His fantasies centre upon the one woman who could have given him happiness. He sees her as a double figure, the author of his woe and the means of his possible redemption, and he cannot be sure which image is finally correct. He tries to assuage his sense of menace by viewing her as transfigured by her divine love for him, but her image as a destroyer is too deep to banish. Likewise his image of himself as a born loser because he is the victim of woman runs too deep to be eradicated. As the foundations of the fate become more obviously neurotic there is a greater split between fantasy and actuality. The effect of the story depends partly on James's handling of details which expose the narrator's false interpreta-

* Tales, Vol. 8

tions, notably in relation to the woman herself, so that the story proves the opposite of what the hero-narrator intends: that the male is the monster while the female has suffered grave injury at his hands and redeemed herself.

Maurice Glanvil's experience at forty-nine is incomprehensible without reference to his mutilated youth. The story is told in an introduction by his mother, Lady Greyswood. Maurice receives his first wounds as the favourite son of a powerful and seductive mother whose possession of him inhibits his development. He is thought to have talents and potentialities, though they remain dormant. He is sensitive to his position in the family, as a younger son with no right of inheritance nor means of supporting the position to which he was born. He is acutely aware of his public failure, for twice he has sat unsuccessfully the examinations for entry to the diplomatic service, the only career open to him. He has a love of photography, but though he is talented it is not a profession suitable to one of his social class. On the one hand he considers himself worthless, a failure, a disgrace, "a poor beggar of a younger son"(464) who has "publicly come a cropper".(464) On the other hand he sees himself as beautiful and lovable, because his mother's obvious preference for him has made him feel superior. His elder brothers have no regard for him and nobody else sees anything in him. Even his mother appears to love him in defiance of the world.

> The acceptability of her favourite child was consistent with the rejection of those of other people - on which indeed it even directly depended. (460)

His story opens when his mother attempts to provide for his future by marrying him to a rich young girl, Fanny Knocker. She is in collusion with Mrs. Knocker, who sees her own advantage in marrying her ugly daughter to a beautiful young man of good birth. Fanny is extremely plain and unformed, but her character and intelligence promise to develop, especially under the circumstances of being loved and given confidence. Lady Greyswood convinces herself that her son will like the girl and find in her everything he wants

if he has a chance to know her and to overcome his "repugnance" toward her looks. Maurice argues that he does not want to barter his beauty and have "the air of having been bribed with gold to marry a monster".(458) This is exactly what his mother has done in making her own marriage. He argues that Fanny is far too good for him and is scared herself of the "ravening wolf".(465) He projects his fear of the threatening power of woman to dominate and possess onto Fanny, whose ugliness he exaggerates. He cannot help regarding her as "awful".(466) His mother has no compunction about using his good parts and connections as "a force for coercing heiresses".(459) She looks on Fanny primarily as "just the person to fill out poor Maurice's blanks",(459) and she takes for granted that events will observe her own convenience. She considers that if she and Mrs. Knocker are only diplomatic enough, deeply wise, and patient, everything will work out. Under his mother's coercion and on condition of secrecy Maurice enters an "experimental"(467) courtship. He finds that he does in a sense like the girl. She rides very well and is easy to talk to, and is also "remarkably"(470) clever and "thoroughly nice".(470) For a while life seems to be made for him.

> He was evidently amused and beguiled; he fell into comfortable attitudes on the soft cushions that were laid for him and partook with relish of the dainties that were served; he had his fill of the theatres, of the opera - entertainments of which he was fond.(470)

Maurice allows himself to be taken up by the Knockers for several months in a constant round of activities, until one day when they attend a horticultural show in tremendous heat he realizes that assumptions have been made that place him in a false position. He goes home to change, but instead "bolts" without explanation. In a note that he leaves behind for his mother he acknowledges only his ostensible reason, his natural aversion to the young girl's appearance. Maurice has been "much addicted to kissing his mother at home"(461) and doing things to please her, but he rebels against her force. Moreover in relation to the marriage, not only was he manipulated by the two elder women, who devised cunning strategies in an attempt to bring about a

marriage that could have occurred naturally without their intervention, but the girl herself was deeply in love with him.

Maurice fled in panic, feeling more and more like the victim of a trick in which all the women were out to get him. He had supposed his own freedom was protected because the girl herself was told nothing of their parents' plans, and nothing was made public. However, the combined pressures exerted on him, together with the increasing publicity of the affair, overwhelmed him and he ran for his life. Fanny herself is an image of nascent female power. Her diffidence, timidity, and failure of confidence are merely a part of growing up. In her both elder women recognise intelligence, character and charm, and an abundance of talents and abilities to which she does not draw attention. Though she becomes critically ill as a result of the affair, she survives to prove her character and strength. Maurice, though he appeared to be in a strong position, goes on to reveal his essential weakness. Fanny has proved too strong for him and he marries, more or less on the rebound, a weak and pretty young girl. It is the "*coup de foudre* of his youth",[474] a "romantic union"[474] in which passion dictates that someone shall die. In this case it is his wife whose energies are depleted and she dies in child birth, having left an ugly daughter, whom he calls Vera. Life in a sense revenges itself upon him in presenting him with this ugly fruit of an impoverished union, in spite of the beauty of her antecedents, who is a further proof of his failure.

After his flight Maurice exiles himself in Europe until he returns to England at forty-nine. He comes in search of the lost threads of his mutilated youth. His drama takes a step forward when he is invited to the home of a painter, where he meets the son he would have liked to have had, Arthur Tregent, who looks like him. Arthur is as beautiful and talented as he remembers himself being. He is kind to Vera, who has now reached the age of marriage, and promises to introduce them both to his mother, whose portrait they have been admiring. She is the widowed Mrs. Tregent and the mature Fanny

Knocker. Even without being told this, Maurice recognises in the portrait the girl, "insurmountably charmless to him, who had fallen in love with him (so that she was ready to die of it) within the first five minutes, before he had spoken".(476) Fanny's features in maturity have been redefined by her personal and spiritual qualities, and she is now beautiful. Her portrait stands for "embodied success",(479) which exposes to him his own sense of failure, for he stands "for mere bereavement and disappointment"(479) - "a failure not to be surpassed".(479) She is obviously loved and admired by her friends whereas he is a lonely and wandering exile. He looks to Fanny to put him in touch with his lost inheritance and give him back the life to which he had natural entitlements.

Maurice feels no embarrassment towards the woman he has treated so badly because he holds that he never committed himself. Her prompt invitation suggests that there is no bitterness in her. When they meet he discovers that she is "simply another person altogether".(482) She has nothing in common with her younger self, so that he is not meeting her on the grounds of a previous acquaintance. She is made totally anew in the shape of a "graceful, harmonious, expressive English matron"(482) whose smile has "a singular radiance".(482) The inarticulate phrase which hums through everything is "how could I have known?"(482) He blushes "for the crass stupidity of his mistake",(483) but he realises that her perception of his blush and understanding of the reasons for it "could only constitute for her a magnificent triumph, a revenge".(483) "To put his finger on the identity"(483) of the young girl "would make him feel better".(483) However, her "attitude of hospitality to himself"(483) effaces for the moment the notion that she wants to triumph over him, and Maurice now imagines her as "watching only the lost vision that had come back, the joy, if for a single hour, she had found again".(483) Yet he wonders whether she retains a sense of injury with respect to the past and asks her whether she knew "a hundred years ago"(485) of the plan of their respective mothers that they should marry. She naturally

denies knowledge of the incident and makes it plain that Maurice knows nothing about her as a person. Maurice becomes more and more obsessed with his sense of having been defrauded unjustly of his rights to love, life and happiness. His sense of his own losses is so great that he forgets he is the one to have injured her, and cultivates his own soreness at the trick that had been played him which caused him to flee from her:

> "No, it wasn't fair," he said, "and I wasn't well used - a hundred years ago. I'm sore about it now; you ought to have notified me, to have instructed me. Why didn't you, in common honesty? Why didn't my poor mother, who was so eager and shrewd? Why didn't yours? She used to talk to me. Heaven forgive me for saying it, but our mothers weren't up to the mark! You may tell me they didn't know; to which I reply that mine was universally supposed, and by me in particular, to know everything that could be known. No, it wasn't very well managed, and the consequences have been this odious discovery, an awful shock to a man of my time of life and under the effect of which I now speak to you, that for a quarter of a century I've been a fool." (491)

Maurice never considers her feelings because he deludes himself that he is speaking to somebody who has no connection with the young girl he jilted. He holds his mother responsible for having tricked him out of his rights, when she must have had a superior knowledge of the transformation that would take place. In fact, she did tell Maurice that Fanny would improve. It was his own fear which made her appearance so ugly, and which was the cause of his early frustrated hopes, for he was the one who "bolted". He blames Fanny too for having worn "a disfiguring mask, a veil, a disguise"(492) to trick him into thinking she was monstrous when in fact she was all he might have wanted. He could not have known of the miracle that would occur, and measured her "by the common law",(491) but he finds it unkind of her to have left him in error and to have deceived him. Maurice ignores her own comments that she cannot flatter herself she has had more than one identity, and that her compensation for aging has been her understanding that one can never be "such a fool as one <u>has</u> been"(486) in one's youth. He is lost within his own fantasies, passing from the haunting notion that he has been tricked, to be lulled by her appearance of treating him benignly, back to a sense of

alarm once more.

When Mrs. Tregent bursts into tears at his admission that it is he who was "the idiot",(492) he measures for himself the depth of her continuing passion for him. He does not see her transformation in the light of her own suffering and her struggle toward a redeeming consciousness to encompass her own loss and injury. Her tears prove to him that he _is_ still the passion of this extraordinary woman's life, and the purity of his gratitude renews in his spirit the sources of his youth for which he has been searching. As he interprets the situation to himself he sees

> she had striven, she had accepted, she had conformed, but she had thought of him every day of her life. She had taken up duties and performed them, she had banished every weakness and practised every virtue, but the still, hidden flame had never been quenched. His image had interposed, his reality had remained, and she had never denied herself the sweetness of hoping that she should see him again and that she should know him. (493)

He is temporarily humiliated by the vision of her sublimity, the secret whereby she has been beautified - "the miracle of heroic docilities and accepted pangs and vanquished egotisms".(493) He sees her as still living for himself with the intensity of fidelity unvanquished by the length of her service to him in love.

Maurice has now "all the air of being in love",(494) though he is incapable of loving, and imagines that Fanny loves him. He has no suspicion that he will be rejected. When he is it is "the sting"(495) in her refusal that it is "a reproach to his delicacy",(495) that is sharper to him "than the disappointment of his desire".(495) He feels he has exposed himself to the imputation "that he only bargained for certainties and only recognised success".(406) Yet it is easy for him to cover up his rejection with the notion that a richer promise lies behind it, his interpretation of her saying that Vera must be their "compensation".(496)

He feels gratitude at the revelation of her "beautiful conception of a nobler remedy - the endeavour to place their union outside of themselves,

to make their children know the happiness they had missed".[499] He has seen Fanny from the beginning appearing to take Vera in hand as an attempt to repair the injuries done to himself. The text seems to imply that she pities the young girl and attempts to protect her from suffering such an injurious fate in love as she had herself suffered in her youth. Maurice only ever sees her as a function of himself and construes her actions to support his fantasies of being loved or cheated, as he sees her as benign or threatening. He never sees her as an individual human being. Maurice is certain that Vera has received her "coup de foudre"[487] from her first meeting with Arthur Tregent, and the young man has suggested a haunting analogy with himself, in the conflict of attitude he has displayed to the ugly young girl. When his mother suggests that she should take Vera for a period to stay with her because she will be "safer"[497] at her home than with her father, he ignores her implied criticism, and rests in the sense that she is the only person to whom he would give his daughter up. His attitude is inexcusable because though he consciously has a horror of exposing Vera to such situations as might lead to her injury, his real desire is that Arthur should prove how natural his own original act was by himself "bolting" and leaving the girl. This is indeed what happens, but Maurice is not abashed because in his view he measures as never before the depth of Mrs. Tregent's passion for him in "the strength of her desire to do something for him"[502] and "the intensity"[502] with which she wished to do it.

> She had counted on her influence with her son, on his affection and on the maternal art, and there was anguish in her compunction for her failure, for her false estimate of the possible.[502]

He comforts himself that Vera knew nothing of the plan, though he knows "how such girls knew who knew nothing".[502] Vera, however, is seriously ill, and does not recover from her injury in love. She is "destined to forfeit even the physical victory",[502] and dies within the year: "unlike Fanny Knocker she was never to have her revenge."[502]

Maurice's view of his daughter is characteristically divided. Though she is fated to die of love he undeniably makes an experiment of her in the interest of his own fantastic proofs. She is portrayed in the story as if she was already an injured self who had not risen to the level of personality, although she is represented as being acutely aware of her situation in the same way that the young Fanny was. She is acutely aware of her defect - her shortness of stature - which is exacerbated by her comparison with English girls who are so much taller. The fact that she has been brought up on Continental lines puts her out of touch with her social context. She is effectively a child who would like to please and knows that she does not. Her father takes "a melancholy view of her possible happiness",[481] "tending to believe, in his pessimism, that it could only lead to some refinement of humiliation"[481-82] for himself. He is certain she will be rejected. He himself rejects her from the beginning because she is ugly and not a boy. He cannot "live instinctively into her girlishness",[474] and she lacks a boy's talents. Although she is "the occupation of his life"[488] he does not love her. It is Arthur Tregent who possesses the "natural gifts"[490] which remind him of his own "fastidiously clever youth",[490] though he appears even sharper than young men of his own time. He cultivates the notion that he too shows "the disposition to escape from plain girls"[490] who aspire to him, which would make him a precise analogy to himself when young. "Such a characteristic, as embodied in the object of Vera's admiration, was purely interesting, was even amusing, to Vera's father",[490] and he is anxious to learn whether Arthur really finds Vera "repulsive".[490] Since he cannot ask such questions without appearing to be offering Vera in marriage, he confines himself to "meditating in silence on the happiness it would be for poor Vera to marry a beautiful young man with a fortune and a future".[490] He sees her "caught up to the blue like Ganymede",[488] as the bearer of Arthur's cup of life. Yet he is sure that she will be rejected, and this is the proof that will verify himself.

Maurice is saved from the appearance of sacrificing his daughter to an experiment because Fanny Tregent takes up the girl's cause. He will be vindicated if Arthur does what is natural in the circumstances, for it will prove that he was right after all to leave Fanny. When Arthur does flee, he too has the appearance of saving himself from a mother's maternal arts as well as escaping a marriage which threatens him, and Mrs. Tregent is left with the appearance of a "murder" on her own hands. For Maurice is sure that she regards the situation as an analogy to her own. The story blanks out his perception of the meaning of Vera's death, but it ends with the notion of Fanny Knocker's revenge. This seems to imply that she pays Maurice back for his original injury of her by sacrificing his daughter to her son. For she would undoubtedly know that the situation would repeat itself. Paradoxically, the fact that he attempts to exonerate her suggests the extent to which he wishes to place the burden of guilt and responsibility upon her in a kind of unconscious revenge. This is only implied, but it follows from the kind of double thinking characteristic of his fantasies.

James cuts the story off at the moment when Maurice's fantasies threaten to support him no longer, although throughout they have only precariously preserved his sense of himself. For he is left with the identity of a failure and a fabric of fictions. He has sacrificed his only child to save his view of himself, and has nothing left. He has only the appearance of being justified. If Fanny is evil then he has saved his own skin and let his surrogate die at her hands. If he has lost his love and happiness and the fulfilment of his original potential, nevertheless he has been the passion of her life, and has been connected with the source of life. Yet the fantasies which in some sense have protected him also prevent him from coming into direct contact with reality.

Maurice's story brings about another reversal: it shows the monstrosity of his own egotism, and vindicates the woman upon whom he has tried to fix an evil identity. The woman who emerges from the text is one who has

loved and lost, lived and suffered, grown and changed, and learned to come to terms with herself and life. Above all she is represented as being supremely conscious. Her remarks indicate that she sees Maurice as he is, and not as she saw him when young. It is an unimaginable affront that after his treatment of her he should return to have his own losses made good. Yet she appears to help him with the charity of a person who understands his flaws, who will do for him what she can. Something in especial may be done for his child, who clearly needs unequivocal support from someone. Her sufferings are represented as having been real in a different way from Maurice's. She has fought for what she has won, and has not lost her capacity to love with charity. She has not had the life she would have liked, but it has been happier than she once expected. She shows all the courage and character of an heroic stance, an integrated personality, and a personal integrity. Her age is ameliorated by a transformation of a kind which is her victory over the circumstances to which she once fell victim. It is not that she is a different person, for as she says "there has been no miracle.... I've never known anything but the common, ah the very common law, and anything that I may have become only the common things have made me."(492)

Maurice's fate is only understandable in terms of his original injury by the overpossessive love of a mother who engulfed him, which is the experience of love he flees for ever after. The first time that he loses his fortune he does so by his own act and without understanding his loss. When he returns to claim his happiness with the awareness of what might have been, and in the supposition that it could still be, he is rejected, but it is a rejection he has asked for. He is seen in his own nature to be the bearer of his fate. He understands his own fate only in so far as he realises a trick has been played him, that he has been defrauded of his natural inheritance in life. He is not represented as comprehending the nature of his own flaw and continues to exist in terms of the conflict that tears him apart and which necessarily reconstitutes itself because it is never resolved. His

one and only woman retains her double face for him, and he merely vacillates between seeing her as monstrous or sublime, depending upon how he measures her effect upon his own situation. Her double nature, however, is a fiction of his own mind which prevents him from ever seeing her as she is.

In The Beast in the Jungle* (1903) James treats the hero's fate from an even greater point of abstraction, in which the hero feels doomed but does not realise that the threat is his fear of loving a woman. The perversity of his fate is grotesque even to himself and he carries his burden as a hunch-back bears his hump. Unlike the previous hero he is heroic in his attempt to confront his fate as a daily fact of life. Although he cannot escape his fate the very fact of searching for it confirms it. His attempt to transcend it by seeking it out fails because this commits him to a passive role, and he lacks the perspective on himself that would allow him to rise above it. He cannot apprehend the meaning of his fate. He blocks himself off from awareness because of his fear of an excoriating knowledge, but his need to know becomes so obsessive that it must burst all boundaries and ultimately explode into consciousness. The hero discovers the extent to which he has doomed himself to a perverse fate, though it could never have been otherwise. The putative possibility of his escape comes with his retrospective awareness of what would have saved him, but it is attended by a sense of inevitability. The theoretic possibility only proves its final impossibility.

John Marcher sees himself as a creature doomed to suffer a peculiar fate that distinguishes him from other people, though he does not understand what it is. He lives in a constant state of apprehension, waiting in suspense for it to befall him. He has to adopt a passive posture in order to allow

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* Tales, Vol. 11

his fate to manifest itself. He thinks of himself as having no choice. Something will happen to him, but not as a result of his actions. Thus in awaiting his fate he confirms it. He grows old, and a friend who watches with him, May Bartram, realizes it has been constituting itself all the while. His mode of life has itself been the living out of his fate. She tells him that it "has come, in its own form and in its own way, all the while".(370) He has expected a dramatic event and feels let down, perhaps even mistaken about himself. But this would be intolerable. He believes her, and he is now in a different posture with respect to his fate, especially after she dies and he no longer has her help. Now he must search the past and raise to light "the lost stuff of consciousness"(395) so that he may comprehend the meaning of what has happened to him. His fate becomes complete in the final moments of his dramatic relevaltion of the truth that he has sought: that he was predestined to be a man to whom nothing would happen because he has never been touched by passion.

There is in Marcher a tremendous desire to arrive at a knowledge of his situation, counterbalanced by a compulsion to remain in ignorance of it in order to live on whatever level he can. He is ultimately astounded at his own previous blindness, but the fate that claims him as its own is precisely that he be blind. His fate is determined by the nature of his own psyche, though he feels it to be imposed from the outside, and escape from it seems a possibility throughout his life. It is given as an abstract condition of his thinking, unattached to any incident. At any moment, theoretically, he might understand that to live is to love and that all he need do is to love May Bartram for herself and not as a function of his own personality. Yet he can only live out what it is his nature to be. The pity and the terror of the story lie in his comprehending, too late to do anything about it, that his fate is not to have loved or lived in direct connection with life. The fact that he has not been able to do so is a way of measuring

the significance of what he has lost in not having done so.

Marcher is in fact so terrified of life that he paralyzes himself from living. Like Maurice Glanvil he is introduced as the hero who has already lost the one woman he loved, though he has not recognised it. When he meets May Bartram she recalls an earlier meeting, which his mind has suppressed. It seems that in their twenties Marcher "fell in love" with May without knowing it. His responsiveness to her was marked by his betraying his secret to her. He exposed his sense of being doomed, which explains his failure to engage in a more romantic adventure with her. It is sufficiently significant that they met at Pompeii in circumstances of a

> . . thunderstorm that had raged round them with such violence as to drive them for refuge into an excavation ... on an occasion when they had been present there at an important find. (354)

May reveals that for her "the great affair",(360) falling in love, has proved a "cataclysm".(360) This is her definition of love. She would seem to have fallen in love with Marcher, the difference between them being that she knew the state of her feelings while he understood neither hers nor his own.

They meet again in symbolic circumstances in a house called Weatherend, in which are heaped the "treasures of all the arts".(351) Marcher finds himself among guests excited by "the dream of acquisition",(351) who sniff out their idea of the possible prize. He feels himself exempt from this symbolic action, and this is in fact what puts him in relation with May, who represents in another form the treasure and prize of life to be won. He is aware that she is there "as a consequence of things suffered".(353) Marcher cannot feel "in a proper relation"(352) to the treasures displayed because they oppress him with their weight of "poetry and history".(352) It is as if life was so concentrated, condensed and summarised in the formulations of art which crowd around him that the things themselves are fraught with the foreknowledge of human destiny, of what is later called "the stamp of the common doom".(388) They are themselves the evidences of that doom. May

herself represents the life which threatens him, but he is only aware of the threat in this other symbolic form. Thus it is in circumstances in which Marcher feels particularly doomed, amid the treasures of the world that are specially not for him, that May takes her initiatory steps that lead to the constitution of their friendship. The effect of the narration of the story is always to put Marcher near to the thing he seeks and yet to keep him separated from it. He is eternally tantalized by being so close and yet so far from the truth. He is like a man who is at the source and has only to bend down to drink, and who finally drowns in the stream because he thinks he cannot swim. He is aware that May is somehow putting him in touch with the lost thread of his connection with life, and it is "a sort of revelation"(359) to discover that he is no longer "abominably alone".(359) Once he discovers that a kind of sharing with another person is open to him, he asks her not to leave him, and she agrees to watch and wait with him for his fate to constitute itself.

In keeping the story to the mode of fantasy and dealing with it in abstract terms, James's power of suggestion is infinitely increased. The reader is placed in a world dominated by exaggerated and powerful feelings, in which anything can happen, disproportion and distortion occur naturally, and all kinds of connections can be established between things that seem disparate. The fantastic may seem ordinary and corresponds to a definite reality. Marcher is "a haunted man",(364) but his obsessions constitute the world for him, whatever it might be for other people. The terms in which Marcher conceives of his fate bring into conjunction ideas of living and loving and make of them an image of terror. He tells May about the thing he is to suffer -

> to wait for - to have to meet, to face, to see suddenly break out in my life; possibly destroying all further consciousness, possibly annihilating me; possibly, on the other hand, only altering everything, striking at the root of all my world and leaving me to the consequences, however they shape themselves. (360)

To her this is a description of falling in love. For Marcher, however, falling in love would seem to be more essentially "agreeable"(360) and "delightful",(360) while being insufficiently "strange".(360) Yet the image in which he figures the arrival of his fate describes the same thing in other terms. Whatever it means, it is an image thrown up out of his unconscious mind to describe his fate. It is a significant aspect of the image that it automatically puts May herself out of the question. His description of his fate is his fear of love, though he does not realize it:

> His conviction, his apprehension, his obsession, in short, was not a condition he could invite a woman to share; and that consequence of it was precisely what was the matter with him. Something or other lay in wait for him, amid the twists and the turns of the months and the years, like a crouching beast in the jungle. It signified little whether the crouching beast were destined to slay him or to be slain. The definite point was the inevitable spring of the creature; and the definite lesson from that was that a man didn't cause himself to be accompanied by a lady on a tiger-hunt.(365)

Marcher is projecting as a beast the negative qualities of the sexually aggressive and powerful woman, the life force which in his imagination threatens to overwhelm, destroy and engulf him. The relation between May and the beast is also established through the connection of their eyes. The eyes of the beast are hidden from him but are intensely watchful of his every movement. It is also May's distinctive feature that she engages him eye to eye so that their eye contact comes to represent the one connection with life and reality which Marcher has in a world of dissimulation in which other things are muffled and masked. As time goes by Marcher is "destined to become aware little by little"(366) that May's eyes are always on him, that she is "all the while looking at his life, judging it, measuring it, in the light of the thing"(366) she knows to be "'the real truth'"(366) about him, his apprehension of his fate. Even after she is dead, when he visits her grave, it is her eyes which make contact with him, either seeming to welcome or repudiate him, depending on whether he sees her as assisting or denying him in his quest.

Marcher's ambivalence toward love and marriage as dramatized in his muted friendship with May, is revealed as a real terror in the blown-up image onto which he projects his fear of the threatening aspects of love. The image seems unconnected with the quiet, dull woman with whom he spends his time, but throughout he denies that the threat which he feels is connected with love. May seems to calm his fears because she embodies all the aspects of the benign woman, who is not obviously threatening or compelling. She adopts a selfless and self-sacrificing role, and can love without expecting rewards. She is from the first a figure of fidelity.

> To tell her what he had told her - what had it been but to ask something of her? something that she had given, in her charity, without his having, by a remembrance, by a return of the spirit, failing another encounter, so much as thanked her. (359)

His relationship with her is characterised by his supposition that he can draw on her generosity endlessly, that her function is to help him, and that he need do nothing in return except offer slightly expensive gifts at birthdays and treats at the opera. He sees her only as an adjunct of himself, as someone who is there to mitigate his burden. Marcher does have his woman on the only terms that are available to him, in muted friendship which represents a kind of sharing and excludes the possibility of passion on his part. He thinks she is "the right person"(364) for him in this capacity because she knows and has never divulged his secret, and thereby tempers its asperity. He does not grasp until long after her death, when it is too late to make a demand on himself he cannot meet, that she has not missed her life as she has loved him. This represents what he would have desired but was too fearful to realise. His limited relationship with her does constitute a degree of life, so that in a sense he does get the life he "wants".

There is a self-serving logic in Marcher's attempts to deal with his situation: the logic of the self afraid of love finding ways to accommodate itself to the problem. When their relationship suddenly springs into exist-

ence on the basis of May's "penetrating question"(365) about his fate, he understands that "the real form"(365) it should take is marriage, "but the devil in this was that the very basis itself put marrying out of the question".(365) What he does in effect is to make her into his "kind, wise keeper"(367) and let her go "unremunerated".(367) His secret becomes "the secret of her life too",(367) so that she shares his sorrows without any of the advantages that marriage would have given her. It is only when May is herself threatened by the common doom, death, that Marcher begins to see what he might stand to lose. At this moment, under the threat of her extinction, he chooses to probe her sibylline pronouncement that what was to have happened to him has indeed happened. The degree of his fear of love is suggested by his total selfishness, which makes him appear monstrous in his lack of concern for her, especially in the face of love for him. She desires above all to spare him from the excoriating knowledge he so crudely seeks. The fear that lies behind his cruelty is to some extent explained by her emergence as the all-powerful woman who holds the keys to his identity and withholds from him what he rightfully seeks to know. Her love and knowledge of him put her in a position of power over him, and he feels profoundly discomforted by his increasing sense of his total dependence on her. He imagines her as a "sibyl"(389) who speaks with "the true voice of the law",(389) and an "impenetrable sphinx"(380) who alone is in possession of the riddle of the law of his life. He already turns her into an image of death - "she might have been a lily too - only an artificial lily ... under some clear glass bell".(380) She is "'out of it'"(380) in his view:

> ... her work was over; she communicated with him as across some gulf, or from some island of rest that she had already reached, and it made him feel strangely abandoned.(380)

He has lost his power to conceive of his situation and is angry and resentful of her for possessing the power to deny him. If her light goes out he will find himself in the dark. He tries to force some clues out of her, while her

main concern is to spare him from the knowledge of his human deviancy. Her last words to him are that he was to suffer his fate, "not necessarily to know it",[391] and that when he need not know he should not try to find out. It is her hope that he will never know. It is enough that she knows.

After her death it is inevitable that he should begin to see what he would not see before. Every step brings him a little closer to his goal of understanding. He realises that he lacks the forms through which he can publicly express his grief at bereavement, since he has never acknowledged his intimacy with her. From a social point of view his relation to her counts for nothing. It is as if it never existed. He is terrified to discover that he is nothing. He seeks to identify his past very much as an "unappeasable father"[395] might seek "a strayed or stolen child",[395] "knocking on doors and inquiring of the police".[305] His frenzied pursuit of "the lost stuff of consciousness"[395] takes him everywhere but the right place, for he travels far and wide. Eventually, under the recoiling sense of his own extinction, he is forced to return "from the circumference to the centre of his desert"[397] where he finds at May's grave his "point ... of orientation".[398] Here in "this garden of death"[397] he finds the "few square feet of earth"[397-98] on which he can most live, and here he settles to live - "feeding only on the sense that he once had lived, and dependent on it not only for a support but for an identity".[398] Here he encounters the incident which lights the chain of recognition that throws into relief the meaning and pattern of his life. He observes one day a "fellow-mortal",[399] a man bent over a newly dug grave in an attitude of stricken grief. Rising to take his way, he passes Marcher, who sees in his face "the raw glare of his grief".[400] It seems as if the man, "the image of scarred passion",[400] was conscious of something in Marcher "that profaned the air".[400] In that moment he begins to see that "he had justified his fear and achieved his fate; he had failed, with the last exactitude, of all he was to fail of".[402] He realises that he has never felt anything or been really affected by life.

> The escape would have been to love her; then, _then_ he would have lived. _She_ had lived - who could say now with what passion? - since she had loved him for himself; whereas he had never thought of her (ah, how it hugely glared at him!) but in the chill of his egotism and the light of her use. (401-02)

"The taste of life"(402) is "belated and bitter",(402) but it is real, and Marcher drinks his cup to the lees. In achieving his fate he completes his life, and his energies are spent. Ironically he turns to May's grave as if she will save him from the beast which rises up in his hallucination to destroy him. The moment encapsulates Marcher's ambivalence, made vivid by his power of fantasy. He does not see that his springing beast is analogous with his fear of the sexually aggressive woman and of life. He turns from this image to that of the dead woman who had protected him and throws himself on her grave. His life has been one of waiting for the vision that would bring the pieces of his puzzle together in his mind; but now that the vision has appeared it cannot help him. It shows him what he has missed and how he has failed. It is a blinding desolating flash that illuminates his own part in his grotesque fate.

Marcher's story comes full circle. He started out in fear of the threatening power of woman and life to engulf and reduce his energies. He has therefore lived in the most minimal sense, in the only way possible to him without being destroyed. Yet he ends by finding himself reduced while the power of woman is magnified. He has no identity except in his relation to May - other than the totally negative one of a man who has never been touched by passion and never lived. She has missed nothing, but has lived in the fulness of her passion and her charity, has suffered, grown and come to a full consciousness. She has even seen him in the full light of his egotism and yet not ceased to love him. Like most women in James she may well have loved him because of his weakness and his dependence on her, which enabled her to develop strength and charity. Whatever her motives, however, he is the one who is exposed as defective: his fear of love made him incapable

of loving.

For the observes it is to Marcher himself that the identity of the monster attaches, as in the previous story. But this knowledge is spared Marcher. For him passion was the monster, and he never sees May as the one woman who is both passionate and charitable. He projects the evil face of woman as the cause of his fate, an image at odds with the woman he knows. The vision of woman in the full strength of her passion justifies his fears in the sense that it reveals that whatever his relation to her she would always be more powerful than him. The inequality in the power relation of love makes love threatening to the weaker partner.

May Bertram emerges more fully than Fanny Tregent as a truly heroic figure. As the male is revealed to be a grotesque figure, a perverse variation of the human type, the female becomes a figure of sublime charity. She accepts her own love fate heroically, making much of the little that is given her, without resentment for the man who has injured her. She grows to full consciousness and knows more about himself than he ever does. Her love of him is all that gives Marcher value. Otherwise he is a monster of egotism and selfishness. As James's theme of the fatally injured lover proceeds to its more perverse variations an increasing sense of monstrosity emerges, which qualifies the hero as a pathetic figure. May tries to save Marcher "from the appearance of variation from the usual human type",(374) and helps him "to pass for a man like any other".(375) She goes far beyond Fanny Tregent in her ability to protect and confirm, love and serve, the man who has injured her.

To have loved like that would have been Marcher's escape, yet it is in the terms of his nature that he could not have felt life from the inside as May Bartram and other women in the James text do. His suffering is a kind of mental anguish. It is not the suffering through feeling that leads to consciousness. Although his illumination is the point to which his life has

striven it comes as an accidental happening, a blinding flash that hits him full in the face. He sees the full cruelty of his image and of his fate, and though he does not see the fate in the perspective that James allows to the reader, he does recognise himself as anti-heroic in so far as he acknowledges that he has only known May in terms of her usefulness. Even so he seems still to be preoccupied with the sounded void of his own life, and only tastes the semblance of life.

All James's heroes have been characterised by their manner of blocking off their full consciousness, but in none of the others does the flaw in the psychological constitution lead to such stupefying blindness. In all these stories James has been moving gradually from the original determining circumstances towards a more abstract presentation of the fate. Marcher is the ultimately fated character whose flaw has been reduced to his fear. In its isolation from other factors it has been magnified to gigantic proportions, so that it is more terrifying than ever before. The extent to which Marcher has been exposed to this terror and tried to accept it makes him to some extent heroic, even if he has anti-heroic qualities. This distinguishes him from a hero like Maurice Glanvil, who is merelv vindictive and complaining, wishing to shift the burden of his flaw onto somebody he can blame for the miscarriage of his life.

In The Middle Years* (1893) the perspective on the fate is altered because the hero is approaching death: he comes to the view that the frustration he has suffered is a transitory part of life. The perspective is altered, too, because as an artist he leaves part of himself behind in the treasure of his work. Furthermore, he meets a young man who verifies his

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* Tales, Vol. 9.

values by appreciating his art. Though he suffers the laceration of finding his goals out of reach and his life force spent, he becomes the spiritual progenitor of posterity. He sees that the values of the old faith whereby he has lived will pass into a future where freer men will enjoy new opportunities in an expanding world. Still, he looks back to the old world, treating the figures who pass before him according to the patterns of fate life has thrown up for him. His great triumph, and it is one that leads in a sense to his immediate defeat, is that he sees the old struggle of a young man rent by a power conflict between two women as being entirely transformed. For the young man seeks him out as his masculine spiritual mentor, thus neutralizing the woman's power over him. The old man cannot bear to be the agent of defrauding the young man of the fortune he would have won had he chosen to stay with the women. His covert struggle with the women impels his death. It thereby cheats him of his last opportunity for a "love" relation. But in spite of his failures, frustrations and wasted opportunities he dies with a sense of fulfilment.

Dencombe, feeling his age and illness, takes a spell at Bournemouth for his health. There he confronts in the face of his "sense of ebbing time"(55) and "shrinking opportunity"(55) the void of his past, the waste of inestimably precious years, and the void of his future, the impossibility of having another chance to achieve what he has so far failed to do. Dencombe's sense of failure is itself evidence of his old injuries. He reflects that

> he had done all that he should ever do, and yet he had not done what he wanted. This was the laceration - that practically his career was over: it was as violent as a rough hand at his throat. (55-56)

In consequence he is "like a creature hunted by a dread",(56) fearing that he should die a failure. Yet feelings of injury in love and victimisation by circumstance seem so consigned to the remote past that the question of his fatedness is not at issue. All the old losses are there: a beloved

wife who died in childbirth and a son who was "carried off by typhoid".(66) But the implication that he sacrificed his son to his overwhelming sorrow is not even raised, though he has a clear sense of a deep emotional conflict having impeded his growth.

> His development had been abnormally slow, almost grotesquely gradual. He had been hindered and retarded by experience, and for long periods had only groped his way.(57)

His sense of loss is treated less as a result of the particular circumstances to which he presumably fell victim than as a feeling that he has about himself. The prospect of death places the past in a different perspective, for the frustration of life must pass.

The story is told from Dencombe's point of view and is filtered through the "blur"(63) of his "ebbing consciousness".(63) His reflections take the form of dreams, "dozing anxieties",(64) intense "meditations"(68) and "morbid fanc{ies}"(68) related to the failure of his physical energies. In the hazy consciousness of the artist whose life energies are exhausted, figures appear as if they were apparitions; yet they acquire sharp definitions from his own mental configurations. The "pleasure of observation"(59) and habit of analysis have always been his resource, and life itself now is rather like "the dim underworld of fiction",(56) "a great glazed tank"(56) into which "strange silent subjects float".(56)

The story opens with some such drama of life impinging on the artist's consciousness, causing him to make certain reflections. The case concerns the relationships between an "opulent matron",(54) a "humble dependant",(54) and a "son" who is the object of their passion. The configuration of these persons has for him a particular meaning, which is inescapable in that his experience informs his observation of the drama. From the perspective he has reached, that of illness and age, his antagonist is now life and not woman. It seems to him that life itself is the "infinite",(61) the source of energies and of the drive toward continuity and perpetuity.

It is not true that human "combinations"(61) are exhausted. They may be for him, whose life energies are spent, but his death is now the natural result of his own disease, mortality, and not necessarily the consequence of depletion by a woman. This perspective liberates him to experience the possibility of a different kind of love experience, of resolving old problems in a new way, though the benefit must accrue to the coming and not the passing generation.

The story opens with Dencombe strolling to a bench in a "safe recess"(53) on a cliff-side overlooking the sea. He has a copy of his recently published novel, which he hopes to revise. He becomes conscious of his alienation from its subject matter and feels liable to an "assault"(55) of his "old ailment",(55) confronted by the chill of a "dark void"(55) which represents "the completion of a sinister process"(55) without the promise of any heavenly light. Life for him has been a painful process toward knowledge and understanding, and he is devastated by the sense that he has "struggled"(56) only to be "brutally beaten"(56) in the end. While he is in this mood "the romance of life"(55) once more confronts him in the shape of the trio wandering on the beach below him. His "old formula"(59) of putting "his head at the window"(59) - having recourse to the imaginative apprehension of life - takes over. His role as artist is calculated to intensify his personal situation, which in turn compounds his problems as a novelist. His life problems have to his sense impeded his artistic development, and he needs an extension of time to enable his artistic abilities to "fructify".(57) Anxious to make up for his failures in art and life, Dencombe seeks the resolution of both. More emphasis, however, is given to the importance of his transforming his love situation than of establishing his reputation as an artist. While Dencombe is ruminating and trying to re-establish his connection with his past endeavours, life throws him into a relationship which makes an irresistible appeal to his deep desire to live. "Chance" brings "the weary man of letters face to face with the greatest admirer in the new genera-

tion whom it was supposable he possessed".[61] The young man, Dr. Hugh, the "son" he has observed upon the beach, comes to claim him. He too has been reading the new novel and is impelled to approach Dencombe, though unaware of who he is or even that they both have the same preoccupation.

The spiritual affinity between the two men is established at once. It is crucial to the outcome of the story, which depends on the supposition that the young man must make a choice as to which "parent" he should follow, Dencombe or his patroness, each of whom seeks his own justification and continuity through him. The strangeness in the case is that the young man is totally without ambivalence. His response to Dencombe is "absolute".[75] Something of the sense in which Dencombe has been looking for a miracle attaches to the circumstance, but it nevertheless alters radically the perspective from which the women are viewed in this story. "Father" and "son" unite and their solidarity supports their male identity and determines the emergence of the female as a grotesque figure. It is as if the bonds with which woman keeps man in thrall are seen for what they are and thereby lose their power, though this perspective is dependent on the novelist's imputing to the young man a personality structure quite different from his own.

Dencombe sees Dr. Hugh as the "mystifying"[61] and "rare"[61] case of a young man who is perfectly balanced, quite without emotional conflicts that impede his personal and professional development. Moreover, in his professional role as doctor he can combine functions that relate to the feminine as well as the masculine aspects of his personality. He is permitted to care for others, nurse the sick, and inform a professional intellectual and practical pursuit with a personal passion that does not interfere with his craft but rather enhances his practice of it. However much Dr. Hugh may be a figure of fantasy fashioned out of the dying man's emotional needs, he yet stands at a transitional point in history, indicating to Dencombe a world in which men are formed by different determinants and may pursue their goals on a new basis. As a fresh graduate in medicine Dr. Hugh is "saturated with

the spirit of the age,"(61) yet he appears like "a man who would have preferred to love literature best".(61) He can construct his future by building on the best from the past.

The quality of Dencombe's work is unequivocally fine (whatever his own sense of the matter or the failure of the world to perceive it). The young man has perceived this even if he cannot divine the artist's intentions and Dencombe himself is aware that his achievement is inevitably beyond his own conscious intention. He brings the instantaneous "infatuation" that marked his readings of the novels into his relationship with their author, and he is not disappointed by him. He validates Dencombe's knowledge of life, preferring his "flowers"(67) to "other people's fruit"(67) and desires to learn from his mistakes rather than imitate other people's successes. He is the saviour who will transform the failure, losses and injury of Dencombe's past. As Dencombe reflects,

> this servant of his altar had all the new learning in science and all the old reverence in faith; wouldn't he therefore put his knowledge at the disposal of his sympathy, his craft at the disposal of his love? ... If he couldn't, the alternative was hard: Dencombe would have to surrender to silence, unvindicated and undivined....Who would work the miracle for him but the young man who could combine such lucidity with such passion? (68)

Dr. Hugh appears larger than life, as one capable of performing miracles like raising the dead to life, and Dencombe momentarily believes that he can have an extension of his life-span in order to fulfil his potentialities. His fantasy is based on the notion that love can save and that it is the source of life and energy. The love between the two men is seen as a pure and ideal spiritual form in which there is no destructive element. It is a creative "marriage" in which spiritual father and son achieve their union. The son's words of love ring in the father's ears with the timbre of the marriage-bell. At last the divided Jamesian hero feels at one with himself. However, for this to happen, the young man too must confront and overcome the threatening power of woman. The power of the male can only assert

itself through destroying the power of the female.

Dr. Hugh's relationship to the two women is a story within the story. When Dencombe first observes the trio he is essentially correct in divining its elements. Here is the classic situation of the young man called upon to meet obligations to both a mother figure and a potential lover. The mother figure, the Countess, is the dominant one. Dr. Hugh characterises her as "generous, independent, eccentric",(62) "ignorant and passionate",(62) a woman "who had in connection with her flushed obesity and in addition to the morbid strain of a violent and aimless will, a grave organic disorder".(62-63) Less is said about Miss Vernham, the young "intrigante", but it is clear that she too is passionate and revengeful, hopes to provide for her future by securing Dr. Hugh as her husband, and sees no other way of securing her wants. The Countess has hired Dr. Hugh and Miss Vernham to be her travelling companions and caretakers. She can afford to pay, and on her death Dr. Hugh, as the object of her passion, stands to inherit. The price the son must pay is total possession by the mother. She attempts to win Dr. Hugh away from Dencombe through moral blackmail undisguised by accepted social formulas. The young man tells Dencombe that

> she was so jealous that she had fallen ill - she resented such a breach of allegiance. She paid so much for his fidelity that she must have it all: she refused him the right to other sympathies, charged him with scheming to make her die alone, for it was needless to point out how little Miss Vernham was a resource in trouble.(69)

No situation could be constructed to test further a young man's capacity to deal with feelings of guilt in relation to a mother. Miraculously Dr. Hugh is unaffected by her threats. He is perfectly aware that she is capable of dying to avenge his disloyalty, of cursing him as the cause of her death. But his conscience is clear. Their contract was monetary and she has no other claim upon him. Failing to gain credence, her power in itself seems to abate. Her "violent and aimless will"(63) has no expression but to wreak vengeance on itself, and is consumed by her own passion. She cannot lure

him with spurious or symbolic treasures, for he is an "independent"(61) young man of "various"(61) capacities who can make his own way. He expects to earn his fortune from medicine and he does not need a woman to give him identity, succour or support.

For the dying novelist, woman is still invested with a destructive power. Miss Vernham tries to alter the outcome of the story by making it clear to Dencombe that he stands in Dr. Hugh's light, that he is likely to "do him a terrible injury"(71) by causing the Countess to "disinherit"(71) him, that Dr. Hugh has had "a magnificent prospect"(71) the chance of which Dencombe has spoiled. One of the reasons for Dencombe's death is that he accepts nis guilt in interfering with Dr. Hugh's prospects. In a sense the Countess does "kill" him, and he takes on the role of scapegoat or sacrificial victim, dying to redeem the young man by taking all the guilt upon himself. The battle between the Countess and Dencombe - though Dencombe withdraws from direct combat - is not a fair one between equally matched powers. Her will seems to the dying man compelling whereas his own is failing as his energies rapidly wane. The very grotesqueness of the appearance, personality and behaviour of the women gives credence to their daemonic power in his hazy perceptions. The Countess appears to him from the first with a personality "as obvious as the giantess of a caravan",(59) and Miss Vernham is an evil shadow cast upon the light in his path. But though he sees through the women intellectually they retain the ability to dominate him emotionally. The young man represents an aspect of the older man's mature reaction to the idea of woman, for with the increase of awareness and self knowledge Dencombe has come to see that his apprehension of her power was a myth. Yet she retains vestiges of that force for him. While Dencombe knows he is dying the natural death of man, he is represented as dying because his chance of a "reprieve"(56) is denied him by the machinations of a destructive woman. His remaining hope is that when she dies life will assert itself in new patterns of existence and forms of expression, indicated by the

personality and situation of the young man. Only through the destruction of the old can new forms of life emerge. Faith in the future adheres to the "representative of the new psychology".[62]

The function of the drama of the male-female relationships is to advance the real story of the relationship between the two men, which concludes with the "escape" of the men from the women. Dr. Hugh escapes because he is not emotionally dominated by woman and identifies himself unequivocally with his spiritual inheritance as a male. Dencombe escapes because he is verified in his masculinity by a son who chooses to love him in preference to a mother. He does not get the reprieve he has imagined. There was never to have been any other chance of life than the one he had spent. However, he dies with the sense that his life has been transformed by a double victory: critical reparation, acclamation and appreciation; and the remaking of the old love fate into a love relation of value, which sustains, supports and verifies. Dencombe's personal despair is transfigured by "a response so absolute"[75] as Dr. Hugh's has proved to be. What he cares for, more than his possible critical reward and public success, is his identity as a man who is loved and may continue to help successive generations of young people to live through the insight into life that his fiction gives them. The function of his literary creations is in some sense to give others the advantage of knowledge dearly won that they may go on to victory. Dr. Hugh is himself the evidence of this, and his relationship to the novelist provides him with a definite "credit"[75] and a definite "result".[75] In his last recognitions Dencombe defines his "glory"[75] not in terms of worldly reputation but in terms of having been "tested",[75] having "had our little quality and cast our little spell.... The thing is to have made somebody care."[75] This does give him a kind of extension of life. His works will continue to cast his spell, and this version of continuity is capable of an infinite extension in time, unlike the power of the Countess, which dies with her. There is a real sense in which Dencombe has come into the

possession of himself in the mastery of his craft and of his life-love situation. The father has been assisted by the son to break the bonds of a female power which reduces him, and he has come into his own. The son has found his true spiritual inheritance, has been helped by the father to cast off the bonds of domination by a destructive and "irresistible"[62] mother, and has thereby liberated himself from the "exacting"[66] passion of woman in general. Thus father and son, who have been split and divided into two partial selves as the result of the injury done them in early youth by the aggression of the powerful mother, are at last united and at one.

3. THE SHORT STORIES: WOMAN

The pattern of life laid down in the last chapter on the basis of an analysis of the chronological development of the hero from birth to death is the central pattern of life from which all James's cases develop in variant forms. What marks the hero who experiences life as a Barmecide banquet is a flaw in his nature which, together with the external factors of his existence, impels him toward a tragic fate. The extent to which he is immersed in this fate is his characteristic.

The case which James postulates with his female characters is not the same. The Jamesian woman is not flawed, by nature, nor is she excessively determined by her parental figures, though she may inherit her mother's intrinsic power and develop in her image. She is not ambivalent towards love. From a social point of view, marriage is her goal, and most women marry. She is not threatened by love because love has for her the character of power. Moreover, she is not necessarily concerned with a moral or heroic stance as a means of encompassing a fate. She may use the moral as a mask of her own energies, but she is not excessively concerned with the moral *per se*. Born into a world of determining circumstances, she often remakes them through her own sheer power of personality, but she does not need to liberate herself from a fate. Nor is it necessarily the case that she can only win by forfeiture. She may win without sacrificing anything on her own part. If forfeits have at times to be paid, this is a necessity of life in general, not of woman's nature in particular. For her inheritance is her power, and her purpose is to develop her strength. Because she has power over her own circumstances and can determine what she wants, she can much more readily find happiness. Even if she loses, she still stands essentially in a direct relation to life and is not split off from her own psychic sources of energy. This means that she is intrinsically capable of consciousness, or at least that she is not necessarily blocked off from it. Moreover, standing in a direct relation to life (love, feeling, suffering), she has the capacity

to grow, change, and develop. She has a drive toward success, and she is not confined to one identity but may have many identities.

The hero is characterised by his ambiguous vision of woman, who, deriving from his experience of a paradoxical mother, always remains in a shifting double focus. In portraying the female directly, James retains this disjunction of qualities and develops two types of personality, whom one might call the eagle and the dove, or the Venus Victrix type and the little sister of charity, or the predator and the sacrificial victim. The only thing that James can posit against the power of the female is her sacrifice or relinquishment of it. In this way (primarily in the novels) he develops two different kinds of being who imply different ways of loving. The weakness of woman perhaps consists in her proclivity to seek out the helpless male in order to assert herpower and enjoy his dependence upon her. However, it is clear that women are not confined to one or the other way of loving, that they experience a mixture of emotions which also includes the maternal passion.

There is an observable basis in reality for James's presentation of the difference in personality and circumstances of his male and female characters. But it is not until the novels, generally speaking, that he profits from exploiting this difference. What is characteristic of this set of stories is the degree to which the female is a male projection. None of these figures is allowed to speak for herself (with one exception). They are all seen by a male observer or author surrogate, or they are presented by the authorial voice of James himself. In the novels, with the development of a reflective consciousness which supervenes upon the male projection of the female, the effect of these characters as projections is neutralised. Thus they can become more strictly speaking heroines and counterparts of the hero and can often share with him a similar spiritual constitution and similar circumstances and manifestations of heroism. The can also be differentiated from the male in a way that is not contingent on the male

projection of the female: the heroine is developed as a figure triumphant in her capacity for consciousness. In the short stories, though the female character is treated as if she were an actual type of woman in the world of observable reality, she remains distinctively a creation of the male imagination, which to a large extent projects male weakness as power in her.

The following stories do not present a chronological series of moments in the life of the heroine which reveal her development through different stages of life. James has a predilection for the female at a relatively young age when she is establishing her identity. Older women for him develop largely into mere power centres. There is no death of the female child represented (except in The Other House, which is not of concern here), and there is no female artist figure in the stories. Though the hero lays down the pattern from which the female departs, her circumstances are not precisely analogous to his and they show the difference with which James regards the female character and situation. These stories show the degree to which the woman is liberated from the fate in which the hero is immersed and the extent to which she is a projection to whom power (sometimes of monstrous proportions) is attributed.

Master Eustace portrayed the crushing effect of the oedipal burden upon a young man who was unaware of his condition until circumstances forced him to recognise it. He was permanently damaged by an intimate and destructive bond with his mother, rendered an emotional cripple and prevented from further development. In The Marriages* (1891) James deals with a comparable situation, in which a young girl who ostensibly adores her father wishes to take her mother's place in the home and to prevent him from remarrying. But

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* Tales, Vol. 8

there are important differences. First, the mother is dead and the girl has some possibility of taking her place. Secondly, the conflict lies between the women in the story, while the father remains an appendage to it. Moreover the girl arrogates to herself something of her mother's authority, and ultimately she is seen to pursue a fantasy of her own assumption of power and to care less deeply for her father than is supposed. There is no developing relation between them and when the story ends they are not even on speaking terms. The tale does trace the devastating effects of the mother's death upon the whole family, which loses its central support. But it is directed towards the girl's action in frustrating her father's future and determining the conditions of her own life.

Adela Chart's passion for her father comes into evidence when,two years after her mother's death, he wants to remarry. Adela thinks his choice, Mrs. Churchley - a rich woman, who is fun to know, and rather obviously aggressive sexually - dishonours her mother's memory. She herself wants, as far as she can, to take the place in her father's life of her "incomparable",[35] "unerring"[35] and "perfect"[35] mother. Her intense love of her mother disguises any negative feelings she may have had toward her before the chance arose for her to become her "direct deputy"[42] and "representative"[42] in the home. Her fantasy of succession is given massive support by the fact that she slips naturally into a maternal relation to her two young sisters, Beatrice and Muriel. She understands that she will be displaced if her father should marry Mrs. Churchley, not only because he would be taken up with the relationship but also because Mrs. Churchley is an irreconcilable rival. Mrs. Churchley is not a woman to accept rivalry and presents Colonel Chart with an ultimatum: if they are to marry Adela must be sent away. Colonel Chart refuses to sacrifice his daughter, with the result that Mrs. Churchley throws him over and decides to marry another man, Lord Dovedale. For such a woman marriage is not a romantic affair and there are always other and perhaps bigger fish in the sea. Adela learns of her father's action only

after she has experienced an "intoxicating sense of power"[(54)] from the supposition that she herself has brought about Mrs. Churchley's withdrawal, representing him as having oppressed her mother. The knowledge of his sacrifice of his own claim to personal happiness further feeds her fantasy. She is triumphant in her possession of him and the evidence of his deep affection for her. As she writes to her brother, "Papa gave her up, as it were, for me. Fancy the angel, and fancy what I must try to be for him for the rest of his life!".[(70)]

Adela is endowed with an "uncompromising spirit".[(46)] Her professed desire to preserve her family's honour and to worship her mother's memory is the expression of a frankly asserted will that ensures that her father "should not do as he wished".[(47)] She would bear anything to prevent her father's marriage - "bear imprisonment and bread and water, bear lashes and torture, bear even his lifelong reproach."[(59)] It is no wonder that at the height of the crisis her brother considers her a "raving maniac",[(58)] for there is a daemonic quality about her drive which is quite beyond anything the males in the story can summon up.

The reader is given such an impression of the silence that exists between the father and the daughter, largely as a result of Colonel Chart's resentment at the way his hand has been forced, that their relationship seems empty. Adela's identity is not bound up with her father. She suffers no conflict or guilt toward him, and does not carry over an emotional content from this relationship to any other. She has no desire to marry and wishes to live in the quiet and peace of the country. She will have a small inheritance, enough to support her in this way of life until she is old. For the moment she tends her mother's garden and is supported in her father's house, taking on the practical functions that her mother had fulfilled. Society makes no demands on her, for it accepts that she should remain at home. Her strongly female sense of identity is derived from her mother, whose presence

is at her side as a source of strength throughout the story. Mrs. Chart was clearly a strong woman, whose presence dominated the home, and whose death leaves her family bereft. The men are aimless and have lost their centre, but Adela finds herself because she can arrogate some of her mother's power to herself.

Although she is not without her emotional scars, the young girl's situation is different from that of her brothers, who are seen in the light of their mother's power over them. The elder son, Leonard, has done the only sensible thing. He has left home to escape maternal influence and sought to mould himself in a masculine tradition. He has trained for the army and joined the staff of the Governor General to India, where he is at a safe distance from interference in his personal life. The burden of the emotional bond to his mother therefore rests upon the shoulders of his young brother, a problem exacerbated by the fact that he was his mother's favourite son. He is also the favourite of his sister and though they share a certain spiritual affinity Adela uses it as a means of influencing his life. She expects him to support her in her effort to save the mother's memory by ousting her successor. Godfrey does not do this, largely because he needs to escape from the bonds of an injurious tie. He nevertheless needs a woman as a source of comfort, but fails repeatedly to secure it. While studying for the highly competitive examinations for the diplomatic service, the successful outcome of which is a matter of life and death to him, he appears in a moment of susceptibility to have been entrapped into "marriage" by a woman of low type. "It was all done in a day"(65) but it was done secretly. The incident dramatically reveals Godfrey's conflict with regard to love. He is subjected to a woman's power in a sexually aggressive form which is reductive of him, yet at the same time he is unable to enter a proper marriage. Only a token marriage takes place, and the woman is paid off so that Godfrey can pursue his career. However, the fact of the marriage will effectively prevent him from engaging in any permanent relationship with a woman. There is an

inescapable sense in which his anger against the closeness of his bonds to his mother explodes, as if he could be revenged on her by downgrading the image of woman and turning it into something low, which would presumably release him from his bind. After the affair is done, he seeks the solace of Mrs. Churchley, the only person to whom he can talk about it and who promises to help him. Mrs. Churchley would have paid the woman off herself in order to save him from telling his father, but Adela's behaviour denies him that consolation. He is thrown into violent conflict with his sister over Mrs. Churchley, although until she learns of his affair Adela does not understand his opposition. On every side Godfrey is the inescapable victim of women, and he can survive only by pursuing his career as far away from them as possible.

The men all reveal themselves as functions of the power of the idealised mother, Mrs. Chart, but none so much as her husband, who suffers in a double sense - through her loss and through the machinations of her representative. Colonel Chart feels deprived of his power to live by his wife, who dies leaving him bereft; by his daughter, who makes conditions of remarriage impossible; and by Mrs. Churchley, who jilts him after having accepted him. While Adela's point of view seems to be at the centre of the story, the real centre of everything is, as she perceives it, "the drama of her father's frustrated marriage".[61] Colonel Chart's ostensible reason for not meeting Mrs. Churchley's demand to get rid of Adela, which leads to her withdrawal, is that he must support the unity and dignity of his own family. This is a way of acknowledging that he is still tied to his dead wife's memory, and that there can be no other woman for him. In a sense Mrs. Churchley represented an impossible escape from the conditions of his life and was never really a choice open to him, though for a time he believed in it. Her rich and gaudy treasures are displayed in a way which makes them seem within grasp at the same time as showing him that they are not for him. For Mrs. Chart was a totally different kind of woman. He suffers a reaction which takes him

temporarily to a woman who is his wife's opposite in nature but who will not really do for him. In this way his own implied feelings support Adela's claim. From the beginning Colonel Chart has an air of resentment against his losses and his inability to live the life he would like. For all his appearance of strength - both Adela and Godfrey are a little afraid of him - he is a broken man whose capacity for life is slowly reduced. He gives the impression of permanent sorrow and desolation. Adela's account of him at the end of the story, when all male passions are spent, seems to capture the whole experience of his future life.

> Colonel Chart was aimless and bored; he paced up and down and went back to smoking, which was bad for him, and looked drearily out of windows, as if on the bare chance that something might arrive. (68)

He wears the "deadly sad"(64) expression of a man robbed of his treasure who bears his grief in silence. He does not have anyone with whom he can share even his reflections. Moreover his relationship to his family is permanently altered by the sacrifice he has made. He is eternally at Adela's mercy. He has given up everything for nothing, while she has got everything she wanted without paying any price, forfeit or penalty.

There is a sense in which Adela is merely the agent of the only possible conclusion, but the point lies in the proof of her own strength through the way in which she models herself on her mother. At the start of the story she feels a mediocrity by comparison with her mother, though she tries to emulate her in everything. Even to kiss her father is a way of arriving at a sense of her mother's presence. Mrs. Chart "had left behind her such a general passion of regret that in kissing each other they seemed to themselves a little to be kissing her".(37) If her father should withhold his kiss the effect is "of his having withheld from other and still more sensitive lips the touch of his own".(37) Adela keeps alive her sense of her mother's presence as a source of courage in working her will. When the engagement is about to be announced she locks herself in her room

> as if with the fear that she should be overtaken or invaded, and during a sleepless, feverish, memorable night she took counsel of her uncompromising spirit. She saw things as they were, in all the indignity of life. The levity, the mockery, the infidelity, the ugliness, lay as a map before her; it was a world pour rire; but she cried about it, all the same. (45-46)

It is in this manner that she forges her purposes, and it ceases to be finally significant how fine the woman's image is she seeks to preserve from outrage, or how patronising Mrs. Churchley's charity might be, because her reasons are a mask for her drive. She would commit any crime to save the situation and feels no guilt whatever about her interference. She naturally supposes that she is right. However perverse her point of view is, she proves her strength of personality in bringing about the conclusion she wants. Everything feeds into her purposes, including the determination of Mrs. Churchley not to put up with a rival.

The situation between women as rivals, especially peers, is treated differently from that of the hero, though rivalry is destructive in both cases because characters compete for essentially the same things. In A Most Extraordinary Case the injured hero projects his weakness as strength in his rival as well as in the woman he cannot attain. In the case of the hero the rival is always in some sense invincible: he gains the material prizes and is a catalyst in bringing about the fate. In The Romance of Certain Old Clothes* (1868) James treats the situation of an unresolved and therefore destructive rivalry between two sisters in relation to a young man, and the situation is not confirmed by the acceptance of the sister who loses that her successful sister has indeed won. Rather the situation acts as a further spur to her own desire to win and to recover from her sister what she believes to be rightfully hers. It is typical that the Jamesian hero encounters a

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* Tales, Vol. 1

rival who is not a sibling (he may be a peer), who is in some way related to a father figure, and whose prior and superior right to the prize is confirmed and emotionally accepted by the hero. The function of the successful rival is to throw the hero's emotional conflict into relief and bring about his seemingly predetermined fate. In The Romance of Certain Old Clothes the rivalry is located within the closed circle of the family and comes to an end only with the death of both sisters. The entry of a prospective lover into the household does not resolve the love fate for either sister, but precipitates a previously unsuspected rivalry between them.

Viola Willoughby and her younger sister, Perdita, were born three years apart. Their father died when they were still infants. Feelings of rivalry that have lain dormant for years recur with overwhelming force when a prospective husband is introduced into the house. The young man is Arthur Lloyd, a friend of their brother's, who has a "foreboding"(300) that he is "destined to marry"(300) one of the sisters but is "unable to arrive at a preference".(300) His function is to expose their rivalry. He is quite unconscious of his effect upon them, which makes the enactment of the whole story possible. As he is not obliged to make up his mind in a hurry he leaves his decision to time and his heart, which allows each of the sisters to believe in her own chance of victory. James awards success to Perdita, who, however, believes in the superior right of her elder sister to whatever might be hers. He places Viola in the position that the hero would have occupied, that of the loser, yet invests her with the will to reverse the situation. The failed rival is thus given the position of dominance in the story, though its interest lies partly in the spectacle of female power exhausting itself.

The sisters' conflict is intensified by being wholly covert. It is known only to themselves, which heightens the contrast between the surface appearance of a happy home and the underlying emotional dynamics. The sisters esteem conventional behaviour, yet, as in all cases where James portrays

female power, this signifies nothing. What matters happens behind their disguise. James distinguishes Mr. Willoughby by his love of drama (which indeed explains his daughters' names) "at a time when this pursuit implied more liberality of taste than at the present day, and in a community where it required much courage to patronise the drama even in a closet."(297) The story portrays drama in a closet, confined to manifestations of the inner life within and unseen by outsiders. It advances through dramatic moments that reveal the otherwise hidden life. The result is a succession of extraordinary images of Viola's monstrous passion. Superimposed upon each other, they become magnified to shocking proportions and supervene on everything else.

The first of these dramatic moments is Viola's discovery of Perdita's secret that Arthur has chosen her and that she has accepted him with their mother's approbation. In their sole exchange of words Perdita recognises that Viola is putting a curse upon her beneath mechanical wishes of "very great joy",(304) "a very long life, and plenty of children".(304) Perdita asks that Viola give her "a year, at least",(305) of happy married life, which would allow her to have a child. The scene is abruptly closed by Viola, who wishes to be alone with her misery. The ensuing scenes present Perdita with more and more frightening demonstrations of her sister's desire to kill her and to take her place. First Viola dresses herself in a bolt of material - "a beautiful piece of white silk, brocaded with celestial blue and silver, sent by the bridegroom himself"(306) - to present "a dazzling picture"(307) of herself as the bride Arthur Lloyd should have chosen. She has an "inordinate love of dress"(306) and makes "prodigious"(309) use of her arts in order to express her superiority over her less sexually attractive junior. Behind this demonstration Perdita sees her insatiable passion, which is next revealed in a more "hideous"(308) form. Viola does not come to farewell her sister after the wedding ceremony. Perdita finds her before the mirror dressed in her own "cast-off wedding veil and wreath",(307) and wearing "on

her neck ... the heavy string of pearls which the young girl had received from her husband as a wedding-gift".(307-08) Viola says nothing, but stands "bedizened in this unnatural garb ... plunging a long look"(308) into the depths of the mirror, and "reading Heaven knows what audacious visions".(308) Horrified, Perdita hastens from the room. Her deepest shock comes a year later when she is delivered of a daughter while her husband, who has gone home to her brother's wedding, is riding with Viola. She cannot forget the image of Viola "dressed in her wedding garments, and smiling with coveted triumph",(310) and knows "in her soul that Viola has never ceased to envy her good fortune".(310) It has become clear to her that Viola does not care for Arthur in himself at all. Her triumph is only to be gained by taking from her sister that which is hers and she believes should be her own. The object is to win her sister's treasures from her. She does not value them in themselves, despite her apparent lust for material goods. Perdita therefore engages in a symbolic act before she dies, making her husband swear on oath to keep her treasures locked within an iron-bound chest until her daughter is old enough to inherit them. In her weakened state - she has given her small flame of life to the birth of "this little spark of mortality"(310) - she has no strength left to resist her sister's will to destroy her, and she dies.

Perdita is invested with the spiritual characteristics of the sensitive male loser. Her life energies have been small and she is deprived of them by the superior force of a passionate rival. That she loves Arthur Lloyd, and that his heart chose correctly, is not at issue. Her love is sufficiently low-keyed to match him temperamentally and is of the sacred variety which showers him with blessings - riches, success and a child. She is of the type who suppresses her own claims that others may fulfil theirs. Hers is a more potent image of sacrifice and renunciation than that of the male, because she does in a very real sense give up her own life for that of her baby daughter. This reduces her to the point of maximum exposure to

Viola's passion, to which she succumbs.

Viola's passions ascend throughout the tale. When Perdita dies she has already begun to reveal her essential hostility to another rival. She and the wife of her brother, Bernard, daily engage in bitter hostilities that are quite evident to others. However, after the death of her sister she directs her energies toward taking away the treasures Perdita has left - first her child, whose affections she wins, then her husband, whom she secures for her own, and finally the symbolic treasure which subsumes the others, the locked chest in which Perdita's goods lie bound. Although James gives weight to the importance of Viola's winning Arthur Lloyd, and describes her state of mind as "a passion of whose radiant heat, tempered to the delicate state of his feelings, Mr. Lloyd very soon felt the influence",(313-14) this passion is not fulfilled by capturing him. It seeks its total fulfilment, and in finally completing itself it achieves its end. The chest itself becomes the object of Viola's desires because it symbolises the difference between her married life and Perdita's. Her own marriage has not been attended by the birth of a child, and is subject to material retrenchments, and losses, which make it impossible for her to live as richly as her sister. She becomes enraged by the idea of "her sister's immense wardrobe ... languishing in thankless gloom in the dusty attic".(315) "It was a revolting thought that these exquisite fabrics should await the commands of a little girl who sat in a high chair and ate bread-and-milk with a wooden spoon."(315-16) Even the child becomes a rival whose claims Viola must destroy in order to come into her own. Arthur is too weak to withstand her violent anger, tears, and "intolerable"(317) scorn. He finally throws her the key, which the child unwraps from its sealed pack, and Viola gains entrance to the chest. On returning home after this event Arthur discovers Viola before its gaping contents

> fallen backward from a kneeling posture, with one hand supporting her on the floor and the other pressed to her heart. On her limbs was the stiffness of death, and on her face, in the fading light of the sun, the terror of

> something more than death. Her lips were parted in entreaty, in dismay, in agony; and on her bloodless brow and cheecks there glowed the marks of ten hideous wounds from two vengeful ghostly hands. (318-19)

In a different way from Perdita Viola represents the image of passion spent, consumed in the moment of its fulfilment. It is also a curiosity of the case that each sister has destroyed the other in fulfilling herself, Perdita even more indirectly than Viola. For although Viola has been singularly without guilt during the progress of her life, James imputes guilt to her in the end. She is like a guilty soul who really knows that what she has been trying to do is impossible and therefore accepts the justice of her own defeat. Trying to gain by foul means what she could not have by fair, she learns that she cannot assume an inheritance which is not, by whatever perverse fate, hers by right. James has presented the rivalry between the two women as if it were possible for either to win or to lose, depending on circumstances. There is no doubt that they could both be winners if they had not wanted the same prize. But his chest symbolises the fact that not everybody can win the prize, that what one person gets another must lose. In this sense, despite the difference in temperament, Viola resembles the Jamesian hero who must lose in the end. Of course Arthur is in fact the male who must ultimately lose, and he does so twice.

Neither of the women is characterised as complex. Viola is described in physical terms because her "majestic height",(299) magnificent appearance and "slow utterance"(299) indicate her power. Arthur describes her as "a devilish fine woman".(314) Her appearance is striking and puts others in the shade, even Perdita as a bride. Hers is a power that consumes others in expressing itself. It is for this reason that her husband's business fails and she bears him no child. It is in this way that she is contrasted with her sister, for although Perdita achieves power by renunciation she is naturally sacrificial. Behind Viola's passion lies an amoral psychic drive that destroys any object that comes in its way, and knows no purpose but its own

fulfilment, in the course of which it burns itself out. In spite of their contrast in personality the sisters are more equal adversaries than any of the male rivals. The ways in which they can be seen as winning and losing are therefore more complex, though in the end both are destroyed. A distinction is implied in the manner that each loves Arthur, for they affect his home life and career differently. But he is presented merely as a male exposed to female power, who does not pretend to practise an ideal constancy, and succumbs to natural charms in the one case and calculation in the other. Viola plays adeptly upon his fancy and knows how to capture him as her slave. He is presented as fearful of Viola's power in the battle over his sacred vow to Perdita, and he has not the will to oppose her. He remains a function of the story, bringing out the sisters' rivalry and demonstrating their superior power.

James does not portray the situation of a woman whose ambivalence toward love is expressed in an attachment to two men between whom she cannot choose. In Benvolio the modus vivendi of the hero was dependent on his alternating between two women, one of whom represented life and the world, the other a version of his own psyche. His double allegiance revealed his paralysis of choice and his fear of sexual domination. As an artist he was able to sublimate his emotional conflict into material for literature. However, he was destroyed as man and artist because his situation became so explosive that he had to retreat from life in order to save anything of himself.

However, in Georgina's Reasons *(1884), James plays with the possibility of a female figure who is "in love" with two men of different personality types, the characteristic male figure and his opposite, and who bigamously

* Tales, Vol. 6

marries both. In her youth, Georgina Gressie enters into a secret marriage with a young naval lieutenant, Raymond Benyon, and never publicly avows it. The affair is empty. It is seen partly as a youthful aberration, partly an act of defiance against restrictive parents. After the marriage she continues to live with her parents, while her husband is commissioned to sail the world. The story is resumed ten years later, after she has married a successful businessman, Mr. Roy, and had a child. In this marriage she reverts to type, for her family has always pursued worldly success. Mr. Roy is a rich older man, already widowed. Like everyone else he is unaware that his wife is a bigamist and his child a bastard. Georgina's reasons are, in fact, unknowable, and therefore the story could not be presented from her point of view. James conceives of her situation only as a contrast to the male pattern. Shortly after his strange marriage Benyon begins to realise that Georgina does not mean to fulfil her obligations, and that she has protected herself and damaged his life by extracting from him a vow to reveal their secret only if she should desire it. But he does not measure the extent of his entrapment until ten years later, when he learns of her second marriage. He has now fallen in love with another woman, Kate Theory, the opposite of Georgina in personality, whom he wishes to marry. He thinks Georgina is at last in his power. However, she refuses to release him from his vow or agree to a divorce, and suggests that he too should marry bigamously. Benyon realises that he is bound to two women with neither of whom he can have a "happy love".(13)

Georgina clearly creates her own conditions, which Benyon can only accept. He resembles an enraged child under maternal command. He can but cry out in angry resentment at his total impotence. Benyon's most sincere feeling, as he expresses it to Kate, is that "I am not master of anything. There is not a man in the world less free. I am a slave. I am a victim."(64) Georgina has, in fact, disposed of his son, whose birth she concealed from him. She bore the child secretly in Italy and farmed it out to an Italian

nurse. When Benyon learns of its existence the child can no longer be traced, and for his own peace of mind he has to consider it dead. Here too he encounters "absolute failure and defeat"(70) and measures his "impotence",(70) about which he observes:

> To him she might have done what she chose - dropped him, pushed him out into eternal cold, with his hands fast tied - and he would have accepted it, excused her almost, admitted that it had been his business to mind better what he was about. But she had tortured him through the poor little irrecoverable son whom he had never seen, through the heart and the human vitals that she had not herself, and that he had to have, poor wretch, for both of them.(71)

Benyon does allow Georgina to do what she will with him. Another husband would not have honoured his word in favour of a wife who has broken her marriage vows. However, he feels he has no freedom in the matter and can only overflow in outrage. He is strongly identified with the injured male child, and it is significant that in his last meeting with Georgina, when he realises that he will continue to keep a vow that will destroy him, she cries out with the triumphant smile of a mother, "I know you as if I had made you!"(83) She has contended throughout that she made a superb choice of victim in Benyon because he will never insist on disclosure against her will. The vow becomes a symbol of the inescapable yoke through which Georgina is herself liberated. But it is bitter for him to have his virtue thrown back in his teeth by a woman who has formed him and who casts him out by dint of it.

The more a hero feels himself to be the victim of a woman the more monstrous the woman appears. Georgina is a "human exception"(71) who grows more hideous as her power over Benhon increases. The reader is placed in the same position with regard to the woman as with the hero. It is impossible to comprehend her motives. She is full of contradiction and inconsistency as she throws off her words with "inconsequence".(31) Claiming that she married Benyon from passion, she argues that she stood to gain nothing by it. He is unconvinced, for her feelings were obscure to him from the beginning. All that is clear about her is that she is self-seeking, protecting herself while making life impossible for Benyon.

Georgina is not a really human character. She is a symbol of life. She has the "cold, living eyes"[76] and "insolence"[75] of life, and bears the "Medusa-mask".[43] She is terrible and wonderful in her power, audacity, and courage. She is inscrutable and unknowable, and exists purely in terms of a motiveless, amoral, senseless force. She can will anything into existence and terrify people into compliance. She recognises no limit to her will and is a natural law breaker. She has the "blooming hardness"[42] and "capacity for insolence"[75] of the creature who means to flourish at the expense of lesser forms of life. She captures Benyon as a stoat captures a rabbit, fixing him with her eye and mesmerizing him until she can make her "kill". And he comes like a "lamb"[14] to the slaughter, adoring "the handsome insolent queen of his affections".[14] It is fruitless for him to complain that "the feminine nature"[24] is "little versed"[24] in "honour".[24] He can have little hope that she will die, since she is herself the life force. As such she destroys part of herself, her child, in order to survive. As she could not acknowledge the child or give it a life she chose to destroy it. With characteristic inconsequence she goes on to bear and rear another child, who she can provide with a life.

Her destructive capacity is not limited to the ill-equipped male. She also "kills" the woman who helps her to hide her child's existence from the world. Mrs. Portico, a friend of her parents, has the heart of a natural mother and is moved by "the simple fact"[38] of Georgina's "personal condition".[38] But she too is "cajoled"[39] and "over-mastered"[39] and has no defence against the young girl's will. She is forced to comply, whatever her personal objections, and whatever realistic alternatives she offers to collusion in Georgina's crimes. She is also drawn by her "splendid, careless, insolent, fair-faced way of admitting"[38] that she is "bad".[38] But Mrs. Portico does not know in advance the depths of the crimes to which she will become accessory. It is only after she escorts Georgina to Italy and sees that she means to abandon her child that she measures the extent

of her own complicity. After the child is left in the Genoese hills and they go to Rome for the spring, Georgina's capacity for life grows as Mrs. Portico's diminishes. The young woman's "blooming hardness"[42] acts on her "like a kind of Medusa-mask".[43] "She had seen a horrible thing, she had been mixed up with it, and her motherly heart had received a mortal chill."[43] She tries by way of "atonement for the treachery to which she had already surrendered herself"[43] to rescue the child and put it safely in the hands of its father. But it is already too late. "The poor lady's anxieties, indignations, repentances, preyed on her until they fairly broke her down."[44] Weakened and in a depressed condition, she contracts malarial fever and dies within three weeks. Her diminished energy has been "spasmodic"[44] and she is unable to resist either disease or Georgina's power to reduce her.

Benyon is spared by the necessary distance between himself and Georgina from looking into the heart of life and actually dying. Nevertheless, at his distance she always appears as life in all its beauty and its terror. He is amazed that such a magnificent woman should be his wife. She affects him so much from the first he counts it "the one thing ...in his favour"[24] that "the finest girl he had ever seen was ready to throw herself into his arms".[24] He cannot release himself from this one connection with life, though he cannot confront Georgina and live with her. Her theoretical opposite, the woman with whom he subsequently falls in love, is bloodless and lifeless. Even Benyon can bend her to his will. Because he is silent about his strange marriage she is denied an understanding of his situation and her own. He binds her to him and asks her to wait for a marriage day that never comes. Benyon himself is for the second time bound to a woman in a situation he can never resolve.

In this story opposition in the nature of the two women as between the violent assertions of an amoral psychic power and the sacrifice of the will is more violently disjunct than in The Romance of Certain Old Clothes.

The difference is largely in what Georgina symbolically represents - life itself. Her opposite is consequently drained of all life. It is characteristic of such oppositions that the sexually dominant woman arouses the male's desires and fears while her opposite appears safer but does not compel him. This is the case here too, but Kate is the least compelling of any of James's sacrificial figures. When Benyon meets her she has already passed most of her life serving her family, and is nursing her dying sister, Mildred. His own position is simplified because he can think of her as being "in love" with her sister. This is a way of saying that she is half in love with death; also that she cannot bring him life. He is lulled by her "soothing and unselfish habits",(53) and finds in her a repository of "good service".(53) Indeed she looks as if "the habit of watching and serving had taken complete possession of her".(53) It is Mildred who tries to take an initiative with Benyon because she would die more happily if her sister were secure and happy. She tells Benyon that Kate is quite morbidly unselfish, and disclaims "a right to have anything of her own - not even a husband".(57) He does not treat her, indeed, as if she had any rights (which was not Mildred's point), but by the time they meet Kate already appears to have forfeited them.

> Kate Theory had a taste of her own, and her ideas were not always the same as her sister's; but she did whatever Mildred liked, and if the poor girl had told her to put the door-mat on the dining-table, or the clock under the sofa, she would have obeyed without a murmur. Her own ideas, her personal tastes, had been folded up and put away, like garments out of season, in drawers and trunks, with camphor and lavender. They were not, as a general thing, for southern wear, however indispensable to the comfort in the climate of New England, where poor Mildred had lost her health. (46)

It is to be presumed that Kate never takes her tastes out of her trunk, and that she leaves them there so long that she no longer knows what they are. After Mildred's death she returns to New England from Naples, where they had sought a better climate for Mildred's health. There she is put upon by the rest of her family, who will use her up in the demands they make of her. It

is from this situation that Mildred wished to save her. Kate is a kind of theoretical (as her name suggests) alternative to Georgina as a marriage partner, but she is scarcely a real one. For she is too much Benyon's counterpart, is too asexual a creature, and seems to represent an aspect of his own psyche.

In Georgina's mind Benyon himself is reduced to a concept of the kind of male she can dominate. At first she imagines him as "the great Napoleon, before he was celebrated",(16) and her treatment of him can be read as testing him to measure his strength or impotence. Despite the absurdity of her imputation that he does not love her because he agreed to a concession she herself had imposed, she was clearly applying a test. As she puts it to Mrs. Portico:

> "Why, then, did he make that promise, if he loved me? No man who really loved me would have made it, and no man that was really a man as I understand being a man! He might have seen that I only did it to test him - to see if he wanted to take advantage of being left free himself. It is a proof that he doesn't love me - not as he ought to have done; and in such a case a woman isn't bound to make sacrifices!" (37)

What happens to Benyon is a measure of her influence. While she is not willing to give up anything for an idea, he is condemned to become an absentee lover, sailing a symbolic sea that might at any moment rise up and engulf him, wandering far from home, a perpetual exile without hope of comfort or a resolution of his dilemma. It is the measure of her power that he is left with all the sickness of his helpless rage blaming her for having ravaged his life. For her love is equated with power and she can reduce him to total impotence. His helplessness is measured against her strength, which enables her even to commit "murder" with impunity. Georgina is a kind of "monster",(71) an inhuman figure who recognises no false position, knows no guilts and no resentments. She imposes compliance with her wishes, suffers no forfeits, is crossed by nobody, and blooms while others die. Part of her power to terrify lies in her lack of motive. Ultimately she is nothing more than

psychic drive and sheer will.

The difference between James's predication of the male and the female personality is such that some male life situations cannot have female counterparts. For example there is no companion piece to The Lesson of the Master because James's women are not faced by the choice between marriage and career, a fruitful source of male confusion over personal and professional identifications. Nor are rival female figures used as agents of a frustrated love fate as they are in the novels, for in the short stories the love fate is not suffered by women. However, women may marry perversely, be the dupe of their own romantic conceptions of marriage and be frustrated in the idealistic goals they seek.

Madame de Mauves*(1874) presents the case of a woman who seems to be a counterpart of the male in her spiritual constitution and in that she suffers a perverse fate in a frustrated marriage, by which she is so deeply wounded that she ceases to live in any real sense. She makes a religion of love, which sets a goal she cannot achieve. Indeed, she has made a marriage to a man she thought was the hero of her dreams but who turns out in every way to be the opposite.

Euphemia de Mauves's story is told largely from the point of view of a young man of her "own faith and race and spiritual substance",(171) an American of "Puritanic soul",(148) Longmore. He might have been made for her but meets her too late. He hates his rival, her husband, especially because he does not seem to appreciate her. Longmore has learned from the friend who introduced them, Mrs. Draper, that Euphemia is unhappily married in a political compact. He is asked by Mrs. Draper to "console"(128) the "unhappy wife"(128) in such a way as to prove to her that "an American friend may

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* Tales, Vol. 3.

mingle admiration and respect better than a French husband".[128] He finds in this an "unwonted opportunity"[129] and an "inspiring idea",[129] and does indeed prove the point, although he falls in love with her. The dramatic crisis of their friendship is reached when each learns independently that her husband has a mistress. At this time, Euphemia's sister-in-law, Marie Clairin, with the implicit consent of de Mauves, asks Longmore to become Euphemia's lover in order to relieve the domestic situation. Longmore is too much of a gentleman to offer more than a "devoted friendship",[179] though he would like to. However, Madame de Mauves herself saves him, by conceiving of his "ideal ... conduct".[197] She requests him to leave at once without passion or recrimination lest she suffer a keen disappointment in him, giving him thereby "a chance to do gallantly what it seemed unworthy of both of them he should do meanly".[197] He accepts his losses as inevitable in the circumstances, though it is to be supposed that he never falls in love again himself. He believes that Madame de Mauves is not in love with him and that in imposing his departure she intended to show him "that she could love him in no degree nor contingency, in no imaginable future".[198] This is for him "absolute".[198]

Euphemia fell in love once only and forever - with her husband "as he ought to have been".[162] Her "incorruptible"[129] purity takes on a different complexion when it becomes clear that she cannot forgive him for the many injuries he has done her, and that her "outraged virtue"[209] covers feelings of resentment and aggression that ultimately drive him to suicide. It is reported to Longmore in a circuitous manner that she "killed her husband"[208] by her "inexorable"[208] refusal to readmit him to her favours and forgive him his follies. The husband fell "madly in love"[208] with her as a result of the extraordinary proof of her purity in dismissing her lover. Her repeated rejection makes him love her more at the same time that it drives him to despair, until, one day, he blows out his brains. This is the very fate that M. Clairin had suffered, as related earlier in the story.

After a year of marriage to Marie, he had taken the measure of his wife's "lofty spirit",(147) had grown afraid of her (and of admitting his financial losses to her), and had likewise blown out his brains. Madame Clairin's aggressiveness is entirely overt, and she is characterised as the "adversary",(148) not the victim of fate. Madame de Mauves's powers are hidden, and she remains a victim of fate, while at the same time revealing a manifest power to consume her man. At his safe distance in America, Longmore becomes aware of "a singular feeling"(209) that translates his earlier tender memories into something different, "for which awe would be hardly too strong a name".(209) He does not return to France to claim Euphemia.

The personality and situation of the two Americans are closely parallel, but there is an important difference between them: the heroine is possessed of a superior force that threatens to overtake the hero unless he withdraws from her sphere of influence. A woman injured in love is a wounded tigress that will take vengeance on her enemy, while a man is the stricken deer that seeks the innermost shade of the forest in which to hide and heal his wound. Her appearance of similarity has proved beguiling.

An air of enigma overhangs Euphemia's motives because her amoral psychic energy baffles the male, from whose point of view she is seen. But she is also revealed dramatically in conversations and is thus seen as a character independently of the male experience of her. The history of her injuries is long. Put to school in France to allow her father to pursue his occupations and her mother her pleasures, an exile from home confronted by a superior culture, she forms an imaginative world. She is a sleeping princess waiting to be awakened by the hero of her dreams. When she meets Richard de Mauves she views him as the archetypal man of her imagination. She is entirely innocent of the ways of the world, which are in any case inimical to her. She is taken up by a worldly aristocratic family in need of wealth to support their position. Marie de Mauves, a schoolfriend, introduces her

to her brother with a purpose, for she is an "accomplished schemer".[131] Madame de Mauves senior, the mother, sees that Euphemia is "too tender a victim to be sacrificed to an ambition",[134] but on the other hand that "the prosperity of her house was too precious a heritage to be sacrificed to a scruple".[134] She takes life as "a game of skill"[133] in which the best player gets the rewards. She therefore sacrifices the girl. Richard, corrupted by society, likewise sees "idealism"[137] as "a losing game".[137] He has debts to pay and a "hard determination"[136] to marry Euphemia's money. Her own fantasies contribute to the situation that determines her fate. For Richard, a man who believes in nothing, it is "a singular fate ... to be so tenderly believed in."[136] On the one hand he is purified by her imaginative conception of him but on the other he inevitably falls far short of it. Moreover, his attitude toward women is erotic not romantic. For him women are soiled gloves to be thrown out after use. So Euphemia finds herself an alien in an evil world and cultivates the country of the mind, where she can still deem herself perfect and judge the iniquities of others. She measures the depths of her deception and her husband's "luxurious egotism",[137] which appears to flourish at her expense. Her conceptions have been so high that she feels her wrongs the more acutely, though she reveals this indirectly.

Longmore regards Euphemia as a woman deeply wronged who makes no attempt to insist upon her rights. He perceives an "ingenuous reserve"[144] and finds her "ardent self-effacement"[145] unusual. He does not know whether to attribute her "stoicism"[150] or submissiveness to self-command or self-abnegation. He sees the evidence of her "painful secret"[144] on every side. Richard appears as an "arrogantly frivolous"[145-46] Frenchman, whose very attitudes are an injury to a woman of Euphemia's nature. The terrifying powers of Madame Clairin give him a moral chill"[148] (whereas she regards him as a rich and amiable man who might redeem her impecuniousness). Longmore has "an indefinable sense of being enclosed in a magnetic circle,

like the victim of an incantation".[148] He sees Euphemia at the centre of the circle, the victim of evil. His perceptions are influenced by his sense of her as the sacrificial innocent, especially as in her spiritual substance she appears to conform to his heroic mould. In her failure to pursue her advantage as the injured party she displays the "generosity"[153] and "magnanimity"[144] of the heroic male. She preaches his own doctrine of reununciation but in a more impassioned form. Moreover, he sees her through the eyes of love, as one who showers a divine charity upon him. That she conceives "an ideal of conduct"[197] for him shows how much she must regard him:

> What she asked he felt that she was asking, not for her own sake (she feared nothing, she needed nothing), but for that of his own happiness and his character.[199]

Beyond Longmore's conception of Euphemia there lives a very different person, less elevated and detached than she appears. She seems calm, composed and indifferent, a woman in whom "the stream of passion"[162] flows "clear"[162] and "still".[162] This is partly her defence against living. She clings to the minimal life that is open to her lest she should be swept into the stream of passion and engulfed. She appears to deny herself the right to complain but her very attitude affirms it constantly. She carries herself like a wronged woman, but in keeping her injury within herself denies her husband the chance to confront and resolve it. Instead of diminishing passionate feelings she therefore magnifies them out of all proportion. When Longmore presses her to make some statement about herself she indicates her fundamental fear of passion.

> "I hate tragedy," she once said to {me}; "I have a really pusillanimous dread of moral suffering. I believe that - without base concessions - there is always some way of escaping from it. I had almost rather never smile all my life than have a single violent explosion of grief."[153]

There is justice in Richard's complaint that she is "morbid",[159] "freezing"[159] and buried alive. She needs to have her imagination brought to life.

Even Longmore sees her "as a figure haunted by a shadow which was somehow her intenser, more authentic self".(145) He has discovered that for himself passion is "a sentiment compounded of pity and anger, as well as admiration, and bristling with scruples and doubts",(163) not a condition in which he feels simply "a mild general glow of satisfaction".(163) But he takes for granted the purity of Euphemia's passion and fails to realise that it too is compounded of many elements. If it is "a potent force"(167) for him - and when such "forces are compressed they explode"(167) - it is no different for her. He senses "a pleading dread of excessive emotion"(168) in her eyes, but at the time he is more concerned to find in it evidence of her feelings for himself than to ask the meaning of her repression. Gradually she emerges as a woman totally isolated from others, pretending that her emotions have not the power to overwhelm her. She is in fact tormented by tumultuous feelings and reduces her experience to freezing point as a measure against her incapacity to live fully. In her passion for survival she is reduced to a bolt of energy, which severely qualifies her humanity. She recognises something of this herself, as she says to Longmore:

> "I believe ... I have nothing on earth but a conscience, - it's a good time to tell you so, - nothing but a dogged, clinging, inexpungable conscience. Does that prove me to be indeed of your faith and race, and have you one for which you can say as much? I don't say it in vanity, for I believe that if my conscience will prevent me from doing anything very base, it will effectually prevent me from doing anything very fine." (171)

This is the form in which she would naturally conceive of her fundamental nature, but it is also the unconscious disguise behind which she attacks her husband and embattles her own life force. For naturally she thinks she is right and good, which affords self-justification. She pushes her attempt to be incorruptible to such an extreme that she becomes inhuman, without compassion or forgiveness.

She encaptures the male partly by presenting herself as espousing the idealization of love while, at the same time, withholding herself from

attainment by him. Longmore likens her to a statue of a feminine divinity that cannot be embraced. He also sees her in a dream as a figure on the opposite bank of a river from himself. A boatman approaches and offers to take him across. Once there he realises that Euphemia is now on the bank he has just left. The boatman, who is now pursuing his way downstream, is Richard. Longmore is haunted by visions of bliss in the form that some people can enjoy but not those like himself who are "foredoomed to be respectable".(185) However, the form of suppressed passion that is so real and so near, yet so reserved and withdrawn, is very potent to him. Richard is affected in exactly the same way after Euphemia dismisses Longmore. She has a paradoxical effect upon her men, at once arousing their passion and seeming to long for it herself, yet denying it and putting them down. It is a way that she holds them in thrall.

Madame de Mauves remains a paradoxical character, infinitely precious yet an extraordinary threat to her men. For Richard it is a curious fate to be drawn into the dilemma that has existed for American men like Longmore but not for a European like himself. Until the point at which the story ends his erotic experience has been characterized by easy mastery. Now he too is stimulated by the suppressed force of her passion while at the same time he grows to fear it. She is his wife and yet makes herself unattainable to him. It is a conflict he cannot resolve and he dies the death of the injured lover wounded by rejection.

The circumstances that make her unattainable to Longmore are different because she is not his by rights. He knows himself to be fishing "in troubled waters",(129) which makes his passion inevitably "born to ill-fortune".(184) "His first - his last - glimpse of positive happiness"(184) is "indissolubly linked with renunciation".(184) His experience must be "muffled and mutilated, like an indecent picture",(185) because any expression of love would be adulterous. He is therefore condemned to the ardour of

hopelessness, and his future will be "the blank memory of a regret, rather than the long reverberation of a joy".(185) However, he takes his losses well, and is determined to live in the face of them. In this he is heroic. It comes over him that "life was this, now, and he must live".(199)

> He must assent to destiny. Why else was he young and strong, intelligent and resolute? He must not give it to her to reproach him with thinking that she had a moment's attention for his love, - to plead, to argue, to break off in bitterness; he must see everything from above, her indifference and his own ardor; he must decide that the handsome thing was to submit to the inevitable, to be supremely delicate, to spare her all pain, to stifle his passion, to ask no compensation, to depart without delay and try to believe that wisdom is its own reward. (199)

Longmore believes that love should provide a "happiness serene, profound"(171) and "complete",(171) but every where he looks, even at the "rapturous union"(190) of the artist lover and his mistress whom he meets in the woods, there lurk "the seeds of trouble".(190) Erotic passion has seemed to him overtly threatening and depleting, but the romantic passion which appeared to invest life with "a certain nobleness of meaning"(130) turns out to have the same psychic basis. Its form is all the more potent and destructive for being unsuspected. For Euphemia is a being who has staked everything on her happiness in love, which constitutes a huge threat to her partner. Even during the course of the story Longmore thinks Richard dislikes his wife because she has loved him too well. Longmore's passions are muted, but Euphemia's - and indeed this accounts for her own fears - enter the world in which it is necessary to kill or be killed. The story resolves itself finally into the representation of the battle for life between the female and the male, a characteristically unequal one in which only for the woman has love the character of power.

The opposition between the two types of woman in the story is reduced as Madame de Mauves comes to embody the dual nature of woman. At first she and her sister-in-law seem poles apart, indeed they are in their

values and social behaviour, and in that Euphemia would not encourage a sentimental friendship while Madame Clairin would. But the contrast between the pure and the overtly sexual woman is nullified by the fact that Euphemia has the same effect upon her husband as Madame Clairin had upon hers. Euphemia is superficially the sweetest of women, charitable, generous, high-minded, without coquetry, and a lover of harmony and peace. This is the view of the man who is in love with her. Yet for her husband she is morbid, freezing, exalted, spiritless, and socially chilling, given to melancholy, grief and nursing her own injury. Behind the mask is a terror that if she gives way her feelings will overwhelm her. But she retains her potent force and is reduced to it in the end: rather an inexpungable will than an inexpungable conscience. If she saw herself as fallen and a part of the world the disgust that she feels for the world would attach to herself. Through maintaining a lofty isolation she seems to retain her sense of her own justification.

James reveals the male's need to build up fantasies about himself in consequence of his weakness, and his tendency to impute the frustration of his potentialities to women. There is no parallel story of the female, who is much less split between the worlds of fantasy and reality. She is precluded from such experience because it is her nature to master circumstances. Stories of verification, in which a woman tests her power against a man in order to prove her value, do not exist as a genre in James's short stories. Nor is the woman represented in and for herself (as is the male) coming to terms with herself in the presence of aging, and developing an increasing awareness of herself and the world around her. The repeated situation is that of the man who establishes his negative identity in contrast with a woman's more positive power.

In Pandora* (1884) James explores indirectly the characters and situation of a young American girl in the process of becoming a socially identifiable "type", "the self-made girl".[396] She is characterised by her extraordinarily rapid progress from obscurity to social distinction and worldly success. The achievement of success, in which Pandora engages some of her family, bespeaks dangerous powers, and in this case the sheer force of personality. The significance of Pandora's psychic drive is that it makes the Jamesian male feel reduced on the ground of mere personality. It is on this ground that the power of men and women are most clearly shown to be unevenly matched.

Pandora's story is told in a series of episodes that establish her increased control over circumstance, as observed by a man of weak personality who remains unchanged throughout. Though Count Vogelstein is a German his nationality throws into relief traits similar to those of the alienated American hero. He is in temporary exile at the German legation in Washington. He has been reliant upon the traditional ideas of his compatriots for recognition of his social (and therefore personal) value. He is quite lost abroad. He is out of touch with the world, and has constantly to enquire who people are and what things mean, in order to arrive at a sense of himself. He does not respond to people as such. His only redeeming feature is that he does, however minimally, allow himself to respond to Pandora, despite being warned about the danger of the type of the American girl of modest origins. Vogelstein is an ambivalent lover: though he would like to establish a relationship with Pandora, he takes precautions against allowing one to develop. At the very moment that he approaches intimate conversation with her he feels that he is losing her. At the same time he discovers that since she was sixteen she has been engaged to a man back home, who has now achieved some status and is about to proclaim Pandora his wife. Count

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* Tales, Vol. 5.

Vogelstein loses his tenuous connection with life in the spirited and natural form that Pandora has given it to him. He is left to indulge in his own intense meditations. Pandora's personal success exposes his own failure.

The story opens with a scene on a German liner just out of Southampton and bound for New York. Count Vogelstein is literally "at sea" in a world of mystifying impressions. He is lost in the crowd, without his usual social and cultural supports, and discomforted by being "reduced to mere personality".(358) Aware of a certain personal inferiority, he tries to reassure himself by watching the newly embarked passengers, who are bewildered by their environment and seem to him socially inferior. Pandora immediately appears as an aggressive, threatening and mannerless young woman. She wants to take his chair (which is inscribed with his name in such huge German characters that in all modesty he has hidden them from view) and to find out who he is. He has been led to expect Americans to have no conscience in such matters, but it turns out that Pandora was looking for one of her family's chairs, which she thought he might be using. She has no interest in him as a person. Throughout the voyage he watches her from safe vantage points. He dismisses the value of her acquaintance as she could not move in the same social sphere as himself. But somehow she fixes his attention and he tries to discern whether she might be worth knowing by watching the responses of other people towards her. She is clearly capable of making an "impression"(372) on the Captain. But Vogelstein tends to identify with older people of established social position, who can consolidate his sense of security. He listens to an older American woman, Mrs. Dangerfield, who is so superior that she speaks to no one but himself. She confirms his sense of Pandora as a mere provincial of no possible account and from a nondescript family. Her parents are "heavy little burghers"(370) he would not want to know, and her elder brother is not of "the upper class".(370) The two younger children are impossible, active and unmannerly. The family interests him as perhaps typical of the one into which he might chance to marry. He

has been told of "the constant danger of marrying the American girl",[370] and feels exposed to this situation as "one of the complications of modern life".[370] He considers himself to be too good "to be sacrificed on the altar of the American girl",[401] but is aware of novel social circumstances in which any expression of love might propel one into marriage.

From Vogelstein's perceptions there emerges a portrait of a young girl who definitely counts. She is of neat appearance and has great cultivation and spirit. She is highly independent and self-possessed. By accepting responsibility for her whole family, parents included, she imparts an "originality"[370] to "the filial character".[370] She settles them to their daily rounds and comforts with a quick, bright, silent and purposeful manner. She is in no way distressed by her duties and almost looks as if she were taking care of mere belongings entrusted to her care for safe passage home. Her parents seem like a pair of "household dogs that expect to be scratched"[371] and snooze as soon as they are made comfortable. Yet there is some intimation of dangerous energies behind the whole spectacle. It is as if Pandora mesmerises her parents into compliance. They appear the "passive",[367] "patient"[367] "victims"[367] of her "spell",[367] for they make no movement without her. Pandora has powers of management and is a kind of overseer of their lives. Her duties leave her energies undiminished for her own preoccupations, such as reading Sainte Beuve, Renan, de Musset, and others, who contribute to her cultivation. She does not in fact seem interested in making the acquaintance of gentlemen.

Before they disembark, Vogelstein allows himself one lengthy conversation with Pandora, in which she talks about her social ambitions. She expects to move the family from Utica to New York on their return. She hopes that their two years abroad has persuaded her parents of the justice of this move, for Utica could not seem the same after exposure to the best that Europe offers. She also talks of putting her parents through the customs, which she anticipates might be difficult unless a friend to whom she has

written for assistance has come to help her. In two years they have made a lot of purchases. Vogelstein makes a great deal of the customs house scene that follows, for it enables him to dismiss Pandora as a girl he would not choose to know. His superior importance seems to be recognised by the customs official, who passes him through without inspecting his bags, whereas Pandora is ostensibly humiliated by having to open a trunk containing her family's "sea-things"(380) and by the non-appearance of her friend, Mr. Bellamy. However, Bellamy has sent her a letter for the official, to whom she introduces Vogelstein. This puts her even further beyond the pale, for the official, whom Vogelstein has considered tipping, turns out to be a friend of Mr. Bellamy. Furthermore, her small sister reveals, as Vogelstein expected, that Mr. Bellamy is Pandora's "lover".(377) Pandora is aware of Vogelstein's reservations, and her last comment to him is a hope that "you'll judge us correctly".(380)

With this recollection in his mind Vogelstein receives a shock when, in the spring of his second year in Washington, he sees Pandora talking with the President at a party at one of the best houses. She has become "a great beauty"(385) and "a great social success",(385) which is acclaimed by the attention the President gives her. He treats her as a considerable person, makes her a promise, and even gives her an invitation. By contrast Vogelstein feels that the President takes him for a "mere constituent, possibly for an office-seeker",(388) a man of no account at all. Pandora appears with all the elation of success as "a person to be reckoned with".(389) Vogelstein is nervous about meeting her but does so in order to establish some contact with her. Bewildered, he presses his host and hostess for information about her. It is then that Alfred Bonnycastle explains to him that she is "the self-made girl",(397) a new American type that he tries to define for Vogelstein.

> She was possible, doubtless, only in America; American life has smoothed the way for her. She was not fast nor emancipated nor crude nor loud, and there was not

> in her, of necessity at least, a grain of the stuff of which the adventuress is made. She was simply very successful, and her success was entirely personal. She had not been born with the silver spoon of social opportunity; she had grasped it by honest exertion. You knew her by different signs, but chiefly, infallibly, by the appearance of her parents. It was her parents that told the story; you always saw that her parents could never have made her. Her attitude with regard to them might vary, in innumerable ways; the great fact on her own side being that she had lifted herself from a lower social plane, done it all by herself, and done it by the simple lever of her personality. (397-98)

The girl has always acquired culture, always done the European tour, and is always "much better"(398) than her parents, who are, however, always eminently respectable. She is "privately devoted"(398) to her kindred, but they are effaced publicly. It is she who goes into society. All these elements seem present in Pandora's situation, and what marks her as an exceptional representative of the type is, according to Mr. Bonnycastle, the "rapidity"(399) of her advance.

Vogelstein's interest in Pandora is quickened by this conversation, and he makes several more attempts to see her. Failing to find her at Mrs. Steuben's house, where she is staying, he follows her to the Capitol, to which he learns she has gone, and begins to flirt with the idea that he might be in love with her. He shows her around and finds it was impossible for a girl "to be less heavy, to drag less, in the business of walking behind a cicerone".(400) He tries to work out "how it was that she had made herself",(401) but gets entrapped afterwards in his own speculations about the discomforts her success would have for her husband. Vogelstein needs to establish himself independently of women, though he concedes that a wife could help her husband.

> Vogelstein, on the whole, preferred that his success should be his own; it would not be agreeable to him to have the air of being pushed by his wife. Such a wife as that would wish to push him. (402)

He is unable to persuade himself that he is not interested in her, but he fears that her superior power will detract from his own. Thus he is under a certain suspense "which made him feel that he was watching his own life and that his susceptibilities were beyond his control".[403] He has known about Mr. Bellamy from the beginning and has been told by Mrs. Bonnycastle that "it is never safe to fix your affections upon"[407] Pandora's type, "because she has almost always got an impediment somewhere in the background",[407] "a precocious engagement"[407] to a young man from her "earlier phase"[407] to whom she "sticks".[408] He therefore imagines her to be in circumstances that make him safe.

The climax comes at a picnic, where Vogelstein has his only intimate conversation with Pandora and finally meets her fiancé. He is confused by her awareness of the warning Mrs. Dangerfield had given him, and by Pandora's disclosure that the lady now spoke to her and was soon to entertain her. He cannot understand her at all, and begins to suspect that she might not accept him.

> The way she talked about expecting some news made him feel, somehow, that she had a career, that she was active and independent, so that he could scarcely hope to stop her as she passed.[406]

James now gives the only indication of Pandora's response to him. She finds it of no significance whether he understands her or not, but she is "a little frightened"[406] by his "revelations",[406] and puts a quick end to their conversation. The effect on his is "discouraging"[406] and "somewhat chilling".[406] He questions Mrs. Steuben about Pandora's possible engagement and learns the truth. Then, on their arrival back in Washington but still on the boat that has carried them to the picnic, he receives his final revelation. She has indeed proved her power in the way he anticipated. What she had asked of the President was to secure a position in the Ministry for Mr. Bellamy. Mr. Bellamy himself is on the dockside, with the letter indicating that he is to be posted to Holland, to the Department of State. The communi-

cation between the two is covert, but unbeknown to them it is observed by Vogelstein, who is standing nearby. Two days later the intended marriage is announced.

James does not indicate the nature of Vogelstein's intense meditations. There is enough indication in the story that Vogelstein has some awareness of his situation, while his weakness is opposed to Pandora's strength throughout. His stance is so speculative, so far removed from life by his attempt to apprehend it intellectually, that an air of the theoretic hangs about the whole situation. Vogelstein walks home alone while his successful rival sets off in a carriage with Pandora, but no great weight is given to his sense of loss. He is still the same "serious, civil, ceremonious, stiff, inquisitive"(358) conservative German he was at the beginning, stuffed with superfluous facts and prejudices that inhibit his response to life. He has neither made any significant advance in life nor developed his capacity to live. Pandora is too distant from him to threaten him, but even at this remove she provides an alarming example of the kind of power a woman might possess. James presents her indirectly, through the narrator's projection of her in terms of his own powerlessness. However, she is far more convincing as a human creation than the women considered earlier, who were so much more male projections. The point about Pandora is that she demonstrates the birth and growth of the power of the female, from the first moment that Vogelstein sees her until the last. In the beginning she is a pretty but ordinary young woman who merely fixed his attention because she seems attractive and unusual. By the end she is an extraordinary success who has used her personal qualities - self possession, responsibility, efficiency, concern, purposefulness - to achieve her goal of self improvement. She literally remakes the circumstances of her life, with no other asset than her power of personality. She has made the world her oyster.

The power of the female to retain her connection with reality, even where a certain amount of fantasy may be involved in the proof of her conclusions, places her in a very different position from the male whose obsessions may become his fate. In The Beast in the Jungle John Marcher's fears about himself in relation to life constitute his fate, though he projects them in terms of a putative external happening. Marcher cannot achieve any perspective on himself and he obstructs his own development. There is a sense in which he could have lived if he had loved May, yet it was his fear of loving her, and thereby finding himself engulfed by her power, that prevented him from living. There is no way to escape this bind. His fear projects itself in hallucinations from which he cannot detach himself sufficiently to see what he is doing. His whole life drives toward the point at which, in a blinding flash of illumination, he gains sufficient retrospective vision to realize the possibilities that the laws of his own nature denied him. It is an abstract variation upon the story of retrospective proof, in which the hero looks back over a life of injury,loss, failure and frustration in order to justify decisions by claiming that he had no real alternative. It is characteristic of the story of retrospective proof that the injured hero attempts to verify his personal worth in relation to his love-fate by comparing himself with an apparently similar person in an analogous situation who may now act as he himself has done. Though none of James's portrayals of woman corresponds to that of John Marcher there is one story in which James treats a woman in her late fifties who looks back over her life in order to arrive at the proof she wants. Hers is an attempt to justify her husband's merit against that of his friend and rival.

The Abasement of the Northmores* (1900) is the only one of James's short stories to be presented wholly through the vision of its heroine. The effect of her attempt to understand the meaning of lives in relation to each other is to produce quite a different pattern from the male-centred stories. There are several reasons for this. The story is primarily about the rivalry between the two men, which turned on their fate in love and was not resolved between them until they both died. Again, what happens to the heroine, being dependent largely upon the social status that her husband gives her, is somewhat external to her. Having chosen to marry the man who ultimately becomes a failure in worldly terms she forfeits the life of worldly renown and prosperity that would have been hers had she married the other. But she is not disposed to place supreme value on the life of the world. She is able to see the life of the great in terms of "the great indifferent general life"(126) that reduces everything in the end to the "commonness of failure".(132) She is resigned to the vanity of human wishes: nobody gets what he wants and the whole human quest is doomed to failure. She can thus readily convict the publicly successful man of failure in his private life and redeem her husband's lack of public recognition by appeal to his personal success. It is sufficient that her husband is a celebrity of some sort. Their marriage is a success, however much she may have thought it a "flat union"(113) as compared with life on the grand scale.

In contrast to the hero of the male-centred story the heroine here, Mrs. Hope, is responding to a sense of injury that is not intrinsic to her own nature, that does not reflect on her inability to love. For her it is merely part of a greater injustice in the way of the world that her husband has not been rewarded when he was really the better man. She is herself much loved. She is characterised by her care of her husband and her loyalty to him, though there is an element of exaggeration in the expression of

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* Tales, Vol. 11.

these feelings, which masks her resentment at his failure to provide what she considers due to her. She pins her faith on the importance of their relationship, the test of which is her desire to follow her husband after his death. Although she identifies herself in relation to a man, she is not cut off from life or love itself. She is therefore justified in an essential way. On a long view, she can even foresee a day when time will redress the balance of wrongs, her husband will receive his proper acclaim, and his rival will sink to oblivion as a man who was personally a nonentity.

Warren Hope and John Northmore started out in life after their university years "shoulder to shoulder".(113) The two men had much "the same outfit of preparation, ambition and opportunity",(113) and had begun "at the same point and wanting the same things - only wanting them ... in different ways".(113) Northmore himself had believed in Hope's future. The great crisis came when he introduced his girl friend to Hope. As they shared chambers the meeting was unavoidable. Six months later she became Hope's bride. It might be thought that Hope, in winning the woman, proved the successful one. But the circumstances spurred the rivalry, which included goals beyond marriage and was never resolved. They remained in competition for life, recognition, reputation, fame, and finally for immortality.

The importance of telling the story from Mrs. Hope's point of view lies in her close identification with her husband, a characteristically failed man who cannot afford to recognise the component elements in his life, or at least sees fit to deny them. She brings to consciousness thoughts that he suppresses. He denies the situation as she sees it and takes the line that her view of Northmore's bad treatment of him "is a figment of your ingenious mind - your too passionate, your beautiful loyalty ... to me".(112) When the question of attending Northmore's funeral arises, he can make no reply to her bitter complaints against his own "exaggerated chivalry",(112) his "renewed refusal to consider"(112) his own interests, which for thirty years he has sacrificed to his friend. The weather is

dangerous, considering that his chest is weak, and Mrs. Hope has a foreboding that her husband will pay the "supreme sacrifice" (112) for going to the funeral, that his end will be the dramatic symbol of his having always paid for his friend with his life. This proves to be the case. Hope returns with congestion of the lungs, which develops into pneumonia. He dies ten days later. His wife is left to reflect upon his sacrifice.

> Tenderly, divinely as he loved her, she felt his surrender, through all the anguish, as an unspeakable part of the sublimity of indifference into which his hapless history had finally flowered. "His easy power, his easy power!" - her passion had never yet found such relief in that simple, secret phrase for him. He was so proud, so fine and so flexible, that to fail a little had been as bad for him as to fail much; therefore he had opened the flood-gates wide - had thrown, as the saying was, the helve after the hatchet. He had amused himself with seeing what the devouring world would take. Well, it had taken all. (115)

Mrs. Hope is aware that the rivalry between the two men can be resolved only in death. It has been her interpretation from the beginning that her rejection of Northmore had led him unceasingly to try to show her that she has chosen the wrong man. He is thereby given a motive to succeed in every way, but most particularly by gaining worldly prizes at Hope's expense. Mrs. Hope's interpretation of the case accords with a characteristically Jamesian situation: a destructive rivalry within a bond. She sees Northmore's success only in terms of his making Hope pay. She sees Northmore as never having let Hope go, using him to the last drop, keeping him down and never letting him go free, making his way up on his back. She sees herself as the great spur towards Northmore's having become a "great political figure",(111) a "great light"(111) of his historical period, and a man of "great usefulness",(111) as he is described in the obituaries. She sees her husband as forever trying to expiate his guilt at having won her, and as accepting his inferiority to Northmore. His resentment is hidden behind his appearance of absolute indifference to the world, as if the whole thing meant nothing to him at all, as if in fact he has ceased to compete

because of his acute sense of failure. He never expresses these feelings, which are left to his wife to suggest. She feels a measure of resentment against the injuries done her. She had married Hope on the assumption that he would be the success, as he might have been had he not remained guiltily tied to his destructive bond with Northmore. Over the years she has refused to have anything to do with Northmore because of her anger at his having shown the error of her choice.

The story opens with Northmore's death. Mrs. Hope is glad of this apparent finality. The newspapers did their duty by the subject,

> arranged it neatly and impressively, though perhaps with a hand a little violently expeditious, upon the funeral car, saw the conveyance properly down the avenue, and then, finding the subject suddenly quite exhausted, proceeded to the next item on the list.(111)

For there is nothing to mention about Northmore but "the monotony of success".(111) That finality is not accomplished becomes clear when Hope dies. The old sense of rivalry is renewed beneath her grief, for the world's treatment of the event as a "commonplace"(115) is even more perfunctory. She receives regrets from learned societies, expressions of condolence bespeaking a "general understanding that the occasion had been met".(116) She finds his despatch "as a minor celebrity"(116) worse than no notice at all. She was prepared for the world's rapid extinction of a life in Northmore's case, but in her husband's case death "should have been properly the beginning".(116) He should have received the proper acclaim for his true merit. Mrs. Hope is obliged throughout to measure her husband's merit against that of his rival's in an attempt to understand the meaning of her own life. Comparison must be injurious to somebody, but her view of the case will determine to whom.

She imagines herself "walking by some swift stream on which an object dear to her was floating out to sea".(116) Her instinct is "to keep up with it",(116) to catch and save it, but she cannot find a way to do so.

She runs faster as the distance to the sea diminishes and the current visibly increases. She tries to save her husband's reputation by putting together a collection of literary remains, but she finds herself defeated on every side. Publishers are uninterested, her competence in preparing the material is questioned, and the papers turn out to be the notes and memoranda of a "scrupulous soul"(117) who has failed of a "final form".(117) Then she wanders in "the wilderness"(117) trying to follow her husband's footsteps "only for herself",(117) for her own relief, but comes in the exercise to the critical revelation of "how remarkably little the three or four important volumes"(117) he had written had "'done'".(117) In coming to this perception she feels that she has "abandoned him",(117) and that he has "died for her at that hour over again".(117) Her next shock comes with the arrival of a letter from Lady Northmore, announcing her intention of compiling a volume of her own husband's letters and requesting assistance. Mrs. Hope realises that "the comparisons, the contrasts, the conclusions so invidiously"(117) in Northmore's favour will be reactivated, and that the ironical comedy of their relations is not yet over. Lady Northmore will do for her husband what she had just "schooled herself to regard as impossible for his defeated friend".(117) She turns out to possess a superabundance of missives from Northmore to her husband, which he has even "roughly classified".(119) She cannot write the regretful letter she has imagined, saying that "after an exhausting search, she could find nothing at all".(119) Hope has "preserved every scrap".(119) She proves her heroism by sending the papers the next day with a very different letter of her own, having struggled with the temptation to destroy them in order to make Hope "seem to have been just a little less duped".(120)

The circumstance produces in Mrs. Hope a "principle of doubt".(122) She begins to wonder whether it is not her own "silly fallibility of Being"(122) that is at fault, whether Northmore is not a "giant"(122) indeed. Her next

attempt to prove her husband's "inimitable gift"[123] as against that of his rival - having now undertaken to honour him through the publication of his own letters - is catastrophic. She receives from Lady Northmore the letter she had imagined herself as writing to her, and receives such letters from everybody else. They have all looked in vain and found nothing. As a result of her sense of her husband's extinction she goes through an experience of death herself. At the end of a month during which "nobody could find anything"[124]

> the poor woman, stricken, chilled to the heart, accepted perforce her situation and turned her face to the wall. In this position, as it were, she remained for days, taking heed of nothing and only feeling and nursing her wound. It was a wound the more cruel for having found her so unguarded.[125]

During this period she seems to come to terms with the probability of her own death and to decide what she may still do to redress the wrongs so as to die more easily. She is roused to life by the publication of Northmore's letters. She is afraid that the reviews will be overwhelmingly enthusiastic and cannot face the exposure of the contrast between the Northmores' pride and her own humiliation. She visits friends whom she would describe as "guiltless"[126] of her husband's "blood",[126] though these are people who at the same time would be unaware of the publication of his rival's letters. However, the sense of the "great indifferent general life"[126] of the world in which these things matter little enables her to return home in order to "face the music"[126] and to read the volumes that she knows Lady Northmore must have sent.

Much to her surprise, in these volumes she meets a man who seems perpetually to be sitting for his portrait, one whom she does not know and who refuses to recognise her. The eyes that she has previously felt fixed on her in their determination now look away from her. It is quite "as if he had been in the room and were unconscious of acquaintance",[127] quite as if she, a stranger, had happened accidentally upon a book in a library

for entertainment. The capacity to see nothing in the man but his public appearance enables her to interpret the letters as if there were nothing in them. The ones to her husband are "an abyss of inanity",[127] whereby she judges the others, and she measures the book to be "a sandy desert".[127]

She turns to the reviews to read them in the light of her discovery and suddenly to find her corroboration, "the triumph, unhoped for, of her justice".[128] She sees the reviewers as wondering equally with herself why the letters had been published, as asking the question "why ... drag to light such helplessness of expression? Why give the text of his dulness and the proof of his fatuity?"[128-29] She makes "the wheel ... come full circle",[129] and at last arrives at a sense of rough justice. She now conceives of her husband as possessing the prevision of this eventuality, a thought which enables her to preserve her old sense of him as knowing everything. Thus, he has played "insidiously the part of a guardian",[128] keeping the letters so that they should reveal their futility. He "had acted to an end long foretasted, and the end - the full taste - had come".[129] Now she considers "how beautiful her own chance would ... have been and how sweet her revenge"[129] if she could have published her intended volumes to vindicate her husband's reputation. Surely then Hope would have proved "immortal"[125] and Northmore "damned".[125] For Hope's letters to her are "natural, witty, various",[123] and "vivid",[123] and play "with the idlest, lightest hand, up and down the whole scale"[123] of human reactions, observations and feelings. They are the proof of his "easy power",[123] and of his talent, "discretion",[123] "usage",[123] and "taste"[123] in writing. In her imagination she sees a double revenge: she might at the same time publish those and Northmore's love-letters to her. Then the difference between the two would be recognized and would be inescapably brought home to the Northmores themselves. She imagines them "bewildered, scared",[130] and "suspicious",[130] like a "dog with a dust-pan tied to its tail and ready for any dash to cover at the sound of the clatter of tin".[130]

In the weeks that follow her sense of "the abasement of the Northmores"[131] she is enabled to resume her place in society, picking up "old threads"[131] and repairing "old ruptures".[131] She even calls on people who have been contributors to the Northmore volumes, seeing them now as "the unwitting agents of the unprecedented exposure: they having, it was sufficiently clear, acted in dense good faith".[131] She finds them without "the rudiments of intelligence",[131] people incapable of discerning her husband's quality whose "weak explanations"[131] and imbecile reasons for not having preserved his "priceless letters"[131] are "so much balm to her wound".[131] Again it is the indifference of the undiscriminating world and its false standards of judgment - judging only by worldly recognition - that confirm her in her knowledge that she is right in her estimation of her husband's merit. With this experience as a buffer, she is able to confront the Northmores in their home (indeed, she would need their permission to publish any of John Northmore's letters herself). Afterwards she recognises that

> she had taken in what she desired, had sounded what she saw; only, unexpectedly, something had overtaken her more absolute than the hard need she had obeyed or the vindictive advantage she had cherished. She had counted on herself for almost anything but for the pity of these people, yet it was in pity that, at the end of ten minutes, she felt everything else dissolve.
>
> They were suddenly, on the spot, transformed for her by the depth of their misfortune, and she saw them, the great Northmores, as - of all things - consciously weak and flat. (131)

At home she weeps "for the commonness of failure and the strangeness of life",[132] and this brings with it "a sense of philosophy".[132] "It was all as broad as it was long".[132] Lady Northmore is simply her own "wan sister in widowhood",[132] and death levels the disparities of experience between them. All the old dreams become accumulated ashes and she is liberated from them. Her last acts are symbolic. First she destroys one by one the love letters written to her by the young Northmore. Then she sets about

reinstating her old hero. She collects Hope's letters to herself, which are the symbol of their life, of their love, of the richness of their experience, and tenderly and piously addresses herself to the task of transcription till she makes up a perfect little volume. She has one copy printed off and makes arrangements for publication after her own death. She has from the beginning found her happiest thoughts in the idea of a book that would establish Hope's renown and reveal to the world how right she had been in loving him and how amply rewarded. The idea of "liberation alike for herself and for her treasure"(123) has quickened "extremely her impatience for the term of her mortality".(123) Her final hope is that death will come in time and that Lady Northmore will learn the truth.

Mrs. Hope is the only example in the short stories of a woman who becomes the victor of her situation through her redeeming consciousness. She is a true heroine, who suffers losses but rights herself under her sense of loss, and who fails to take a vindictive advantage because of the generosity of her spirit. She acts under the perception of ultimate values which are opposed to the standards of the world. Her loss is twofold: her husband and his reputation. Northmore has tried to show her that she made a wrong choice, but she proves that she married the right man and that her life has not been wasted.

Warren Hope is a typical Jamesian hero, a man of scrupulous soul and a genius unesteemed by the world. He is unusual in having achieved success in his personal life, for he is a man much loved who knows that his wife has been his gift. If he fails of a final form it is no more than the celebrated author of The Middle Years, Hugh Dencombe, has done. This is no more than the general fate. He is typical also in being a man who, however much he has contributed to the general sum of knowledge in his works, is unconscious of a great many aspects of his life, and who consciously chooses to block himself off from certain truths. It may be that he has had considerable compensation in his scholarly pursuits and did not wish to live

in any other way, though he dies with potentialities unfulfilled. Here his wife can serve him by her consciousness of his situation. She is valiant in her effort to redress his wrongs and to redeem him for posterity. He continues to live in her memory, but it is her hope to give him immortality, that he might continue to live in the minds of others after they both have gone. She asks herself what in this world of relative values is the difference between people, when life in the end reduces all to nought, and the difference lies in the quality of life and the power of consciousness. Whatever doubts are inevitably raised in her mind by the inequity and injustice of things, she has the support of her author in the assumptions that she makes. For James repeatedly portrays the life of the man who is a worldly failure but a success in other terms. It is unthinkable in the end that Northmore is anything more than a nonentity. The apparent largeness of his life seems to bespeak a vacuum within. Through her power of consciousness Mrs. Hope reverses her situation to triumph over her circumstances. She demonstrates James's presentation of the power of women, as opposed to men, to become aware.

With the development of the artistic imagination the Jamesian male can become conscious of life. This becomes an increasing compensation for his failure to live life directly, whereas the male without such an advantage can only acquire the knowledge of what he has lost. The perspective on life gained by his closeness to death enabled the artist hero of The Middle Years to see the pattern of life - and particularly of the masculine love-fate - in a new light. The reward of his consciousness is the verification of his life by a young man who, as an admirer of his works, is especially constituted to love him, and whom he enables to break the patterns of the past. Their community of love and spirit brings father and son together

at last in harmony and unity, and allows the elder man to die leaving something of himself behind to fructify in the new world. The case of the female with the onset of age is different: the power with which she has been invested grows to outrageous proportions. The magnificent vitality she was seen to possess as a figure of life becomes terrifying in its force and she becomes a daemonic figure.

In "Europe"* (1899) the ancient Mrs. Rimmle is like one of the Fates grimly presiding over the lives and deaths of others while she lives to an incalculable age, when she can no longer move or speak. Her terrible power is exerted at the expense of her daughters, who grow old serving her while their dreams of happiness and fulfilment are constantly deferred. Moreover, consciousness of her designs is attributed to her, so that she is seen as living on in order to deprive her daughters of life. Their world of Puritan conscience "reclaimed and refined ... to a wonderful delicacy"(428) is revealed as one of terrifying psychic energies, unleashed in such a way that for the daughters it is a question of who shall live and who shall die, if any of them can escape their mother's domination. For she is likely to outlast and consume them all unless they can get away from her influence.

When the story opens Mrs. Rimmle has been thought to have had a life so "prodigiously extended"(428) that she has reached "the limit"(428) of its span. The story is about "the scale"(428) of her extension beyond this measure. Her three daughters, Becky, Maria, and Jane, are themselves quite old. Her life is symbolised by a tour of Europe with her husband in the remote past, on which she laid up "a store of remarkable impressions"(431) and a "wealth of knowledge and food for conversation"(431) upon which she still draws. By driving home to her daughters a sense of what she has had Mrs. Rimmle makes them intensely aware of what they have missed. They grow old in the desire to go to Europe, until it begins to become evident that

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* Tales, Vol. 10.

their chance may have gone, never to come again. They find themselves in competition with their mother for sheer existence, and it is doubtful whether any of them has the capacity to assert her individual desire. Certainly they cannot survive if they remain, so that conversation revolves eternally around the possibility of going to Europe, the symbol of liberation and experience. Mrs. Rimmle's prodigious will makes it possible that none of her daughters will come into her own inheritance as a woman - the assumption of her life power. The sisters are differently characterised. Maria is totally identified with her mother and has no life independently of her. Becky is strongly identified with her father, and therefore with the weakness of the helpless male. Jane alone has the seeds of a passion for life, and she inherits something of her mother's will.

The story is presented through the consciousness of a male narrator who is saturated with the experience of Europe, which he believes to be salutary for everybody. He is introduced to the Rimmles by his sister-in-law, whom he assists with her affairs after his brother's death. It is through his contact with her that he is put in touch with the multiple crises in the Rimmles' lives as their saga develops over a long period. He identifies strongly with the plight of the daughters and grows increasingly to hate the old woman, wishing for her death as "the compensation proper to their long privation".(437) He has a "faint fore-knowledge"(431) of the future and sees Mrs. Rimmle perched over her daughters "like a vulture",(436) "calculating",(436) waiting for each daughter "successively to drop off".(436) His prevision heightens the poignancy of their story, for it carries the implication that if only they understood their fate the "girls" might be able to escape it.

The narrator shares with other Jamesian sons a fear of the dominating mother, which is partly responsible for his sympathy with the daughters, especially Becky, the one most identified with the male position. However his

relationship to them changes over time. At first they like him, for he has been to romantic places in all the pride of his power, and his conversation stimulates their desire to go to Europe. As they fail to get to Europe the relationship becomes strained and embarrassed. Moreover he believes that they recognise him as a percipient observer of their case. He begins to feel a certain discomfort from his supicion that "the good sisters even shrank from me a little, as from one who penetrated their consciousness in spite of himself".(436)

The Jamesian male's inferior capacity for life, in contrast to such an extension of life as Mrs. Rimmle exhibits, is presented through the fate of Mr. Rimmle. He is so long dead (at least thirty years) that he is not even a living memory to his family. His public relics are kept - momentoes, speeches recorded on anniversaries, framed letters, tributes - but there is no sense of a personal relation to him to evoke his presence. He is not remembered for himself and the details of his life are lost in the mists of time. The narrator learns nothing directly of him. "He was reported to have been celebrated",(428) and "he was understood to have made, in his wife's company, the tour of Europe at a date not immensely removed from that of the battle of Waterloo".(428) But he is a pale ghost affording no model of strength to his daughters, and his life must have resembled theirs in its deprivations. Neither does the society around them furnish patterns of existence that would help them to mount a challenge to their mother's domination. They were brought up as good Puritans, whose duty it is to serve their mother and to thresh their conscience. They have only the narrator, so that they make a point of confiding in him.

The story records a series of cumulative crises that constitute dates in the dramatic unfolding of the lives of the individual participants. The narrator loses "the thread"(436) of "special occasions",(436) but the first has already occurred when he meets the Rimmles. It belongs to a time when Mrs. Rimmle had proposed to take her daughters to Europe on the grounds

of her health - "her health was supposed to require constant support"(429) - but failed at the last minute to be well enough to go. "In spite of her extreme physical frailty",(428) she has shown herself to have a "blandness and firmness"(428) that "would be proof against any surrender not overwhelmingly justified by time".(428) The question then becomes which two of her daughters she can spare to go to Europe on their own, and who shall stay behind. With characteristic heroism, each for the sake of her sisters tries "not to be one of the two".(430) However, Becky and Jane have particular claims and Maria accepts her defeat by adopting the line that she did not want to go anyway, that her mother "is better than Europe".(433) Maria is characterised as "the flushed one"(432) because of her unfortunate complexion, in itself an indication with James of some repressed impulse toward life. However, she is the one who speaks for her mother, identifies with her power, and has no existence independently of her. In this sense she is not in real competition with her sisters. Becky's preparation for Europe lies in the fact that she is "the most literary",(429) the one who has most mastered the subject of Europe. Jane's preparation lies in the "figment"(430) of her "prettiness".(430)

Becky and Jane forfeit an opportunity to go to Europe together when their mother is taken by a "seizure".(433) However, though they postpone the trip in order to look after her they "think they're still going - or _think_ they think it - when she's better".(433) And "they also think - or think they think - that she _will_ be better".(433) However, some friends, the Hathaways, plan a trip to Europe and can take one sister with them, so that Becky and Jane find themselves in competition. Theirs is again the situation of rivalry within a bond. In their particular circumstances the issue is rivalry for existence. One must win and the other lose. When the mother's health breaks down once more Becky, "fully recognising the nature of the crisis",(438) insists upon "action".(438) It is clear to her that their mother will not die if Jane goes. She therefore sacrifices her claim and

pushes Jane into going. As Jane has said earlier that it would be better "not to go"(432) at all than to go and not "stay on",(432) she now goes never to return. The narrator has discerned in her "the lifelong, secret, passionate ache"(430) of "rebellious desire".(430) She is the true female possessed of a passion for life and the capacity to assert it when she gets her chance, in spite of the fact that her sister's chance is thereby sacrificed. Becky supports her financially and morally, and in the proces comes to understand fully what she herself has lost. When the narrator calls one day and is told that she is "lying down"(447) he knows that she has accepted her fate. The day of his call is

> a date in the process of her slow shrinkage - it was literally the first time she had, as they said at Brookbridge, given up. She had been ill for years, but the other state of health in the contemplation of which she had spent so much of her life had left her, till too late, no margin for meeting it. The encounter, at last, came simply in the form of the discovery that it was too late; on which, naturally, she had given up more and more. (447)

The narrator feels a soreness at her martydom. It had not been suspected that she herself was ill, since attention had always been concentrated upon her mother's health. Aside from the wastage of her energies in her mother's service Becky is also depleted by Jane, to whom she has given her funds. Jane blooms at Becky's expense, drawing her life's blood from her. It is not Mrs. Rimmle who suffers from her departure.

Jane is described as having "'tasted blood'"(441) when she gets to Europe, and she comes out with quite a new character. "The sense of life",(438) the depth of her desire to live, which the narrator has seen in her "expressive brown eyes",(431) finds something to feed on. She refuses to budge from Florence and the Hathaways have to leave her there. As the Hathaways describe her she is no longer recognisable as the Brookbridge spinster they knew. She becomes "rather strange and free and obstreperous",(441) and announces that she has given her mother up.

> She had thought she should like Europe, but didn't know she should like it so much. They had been fools to bring her if they expected to take her away. She was going to see what she could - she hadn't seen half yet. (441-42)

She is left alone but "she says she's on her own feet"(442) and is bent on travelling to the East. Becky has apparently always known that Europe would bring her out and suspected her potentialities. The narrator, too, had expected the change. Jane proves that she can look after herself and maintains the freedom she has dearly won. In achieving her own personal status she becomes young again. The narrator positively pictures her "a well-preserved woman",(448) enjoying "a sort of rich, ripe _seconde jeunesse_ by the Arno".(448) Here is the only mitigating element in his sense of the family tragedy, though at the time of her departure he reflects: "One of the two had sailed, and I was sorry it was not the other. But if it had been the other I should have been equally sorry."(438)

Mrs. Rimmle's portrait also emerges over time. At first she is described as possessing "magnificent vitality".(437) The full revelation of her destructiveness makes her seem a "subtle old witch",(437) hideously drawing life from those who tend her. The tragedy of the circumstances consists partly in the awareness of the narrator and his sister-in-law of the hoax that Mrs. Rimmle plays on her daughters. They realize that at least two of the girls could leave without fear of her dying. Whenever her will is challenged she always recovers herself. She holds her health over her daughters as a means of subjugating them, using every circumstance to her own advantage. Early in the story she upset the narrator by her attitude to her daughters' prospective tour. He saw her in the posture of Fate assuming "a large, placid perversity, a grim secrecy of intention, in her estimate of the ages".(431) Her span of life is so far beyond the normal that she becomes "awful" in her manifest capacity to consume her daughters' lives. The narrator believes that "if she would prefer to go she _would_ go",(437) but that "she just prefers _not_ to go".(437)

> "She prefers to stay and keep up the tension, and her calling them 'girls' and talking of the good time they'll still have is the mere conscious mischief of a subtle old witch. They won't have any time - there isn't any time to have! I mean there's, on her own part, no real loss of measure or of perspective in it. She knows she's a hundred and ten, and she takes a cruel pride in it." (437)

His view is proven with time. Though Becky herself becomes aware of the truth she is unable to escape, so that the knowledge is desolating. Mrs. Rimmle's consciousness of the situation is suggested by her apparent failure of lucidity after Jane's departure. At first she says, "My daughter has been -,"(439) "I'm so glad she's going to have always - ,"(439) phrases which she cannot complete because she would need to pronounce the words "Europe" and "wonderful experience". The narrator observes:

> Jane's flight was, clearly, the great fact with her, but she spoke of it as if the fruit had now been plucked and the parenthesis closes. I don't know what sinking sense of still further physical duration I gathered, as a menace, from the first hint of her confusion of mind. (439)

He is not surprised when she refers to Jane as if she were dead, for she is dead to herself. This fabrication exposes her hatred of the daughter who has abandoned her. At the same time her confusion of mind indicates her power to endure despite her gradual loss of the faculties for life. She survives by the exercise of will when only her will remains. Before her own death even Becky refers to her mother as "not alive".(445) Yet she is horribly so. When he sees her the narrator writes:

> Though shrunken and diminished she still occupies her high-backed chair with a visible theory of erectness, and her intensely aged face - combined with something dauntless that belonged to her very presence and that was effective even in this extremity - might have been that of some centenarian sovereign, of indistinguishable sex, brought forth to be shown to the people as disproof of the rumour of extinction. (445)

"Mummified and open-eyed,"(445) she seems to regard him without recognition, yet her "unquenched spark"(446) appears to revive with the thought of Jane's "death". He has always regarded her as seeming to question his own awareness with her silent penetrating eyes. To the last she challenges him with her

perception, and tries to tell him something he cannot bear to hear, but which he is forced to put into words - that Becky has gone to Europe, in other words she is dying. His last vision of her is his discovery "from the drop of the old woman's jaw",[448] and "the expression of her mouth",[448] which opens "as if for the emission of sound",[448] that this is what she wishes to say.

The story obviously centres around the portrayal of Mrs. Rimmle's power and its effects upon the lives of her daughters. Properly speaking Maria has no personality at all. With Becky's death she becomes the ancient one. In his last vision of Becky the narrator mistakes her for her mother because she looks so old and has come to resemble her physically. In the case of James's male rivals the elder usually wins while the younger loses. In this case the reversal has some point: Becky is closest to the father with whom she identifies, and Jane is the furthest away from her mother's influence. James's characterisation of the two different types of women is evident in the contrast between the two rival sisters, for Jane is the representative of life and Becky is the martyr who sacrifices herself. The one who most asserts her will gets a chance to live while the one who relinquishes it dies. It is characteristic of the sacrificial female figure that she resembles the Jamesian hero spiritually, but in this story Becky is very specifically seen as a kind of male. She is the literary one, who writes her father's life, edits his speeches, and translates the tributes in foreign tongues which hang upon the walls. She wears as a breastpin a miniature of him made in Rome. She is the one of conscience, who thinks of the good of her sister even when it involves sacrifice. She is the truly heroic one. Like the injured male who dies of love wounds and frustrated potentialities of life, Becky is secretly ill and reveals by dying her resentments against her dependency on her mother; her anger in relation to her own failure; and her envy of the sister whom she has helped at her own expense. It is Jane

who is life and who inherits her true bequest as a female, the power to be, the power to live, and the power to determine her circumstances in life.

4. THE SHORT STORIES: MAN AND WOMAN

The heroes of the short stories are relatively unconscious. They are aware that they are destined to a certain kind of fate in which the issue of their lives is dependent upon their relation with a woman. Why this should be their fate, or to what extent their inner determinants concur with outward circumstances governing their lives, with the things that happen to them, is not clear to them. It is as if fate were the artist of their lives, and they were merely observers watching the contents of the drama in the process of being enacted. This drama hinges on their injury, which they experience as a wrong suffered at the hands of a woman which can onlv be put right by a woman. Given this amount of grasp of their situation - a sense of their injury, the wrong done them, which must be righted - they are preoccupied with their sense of themselves as split and with the riddle of woman's duality for them, both as the cause of their woe and as the sole redeemer of it.

The problem of awareness is central to the hero's plight, for his only means of transcending his fate is in fact to understand it. An understanding of the fate - to be injured in love and as a result to be unable to live fully or to love another - demands an understanding of self, and of self in relation to the other, in this case, woman. Yet she, as the cause of the injury and instrument of the fate, is a great source of anxiety. She is only apprehended through the filter of intensely emotional reactions and conflicting feelings. It is difficult for him to keep her image in focus or to apprehend her in a realistic way. Her image moves between extremes as she seems to threaten the hero's destruction or to promise his redemption. He is preoccupied at first to know which aspect of her potential nature is the one he will experience in relation to her. While he fears her aggressive qualities, he wants to experience her benign ones, but his very fears make him see her as the thing he most dreads. Because he does not understand how he became injured and repressed so many of the feelings

that prompt him toward awareness, his drama necessarily repeats itself. He wavers between the need to see himself as the victim of a woman, in order to explain his injury to himself in a self-justifying way, and his need to see her as his saviour because she alone holds the keys to his identity and can redeem him. Either way it is evident to him that his apprehension of her lies at the source of his identity for himself, and it becomes increasingly necessary to try to see her as she is in order to understand himself as he is. But here the myth predominates in his mind and makes it extremely difficult for him to perceive the truth. Perhaps only a mythic resolution is possible, but if he is to escape the pattern of the past he must come to some apprehension of the whole.

This is the area in which the hero is faced by the maximum of human bewilderment. He wishes to see his relationship to his woman in a certain perspective and fears to discover it in another. He has an extraordinary need to understand it, and yet his emotions prevent him from reaching the truth. The means of transcending his situation becomes extremely difficult to arrive at, and if knowledge comes it is generally excoriating because it comes too late to be of help. Even the artist-hero is involved in this dilemma. His redemptive consciousness, which allows him a knowledge of human psychology that he can convert into the materials of his art, is denied him in his own case. He may dramatise the problematical issues of experience in his works and thereby help others to live, but he cannot remake his own life or transform his identity as an injured lover and a personal failure. None of James's heroes can do this alone. To succeed, he must be loved by a woman.

The following stories have been selected to reveal the problematical nature of awareness for the hero in his struggle to apprehend his case. They also illustrate the development of the hero through different stages of life, starting from the point of least awareness and arriving at

the point of maximum awareness for him. The hero is usually split in some sense, most obviously between a public presentation of himself and a private preoccupation which reflects his real self, but often more dramatically between himself and his alter ego, or what represents for him the other half of himself - between himself and another male, perhaps a rival, but certainly his opposite, who embodies the qualities he himself lacks. Because, divided as he is, he cannot arrive at an apprehension of the true nature of woman through his own senses or instincts, he tries to resolve the puzzle or mystery by imposing some test upon her, designed to reveal the truth of her nature, to see whether she is good or bad, innocent or guilty, daemonic or divine. At the same time, it is a need of his own nature to prove the myth of her duality and of his injury at her hands. For their own part, women in these tests, in spite of the often violent disjunction of their apparent qualities, seem to belie the myth. They seem essentially at one with themselves, "good", and devoted to their men in spite of their flaws. The woman's identity for the hero therefore changes over the years; she begins to present herself in a mythic way as the woman out of his past who can redeem him. He has an increasing awareness of her own injury, of what she has suffered as a lover at the hands of a man, even of himself, an equality of suffering which cancels out the past. It is possible that he had all along misread her, that she never intended his harm and that it was his own fear which led him to project his fear onto her as a person with the power and will to inflict harm upon him. In order to re-establish his relation to her he must go back to the past and, as it were, die to his old self - his injured self. He must return to the point at which his life capacities were cut off and reunite himself with his own sources in order to become reconnected with life, to allow himself to be redeemed by the other source. Even if he is passive in his redemption and so injured that he can only be held together by a woman's embracing love, he must find some ground within himself upon which he can meet her. Only when he becomes at one with him-

self can he be united in harmony with her in a psychic rebirth. This enables them both to begin again on the basis of what they now know - that the myth was a myth even if it was an inescapable feature of the past, the hoop of fire through which they had to pass in order to arrive at a possible redemption.

There is a strong drive in these stories towards the rejoining of the separate and the disparate in the union of love. It is still the case, however, that the hero is in effect too injured to be able to love. James's only way of encompassing the problem which he himself has projected is to project a means of redemption for the hero. These redemptive women who save him through their selfless service and lifelong devotion (though he has never known it) are male projections of the kind of woman the hero needs in order to restore himself. The stories are increasingly dominated by a need to arrive at a thematic resolution of the problems which have been at issue for the author for so long. The hero is notably passive to the active intervention of the benignly loving woman who saves him. Her intense love of him throughout his life is as arbitrary as the fate itself has seemed. It is just the way it has all happened. She loves him and this for her is inescapable. There is a fabulous fantastic quality about these stories of love, treasure, and money in handfuls restored to the disinherited hero - just dropped in his lap as golden fruit from the tree that he may live his remaining days in happiness and fulfilment, assume at last his natural inheritance in life and rise to the estate he ought to have had. It is only by a kind of supervening fabulous happing ending that James can solve the initial problem he himself projected.

Woman in these stories is vindicated; she proves to have a "good" identity and to love her man on the whole selflessly. She is from the first represented as being conscious of everything, including the hero's flaw, and of loving him in spite of it. This consciousness is at first threatening to him because it puts him in her power. She can spy out his

nature and reveal him to himself in a manner which exposes him. But the more monstrous he becomes in his own incapacity to love, the more her consciousness of him turns out to be redemptive because she loves him in spite of it all. Her consciousness of him becomes an aspect of her power to save him. Since she knows everything, it is unnecessary to go over the ground explicitly; she knows what to do for him and how to help him -- she knows what he wants her to be for him. She becomes the consciousness of his situation and spares him from the need to know everything about himself. She is not given a specific point of view in relation to her own life, a consciousness of herself. She exists in terms of her awareness of him.

A Landscape-Painter* (1866) represents the hero at a stage of unconsciousness about himself during which an earlier experience of being wounded in love repeats itself. The hero, Locksley, has been injured by a Venus Victrix type of woman to whom he was engaged. He manages to save himself from marriage to her, and seeks by an elaborate strategy to remake his identity on the basis of his own personal merits. Being extremely rich he is exposed to fortune hunting women, but he wishes to be loved for himself. He enters a new set of circumstances but as he himself remains the same his situation repeats itself. He is lulled into believing - because he needs to believe it - that the woman he now marries is benign and selfless. He discovers, too late this time, that she too is a Venus Victrix. He becomes her victim, seemingly tricked out of his happiness, and slowly dies. The woman in the case, Miriam Quarterman, is aware of the complexities of life and of Locksley's nature. By contrast with him she is profoundly realistic, but not cynical, in her estimation of life.

* Tales, Vol. 1.

She in fact undertakes to make the most of life's possibilities and to love Locksley more than he thinks. He sees her only as a creature who has deluded and failed to satisfy him. The meaning of his life eludes him and he may be said to die in consequence. Had he been able to comprehend his case realistically he would probably have been able to live contentedly: his fantasy of himself as the victim of woman hastens his end.

Locksley's story is related to the public seven years after his death (and after the death of his wife), which places its elements in a particular perspective. The tale is presented by a friend who has inherited his personal belongings, which include a diary that records the drama of his developing relations with Miriam during the three months from their first meeting to their marriage. The friend recognises in this account the meaning of Locksley's life and death, hitherto hidden from his friends. He contributes to its significance by presenting some information which logically precedes the story and is necessary to its understanding: that Locksley as a very young man of "enormous"(99) wealth was engaged to a great beauty "of heroic proportions",(99) Miss Josephine Leary, and that the engagement was broken off suddenly. Her mother was known to be "an inveterate old screw",(100) and Locksley's friends in the main considered that it was he who backed out of the engagement on the grounds of "overwhelming proof of the most <u>mercenary</u> spirit"(100) on the part of the young lady, who as the "first-born child had also shown the cloven foot".(100) Miss Leary found almost immediate compensation in a marriage to "a gentleman of expectations very nearly as brilliant as those of her old suitor".(100) The diary reveals "the ultimate view taken by the great Nemesis of {Lockley's} treatment of Miss Leary - his scorn of the magnificent Venus Victrix",(101) for what fate has in store for him is, unbeknown to him until too late, his re-encounter with her type in circumstances which prove tragic for him.

Wounded by the experience, Locksley tries to hide himself from the

eyes of all. Seeking an unfrequented spot in which to sketch and recover from his bitterness he settles on the coast. He is at once "filled with ecstasy"[102] at the light, "the transparency of the air",[102] and "the moods and tenses of the ocean".[102] He feels ten-years-old again, at liberty to wade, or swim, or make up stories (perhaps fantasies) on a Saturday afternoon. In a general state of apprehension that "something will happen",[101] and on the look out for hospitality, he meets (owing to the accident of finding himself stranded by the tide) an old sea captain. Captain Quarterman appears to be a friend, and Locksley feels he can relate to him as a brother. He presents himself as a poor art student who wishes to board in a home and be free to sketch. Captain Quarterman proposes that, with his daughter's approval, Locksley come to board with them, since for them "money's an object".[105]

Locksley's initial mistake is to suppose that he can assume a simple and natural character by pretending to be poor, and that by this ruse he can arrive at a state in which he will be loved for himself and not for his money. It is an unrealistic strategy to break with his past, "abjure"[104] his "conventional self",[104] and gain some self-respect. He is determined to stand upon his own merits, to "test them and see what kind of stuff I am made of",[104] as "the great basis of solid success".[104] He hopes this will bring about a reversal in his personal fortunes. But he deludes himself that he can successfully "stifle those innumerable tacit allusions which might serve effectually to belie {his} character".[114] He exposes his pretence at once by offering the Captain a very good cigar and by telling Mirian that he has never sold a picture in his life. And his whole posture is unnatural. His tone is witty, satirical and superior, and he clearly regards himself as better than the Quartermans, who know what it means to be poor. He lounges around their cottage with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets and an air of detachment from the workaday world. He has little idea of how he appears to people, and cannot imagine them not

seeing him as he wishes. He does not even appreciate that he is dissimulating, except in the trivial matter of feigning belief in Captain Quarterman's "romances":

> Perhaps I take kindly to his beautiful perversions of fact because I am myself engaged in one, because I am sailing under false colours of the deepest dye.(114)

At first the experiment seems to work. Locksley finds himself thoroughly at his ease, with a new peace of mind, and "none but pleasant thoughts".(109) The past begins to lose its bitterness. He appears to be in a world of natural innocence in which as a valued friend he becomes part of a very happy household. He has two rooms, one of which he decks out to look as much like a studio as possible, and under the routine of daily sketching his work improves. He writes:

> I am in every way much encouraged; the horizon of my work grows perceptibly wider. And then I am inexpressibly happy in the conviction that I am not wholly unfit for a life of (moderate) industry and (comparative) privation.(110)

Locksley is in search of "a new earth"(101) and a "new sky",(101) and, despite his tendency to represent happiness as stupid, his portrayal of the local scenery is imbued with memories of childhood, reaching back to a time when the world seemed natural, innocent and secure. For over a month he luxuriates in pleasant sensations, after which his relations with Miriam begin to take an intimate turn and develop rapidly through a sequence of episodes leading to the proposal and marriage.

From the first, Locksley views Miriam as a contrast to the "fretful daughters of gold"(108) he has known in New York. He clings to the hypothesis that she is amiable, though she is somewhat of a puzzle. Her habits seem simple and her needs small, especially when compared with the great worldly scale of necessities. Her makes her a romantic figure of innocence and simplicity.

> What poetry there is, after all, in red hands! I kiss yours, Mademoiselle. I do so because you are

> self-helpful; because you earn your living; because you are honest, simple, and ignorant (for a sensible woman, that is); because you speak and act to the point; because, in short, you are so unlike - certain of your sisters. (110)

Her devotion to her father, and his pride in her, deepen Locksley's sense of security. His first tête-á-tête with her occurs on a Sunday when a sprained ankle prevents her going to church. Reading her bible and reclining on the sofa, she represents the "edifying spectacle"(117) of "the piety of woman".(117) Locksley pictures himself as "a poor friendless wanderer",(117) taken into peaceful anchorage, and thanking heaven for it. He expects her to conform to his vein of thinking, instead of which his desire to be complimented provokes her into an analysis of his character which is critical and penetrating. As the diary reports her words without censorship she appears independently of Lockley's view of her. She finds him "very indulgent"(118) and "too particular".(118) He is considerate of her, but this rubs because of his awareness that she perceives it. He is superior to her poverty, yet he thinks that "virtue in a lowly station ought to be encouraged".(118) Moreover, he considers women inferior and is not casting himself among equals. She contrasts his spurious virtue with her own active heroism in the daily exercise of her profession (teaching) and domesticity. She makes it clear that her poverty is "a constant vexation"(119) and that as a woman she requires courage of a kind unknown to him. As yet, she says, Locksley is "only selfish: It is your own fault if people don't care for you; you don't care for them".(119) Locksley seems to ignore her analysis, merely observing that although he admires her she has perhaps been "a little soured"(121) by an old love affair. She may have some traits in common with her sisters but they are natural ones. Miriam has "animated eyes"(112) which "have a power to keep people in their place"(112) and Locksley, who has found himself compelled to keep his distance, is much encouraged by this advance in their relations. The burden of her remarks is that she intends to marry the first man who offers,

be he rich or poor. Locksley will be accepted if that is what he wants.

Locksley is further reassured when Captain Quarterman reveals that he does not favour the cause of Mr. Prendergast, a gentleman who shares Miriam's hymn book on Sundays. But he is shocked by the Captain's account of her dismissal of Alfred Bannister, a young man to whom she was once engaged, because he did not grow rich enough soon enough. Bannister is believed to be "amassing considerable wealth in the China-trade"[123] but he has not returned. Though Locksley has discounted the concern of Miriam and her father for her future financial security, as they could not possibly know he was rich, he now becomes "very ill".[123] However, his alarm at this evidence of a mercenary nature appears to be dispelled one morning several weeks later when she comes into his room to nurse him. In this moment he is cured, for, "like a kind of moral Aurora",[124] she has driven "the shadows"[124] from his brain. At this stage Mr. Prendergast gets his "discharge",[125] but thinking him beneath consideration as a rival Locksley does not ponder what this means.

He suppresses his sense of Miriam as a kind of divine "Juno".[124] (He was fond of comparing Miss Leary to the Venus de Milo.) He prefers not to see her as representing triumphant female power, though she is "infernally handsome".[128] He likes to see her as a maiden in white muslin performing sacred duties around the home - the handmaiden of men.

His next crisis in their developing relation comes on the day of a picnic, when he sees her as the maiden at the spring, dipping the cup and holding it "dripping to our thirsty lips".[129] She gives animation to the scene and looks as if she will be for him the bearer of the cup of life and love. The "interminable summer's day"[129] is full of happiness, "silly sweetness"[129] and "artless revelry".[129] Locksley notices "a certain purity in the air which allows perfect liberty of self-assertion to each individual object in the landscape",[127] though the scene "lacks

its final process, its reduction to unity".[127] This is symbolic of his own situation. All the elements of his picture are now present, but he does not yet understand their relation or see how they will compose. By the end of the day he does comprehend that something between himself and Miriam has been established in their very silence.

> There was something between us - there is something between us - and we listened to its impalpable presence - I liken it to the hum (very faint) of an unseen insect - in the golden stillness of the afternoon. I must add that if she expects, forsees, if she waits, she does so with a supreme serenity. If she is my fate (and she has the air of it), she is conscious that it's her fate to be so. (131)

That she is conscious is suggested by the way she follows up her advantage. The Captain goes out for an evening, leaving Locksley his opportunity to propose. He is absorbed at this time in considering his fate and "watching it come nearer and nearer".[132] His proposal is in fact comic, largely because of his lack of simple and direct feeling towards Miriam. He does not say at first that he loves her. He holds her to account for a "crime - that you are stone-cold to a poor devil who loves you".[134] This is not specific enough. He might after all be thought to be referring to her treatment of Mr. Prendergast. Miriam teases him because she fails to see "the relative importance of the two branches of {his} proposition",[134] and asks "which is the principal and which is the subordinate clause".[134] And so she leads him to the proposition she wants, the one with a definite value, "will you be my wife?".[135] There is no other intimation of her reaction than her acceptance.

The three weeks until the wedding pass quickly, with Miriam's simple preparation and Locksley's reflections upon the potential poetry in the situation of which he was previously cheated. He finds Miriam "positively lyrical",[136] ignoring the pointedness of her remarks about their prospective station in life. This period has "no connection with the shops".[135] After the ceremony they go to "a romantic little watering place",[136] where, after a couple of days during which Locksley has reread

his diary, he decides to reveal the secret of his wealth. At this moment Miriam looks all tenderness to him, as he observes her from the window talking to one of the landlord's little boys, and giving "the infant a kiss, bless her tender heart!"(137) However, she matches his secret with one of her own: having read his diary during his illness she confirmed what she already suspected, that he was rich. Locksley's whole project is defeated. In retrospect his illness and recovery reveal his ambivalence (which is unconscious), for he accepts her as his saviour at a time when he has apprehended her mercenariness. His desire for her concurred with his fears, albeit unconsciously.

His last record in the diary is the reply Miriam makes to his revelation,

> "I expect you to show the same courage that I am showing. I never said I loved you. I never deceived you in that. I said I would be your wife. So I will, faithfully. I haven't so much heart as you think; and yet, too, I have a great deal more. I am incapable of more than one deception. - Mercy! didn't you see it? didn't you know it: see that I saw it: I know that I knew it: It was diamond cut diamond. You cheated me and I mystified you. Now that you tell me your secret I can tell you mine. Now we are free, with the fortune that you know. Excuse me, but it comes over me! Now we can be good and honest and true. It was all a make-believe virtue before." (137-38)

In reality Locksley fools nobody but himself, and Miriam is not a puzzle. His puzzle lies in his own attitudes to her. Although she appears somewhat hard-headed her realism contrasts favourably with Locksley's fantasies. Moreover she recognises the complexity of things, and her ability to determine the circumstances of her own life - and indeed to remake them - depends upon her consciousness. She possesses the ability Locksley lacks. She is a woman of character, independence, courage, and intelligence, who stands in a direct relation with life. She does not live, as Locksley thought, through second-hand knowledge derived from fiction. She has told him repeatedly that she is tired of unremunerative hard work and that she wants marriage and riches. She gets what she wants and intends to

make the most of it. By contrast his own attitudes have been unrealistic. He is so self-absorbed in proving the myth that he is the victim of a powerful woman that he is not free to think or respond naturally, to admit his error, change and accept responsibility for himself. His conscious wish to provide himself loved, lovable, and a personal success is defeated by his unconscious emotional drives. He looks for a transformation of himself in terms of fantasy but he only proves his old identity: the inferior, weak, failed, injured lover, who can neither live nor love.

James enables the reader to perceive complexities that the hero does not see. Locksley imagines that the Quartermans trapped and manipulated him into marriage. But he is really the victim of his own inner conflict. Part of him wishes to prove that he is the innocent prey of a woman, and belief in the myth produces its own proof. The elaborate disguise he adopts before committing himself is a way of testing Miriam. He needs to see her as the woman of selfless service, the benign nurse and mother figure who will nourish and support him. He fears that she is a Venus Victrix who depletes the male. Until the final revelation his fears are manifested unconsciously and result in the illness from which she rescues him. His last vision of her is of a false woman who has cheated him of his right to be loved. In reality Miriam does not approximate to the myth. She is neither divine nor daemonic. She is ordinary but real, with needs to satisfy and duties to fulfil. It is possible that she loved Alfred Bannister as she could not love again, but she does not appear cynical in marrying Locksley for security while she sees through his weaknesses. She wants to live truthfully and points out that they have been engaged in playing roles. At the end she hopes that their relation is realistically based. She is disappointed, for Locksley takes his injuries to heart and never forgives her. His sense of injury leads to his death, and hers for she has lost her purpose in life. Locksley's fears have led him to adopt a fiction about her but when they overwhelm him they lead him to project

her as a daemonic figure capable of consuming him. He holds to his earlier hypothesis about her in the face of disproof and until it is clearly untenable. He never sees her as a person. The fact that the reader is given all the clues with which to interpret the conflict between Locksley's fears and desires, which is demonstrated in the division between his unconscious and conscious motives, does not reduce its complexity. Rather, it magnifies the perplexing matter of consciousness, which the story so vividly dramatises. Locksley remains a bewildered man, who never rises above the level of resentment, which is his minimal way of apprehending his case.

In Osborne's Revenge* (1868) James attempts to encompass the problem of the myth by splitting his hero into two figures and killing off the injured part of the self, so that the healthy half is given the possibility of disproving the myth and arriving at a happy conclusion. Robert Graham, who represents the love-injured aspect of the hero, commits suicide as the result of his sense of injury by a woman who has seemingly led him on only to reject him. Philip Osborne, an intimate friend of his youth, who represents the healthy aspects of the hero, nevertheless inherits his spiritual legacy, and takes it upon himself to seek vengeance on the woman who caused his friend's destruction. He has a different mental and emotional constitution from his friend, and in the pursuit of his vengeance his sense of his situation, of himself, and of the woman changes. He has been "in search of a wicked girl"(24) only to find himself "face to face with a charming one".(24) Though the idea that she is a woman who drains "honest men's hearts to the last drop"(36) and blooms "white on

* Tales, Vol. 2

the monstrous diet"[36] is kept alive as a fiction in his mind, as represented by the ghost of his dead friend, he does not achieve his revenge. Nor is he destroyed, but simply brought to realize the facts of the case and released from domination by the myth. He turns out to have conducted an experiment for himself: he has adopted a vicarious belief in the myth but in relation to a woman who, as she is already engaged, is no threat to him. He is liberated psychologically for a successful marriage.

Osborne labours under an illusion from the beginning. Graham writes from some medicinal springs, where he is spending the summer under his physician's instructions, to tell him that his life has been poisoned by a woman who has him in thrall. The fact is corroborated by a mutual friend, Mrs. Dodd, who tells Osborne that Graham is "dying of a broken heart".[14] He has fallen desperately in love with a young woman, Henrietta Congreve, who has encouraged him only to reject him at the very moment when their engagement was expected, in favour of a better offer made by a Mr. Holland. Graham himself does not confirm the details, of which he feels so unfit to write. He writes only of being out of his mind and of his life being meaningless, except for his degradation and self-contempt, in consequence of which he kills himself.

Osborne is unaware of the strength of his bond to Graham until after his death. Hitherto the question of woman has not intruded upon their relationship, which has become for Osborne "the single absolute certainty in life, the one fixed fact in a shifting world".[18] The two men complement each other in personality. Graham possesses in rare degree the qualities characteristic of the Jamesian hero: he is "feeble in health, sensitive, indolent, whimsical, generous",[18] with "the airs of one whom nature had endowed with the right to be fastidious".[18] Osborne has vitality, health and promise: "He was all one piece - all health and breadth, capacity and energy".[19] It is therefore given to him in a positive sense to take up the cause of a man whose life has been "wantonly

quenched"[20] and who is "foully wronged".[20] His response is a mixture of charity and bitterness: grief that requires expression in "an act of sacrifice"[19] and a "savage need of hating"[19] the woman who has destroyed his friend.

Osborne's first view of Henrietta Congreve makes her look blameworthy, yet he instantly suffers an "electric shock"[24] of awareness that this is not the whole truth of the matter. He follows her to Newport, where she is spending the summer, but is able to discover nothing about her. He finds himself on the beach and sees a small boy, in "an agony of terror",[22] caught on a rock above the rising tide. He rescues the child and restores him to the female attendant who has neglected her charge. The image of the terrified male child at the mercy of its female guardian, Henrietta, is a potent one. Nevertheless, Osborne is "forcibly struck"[24] by the girl's face and manner.

> He detected in her appearance a peculiar union of modesty and frankness, of youthful freshness and elegant mannerism, which suggested vague possibilities of further acquaintance. (24)

Henrietta becomes "humanized"[26] for him, and he has to keep reminding himself of Graham's grim ghost. His problem now becomes how "to reconcile the heroine of his vengeful longings"[26] with the woman he has met, how "to accommodate this inoffensive figure ... to the color of his retribution".[26]

His next encounter with her is thrilling but even more bewildering. Invited to an evening of private theatricals, he discovers Henrietta as both heroine and author of the play, in that she has translated it from the French with such emendations as have repaired the "difficulties"[38] of the original. It is virtually her debut in society. She is overwhelmingly acclaimed. She appears as "a true artist"[27] and as "a perfect young lady".[27] Her versatility is extraordinary. Osborne sees her as the image of triumphant life, set off against Graham imprisoned in eternal silence. It seems impossible to know "of what stuff"[28] she is made: she

is "a coquette, a musician, an artist, an actress, an author - a prodigy".(28-29) Yet "what had she done with her heart and conscience?"(28)

Utterly at a loss, and with a vague notion of drawing "a penitent tear"(29) from her "deep and charming eyes"(29) he pursues her at the next social occasion upon which they meet, Mrs. Carpenter's picnic. He questions his hostess and some guests and learns a number of facts. She comes from a family of unimaginative people "who are shy of the theatre on moral grounds".(29) She is a good and quiet girl, retiring and serious rather than social or worldly. Moreover "she's very religious. She visits the poor and reads sermons",(34) and her theatricals had been given "for the poor".(34) She is a scholar, reading both Latin and Greek, an accomplished theologian, and a singer of sacred music "with the most beautiful fervor".(38)

Nevertheless, Osborne is determined to get some evidence against her. Mrs. Carpenter has referred to a "flirtation"(30) between Henrietta and Graham, but has altered the previously supposed facts by saying that Graham had pursued Mrs. Dodd. Osborne seeks to press Henrietta on the subject of Graham, especially on the manner of his death. He tries to force her to read the last letter Graham wrote to him, but she tears it up unread as a punishment for his having expressly disobeyed her wish not to see it. He now regards her as a perverse and heartless girl who drove Graham to destruction and put about the story that he died of "remorse at his own misconduct".(31) Furthermore, she appears to be leading on a young clergyman, yet another potentially injured lover who will have to be avenged. Osborne is further confused when the clergyman says Henrietta is not a coquette while Mrs. Carpenter, with a degree of feminine jealousy, is doubtful. Osborne would like to believe her but feels that the parson is correct. His view of the situation takes another turn when he begins to think that she ought to be used as she used others.

> If she could only find her equal or her master! one with as clear a head, as lively a fancy, as relentless a will as her own; one who would turn the tables, anticipate her, fascinate her, and then suddenly look at his

> watch and bid her good morning. Then, perhaps, Graham might settle to sleep in his grave. Then she would feel what it was to play with hearts, for then her own would have been as glass against bronze.(36)

Casting around the company for a "man with a heart of bronze and a head of crystal",(36) he finds himself being looked at by a young lady who has paused in her lunch. The "virginal eyebeam"(37) proclaims to him, "thou art the man!"(37) He devises a plan for making Henrietta fall in love with him so that he may jilt her. His own good looks are "the outward signs"(37) of his "mission".(37) Whether Henrietta has a heart or not is problematical, but he will find out.

However, as soon as he puts his theory into practice, his feelings undergo a "great change".(44) Henrietta has such "distinguished gifts and remarkable character"(44) that it is impossible not to take her seriously. "Her mind and her talents"(44) have been formed in seclusion and study, and "thanks to her circumscribed life and her long contemplative leisures, she had reached a pitch of rare intellectual perfection".(44) Introduced to the world at a later age than most girls, her faculties have "burst into luxuriant bloom"(44) and borne "the fairest fruit".(44) Osborne finds himself falling in love with her and more muddled than ever. When he is with her he forgets he has "a sacred part to play".(45) Yet "preoccupied with his own intentions and the effect of his own manoeuvres",(45) he is prevented from "seeing the young girl in all her beautiful integrity".(45) She becomes a sore puzzle, and he fails to understand how "a woman could unite so much loveliness with so much treachery, so much light with so much darkness".(45)

He supposes that he has begun to conceive of the intensity of Graham's despair. Trying to persuade himself that she prefers him to most men, he imagines that he entertains her as much as she refreshes his mind. He begins to wonder whether he might strike his blow. While he sees himself as her equal in endowments, his infinitely greater experience of the world

makes him superior; yet he cannot imagine her swooning upon the floor at his departure. His desire for certainty leads him to adopt a ruse "to test the quality of his empire".[47] He will introduce a hypothetical "other woman"[47] in order to draw her jealousy and force her to declare her feelings. He has seen the portrait of a charming young girl displayed in a photographer's showcase. The photographer will not sell it. However he gives it to Osborne after he has had photographs taken of himself. These he takes to Henrietta with a view to her selecting the best one. He interpolates among them the portrait of the young lady, hoping to surprise Henrietta. The ruse fails. She appears to know the young lady and to consider her a perfect match for Osborne. She is clearly not jealous.

Osborne, who has been long preoccupied with his personal quest, now receives a letter from his partner, saying that the office has come to a standstill in his absence. The appeal is like "the sound of the brazen trumpet to an old cavalry charger"[52] and it brings him back to reality. He does not want to admit that he has played with fire and burned his fingers, but he feels angry with Henrietta for having stolen "his time and energies"[53] and "put him into a savage humor with himself".[53] He tries to think of her as caring for him a little so that he will have some sense of having achieved his revenge. However, there is an air of the perfunctory about the whole thing. He goes to say goodbye and is prompted into making a confession of love. At that moment Henrietta, who is clearly surprised, is interrupted by Mr. Holland's arrival - a circumstance which gives Osborne his dismissal. She is deeply shocked when Mr. Holland refers to the manner of Graham's death, of which, unbeknown to him, she was hitherto unaware.

Osborne sets out for home a sad and disappointed man, but not an injured one. He thinks he has discovered what it feels like to be desperately in love and to be driven by despair to suicide, and he watches the wake of the boat as if the yawning ocean were inviting him to death as a result of his frustrated experience. He is saved by Major Dodd, a fellow passenger

who is escorting his sister, Mrs. Dodd, and who happened to be at the medicinal springs when Graham was there. He concedes that Graham did in fact lose his mind as a result of falling in love with Henrietta, but insists that she was an innocent cause; she did not encourage him whereas he persecuted her. Graham was a "monomaniac":(58) it was his fixed idea that he had been accepted and rejected. Henrietta had not known the manner of his death, believing that he had died naturally. Moreover, Mrs. Dodd was predisposed to believe his story because she herself had fallen in love with him. Osborne can now piece together the fragments of the story: Graham died because of his mistaken belief that he was the victim of a destructive woman. Relieved of the burden of the myth, Osborne goes on to marry, apparently the young lady in the photographer's portrait. As they are supposed to be a perfect match for each other he seems to have found his complement. In effect he has followed out a situation invented for him by another, but it has allowed him to impose an independent test that liberates him from the myth.

Osborne achieves a consciousness that is denied the hero of _A Landscape-Painter_ and which enables him to marry happily, but it is an unreal resolution of the problem. James has projected him as a means of encompassing the problem faced by the injured lover, but in doing so has divested him as a hero of all the characteristics that would make him a real figure. The story has, too, an element of the theoretic about it, as if its author were merely playing with mental possibilities. The split in the hero, which becomes the datum for James's exploration of the problem in the male-centred novels, is characteristically that there is a superego and an id, but no ego. Here James plays with the possibility that if he destroys the passional side of the hero reason can operate; he can then posit a hero of some strength and project a resolution to his problem. In proposing that Osborne finds his perfect complement and lives happily ever after James substitutes another myth for the one that preoccupies him. The effect is

to neutralise the impact of the death of the excessively weak and injured Graham.

It is significant that in testing the myth Osborne is faced by a violently disjunct vision of the duality of woman. On the one hand Henrietta is a paragon of virtue; on the other she is a demon destroyer who flourishes on the life's blood of his friend. Henrietta refuses to conform to this duality, and reveals herself to be exemplary in all respects. She is totally vindicated and exonerated. However, for the purposes of the story doubt is kept alive, and the myth is fed largely by older women - by Mrs. Dodd, because she herself was in love with Graham, and Mrs. Carpenter, who does not wish to appear less virtuous than her neighbour and is somewhat mean-minded. The myth also receives some support from the apparently ambiguous circumstances in which Henrietta first appears to Osborne. The question is kept open and alive, and in adopting a ruse as a means of arriving at proof, like the hero of the last story, Osborne falls victim to his own plan: he falls in love with Henrietta, not she with him. In falling dupe to his own fictions he does bear some resemblance to the characteristic hero and also reveals something about the laws of the mind, for emotions are always stronger than reason. Yet he is saved by the indirect manner in which he has approached the whole affair. There was never any reality in his courtship of Henrietta, who was engaged to Mr. Holland all along and lacked any particular personal interest in Osborne. He not only learns that he was mistaken about her, but that his plan of revenge was formed on false premises. Graham presents the most clear cut case of a hero who dies as the result of an injury which is entirely his own fiction.

In Daisy Miller* (1878) James carries his theme into the social

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* Tales, Vo. 4.

world, thereby increasing the range of determinants potentially prejudicial to the heroine. She becomes the victim of a man's desire to convict her. The hero is definitely flawed, but he too protects himself by his indirection. He never avows his love but conducts his experiment by allowing the girl to be injured by the attentions of a male who is his opposite in type and temperament. He is nevertheless culpable in a human sense and rises only to the level of vague apprehension of guilt for having wronged the heroine.

Winterbourne's love injuries are evident in his desire for life, his incapacity to respond to it, and his resentment at finding himself blocked off from it. He is hypothetically involved in relationships with two women of different personality types, in which he is testing out their dangerous propensities for him. His resistance to life is greater than his capacity for it, which makes him a potential danger to the girl who represents the life he cannot have, Daisy Miller. The "mysterious charmer"(170) who is supposed to hold him in thrall in Geneva remains in the background, and is of the dangerous and terrible type "with whom one's relations {are} liable to take a serious turn".(151) She represents a definite threat, but not of marriage, for she is a coquette and provided "for respectability's sake"(151) with a husband. Winterbourne meets Daisy, a young American girl, at Vevey. She represents life in its natural, spontaneous and uncultivated form. He finds her charming and she clearly likes him, though she teases him about his foreign manners. He cannot tell whether she is worthy of his respect, largely because of the inadequacy of his response to her, and he makes an issue of the question in order to relive his own anxiety and forget her. He would prefer to find her "wanting in a certain indispensable delicacy."(182) It would "simplify matters greatly to be able to treat her as the object of one of those sentiments which are called by romancers "'lawless passions'"(182) for then he would "be able to think more lightly of her".(182) He allows her to be taken by an Italian fortune hunter into situations which

expose her to public criticism, loss of reputation, and even possible abuse by a man of doubtful intentions. He could save her if he cared sufficiently to become her escort, for she could come to no harm in his society. But he stands aside and lets her ruin herself, and then shows her that he rejects her as a person unworthy of consideration. She dies in consequence. Only afterwards does he learn that she was an innocent victim wantonly sacrified, but even then he does not allow himself to perceive what he has lost in her, the extent to which he has been an agent of her fate, or what he has himself become.

Winterbourne visits Vevey to be with his aunt, Mrs. Costello. That he lives at a minimal level is suggested by his relation to her, for her power to restrict life is her paramount quality. Her three sons have escaped her. Two are married in New York while a third amuses himself in Hamburg, leaving her nephew to attend to her. She is liable to "sick-headaches"(154) that keep her confined a good deal to her room and prevent her, in her view, from leaving "a deeper impress upon her time".(154) She is too "exclusive"(155) to expose herself to life, which she considers vulgar, and her influence is confined to her small social circle in New York. She gives a picture of so "minutely hierarchical"(155) a society there that it seems even to Winterbourne's imagination "oppressively striking".(155) Her conception of society supports her sense of superiority but excludes her from living in any other dimension. She is the guarantee of Winterbourne's respectability and he is extremely attentive to her. Long years of residence in Geneva (through school and college) have formed him according to a European pattern of manners, which symbolises his alienation from his own feelings.

When Winterbourne arrives he is "at liberty to wander about"(142) the grounds of the hotel because Mrs. Costello has a headache and is "shut up in her room, smelling camphor".(142) His occupation is similar to that of Daisy's Italian "lover", Giovanelli, when he is later introduced into the

story. Winterbourne is watching the stylish young girls flitting hither and thither across the lawns of the "Trois Couronnes". He has "a great relish for feminine beauty"[147] and is "addicted to observing and analysing it".[147] Daisy strikes him immediately as pretty. She seems quite unembarrassed, and indeed uninterested in Winterbourne, who is exercised over the matter of being properly introduced. Her glance, when she looks at him, is "perfectly direct and unshrinking".[147] It is not immodest. Her eyes are "wonderfully pretty eyes",[147] "singularly honest"[147] and "fresh".[147] There is some "want of finish"[147] in her face, but it is always lively. Her lips and eyes are "constantly moving"[149] and Winterbourne finds it very pleasant when her eyes rest on him. Her liveliness is emphasized by her spontaneity, unexpectedness and responsiveness. She is constantly in motion and is connected with scenes of light and air and water - vistas suggestive of possibilities of expansion and liberation of the spirit.

Winterbourne is "charmed"[150] and "amused"[150] but also "perplexed"[150] by her behaviour. He has "become dishabituated to the American tone"[157] and cannot judge of her manners, though he finds her "deucedly sociable".[151] He cannot tell whether she might not be also "a designing, an audacious, an unscrupulous young person",[151] for he has "lost his instinct in this matter, and his reason {cannot} help him".[151] She looks "extremely innocent",[151] but she may not be. He thinks her "a pretty American flirt"[151] but has never "had any relations with young ladies of this category".[151] He would be "grateful for having found the formula that applied to Miss Daisy Miller",[151] and his relations with her develop through a number of incidents that enable him to test her in an effort to produce a conclusion.

The first comes when Daisy expresses a desire to go to the Chateau de Chillon and accepts Winterbourne's offer to escort her there. The prospect seems to him "almost too agreeable for credence",[153] and it is

"so much of an escapade - an adventure - that, even allowing for her habitual sense of freedom",(167) he expects her to "regard it in the same way".(167) He takes it for granted that her mother "deeply disapproves{s} of the projected excursion"(163) as does his aunt. The fact that Daisy agrees to go with him alone (without proper introductions and on a half-hour acquaintance) is enough to put her beyond the pale for Mrs. Costello. Winterbourne, who has tried to guarantee himself to Daisy by a promise of introducing her to his aunt, is embarrassed not to be able to do so. Daisy realises that Mrs. Costello does not want to know her, and Winterbourne, while shocked at the possibility of her being hurt by this snub, nevertheless looks forward to the possibility of her being "very approachable for consolatory purposes".(16[illegible]

When they set off he feels "as if there were something romantic going forward",(167) almost as if he were going to elope with her, and he is therefore disappointed when she chooses to go by steamer rather than by carriage because on the steamboats "there was always such a lovely breeze upon the water, and you saw such lots of people".(167) Though "extremely animated"(167) and "in charming spirits"(167) she is not excited, flustered or liable to blush. She avoids "neither his eyes nor those of anyone else",(167) and is "not ashamed to be noticed".(167) Her "distinguished air"(168) attracts attention and gives much satisfaction to her escort. She teases him for taking the outing so seriously. He is so grave that he might be taking her to a funeral. His own formality and politeness provoke her into trying to get a specifically personal response from him, some indication of the way he really feels. She finds him "a queer mixture",(168) but clearly likes him. The one way in which Winterbourne's hopes are gratified is through Daisy's "subjective"(168) manner of approaching things. She appears little interested in "feudal antiquities"(168) and "dusky traditions",(168) and uses the occasion

> for asking Winterbourne sudden questions about himself - his family, his previous history, his tastes, his habits, his intentions - and for supplying information upon corresponding points in her own personality. Of her own tastes, habits and intentions Miss Miller was

> prepared to give the most definite and indeed the most favourable account.(169)

She learns that he is leaving for Geneva the next day, and he is "fairly bewildered"(170) by her reaction. "No young lady had as yet done him the honour to be so agitated by the announcement of his movements."(170) She accuses him of being "horrid"(170) and of "hurrying back"(170) to see a "mysterious charmer"(170) there, who holds him in thrall. Winterbourne, who denies "the existence of such a person"(170) is "divided between amazement at the rapidity of her induction and amusement at the frankness of her persiflage".(170) He finds her teasing crude, yet he does not consider that it has an ulterior motive, even though she makes him promise to come to see her the following winter in Rome - and wants him to come for her, not for his aunt.

Before he arrives in Rome his aunt has already informed him that Daisy "rackets about in a way that makes much talk"(171-72) with "some third-rate Italians"(171) with whom she is "intimate".(171) On arrival, he learns that "she has picked up half-a-dozen of the regular Roman fortune-hunters",(172) whom she takes about "to other people's houses".(172) This information checks his "impulse to go straightway to see her",(172) though he defends her behaviour to his aunt, claiming that she is innocent and not bad. He meets her almost at once at the house of an American woman whom he has known in Geneva, Mrs. Walker. Daisy is disappointed that he has not visited her and refuses to believe that he has only just arrived. He feels

> rather annoyed at Miss Miller's want of appreciation of the zeal of an admirer who on his way down to Rome had stopped neither at Bologna nor at Florence, simply because of a certain sentimental impatience.(176)

Daisy requests Mrs. Walker's permission to bring Mr. Giovanelli to her party, and then announces her intention of going to the Pincio and walking there with him. When Mrs. Walker tells her that it is not safe to "walk

off to the Pincio at this hour to meet a beautiful Italian",(178) Daisy expresses a wish not to do anything improper, though she does not believe it is so. She suggests that Winterbourne should come with her and settle the question. "In spite of his consciousness of his singular situation"(178) he finds it "highly agreeable"(178) to escort Daisy through the crowds, where she attracts much attention, yet he wonders "what on earth"(178) could have been in her mind "to expose herself"(178) (as she had first planned) "unattended, to its appreciation".(178) Giovanelli, when discovered, is occupied in "staring at the women in the carriages"(180) and his dress and manner suggest to Winterbourne that he is not a gentleman. Winterbourne is outraged that Daisy should not know the difference between a real and a spurious gentleman, and tries to prevent her from speaking with him. Giving evidence of the independent spirit he has thought she possessed, she resents his "imperious"(180) tone and tells him "I have never allowed a gentleman to dictate to me, or to interfere with anything I do".(180) Winterbourne wonders if it is perhaps "a proof of extreme cynicism"(182) on her part to make a "rendezvous with a presumably low-lived foreigner"(181) in broad daylight. While there is an "inscrutable combination of audacity and innocence"(182) in her behaviour, he inclines to think that she is not a nice girl. He is irritated by her willingness to forego his own company in joining her amoroso.

The situation gets out of hand when Mrs. Walker, outraged at the imbecility of Mrs. Miller, who is totally incapable of taking care of Daisy, tries to save her by coming to get her in her own carriage. Mrs. Walker is also interested in discovering whether Daisy is "perfectly determined to compromise herself",(185) so that she may "act accordingly".(185) She makes an unpleasant scene. Daisy later says she would have thought it unkind to Giovanelli to throw him over when she had arranged to meet him. She in no way appears to comprehend how she might be compromising her reputation by walking openly among the crowds, freely enjoying the day. If this is "improper"(185) then "I am all improper",(185) she declares.

The evil is unquestionably in Mrs. Walker's mind, not in Daisy's, and Daisy does not know what it is that Mrs. Walker means, though she says, "I don't think I should like it."(184) Mrs. Walker is so outraged that she asks Winterbourne not to see the girl again. This he refuses to promise. He recognises that "the poor girl's only fault ... is that she is very uncultivated".(186) She is in fact an easy victim of abuse because she is unaware of her own danger and suspects no harm from people whose motives are more complex than her own.

Winterbourne claims that he likes Daisy "extremely",(186) too much to give up seeing her, but he in fact never takes her out again. His subsequent relations with her are confined to observing her and criticising her. Others are engaged with the idea of saving her from ruin, but Winterbourne alone could achieve this by himself becoming her escort. Daisy is happy to go about with gentleman friends; she likes society and social pleasures; but she has no interest in Giovanelli personally and is clearly far from considering the idea of marriage (or from being ready for it), whatever Giovanelli's own intentions may be. It is clear, however, that she is interested in Winterbourne, except when he is preaching at her; there is plenty of evidence that she would prefer his society to that of anyone else. Daisy's ruin occurs in large part because of Winterbourne's attitude to her, which leaves her exposed, isolated, and obliged to pursue her perverse course.

Mrs. Walker's party is a catastrophe for Daisy. On her departure, Mrs. Walker finds an occasion to cut her, on the ground of the girl's late arrival with Giovanelli after having spent the evening with him alone at her hotel. Giovanelli had been preparing songs which he in fact goes on to sing, apparently at nobody's actual request. During the songs Winterbourne and Daisy have a discussion which is much at cross purposes. He accuses her of being a flirt because she likes to roam about. She replies, with an exaggerated assertion that suggests she would like to be thought very daring,

that she is, of course, "a fearful, frightful flirt!" - "Did you ever hear of a nice girl that was not?"(190) She considers flirting "much more proper in young unmarried women than in old married ones"(191) (a view consistent with the American romantic notion of marriage as opposed to the more cynical European attitude). Daisy is horrified by Winterbourne's inference that she is in love with Giovanelli because she calls him an intimate friend, and the very idea of being in love makes her blush. Winterbourne does not understand her shock. It is symptomatic of his failure to respond to her personally, that when his singing is done Giovanelli comes to see that she gets some tea.

After Mrs. Walker's drawing-room is closed to her, Winterbourne calls on her at Mrs. Miller's hotel, and he always finds Giovanelli in attendance. Daisy is never displeased at having a _tête-á-tête_ interrupted, and she takes no "trouble to preserve the sanctity"(193) of her interviews with her "lover". Winterbourne likes her "the more for her innocent-looking indifference and her apparently inexhaustible good-humour".(193) Her ability to "chatter as freshly with two gentlemen as with one"(193) suggests a lively energy, while her indisposition toward jealousy and the darker passions is a relief. He decides that "he should never be afraid"(193) of Daisy, though his reason is partly that she will inevitably prove "a very light young person."(193) The point is that she will not have the power to overwhelm him. Winterbourne has already ascertained that Giovanelli is "a perfectly respectable little man."(195) He is "in a small way a _cavaliere avvocato_"(195) but does not move in "the first circles".(195) Winterbourne learns from Giovanelli only at her graveside that he was sure Daisy would never have married him.

Winterbourne is capable of defending Daisy's conduct to her detractors but he is less positive in his own reflections. After a friend tells him he saw Daisy and Giovanelli together in the Doria Palace, and did not assume from that exhibition that she was "_du meilleur monde_",(196)

Winterbourne tries to put Mrs. Miller "on her guard".(197) This proves, of course, a fruitless idea. Mrs. Miller is incapable of a conception outside the realm of her own health. Though Winterbourne has decided for himself that Daisy is "going very far indeed",(196) he is pained "to hear so much that was pretty and undefended and natural assigned to a vulgar place among the categories of disorder".(196) At the same time, he is annoyed to think that Daisy does not feel the consequences of being given the "cold shoulder".(200) He argues to himself

> that she was too light and childish, too uncultivated, and unreasoning, too provincial, to have reflected upon ostracism or even to have perceived it. Then at other moments he believed that she carried about in her elegant and irresponsible little organism a defiant, passionate, perfectly observant consciousness of the impression she produced. He asked himself whether Daisy's defiance came from the consciousness of innocence or from her being, essentially, a young person of the reckless class. (197-98)

He decides that a belief in her "innocence"(198) is "more and more a matter of fine-spun gallantry",(198) feels angry with himself for being reduced to "chopping logic"(198) about the girl, and is "vexed at his want of instinctive certitude"(198) about her "eccentricities"(198) of behaviour.

At any rate, he has now somehow missed her, and it is too late to do anything about it. She is carried away by Giovanelli. There is a sense in which Winterbourne is jealous of Giovanelli in a way his rival never is of him. The last time Winterbourne meets Daisy before he cuts her himself, he encounters the two walking in the Palace of the Caesars. Giovanelli tactfully strolls off to pick some almond blossom, while Winterbourne tries to bring home to Daisy the implications of ostracism. It is a sad interview. Daisy cannot believe that people care so much about her conduct or are essentially so unkind. She thinks that Winterbourne himself ought to be able to say something on her behalf. He replies that he tells people what her mother believes: that she is engaged. Her response is teasing: "Since you mention it ... I am engaged."(200) When he takes this seriously, she adds, "You don't believe it!"(200) He replies

that he does (which is untrue) and she is moved to assert, "Well, then - I am not!"(200)

A week later, enjoying the moonlight in the Forum, he encounters the pair for the last time. The historic atmosphere is there, "no better than a villainous miasma".(201) It is fraught with the memories of man's atrocities and the blood of innocent victims. Significantly Winterbourne himself is seen by Daisy to look "at us as one of the old lions or tigers may have looked at the Christian martyrs".(201) At last the "ambiguity"(202) of Daisy's behaviour is dissolved for him: "She was a young lady whom a gentleman need no longer be at pains to respect."(202) He checks his advance, with the idea of cutting her, partly because of "the danger of appearing unbecomingly exhilerated by this sudden revulsion from cautious criticism".(202) However, Daisy has perceived his intention and makes it impossible for him to cut her entirely. He is brutal in his manner, telling her that she will get Roman fever and should go home at once. Giovanelli agrees, and while he seeks a cab Daisy asks Winterbourne, "Did you believe I was engaged the other day?"(203) When he replies that "it makes very little difference whether you are engaged or not,"(203) she understands his meaning perfectly. She replies in a strange tone, "I don't care ... whether I have Roman fever or not."(204)

Daisy dies a week later. Winterbourne had not seen her again, and he had talked only once with Mrs. Miller, though he had called for news. Daisy's dying messages to him were that she was not engaged, and that he should remember the day at Vevey when they visited the Château de Chillon. It is only at her graveside that Winterbourne learns that the truth is the opposite of what he had concluded, that Daisy was the most innocent young lady Giovanelli had ever seen, and that he knew he had no chance of marrying her. His impulse is to leave Rome immediately, and it is not until next summer that he confesses to his aunt that it is "on his conscience that he had done her injustice".(216)

> "She sent me a message before her death which I didn't understand at the time. But I have understood it since. She would have appreciated one's esteem."
>
> "Is that a modest way," asked Mrs. Costello, "of saying that she would have reciprocated one's affection?"(206)

Winterbourne does not answer the question. He can go only so far as to acknowledge that he "was booked for a mistake"(206) because he was unable to respond to Daisy adequately. But as the echoes of the story draw together it becomes evident that he was the one person Daisy took seriously and loved, and that it was his rejection of her, rather than that of people she did not care about in society, which caused her to accept death. Winterbourne does not change nor gain any particular insight into himself. He remains in Europe and continues to be "much interested in a very clever foreign lady".(207)

The issue relating to different forms of social behaviour serves to mute and qualify the presentation of the hero's ambivalence. It further distances an approach to the question that is already distanced by the covert and indirect manner of the experiment. It is a more subtly conceived tale than those in which the hero is more nakedly confronted by his own fears. Nevertheless Winterbourne's fear of Daisy's threat to him is expressed in terms of his doubts about her character; they are doubts of sufficient magnitude to prevent him from entering a real relationship with her. They are also enlarged by the patent innocence of Daisy from the reader's point of view. As in Osborne's Revenge the male figures are split in two and the ambiguous vision of the woman that is maintained for the purposes of the tale is reduced finally to a single view of her, as the innocent and sacrificial victim of her determinants. Winterbourne represents the rational aspects of the hero and the super-ego, while his rival represents the passional aspects and the id which the hero suppresses. Giovanelli possesses throughout the knowledge of Daisy that Winterbourne, cut off from his instincual life, is denied. This represents a reversal of the pattern

of Osborne's Revenge, for the man of reason and conscience is the one not saved. He cannot live while the man of pleasure manifests his power to live. There is something monstrous in Winterbourne's fears, which lead him to be an agent of the wanton sacrifice of Daisy's life. The death flows from an experiment, which is all the worse for being devious, and which the hero expects to tell him the truth about her. But there are elements of decency in his nature. His problem as an American male is exacerbated by his domicile in Europe, since he adopts the cynical attitudes of Europeans, as James presents them, to sexual matters. However, James uses customs to make expressive the plight of an ambivalent lover confronted by the enigma and mystery of a woman. Winterbourne expects women to be either dangerous coquettes or safe and respectable. His ambivalence is enacted in his pursuit of women who represent figures of life while he remains dominated by a respectable but also destructive mother figure. He is ambivalent to both types of figure, though it is the figure of woman as life that intrigues him. Winterbourne's pursuit of the coquette in Geneva illustrates his view of woman and further demonstrates his ambivalence. It is hard to think of him as actually engaging upon any dangerous adventure, though the fact that he is purported to do so makes him worse in the application of a double standard in Daisy's case. It is a curious effect of the story that this muted hero emerges as a figure whose faults are magnified to the reader.

Daisy Miller marks a development in the presentation of the woman in the tales. She becomes a victim in a way that makes her a counterpart of the male. Henrietta Congreve was only thought to have been pestered by a man. Daisy falls victim to one, accepting her death in consequence of the injury he does her in love. Like the male she is also the victim of older women who are destructive mother figures and who use social manners as a mask of their own power drives. Daisy is totally vindicated, but at great cost to herself. She prepares the way for the presentation of women who, as equal sufferers with men, find themselves in the same boat in life.

Her parents, too, are particularly ill-equipped to help her, her father by his absenteeism, and her mother by her general inadequacy and personal weakness.

The Liar* (1888) represents the rising monstrosity of the male in the extremity of his resentment at his injury at the hands of a woman. It is a terrible proof of his conflict that it leads him to behave inhumanely, and prevents him from achieving full consciousness of himself and understanding of the meaning of his life. He is a more extreme version of Winterbourne, although he destroys no-one, except perhaps himself. The hero, Oliver Lyon, has been injured in love by a refusal of marriage from the only woman he has loved. In consequence, he has not married and his sense of injury has remained undiminished. Twelve years later he meets her with her husband. He perceives that she loves her husband, and thereby measures his own personal loss in losing her. He is provoked by jealousy of his successful rival and wishes to prove to the wife that she has married the wrong man. Moreover, if he can show the woman that her husband is flawed in some sense, he will be able to express his love by protecting her secret. He is partly aware of a conflicting need to prove her inferior to himself, as he would if she should support her flawed husband; by this means he might hope to rid himself of his own domination by her. His conflict of motives impairs his judgment and he decides to proceed with a plan to expose the husband publicly. He will paint his portrait in such a way that not only the wife but the whole world will see his flaw, while the portrait itself will be so masterly that he will rise to greater artistic acclaim by it, thereby proving his own superiority to the woman.

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* Tales, Vol. 6.

The artist's sense of his own needs blinds him to all human considerations, and the trial through which he puts the couple is viciously cruel. He himself sees that he has been too successful in his proof; he has given his game away and exposed his own hand. The woman knows what he has tried to do and stands by her husband, showing the real extent of her love for him. The artist knows that he can never go back to see them. It little matters to the woman whether her husband is flawed or not. The artist's situation is further complicated by an unconscious awareness that he himself is the flawed person, the inferior being, who is unloved because he is malignant and vicious. He has tried without success to project his evil qualities onto his successful rival. The rival's flaw is insignificant, and he is a richly living, masculine and likable man. The artist cannot afford to recognise that he is incapable of love and unworthy of being loved. His story comes to a close at the point where he might have made this recognition, and perhaps unconsciously he does. The test he has imposed illuminates all the elements in his fate and would allow him to come to a full consciousness of it if he had the courage to do so. Despite his monstrous nature one has sympathy with him, for the perversity of a fate that can drive a man to such extraordinary behaviour has something tragic in it.

Oliver Lyon, the artist, is invited to a country house to paint the portrait of his host, Sir David Ashmore. He arrives to find a house party in progress. He is a portrait painter with a deep interest in human personality and his favourite occupation is watching faces to see what they reveal of the person behind them. He works best when "things in general"[(384)] seem to contribute to his "particular idea",[(384)] "fall in with it, help it on and justify it",[(384)] at which time he feels "as if nothing in the world can happen to him, even if it come in the guise of disaster or suffering, that will not be an enhancement of his subject".[(384)] It remains true of him as an artist that he can transform his experience into works which enhance the quality of life. However, his personal identity is established

in relation to the woman he loves. In this situation he cannot transform his suffering and is strongly contrasted with her husband, who in his own person, as a man, enhances the quality of life about him.

Lyon is struck by the husband's handsome appearance before he knows who he is, as he runs his eye around the dinner table upon his introduction to the party. The husband appears "a fine satisfied soul"(386) and wherever he rests "his friendly eye"(386) there falls "an influence as pleasant as the September sun - as if he could make grapes and pears or even human affection ripen by looking at them".(386) Lyon notices, too, the beautiful profile of Everina Brand, the woman he has loved. At once he observes that her eyes look upon this handsome gentleman as if she were in love with him. He knows that she is married but supposes the gentleman is not her husband and that her husband, who must be present, either ignores the situation or likes it. Lyon is irritated that Everina will not catch his own eye and recognise him, especially as she confers such favours upon another. When he learns that the two are Colonel and Mrs. Capadose, he cannot believe that she is "that fellow's wife".(390) "What was definite to Lyon was that Mrs. Capadose was in love with her husband; so that he wished more than ever that he had married her."(390) His jealousy of his successful rival is pre-established, and it is activated by signs of the wife's faithfulness. He feels himself essentially exposed by contrast with the man she has preferred and whom she has considered a good marriage.

He then observes that the Colonel tells stories which strain the credulity of the listener and that the other guests pay no attention to them. His first occasion to test the validity of a story is soon provided for him. He had given Everina a portrait of herself. The Colonel, on learning his identity as they come away from the table, suggests that his wife is ashamed to meet him because they had parted with the portrait. He tells a story about a German Grand Duke having wanted it so badly that they

had given it to him, in gratitude for which he had presented them with a magnificent vase. Everina tells Lyon independently that they were in want of money when they first married and had been obliged to sell the painting for £200. She clearly knows nothing of a Grand Duke or a vase. Before retiring he checks with his host another story about a haunted room and a guest who fled rather than stay in it, only to find that it too is a fiction.

Instead of regarding the Colonel's foible as harmlessly entertaining, he begins to think his personality a mystery and exaggerates its effect. Yet as an artist he discovers a lurking admiration for the man, who so gratifies his eye that it is no "wonder that Everina could not regret she had not married"[400] himself. For the Colonel is a rich figure of life. Unlike other men he has "little loss of vital tissue to repair"[401] after a day's hunting. Neither does he show any fatigue after dinner is over. He is evidently a fine and manly person, but Lyon continues to probe him. In talk with Sir David, Lyon learns that Clement Capadose comes from a good family and was at Eton with his son, Arthur. Sir David, who is "a repository of antecedents",[406] has known several generations of the family. The Colonel's father was a general - "a smart soldier, but in private life of too speculative a turn - always sneaking into the City to put money into some rotten thing."[406] Sir David, who is ninety, is characterised as a man with "no crack"[406] in his "crystallisation".[406] His personality is fully developed and complete. It is he who categories the Colonel's flaw, but who also shows Lyon the normal human response to the situation. Capadose has a tendency to lie even over such small matters as the time. The phrases "thumping liar"[407] and "monstrous foible"[408] are used, but it is made clear that the Colonel is not a scoundrel. He is a kind man, who sticks to his wife and is fond of his child. "His friends usually understand"[407] his foible and "don't haul him up - for the sake of his wife".[407] As for her, Sir David had seen her "back him up",[408] but she "must help him out - she can't expose him".[408]

Lyon looks at the matter as if it were an intellectual question of what loyalty and "infection of an example would have made of an absolutely truthful mind".[408] It would be particularly significant, he thinks, if she were to support her husband in front of himself. According to the evidence of his two early paintings of her, as a Bacchante and as "Werther's Charlotte, cutting bread and butter"[391] while her brothers and sisters "clustered all round her",[391] he has been ambivalent to her from the start. He tends to see her as daemonic or divine and he has to prove to himself which she is. On re-establishing a connection with her, Lyon finds "the reason for which he used to like her came back to him, as well as a good deal of the very same old liking".[396] For she is "the least spoiled beauty"[396] in the world, and a woman whom no comparison could injure. She is simple, kind and good, and the things she says have the air of being sifted and selected. They are first-hand impressions, about which she has reflected and which are expressive of her. Yet in testing his belief that she is "perfectly incapable of a deviation"[408] against the probability of some change in her, he may prove her to possess an evil identity. If she supports her husband she does so in the light of having rejected himself, and if in this comparison between himself and her husband she denies him she rejects him again. In so doing she would prove to have the power to injure him still. Lyon feels "an element of suspense"[409] about the matter, especially as he has conflicting proofs in mind.

He carries his enquiries further by professing friendship toward her husband and trying to quiz her about him. He is looking for a confession that she is "consumed by a hidden shame"[410] at finding herself "married to a man whose word had no worth".[410] Instead, he is met with an obvious impenetrability. She repeats that she likes her husband very much, that "he is everything that's good and kind",[410] that he is a soldier, a gentleman, and a "dear"[410] - also that "he hasn't a fault".[410] She adds that she does not care what Lyon thinks of him, a point which he

overlooks because his attention is directed toward a different truth.

Clearly he has "little prospect of winning from her the intimation he longed for".(410) He imagines every possibility but the real one in trying to estimate her attitude, and he considers different possible attitudes on his own part toward his rival's "delinquencies".(411) They "appeal to the tragical in his mind",(411) yet there is something of a vulgar futility about the lies which makes them offensive. They are evidently platonic, and there is nothing malignant in them. Capadose has his lapses into "flat veracity",(412) and sometimes even laughs at himself.

> The oddest thing of all was that neither surprise nor familiarity prevented the Colonel's being liked; his largest drafts on a sceptical attention passed for an overflow of life and gaiety - almost of good looks. He was fond of portraying his bravery and used a very big brush, and yet he was unmistakably brave. He was a capital rider and shot, in spite of his fund of anecdote illustrating these accomplishments; in short he was very nearly as clever and his career had been very nearly as wonderful as he pretended. (413)

It is Lyon's sense of personal injury that makes him ignore the evidence of his senses. What they tell him will not do because it is not what he wants to find out. He cannot see why Everina is not sorry she has not married him, and he determines to make her "feel that there would have been more dignity in a union"(414) with himself. "He even dreamed of the hour when, with burning face, she would ask <u>him</u> not to take {the question of her husband's foibles} up. Then he should be almost consoled - he would be magnanimous."(414)

Failing to find his proof, and needing to set it up in such a way that Everina herself must acknowledge it, he pursues his plan to paint the Colonel's portrait. He considers it a "legitimate treachery"(415) to pry into his nature to create "a masterpiece of subtle characterisation".(415) Though it is revenge he seeks, he thinks of his plan in terms of his "private satisfaction"(415) as an artist whose gift of portraiture is that it essentially bears "the stamp of psychology".(415)

> There were moments when he was almost frightened at the success of his plan - the poor gentleman went so terribly far. He would pull up some day, look at Lyon between the eyes - guess he was being played upon - which would lead to his wife's guessing it also. Not that Lyon cared much for that however, so long as she failed to suppose (as she must) that she was a part of his joke. (415)

He becomes aware that his scheme is shameful only when he imagines that it will be perceived. Otherwise, he assumes that his role as an artist protects him from suspicion and legitimises his pursuit. His need to repair his injury is too strong to allow him to reflect upon the ethics of his position, especially as it would not reveal him in a good light by contrast with his rival. The Colonel is a social man of simple nature, and is quite without perception of Lyon's complex nature and motives. It is his wife, in fact, who suspects them. She is against the idea of the portrait from the beginning. She knows it is Lyon's idea to paint her husband's nature and is in a position to perceive that his motives in so doing are not pure. Her husband will be generous and sit, but, as she tells Lyon, "nothing would induce me to let you pry into me that way!"(419) The only comments she is recorded as making are complimentary about her husband and critical of Lyon. There could never be any real question of his obtaining from her a recognition that her life would have been finer with him. Nor is there any account of a normal relation developing between them, although Lyon sees a good deal of her, either on Sundays when he visits or when she calls at the studio with her young daughter, whom Lyon paints first. He takes a great deal of time over this portrait in order to have time with the mother. But by now he is no longer interested in her as a person. She becomes an adjunct to his problem, though he cannot arrive at his sense of himself except through her.

All Lyon's faculties become centred upon the challenge of painting his rival in such a way as to expose him before the world as "the Liar".(419) When the portrait goes forward to the National Gallery it will not need a title for it will have the expressive clarity of a masterpiece. The

portrait comes to completion rapidly but Lyon wishes time to nurse his revenge and saves his effect till the right moment. He has refused to allow Mrs. Capadose to see the portrait until it is absolutely ready. The situation reaches its climax when Lyon returns from the country unexpectedly and lets himself into his studio quietly in order to add some touches to the portrait. He discovers the Capadoses in occupation. The scene is too embarrassing to interrupt, and he remains a spy throughout, watching without being observed. He fails to comprehend the scene, which is not a simple acknowledgment of his triumph. In a flood of tears Everina throws herself upon her husband, weeping and "sobbing as if her heart would break".[(429)] After a while she sinks into a chair, with her face buried in her arms. Suddenly her weeping ceases to be audible, "but she shuddered there as if she were overwhelmed with anguish and shame".[(429)] Her husband does not understand the cause of her distress, though he realizes that Lyon is in some way responsible for it and reiterates, "damn him - damn him - damn him!"[(429)] She has perceived the cruelty of the portrait, its betrayal, its public exposure, its hideous transformation of her husband. "What he has made of you - what you know! <u>He</u> knows - he has seen. Everyone will know - everyone will see. Fancy that thing in the Academy!"[(430)] She acknowledges its artistry but is overwhelmed by its inhumanity. Her husband hastens her out through a side door in order to relieve her distress, but returns at the last minute, finds an Eastern dagger to hand, and slashes the portrait "as if he were stabbing a human victim".[(431)] The act seems not so much "a figurative suicide"[(431)] on the Colonel's part as a revenge on Lyon for the thing he has done and the pain he has caused Everina. The revelation excites Lyon, as he trembles with "happy agitation".[(431)] He thinks he has the proof he wants, that Everina endures a private torment as a result of her husband's monstrous nature, and that Capadose secretly hates himself. Moreover, since the portrait is destroyed some confession on their part is inevitable, and the test will be a real one because he will

be in a position to judge the veracity of the story they will tell.

When Lyon informs them the portrait has been slashed, Everina thinks he has done it himself. It is assumed that she does not know the truth, since she left the studio before her husband. They both confess to having seen the portrait without his consent, but that is all. Colonel Capadose goes on to suggest an explanation of the mystery. One day during a sitting an artist's model had arrived somewhat drunk. At the time the Colonel had seemed to invent a story about her as a person with a particular grievance against him. Now he asserts that the woman must have slipped back after they had gone in order to wreak her vengeance. Lyon has expected him one day to "cross the line"(416) and "become a noxious animal".(416) He now thinks that Capadose has done so by wantonly sacrificing the reputation of the person he holds accountable for the crime. His wife supports his story, though on her part it is not a prepared fabrication:

> His wife's words were for Lyon the finishing touch; they made his whole vision crumble - his theory that she had secretly kept herself true. Even to her old lover she wouldn't be so! He was sick; he couldn't eat; he knew that he looked strange. He murmured something about it being useless to cry over spilled milk - he tried to turn the conversation to other things. But it was a horrid effort and he wondered whether they felt it as much as he. (438)

Lyon is revolted at Everina's hypocrisy. For she declares she loved the portrait, observing that "Providence won't let you be so disinterested - painting masterpieces for nothing."(437) Lyon stays on until they are alone to give her an opportunity to retract and break down. In this condition "he would have loved her and pitied her, guarded her, helped her always!"(439) But she supports her husband to the end, elaborating details of her own under questioning. She professes to be sorry, for Lyon's sake, that the picture was not saved "but" tells him, "you must remember that I possess the original".(440) Lyon concludes that her husband "had trained her too well".(439) This is what love has reduced her to. At last he understands fully that she loves her husband and he decides he can never return.

It is evident through the parallel and contrasting characterization of the two men that it is Lyon who has the monstrous flaw in his nature: his resentment of his injury. Sir David has thought of the Colonel's "natural peculiarity"(407) as if it were a kind of impediment - "as you might limp or stutter or be left-handed".(407) It does not affect his capacity to live and to support life. He is in every way superior to Lyon as a man. His wife loves him as unequivocally as he does her and has never doubted her choice. As she is vindicated by her love for her husband it is only Lyon's need to protect himself from his own loss and subjection to her that causes him to judge her a liar. At the same time, as he is fully aware of the depth of her love he must entertain doubts about her as he did at the beginning of the story, but it is left to the reader to make them conscious. Lyon has wantonly sacrificed Everina by injuring her husband in order to test her. It is he who has lied, by taking up a false position as a cover for his vengeance. His sense of his own injury has been much greater than his love of Everina. The identity he has tried to project onto her husband in fact adheres to himself.

In the division of qualities between the two men, Lyon represents the superego and his rival the id, but in this case the life of the passional man is seen to be rich and fulfilled. He is the one to be envied, who is loved and brings a sense of life to others. He is so alive that it does not seem to matter that he lacks consciousness. He takes life directly and does not need to think about it. His foible is a harmless eccentricity that makes him an entertaining guest. What is peculiar about Lyon is the extent to which he blocks himself from the truth in favour of his preferred fiction. He knows from the beginning that Everina loves her husband, that he is a magnificent man whom friends refrain from exposing for her sake. He knows from Sir David that she has been seen to back him up, the only humanly decent thing to do. But he thinks it would be more significant if she lied to him as an old lover, though it is not clear why. He has always

needed to see her in a dual focus - as a Bacchante and as Werther's Charlotte. He still assumes that she must either be a woman of exemplary virtue, one of too straight a nature ever to lie, or a fallen woman, one who has become corrupted by an evil influence. However, it is clear that she is a loving woman who lives and suffers and is aware of life and that despite her supportive lies she is vindicated from the reader's point of view. She is fully human. In wishing her to make a confession to himself Lyon is reaching for the only manner in which he could continue to serve her and see himself in an intimate relation with her - by guarding and protecting her secret. But this proof would also humiliate her, and make her a creature of pity. It would reduce her power over him in his eyes. He sets about making a monstrous proof because he is out of touch with his own feelings and dominated by his fears. It is a perverse experiment to prove to himself that he is loved and would be worthy of Everina's choice. It is a new element in the pattern that he should suppress his recognition of his own flaw and try to project it onto his rival in order to diminish him. Everina has never been in any doubt about him. She tells him she always knew he would be famous. It was not that she refused him because she thought of him as a poor young artist who would not make his way in the world. She did not love him, and her comments indicate that she perceives the flaw in his character. He has again been tricked by his own nature and has brought about the opposite proof from the one which he sought, though this is clearer to the reader rather than to himself. Because he holds a perverse interpretation of the events out of his own need to verify himself he can believe that he has exposed the Capadose pair. But he has not proved that there would have been more dignity in her union with himself, and his unconscious recognition of the meaning of her denial - that she loves him in no conceivable way - seems evident in his realisation that he can never return to their house. He has in fact shown himself to go beyond the limits of human decency in his attempt to experiment with the pair and,

whatever the merits of his painting, has exposed his own faults.

The pain and conflict that lie behind the rising hallucinations of the injured male lead James to take fantasy as the focus for his treatment of the plight of the aging man. In The Altar of the Dead* (1895) the hero is utterly split between his public presentation of himself and the private inner life that represents his real identity for himself. He lives totally in the world of his fantastic imaginings and it is only through a kind of dream conclusion that his situation can come to some resolution. The story deals with the Jamesian myth of the injured lover who cannot live, but in this case one who comes to a consciousness of his life's pattern in a fantastic dimension and whose resolution becomes possible by his own death, for he will live on in the memory of the woman he then recognises loves him. The story never loses its dream quality; it takes place in that area of the hero's mind in which he stands between consciousness and unconsciousness. He is characteristically in a doze, either losing himself or swooning into unconsciousness or regaining himself and coming into consciousness. Only one figure in his drama is actually alive, the woman who lives after him, and even she seems to be a figure generated by the myth and belonging to the dream.

The hero, Stransom, has been injured in love early in life, when his fiancée, Mary Antrim, died before their wedding day. He lives in a house from which "the mistress"(231) is "eternally absent",(231) without ever having tasted the "affection that promised to fill his life to the brim".(231) He is abandoned, bereft and grief-stricken. His only worthy sense of himself is established in relation to her, and he lives in being

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* Tales, Vol. 9.

faithful to her memory. He is introduced as a man whose life represents an "immense escape from the actual".(232) Yet it is not totally divested of meaning in that he remembers the relationship which might have been. Mary Antrim's "pale ghost"(231) and "sovereign presence"(231) rule his life. Indeed, Stransom is himself a kind of ghost, and his identity with the dead is established through his sense that they are like him. His sign of life - his resentment at finding himself prevented from living - resembles their plight: destroyed by hard usage they can exist only in minimal form in the memory of those who loved them. His worship of his dead mistress leads him into the worship of death itself. He lives only by endowing the dead with life, by becoming the consciousness of ghostly selves like himself. They are pure selves, simplified in their "intensified essence"(232) and in "their conscious absence and expressive patience".(232) It is as if they had been stricken dumb and need somebody to express their plight in order to gain an existence. It seems to Stransom that if they are not remembered they die again "as if their purgatory were really still on earth".(232) As one who can endow the dead with life, he thinks of himself as having more charity and generosity than people who live in the world.

On the eve of the anniversary of Mary Antrim's death, Stransom finds himself before a jeweller's window selecting a string of pearls he might mentally hang around her neck. He encounters, as if in a dream, a couple engaged in considering a purchase. The identity of the couple is hidden by the figure of "a mumbling woman"(234) standing between them. As she moves away Stransom recognises with horror a friend, Paul Creston, with a new wife. He is shocked by Creston's infidelity to his first wife, "who had devoted her life"(236) to him and (for whom she had given it up) - dying to bring into the world a child of his bed".(236) Mrs. Creston is a woman Stransom has found it possible to love "without accidents"(236) and whose memory he reveres. But for her husband she "had only to submit to

her fate to have, ere the grass was green on her grave, no more existence for him than a domestic servant he had replaced".(236) Stransom feels rich and almost happy by contrast with Creston, whom he regards as "a conscious ass"(235) whose second wife can be no more than "a hired performer".(235) He believes that "he alone in a world without delicacy"(236) has "a right to hold up his head".(236)

It is in the contemplation of the merits of his version of love, which demands no cost but "the liberal heart",(233) that Stransom, back home, turns to the newspaper and learns of the death of Sir Acton Hague, K.C.B., his only intimate friend, whom he had known since his university days. He was passionately loyal to Hague until a quarrel that related to "their joint immersion in large affairs".(237) Through some action that Hague "had taken in the face of men"(237) Stransom was publicly wronged and insulted. He cannot forgive Hague or surmount his own sense of injury. The incident seems to have stiffened his posture as a victim and confirmed his fear of life. For Hague represents life in its wonderful and terrible capacities for love and brutality, injury and redemption. To his sense his own life is merely "pitiful to consider and impossible to repair".(242) His fear or injury makes it impossible for him to stand in a direct relation to life. Only in relationship to "the ties, the effections, the struggles, the submissions, the conquests, if there had been such",(242) of the dead that he claims as his own does it attain dignity and hope. At fifty-five Stransom has "entered that dark defile of our earthly descent in which someone dies every day",(242) but these are people to whom he has not been intimately related. Although he will not admit his continued relationship to Hague it is the death of this real friend which most spells his own death, and turns him to seek relief and "comfort in some material act, some outward worship".(239) People seem to draw closer to him "by entering his company",(242) and he finds himself "wishing that certain of his friends would now die, that he might establish with them in this manner a connection

more charming than, as it happened, it was possible to enjoy with them in life";(242) except for those, like Hague, who are "more sanctified by being forgotten than by being remembered".(243)

Stransom's drama begins with the death of Hague, when he seeks some act of external worship to relieve his pain and give him a sense of material being. In his worship of the dead and his need for ritual offices to give dignity, purpose and meaning to his life, he has already reared an altar in his own "spiritual spaces"(233) to prove to himself that even "the poorest child"(233) could build himself a temple of the spirit and become rich. Now he finds himself in a church where he conceives the idea of actually consecrating an altar to the worship of the dead. Preoccupied with these thoughts, he observes a woman so lost in mourning that she is an image of redemption. Unbeknown to him she mourns her lover, Sir Acton Hague. Her rapt prostration and unseeing eyes are a measure of her devotion, her capacity to make vivid and give life to her dead. For Stransom is sure that this is the meaning of her worship. Unconsciously he recognises what she might do for him: she can love him after he is dead. Then he will die happily, in the knowledge that she will give him life while her own life lasts. This desire becomes conscious after he has established his altar in the church. She recognises it as an altar to the dead, and they establish a mutuality of practice in a common worship that constitutes a relationship between them. They share only a common spiritual need; their relationship is impersonal.

The woman whose bereavement is analogous to his own indirectly influences his decision to establish his altar. He takes years to discover her name, address and incidental facts about her life. However, these details are less significant to him than the fact that they "feel deeply together about certain things wholly distinct from themselves".(248) This constitutes a safe bond, although he fears his motives may have become muddled and less pure. He thinks of himself as doing more for her than she

for him, since "she had only given him a worshipper and he had given her a magnificent temple".(248) What they worship is, in fact, distinctly different. He discovers gradually that her dead "are only One",(249) and he finds it difficult "to reconstitute a life in which a single experience had reduced all others to nought".(249) "His own life, round its central hollow, had been packed close enough".(249) She remembers a life she had in relation to a man she loved and still loves; this was her central experience of life. Never having had this experience he reveres the possibility. Not knowing this, she thinks she would have chosen his portion "if one had been able to choose".(249) She feels she can "perfectly imagine some of the echoes with which his silences are peopled",(249) but he knows that she cannot do so for "one's relation to what one had loved and hated had been a relation too distinct from the relations of others".(249) His own experience seems to him unique. But in any case this does not affect the piety of their common pursuit. She understands his intention sufficiently to become "the priestess of his altar"(250) when he is away, and her fidelity makes his own look pale. "She proved to him afresh that women have more of the spirit of religion than men".(250) Under his sense of this his "great plan"(250) emerges. He will leave a bequest that will enable the altar to be kept up "in undiminished state",(250) and he will appoint her superintendent "of the administration of this fund"(250) - "and if the spirit should move her she might kindle a taper even for him".(250) She too is growing old, though she is younger than he, but he never considers the possibility of anyone's caring for her when she should be deceased, and sees her only as a function of his own needs.

The shock to this plan occurs when, after her aunt's death, he visits her at home for the first time. He is in a state of expectation, sensing that he has come for something, and also in a state of apprehension, feeling that their life had been happy "as they were".(252) He is first introduced into an elegant drawing room, which must have been her aunt's,

an impersonal public room. Then he is admitted into her own room, the room which puts him in possession of her. "The place had the flush of life - it was expressive; its dark red walls were articulate with memories and relics."[253] He sees that "the objects about her mainly had reference to certain places and times, and to a certain person, Hague himself".[253] Hitherto neither has been aware of the other's relation to Hague. Stransom is deeply shocked. He quickly becomes aware "that she was shocked at the vision of his shock",[254] though unable to resent it. He is horrified by yet another vision of Hague's turpitude, for he assumes that the woman must have been tragically sacrificed by him: "A woman, when she was wronged, was always more wronged than a man, and there were conditions when the least she could have got off with was more than the most he could have to endure".[260 She confesses that she suffered everything, but has forgiven Hague, yet she must renounce her worship at Stransom's altar unless he too forgives his friend, which it has become clear to her he has not yet done. Once more injured by his dead rival, Stransom faces the total collapse of his plan and of his one great bond. He feels the victim of a fraud she has imposed upon him and is perversely jealous of Hague, whom he cannot himself forgive, especially as the woman continues to love him.

After they separate, Stransom begins to understand what his devotion to her has meant to him. He moves in widening circles away from the centred meaning she has given to his life. Then he recognises that "he had taken from her so much more than she had taken from him".[262] He tries to win her over but her attitude remains immutable. This change breaks their life together and quenches the fires upon his inward altar. Stransom can find no compensation for the "horrible mutilation"[263] of their lives. He cannot agree to light a candle for Hague because he has coldly sacrificed the woman. But he forgets that he himself is guilty of the same crimes. He has not publicly avowed their relationship; he has taken from her more than he has given; he has seen her in the light of her use for him. Under

the experience of being cut off from her Stransom realises more than ever that it is she alone who will redeem him. Without her presence the altar ceases to exist and the church becomes a void - "it was his presence, her presence, their common presence, that had made the indispensable medium".(266) It is revealed to him that he can no longer bring about the revival of his sense of life in his own soul, that he needs his relationship to the woman and can only arrive at life through her.

As he feels his own death approaching, and suffering from intense loneliness, he returns to try to lose himself again in the large lustre of his altar candles - "as dazzling as the vision of heaven in the mind of a child".(267)

> He wandered in the fields of light; he passed, among the tall tapers, from tier to tier, from fire to fire, from name to name, from the white intensity of one clear emblem, of one saved soul, to another. It was in the quiet sense of having saved his souls that his deep, strange instinct rejoiced. This was no dim theological rescue, no boon of a contingent world; they were saved better than faith or works could save them, saved for the warm world they had shrunk from dying to, for actuality, for continuity, for the certainty of human remembrance. (267)

Stransom becomes absorbed by the idea of completion as he approaches the end of his life in the desire that it shall fulfil its own essential meaning. The idea of achieving a final harmony and symmetry among his ranged candles begins to haunt him. All his friends are dead and there is room for only one more candle on the altar; it will be "the tallest" and brightest of them all (250) and complete the pattern. He arrives at a "conception of the total, the idea, which left a clear opportunity for just another figure".(268) He enters upon his final illness and takes a deliberate risk that impels his own death, returning to the church in a weakened condition in the winter cold. For he feels that the time for "the great surrender"(269) has come. The lights of his altar gather themselves together to represent the source of human beauty and human charity in the face of Mary Antrim, who descends from the glory of heaven to take him with her.

It is she who opens his spirit "with a great compunctious throb for the descent of Acton Hague".(270) In this she is a surrogate for the woman and makes it possible for him to meet her request, and she shows him the way to salvation. The woman herself knows that Stransom is gravely ill although she has not seen him since their difference forced their separation. Intuitively she knows that something is wrong and that she will find him in the church. She follows him there in order to relieve him by relaxing her prohibition. She comes to tell him that she has "come for what you yourself came for",(271) while he tells her that the candles "offer the very thing you asked of me".(271) The one last candle, however, is not merely for Hague. As it turns out it is for Hague and for himself, for Stransom is literally at the point of death.

The two aspects of the divided male come together at last in death and make possible a union with the woman. Stransom is united with all his aspects, which makes possible his harmonious relationship with the woman who will redeem him and upon whom his identity rests. Although he has represented the spiritual and Hague the passional, though he has lived indirectly and Hague directly, he has yet resembled Hague in respect of his crimes toward the woman. The union of the hero with the aspects of himself that his friend represented suggests a number of meanings. He accepts his relation to life and to his own past, and accepts also in himself those features he has seen as monstrous in his friend. Whereas the woman has worshipped her relation to an actual life, he has only worshipped an imaginary one - the life that never was but might have been, in which he ought to have been loved. Now that a real woman lives to remember him he gains an existence. He has been irritated that Hague "had only to die for everything that was ugly in him to be washed out in a torrent"(260) by the passion of the absolving woman. However, his perception of his friend's redemption prefigures his own: "The passion by which he had profited had rushed back after its ebb, and now the tide of tenderness, arrested for ever at flood, was too

deep to fathom".(260-61) The myth that Stransom could not be loved because there was a superior rival in the case who injured his relationship with the woman is made over. The Jamesian woman here is no longer a fount that will not flow, a figure of denial and exclusion, who holds the keys to life and love and deprives her man of them. Another myth supervenes upon the original one to show him that he is indeed loved. Part of the effect of keeping the woman as an unnamed and symbolic figure is that she can subsume the identity of the woman out of the far past and represent the archetypal woman latent in his consciousness. Over the years Stransom has come to realise that "his impression of her, beginning so far back, was like a winding river that had at last reached the sea".(245) She goes back into his past, gives value to his present and promises his futurity. She is an endless fount whose divine charity will heal his wound and whose love is redemptive even beyond the grave. The woman who injured him by taking away his capacity for life now in his death restores her gifts to him. She has become a redeemer figure, who gives herself totally, who loves her man in spite of his flaw, whose love saves him from his impairment.

Although a symbol, the woman herself is an heroic character. She is a tragic figure who arouses sympathy and admiration. She has total integrity of personality, is grave, courageous, and loyal. She has experienced an equality of suffering but has expressed no resentment, anger, or even harsh criticism, by the manner in which she has accepted her fate. She has resigned herself with "absolute submission"(262) to a "hard reality,"(262) yet she can still adore her wounds and rise above them. She has suffered and won her own soul. A totally transcendent figure, she no longer represents a double face to the hero. In other words, because she loves both men, she cancels out the rivalry between them. The figure of the rival is therefore altered. Instead of possessing what the hero wants and excluding him from it, the rival becomes an aspect of himself that no longer needs to be denied. Stransom has seen life in the form that Hague has

represented it - the wonderful terrible thing he has loved and hated, desired and been injured by. Hague's death as the result of a snake bite seems symbolic of his representation of life, for he is bitten by the Medusa snakes of life: he is the image of life quenched by itself. He has been a man of great power, brutality, and courage, who has loved intensely despite his sacrifice of others. Stransom now has a relation to this, to the life lived, on every side, and he can accept its wonderful aspect when he is no longer threatened by its terrible aspect. In a sense his rival has done what he could not do for himself: in actually loving the woman Hague liberates Stransom to be conjoined with her. Stransom is notably passive in his redemption. He is also unconscious, for he has let the unconscious elements in the myth constitute themselves in a way that allows for a projection of a myth of redemption, but it is redemption he cannot himself will. It is something that happens to him. He has sought his goals in life - love, fidelity, unity, harmony, and fulfilment - in a perverse way, yet he has been rewarded. The normal has seemed to him abnormal, and yet his indirect method of approaching life has brought about its resolution, the goal that everyone seeks, whether ordinary or extraordinary. It is unnecessary that Stransom understand himself fully because the myth and its projected solution form themselves around him, and he is redeemed whether or not he understands why and how. His redemption, which would in the ordinary case come too late to help him, is made possible by his earlier approach to life from a distance. It is important for his redemption that he should have lived indirectly rather than not. His rapport with death prepares for his salvation after death.

It becomes less possible for the hero in age to disregard the problem of understanding his case. The Altar of the Dead is a fantastic

story prefiguring the kind of resolution to the myth that James later projects in somewhat less egregious form. The Tree of Knowledge* (1900) reveals in less heightened circumstances the hero's awareness of what he has lost in life, though the story ends at the point where the hero would logically make these reflections to himself. The story portrays the bitterness of self-knowledge for a love-injured hero whose life has been based upon the fiction that he was loved in some sense. The hero, a failed writer, falls in love with a woman who marries an unsuccessful sculptor. He continues to adore the woman, and his life is carried on in relation to the lives of the married couple and their only son, his godson. He keeps up the beautiful fiction of "the Master's" quality in order to prove how much he loves the wife. The whole situation is a marvel, with the hero feeling himself loved by the wife because of the affection he bears for her husband and son. Though his own personal quality is evidently far superior to that of the husband, who is vain, egotistical, and a sham, there seems love enough for everybody, and the couple are right and safe together.

This apparently happy equilibrium is upset when the son grows up and comes into conflict with his father over the matter of his own artistic quality. He cannot bear being despised for not "grovelling in mediocrity",(108) and being told to produce and sell by his father, who does not sell and produces works that are afflictions. The hero's integrity for himself, and indeed his success in life, is based upon his never having expressed an opinion on the quality of "the Master's" work. He believes that none of the family knows how bad it is. He is "absolutely"(106) sure that the wife herself does not know and believes that she would throw her husband over if she did. The hero's crisis comes through a number of revelations provided by his godson, whom he has tried to keep from knowledge. The boy first reveals that he has always understood how bad his father's work was, though

* Tales, Vol. 11.

he never supposed that his godfather knew it. He is bribed by the hero to maintain a "noble duplicity",(108) which he finds increasingly difficult to do. The critical revelation comes through the boy's discovery that his mother, too, has always known. Seeing his desire to strike back at his father, she comes to him one night to demand of him the same sacrifice she has always demanded of herself: to maintain the fictions that surround the work of the artist because of the deep love she bears toward the man. The boy reveals that his mother cares only for his father, and the story leaves the hero at the moment of apprehending what this means for himself. He observes that what he must have wanted was to keep himself from knowledge, but he does not formulate his reasons. In effect, it is he who has built his life upon a fiction and who, when the truth is known, is not loved for himself, while the man of whom he has always believed this to be true turns out to be vital, potent, and passionately adored - totally loved for himself in spite of his flaw. Nothing is difficult for "the Master". Abounding in energy he has life in abundance, lives off his wife's money and enjoys the treasures of her affection.

When the story opens Peter Brench is fifty. For years he has been in love "without breathing it"(93) with Mrs. Mallow, whom he thinks is unaware of being "the one beautiful reason he had never married".(93) He is utterly silent on the issues that affect his personal life most deeply. He has never gone on record as having "either lied or spoken the truth"(93) about Morgan Mallow's "multiplied marbles",(93) "the affliction of which even time had never blunted the edge."(93) Nor does he speak about his own work, for he too is a failure of a kind who maintains "the purity of his taste by establishing still more firmly the right relation of fame to feebleness".(95) He gets about as much life with the Mallows as he can sustain. They are "tremendous Italians"(95) and maintain a style of life which gives Brench "just the amount of 'going abroad' he {can} bear".(91) Carrara Lodge is built with Mrs. Mallow's marriage portion, and it is with these funds that

"the infatuated sculptor and his wife"(95) "keep it up".(95) Since Brench has likewise "a certain independence"(94) financially there are the means all round to preserve the sense of their beautiful relations.

> He despised Mallow's statues and adored Mallow's wife, and yet was distinctly fond of Mallow, to whom, in turn, he was equally dear. Mrs. Mallow rejoiced in the statues - though she preferred, when pressed, the busts; and if she was visibly attached to Peter Brench it was because of his affection for Morgan. Each loved the other, moreover, for the love borne in each case to Lancelot, whom the Mallows respectively cherished as their only child and whom the friend of their fireside identified as the third - but decidedly the handsomest - of his godsons. (94)

His troubles begin when Mrs. Mallow, who shares with him "their problems and aims",(96) reveals that Lance, now twenty, has a passion for painting and must embrace it as a career. A year at Cambridge has brought him "no glory"(96) and there is no point in preparing him for a career that is impossible for him. Lance has been at Brench's old college studying the humanities, and Brench hopes that the boy will follow him in his career rather than his father, whose example would be a perverse and corrupting one. However, Mrs. Mallow's view is different. She praises her husband extravagantly and is irritated by any dissent.

> "I know what you mean by that. Will it be a career to incur the jealousies and provoke the machinations that have been at times almost too much for the father. Well - say it may be, since nothing but clap-trap, in these dreadful days, <u>can</u>, it would seem, make its way, and since, with the curse of refinement and distinction, one may easily find one's self begging one's bread. Put it at the worst - say he <u>has</u> the misfortune to wing his flight further than the vulgar taste of his stupid countrymen can follow. Think, all the same, of the happiness - the same that the Master has had. He'll <u>know</u> .... Quiet joy!" (97)

Lance has, in fact, quite a different personality from his egotistical and vain father, who appears "like somebody's flattering idea of somebody's own person expressed in the great room provided at the Uffizi museum for Portraits of the Artists by Themselves".(95-96) It is Mallow's only regret that he has not been "born ... to the brush"(96) and been able to contribute to that

collection. He looks on Lance as an extension of himself. Lance is full of curiosity and desire to master his art. He believes that he is living in a period when there is so much to know, and he wants to know, even if there is "such a mill to go through".(97) He proves himself perceptive and capable of judgment and self-criticism. His interest is deeply aroused by Brench's attitude to his project. His godfather feels strongly enough about it to pay out of his own pocket for him to return to Cambridge, because he argues it is better not to know, that "ignorance ... is bliss".(98) He feels that he himself has "the misfortune to be omniscient"(98) but does not make clear to the boy what he fears he may learn. Brench, in fact, supposes that Lance still believes in "the Master", that in training his eye he will learn to see through him, and that the terrible truth will then come out. Part of his sense of the merit and grace of Mrs. Mallow's loyalty and her husband's vanity is that they are themselves innocent of the truth, and he supposes "they would have been nowhere without their attitude that the Master was always too good to sell".(101)

Lance does indeed proceed with his plan to study art in Paris, and when he returns home for his first spell he tells Brench he has discovered why he was so much against his going: "It <u>isn't</u> so very good to know."(103) "I'm a beastly duffer."(103) "It's <u>that</u> that isn't pleasant to find out."(104) Gradually it becomes clear to Peter that what Lance has learned is "what I can't do",(104) that he has developed a "deep doubt of his means".(104) This is not what Brench has expected him to learn. Since Brench does not display the pleasure Lance might have anticipated a further question arises. But Lance gets nowhere by direct questioning of his godfather, who says only that if Lance does not already know the answer he may not guess in the future. Eying him "with the bold curiosity of youth",(104) Lance is determined to solve his "conundrum".(104) This he does, and the next time they see each other alone, he declares that he cannot believe Brench "had been supposing I had to go to Paris to learn that" - "the truth about the Master".(105) "I

understood it {the true value of his work} as soon as I began to understand anything."[105] Each is equally amazed, but "since the murder is out",[105] Brench demands that Lance promise to sacrifice anything rather than let his mother guess. Lance's comments reveal that he doubts his godfather's interpretation of the state of affairs. He believes that "the Master's" audience consists "first of all ... of himself."[106] And "last of all too",[106] and does not include his mother in this. Nor is he sure that she does not know the truth. Indeed, the portrait of Mrs. Mallow that slowly emerges in the story is that of a woman almost archly conscious. She is perfectly aware of Brench's adoration, but is not herself entrapped by it. She tends to look upon him "with accusatory affection - a grace, on her part, not infrequent".[102] Her criticism of his stand over Lance - that it is cruel and perverse - suggests a view of him which is independent of any emotional involvement on her part. With her own heightened colour she is presumably not without her own vanity. "At more than forty"[96] she still has "her violet eyes, her creamy satin skin, and her silken chestnut hair",[96] and still seems conscious of her charms.

Brench's crisis comes to a head when Lance returns after another six-month trial in Paris and has "with his father, for the first time in his life, one of the scenes that strike sparks".[107] The immediate outcome of this is that Brench for the first time feels a "reserve on the part of the pair at Carrara Lodge",[107] who fail "to open themselves - if not in joy, then in sorrow - to their good friend".[107] Lance has to visit Brench at his place because of the tension at home, "begotten of the fact that his father wished him to be, at least, the sort of success he himself had been".[107] If Lance judges himself harshly he judges his father more harshly. He will go back to Paris

> because of the fascination in trying, in seeing, in sounding the depths - in learning one's lesson, in fine, even if the lesson were simply that of one's impotence in the presence of one's larger vision. But what did the Master, all aloft in his senseless fluency,

> know of impotence, and what of vision - to be called such - had he, in all his blind life, ever had? (107-08)

Lance finds it less and less easy to "continue humbugging";(106) his promise to Brench imposes a real strain on him. The day comes when his just resentment can barely be contained - it is at this moment that Mrs. Mallow reveals her own attitude and demands a similar sacrifice of him. Lance is pitiless in leading Brench up to the shocking truth. When he asks how his godfather can hold his tongue on the grounds of his affection for his mother, if he is nothing to her and she cares only for his father, Brench replies that his advantage lies in what he makes of it. Gradually Lance sees "how awfully - always"(109) Brench "must have liked her",(109) and he decides in the face of this to reveal to him what he has himself just learned, the depth of her love for his father:

> "She came to my room last night, after being present, in silence and only with her eyes on me, at what I had had to take from him; she came - and she was with me an extraordinary hour .... She does know. She let it all out to me - so as to demand of me no more than that, as she said, of which herself had been capable. She has always, always known ...." (109-10)

Brench is left to see "how tremendously much"(110) she cares and to measure what this means for himself - the sum of which is implied in his final comment to Lance that he must have wished to protect himself from knowledge.

In The Tree of Knowledge the qualities of the hero and his antitype are again split as between superego and id; and, though both men are in some sense artistic failures, the one who can love is loved and wins the honours. It is a rather muted story in which the hero is allowed to come to knowledge because it is not so excoriating as in the case of heroes more deeply flawed. He knows that his life has been based upon a fiction and that he is not loved, while the man whom he has regarded as being seriously flawed is in fact supremely loved. Mrs. Mallow is a somewhat comic character but she is seen only in one dimension, that of her charm and ultimately of her love of her husband. The hero's assumed relation with her has been a

total fiction, so that the truth sweeps the ground from under his feet. As the title of the story indicates, knowledge is a bitter experience, revealing his own flawed nature.

There is no solution to Brench's plight, but in The Jolly Corner* (1908) James does project a solution for the hero while also allowing him to come to a degree of consciousness. In this story a love-injured hero of fifty-six returns to America after more than a quarter of a century in exile in Europe. He comes ostensibly to survey two properties which have passed into his hands, but more profoundly, as is later evident, to assume his spiritual inheritance: by returning to the woman he has loved and lost without having recognised it, and to the scene of his youth in order to recover his lost threads of life. He has died emotionally in his youth and seeks to resolve the inner conflict about life that he has consequently suffered - his intense desire for it and inability to have it in any real sense.

On his return, the emotional suffering which is the culmination of a life-time of feeling himself to be blocked off from living blows up, putting him through an experience of inner death so grave that he must either actually die or grasp the life that is left him. His need to understand himself requires that he descend into the depths of his psyche in search of self-knowledge. His conflict intensifies to the point at which he splits into two, becoming two projections of himself in search of each other and existing in a state of mortal combat. He refers to them as himself and his alter ego. His situation acts itself out in the manner of a dream in which all the major aspects of his personality necessary to an understanding of his life and fate become manifest. The specific aspects of himself which

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* Tales, Vol. 12

are dramatised in the contest between these intimate adversaries shift from one figure to the other and also become conflated in the manner in which figures are superimposed upon one another in dreams. He has an adventure marked by extraordinary suspense, in which the things that occur are symbolic and expressed in powerful images, in the apprehension of which he loses his ordinary sense of proportion. He wanders in a dim underworld in which he can see things he could never see before.

In point of fact, although he confronts himself, he never really comes to know himself fully, because he will not accept as belonging to him all the hideous attributes of his personality which become evident in his alter ego. But since his identity is transformed as a result of his experience, he truly ceases to be the monstrous and mutilated man incapable of love, the recognition of whom would have destroyed him had he accepted him as his total identity. He is saved by the woman who knows him completely and loves him as he is. It does not matter to her what he has done or been, or what he has failed to do or become. She waits for him to arrive at the point at which he needs her and can accept her love, when she can claim him as her own and bring him to life. He therefore does not actually die, but emerges from his dark passage into the light in full possession of his inheritance of life and love.

Spencer Brydon has lived in Europe on the rents derived from two properties in New York, which have now fallen "wholly into his hands",(195) and which he is released to inspect by "the successive deaths of his two brothers and the termination of old arrangements".(195) His mind has been totally averted from America. His motives for returning are entirely personal and private. He himself is not entirely aware of them, though he knows that his thoughts are "almost altogether about something that concerns {himself}".(193) He accedes to overtures for the conversion of one property into a block of flats. Though he has always turned his back on such considerations, disclaiming any ability to engage in constructive work which

would make him a fortune and gain him social power, this project makes him aware of a "lively stir, in a compartment of his mind never yet penetrated, of a capacity for business and a sense for construction".[195] The ability to participate in the venture with authority, to challenge the explanations and estimates of those engaged in the work of construction, acquaints him with potentialities within himself that have lain dormant. He has perhaps neglected a real gift, a genius for worldly triumph, a capacity "to start some new variety of awful architectural hare and run it till it burrowed in a gold-mine".[197] He is not attracted by "the rank money-passion"[204] which has determined the development of the type of American male, but he becomes absorbed in the question of the cost to the development of his own nature of following the perverse young course which had taken him to Europe almost in the teeth of his father's curse. He begins to envisage some strange element in himself, an "alter ego deep down somewhere within me, as the full-blown flower is in the small tight bud",[204] which he had blighted "for once and for ever"[204] in transferring himself to a foreign climate.[204] His dismay at the modern things for which America is famous and his dislike of money-power make him feel that his alter ego, had it developed, would have been "quite splendid, quite huge and monstrous".[205] All the same "it positively aches"[203] within him to know "what he personally might have been, how he might have led his life and 'turned out', if he had not so, at the outset, given it up".[203] He feels about "this absurd speculation"[203] "the small rage of curiosity never to be satisfied"[203] that he has felt on burning "some important letter unopened".[203]

Brydon's quest for self-knowledge leads him to a search for himself in the more significant of his two houses, the one in which he was born and raised and which comes to represent his psyche. The house on the Jolly Corner has values which can be read into it, values other than money, that make it inappropriate for him to consider conversion. He thinks of

himself as making a magnanimous sacrifice of a financial advantage of behalf of decent feelings. He can afford this generous gesture made on behalf of "some good old servant",(199) some "lifelong retainer's appeal for a character, or even for a retiring-pension",(199) because of his profit from the other house. On the Jolly Corner he confronts life in ghostly terms - life not fully lived, whether it refers to his own truncated existence or to the survival of the dead in his memory. Though a great gaunt shell, the house is not empty for him. "It is lived in",(203)

> since his parents and his favourite sister, to say nothing of other kin, in numbers had run their course and met their end there. That represented, within the walls, ineffaceable life. (203)

The house contains seventy years of the past, the annals of three generations of his family now dead, and it is the scene of his own overschooled boyhood and chilled adolescence. It is symbolically upon the black and white marble slabs of the vestibule that his own potentialities to live and love were cut back, suspended and suppressed, and in retracing his steps back to them Brydon may hope to reconnect himself with his lost sources of vitality and his capacity to love.

He cannot do this by himself. One of the greatest surprises of his return to New York is his renewed contact with Alice Staverton, the woman with whom he shares a past. His communication with her is real, and their discussions rapidly become a resource, comfort and support. She is part of the things he thought ugly in his youth, but which now charm him. She has for him a "precious reference ... to memories and histories in which he could enter, she was as exquisite for him as some pale pressed flower".(197) Moreover, the "communities of knowledge"(197) which they share, and which refer to "their common, their quite far-away and antediluvian social period and order",(196) have a specifically personal content, which she, with her perfect integrity of personality has saved. It is "still unobscured, still exposed and cherished, under that pious visitation of the spirit from which

she had never been diverted".[197] Brydon himself does not see that she too represents the life he might have had in America, and which he abandoned for a version of partial living in Europe. But though he does not regard her as the woman he has loved and lost, she knows what his exile in Europe has made of him and that she has loved him always. He is good enough for her even if he has not achieved his full human potentiality. Whatever he might have been, she tells him, "how should I not have liked you?"[205]

He comes half way toward admitting what has been wrong by confessing that his life in Europe has been "a selfish frivolous scandalous life".[205]

> "I've not been edifying - I believe I'm thought in a hundred quarters to have been barely decent. I've followed strange paths and worshipped strange gods."[205]

What this means, as she recognises, is that he has not cared for anything or anyone but himself. Though he knows vaguely what this has made of him, he tends to project his sense of himself as monstrous and mutilated onto his alter ego, which he regards as totally other than himself. Alice, on the other hand, knows everything about him and accepts him as he is. Her support and understanding enable him to make the dark descent into himself and emerge. She is a catalyst in the quest, partly because it is for her that it is undertaken. She is the goal, though in order to know this, he must know more about himself. She gives both credence and credibility to his venture.

After providing her with some idea of his morbid obsession Brydon surrenders himself to it, visiting the house on the Jolly Corner nightly to hunt up the ghost of his frustrated possibilities. The normal orders of experience become reversed. Ordinary social contact becomes an unreal activity, "all mere surface sound",[208] like playing a game of "ombres chinoises".[208] He projects himself into "the other, the real, the waiting life"[208] of mystical experience, roaming the house that comes to seem like "some great glass bowl, all precious concave crystal, set delicately humming

by the play of a moist finger round its edge".[209] The house emits "the scarce audible pathetic wail to his strained ear, of all the old baffled forsworn possibilities"[209] that he wishes to wake "into such measure of ghostly life as they might still enjoy".[209] This dark underworld becomes his society, warm, peopled and responsive, while the world outside represents a lamplit vacancy.

As Brydon searches for his alter ego, it becomes the symbol of life in its wonderful and terrible power. Brydon imagines it as "a creature more subtle than a beast",[210] which he stalks in the manner of the chase and with a similar life-and-death intensity. At first he is in the position of the aggressor, like some monstrous cat with an acquired facility to penetrate the dusk. But the creature he pursues has a life greater than his own, and he begins to feel less confident as he senses that he too is being followed and tracked at a distance carefully measured. He finds himself in the disconcerting position of being "kept in sight while remaining himself - as regards the essence of his position - sightless".[212] Then he feels like a foolish Pantaloon tricked and outwitted by the superior cunning of a Harlequin, made the sport of life. More and more at the mercy of this agent of life, he develops an acute certainty that his alter ego is like an animal brought to bay who will fight to the death. He is glad to discover that this projection of himself is not unworthy of him, but he feels in definite danger as a result of what he might passively come to know. Brydon needs all his courage to maintain his staying power and to resist the "imminent danger of flight";[215] he is like a man slipping on an awful incline without knowing he is holding on.

The crisis comes one night when he is aware of the actual movements of another agent. A door at the far end of the upstairs passage is closed subsequently to his having passed through it. "At this time at last they <u>were</u>, the two, the opposed projections of him, in presence."[218] Brydon looks down the passage as if the other "agent"[217] might be "encountered

telescopically",(217) "focussed and studied in diminishing perspective and as by a rest for the elbow",(217) but he cannot reduce its power to terrify and overwhelm. His only hope of saving himself seems to lie in cultivating the value of discretion as opposed to insistence. Once he can know himself he loses his desire to do so. He imagines his other self as appealing positively to pity, as convincing him that "we both of us should have suffered"(219) by an encounter, so that he moves toward renouncing his quest. He considers the spell broken and opens a window with the idea of discovering signs of life in the night world outside the house. He watches "as for some comforting fact"(220) with an increasing "impulse to get into relation with it".(220) He could not reveal his purposes publicly without feeling himself compromised, yet wishes somehow to record "the vow {of discretion} he had just uttered to his intimate adversary".(220) But the outer world fails of all response, and his own choked appeal forms the sole note of life. Longing to escape without running the gauntlet of the rooms and facing what is there, Brydon is sickened at the prospect of having to retrace his steps. He hangs back from really seeing. The risk is too great, the fear too definite, once the moment has come to confront the "awful specific form",(222) the "agent of his shame",(222) a sense of himself which can only lead to suicide or death.

Brydon still has the whole house to deal with. Gradually he makes him descent to "the marble squares of his childhood",(223) the old black-and-white slabs, as if they lay at the bottom of a glimmering sea. He passes the open rooms without looking, aware that they gloom "in their shuttered state like the mouths of caverns".(222) The high skylight forms the crown of a deep well which creates a medium for him in which he can make his descent into the watery under-world. He begins to think he has escaped, that he will never come back, and that he can send in "the builders, the destroyers"(223) "as soon as they would".(223) Then he sees that "the hinged halves of the inner door"(223) of the vestibule are gaping wide open,

whereas he had left them shut. He is faced with the challenging certitude that

> here was at last something to meet, to touch, to take, to know - something all unnatural and dreadful, but to advance upon which was the condition for him either of liberation or of supreme defeat. (224)

The light seems to expand and contract, protecting by indistinctness something within it, behind "the painted panels of the last barrier to his escape".(224) The figure is the key to his own identity, standing like "some image erect in a niche or some black-visored sentinel guarding a treasure".(224) He is "a man of his own substance and stature",(224) in evening dress exactly like his own, though instead of a monocle he wears a double eye-glass or pince-nez, the symbol of his "poor ruined sight".(232) His "grizzled bent head"(225) is "buried as for dark deprecation"(225) in his white hands. Brydon is astonished that his other self, who stands for "the achieved, the enjoyed, the triumphant life",(225) should not represent himself "in his triumph",(225) that he is in fact a figure of shame. When the other removes his hands to reveal his injury - two lost fingers, "reduced to stumps, as if accidentally shot away"(225) - and finally a face "too hideous to claim as his own",(225) Brydon denies that the figure represents himself. It is "the face of a stranger",(226) "evil, odious, blatant, vulgar",(226) who advances upon him "as for aggression".(226) Brydon reels under his shock:

> falling back as under the hot breath and the roused passion of a life larger than his own, a rage of personality before which his own collapsed, he felt the whole vision turn to darkness and his very feet give way. His head went round; he was going; he had gone. (226)

He becomes a shadowy residue of himself as his alter ego becomes a conflation of multiple aspects of himself. In one sense, his unconscious has thrown up a projection of the self he fears that he possesses, that of the injured and humiliated man, incapable of love, who has led "a selfish frivolous scandalous life"(205) in Europe. This is a figure of death, repre-

senting unfulfilled potentialities for life, and a rage of resentment and anger against repression, which have accumulated in him as a force for destruction. Like the trodden worm it turns, but turns upon itself. Brydon has an impulse to reject and annihilate this aspect of himself. Though he has sought to know himself, as Alice says, he cannot. He still blocks himself from full recognition. She has seen the aspect of himself which he denies before he himself sees it, and she sees it again in a dream at the time when Brydon himself confronts it. She is therefore able to come to him at the house when he needs her. She tells him upon his waking that she accepts this figure. For her he is grim and worn, unhappy and ravaged, someone to whom things have happened. She has nothing but pity for him and does not consider him hideous. This is the injured lover, the victim of circumstances, who has lived in a partial way which has profaned his potentialities. It is not an image of what Brydon might have been, had he been the powerful American capitalist, mighty in his triumph. It is what Brydon has become in the pursuit of the life he has led.

However, there is a sense in which "what he might have been"(203) becomes what he might now be. In the first image of the alter ego as the blighted bud of baffled possibilities lies the implication of a potentiality for life, love and happiness which Alice now renews in him. Brydon has not had the life he might have had in terms of marriage to her, but he does die to his old identity in order to achieve this new one. He regains consciousness on those marble slabs of his youth, awakening to life, warmth, consciousness, and the treasure of Alice's intelligence and knowledge, "waiting all round him for quiet appropriation".(227) He has emerged from the dark other end of his tunnel of suffering and despair, able to grasp the life that is left him and to accept the love that is offered him. Alice claims him as her own. "And now I keep you,"(228) she says; to which he answers, "Oh keep me, keep me!"(228) In confronting that aspect of himself

in which the thing he sought was what he needed to combat - the beast Life, which assaults, overwhelms and destroys - he has become enabled to accept the life that is benign, sustaining and rewarding. Alice is not the destructive mother of youth, but the charitable nurse who becomes acceptable in age. With this knowledge his state resembles

> more and more that of a man who has gone to sleep on some news of a great inheritance, and then, after dreaming it away, after profaning it with matters strange to it, has waked up again to serenity of certitude and has only to lie and watch it grow. (227)

The other self, which is now distinct from him, might indeed have had a million a year, but not Alice Staverton. Brydon comes to himself by coming to her, and she defines his new identity.

The split in Brydon's nature arises implicitly from his earliest experience of love, which destroyed the living, growing and forward looking part of his nature. This experience of being injured in love was repeated later when he fell in love with a woman whom he did not marry. Alice knew him at that time and knows everything about him. It is as if he were put back in touch with the original woman who loved him and who repairs his former injuries. Alice is not given any personal psychology of her own. It is enough for the purposes of the story that she exists for Brydon and saves him. He could manifestly not save himself, and the pain of self division and conflict which leads to the search for and confrontation with his alter ego would have led to his death had he not awakened to find his head resting upon her lap and cushioned for the rest of his life. He is passive in his redemption. Her active intervention saves him. She waits all his life for the moment when he is ready to accept her and she can claim him. There is a dream quality about the conclusion to his story, which is the result of James's projection of a possible solution to his dilemma. Alice is represented as being totally conscious of his situation, drawing upon actual facts, her love of him, and her intuitions about him. He has merely to

place himself in her hands, but before he can do so he must go back to his past and re-establish his connection with the lost thread of his life. He must return to the scene of his youth and adolescence to reconstruct the destruction of his capacity for life so that he might achieve understanding with which to encompass his situation. It is Alice herself who makes this experiment possible: she enables him to die to the life he has had (which was no life at all) and to the self he has been (which was injured and monstrous) in order to assume the life that he ought always to have had. She enables him to assume his true inheritance and redeems his alienated condition. His drama is enacted without his needing to understand everything about it because she is the consciousness of his situation. It is enough that she understands everything and can be for him the woman that he wants and needs. James remakes the myth of the injured lover who has died to life by superimposing upon it a myth in which he posits a solution. The experience is pushed to an extreme point at which the intensity of the hero's suffering is represented in images that press themselves vividly upon him, and it is only by projecting a fabulous conclusion that James can resolve the lifelong problem he originally postulated.

Although this fabulous quality is maintained in The Bench of Desolation* (1909-10) the story has a greater reality and less of a purely dream quality. Moreover, the hero is more manifestly passive in his redemption and is so injured that he needs a woman's comfort desperately. A re-enactment of his early history clarifies the extent to which he projected his fear of the woman he loved in terms of her power. The woman's exertion of power over him was her response to his desertion and she regrets it.

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* Tales, Vol. 12.

Whereas Brydon has a fabulous nightmare in which all comes right, the hero's experience occurs in terms of his life, which creates a sense of even greater suffering, blindness, and tragedy. He is forced by the reality of his circumstances into a greater awareness of his suffering and its meaning. His is the truly pitiable and terrifying story of injuries in love which ultimately appear to have been quite unnecessary. The hero experiences a fate of intense suffering, humiliation, failure, and loss, which ends in a "fantastic fable"(412) when the truth becomes evident to him and the woman returns to him with treasure he has only to put out his hand to take. The woman herself is the bearer of the beautiful, dreadful truth about life and love. She has loved terribly and her only meaning for herself lies in her relation to her beloved.She still cherishes him, and in the end his need for her is too great for him to reject her care, not only because he is broken by suffering but also because he can no longer suppose himself to be the victim of her abuse. His view of himself as honourable, heroic and thoroughly justified becomes a hollow and vain pretence, so that his only support lies in his acceptance of her romantic passion for him. Though the suffering experienced by each severely qualifies the romantic conclusion, the reader is asked to believe that under their re-constituted relation the past can to some extent fall away and life begin for them anew.

The scene of the major events of Herbert Dodd's life and meditations upon his suffering is the last bench upon the "'land's end'"(377) of a seaside town, facing the western sunset. It is to this bench that he brings his despair and sense of personal desolation. He comes to it because he has no other pleasant place to go and because he is consuming himself with grief. The sunsets provide a beautiful image of failure, and he develops the custom of projecting the facts of his case against this background as if they were silhouettes whose meaning was clearly etched and defined. In this setting of vast inhuman expanse he can cultivate a detachment from the world and turn his face from harsh reality. The scene

provides him with an image of himself washed up by the "long wave of his misfortune"(386) "far beyond everything"(386) and "stranded by tidal action, deposited in the lonely hollow of his fate."(386) The bench is his consecrated seat. It provides him with some security and comfort and becomes an image of his longing to be loved, supported, and healed. It was once the scene of his wooing, and it is the scene of the final resolution of his love-fate, when his former fiancée, Kate Cookham, comes to claim him and to take her place beside him, while he remains bowed "with the sense of her own sustained, renewed and wonderful action,"(425) knowing that "an arm had passed around him and he was held."(425)

When the story opens, Kate's actions seem of a very different kind. Herbert Dodd has written her a letter breaking their engagement, to which her response is a threat of a breach of promise action. This corroborates his fears that she has an "appalling nature,"(370) brutal, ruthless, and menacing to himself. She is revealed to him "in all the grossness of her native indelicacy, in all her essential excess of will and destitution of scruple."(369) He assumes that "the very probable truth"(370) is that if she should try it "she'd pull it off,"(370) and he finds in her own assurance of this "the very proof of her cruelty."(370) He feels held in a trap of sharp, murderous steel, and cries and cries, knowing "he shouldn't get out without losing a limb",(375) and considering "which of his limbs it should be."(375) Kate's look is grim as she makes her intention clear. For him it is like looking directly upon the face of life in a way that spells his own death. He expresses its "mortal chill"(372) to himself by the image of the canvas blind of his bookshop drawn to signify the suspension of business. It foreshadows his ruin and failure, the particular doom of discovering that he is "crippled for life."(375) For him, there is a "nightmare logic"(376) about this, since he already regards himself as one who has always "exquisitely suffered,"(376) someone who would always have to pay. His sensitive nature and superior quality have decreed from "as far back as he could

remember"(374) that he should suffer from things "when other people didn't,"(374) and his tendency to conceal his suffering has "taught him, in a manner, how to suffer, and how almost to like to."(374) This is not merely a matter of aesthetic disposition, for there is in his background a dominating and powerful widowed mother, who is somehow responsible for his being unable to live fully, even though she has provided him with a means of existence. She "had screwed"(372) the shop, lock, stock and barrel, from her brother before his death, "in the name of the youngest and most interesting, the 'delicate' one and the literary, of her five scattered and struggling children,"(372) who is by implication her favourite.

Herbert Dodd finds himself incapable of dealing with Kate. He has an instinct to play for time, cannot deliver his ultimatum, and

> a lurking fear in him, too deep to counsel mere defiance, made him appear to keep open a little, till he could somehow turn round again, the door of possible composition.(370)

He works himself around to a manner in which he can conceive of his situation. If he is to live "abjectly exposed"(370) because of Kate, he is also "to live saved,"(370) in so far as he clearly cannot marry her. His intensified sense of her nature allows him to "plant his feet firmer"(370) on the ground, because her actions "put him so beautifully in the right."(370) Yet his heroic acceptance of the losses which will follow from his victimisation masks acute resentment (righteous or not) and hatred for the author of his woes. She has entrapped, seduced and muddled him, and makes it a crime that he should not want to tie himself to her for life. It is not just a question of her pretending to love him - and she still maintains "it's just as much my dream as it ever was"(372) to take up her life with him - but of her making out that "he could possibly have been right and safe and blest in loving her,"(370) a creature who could brazen the law-courts and publish love-letters.

Dodd is, in fact, an ambivalent lover caught in a bind between two

women, one who represents life in so terrible a form that she threatens to destroy him, another who represents death and is a weak version of himself. He never admits this, insisting that the other woman, Nan Drury, did not in any way enter his life "till his mind was wholly made up to eliminate his other friend."(379) But Nan's references "to the time, as she called it, when she came into his life"(379) clearly make it earlier, a fact thoroughly evident to Kate herself. Dodd does not now perceive his dilemma in terms of his own ambivalence, nor does he do so later when he is made aware of his misjudgment of Kate, even though he is first in the posture of a man observing his fate in the process of becoming enacted and later in that of one understanding its elements. Kate and Dodd finally comprehend their fate: the crux is the false supposition of each that the other wanted to marry somebody else, "the blind, the pitiful folly"(407) of mistaken judgments. Kate thought he wished to marry Nan. He thought that she wanted to marry Bill Frankle and to extort money from him for that purpose. They have really only loved each other (though the hero's case is largely negative). However, the errors on which the logic of their situation seems to hinge are merely symptomatic of the deeper reasons for the fate that lie hidden in the hero's complex nature.

At the time when he breaks off his engagement Herbert Dodd does think that he wants to marry Nan Drury. But she loses her attractiveness for him by the time of their marriage, which he enters in the face of poverty brought on by her father's financial crash and his own ruin (for he agrees to give Kate £400 to keep her from taking proceedings against him). He cannot support her or a family. But he refuses to recognise it. He thinks of himself as honourable for having married Nan in the wake of her familial disaster, whereas she grows to bear him a mortal grudge for marrying her without the means of supporting her. She suspects that Kate's threat was idle (especially as he stops his payments and nothing happens) and that he need not have impoverished them by paying for his release. Dodd does not

choose Nan freely as a marriage partner. His sense of his injuries creates a violent, wild and immediate need in him to seek

> consolation from beautiful, gentle, tender-souled Nan, to whom he was now at last, after the wonderful way they had helped each other to behave, going to make love, absolutely unreserved and abandoned, absolutely reckless and romantic love, a refuge from poisonous reality, as hard as ever he might. (377)

He holds that Kate "had made the straightest and most unabashed love to him,"(377) and now gives himself up "to the reactions of intimacy with the kind of woman"(377) whom he likes and who is possible for him in a world in which he is to be "forever starved"(377) of everything else. He remains "in the shake of his dark storm-gust,"(377) though his relations with Kate have formally ceased. Everything that happens to him happens as a result of her "prime assault"(394) on him, which permanently unnerves him. It is Kate who is "the mistress of his fortune."(378) Though his relationship with Nan begins on the basis "of their having so little ... to consider save their impotence, their poverty, their ruin"(378) - and the supposition of the bliss and freedom of romantic love - their marriage only has meaning in relation to the marriage which has not taken place. His ultimate response to everything is one of "idiotised surrender,"(382) and as the years go by he watches

> everything impossible and deplorable happen, as in an endless prolongation of his nightmare; watch{es} himself proceed, that is, with the finest, richest incoherence to the due preparation of his catastrophe. (382)

Everything comes "to seem equally"(382) a part of his original catastrophe "in complete defiance of proportion."(382) In the space of twelve dismal years his business fails, his two children die, and their deaths are followed by their mother's. Dodd, who was deaf to his wife in life, has nothing left to do but to take up her echo, the faint wail of her resented wrong.

His original pleasure in her is "almost altogether determined by the fact of the happy, even if all so lonely, forms and instincts in her

which claimed kinship with his own"[379] - her "refinement of grace,"[379] and "distinction of type."[379] She is also dim and disinherited, and comes from a family who "couldn't be said very particularly or positively to live,"[379] and whose "continued collective existence"[379] is "a good deal of a miracle even to themselves."[379] The "waxen image of uncritical faith,"[379] she at first seems to cool "the heat of his helplessness very much as if he were laying his head on a tense silk pillow."[379] But she becomes less and less of a comfort to him as she turns into the image of his failure and keeps constantly before his mind's eye an awareness of his own doubts and anxieties. Her "artless habit of not contradicting him enough"[380] leads "to her often trailing up and down before him, too complacently, the untimely shreds and patches of his own glooms and desperations."[380] She treats him to himself "served up cold,"[383] yet also "to a certain small bitter fruit of her personal, her unnatural plucking"[383] - her sense that he might have taken legal advice and that, had he done so, his lawyers might have had a different story from Kate's. She only says "perhaps,"[383] but she says it so often that it comes up to the exclusion of everything else. The whole of Nan's personality becomes reduced to the little bundle of energy and resentment represented by her

> flat infelicities, which for the most part took no pace with the years or with change, but only shook like hard peas in a child's rattle, the same peas always, of course, so long as the rattle didn't split open with usage or from somebody's act of irritation. (382)

Facing this hard core of resentment is the first link in the unfolding of the revelations about which he tries to cultivate ignorance. About the things that have happened to him as Kate's victim he cultivates his memory. His habit in the "year of mortal solitude"[383] that follows Nan's death is to collapse for rest on "the bench of desolation" and there to watch the western sky, taking full in the face the dismal records of his submission to a nightmare fate.

> He might in these sessions, with his eyes on the grey-green sea, have been counting again and still recounting the beads, almost all worn smooth, of his rosary of pain - which had for the fingers of memory and the recurrences of wonder the same felt break of the smaller ones by the larger that would have aided a pious mumble in some dusky altar-chapel. (384)

He tries to find a sense of personal dignity in sitting still with his fate and accepting it, but he merely prolongs his distress by his devotion to an "impractical remorse,"(389) tossing up his recollections of his grim relations to Kate and Nan without understanding the link between them and finding no meaning in his doom except that of necessity and inevitability. "He couldn't not have married, no doubt, just as he couldn't not have suffered the last degree of humiliation and almost want, or just as his wife and children couldn't not have died of the little he was able, under dire re-iterated pinches, to do for them."(384-85)

It is under these conditions that Kate returns to him with the treasure of her love and with his money quintupled. The money is the symbol of her passion and proof of her ability to take care of him. In a perverse way she has husbanded his resources for him - "using {the money} for you and using you yourself for your own future."(409) He allowed her no other way to take care of him. For the Jamesian hero, the terror of the passion of such women is that they want to bring so much to him that they consume him, possess him, and deprive him of all power of independent existence. And indeed there is something terrifying in Kate's coming stuffed with the proofs of her passion and her power to pick up the pieces of the man whom she has so reduced that he can no longer put up any resistance to her. But Kate has been prevented by him from doing what she really wanted, and she has lived in the light of her passion for him. If in a sense she has lived off him, while he has been consumed, undoubtedly he has allowed it, being willing to see himself as her victim in order to escape the threat of engulfment by her. His own sense of personal weakness has compounded her problem in dealing with him. Kate's message is quiet and clear, but it

completely reverses his own view of his life; his situation grew out of his own nature:

> "I wanted to take care of you - it was what I first wanted - and what you first consented to. I'd have done it, oh, I'd have done it, I'd have loved you and helped you and guarded you, and you'd have had no trouble, no bad blighting ruin, in all your easy, yes, just your quite jolly and comfortable life. I showed you and proved to you this - I brought it home to you, as I fondly fancied, and it made me believe it - you pledged me your honour and your faith. Then you turned and changed suddenly, from one day to another; everything altered, you broke your vows, you as good as told me you only wanted it off. You faced me with dislike and in fact tried not to face me at all; you behaved as if you hated me - you had seen a girl of great beauty, I admit, who made me a fright and a bore."(407)

Kate is right, whatever he may say at the time, and however hard it is for him to believe the truth. Her task is to introduce him to it slowly and tactfully, to let him come to an awareness of it himself if he can, and to preserve him intact as far as possible.

She appears before him while he is meditating on his bench. Because he is occupied with his own thoughts and fails to recognise her, she is enabled to observe him without his being immediately aware of it. It is her directly applied vision which makes him suspect her interest in him; her eyes are the eyes of a woman who engages him, who lives and loves, and who opens up these possibilities for him. She dresses in the manner of Nan Drury, wearing the "pretty, dotty, becoming veil"(390) characteristic of her former rival and carrying the same kind of umbrella. What he sees is "a'real' lady,"(389) a handsome woman of character, a "mature, qualified, important person"(390) looking at "the limp, undistinguished ... shabby man on the bench."(390) When he realises who she is he assumed she is now a "totally different person."(391) Age and experience have brought out features in her which he had not supposed she possessed. She has flourished, had a life, a career, and a history. He is impressed by her "deeply latent assurance."(392) It is no longer true that he is the man "to whom nothing worth more than tuppence could happen."(392) "In the grey desert of his

consciousness, the very earth had suddenly opened and flamed,"(392) in response to which he presses his hands to his face to "cover and guard it"(393) and to hide the shame of his rising perceptions. When he uncovers his face he freshly meets her eyes, to see as ladylike, authoritative, and refined, the woman whose "prime assault had kept him shuddering so long as a shudder was in him."(394) He cannot immediately take in the possibility that she is not the atrocious person upon whom his whole interpretation of himself and his life is built; he feels a need "to save the past, the hideous, real, unalterable past, exactly as she had been the cause of its being and the cause of his undergoing it."(394) But gradually he suffers "reduplications of consciousness,"(394) as he becomes aware that "she was understanding, she had understood, more things than all the years ... had given him an inkling of."(392) He makes no defence or attack, and tries merely to keep the conversation on the level of small talk in a vain attempt not to do what he thinks she might expect - to ask her what she wants. He leaves her to think out what she will do. "Nothing in fact more interesting than the way she might decide had ever happened to him."(397-98)

She invites him to tea at five at the Royal, the most conservative and exclusive hotel, and provides him with the social adventure of his life. It is also the beginning of a romantic venture, for when he arrives Kate is in the company of a Captain Roper, whom she asks to leave to show her preference for himself. This is the prelude to her revelation of her motives, to the announcement of her gift to him, and to the answer to Nan's question with regard to the law. He might certainly have defied her, for she had had no legal case. The proof of her love presents him with a "beautiful and dreadful truth that no abiding ache of his own could wholly falsify,"(409) "and from this, by a succession of links that fairly clicked to his ear as with their perfect fitting,"(409) he sees "the fate and the pain and the payment of others"(409) in relation to each other "in a great grim order."(409-10 He can only burst into tears, "weakly crying ... as he had cried to himself

in the hour of his youth when she had made him groundlessly fear."(411) She too can only "responsively"(411) wail, burying her own face in "the cushioned arm"(411) of the sofa for "the blind, the pitiful folly"(407) of it all.

Kate gives Herbert Dodd time "to look his extraordinary fortune a bit straighter in the face"(411) and "the fantastic fable, the tale of money in handfuls, that he seemed to have only to stand there and swallow and digest and feel himself full-fed by,"(412) or the "incredibly romantic"(412) fact of the "unextinguished and apparently inextinguishable charm by which he had held her."(412) It is a terrible discovery that so much has been so dreadfully suffered for nothing. During and after the night which follows Kate's revelations he wanders

> wild, incoherently ranging and throbbing ... since he lacked more than ever all other resort or refuge and had nowhere to carry, to deposit, or contractedly let loose and lock up, as it were, his swollen consciousness, which fairly split in twain the raw shell of his sordid little boarding-place. (412)

His shadow dances before him as he walks, shooting out and then contracting, presenting him with grotesque and shifting images of himself. He cannot lift a finger to save himself. While Kate makes no sign, he wonders whether he has not lost "what had hovered before him,"(413) a proposition which makes him grind his teeth so that the sound penetrates his own ear. He is used only to the logic whereby he should lose everything, but at this moment, now, it would be too terrible. Though he tries to hang on to his "remnant of faith in tremendous things still to come of their interview,"(414) he cannot formulate or initiate the idea. At length, a week later, Kate returns to "the bench of desolation" with the money, which she offers him without asking for anything in return. He tries to believe that he could save his honour by not accepting the money and indulging in some sublime, ideal flight. Kate leaves him "for kindness, free to choose."(416) Neither can move, and there is a high tension between them during a mute passage

in which he watches her watch him - "watch him for what he would do."(416)

> It yet somehow affected him at present, this attitude, as a gage of her knowing too - knowing, that is, that he wasn't really free, that this was the thinnest of vain parades, the poorest of hollow heroics, that his need, his solitude, his suffered wrong, his exhausted rancour, his foredoomed submission to any shown interest, all hung together too heavy on him to let the weak wings of his pride do more than vaguely tremble. (416-17)

Kate makes a number of further attempts to reach him, culminating in the moment when she presents him with the sealed envelope containing his treasure, an account at a London bank upon which he can draw. He knows that in accepting the money he is "bargaining away his right ever again to allude to the unforgettable,"(419) and also that her gift cancels the difference between them. The money represents the life that she has suffered in working to accumulate it for him. It shows him that she has been through things he could not even guess at and thus creates "an equality of experience"(419) between them. Even so, he cannot bring himself to say that he loves her or wants her. She tells him that she has been coming to him for the last ten years, and that she has meant, for long years "all I'm capable of meaning. I've meant so much that I can mean no more. So there it is."(421) But he still lets her wait, as if she were waiting for nothing, though he does not want her to go; and while their situation draws to its conclusion, he learns something of her life - how she has worked to save more than a hundred a year under the stress and hatred she felt at what she had so long been doing to him. However, she will not tell her story and refuses to hear his. They can never talk about the past, but she can take care of him now, now that he will need her. At this moment he finally acknowledges the logic of his life, which thereby completes itself. "The unforgettable and the unimaginative"(406) are truly "confoundingly mixed."(406)

> He waited a moment, dropping again on the seat. So, while she still stood, he looked up at her; with the sense somehow that there were too many things and that they were all together, terribly, irresistibly, doubtlessly, blessedly, in her eyes and her whole person; which thus affected him for the moment as more than he could bear. He leaned forward, dropping his elbows to his knees and pressing his head on

> his hands. So he stayed, saying nothing; only, with the sense of her own sustained, renewed and wonderful action, knowing that an arm had passed round him and that he was held. She was beside him on the bench of desolation. (424-25)

Herbert Dodd's story is one of the most painful that James ever conceived, especially as retrospectively, under the knowledge that Kate had only ever meant one thing for him, he might have been spared his fate and led nothing but a jolly, comfortable life with her. Yet his fear of her has been such that things could not have been otherwise. Dodd suffers reduplications of consciousness as he sees that Kate is open to a double interpretation. Everything in his life may be seen from a double perspective, not simply from the point of view of his earlier resentment. His belief in the justice of his own position turns out to have been a hollow sham, a fantasy that only temporarily sustained him. He sees that everything has been confoundingly complex and that he has misinterpreted Kate, but he does not see that it was his own ambivalence to her that led him into this error. It was the extent of his love and hatred for her which made him try to escape her. In essence her personality has only been of one kind, but the degree of her power makes her appear double in terms of her effects upon him. But she unquestionably always represents life, though originally life in too threatening a form to be confronted by him. He never ceases to shudder from her "prime assault"(394) upon him. Nàn, by contrast, was never a woman, but a pale imitation of his own character and weaknesses. She rises to a minimal level of awareness in bearing him a resentment for the injury he has done her, which is exactly the same awareness he has in respect of the injury Kate has done him, and which is the source of his long string of woes. Both women, in fact, suffer injury at Dodd's hands, just as he has suffered at theirs (and presumably at his mother's hands before that). In this sense there is an equality of suffering between Kate and Dodd which cancels out the past and makes it possible for them to envisage a new future on a different ground. But Kate and Dodd are not equal in terms of their capacity

for being, seeing or loving. He remains a shattered and fragmented personality, and can only be held together and supported by Kate's all-embracing love, which he will now need in order to survive at all.

Kate has been represented from the beginning as highly intelligent and supremely aware. She has gone on to suffer, grow, and change, and to become a mature woman capable of being self determining and taking the responsibility for her own life and her lover's. She is still supremely powerful, though his sense of her power is ameliorated by her gentleness, charity and pity. Her consciousness of him is not now interpreted to be threatening because of her complementary benign qualities, and because her awareness of him puts it in her power to help him in the way he wants, and be for him the woman whom he needs. But she has always lived and suffered in a direct relation to life and has an integrated personality. Now she can be the consciousness of his situation and make up to him all his losses. It is she alone who can save Dodd. It is the woman who was thought to disinherit him of his potentialities for life who alone can restore his treasure to him, and make it possible for him to assume his rightful inheritance in life. She alone holds the keys to his identity, his past and his future. She knows everything about him and does not need to be told the details of his suffering. Kate is portrayed as being benevolent, but her power is still such as to make comprehensible Dodd's original fear of her. She wished to bring him too much, to be everything for him and to do everything for him. It is in question neither that she could have loved anyone else, nor why she should love him. She simply does, and this is a donnée of her case.

It is always James's way to project a fabulously happy solution to the old problem of the injured lover. In this case the passive hero is suddenly given ten-times over all the things he thought he had forfeited forever. Dodd has suffered so badly and been so broken that his story asks

for a thematic resolution of this kind. In making over Kate's personality for Dodd James is creating an even more fabulous tale than in earlier stories where the redemptive woman was more purely a symbol of the woman from the far past, never the one who perpetrated the injury. On the one hand this story is more realistic and on the other more fantastic, than any other. The hero never rises to a full level of consciousness. He is spared the necessity to do so, and thereby the further depletion that such an excoriating knowledge would bring him, by the woman who knows all for him.

5. THE NOVELS: MAN

In the male-centred novels James further develops his theme of the injured lover whose fate hinges upon his frustrated experience of love and upon the tricks of fortune whereby he is disinherited of his right to life. His "dispossessed princes and wandering heirs"(AN,195) continue to be seen in relation to the characteristic parental figures (not necessarily their actual parents), the mother figure of dominant will whose assertion of her own force deprives her son of his, and the ineffectual father who is himself incapable of living and of assisting his son in the battle for life. The crucial instance, which is set against this background, is the confrontation of the male with varying forms of power represented by the woman, or women, who might lead him to life. The figure of the rival remains as an agent of the fate, though treated in a more perfunctory way in the novels than in the stories. In the stories, however, the hero's predicament is extreme and almost invariable totally fatal and there exists characteristically a tension between psychological and moral aspects of his situation. What the hero forfeits, the things he stands in want of, are often insufficiently counterbalanced by the benefits which accrue to his moral posture, and indeed his moral position is not infrequently diminished by a sense of the injuries sustained by his personality. One of the effects of the novels lies in the capacity for further elaboration of the problem by the presentation of varying aspects of the fate, various levels of appreciation, and different versions of division, bringing into prominence all kinds of possible relation between the self and the world and taking some of the emphasis away from the purely psychological determinants of the fate. The novel gives James a broader field than the story in which to explore the possible variations inherent within the pattern of life which he persistently represents.

Yet the quality of experience in the male-centred novels is closer to the short stories than that of the female-centred novels, largely because

the hero's psychology chiefly determines James's method of presentation of his subject in these works. But there are differences. The composite hero of the short stories contains opposing elements within his own nature and exists in terms of the tensions between them to which he falls victim. He is totally ambivalent to love and cannot reconcile his desires with his fear of the things which threaten him. In the novels, the hero is represented in terms of certain aspects of this composite psyche, while another male represents the opposing aspects originally contained within the one personality. Elements in the total situation of the hero are displaced and projected onto other characters, who are all in some way projections of the problem of the central hero. This method of presentation precludes the hero from ever understanding his fate. In terms of his own nature he can comprehend only certain aspects of his position. James himself represents the consciousness of the hero's situation, and the reader is faced with the necessity of having to draw together the disparate elements in order to arrive at a sense of a meaningful whole. This is a variation on the presentation of the hero in the short stories, since he is precluded by his own psychological blocks from arriving at a full knowledge of his fate - at least until the fate is so constituted that it is unalterable. Yet the male of these novels,in his struggle to arrive at comprehension, cannot be developed as a true centre of consciousness. He can only be represented as the centre of an action to which everything refers.

This kind of presentation means that the hero may be purged of some of the negative and reductive elements which are present in the personality of the composite hero, in consequence of which he can appear more heroic. But it also means that, as in the short stories, life and fate are still to some extent the authors of the pattern of events. The hero is still in the grips of his fate, still an unconscious victim of it, and exists on the level of acting out the elements in the fate. He cannot arrive at a redeeming consciousness of it, yet he can rise to the level

of living out his inner fantasy. In this sense, the hero becomes a man of imagination, one whose imagination (or in the cruder form, fantasy) is the source both of his heroism and his defeat. His personality is developed in terms of the desire of the romantic imagination to arrive at knowledge through "the things that can reach us only through the beautiful circuit and subterfuge of our thought and our desire," through the things "we never can directly know"(AN,32) as opposed to "the real" knowledge of the actual world. The terms of his quest for the union of the separate in a "world of cleft components"(NBS,176) is extended. His goal is not only the completion of personality through a love relation, but a liberation of spirit which would enable him to transcend the limitations of circumstances. Other terms than the purely psychological thus enter into the quest and "explain" the failure.

The female still represents the life force in its wonderful and terrible capacities. She is the principle of the other against which the male must define himself. He must know himself in relation to her in order to comprehend himself. The capacity of the female to stand in direct relation to life is expanded to include more specifically her relation to the world and to the traditions of culture and civilization. Her power, represented largely in her sexual aggressiveness or inversely in her capacity to relinquish her own will, is increased to include many versions of "otherness". The male develops two ways of loving, which correspond to the two types of female represented and the two versions of experience discovered. He may develop a sacred love for the idealized type whom he can love imaginatively, who is the woman latent in his imagination, or he may develop an erotic love for the daemonic type whom he would like to love in the ordinary way but who is too threatening to allow this kind of love to come to fruition.

Both types generally represent a frustrated possibility for the hero and his spiritual brother, yet there is a way in which the male may

develop his own sacred spark of fire. His problem is not only his love-relation to woman but his assimilation within his own nature of the feminine in culture. He can rise to his estate, becoming a noble and civilized man of the world, by proving his capacity to absorb into himself the values in culture which the female has represented. He may become a potential redeemer in so far as he develops his capacity to love generously and sacrifice his own personal interests. By arming himself with some professional skill or art, he may develop his own will and his capacity to live in terms of the appreciation of life. In this way he may potentially remake himself and make over his fate, developing a greater capacity for heroism than consists in the mere acceptance of his fate. Through his relation to ultimate values, he too may live in the shadow of the ideal and exemplify deeply human virtues.

The problem for the male, however, is not only his relation to the feminine and his self-definition in terms of something external to himself which represents a different inner principle, but also his relation to his own inner life. The division in the male which results in his ambivalence to love is characteristically treated as a tension within him. In the division of the hero into two figures who represent opposing aspects of his nature James reveals a further consequence of his love injury. For the hero and his spiritual counterpart represent either the superego or the id. The ego is therefore lacking as a cohesive principle within the personality. These aspects of the self appear in these novels as free floating qualities which are incapable of being drawn together. It is only in the case of Hyacinth Robinson in <u>The Princess Casamassima</u> that the hero is represented as divided within himself, but even here the pressure which lacerates his personality gives him a double identity derived from the blood of his mother and the spirit of his father in which the resulting death grapple provides an explosive force which leads him to suicide. These two aspects of himself exist in a constant battle and

cannot be integrated.

There is a further division in the relation of these male figures to the world, for they are all at odds with it in some sense. They are either Americans in Europe or Europeans in America and are fatally disconnected from their social environment. In Hyacinth Robinson's case he is separated from tradition and culture because of the stigma of his birth and social origins as well as being a "Frenchman" at odds with English society. While this division further extends the range of the hero's experience of being separated from the goals of his desire James also uses the American-European contrast to illustrate the particular plight of the American, born the victim of fatal disconnections. He finds in the European world rich types, settled forms of behaviour, dense surfaces, clear values and a rich medium of expression. Although clearly interested as a social historian in the contrast of manners and traditions between Europe and America, he invariably uses the details he observes in his Europeans in order to heighten his presentation of the love fate suffered by his American heroes. He represents in other forms more dominant mother figures, and further illustrations of the duality of female types, rival figures and ineffectual fathers. His presentation of his Europeans conforms to the psychological components he persistently represents as operative in the love-fate.

Mother figures are dominant in all the novels, and the female, even where she is represented as being an equal victim of a perverse fate (and therefore in some sense as the counterpart of the male), is still largely a male projection. As a projection of the other, however, her personality is posited on different principles from that of the male, and a different set of explanations may be used to account for her fate where she suffers one. Her fate is largely understood in relation to social, cultural and historical forces and accidents of fortune which endow her with everything or deprive her of everything. The circumstances which engineer her losses are infinitely complex and less related to an internal sense of division.

But it is only the daemonic woman of amoral psychic energy who really gets what she wants, for the woman of passion herself may lose her lover. Also the woman of erratic will may deplete herself in fulfilling the nature of her passions. James is still concerned with the relation between love and power and invests his female characters with the power his heroes lack. Partly because she exists primarily as a function of the male personality, she is not represented in these novels as being eminently aware of her situation.

As in the case of the short stories, because the hero in particular lacks comprehension of his fate and is prevented by James's method of presentation of him from ever arriving at it, it is inevitable that James himself provides the consciousness of their situation. It is his conception of his theme which lies behind these novels and implicitly provides them with their coherence. He must "borrow his motive" from life, but his interest as an artist "resides in the strong consciousness of his seeing all for himself."(AN,122)

> He has to borrow his motive, which is certainly half the battle; and this motive is his ground, his site and his foundation. But after that he only lends and gives, only builds and piles high, lays together the blocks quarried in the deeps of his imagination and on his personal premises. He thus remains all the while in intimate commerce with his motive, and can say to himself - what really more than anything else inflames and sustains him - that he alone has the secret of the particular case, he alone can measure the truth of the direction to be taken by his developed data. There can be for him, evidently, only one logic for these things; there can be for him only one truth and one direction - the quarter in which his subject most completely expresses itself. The careful ascertainment of how it shall do so, and the art of guiding it with consequent authority - since this sense of 'authority' is for the master-builder the treasure of treasures, or at least the joy of joys - renews in the modern alchemist something like the old dream of the secret of life. (AN,122-23)

In texture, Roderick Hudson* (1875) is the closest of the male centred novels to the short stories. It experiments with the technique developed there of presenting a situation through the eyes of an observer. The technique clearly suits the shorter fiction better, but the extended treatment made possible by the novel form allows the observer, Rowland Mallet, to have a story of his own as well as reflecting that of his friend, Roderick Hudson. The two stories reinforce each other in so far as both men are disinherited heirs of life who confront walls of the mind and of external circumstances that prevent them from enjoying personal happiness and marrying the woman of their choice. The statue which brings the two men together, the earliest example of Roderick's artistic promise, symbolically represents the desire for life common to both men.

> The statuette, in bronze, something more than two feet high, represented a naked youth drinking from a gourd. The attitude was perfectly simple. The lad was squarely planted on his feet, with his legs a little apart; his back was slightly hollowed, his head thrown back; his hands were raised to support the rustic cup. There was a loosened fillet of wild flowers about his head, and his eyes, under their dropped lids, looked straight into the cup. One the base was scratched the Greek word.... Thirst. The figure might have been some beautiful youth of ancient fable - Hylas or Narcissus, Paris or Endymion. Its beauty was the beauty of natural movement; nothing had been sought to be represented but the perfection of an attitude. This had been attentively studied - it was exquisitely rendered. (33-34)

One of the differences between the two men is that Roderick represents the life force, passion, will and creative energy. (The possession of this power makes him an unusual male figure for James.) Rowland, who has money and no capacity for life, would like to be Roderick, and in part envies his divine facility. He offers him the opportunity to study and develop his talent in Europe in part as a means of establishing his own claim to fame and immortality, or at least to the distinction of connoisseurship, through sponsoring the potentially great American artist. Under the

* Roderick Hudson, 1875 text in Penguin Books, Baltimore, 1969.

access of a wave of practical power suddenly bestowed upon him by the opening up of possibilities, Roderick engages himself secretly to Mary Garland on the eve of his departure for Rome. In Rome he falls in love with Christina Light, "the most beautiful girl in Europe,"(146) who at first serves as an inspiration for his art. He grows to hate Mary, the woman he can marry, and pursues Christina, a woman whom he cannot have. It is perfectly clear that it is built into Christina's fate to be sold on the marriage market to the highest bidder by her fortune-seeking mother, and Roderick's rival is a man of vast and unencumbered property, Prince Casamassima. Though he is a perfunctory figure in the novel, he is nevertheless an invincible rival, who settles Roderick's fate. The hero is deprived of his ground of existence and consequently dies; love and inspiration are necessary for both life and creation. But it is essentially his frustrated love experience, not his incapacity to create, which proves him to be a failure. His fund of energy is doomed to depletion in the active living-out and pursuit of his passion, especially at the rate at which he lives. The inevitability of his death arises also from the fact that he is consumed by the passionate devotion of others who desire to possess him. The efforts of his mother, Mary Garland, and Rowland to press their individual claims, each in itself sufficiently restrictive and limiting, combine at his moment of maximum crisis, and their concerted force snaps his cord of life. He falls literally and symbolically from the great height of his potentialities to founder on the rocks of impossibility.

Behind this story lies the resentment of the overpossessed child whose will to live is impaired by, and who desires to be liberated from, the destructive bonds of a mother's love. Roderick was originally his mother's "curled darling,"(48) the favourite son who got "the silver mug and the biggest piece of pudding."(48) His situation is exacerbated by the death of his elder brother in the war. This event makes Mrs. Hudson think she had not loved Stephen enough, and makes her love her younger son all the

more. Since Stephen was a steady boy and would have brought in a steady income to the home, Roderick finds that more is expected of him. Mrs. Hudson, "brooding night and day on her bereavement, has come to fix her ideal"(48) on the things Stephen would have done for her, which she demands Roderick shall make up for. He must be himself and his brother too in relation to her. When Rowland discovers him, Roderick is "tethered to the law, like a browsing goat to a stake."(49) This is the profession of his mother's family, but she is also the moral lawgiver of Northampton, the exocentric Puritan mother who lives for her son and submerges his personality in her own.

It is this situation which explains his perverse need to bind himself to the kind of attachment he wishes to escape from by engaging himself to Mary before he leaves America. He argues that "a man is unnaturally selfish"(74) unless he works "for someone else than himself,"(74) and that he needs a woman to operate as an incentive. His offer also arises from an unconscious overflow of expansive feelings. He felt "an extraordinary desire to tell some woman I adored her."(73) However, Mary is a woman precisely in his mother's mould, a little Puritan of apparent gentleness which masks her "great personal force."(56) Her latent power is to some extent manifested as the story progresses and she reveals herself to be a "grimly devoted little creature"(75) of undying passion, who will love Roderick beyond the grave and in spite of his treatment of her. The essential ambivalence which underlies his engagement is enhanced by its secrecy, which allows him to court Christina without breaking with Mary, and without arriving at an operative choice in either case.

With his apparent liberation from domestic bonds back home and the expansion of his opportunities for development in Europe, Roderick steps "without faltering into his birthright,"(77) spending his money with the liberality characteristic of his aristocratic nature, and squandering

his resources "as lavishly as a young heir who has just won an obstructive lawsuit."(77) He reveals his potentiality to be "a natural man of the world,"(78) and to possess "intuitively"(78) "the historic consciousness".(78) He gives "a splendid account of himself",(77) quite justifying Rowland's confidence in him. He changes roles with Rowland in that he becomes "the accredited fountain of criticism."(78) He rises to a climactic point when he takes on the character of the hero of the feast displaying his powers to his fellow artists and friends. What he seeks to represent in art is always the emotional source of his life, his desire to attain the wonderful terrible awe-inspiring goddess of beauty. Christina is latent in his imagination before he meets her, and she will inevitably serve as the inspiration for the creation of marbles "expressing the human type in superhuman purity,"(95) evoking "a kind of religious awe,"(95) "a thrill of mysterious terror"(95) in the "passionate beating"(95) of the heart of the observer. When Christina marries, Roderick feels as if the perfect statue had suddenly cracked and turned hideous. In that moment she dies for him, and his own life and work are finished. The flaw in human nature cannot be patched, and the disparities in a "world of cleft components"(NSB,178) cannot be conjoined.

The possibility of a romantic union with Christina is always a fantasy, but it is a completely compelling one. Christina verifies his sense of himself as "a great man"(320) worthy of a great passion, and she looks upon him as redeeming her from being ground in the conventional mill of marriage to a third-rate talent. She would be saved from the evils which surround her if she loved a man she could "unrestrictedly admire,"(181) who is "large in character, great in talent,"(181) "strong in will,"(182) and possessed of "the sacred fire."(182)

> In such a man as that, I say, one's weary imagination at last may rest; or it may wander if it will, yet never need to wander far from the deeps where one's heart is anchored.... I should delight in it with a generosity which would do something towards the remission of my sins.(182)

Likewise, Roderick's imagination would rest in the attainment of the woman of his dreams, who would put him in touch with life and prove a source of unlimited energy and inspiration for his art. She does not exist for him in any other dimension, and he is incapable of reflecting about her. For the more conscious male, Rowland, she definitely represents a danger, and indeed she has been educated by her mother to emasculate the male. Mrs. Light is like a huge spider to which the male serves as an appendage at his peril. Mr. Light drowned three years after their marriage. Her lover, Savage, died in an asylum, and the Cavaliere, the unacknowledged father of Christina, follows her about in the capacity of a serving man, daily depleted of his energies by her.

Roderick is unconscious of the dangers of the feminine will, in both Christina and Mary, until it is too late. The idea of marriage to Christina represents momentarily and in fantasy a harmonious union of beings of a similar kind, who both have a great fund of life and passion. At the height of Roderick's dream, when he believes that Christina has renounced the Prince for himself, and that everything is his, Rowland finds him in a state of ecstasy. He is lying on a divan in a white dressing gown, in a dark cool atmosphere surrounded by the fragrance of flowers, looking like "a Buddhist in an intellectual swoon, whose perception should be slowly ebbing back to temporal matters."(265) But at this moment, unbeknown to him, Christina is already married, and life's feast is for him a Barmecide banquet. When he learns the truth, he sees her as a contradictory woman who has tricked him out of his happiness by encouraging him to hope and then dealing him his death blow. Roderick is rendered too "angry, savage, disappointed"(284) and "miserable"(284) a man to think of anything else but expressing his "helpless rage and grief and shame."(284) He was once "a mighty fellow"(284) and now has nothing "to be proud of,"(284) and he wants everyone to "know why I have gone to the dogs."(287)

He is doomed from the beginning to be the victim of women, unconsciously lending himself to his fate, which is unalterable and inevitable. He has had a prevision of his death in a fantasy that when the hour should strike he would simply cease to exist: "I shall disappear, dissolve, be carried off in a cloud."(164) His prevision of this destiny perpetually swims before his eyes until it is enacted. As an unconscious hero, Roderick is in the grips of his own nature, which he can only accept. He is precluded from understanding it and from rising above it. He remains a victim of it.

Rowland, the observer of Roderick's tragic fate in love, is preserved by his distance from any awe-inspiring passion. However, he is in the position of a man who falls in love, albeit theoretically, with a perfect woman who proves unattainable because she has already pledged her affections to a rival. Rowland meets her in consequence of meeting Roderick, and he wonders "why fate should have condemned him to make the acquaintance of a girl whom he would make a sacrifice to know better, just as he was leaving the country for years."(66) The few remarks Roderick has made about her serve to make her intolerably interesting, and it is not until they are embarked on the ship that Rowland learns of his secret engagement to her. Then he feels "that fortune had played him an elaborately devised trick,"(74) by presenting him with a "singularly sympathetic comrade"(74) and then turning him into a rival who delivers him "a thumping blow in mid-chest"(74) and puts an end to his possibilities of happiness. Although Rowland appears incapable of love in any real or full sense, he does remain attached to Mary, though without breathing a word of his feelings to her. It becomes a continuous torture to feel himself cruelly defrauded by Roderick's possession of her despite his rejection of her. He is not without a desire to be revenged on the man who has her love and proves unworthy of it by failing to match it. His fingers itch to handle the forbidden fruit, and he sustains himself by the hope that Roderick will somehow be removed from the picture.

He likes to believe that Mary "looked to him to transmute her discontent"(315) at Roderick's rejection. But at the end he is forced to recognise her undiminished passion for Roderick, to which she would wholly sacrifice himself. He is thereby deprived of his future.

Rowland is from the beginning disinherited of his rightful riches. He is the son of a shrewd and silent man, "a chip of the primal Puritan block,"(28) who has made a fortune by independent labour and makes sure that his son will not have anything easily. He brings him up as if he were a poor boy, denying him all pleasures and privileges, taking out on the boy his own "extreme compunction at having made a fortune."(30) Rowland inherits nothing whatever that was to make his life easy. When Jonas Mallet dies and leaves part of his fortune away, Rowland recovers it by suit, but partly because it was left to an institution that would not honour the gift. He immediately gives it away to another body in an exercise of charitable virtue, for he has been brought up with a strict sense of conscience, duty and responsibility. He tries to reject his father's domination by becoming a connoisseur of art and a man of aesthetic pleasure, but he has been too subject to his rigid and inconsistent will to escape the pattern. He imitates his role in relation to Roderick, becoming the figure of paternal authority, reason and rigid morality.

Rowland is also the overpossessed son of a mother who seductively binds him to her. "If the lad had not been turned to stone himself {by his father's icy smiles and stony frowns} it was because nature had blessed him with a well of vivifying waters"(28) which his mother nurtures. She is an "intensely gentle"(31) and "vivid presence,"(31) but her motive in life is her passion for her son, her compensation for the "immitigable error"(31) of an unhappy marriage she has spent her life in trying to confront. She is ill, and Rowland lives in fear of losing her. He discovers she is a "saint"(31) before she dies, when she gives him the key to her "secluded precint,"(31) telling him then that her only pleasure has been derived

from cultivating "a little private plot of sentiment"(31) for himself. Rowland does not escape her influence, and there is something of the possessiveness of the maternal passion in his love for Roderick. Indeed, Roderick complains of feeling crippled by his too minute attention and overly high expectations.

Rowland repeats the emotional patterns of behaviour learned in the past from his parents' manner of handling life. At the same time, his frustrated love experience repeats the original pattern laid down in his earliest experience of love. Jonas Mallet provides the original pattern of the invincible rival who possesses the exquisite woman whom he proves unworthy of, and Mrs. Mallet is herself the model for the perfect and suffering beloved woman who is unattainable.

Both Rowland and Roderick are fated to be barred from happiness, but the man of passion is doomed to extinction, while the man of reason, although he expends his moral energy, saves enough of himself from immersion in experience to survive. It is a function of Rowland's role as observer that he is able to some extent to reflect upon experience and maintain his distance from the field of action, just as it is a corollary of Roderick's situation as the hero of the novel to act out the necessities of his own nature and to be precluded from thinking about his experience. Yet it is a curious distribution of qualities that James attempts in the case of Rowland , investing him with the moral qualities of his characteristic hero but preventing him from being finely moral by depriving him of imagination. His effect on Roderick is analogous to that of the strong woman of great conscience and daemonic will, who acts, as she supposes, in the best interests of her men and is incapable of perceiving the disastrous effects of her assertion of will upon the life capacities of the men who fall victim to it. He constantly limits Roderick's freedom and watches over him to the extent of depriving him of the capacity to

create. His ostensibly heroic qualities as a man of moral passion with a constitutional tendency to magnanimous interpretations and a capacity for sacrifice (especially in the circumstances of his holding the purse strings and having it in his power to take vindictive reprisals) are severely qualified by his incapacity to comprehend his own motives or to perceive the consequences of his own actions. He cannot become fully heroic and has no means of making over his own losses.

Roderick, on the other hand, is a fully tragic character, possessed of great qualities and fatal flaws which together with the accidents of fortune impel his final catastrophe. His "divine facility"(86) makes him enviable but also helpless - "passive in the clutch of his temperament."(158) Rowland sees that his "genius" is priceless, inspired and divine, yet at the same time, capricious, cruel and sinister. It is as if Nature had "given him his faculty out of hand and bidden him be hanged with it."(158) He is a minimal version of the man of imagination whose imagination is the source of his heroism and his defeat. He is the victim of his own nature and the sport of his own passions. What he eminently reveals is that the capacity to live imaginatively and to "transmute all his impressions into production"(80) arises out of unconscious fantasy at the base of which lie raw passions, energy, force and will. Roderick lives too much on the level of dream to acquire the detachment necessary either for art or for a complete understanding of life. He finds "there are all kinds of indefinable currents moving to and fro between one's will and one's inclinations,"(109) and "the whole matter of genius"(162) is experienced as a mystery. "It bloweth where it listeth and we know nothing of its mechanism."(163) What is clear, however, is that "the will is destiny,"(109) and while the source of success may be, as Rowland suggests, "only passionate effort,"(75) the vagaries of the will reveal that it cannot merely be harnessed according to rational principles.

Roderick's will is destined to snap like a twig because he is

deprived of his fund of life (and therefore his ability to create) by women who deplete him, seek to live through him, and deny him his ground of existence either through overpossession or rejection. His capacity to create is dependent upon his relation to women, particularly Christina, who is the one woman who could be his inspiration. Yet this relation threatens his existence. The relation between the artist's creativity and his fate in love is extended by Roderick's contrast with two other artist figures, the Italian, Gloriani, and the American, Sam Singleton. Gloriani squanders his creative energies on easy living and keeping a mistress. He can only survive by corrupting his capacities and inventing ingenious tricks to catch the curiosity of the public so that they will buy his works. Sam Singleton, on the other hand, although a small watercolourist, becomes a giant because he has no relation with a woman. He can save, bank and hoard his energies, which he respects and reveres. This enables him to accrete impressions and sustain his artistic endeavours without expending himself. There is a basic quantum of life energy upon which the artist can draw. James implicitly supports Rowland's view of the matter, for Rowland regards Roderick as playing a dangerous game with his facility and sees Christina as a pernicious influence in this regard. Yet Roderick's passion is the source of his heroism and his defeat.

In the short stories the division of qualities between the hero and his successful rival is quite unequal. The hero is often totally weak, and the rival seems to be his anti-type and totally strong. It represents a new departure and makes for a more interesting division of qualities that neither of the two men here is totally strong or totally weak. Each has some positive and negative qualities, some superiority and some inferiority. However, both derive characteristics from the general psychological constitution of the composite hero, and they do not reflect the division between the hero and his anti-type. The conflict which resides deeply within the

nature of the hero gives rise to two men, who represent the opposing tendencies within the original nature. What is distinctive about the division is that Rowland represents the superego, the authority of the male conscience and the principle of rationality, while Roderick represents the id, the principle of pleasure, and the sensual life. There is no central ego, no coherent self, and no reality principle present. There can be no centre of awareness: both men represent aspects of the self and neither is complete in himself. They exist in terms of free-floating qualities that are essentially in opposition, and neither in terms of his own nature can understand the other. One of the most interesting features of the novel, supervening upon the situation of the love fate but also related to it, is the development of this opposition between the two men. It is a kind of dialogue between body and soul or passion and conscience, elements in the self which exist in mortal combat in a love-hate relation. This suggests why Rowland is the catalyst of Roderick's catastrophe, for it is after their critical debate that Roderick is impelled to wander into the Alpine mists and meet his death. Conscience cannot allow passion freedom of expression, though in killing it off instinctual life is destroyed and only the shell of a person remains. This is the price Rowland pays for winning the contest.

On meeting Roderick, Rowland is impressed with his "nervous force"(37) and sees "enough life in his eye to furnish an immortality."(37) He has a "boyish unconsciousness"(38) together with a "manly shrewdness."(38) Though the elements within his nature are hopelessly disconnected, and he has nothing to help him to self-knowledge, he has the beautiful, supple, restless quality of a "bright-eyed animal,"(42) the vitality of exuberant and confident youth. He excites Rowland, takes possession of his mind, and meets his need for an imaginative life. It is part of Roderick's triumph to make people care about him, and he has an ineffable charm that

convinces and inspires faith. Rowland himself lacks "the simple sensuous confident relish of pleasure."(32) He has an "uncomfortably sensitive conscience"(23) and is an "awkward mixture of moral and aesthetic curiosity."(32) He yields Nature a meagre interest on her investment. To his credit it is an incorruptible modesty in the assessment of what he personally lacks, as well as a growing conception of what he himself fails of "in action"(84) and misses "in possession"(84) in contrast with the creative power of the artist and the "accepted suitor."(130) Yet his desire to let Roderick "run his course"(84) and "play his cards"(84) is in part a process of self-justification that will vindicate his own posture. And he experiments in life by living Roderick's intellectual life "as well as his own,"(76) thus gaining a voyeuristic glimpse of the imperious passions he shrinks from indulging in himself. Rome, the city which illustrates the vanity of human wishes, depresses Rowland because it makes him sensible of the fact that his horizon is limited "by a magic circle,"(128) mortality, and that there is nothing in his consciousness that is not "foredoomed to moulder and crumble."(128) What he seeks in life can be more importantly provided by Roderick than by any woman, and he pursues the qualities of masculine power and vitality to the detriment of the artist through whom he tries to live. When Roderick dies, his occupation in life is gone, and he himself is reduced to a kind of nullity.

It is the unresolved rivalry with Roderick that overturns Rowland's presentation of himself as the artist's guardian angel, the benefactor who is the dupe of his own generosity and perverse benevolence. He thinks his affections are stronger than his personal resentment, and that his faith in his friend is greater than his doubt, and that his role is that of the attendant who waits on the sidelines to pick up the pieces when Roderick shall fall. But he constantly destroys the artist's freedom of being and creation. Roderick resents the fact that Rowland's range of vision should place a limit on his own actions. This applies not only to his function as

sponsor who is looking to get something back for his money and forming perpetual expactations. It applies also to his interference with Roderick's emotional life. He informs Christina of Roderick's earlier engagement and tries to imbue her with the heroism necessary to sacrifice her own interests in her lover. As Roderick says, Rowland demands imaginative creation and denies him the things of the imagination. He feels he ought to be allowed freedom of action "to find his material where fancy leads."(159) Rowland ties him by as short a rope as his own mother had previously done. Roderick's problem essentially relates to the necessity for freedom, autonomy and independence - the only conditions under which the will can survive and develop, though freedom in itself may be disastrous. Rowland in seeking to impose a necessary order of discipline provokes Roderick into an exaggerated wilfulness, while at the same time depriving him of his will and his freedom by his excessive domination of him. In getting Mrs. Hudson and Mary Garland across from America, Rowland increases the pressures under which Roderick is submerged. The artist knows he is in danger of dying of too much attention. Even Rowland is subject to a vision of himself as tempted by the devil to destroy Roderick. He looks at this consciously only as an impulse to harm Roderick's relationship with Mary in order to win her himself, and naturally does not act on this impulse. But the two men are not simply in competition for the woman, for money (or a means of existence), or for fame (the capacity to become something in the world). They are in competition for existence itself.

It is characteristic for rivals within a bond, as the short stories reveal, to be in the position of wanting the same things in circumstances in which there must be a winner and a loser, but this is an extreme illustration of what such rivalry amounts to. The rivalry between the two men becomes in a sense more important than their independent relations to the women as the representatives of life, although the triangular love situation is the epitome of their struggle. The contest is really on a cruder level

in which the battle for survival precedes the capacity to win a woman and live in a more complete sense. There is some truth in Christina's assertion that Roderick does not care for either herself or Mary, for the women are in the case of both men symbols and functions of their personalities. As neither man is a complete self, neither could wholly pursue a woman with an undivided intention. And both do express ambivalence toward love.

In their last debate Rowland complains of "the perfect exclusiveness"(288) of Roderick's emotions, which prevent him from seeing himself "as part of a whole"(288) and render him simply "the clear-cut, sharp-edged, isolated individual , rejoicing or raging, as the case might be, but needing in any case absolutely to affirm himself."(288) But it is his revelation to Roderick of the partiality of his vision which condemns him as a failed artist in his own eyes and makes him say he is ready to shut up shop. Roderick is a man it is impossible to judge rationally. Rowland cannot keep him in focus. He is more conscious of his friend's predicament than he is of his own relation to it, and although he tries to act magnanimously in coming to the aid of "a young man of genius standing helpless and hopeless for want of capital,"(53) he meddles to no advantage. Thus he also stands for a partial awareness, which reduces his capacity for heroism and is fundamentally an aspect of an isolated individual who exists in terms of his own needs. The conflict and tension between the two men is fatal to both and inhibits their possibilities of life and growth.

The whole action is overlooked by Cecelia, the relative of Rowland who introduced him to Roderick, and she represents the possibility of a coherent consciousness. Her absent eye is a kind of presence in the novel. Made ineffective by her distance from the action, she is nevertheless a reference point of the action, the only person capable of seeing both men as they are and of foreseeing the tragedy as a consequence of her vision. She exposes the ambiguity of Rowland's motives and prepares him to see what

he cannot himself grasp intuitively. She is amazed at his temerity in "disturbing so much living security in the interests of a faraway fantastic hypothesis,"(64) perceiving that the venture may bode the young man no good. While she has only a tangential role in the action, she indicates the capacity of the female to be supremely conscious in a way which threatens the male. He, although he wishes to arrive at an understanding of things, protects himself at the same time by emotional barriers which block him from arriving at knowledge. Therefore, even when she is suspect to Rowland, who expresses more of the fear of passion as Roderick expresses more of the desire for it, and who believes that she has some personal interest at stake in wanting to prevent Roderick's departure (he is obviously a social resource to her in the dull conditions of Northampton). However, this is more the result of Rowland's projected fear of the female than it is a reflection of the truth.

The presentation of the two central women is placed largely in Rowland's hands, not only because he is the observer but because he is more sensitive than Roderick to the terribly dangerous and mixed world in which the female operates. What is evident to an unusual degree in this book is that all the women, despite their differences of personality, emerge as having the same potentially destructive effect on the male. The case of the mother is underlined by Mary Garland, who is formed in her spiritual likeness. Mary is an utterly uncompelling character who seems gentle, inexpressive and capable of a selfless devotion, but the extent of her investment in Roderick overturns this appearance to become its opposite, a terrifying example of a passion to possess which throttles and engulfs the object of its desires. Although her will is disguised by her moral posture, it eventually becomes wholly obvious and is therefore a force against which the men can in some measure arm themselves for defence. Christina, on the other hand, who is obviously sexually agressive, is at once seen by Rowland to be of an unsafe, complex, wilful and passionate nature, one who might easily

engulf a too confiding spirit in the eddies of her capricious temper. But her will is erratic, so that the angle of her next attack is never clear, and the male is infinitely more vulnerable to her. In this respect Christina is a variation on James's customary presentation of the female as the embodiment of the life force and the will to exist.

In herself Christina is eminently a victim of circumstances. Her passionate assertion of herself is to be understood in the context of her own deprivation of autonomy and liberty of action. But there is no coherent self in her capable of integrating her disparate passions and conflicting impulses, though she is supremely aware of her fate. She is so conscious of the way in which other people see her, in consequence of her mother's undisguised social presentation of her as a beauty to trap a man of fortune into marriage, that she attempts to create fictions for herself in order to escape the image that is thrust upon her. She experiments with roles in a dramatic presentation of herself, as if she were always acting with her eye on how her spectators react to her performance. She can imagine anything - committing suicide, becoming a nun, imitating the behaviour of the exemplary woman - anything that would make her feel better about herself and enable her to see herself as better than other people. For she has the intense pride of great beauty and experiences the anguish and humiliation of discovering that her own nature is flawed - notably by the secret of her illegitimate birth, which her mother hangs over her head like a sword of Damocles to force her into marriage with the Prince.

Christina, however, is not presented sympathetically. She remains the projection of a fearful male who has made an attempt to comprehend the nature of a wilful erratic female constructed on principles too different from his own to be comprehensible by him. She is a product of the world, corrupted by the world, and given over to the devil. There is no escape for her from this fate, no possibility of transforming it through trying to

adopt romantic positions. From the male point of view she exemplifies the accretions of history which overwhelm him with a sense of the atrocities perpetrated on others in the name of some ideal. She does not represent the possibilities of extension through cultivation, culture, and civilization. It is only her beauty which is wonderful. And in her passion and her unrepressed imaginative capacity to become anything she appeals to the artist, for her infinite variety and extraordinary energy present him with the life and the experience of life necessary as the materials of his art.

Roderick's artistic temperament gives him a means of appreciating her, yet her passion would in reality destroy him rather than complete his personality. If the capacity of the artist to develop an imaginative life gives him on the one hand a means of appreciating Christina, on the other hand it renders him a man more susceptible than ever to the power of a woman. The novel can be seen as an extension of the situation presented in Benvolio: the terms of enquiry into the love fate, and into the fate of the artist who epitomises the problem, are isolated, expanded and viewed in further dimensions. The major area of expansion is in the development of the inner conflict of the artist-hero of the story, whose opposing qualities are dramatically enacted in the novel through two different characters who are embattled until death. The outcomes are not dissimilar in so far as the passional element is in both works destroyed for the sake of mere survival, and the thinking mind, which survives at the expense of living in the ordinary sense, is reduced because it no longer exists in relation to life, instinct, and spontaneous passion. In this case the hero's divided allegiance between two women of opposite personality types leads to the actual death of the artist. The division he experiences is further emphasized by the division in his worlds, for Roderick is caught between Northampton and Rome. He retains a relation to his homeland which puts him

at odds with the European world, and, although he tries to shuffle off this relation he cannot assume his inheritance in the larger world partly because of it. The seeds of his fate lie both within his own nature and in the world at large.

The American* (1877) essentially presents the case of a hero who falls victim to a perverse fate in love and permanently forfeits his natural right to love and happiness. Christopher Newman is a man of some imagination and feeling who suffers a moral revolution against the practices of business and conceives of the romantic project of uniting himself to a woman who will give meaning and purpose to his life, fulfil his desires, and complete his personality. He leaves America for Europe, and his project receives definition when, standing before Veronese's picture of the Marriage Feast of Cana, which symbolically represents what he seeks, he meets an American friend, Mr. Tristram, whose wife engineers his introduction to the woman of his dreams, Claire de Cintré. She belongs to a family of such ancient distinction - her people are "all mounted upon stilts a mile high, and with pedigrees long in proportion,"[38] "the skim of the milk of the old noblesse"[38] - that she is virtually unapproachable. Newman admits no obstacles and courts her in the face of her family's disapproval. His great triumph is that he pleases her despite the fact that for her an escape from the determining conditions of her own fate is unbelievable. She accepts him, and for some ten days everything in the world seems his. At the climactic point of his triumph, the fête given by her family to mark his forthcoming marriage, a portent of disaster is introduced in the figure of a merely perfunctory rival, a young man of good birth who is himself afraid of women

* The American, 1879 text in Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1962.

but who would be favoured by the family. Claire immediately afterwards leaves for their country estate, and his cup of life is taken away from him at the moment when it seemed full and within his grasp. She subsequently enters a Carmelite convent, and he is literally confronted by "a high-shouldered blank wall"(363) which separates him from her forever, condemning them both to a future in which the days will pile themselves up "like the huge immovable slab of a tomb."(363)

Newman does not understand what happens to him. It seems to him merely an arbitrary and unjust stroke of fate. As such, it does not seem to reflect injuriously upon his own nature and is not an essentially diminishing experience. And he proves his heroism by the manner in which he accepts his fate: for he is put in possession of scandalous information about Claire's family, which he could use to vindictive advantage, and he fails to do so. He would be ashamed to express his resentment at the cost of hurting the family, though James is not prepared to say "whether it was Christian charity or unregenerate good nature - what it was, in the background of his soul."(364) Having proven his nobility and his essential human worth, he becomes one of the few Jamesian heroes whose goodness is an "antidote to oppressive secrets."(168) His material loss definitely serves toward his spiritual gain, despite the fact that he is precluded from a redemptive awareness of his situation. It may be that the swing of his emotional pendulum will return him to his business career but that is beyond the confines of the story. So far as the story is concerned, his fate hinges upon his frustrated experience in love.

This as it stands might well be the subject of a short story as James would have presented it, except that there is nothing within Newman's nature which corresponds to the fate which is externally imposed upon him. The situation is treated as if the social determinants were absolute, as James suggests in a letter to Howells:

> Mme de C. couldn't have lived in New York, depend upon it; and Newman, after his marriage (or rather she, after it) couldn't have dwelt in France. (CH, 43)

But James's choice of a social barrier actually underlines the psychological elements in the situation, which become comprehensible in the light of the novel at large. James projects the characteristic elements in the life of his composite hero into the larger situation, so that the Europeans highlight the problem in relation to love experienced by the American hero. The whole is set out in displaced component parts which together operate as the determining conditions of the hero's fate, and the emotional and spiritual characteristics of the hero are divided between Newman and his spiritual brother, Valentin de Bellegarde.

The conflict of emotions of attraction and repulsion on the part of an ambivalent lover toward a woman who may have a benign or threatening influence upon him is not treated as an internal conflict. It is dramatically enacted between the hero and his male counterpart in the pursuit of different women of opposing natures. To Newman is given the desire for a love which is benign, and to Valentin is given the fear of a love which is destructive. Newman's affection is noble and virtuous. It is not a "romantic passion"(166) such as he believes makes a fool of a man, but "wisdom sound, serene, well-directed."(166) What he felt was an intense all-consuming tenderness, which had for its object an extraordinarily graceful and delicate, and at the same time impressive woman."(166) His love is purged of earthly desire. It is not unlike the friendship between soul mates or spiritual brothers. Claire would be as safe with him as in her father's arms, and he is as careful with her in "his desire to interpose between her and the troubles of life"(166) as any young mother eager "to protect the sleep of her first-born child."(166)

> He was simply charmed, and he handled his claim as if it were a music-box which would stop if one shook it. There can be no better proof of the hankering epicure

> that is hidden in every man's temperament, waiting for a signal from some divine confederate that he may safely peep out. (167)

He becomes the apostle of love and marriage, finding an ideal woman who answers absolutely to his needs and for whom he promises to do everything a man can do for a woman.

Valentin, on the other hand, falls in love with a perfect type of the adventuress, Noemie Nioche, a woman who has "taken the measure of life, and ... determined to be something - to succeed at any cost."(148) She exemplifies "perfect heartlessness". As he explains it,

> it's not a grand passion. But the cold-blooded little demon sticks in my thoughts; she has bitten me with those even little teeth of hers; I feel as if I might turn rabid and do something crazy in consequence. It's very low; it's disgustingly low. She's the most mercenary little jade in Europe. Yet she really affects my peace of mind; she is always running in my head. (207)

His love is "a vile contrast"(207) to Newman's "noble and virtuous attachment."(207) He is perfectly aware of Noemie's nature and understands that she will consume anyone in order to advance her position in the world, but he is as helpless as any passive victim of a perverse love fate. He is held by a fatal fascination for an "ingenious piece of machinery"(204) that, put into operation, will spell his own destruction.

Valentin is, in fact, the type of disinherited male for whom there is no possibility of life or love, no escape from his fate and no El Dorado. He takes on the characteristics of the injured lover. He has received an "apostolic wound"(96) - fighting for the Pope has been the only thing he has ever been able to do. And his sense of his own injuries fosters a death wish. He considers the resolution of the old days not a bad habit - to keep "the pot boiling until it cracked, and then put it on the shelf altogether"(96) - and could consider becoming a monk and turning to the religious life. His past is an extreme illustration of the conditions of the overpossessed child and over-schooled son, whose spontaneous desires toward life have been

quelled. He bears a "mortal grudge"(95) against the family discipline which has tied him by too short a rope to allow him to live. His social circumstances heighten his plight, for although he is born to a great position, he has no money, freedom, or independence and is powerless to alter his circumstances. He envies Newman's apparent freedom to look about him in a world full of wonderful things he has only to step up to and take hold of, for his own circumstances have been entirely different.

> When I was twenty, I looked around me and saw a world with everything ticketed 'Hands off!' and the deuce of it was that the ticket seemed meant only for me. I couldn't go into business, I couldn't make money, because I was a Bellegarde. I couldn't go into politics, because I was a Bellegarde....I couldn't go into literature, because I was a dunce. I couldn't marry a rich girl, because no Bellegarde had ever married a <u>roturière</u>, and it was not proper that I should begin ....The only thing I could do was to fight for the Pope. (95-96)

Valentin is possessed of all the negative feelings which result from an inability to create his own conditions of life. Though he appears the ideal Frenchman of tradition and romance, the soul of honour and idealism, he is born into a world in which he cannot maintain his position or attain his rightful inheritance. He cannot marry a rich woman or a poor one and lacks the fortune necessary to marry within his own class. As a result of the inevitable sense of failure which arises out of an extraordinary limitation of circumstance, he considers himself one of the least valuable of society's members. Yet he possesses a great potentiality for life. His face is "intensely alive - frankly, ardently, gallantly alive."(91) As Newman describes it,

> the look of it was like a bell, of which the handle might have been in the young man's soul: at a touch of the handle it rang with a loud silver sound. There was something in his quick light brown eye which assured you that he was not economising on his consciousness. He was not living in a corner of it to spare the furniture of the rest. He was squarely encamped in the centre, and he was keeping open house. When he smiled, it was like the movement of a person who in emptying a cup turns it upside down: he gave you the last drop of his jollity. (91)

His cup is, in fact, a bitter one, which he is obliged to drink to the lees. The feeling that he is blocked off from life leads him into a career like that of the ambivalent lover: having courted a woman he cannot marry, he dies in an affair of honour which represents the only possible way out. Valentin's desire for death is dramatised in the duel. He accepts an insult from a rival, a bovine brewer's son of a character unworthy of respect. While Valentin shoots wide in order not to kill, his opponent shoots to kill, though he achieves his aim accidentally because he is a bad shot. Valentin accepts his inevitable fate with courage, although it represents "the meanest winding up of a man's affairs imaginable."(268) He believes he is too easy to kill to be thought a serious man.

Valentin exists primarily in the dimension of the injured lover who dies in consequence of his perverse love fate. The effect of displacing the negative elements which cripple the fearful lover onto a spiritual brother of the hero is to purge Newman from feelings which might detract from his heroism. It also makes possible a development of the terms of his romantic quest, which receives an entirely positive treatment. Newman is "a practical man,"(4) and a "completely healthy mortal."(19) He has come out of the war with a brevet of brigadier-general and "an angry, bitter sense of the waste of previous things - life and time and money and 'smartness' and the early freshness of purpose"(18-19) - to address himself to "the pursuits of peace with passionate zest and energy."(19) His is the success story of a child thrown to the mercy of the world who has grown to be a man and made his pile, believing that he has been "placed in the world ... simply to wrest a fortune, the bigger the better, from defiant opportunity."(20) Though he has once known failure - an experience which has made him realize that there is "something stronger in life than his own will"(19) - the "supernatural element in the world's affairs"(19) seems to him essentially evil, an "impertinent force"(19) to which he feels "an intense personal enmity."(19) He has "carried off"(20) the world's winnings to an extent

which suggests that he must succeed in everything he undertakes.

He arrives in Europe with the sense that there is a new man within his old skin, longing for a new world, and he finds his "metaphysical inspiration in a vague acceptance of final responsibility to some illumined feminine brow."(28) His attitude toward women generally is "grave, attentive, submissive,"(23) and "often silent."(27) He swims "in a sort of rapture of respect."(27) To make his previous successes in life perfect "there must be a beautiful woman perched on the pile, like a statue on a monument."(35) He wishes to possess "the best article in the market."(35) Such expressions, although blunt, express ideas not basically unlike those of other Jamesian characters, like Madame de Mauves, who believe that the best birth is a guarantee of ideal delicacy of feeling. Newman's plan to marry and notion of what he desires of marriage are mature and deliberate. His definite programme in life is to expand "to the full compass of what he would have called a 'pleasant' experience."(62) When he meets Claire he finds in her the promised perfection and the proposed ideal. She is the archetypal woman latent in his imagination, his dream realised, and it is as if he has already known her within his own mind. He wishes to "complete himself by taking a wife,"(117) and the way she bears herself is "the way he should like his wife to interpret him to the world."(117) For she is the fruit of "an elaborate education"(117) who has passed through "mysterious ceremonies and processes of culture"(117) that have made her "flexible to certain exalted social needs."(117) Newman watches her as if she were part of a play that he was seeing acted, lost in admiration for how she fills the stage.

> Whether she rose or seated herself; whether she went with her departing friends to the door and lifted up the heavy curtain as they passed out, and stood an instant looking after them and giving them the last nod; or whether she leaned back in her chair with her arms crossed and her eyes resting, listening and smiling; she gave Newman the feeling that he should like to have her always before him, moving slowly to and fro along the whole scale of expressive hospitality. If it might be <u>to</u> him, it would be well; if it might be <u>for</u> him, it would be still better! She was so tall and yet so light, so active and yet so still, so elegant and yet so

> still, so elegant and yet so simple, so frank and yet so mysterious! It was the mystery - it was what she was off the stage, as it were - that interested Newman most of all. He could not have told you what warrant he had for talking about mysteries; if it had been his habit to express himself in poetic figures he might have said that in observing Madame de Cintré he seemed to see the vague circle which sometimes accompanies the partly-filled disc of the moon. (102)

Claire is essentially the projection of a male imagination in search of an ideal woman who would never answer man's every need - social, psychological and quasi-religious. Newman is completely satisfied.

> A rose-crowned Greek of old, gazing at a marble goddess with his whole bright intellect resting satisfied in the act, could not have been a more complete embodiment of the wisdom that loses itself in the enjoyment of quiet harmonies. (167)

He begins to taste enjoyment "purely, freely"(167) and "deeply,"(167) though there is a sense in which everything seems too good to be true. Newman's triumph is that he makes her care for him sufficiently to attempt to defy her family in order to marry him. He defines himself against her, realising within himself qualities he has never previously perceived. It is fundamentally in relation to her that he proves himself noble and civilized, a man of great human worth. In quest of her his imaginative and spiritual capacities develop beyond the previous limitations of his personality, so that he becomes to some extent an idealised hero purged of all faults.

One of the effects of the division of the ambivalent lover into two figures in this novel is to give a subordinate role to the injured self in the grips of a daemonic power and to assign a particular value to the role of sacred love, of which Newman is a prime and unusual example. However, he is just as much tricked out of his future happiness and fulfilment by the power of the female as any other male in the James canon. The reason for Newman's failure lies in the amoral power of the mother figure, who is the primary agent of the tragic fate. The old Marquise presents "a striking image of the dignity which - even in the case of a little time-shrunken old lady - may reside in the habit of unquestioned authority and

the absoluteness of a social theory favourable to yourself."(162) Her power consists in the obedience of her children, and they may not disobey her. She is invested with the authority both of the French mother and of the woman of aristocratic birth; these usages become the weapon of her will. It is, in fact, with Claire's mother that Newman's battle to possess his bride is fought, and he is as helpless as any child to combat her superior force. She is an adversary against whom it is impossible to win; Newman is barely able to approach her, let alone to meet her on any reasonable terms. In accordance with the contradictory nature of the female, she at first seems to approve of the marriage and then decides that the family cannot accept it, with Newman's whole future symbolically dependent on the decision. Any less naive soul would have seen that ultimately she would not accept him.

The fact that Claire is so much in her mother's power has a long history. Claire herself has bartered away her future freedom in order to survive at some peace with herself. She has disentangled herself from the wrangle over her late husband's estate at the price of her promise that she would not marry for ten years. And the story of her enforced marriage to M. de Cintré brings to light further evidence of the fate of the male at the hands of a daemonic female will - the same will that is asserted at Newman's expense - since the Marquis, Claire's father, died as a result of the issue of Claire's marriage, in which he opposed his wife's wishes. Because of his failure in the contest he fell ill, gradually reduced from a man of magnificence, high spirit, and lust for life, into one without the will or energy to continue to live in a world darkened by such evil force as his wife possessed. She finally deprived him of the medicine that would have sustained him. When he regained consciousness after he was already considered dead (sufficiently to communicate his plight to the old family nurse, Mrs. Bread, who finally puts Newman in possession of the story), the Marquise returned to the bedside and killed her husband stone dead with a look. The death of

the Marquis is the dramatic conclusion to and summary of the lifelong underlying conditions of his marriage; he is like a ghost-self resentfully affirming his desire for life. The Marquise exemplifies the "curse"(283) placed on the family, of which Claire speaks. She embodies all the crimes committed against life in the name of family and ties which restrict rather than liberate its individual members. The sheer weight of the accretions of history that lie behind the Marquise contribute to magnify the sense of the evil power she possesses. Newman's last vision of her in her country chateau, an evil, dark, old prison of a place, makes him feel when he enters as if "the door of a sepulchre had suddenly been opened, and the damp darkness were being exhaled."(292)

A kind of rhetorical exaggeration attaches to the figure of the old Marquise as the author of man's woe, but she does in fact destroy the capacity for life in all her children in different ways beside causing her husband's death. The eldest son, Urbain, is a papier-maché man of hollow forms and subservience to propriety and convention, who has survived by identifying himself with his mother's power and becoming an instrument of it. He therefore assumes some of the characteristics of the superior rival figure and stands with his mother in preventing Newman's marriage from taking place. He has in a sense usurped his father's position and assumed a spurious authority.

It is with the two younger children, Claire and Valentin, who inherit the spiritual constitution of their sacrificed father, that Newman finds a common identity. Like their father, they both prefer to die to a world in which honour is no longer found and injustice abounds, and they both die (though Claire chooses a form of living death) partly as a result of their mother's treatment of Newman. But it is one aspect of Valentin's death that he takes upon himself the shame and dishonour of his family (although his knowledge of this is not complete), and in accepting the role

of sacrificial victim he partially transforms the meaning of his death. In desiring to make amends to Newman, Valentin achieves a tragic and heroic dignity in his death which would have been lacking if its meaning had solely lain in her personal destruction by Noemie, administered by his rival. The power of the two destructive women in his life is conflated at the end, and against them his heroic sacrifice gives a value to his life and fate.

Claire is an equal victim of a perverse fate in love. She too is an apostle of potentiality, a woman made for the light, for frank, joyous, and brilliant action. She dramatises this potentiality on one occasion by altering her custom and going to a ball, expressing the belief that she has a chance for life which will make her listen to Newman despite her sense of personal doom. Claire has been from the beginning the victim of implacable laws, and her only freedom has lain in cultivating her own personal qualities. She has had even less autonomy than her brother, has been deprived of any conditions in which she could develop a will sufficient to defy her mother. When she is forced to reject Newman, she feels she has no alternative but to reject a world in which the innocent suffer, to live among the Carmelites with the sense of a justice that is not of this world. She will pass what remains of her life in the face of death and with her eye on ultimate values, leaving behind her the vanity of human wishes. Her decision to enter the convent also has an aspect of heroic sacrifice about it; she too, like Valentin, would pay for the sins of the world.

There are further versions of the depletion of the male before the power of the female in Noemie's father, who is shamelessly bent to his daughter's will, and Mr. Tristram, who is constantly diminished by his wife. It is significantly to Mrs. Tristram's "spark of sacred fire"[27] that Newman owes his introduction into his fatal circumstances. She is a woman "with a certain avidity of imagination",[27] who is "eminently

incomplete,"[27] and "full ... of beginnings that came to nothing,"[27] and her dissatisfied passion seeks to satisfy itself through Newman.

The condition of the male is essentially unalterable. Newman is destined to be "insidiously beguiled and betrayed"(AN,22) and "cruelly wronged."(AN,22) But by purging him of the flaw of nature characteristic of the ambivalent lover, James is able to develop a notion of the heroic in terms of the manner in which the predestined fate is accepted. Newman sacrifices the possibility of revenge against the woman who has defrauded him of his rights, "the bitterness of his personal loss yielding to the very force of his aversion."(AN,22) As James makes clear in the preface,

> all he would have at the end would be therefore just the moral convenience, indeed the moral necessity, of his practical, but quite unappreciated, magnanimity; one's last view of him would be that of a strong man indifferent to his strength and too wrapped in fine, too wrapped above all in other and intenser, reflexions, for the assertion of his 'rights'. (AN,22)

The evil of the self-assertive will, which inevitably affirms itself at the expense of others, leads to a version of heroism in which the sacrifice of personal rights assumes an extreme importance. The three disinherited heirs and spiritual brothers (including Claire) all exemplify similar versions of heroism, although Newman lives on.

None of these characters alone has the capacity to understand the entire situation, since James presents each of the others in the light in which they touch on Newman's experience, and the reader assists Newman in his attempt to arrive at "his vision, his conception, and his interpretation"(AN,37) but is given more clues to the understanding of the whole that he can himself possess. Indeed, Newman's method of arriving at knowledge is through the things "we never can directly know; the things that can reach us only through the beautiful circuit and subterfuge of our thought and our desire."(AN,32) He expresses as no hero before the quest of the romantic soul for union with the ideal and for an ideal concordance of

values, which Claire symbolically represents within herself and which he seeks in his desire to marry her. Although his aspiration is foredoomed in a world in which "we are each the product of circumstances and there are tall stone walls which fatally divide us,"(CH,44) the quest itself invests the tragedies of life with a meaning they could not otherwise have. Newman fails to complete his personality, to expand to his full compass, to liberate himself from the limitations of nature and social conditions, and he fails to marry his ideal. But he rises above his fate in exemplifying all that is deeply human and truly civilized, and the values he expresses counterbalance the evils of the world of which he was originally insufficiently aware.

His personal qualities are like those of Claire and of James's romantic heroines generally, who by virtue of their being make the world a better place for others to live in. This is a lesser form of the attribute given to the hero of more specific imaginative consciousness, who can help others to live. Although Claire has power over Newman, and although her renunciation of life involves him in a corresponding loss, she is not represented as having a specifically destructive influence on him in either respect. This is partly because she is in some sense a pure fiction, partly because she is an equal victim of circumstances herself, and partly because it is her mother who represents the evil power in the case. She and Newman are effectively romantic figures and the romantic quest Newman expresses in relation to her remains a desire of the heart and mind of such figures despite all realistic evidence against it.

Marriage would have represented for Newman "the greatest victory over circumstances."(44) Yet in seeking a wife who belongs to an aristocratic European family Newman directs his energies toward an unattainable goal, though he proves himself noble and virtuous. America and Europe remain distinct worlds which cannot be conjoined. However, the manner in which Newman confronts the Bellegardes throws into relief the central

psychological components in the love-fate of the American hero and extends their range of reference.

The Europeans* (1878) is a sketch in which James lays out the spiritual and domestic heritage of the American hero and his problem in relation to life and love. It lacks a fully central figure; elements which belong to the fundamental situation are projected into the circumstances and personalities of several different characters, who together form the whole.

America is pictured as a natural Paradise into which the hero is born only to find himself unable to possess and enjoy its fruits. The scene is expressive of such "fresh-looking abundance"(61) that it is reminiscent of "the mythological era, when {people} spread their tables upon the grass and replenished them from cornucopias."(61) The natural world of milk and honey and of extraordinary symptoms of great wealth is contrasted with the Americans themselves, who are out of touch with these riches and unable to live and love. They are all princes debarred from assuming their rightful inheritance because there is something the matter with them. Their fear of life and of love is derived both from their spiritual history and from their domestic circumstances. James develops the theme through the contrast of two houses which complement each other and which together make up the conditions out of which the characteristic hero emerges. The first is dominated by the dying male and ineffective patriarch, Mr. Wentworth, who represents the spiritual influence of the Puritan mind, who implicitly accepts the idea that woman is the cause of man's fall, and who is afraid of life and the world. The second is dominated by the perfect

* Macmillan, London, 1921

and selfless mother, Mrs. Acton, who binds her son to her in a destructive bond which prevents him from marrying until after her death. The psychological elements which determine the love fate belong to this second setting. This composite household is defined against an "other house" which their Europeanized cousin, Eugenia, sets up among them. It is founded on distinctively feminine and civilized principles which are quite different from their own. Their problem is how to accommodate themselves to their fear of the power of this woman, which they exaggerate and feel unduly threatened by. In the end, they are unable to take her in, and she is obliged to return to Europe, which is her "natural field."(207) Their failure to comprehend her and absorb her into themselves represents their failure to rise to their estate - to live, love, grow and become thoroughly civilized human beings.

Such action as the book offers relates to Eugenia's story, her failed quest to find her fortune in America. She is the only rounded character in the novel, embodying life and the possibilities of living through the apprehension of life. Unlike Claire of The American, although she has symbolic attributes, she is an actual woman, who lives in the world and who suffers as a result of her frustrated love experience. Eugenia is the repudiated wife of a German Prince, who presumably wishes to get rid of her in order to marry again. She comes to America in search of a home, family, roots, and security, and she selects Mrs. Acton's son, Robert, whose consciousness has been complicated by residence in foreign lands, as a suitable husband. He almost comes to the point of proposal, but only admits to himself that he is in love with her when she has already decided to return to Europe. Robert is an extreme example of the ambivalent lover who fears love more than he is attracted by it. He is more curious about the state of his own emotions than really capable of responding to Eugenia as a human being. She is acutely aware of the image he thrusts on her as a sort of Madame Recamier. Though the cause of her failure lies not within

her own nature but within his, this does not lessen her humiliation at her rejection. Her frustrated possibilities are expressed in the image of

> a rather wearied swimmer who, on nearing the shore, to land, finds a smooth straight wall of rock when he had counted upon a clean firm beach. Her power, in the American air, seemed to have lost its prehensile attributes; the smooth wall of rock was insurmountable. (155)

Robert Acton assumes a particular significance in the novel because he bears the burden of ambivalence toward love, which is the reason for Eugenia's fate as well as his own. He is the only character treated entirely in a psychological dimension, and the only male who is given a totally convincing treatment. Largely unconscious of his own nature, he is contrasted with a male who forms his complement, Eugenia's brother Felix, who is given the power to remake his fate through the development of his imaginative and conscious faculties.

Robert comes from a home where the father is so reduced as not even to be a ghost or to get a mention. He is totally undefended against the power of his perfect mother to bind him to her.

> He never talked of this still maternal presence - a presence refined to such delicacy that it had almost resolved itself, with him, simply into the subjective emotion of gratitude. (99-100)

Mrs. Acton is dying and requires a total "restriction of emotion"(171) in the home. She is a "constant invalid"(96) confined to her bedroom and often unable to see anyone. She is so important to her son that a sense of her presence seems constantly to affect him, though she is entirely withdrawn from the action. Significantly, it is in relation to a social fib of Eugenia on the occasion of meeting Mrs. Acton - she suggests that the son has talked immensely of his mother - that Robert finds evidence upon which he can convict Eugenia as a liar who is unworthy of an offer of marriage. In effect, he is in the situation of the lover attracted and repelled by two contrasting women and to each in herself. He believes that love should be a "poetic"(136) and idealized "impulse,"(136) not the perplexing emotion

he finds in himself, which is too threatening for him to deal with.

Robert exemplifies the potentialities of the American hero. He is to some extent "a man of the world"(36) and is invested with a particular importance by the other Americans. A "frigidly-tender faith"(85) in his "unlimited goodness"(85) is part of the Wentworth household's "personal sense of right."(85) Though he is aware that they make more of him than he amounts to, he does seem to stand in relation to certain possibilities and opportunities.

> He had made a fortune - or rather he had quintupled a fortune already considerable; he was distinguished by that combination of celibacy, 'property', and good-humour which appeals to even the most subdued imaginations. (85-86)

Yet, despite this appearance, he is a man ill at ease with himself and others. He adopts exaggerated attitudes which cover his embarrassment and mask his "vigilant observation"(88) of Eugenia. He constantly holds himself back and is unable to give of himself. While he appears to have "levelled the outworks"(137) of the "citadel"(137) of his single state and thinks that he has "lowered the drawbridge across the moat,"(137) he never gives Eugenia access to himself. She might become his "prisoner"(137) if he lets her across, but he fears to become hers in letting her in. Unable to be truly in love, he is testing out his own emotions in relation to another. He himself does not understand why he should not be more in love and is puzzled and vexed by the knowledge that he is not more ardent.

> It was part of his curiosity to know why the deuce so susceptible a man was not in love with so charming a woman. If her various graces ... were the factors in an algebraic problem, the answer to this question was the indispensable unknown quantity. The pursuit of the unknown quantity was extremely absorbing; for the present it taxed all Acton's faculties. (137)

Acton never discovers that the unknown quantity he seeks lies within his own nature. He must convict the woman who mystifies him in order to let himself off the hook, for he is ultimately more repelled than attracted by her. He

believes the fault must lie with her and not with himself. He eventually loses the reader's sympathy because he carries his inquiry almost beyond "the limits of legitimate experimentation,"(205) although he is ashamed of having done so. His desire to convict Eugenia leads him to thrust her into situations in which he can brand her as an evil force, her sin being primarily that she is sexually mature and therefore threatens him. Acton is far from heroic, he loses something much greater in value than he can ever know, and he is given nothing that compensates for his loss. When he does marry after his mother's death, it is a kind of non-marriage to "a particularly nice young girl"(209) who in no way represents life as Eugenia does. Acton epitomises the failure of the Americans at large to assimilate the feminine in culture, to live and grow, and to attain a satisfactory love relationship. His failure is unqualified by any redeeming factor.

Behind the novel lies the experience of Mr. Wentworth's half-sister, the mother of Eugenia and Felix, whose story reflects the Puritan tendency to equate passion with destruction. She died to her family when she fell in love with the Catholic American born in Sicily, Adolphus Young. The consequence of their passion, from a Puritan standpoint, was that both parents died young and left their children undefended in the world.

In Felix lies the only possibility which seems open to the American hero, the cultivation of consciousness and imagination. He is not actually American born, but he is treated as if he were "an undispirited young exile revisiting the haunts of his youth,"(11-12) for whom the natural goodness and beauty of the world from which he sprang has peculiarly poignant resonances. Felix has been reformed by his experience of Europe, and as an artist he is given a posture from which he can accommodate himself temporarily to America and perceive its beauties. His fancy flings rosy lights over everything he sees, and his appreciation of things throws into relief the possibility of taking life in terms of opportunity, pleasure, and happiness. Intellectually he is Acton's opposite, for he has "a confident,

gaily trenchant way of judging human actions,"(102) which seems like "criticism made easy,"(102) and he is released from the necessities of a perverse fate.

> Never was a nature more perfectly fortunate. It was not a restless, apprehensive, ambitious spirit, running a race with the tyranny of fate, but a temper so unsuspicious as to put Adversity off her guard, dodging and evading her with the easy, natural motion of a wind-sifted flower. (60)

His nature enables him to assume his true inheritance in America. After spending his life looking into courts from a "domiciliary quatrième"(61) "with the rent overdue,"(61) he arrives in paradise. Like the prince of a fairy tale he awakens the virgin princess, Gertrude Wentworth, from sleep, and carries her away to a faraway place of eternal happiness. Felix remains a figment of the imagination, a prince of pleasure and enchantment, whose portrait is not based upon any psychological reality. His is a marriage between children, which actually has the effect of stressing the fact that life is with Eugenia and her wonderful-terrible power. His only power is in his head, and his imagination has the capacity to distort reality as well as to represent it in its essential truth.

The characteristics that belong to the spiritual constitution of the composite hero are laid down in the character of the patriarch, Mr. Wentworth. His system of thought, a decayed Puritanism, explains why the hero cannot live, and this dimension is conflated with the love fate and contributory to it. The sacred patriarch is at the same time virtually a child, helpless before the world and afraid of it, and never represented as a husband or lover (there is no mention of Mrs. Wentworth). The extent to which he is bewildered and paralysed by Eugenia reveals his essential fear of life and woman and his inadequacy in dealing with both. Mr. Wentworth is barely alive. He "looks as if he were undergoing martyrdom, not by fire, but by freezing."(35) He exists in a mortuary state. Even the operation of his conscience within him announces itself "by several of the

indications of physical faintness."[38] His "scrupulously-adjusted, consciously-frigid organs of vision"[39] are incapable of readjustment to something outside the "scheme of usual obligations"[49] which he recognises. The enlargement of life represents "an extension of the field of possible mistakes,"[50] and he so cherishes the doctrine "of the oppressive gravity of mistakes"[50] that he would prefer to look away from evil and the world. In consequence he is unprepared to meet it and undefended against it, "destitute of the materials for a judgement"[70] because his experience of life is so limited. He is ashamed to confess even to himself "the unfurnished condition of this repository."[70]

> Forming an opinion - say on a person's conduct - was with Mr. Wentworth a good deal like fumbling in a lock with a key chosen at hazard. He seemed to himself to go about the world with a big bunch of these ineffectual instruments at his girdle. (102)

He looks on life in terms of duty, discipline, and responsibility, but it is as impossible for him to be finely moral as it is for him to be an adequate guide to his vaguely mature brood of children. He wants what is best for them but does not know what that might be, though he is concerned with an ideal behaviour. He is at once liberal, generous, and magnanimous, distrustful of the senses and the flesh, and selfless. These traits are to be found in all his children.

His elder daughter, Charlotte, exemplifies renunciation of the will, self-sacrifice, and pursuit of duty. She is in love, without allowing herself to recognise it, with Mr. Brand, the Unitarian minister who assumes the role that would have been her mother's as moral guide in the home. Mr. Brand thinks he is in love with the younger sister, Gertrude, on the theory that her nature requires reform. Charlotte is bent on cutting off her own head in an attempt to further the interests of her sister. She has buried "the poor little unacknowledged offspring"[189] of her "misbehaving heart."[189] When Felix discovers that there is already a rival to Gertrude's hand, the

situation is quite unreal, and Felix succeeds in reanimating the ghost of Charlotte's stifled dream and engineering her marriage to Mr. Brand. This sequence of events is not so much a parody of the usual love fate as an exposure of the essential weakness in the Puritan nature which has stifled the senses to the extent of being entirely out of touch with emotions, the instinctual life, and the imagination. Charlotte characteristically keeps her imagination in her pocket, and it takes no journeys whatever. Her marriage is again not a real one; it takes place between people who have no passional or emotional life to speak of.

The son, Clifford, is haunted by the bad conscience of the Puritans about sins they have not truly committed. His liability to get "tipsy"(36) is an indication of his effort to live within conditions which restrict his growth. Clifford is a "mere shame-faced boy"(91) who is afraid of ladies, a weak and helpless male. Felix proposes that his sister will be a civilizing influence on him, and asserts that every agreeable man has gone to school of a clever woman. But Clifford is too young and afraid to take advantage of his opportunity. In a lesser way his case is analogous to that of Acton, since Eugenia would in fact have helped him to learn to bear himself like a man. In any event, Eugenia is not interested in a flirtation with Clifford except in order to bring Acton to the point of declaration. (The attempt fails because her action is misunderstood. She is working with people who know nothing about human motives, and who misinterpret what they see because of an exaggerated fear of life). At the end, Clifford's proposed marriage to Lizzie Action cannot help but repeat the patterns of the American marriage, in which a helpless male falls under the domination of a powerful woman. Lizzie represents the new type of American girl, whose apparent incongruity in combining a taste for housework with the wearing of fresh Parisian-looking dresses suggests "the possession of a dangerous energy."(98)

Gertrude must "struggle with a great accumulation of obstructions, both of the subjective ... and of the objective order,"(50) yet she at least

has the imagination necessary to perceive that something is wrong and to pursue what will help to put it right. Hers is an essentially "dormant nature"(168) that has been waiting for a "touchstone,"(168) and like the folded flower when plucked from the parent tree she will expand under Felix's influence. What she has been waiting for, she discovers, is to see the world. Under the influence of her awakening, her nature begins to pull like a runaway horse; with her discovery of herself she discovers her own will. It is her triumph to be able to say, "I know what I want; I have chosen. I am determined to marry this gentleman."(197) She will seek life and freedom and union with the prince of her dreams. When Felix first meets her she symbolically holds the keys to the cake and the wine in the house (for the others have gone to church). Their romance, then, is like a dream come true. Yet it remains a dream - unreal because it contains no sexual element. One of Gertrude's functions is to contrast a version of love (which is not yet a charitable or sacred affection) with that which Eugenia offers, but it is hardly a convincing alternative. James lets all these non-marriages take place, and they are of less significance than the one marriage which does not take place.

Eugenia is seen from a male perspective: one reason why she dominates the book is that she represents what the male fears, an opposing principle to his own. She also assumes a particular importance because she is given a standpoint of her own: she is the only character capable of being fully conscious and of understanding finely mingled human motives. In this respect she foreshadows the development of the female as a centre of the novel.) Her problem is that she is a picture out of its proper frame. The others have no means of measuring her position in the world, and she cannot interpret the American mind, for she is thoroughly European in a way that Felix is not.

First and foremost, she is life, the light-wristed Hebe bearing

the brimming wine cup. Her qualities are those of maturity, flexibility, and spontaneity. She represents life as self-gratification, opportunity, and imaginative fulfilment - the cultivation of life in terms of an apprehension of it. She is constantly open to interpretation because of her range of expressiveness. As Felix says,

> there were several ways of understanding her: there was what she said, and there was what she meant, and there was something between the two, that was neither. (160)

She is like a singer of a song one cannot tell the meaning of until the song is done. She possesses the mystery of the feminine, which is like a "lunar disk when only a part of it is lighted."(158) "The shadow on this bright surface" seems "to expand and to contract"(158) on observation and to be capable of infinite spiritual suggestiveness. Her capacity for self-expression makes her like a kind of artist who works with the material of the self, adjusting her presentation of herself to the possibilities life offers. She promotes reflection and aspiration in others, and her experience of life gives an inimitable pliancy to her nature. Too clever not to be capable of a great deal of just and fine observation, she has a lively perception and enjoyment of things that are characteristic.

Like Claire, she shadows forth a finely human ideal, and she does this in spite of being a realist who has come out of desperate situations and profoundly limiting circumstances in Europe with her eye on the chance of bettering her situation. She conveys the symbol of the romantic quest without being herself a fully romantic character. Her intrinsic ambiguity, however, is distorted and vulgarized by the minds of the Americans who perceive her, who make her feel like a strolling actress going about with her properties, or a "kind of conversational mountebank, attired, intellectually, in gauze and spangles."(46) On the one hand, her power seems illimitable because the Americans have no standard of comparison whereby to judge her, but on the other hand, it is reduced to nothing in a world of "diminutive virgins"(98) like Lizzie Acton. She must try to operate

virtually in a vacuum. She understands from the beginning both that "they would be able to discover nothing against her"(64) and that "they would neglect to perceive some of her superior points."(64) But the image they unconsciously thrust upon her of an undefined evil is more painful to bear than she could anticipate, and it leads her to try to save her face by shipping at the first moment moment for Europe, where she may live and breathe in a larger world.

Eugenia is an unusual figure in that she represents both life and the appreciation of life. Moreover, the idea of woman is here conflated with social, cultural, artistic and imaginative ideals in a form which demonstrates that the doubt cast upon her belongs to the mind of the Puritan male. The case of Eugenia provides some sense of what it might feel like to be other from a male point of view. This otherness is extended by Eugenia's relation to Europe which compounds the difficulty for Acton to arrive at a union with a real woman. It is he who represents the unfolding drama of the unconscious male who is ambivalent to love, and his alter-ego, Felix, who represents consciousness in its imaginative aspect and its power to transcend the limitations of circumstance. Felix's situation, however, throws into relief the more telling characteristic plight of his opposite. The novel traces the spiritual heritage of the American male through an analysis of his parental background which determines his psychology and his fate in love. By setting out all these component elements, the book works toward a deeper definition of the Jamesian situation in general.

In The Princess Casamassima* (1886) the hero, Hyacinth Robinson, is an extreme example of the disinherited heir of life, who dies in conse-

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* Macmillan, London, 1921, 2 Vols.

quence of being unable to attain the things which are necessary to his continuance. Though Hyacinth is not technically a centre of consciousness or register of events, his consciousness governs the story. This imparts a fantastic quality to the book. In effect, the whole "tremendous little drama"(I,150) takes place "privately on the stage"(I,150) of the hero's "inner consciousness,"(I,150) and the mind represented is that of a child in the grips of an extraordinary fantasy he can only live out to its inevitable conclusion. His impressions and sensations take on a mythic and legendary quality, for what he lives out are the consequences of a primal battle between his parents, which in itself is a kind of myth. Events in the real world assume the significance he attributes to them; he projects his own dilemma onto the world of the book. His "love" relations and the people and circumstances he encounters strike us less as actual situations or real alternatives in the actual world than as mental alternatives which serve to manifest and clarify his own feelings. Thus the hero's dilemma is one with the presentation of a social world in which the disinherited and despoiled members of society at large attempt to envisage their own reunification with the treasures of life.

Hyacinth does not achieve an identity in the sense of a coherent self, an integrated personality. His personality is "lacerated,"(I,303) and he exists only in terms of the tensions within his own nature. He is his conflict, a "death-grapple"(I,151) between forces within himself that stand in total opposition to each other, remaining in a kind of free-floating condition, incapable of being brought together. Though he is an emotionally crippled and injured lover, he potentially has the imaginative capacity to rise above this state. But his imagination lacks the cohesive power to draw together the elements in the love fate in a meaningful way which would lead to its transcendence through consciousness. There is no central ego or mind; events have the appearance of acted-out contents of the unconscious mind, which cannot contain them. The only release possible

lies in projecting them.

Hyacinth is "the unconscious victim"(I,26) of injuries sustained in love before he was born, which result in his bearing a "stigma"(I,101) at birth. He is the bastard son of a light Frenchwoman, Françoise Vivier, who murdered one of her many lovers, believed to be the aristocratic Englishman, Lord Frederick Purvis (who took on the name of plain Mr. Robinson for the purposes of the affair). Her miserable baby is the living sign of the injuries done her. The product of the primal battle between his parents, he lives out its meaning in the division it sets up within himself. "To desert one of these presences for the other - that idea was the source of shame, as an act of treachery would have been."(II,237) He cannot desert his mother for his father, or desert his father for his mother; it is his fate

> to be divided to the point of torture, to be split open by sympathies that pulled him in different ways; for hadn't he an extraordinary mingled current in his blood, and from the time he could remember wasn't there one half of him always either playing tricks on the other or getting snubs and pinches from it? (I,152)

He inherits his plebeian condition from his mother and his aristocratic tastes from his father; each puts him at odds with the other, and both with life.

> Everything which in a great city could touch the sentient faculty of a youth on whom nothing was lost ministered to his conviction that there was no possible good fortune in life of too 'quiet' an order for him to appreciate - no privilege, no opportunity, no luxury to which he mightn't do full justice. (I,150)

His appreciation seems to give him the right to expect he might enjoy everything. But his social circumstances constantly remind him that he has nothing. To look about him is to be reminded

> of the high human walls, the deep gulfs of tradition, the steep embankments of privilege and dense layers of stupidity fencing the 'likes' of him off from social recognition. (I,151)

Even as a child, before he is aware of his origins, he has stood before a sweet-shop looking not only at the toffee and lollipops but also at periodical literature which illustrates the romance of high life and appeals to him more than the stale sugar-candy. He remains "poor and obscure and cramped and full of unattainable desires."(I,141) Because of his "peculiar and distinguished"(I,302) position as "the victim of social infamy, of heinous laws,"(I,302) a child with "a larger account to settle than most,"(I,302) an "ab ovo revolutionist,"(I,302) he joins a "band of malcontents"(I,302) who plan a social revolution. Hyacinth is ready for any personal sacrifice in the hope that it might do some good, for given the alternatives of "escaping or facing one's fate,"(I,314) he thinks he can only settle the question of life for himself by "paying for the lot."(I,314) He therefore pledges to do whatever he shall be called upon to do. After this, "the cup of an exquisite experience"(II,37) is offered to him through the agency of the Princess Casamassima, who takes him up for her own purposes and transports him to her enchanted palace. The cup is at his lips "purple with the wine of romance, of reality, of civilisation,"(II,37) and he cannot put it aside without drinking, although his fate is already sealed. Temporarily, "any scrap filched from the feast of life"(II,50) is "so much gained"(II,50) for his "eager young experience."(II,50) But it is a strange and bitter fate, as the Princess herself says,

> to be constituted as you're constituted, to be conscious of the capacity you must feel, and yet to look at the good things of life only through the glass of the pastry-cook's window! (II,54)

The impulse to identify himself with the condition of the people as against the bloated rich gives way to the opposite impulse as he is given access to the treasures of the world. He is helplessly condemned to a double vision of things, for

> whatever he saw, he saw - and this was always the case - so many other things besides. He saw the immeasurable misery of the people, and yet he saw all that had been, as it were, rescued and redeemed from it: the treasure, the

> felicities, the splendours, the successes of the world. (II,194)

He ceases to know what to believe, because to restore equity will reduce all mankind to "the selfsame shade of assinity"(II,192) and will necessitate the destruction of many of the ameliorating influences which make the world a better place. "The flood of democracy"(II,236) will sweep "all the traditions of the past before it."(II,236) The poverty and ignorance of the multitude seems "the law of life."(II,235) On the other hand Hyacinth finds

> joy and exultation in the thought of surrendering one's self to the wash of the wave, of being carried higher on the sun-touched crests of wild billows than one could ever be by a dry, lonely effort of one's own. That vision could deepen to ecstasy; make it indifferent if one's ultimate fate, in such a heaving sea, were not almost certainly to be submerged in bottomless depths or dashed to pieces on immovable rocks. (II,236)

When he is called upon to enact his fate the shock makes him feel dissociated from himself, as if he were "somehow a detached, irresponsible witness of the evolution of his doom."(II,324) The other elements in his situation come to a head at the same time. His position in relation to the Princess is taken over by his friend, Paul Muniment; he finds himself supplanted. Though she has always been unattainable to him he has still wanted her. The kind of woman he would look at would not look at him, and the kind who would look at him he would never look at. His relation with a woman of this latter type, Millicent Henning, whom he has known from his youth, suddenly turns into a friendship. He is offered the position of foreman at work, a position which clearly carries with it the possibility of marriage to his employer's daughter. His story could enact that of the virtuous apprentice. However, these possibilities do not seem real to him. The compulsions of his imaginative life assume a superior importance, and he sees no remedy for his plight except self-sacrifice,"what alchemy but annihilation? "(II,240) He is asked to assassinate a male aristocrat. The

act would be a repetition of his mother's own act and would expose her once more to the world. It brings to a point of irreconcilable conflict the "two currents"(II,237) which flow in his nature - "the blood of his passionate, plebeian mother and that of his long-descended, supercivilised sire"(II,237 - which have involved him in "intolerable defiances and revenges against himself"(II,237) and for which his own death provides the sole resolution. He commits suicide.

There are elements in the situation which correspond to the characteristically perverse fate in love. Hyacinth falls in love with an unattainable woman and is superseded by an invincible rival who possesses the brutality necessary to live and succeed. He is also involved in relations with two women of different personality types, each of whom reflects the impossibility of the other as a serious proposition. But his wounds in love precede this situation, which is in essence a theoretic one. What seems fundamental in his pattern of life is the repetition of circumstances in which he is tricked out of his rightful inheritance by women, and in which men act in the role of catalysts to his tragedy. He finds no man willing or strong enough to protect him from the overpowering influence of the women in his life, and the emotional pattern laid down early, in which the male is destined to be destroyed by the female, is so powerful that it can only be prevented from repeating itself by a deliberate self-annihilation.

The action of the book is generated by the scene in which Hyacinth is taken by his foster mother, Miss Pynsent, to Newgate Prison to see his mother before her death. He is not aware of his origins and has not been told that the woman is his mother. It is a scene of extraordinary force. She looks terribly old and is "cruelly misrepresented"(I,44) by the disfigurements of age and illness. She is speechless and motionless, with a terrifying intensity in the glazed entreaty with which her eyes take him in, absorb him into herself, and in the "terrible, irresistible embrace" (I,50) with which she grasps him, sobbing and pressing him to her "ravaged face." (I,49) "His miserable mother's

embrace"(I,158) furnishes him with "an inexhaustible fund of motive"(I,158) for everything he later does. He never recovers from it; it symbolizes the wonderful-terrible capacity of woman to represent life in its raw essence. It is like looking on the Medusa face of life which turns the beholder to stone. Thereafter, life and the world are at once beautiful and horrible for Hyacinth, incomparable and abominable at the same time. He does not need to be told who his mother is, although it is only later (in the light of the fierce questions he applies to Miss Pynsent, and later still through newspaper reports), that he learns of the stigma of his birth. One of the consequences of this meeting is that his mother is totally vivid to his mind while his father remains a completely shadowy figure. He never manages to put a conceivable face on him, and cannot imagine a nobleman wanting in nobleness.

His mother seems to him to have deprived him of the inheritance he would have had if he had been born the son of Sir Frederick Purvis. In effect, his foster mother does exactly the same thing. Miss Pynsent has an incorrigibly "romantic mind."(I,9) She "adores the aristocracy"(I,8) and, partly to escape her own miserable conditions of poverty and failure, creates a myth of a potentially beautiful existence which might be had around them. She unquestionably believes that Hyacinth is the son of Sir Frederick and brings him up as if he were perfect and could assume an aristocratic life. Weaving her own fantasies around him, she builds up a "fantastic structure"(I,8) which seduces him into thinking he has a right to expect more in life than he finds in it. She leads him into a fool's paradise and draws out his own romantic tendencies. The fact that she then introduces him to his origins and shows him that he is the bastard son of a murderess, "spawned in a gutter,"(II,193) renders her a totally contradictory figure in his mind. Hyacinth hates her for this trick sufficiently to remind her constantly of his lowly origins and twists the knife in her wound as well as his own. He does not forgive her for defrauding him until she is virtually dying, and enjoys humiliating her, making her pay for her guilt by abasing

herself before him. It it not until much later that Hyacinth perceives how much she has done for him. To have saved him from the workhouse and the gutter and put him in touch with possible luxuries, such as his intimacy with the Princess, is to have given him "a grand position as opposed to a foul, if he could only have the magnanimity to take it so."(II,99) And by the time Miss Pynsent dies of her poor career and of "her unaffected remorse for the trick she had played him in his boyhood,"(II,96) he has forgiven her, "judging it to have been the highest wisdom!"(II,96)

The Princess is the third woman to deprive him of the rights she appears to have given him a reason to expect. She introduces him to the life he would have liked without any intention of sustaining him in it. Even her words evoke "all sorts of shadowy suggestions of things he was condemned not to know, touching him most when he had not the key to them."(I,260) In taking him to Medley she acquaints him with

> the spectacle of long duration unassociated with some sordid infirmity or poverty {which is} new to him; he had lived with people among whom old age meant for the most part a grudged and degraded survival. In the favoured resistance of Medley was a serenity of success, an accumulation of dignity and honour. (II,7)

She has a talent for mise en scène, and even herself plays tricks on society by introducing him into Lady Marchant's house without revealing his origins. The Princess is too beautiful to question, to judge by common logic, and casts the spell of the worshipful over others.

> The sense of the beauty of women had been given to our young man in a high degree; it was a faculty that made him conscious to adoration of all the forces of that power and depths of that mystery; of every element of loveliness, every delicacy of feature, every shade and tone that contributed to charm. (II,13)

For Hyacinth's imagination, it matters not at all that she is not a real Princess, and that what she introduces him to is the appearance of the real thing. For Hyacinth's future, however, it matters greatly that she is fundamentally a "capricciosa"(II,9) a woman of erratic will who makes

every one do everything. She has a fluid personality that refuses to be fixed, and it is impossible to tell in what direction her will may manifest itself next. Her personal passions are entirely erratic and unpredictable.

The Princess is, in fact, a woman whose drive is becoming depleted in the process of acting itself out. But although her behaviour clearly relieves no one but herself, and although she takes up Paul Muniment after she has wrung Hyacinth dry for her own purposes, she remains for him an inspiration. She represents all he will ever know of life and beauty, art, culture, and society, and the values of long transmission. Even in her spurious love of the people (she knows nothing about poverty or the conditions of ordinary life) she seems inspired and inspiring. Although Hyacinth is demoralised with respect to his sacred cause from the moment of meeting her, she at the same time acts as an agent of his accepted mission. After she has put him totally in a world of darkness and exclusion in their final interview, her talk about the thousands of people out of work "on the over-crowded earth, under the pitiless heaven,"(II,359) impels him to sacrifice himself at once for the good of the people.

> The tone in which she spoke made his heart beat fast, and there was something so inspiring in the great union of her beauty, her sincerity and her energy that the image of a heroism not less great flashed up again before him in all the splendour it had lost - the idea of a tremendous risk and an unregarded sacrifice. Such a woman as that, at such an hour, one who could shine like silver and ring like crystal, made every scruple of a poor prudence and every compunction a cowardice. (II,359-60)

The incident shows Hyacinth to be the foredoomed victim of a woman still. She is for him at this moment a figure who has transcended her own limitations. He sees her beauty as "it might have worked itself free of all earthly grossness and been purified and consecrated by her new life."(II,353-54) She exemplifies "the humility of a high spirit"(II,354) to him. In reality her course has almost run to ground, and her attempt to live like the people is the last manifestation of her erratic will. Once she has no further money to give to the cause, she becomes merely an embarrassment to the conspirators.

Hyacinth wishes to redeem the image of his disfigured mother by

cultivating the image of a woman of aristocratic spirit and heroic nature who would liberate him from his own portion of her personal stain. Although he is always thought to be in love, this is evidence of his romantic imagination rather than passion; his desire to remake his parental heritage precedes the necessity to find a lover.

The substitute parents who most represent the world of ordinary reality, the Poupins, have the least to say to his imagination. He is introduced to them by Miss Pynsent's friend, Mr. Vetch, as himself "one of the disinherited, one of the expropriated, one of the exceptionally interesting" children of France.(I,91) Eustache Poupin is a Republican "of the old-fashioned sort, of the note of 1848, humanitary and idealistic"(I,83) and "infinitely addicted to fraternity and equality."(I,83) He is also "a prince of binders,"(I,84) and a "brilliant craftsman"(I,85) of unerring, incorruptible and imaginative instinct about his craft. Poupin initiates Hyacinth into the art of bookbinding and becomes his protector at work. In doing so, he not only helps the young man find a means of subsistence but also provides him with a role in which to present himself in public. Hyacinth develops a "double identity"(I,288) which marks his sense of division between the public and private aspects of himself. He has had from the first a need to hide his real character from others and "to go through life in a mask, in a borrowed mantle."(I,77) "He was to be every day and every hour an actor."(I,77) His position at work makes him a more "clever little operator"(I,288) than before. Moreover, Poupin assumes a paternal role, takes Hyacinth as his disciple, "the recipient of a precious tradition,"(I,91) and discovers in him "a susceptibility to philosophic, to cosmic, as well as technic truth."(I,92) Poupin fosters the "latent Gallicism of his nature"(I,92) and lays down the foundations which enable him to appreciate the culture from which he sprang "that had no visible rough spots."(II,109) Mrs. Poupin, notable for her triumphant cuisine and her "passionate identity of interests"(I,95) in a spiritual sense with her husband, is Hyacinth's

third mother. The two combine the ordinary decencies of life and a worship of proper work with humanitary zeal and socialistic passion. But they are essentially comic to Hyacinth, and do not play a part in his inner life, about which they know nothing. At bottom he feels "sorer"(I,95) than they. They are like parents who do not understand and who cannot help.

Mr. Vetch is primarily experienced by Hyacinth as a catalyst of his tragedy, and in this repeats the pattern of his father. Not only does he fail to defend the boy against the power of his mother, but he exposes him to her to be ravaged, for it is he who advises Miss Pynsent to let Françoise Vivier see her son before her death. It would be for her clearly the cup of the only mercy she had had since her fall. For the boy, it would have the advantage of inducting him into reality. Mr. Vetch is critical of Miss Pynsent's fantasies and thinks it "a great gain, early in life, to know the worst."(I,30) Hyacinth does not forgive him for this treacherous interference. He feels more for Hyacinth than the young man ever does for him, and though he would give his life to save Hyacinth's own, he never touches the boy's imagination highly. He is, in fact, the father figure who could most represent the principle of reality in the boy's life.

Hyacinth looks elsewhere for fathers. He wants to find models of the male as a redeemer figure, foreshadowing his own destiny and showing him the way to heroism through sacrifice. The prime example is the German revolutionary, Hoffendahl, who is one of the purest martyrs of the sacred cause. He has been "scarred and branded, tortured, almost flayed, and had never given his would-be butchers the names they wanted."(I,310) He alone "had suffered for everyone."(I,310) At the thought of Hoffendahl, Hyacinth's mind can register nothing but a sense of ecstasy in rising to meet his fate. He is in a state of "inward exaltation"(I,314) and possessed of "an intense desire to stand face to face with the sublime"(I,314) figure, "to hear his voice and touch his mutilated hand."(I,314) Hoffendahl is almost totally

a figment of Hyacinth's mind (he is never actually seen in the book). He is the symbolic presence who can recognise "the lamb of sacrifice"(I,320) and present him with the opportunity to come forward in that guise. Only in this role can Hyacinth become "a perfect little gentleman"(I,320) of courage, heroic virtue, and human value.

The second martyr figure is equally ghostly, the figure of his maternal grandfather, after whom he was named. The grandfather was a revolutionary watchmaker who died for his opinions in the struggle for liberty. Under his sense that he is destined to perish in his flower, Hyacinth thinks it just he should spend the meagre inheritance left him on Miss Pynsent's death by visiting France, making his dash at "the beautiful, horrible world."(II,113) In Paris his "mystic ancestor"(II,109) becomes a vivid presence to him. He figures him as looking like himself and as having suffered a similar fate. He takes the tragic termination of his grandfather's life - symbolically, death at the barricades - as a matter of course. Hyacinth imagines him as knowing his own secret, sharing it, and showing him the way to live and die. The grandfather's "vague yet vivid" presence becomes the "constant companion"(II,110) of his roaming, and sits down to dinner with him as if to murmur that "when one was to die to-morrow one must eat and drink, one must gratify all one's poor senses all one could to-day."(II,110) In Paris, therefore, Hyacinth lives more intensely than ever before under the influence of the wonderful, precious things society has produced, "the fabric of beauty and power it had raised."(II,112)

Hyacinth needs to feel that these men know things and can initiate him into the purposes of life as experienced by himself as a male. He can submit to playing a part in a plan, the entire nature and effect of which is unknown to him, if somebody (notably Hoffendahl) knows the whole and can invest it with meaning. Images of the male as hopelessly dishonoured and helplessly victimised by the female are presented to him by the Princess's men, both her husband, the Prince, and her follower, Captain Sholto. He

sees the Prince hanging about on the street corner watching Paul Muniment enter, an image of the pitiful gentleman who has suffered and is helpless - "the victim of a wrong he could feel as deeper than his own."(II,289) The Prince remains for most of the novel an adversary so unequal to his wife's superior powers that he hardly takes part in the action. She inflicts wounds on him in revenge for the degradation of her enforced marriage, and he lives in terror that she will degrade his family's name. Sholto is a perverted example of wasted fidelity. He has been reduced by the Princess to the state of a tout to keep her in amusements. He too is a kind of hanger-on, condemned to watch her from a distance. He finds what meaning he can in life by adoring at a remove the nature he must watch act out its extraordinary contents. Sholto is a pathetic image of the aristocratic male dishonourably reduced in the service of a woman who depletes him and destroys him.

The only male in the novel who is not subject to this power is the man who fears women and keeps his own chosen distance from life, Paul Muniment. He is the true anti-type of the hero, a young man of superior brutality and calculated prudence, a cold and passionless nature. Hyacinth exaggerates his strength and his powers and looks to friendship with him as a purer form of love. Here too he is blocked, since Paul becomes his rival, and his dream of "the religion of friendship"(II,126) is dashed. It is true of both younger men that they are incapable of love, in contrast to the parental figures of the older generation who love selflessly and disinterestedly. But Hyacinth's block is sufficiently explained by his psychic injury. Paul's is seemingly an innate quality of temperament and it makes him inscrutable to his friend. Moreover, his image shifts in the course of their acquaintance. He begins by seeming to be the future prime minister, a young man with the strength and vision to do something supreme for his fellow men. But he comes to seem fundamentally self-concerned, happy because

he gets on and looks after himself. He gives no one a handle with which to grasp him, shields his personal views from detection, and indeed takes this attitude so far that it works against him with his associates. Hyacinth at least knows he is not a gentleman, however impenetrable his nature, and comes to feel that he is somehow at the back of his own disasters. Muniment appears to rig the situation with Hoffendahl in order to induce Hyacinth to throw away his life, feeling all the while that his sacrifice would not do any good or even have any general effect. It is also his getting in with the Princess that puts Hyacinth out of doors. But his apparent malignancy is magnified by the emotions he arouses in Hyacinth, and in reality he may not have been the decisive factor in either case. Something of a child's fear of the male who has acted self-interestedly against his interests, which seems to derive from Hyacinth's sense of his father's responsibility for his plight, attaches to the figure of the friend and rival.

Paul Muniment offers the image of a man who knows how to live, who is not a victim in a love relation. But Hyacinth is mainly preoccupied with visions of the male in his helplessness or in his attempt to redeem his condition. His images of women are more varied but tend to take on extreme colorations, to be either saints or witches, as in the case of Lady Aurora and Rose Muniment. Lady Aurora, who dedicates her life and pocket money to the service of the poor and the sick, is the saint of legend come alive. Rose Muniment is a wonderful little witch with the resentments of a cripple, who pushes people about from her bedside. Hyacinth's image of the Princess involves a good deal of distortion, since he wishes to make her out a redeemer figure when she is in fact primarily a destroyer. Yet not only the Princess but all the women except one are in fact victims of situations whom he can see in a redemptive light in order to restore his mother's image. They are women who try to expiate their sins through suffering. It is Millicent Henning alone who represents the female as she ordinarily is,

a woman against whom the male might be more realistically defined. Millicent is totally different from Hyacinth in that she is accomplished at survival; while having an acute sense of deprivation, she has always known where to put her finger on the remedy. She is "elementally free,"(I,144) and has the power of "the eternal feminine"(I,144) to remake herself and alter her conditions of life. Full of life, beauty, grossness, vulgarity and vitality, she has both passion and pluck. With her the prime passions lie very close to the surface. Exchanges with her take the form of concussions for Hyacinth, but as the perversity of his attachment to fantasy rises to its height, she represents the only familiar sound in his world.

The scale of the fantasy essentially distinguishes the account of the love fate in this novel from any similar situation in the short stories. It is supremely characteristic of Hyacinth to reject ordinary reality for the life of fantasy. The whole novel reflects his fantasies. His social circumstances and all the people he meets are representatives of the things he longs for or the things he fears. His experience is always infused with the prior images of his parents, with the wounded mother made good again through suffering and with the father who is a victim of a woman's power and himself the cause of his son's injury. Conceiving himself as fallen in consequence of what his parents have done to him - the personal stain they have given him - he can only recover from his injury if he remakes their images and transforms his own in relation to them. The external conditions of his world reflect his sense of internal division as originally laid down by his parents, for he is like a Frenchman who is alien to England, and a spiritual aristocrat born to the slums, who cannot overcome the gulfs of tradition which separate him from the goals of his desires. His situation as a lover, seeking the unattainable woman and shunning the one within reach, is inevitable. For his life was sown in conflicts doomed to become fully enacted. Hyacinth's story is a prime example of a fatal

flaw in nature concurring in fatal conjunction with externally imposed conditions and leading to an inevitably tragic end.

6. THE NOVELS: WOMAN

In James's fiction the heroine stands in a more direct relation to life than the hero. She is not to the same degree afraid of life and the world, and she does not suffer from a crippling emotional ambivalence to love. Indeed, her attitude to love is the reverse: she loves too deeply for the male not to experience her as a threat; she desires to be everything for her lover, to bring him everything. One of the most positive results of her capacity to love is that she is neither divided within herself nor unable to arrive at a sense of identity. Her sense of herself is firmly rooted within her own nature, even though she may experience herself in relation to the tensions therein. The important fact is that the tensions are not an intrinsic flaw in her mental and emotional constitution, such as bifurcates the hero and necessitates his projection of his experience as a dialogue between antagonistic aspects of personality (roughly, the super-ego and the id) that prevent the central ego from developing or acting cohesively. The heroine is initially unconscious, to a greater or lesser degree, but there is no inherent psychological block that prevents her from arriving at a consciousness of her situation. She is capable of living in terms of loving, and capable of developing an awareness of what she has experienced. She is, indeed, ultimately a kind of reality principle, a figure standing in a realistic relation to life and the world.

As the representative of the life force and a potential source of life to others, she is threatened by the desire of others to possess the force they can only acquire by appropriation. She is placed in a world in which the main problem of life lies in the ways in which the self encounters the intentions and purposes of others. Since the heroine stands in a realistic relation to others, they represent their own sphere of being, not merely aspects of her own nature. She acts upon others in the social world as they react upon her; her function consists very largely in a negotiation between the powers of others and between her will and that of others. The

critical relation in which this function appears is the love relation. Love in this context is still a relationship between unequal powers, a sharp concussion or a mutual absorption. But the dramatic interplay in which the freedom of being of an individual self is limited by the freedom of another being is further developed by the representation of woman in a social context and in a more realistic light, less as a myth or symbol projected by a male imagination.

Her capacity to reflect on her experience means that she can be treated more properly as a centre of consciousness. Hers is not distinctively a private drama that takes place fundamentally on the stage of the inner consciousness and in which the elements of the life problem are projected by the power of the unconscious. Though the heroine begins by being virtually unconscious, life administers some terrible blow to her that shocks her into consciousness. In the case of the hero, the determinants in his external fate reveal and concur with an essential flaw in his psychological and emotional constitution. His fate throws into relief his own disabilities; what he suffers diminishes him personally in some degree. The fate of the heroine is less dependent on purely psychological determinants and is more the result of the externally determining conditions into which she is thrust. It therefore has less effect on the evaluation of her personality and being.

Others in the social world serve as agents of the fate through the development of their own purposes and intentions. One of the central problems for the heroine is that of manipulation; she can only maintain her own personal integrity by refusing to be abused by others, yet she is characterised by her exaggerated power of suffering. The hero has more defences against the ravages of feeling. But although consciousness with the heroine is unavoidably linked with suffering, and although she is in one sense very much at the mercy of the world, she is in another sense in a better position than the hero to rise above it. For she acquires through suffering a stronger sense of herself. Suffering, she changes, grows and develops in

personal maturity and in her knowledge of things. She is stronger than the male, has a greater capacity for survival - even when survival may seem the worst thing - and is potentially more capable of becoming the victor over circumstances.

Her heroism lies not only in her capacity for consciousness but in her capacity to go on living in the face of that of which she has become aware. She seeks avenues in which she can continue to live out the conflicts in human nature and life with which she has been confronted. Her strong constitution means that there is no escape from this. But initially, her need to arrive at knowledge usually arises out of the fact that she has an extremely deficient knowledge of the world. As a woman she is obviously limited in her experience of life by the social determinants which inhibit her action in the world. She is also limited by a quality of mind that grasps certain intuitive or imaginative truths and correspondingly avoids facts. Her habits of mind lead her into a certain inescapable moral innocence; she prefers to remain in ignorance of what she would specifically apprehend as evil. Initially, she is inner-directed rather than outer-directed, liable to reject the purely external phenomena that belong to the world of actuality as being of less significance to her than her own sense of spiritual values. In sum, she is essentially a Jamesian "romantic" in nature, possessing immediate knowledge of the kinds of things the "realist" can never know but ignorant of the things that are inevitably known to the more worldly.

To become a realist without losing romantic values would be a great achievement. However, James consistently portrays a world in which goals are mutually exclusive and in which human desires cannot be fully met or aspirations fulfilled. The heroine, like the hero, is doomed to suffer losses and to win only by forfeiture. But it is notable that James employs less of the usual images which describe the fate of love of the hero (such as the cup of life which is dashed from thirsty lips), since the heroine is

less merely fated. Because she desires to love and be loved, and because marriage represents her most likely position in life, she is not necessarily doomed to lose her lover. To win him, of course, may be an equal disaster. She too is deprived of her inheritance in life, and if she is given an inheritance it is only to throw it away or to lose it; she too sees happiness nearly within reach only to discover that it is beyond pursuit. And yet what she is destined to discover is not so much that she cannot live as that her life is severely restricted. For her, it is not a question of not living at all, but of not living fully. Life, instead of being the free pursuit of personal possibilities, turns out to be a matter of limiting conditions, imprisoning circumstances, reduced vistas, and enclosing walls.

The heroine is not confronted and mystified by contradictory versions of masculinity, as is the hero in relation to femininity. She does not generally encounter two men of different personality types by whom she is in different ways attracted and repelled. The heroine is characteristically capable of loving fully and is constitutionally framed to experience the highest intensity. She is cheated out of her experience of living, in terms of loving, by the inadequacy of the male to match her capacities. Characteristically, the heroine is let down by her lover and fails to meet her adequate match. She is not unlikely to find a selfish, cold male solely interested in appropriating his rightful inheritance through her. James uses the term "passion" to cover a variety of different ways of feeling, and the heroine's passion to possess her man is not necessarily a crude form of sensual feeling but more characteristically altruistic. Ironically, however, it is generally self-defeating. She is moved by the charitable emotions of sacred love and of sisterly affection for a soul mate as well as the force of a maternal passion which strives to be everything and to do everything for her lover. But the conflation of all these modes of love is likely to be threatening to him, and it is capable of producing disastrous

results.

The two types of female, the divine and the daemonic, recur in these narratives, but in a different pattern. The heroine is compared and contrasted with an older woman of superior will. The mother figure thus retains a position of importance, and James portrays the female as essentially increasing in will and personal force as she gets older. The older woman always has a daemonic aspect, a capacity for the assertion of her personal force at the expense of others which operates as an evil influence. In this relation, the young woman therefore shares a spiritual constitution and a similar fate with that of the hero.

The heroine remains the sport of her own nature, despite the importance of external factors in her case, and her imaginative capacity is the source both of her heroism and of her defeat. However, her capacity for both life and consciousness, elements which are normally opposed to each other, helps her to bridge the gap between the two and to develop a mature consciousness of life. Her aim is to become fully human, which means not only to embrace this consciousness of life but to act in an exemplary way. She makes the world a better place for others to live in through the quality of her being as well as her insight into the human condition. In this sense, she shares with the artist the capacity to confer life on others, to assist others to live. Like the artist, she enhances the freedom of others even if the human condition is not to be free. The hero's aim, to become noble, relates to the particular form of his tragic fate, his need to make over a weak or inferior sense of self. The heroine's manner of encompassing her fate is more fully human. Since she is spared some of the defects which result from his particular psychology, there can be a correspondingly greater depth and complexity in the presentation of her character and situation.

In Washington Square* (1880) the heroine, Catherine Sloper, is a young heiress who is deprived of her chance of marriage when she is forsaken by her lover, Morris Townsend. She worships her father and only discovers that her being is distinct from his and has its own centre when she falls in love. She falls in love passionately in a way she can never repeat again. Her father disapproves of the young man on the grounds that he is a fortune hunter, concerned with nothing but the pleasures in life which he can secure through a woman, whom he will inevitably make suffer for him. Catherine discovers that love is an "exacting passion."(49) She cannot choose between the two men, who are fatally opposed to each other. Neither does she think of giving either up. She believes that if she were only good enough, heaven would invent some way of reconciling things. She is able to choose Morris only after her father has treated her brutally and spurned her. Her sense of injury at his contempt absolves her from her duty and leaves her free to be possessed by her passion.

Her father has taken her to Europe with the idea of preventing her marriage. But when Catherine returns after a year abroad it is with an "undiverted heart"(163) and an "undiminished trust,"(185) determined to be married. She has become totally separated from her father and looks to Morris to love her deeply because of all the things she has forfeited for his sake. However, at the moment when Catherine thinks her troubles are over and that she can marry in joy and without scruple, Morris abruptly leaves her. She slowly discovers he has left her forever, and feels somehow that her aunt, who has had uncontested possession of him during her absence, has made Morris detest her. In any case, she settles to the rigid business of life, finding her duty in filling the void left by her frustrated hopes of marriage. Her father, believing that she is perverse enough to marry Morris after his death, disinherits her of his fortune exactly as he had

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* Macmillan, London, 1921

planned to do if she had married Morris. Catherine has no alternative but to face the blankness of the future in increasing awareness of "the great facts of her career"(215) - "that Morris Townsend had trifled with her affection, and that her father had broken its spring."(215)

Catherine suffers a perverse fate in love similar to that of the hero; she is denied the fruits of life at the moment when they seem to have dropped into her lap. She also shares certain emotional and spiritual traits with the hero. Although she has force of character, she feels others regard her as inferior, that she constantly disappoints them and fails to come up to expectation. She has no sense of her own rights in her struggle for happiness. She is only conscious of "immense and unexpected favours"(50) bestowed on her by the possibility of possessing so beautiful a young man. To her own mind there seems to be nothing within her nature to be proud of; she feels ugly and stupid by contrast with others. As the tensions and pressures of her conflicts increase she is shocked into a state of self-division. She is put in "a state of expectant suspense about her own actions."(96)

> She watched herself as she would have watched another person, and wondered what she would do. It was as if this other person, who was both herself and not herself, had suddenly sprung into being, inspiring her with a natural curiosity to the performance of her untested functions. (96)

But as the victim of circumstances that are quite beyond her control, she has a tendency toward "self-effacement"(49) and the sacrifice of her own desires in the effort she is called upon to make. Indeed, she has a good many of the puritanical qualities which form a part of the hero's spiritual heritage. Good, serious, and sincere, she has a rigid view of duties and an admirable sense of honour and justice. She is practical, loyal, and faithful, and hates violence and the abuse of power. Nor has she any desire for revenge. However, there are important differences from the usual treatment of the hero. If she is twice injuriously rejected, there is nothing in her feelings or state of mind to court rejection. And the irreconcilable opposition in

her situation plainly belongs to the way things happen in the external world. It is not in her head. The sympathy that is invited for the unqualified tragedy of the sensitive hero is lacking. James even adopts something of the ironic and comic distance characteristic of her father, who looks on the female as an essentially inferior species, though James is plainly concerned to portray Catherine's moral worth.

Catherine's situation is pointedly different from the beginning because she has been born "a dull, plain girl"(13) and tricked her father out of the son he wished. She is brought up in the shadow of her father's tragic loss of her mother and brother. Dr. Sloper married a beautiful heiress, much sought after, who died shortly after the death of their first-born child, "a little boy of extraordinary promise."(4) He suffers such grief that it suggests deep guilt-feelings and a sense of personal responsibility for her death (which is indeed the characteristic meaning of these early deaths incurred in youthful marriages). Though he is not held responsible by others, he does not escape his own criticism, which is, of course, the more "competent"(4) and "formidable."(4)

> He walked under the weight of this private censure for the rest of his days and bore for ever the scars of a castigation to which the strongest hand he knew had treated him on the night that followed his wife's death. (4)

Catherine is doubly disabled because she is of an inferior sex, which renders her "an inadequate substitute for his lamented first-born,"(4) and because she is inferior in personality and beauty to her mother. As she explains to Morris, she knows that her father hates her because "we can't govern our affections:"(170)

> He is so fond of my mother, whom we lost so long ago. She was beautiful, and very, very brilliant; he is akways thinking of her. I am not at all like her; Aunt Penniman has told me that. Of course, it isn't my fault; but beither is it his fault. All I mean is, it's true; and it's a stronger reason for his never being reconciled than simply his dislike of you. (170)

Her upbringing differs radically from that of a son since she is not loved by her father, much less in the way a mother would love a son, and she knows this at first intuitively and then with increasing force as she is given evidence of it. This circumstance has a double effect, because on the one hand it produces a deep attachment to her father, which lies behind her search for a romantic attachment (just like his own), and on the other hand it makes it possible for her not to remain emotionally bound to him and to break with him in order to form tnat new attachment.

She is "deeply and incurably wounded"(210) by what happens to her and has "no faculty for quenching memory,"(215-16) although she appears to others to bury "this fruitless episode as deep as if it had terminated by her own choice."(210) Through her suffering she comes to understand her experience. When the story opens, she is innocent and inarticulate, but her dry, spare words are expressive of deeply felt experience. She has force of character and "a style of her own"(41) from the start. During the course of the story she grows "more positive",(165) "more mature,"(165) and discerning. She is even thought "stern and contradictious"(113) by her aunt, and her father becomes increasingly irritated with her firmness, which he interprets as perverse obstinacy. As her purpose ripens she sheds her weakness and self-doubt, always acting upon her own judgement. Despite her suffering and loneliness she seeks no pity or consolation from others.

Her self possession and dignity arise from her integrity in her relations with others. Sincere to a fault and unconcerned for money, she cannot entertain Morris's suggestion that she should coax her father into revoking his threat of disinheritance. What she minds is having to transgress a "sacred law"(142) and invite her father's "curse."(127) Disinheritance, not the loss of money, distresses her. She requires considerable strength of character to oppose her father, and she wins her moral victory by maintaining her integrity in so doing. When Morris jilts her, she tells

him that it is she who broke off the engagement, thereby protecting Morris and preserving her own dignity. She withstands his abuse of her, however unjust; for he accuses her of having played with Morris's feelings and suspects her of waiting for him to die in order to marry him and have everything. Finally, he insults her by requesting under threat of changing his will, that she promise not to marry him.

> All her feelings were merged in the sense that he was trying to treat her as he had treated her years before. She had suffered from it then; and now all her experience, all her acquired tranquillity and rigidity protested. She had been so humble in her youth that she could now afford to have a little pride, and there was something in this request, and in her father's thinking himself so free to make it, that seemed an injury to her dignity. (218-19)

Catherine refuses to be thus manipulated. When Morris does, in fact, return with the expectation of marriage, James shows how far Catherine has come, how much she has lived, and how much she has learned. She emerges heroically, whereas Morris is exposed.

Catherine is the only character to emerge with honour and blameless. She is seen to be generous and deeply compassionate. She judges her father, her aunt, and Morris justly and without rancour. If she loses her capacity to love fully she grows in charity. She comes to be liked in society and takes on the position of "a sort of kindly maiden aunt to the younger portion of society",(216) helpful to young women whose situations resemble her own experience. She has an "impracticable *physique*"(126) which foretells a long life, so that she needs fortitude to face the future. Though the victim of circumstances beyond her control, she has risen above them by accepting her fate.

Catherine's story is in part the growth of her strongly centred self to maturity and consciousness. It is possible to view the novel as the presentation, through her conscious female ego, of a battle between her father, as the super-ego and masculine authority, and Morris, as the id and pleasure principle. Neither man has the capacity to become fully aware

because both develop obsessions and have psychic weaknesses that block their perceptions. For this reason Catherine's character is unknowable to them.

Catherine is the diplomatist who has to negotiate between superior powers in mortal combat. As a woman in a male dominated world she is particularly vulnerable to her father's authority, which limits her freedom to an exceptional degree. As a doctor and observer of life, he assumes his superior wisdom in judging Morris and presumes to question Morris's sister in order to prove himself right. Though a professional success, he is a personal failure, an ostensibly scientific observer-philosopher whose passionate will distorts his conclusions about human nature. He is originally a just and honest man, who seeks "to learn something interesting and to do something useful."(3) His interest in seeing whether Catherine might be loved for her "moral worth"(44) turns into resentment when he realises that her adoration for himself has limits. He seeks to test her worth, which he sees as inverse to her will to oppose him. Her opposition provokes him to treat her as if she were merely an annoying object. He is diminished by his obsessionally distorted view of her, which arises from his egotistical need to be proved right. He goes beyond the bounds of legitimate human behaviour by making an experiment of his own daughter. He is a variation on the type of male who cannot love. Even if his mistake is a tragic one, it severely qualifies his humanity.

Morris is in no position to win against Dr. Sloper, who expends more will and authority than any other male in the James canon. He would like to, and argues that it is a point of honour to do so, though this is in part a disguise of his motive to marry Catherine and to get the money. For he is a perverted quester, a young man of intelligence and sensitivity who has somehow been defrauded of his expectation of a brilliant career. He has spent his patrimony in early youth and has nothing to show for it. He gives Mrs. Penniman the impression that he has been deceived by false friends, betrayed by others, and dogged by an evil star which has prevented

his success. So far as Catherine is concerned he looks on himself with "a perfectly definite appreciation of his value,"(141) and considers he has been snubbed by her father in a "benevolent attempt to confer a distinction upon a young woman of inferior characteristics."(100) He neither loves Catherine nor appreciates her qualities, regarding her as a woman who will provide him with his rightful fortune. He is prevented from attaining his goal by a number of familiar elements in his fate: an invincible rival who has the power to forestall him; the interference of a mother figure, who harms his interests while ostensibly furthering them; and the unreserved passion of the young woman herself, whose undivided heart makes demands upon him he cannot meet. Had Morris been the centre of the story his ambivalence to love would have been plainer, though it is sufficiently suggested. Catherine's forfeit is sufficiently large to place on him a burden of responsibility. Her passion for him clearly continues to increase throughout the story; she is thought to "stick"(122) and "cling".(136) Her aunt's "meddlesome folly"(202) makes it clear to him that Catherine loves him so much that he may do anything. Catherine herself tells him that she has given up everything for him and that it would kill her to lose him. He has said earlier that he did not wish to become subordinate to her and to owe her everything. His fear steadily mounts until he realises that she will never let him go, at which point he runs away. The fact that he returns at forty to try once more to get a position in life through her, after making a kind of non-marriage to a woman who soon dies, shows that he still regards Catherine as representing life and fortune - for she has retained her mother's inheritance. He is incapable of understanding why Catherine rejects him, and is quite without self awareness.

This is true of Mrs. Penniman too, for she always has a glossy view of Morris, and supposes that Catherine does not marry because she is still in love with him. Mrs. Penniman is an example of the fool who ministers to the tragedy of others. She is an agent of Catherine's fate

through "taking too much on herself"(227) with respect to Morris. Catherine sees this with the clairvoyance of love. Her aunt is always talking to somebody about the affair, and she limits Catherine's freedom to control the course of events. She has an irrational will and becomes destructive because she has no conception of anyone's rights but her own. She has a "powerful imagination",(33) unbounded by reality. She is self-centred and theatrical. However she sees herself as helping the star-crossed lovers, as "the central figure"(99) who commands the stage.

Catherine refuses to be made into a romantic figure who will enhance her aunt's fantasies. She does not appeal to Mrs. Penniman's imagination as Morris does. Though her surrogate mother, Mrs. Penniman transfers her affections to the young man at Catherine's cost. She takes Morris's side as the gulf between the lovers widens and she appears to Catherine as having taken part in a deliberate plan to trick her. Part of the evil of the situation lies in her maternal passion. She has never had a child, and sees herself "as if she were Morris's mother or sister - a mother or sister of an emotional temperament,"(176) and absorbs herself in ministering to the happiness of this "handsome and tyrannical"(176) young man. Even his increasing brutality toward her comes to take on "a sort of filial value",(177) though he first impressed her by his "calculated deference".(176) As James observes, "even the maternal passion in Mrs. Penniman would have been romantic and factitious."(176) She is so taken up by him that she comes to feel that "if Morris should decidedly not be able to get her brother's money, it would not do for him to marry Catherine without it."(134) It is left for her to defend his motives after he flees, for she remains gulled by the hollowness of his words.

The purity of Catherine's affection is thrown into relief by the spurious quality of her aunt's emotions. The two women are in total contrast and the evil of Mrs. Penniman's interference is deepened by the betrayal of her privileged position as the girl's guardian. From Catherine's point of

view she is a most alarming adversary because her misdemeanours cannot be pinned down. Her father's views are well enough known for Catherine to arm herself against them. But her aunt does not come out as an enemy against whom it is possible for her to defend herself. Mrs. Penniman is another example of the mother figure of inconsistent and contradictory advice, who thinks herself a beneficient influence upon the young when she is really a threat to them. It is significant that she has a "rich vitality"(222) and flourishes while Catherine gets older. For she is a kind of psychic energy let loose on Catherine's happiness, a will expressed at the cost of those around her.

The interference of her aunt, the strength of her father's will, and the defects in Morris's nature contribute to a fatal conjunction of events which deprive Catherine of her happiness. Her youth and sex make her supremely the victim of her circumstances, yet the qualities which the affair has brought out in her nature make her a fine heroine. As the novel closes and she settles with her "morsel of fancywork ... for life, as it were,"(234) the reader is left with the impression of her truncated possibilities and the confinement of the walls of her drawing room. She will live as she can, but she will not live as she would have liked.

In The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) James conceives of his heroine, Isabel Archer, as "the mere slim shade of an intelligent but presumptuous girl",(AN,48) endowed with "high attributes"(AN,48) and values, "affronting her destiny."(AN,48) He acknowledges that he can only give his subject as he sees it, "not hoping to make it seem altogether natural";(II,19) for he invests Isabel with every quality of nature and opportunity of fortune with

* Macmillan, London, 1921, 2 Vols.

which to explore life freely and expand her potentialities, only to demonstrate that she is a creature as fully determined as any of his fated heroes, the product of a network of conditions that proves her to be anything but free.

There is considerable repetition in the events of Isabel's life. She is the product of an American background in which her father has lived out what she is to discover. "He had squandered a substantial fortune"(I,37) and gambled it away "freely."(I,37) He had similarly "a large way of looking at life, of which his restlessness and even his occasional incoherency of conduct had been only a proof."(I,38) He departed willingly from a world in which "the difficulty of doing as one liked appeared to increase as one grew older."(I,38) Isabel is given her first opportunity in life by her aunt, Mrs. Touchett, who wishes to do something for the family to redress the pattern of death and disaster. Perceiving Isabel as a young woman who deserves the opportunity to see the world, she takes her home to England, with the idea of conducting her around Europe.

Isabel wishes to leave the past behind and to begin life afresh. According to her aunt, she seems to have been brought up as if she had a million. She has an immense curiosity about life, and "a fixed determination to regard the world as a place of brightness, of free expansion, of irresistible action."(I,60) Before the novel opens "her visions of a completed consciousness"(I,126) have concerned themselves largely with "moral images - things as to which the questions would be whether they pleased her sublime soul". (I,126) However, her potentiality to grow comes to depend upon her fate in love. She has no particular desire to marry, believing that a woman may be sufficient to herself, like her friend, Henrietta Stackpole. But she attracts people to her. She is at once pursued by an American friend, Caspar Goodwood, who is clearly sexually aggressive and checks her vision of the multitudinous opportunities of life. Though she gives him no hope he refuses to be repulsed and retires for a period of

probation.

Isabel's consciousness of possible felicities is quickened by her experiences. She soon receives an offer of marriage from Lord Warburton, a friend of the Touchetts and a "hero of romance."(I,80) "He appears to have everything, to know everything, and to <u>be</u> everything."(I,86) Yet he seems to offer too big a bribe and to represent a limitation upon her freedom, partly because of the social definition he would impose. The opportunity makes Isabel aware that she has initially "a system and an orbit of her own"(I,127) and wishes to retain her autonomy. The terms of her refusal reveal her as the sport of her own romantic imagination, although they are ironical in view of her eventual destiny. She tells Warburton, "I can't escape my fate."(I,164) "It's not my fate to give up."(I,164) "I can't escape unhappiness."(I,164) "I can never be happy in any extraordinary way; not by turning away, by separating myself ... from life. From the usual chances and dangers, from what most people know and suffer."(I,165) One implication of her refusal is that it enhances her responsibility to do something with her life. It makes her the apostle of potentiality.

Isabel's next opportunity is her endowment with a fortune. It comes, unbeknown to her, through the agency of her cousin, Ralph Touchett, who directs his father to make over half of his own inheritance to her. Ralph is touched by her desire to look about her and to see all for herself. "A character like that," he said to himself - "a real little passionate force to see at play is the finest thing in nature."(I,75) He wishes to make her rich in order to meet the requirements of her imagination, and cannot conceive of a nobler act than "to facilitate the execution of good impulses."(I,232) She comes herself to see that "the fine things to be done by a rich, independent, generous girl who took a large human view of occasions and obligations were sublime in the mass."(I,283) Her fortune comes to assume "a part of her better self"(I,283) in her own mind, and what she does with it is similar to what Ralph has tried to do for her, to invest

somebody else with the means of living out his potentialities. She marries Gilbert Osmond. Her marriage to Osmond is a morbid perversity, for he is a nullity, a man with "no property, no title, no honours, no houses, nor lands, nor position, nor reputation, nor brilliant belongings of any sort,"(II,65) although Isabel judges him in his person to be everything. As she tells Ralph, "he knows everything, he understands everything, he has the kindest, gentlest, highest spirit."(II,64) It is characteristic of her generous romantic imagination to dress out his poverties as if they were riches. Ralph summaries her position in an image of her as "soaring far up in the blue,"(II,61) "sailing in the bright light, over the heads of men,"(II,61) only to drop straight to the ground when someone "tosses up a faded rosebud - a missile that should never have reached you."(II,61) The image anticipates what she herself discovers to be the meaning of her marriage at a later date, as she puts it to herself.

> She had taken all the first steps in the purest confidence, and then she had suddenly found the infinite vista of a multiplied life to be a dark, narrow alley with a dead wall at the end. Instead of leading to the high places of happiness from which the world would seem to lie below one, so that one could look down with a sense of exaltation and advantage, and judge and choose and pity, it led rather downward and earthward, into realms of restriction and depression where the sound of other lives, easier and freer, was heard as from above, and where it served to deepen the feeling of failure.(II,166)

Isabel's marriage could never have taken place without the money, and she learns that she was not even free when she made her mistaken choice - a choice most deliberately made - for Madame Merle, formerly Osmond's mistress, had introduced her to him with the idea of providing for her unacknowledged daughter, Pansy, who is brought up as if she had been the product of Osmond's deceased wife. Isabel has wished to choose her fate, but her fate is the result of "nature, providence, fortune,"(II,138) and "the eternal mystery of things"(II,138) in which everything is a contributory factor.

After Isabel has come to understand the meaning of her fate she learns that she has been "adored"(II,364) by Ralph and that with him she

might have had everything. Ralph is the lover doomed by disease, who has "forbidden himself the riot of expression,"(I,47) and contented himself with "the imagination of loving - as distinguished from ... being loved."(I,47) When she first arrives at Gardencourt, his father's house, Isabel is introduced to the fact that there is a ghost in the house which she will not see until she has suffered. To some extent the ghost represents her own immense desire to live, and the trials she must undergo in order to know that experience is "a poisoned drink."(I,188) At the moment of Ralph's death she sees the ghost as if it were Ralph himself, signifying what they might have had in a life together. Places where people have died, including her own original home, are "full of life"(I,30) because they are "full of experience - of people's feelings and sorrows."(I,30) Ralph's love has the power to survive pain, and he will continue to live in her mind as a part of his own frustrated possibilities and her own.

Isabel has offended against the destiny she might have had. What is left is the need to face the meaning of the destiny she now has. In her return to Osmond after Ralph's death there is an element of the stricken deer seeking the innermost shade, which suggests her need to let her wounds heal over time. But there is a more positive reason for her return: her marriage represents the single sacred act of her life. She exemplified her freedom in marrying the man of her choice, and she accepts the consequences. She viewed marriage as "the observance of a magnificent form,"(II,312) and her quest for ultimate values is not diminished by her new awareness of life's perils. She now demonstrates her freedom in her capacity to reflect, rethink, and relive the meaning of her choice. In respect of friendship, she remarks that "one's ideal {can} never become concrete."(I,234) The same is true of the human situation. Though she has thrown her life away, she becomes more fully human through her sufferings. As James foresaw, she becomes "consistently wise only at the cost of an amount of folly which ... constitute{s} almost a direct appeal to charity."(I,127) The purpose of

her fate is her comprehension of its meaning which can come only by living with it. In her capacity to reflect upon her experience and become imaginatively conscious she exemplifies the activity of the artist himself, of whom James says in the preface: "Tell me what the artist is, and I will tell you of what he has become conscious. Thereby I shall express to you at once his boundless freedom and his 'moral' reference." [(AN,46-47)]

Isabel is a heroine whose "nobleness of imagination"[(I,160)] renders her "a good many services"[(I,60)] and plays her "a good many tricks."[(I,60)] It is the source of her heroism and of her defeat. Her quest for knowledge has involved "the finest capacity for ignorance,"[(I,250)] in which her original flaw lies. As Henrietta suggests, she thought she could live in a world of her own dreams without taking the world of reality into account - "the toiling, striving, suffering,""sinning"[(I,273)] world which surrounds her. She has wanted only a "happy knowledge,"[(I,56)] and has been afraid of suffering, of the world, love, and even freedom. Like the hero, she has looked on the world as "a region of delight and terror"[(I,27)] on love as an engulfment of the personality, and on freedom as such a fine thing that it would be humiliating not to make good use of it. In these respects her situation is analogous to that of the hero. However, the theme of her fate is pursued less by reference to her psychological nature than in her confrontation with the circumstances of the social and historical world in which James so firmly places her. That confrontation nevertheless enables James to deepen his analysis of the male's fate in love by mediating his perception of the male through her consciousness.

Isabel steps as a pure and spontaneous fund of life into a world of masculine malaise. Every male character is flawed in some way and each is subject to a perverse fate in love. In addition, each faces paralysing conditions. Goodwood is a man of energy who cannot express himself in an heroic field of action. Warburton is a "radical"[(I,84)] of the upper class,

who is "the victim of a critical age."(I,87) "He has ceased to believe in himself and he doesn't know what to believe in."(I,87) He "can neither abolish himself as a nuisance nor maintain himself as an institution."(I,87) Ralph is an alienated American who has "the key to modern criticism"(I,44) in his hand and no way of using it. Osmond is an obscure American living with his eye on the world with no means of taking up a position in it. Old Mr. Touchett has a "massive"(I,247) identity as the representative of "a great financial house,"(I,247) but he belongs to a past that is dying, and is dying himself. All of them look to Isabel to replenish their sense of value, and she fulfils a psychic need in their lives.

In the opening dialogue of the novel, Daniel Touchett observes that in relation to the general discussion of sickness, malaise and boredom, "the ladies will save us ... that is the best of them will."(I,10) Warburton replies that he will lay his hands on one as soon as possible and "tie her round my neck as a life-preserver."(I,10) Isabel is from the first the victim of a male dominated society in which the men seek to annex life by possessing her. She is a potential source of life to them, "as good as a summer rain,"(I,48) as agreeable as "the sound of flowing water,"(I,66) and with a "garden-like"(I,63) nature that suggests "lengthening vistas."(I,63) "She touches nothing that she doesn't adorn!"(I,79) Inevitably her "strong will,"(I,48) "high temper,"(I,48) and "fund of life"(I,39) will be threatened by the attempted appropriation of her lovers.

Isabel's is the only case in the James canon in which a woman is confronted by lovers of different types. While this deepens her analogy with the ambivalent hero, it also enables James to probe the male personality through her consciousness. Basically her lovers fall into two types, representing two different ways of loving: Goodwood and Osmond both threaten to engulf her completely, while Ralph and Warburton love her from a distance and appreciate her selflessly.

In her response to Goodwood James extends his treatment of male sexual aggression beyond anything that appears in the hero of the male-centred stories and novels. Goodwood represents an obvious case of sexual insistence, which Isabel feels as

> an energy - and she had already felt it as a power - that was of his very nature. It was in no degree a matter of his 'advantages' - it was a matter of the spirit that sat in his clear-burning eyes like some tireless watcher at a window. She might like it or not, but he insisted, ever, with his whole weight and force: even in one's usual contact with him one had to reckon with that. (I,143)

He pressures her until she feels that she is suffocating for lack of air, and she reacts with an immediate need to escape. He never accepts his defeat and is purged of the weakness characteristic of the rejected lover. He has a lofty nature, which divests him of his humanity yet endows him with dignity. However, as in the case of the female who is all will, Goodwood's command of respect does not qualify his exertion of his will upon Isabel.

Isabel feels an "appreciable shock"(I,100) upon Warburton's proposal, not, however, from his form of loving, for his is a passion sifted clear of all baser parts of emotion. The shock relates to his being so much a "'personage'"(I,126) as to represent "an aggression almost to the degree of an affront, quite to the degree of an inconvenience."(I,126)

> He appeared to demand of her something that no one else, as it were, had presumed to do. What she felt was that a territorial, a political, a social magnate had conceived the design of drawing her into the system in which he rather invidiously lived and moved. A certain instinct, not imperious, but persuasive, told her to resist - murmured to her that virtually she had a system and an orbit of her own. (I,126-27)

He appeals to her imagination but her personality would be confined by the social role she would be given as his wife. He combines the "extrinsic advantages"(I,185) of opportunity, wealth and power with the "intrinsic"(I,185) merit of being a good man. With him Isabel would have possessions, kindness, honour, and a deep security. But she would be so smothered in delightful things that they would quite stifle her own sense of being. She would never

be able to discover her own identity, achieve anything on the grounds of her own personality, or even discover her own wishes and fears. Hers is the desire of the romantic sould not to be defined by worldly things that would limit her freedom, and it is expressed in the famous discussion between Madame Merle and Isabel on the nature of the personality. Yet Isabel likes Warburton extremely well, and trusts him absolutely, regarding the friendship as a large bank balance upon which she can draw. Like Goodwood, Warburton is a man who loves only once and is undiminished by rejection.

Isabel can do nothing for Warburton because in her eyes he has everything already. The case is different with Osmond: "She could surrender to him with a kind of humility, she could marry him with a kind of pride; she was not only taking, she was giving."(II,72) Her aspirations are overtaken by "a more primitive need."(II,72)

> The desire for unlimited expansion had been succeeded in her soul by the sense that life was vacant without some private duty that might gather one's energies to a point. (II,71)

Furthermore, she "vibrates" to Osmond, a term James uses for the full arousal of passion. She has known herself capable of this. "Deep in her soul - it was the deepest thing there - lay a belief that if a certain light should dawn she could give herself completely."(I,63) This image is from the beginning "too formidable to be attractive,"(I,63) and her alarm is amply justified by her experience in marriage. She enters marriage with a full faith, believing Osmond to be "the first gentleman in Europe,"(II,172) "the incarnation of taste,"(II,62) who exemplifies the qualities of mind as well as the pursuit of a life congenial with his ideals. Her imagination supplies him with "the human element"(I,337) and she seeks the goals that Christopher Newman defined in his romantic quest: the completion of self, the liberation of spirit, the transcendence of circumstance, and an ideal concordance of values. Instead she is imprisoned in a trap of murderous steel, representing her deepest fears. Nowhere else does James ever develop so fully the terms

of entrapment and engulfment of one personality by another. With Newman's quest for a wife who would represent him to the world, James does not imagine the plight of the woman who would become a function of his personality. Here, James presents a woman who falls victim to a perverted male will.

As Ralph is first to recognise, Osmond seeks Isabel as his instrumentality. He represents Osmond's desire

> to surround his interior with a sort of invidious sanctity, to tantalise society with a sense of exclusion, to make people believe his house was different from every other.... His ambition was not to please the world, but to please himself by exciting the world's curiosity and then declining to satisfy it. It had made him feel great, ever, to play the world a trick. (II,126-27)

Isabel is to be smothered and stifled in her very sense of being. James characteristically presents love as a battle of unequal wills in which the female has the stronger will, but in which male and female are intrinsically opposed. Isabel's plight is compounded by a fatal opposition of mind between herself and Osmond, which makes them a principle of offence to each other. She comes to realize that Osmond would give her no role but to interpret him to the world:

> The real offence, as she ultimately perceived, was her having a mind of her own at all. Her mind was to be his - attached to his own like a small garden-plot to a deer-park. He would rake the soil gently and water the flowers; he would weed the beds and gather an occasional nosegay. It would be a pretty piece of property for a proprietor already far-reaching. (II,175)

Behind all the appearances of culture and knowledge "his egotism {lies} hidden like a serpent in a bank of flowers."(II,172) His will is a psychic drive to power and self assertion that would invade and destroy any other will.

It is in the tales rather than the novels that James develops the monstrosity of the male who suffers an increasingly perverse fate in love because he is incapable of love himself. However, Osmond represents a development of Morris Townsend. The image of the romantic quester is pene-

trated to reveal the monstrosity behind the selfish ego of the male who cannot love and bleeds a woman for his sense of life. In Osmond's case James distorts the terms that he would use for the disinherited prince of life debarred his heritage, for whom life is a Barmecide banquet. Osmond is like a fastidious prince who is disgusted with himself for having abdicated his royal position. To his own mind he should have been born a Pope, or a duke - or a Warburton. For him Isabel's stock rises when he knows she has refused Warburton, the one man he envies. He is "like a sceptical voyager strolling on the beach waiting for the tide, looking seaward yet not putting to sea,"(II,168) until he finds that Isabel will put the wind in his sails. He does not get all that he expects from her for he is made sensible of her scorn of his assumptions. It is left only for him to hate her, a sufficient occupation and comfort for him, because hatred is his one deep and sincere feeling. He represents a studied and wilful renunciation of life. He would be satisfied if he could destroy Isabel's capacity for life in revenge for his failure to possess her life force.

In the context of this fate Isabel comes to feel "what might have been"(II,178) in the world; the memory of Ralph makes her feel "the good of the world,"(II,178) and he makes "the blasted circle round which she walk{s} more spacious."(II,178) Ralph is, in fact, everything that Isabel had mistakenly thought Osmond to be. It is he who is "the apostle of freedom,"(II,215) "the illumination of wisdom,"(II,52) and who has an independent mind which expresses "a boundless liberty of appreciation."(I,43) He is the bright, free, generous spirit of conscious intelligence, who is also good. James makes Ralph the redeemer of Isabel's world. It makes a difference to her that such a man exists, and, moreover, that he has adored her. Ralph does, however, bear a relation to the Jamesian wounded lover, and the crux of the matter lies in the bequest. One of the effects of the bequest of Ferdinand Mason is to leave his money to Caroline in lieu of his own love, which he could not give her. Any ordinary soul would agree with Ralph's

father, that if he is in love with Isabel he ought to marry her, even if he should only live for a short time. Ralph loves Isabel too much to perceive the danger in which he places her by the bequest, and is blinded to the possibility of her being mistaken or exposed to abuse. His father sees the dangers inherent in the situation, but loves Ralph and does what he wishes. Ralph is connected with the figures of men who are inadequate to women and destroy their lives by letting them down. However, he felt sure that Isabel would have refused him. They circle about each other without ever making any near approach, until his death-bed confession. He is portrayed as a man who has been given a beautiful edifice in Isabel, who is obliged to survey the building from the outside because he lacks the key to fit the lock. So he keeps within his own edifice, ordering a band to play continuously in his ante-room so that the sounds of the world may not reach him and others might think that dancing is going on within. It is easier to develop a secret hoard of indifference to life than to look it in the face knowing that one is denied it. It is for this reason that Ralph reduces all his senses, but for Isabel herself it is a kind of rebuff.

> Isabel often found herself irritated by this perpetual fiddling; she would have liked to pass through the ante-room, as her cousin called it, and enter the private apartments. It mattered little that he had assured her they were a very dismal place; she would have been glad to undertake to sweep them and set them in order. It was but half-hospitality to let her remain outside. (I,72)

Ralph's love seems more perfect and compelling because it remains an idea. He is the only man in the novel capable of loving who is not concerned with being loved in return. His manner of loving is an exercise in charitable affections as between soul mates and spiritual brothers, and Isabel finally calls him "brother."(II,364) James never allows marriages to take place between people who share a similar psychological and spiritual constitution, except as pure fictions. However, such love as Ralph and Warburton have seems more content to remain in the sphere of contemplation than of action, and partly for this reason seems more liberating. On the other hand,

spiritual love, particularly in the case of the male seems attenuated, and to belong to men of mind, who cannot develop a full physical being. For Ralph, in particular, Isabel has the fragrance and the sweet tasting property of forbidden fruit.

Unlike the males in the novel, Isabel seems capable both of spiritual love and of sexual passion. Her dilemma lies in being divested of the capacity to conjoin the two in the love of one man. She is in the position of the ambivalent lover, married to a man she no longer loves, and in love with a man she can no longer have. Romantic passion seems doomed to this kind of split. It is the more ordinary people like Henrietta and Mr. Bantling (however much their match is a comic parody of the larger quest for union), understanding each other not at all and with no high expectations of love, who seem to rub along together successfully.

For Isabel there has lain between the proposal and the acceptance of marriage "a dusky, uncertain tract which looked ambiguous and even slightly treacherous, like a moorland seen in the winter twilight."(II,19) It surpasses the hero's apprehension of the destructive potentialities of love; it also represents her fear of life in the world, in which her freedom is menaced by the adverse will of those whose principles differ from her own. As with the hero her fate is wrought by both elements in her own nature and external circumstances. However, in her case this coalescence of determination does not reflect a defect of nature but rather indicates an ignorance of worldly personalities. Moreover, although she accepts responsibility for her own fate, she is clearly operated on by others. She is not crippled by emotional problems. Her "garden-like quality"(I,63) of nature makes introspection for her "an exercise in the open air,"(I,63) and visits to the recesses of her spirit a gathering of a lap-full of roses. Those natures which are "only dusky pestiferous tracts, planted thick with ugliness and misery"(I,63) come to be exemplified in Madame Merle, who cannot carry out any commerce with her own spirit.

Madame Merle is a further example of a perverted mother figure. Her ambition for her daughter, Pansy, leads her to become a disastrous agent of Isabel's fate. She operates at a remove from the central action, because her love for Pansy determines her abuse of Isabel. Madame Merle represents what Isabel might become without the heroic capacity to accept her fate and comprehend its meaning. She is anti-heroic and the opposite of Isabel in temperament, yet she is likewise a victim of Osmond. She was once a woman of passion but her circumstances have inhibited the fulfilment of her potentialities. The fountains of her feeling have dried up and she has become, like Osmond, a perverted quester, who pursues her aims deviously and spuriously, in every sense replacing true values with false ones. There is nothing of her left but the shell which she presents to the public. She exists only in relation to other people. No wonder that she defines the self in terms of its material expressions: house, furniture, garments, books, and the company one keeps. She herself has only garments and social relations. She attracts sympathy because she has lost so heavily in life. In the end Madame Merle is depleted, but during the unfolding of the action, she is seen in relation to Isabel as "the great round world itself,"(I,318) in which the innocent fail to perceive the ulterior motives of their pursuers. Isabel sees her as the model of the mondaine, social, cultivated and civilized, that she would like to become. Isabel is easily deceived by her because she seems so different, so accomplished, so faultless. Yet she indicates the inherent threat in the association of woman with the world; she represents the terrible attractions of the world. Isabel wishes to hold the light up to her, but she is on the wrong side of the wall behind which lies the private garden of Madame Merle's talents. In this sense she is like the hero who confronts woman as the principle of the other, but who lacks the key to understanding. Osmond's sister has to tell her the whole truth of Madame Merle's relation to Osmond and Pansy before she is totally undeceived. She then forgives her, comprehending her tragedy.

Madame Merle closely resembles Osmond in that her nature has become overlaid by custom and lost its capacity for human feeling. He too represents the evils of the world and a perverted will. They both reveal the hollowness of an outer directed life, in which the personality has become absorbed in conformance to convention, an expression that demands recognition by others as it lacks personal value. They can only try to make themselves appear to be in the right, and always stand in a false relation to ultimate values. By contrast, though Isabel may seem to be in the wrong, she is always right in absolute terms. Though she cannot win against Osmond in the ordinary transactions of life, it is a definition of her heroism that she stands in the shadow of the ideal and gains her own soul.

Isabel's generosity in her judgment upon Madame Merle and Osmond is a further illustration of her heroism. She has neither bitterness nor desire for revenge. She sees them in the light of their own failures. When she reviews her own fate and Osmond's she sees "the magnitude of his deception"(II,170) in not having seen the whole of her own nature, and the revelation is "like the bell that was to ring up the curtain upon the real drama of their life."(II,170) She grasps his point of view as clearly as if he had been able to put it himself. She likewise intuits the inner meaning of his mistress's life.

It is Isabel's acceptance of the world and her redeeming consciousness that distinguish her from the hero. Like him she is injured in love in an inescapable fate. She too takes no revenge, harbours no rancour, wins by forfeiture and is heroic in her acceptance of her fate. But she accepts responsibility for her own fate, and finds in this the meaning of her life. She represents an advance beyond the hero: her capacity to feel is never diminished, and she is shocked into consciousness by what happens to her. Her ability to achieve full consciousness of her experience is based upon her quality of spontaneous feeling. The capacity to feel is represented as the spur to comprehension: the extent to which she suffers necessitates that

she understand what it is that she has suffered. While this leads to a comprehensive knowledge of herself, others and the world, it also leads to the achievement of a fully human status. Also, despite her romantic affection for Ralph, she can expect nothing from love itself. What was passion in her is converted into charity, compassion and generosity toward others. Unlike Osmond, who despises the world he is dependent upon for recognition, Isabel would redeem the world, in order to make it a better place for others to live in. In this she exemplifies the activity of the artist and demonstrates why James values such "frail vessels of consciousness."(AN,49)

Of James's heroines, Isabel resembles the hero most closely, but her feminine virtues enable James to develop further the qualities of heroism. Isabel is freed from the disabilities of the hero, whose psychological flaw renders the unattainability of his desires a relatively personal matter. Her frustrated experience of love is deepened and extended by James's placing the matter firmly in the social world, which makes her failure a question of how the world works. This is to endow her story with an even greater significance.

In The Spoils of Poynton* (1897) the perverse love-fate of the heroine, Fleda Vetch, results in the usual way from the accidents of nature and fortune. The final circumstances which determine her loss are entirely beyond her control, but in this case the circumstances are so enveloping that her only integrity for herself lies in the mere act of freeing herself from them. Her social origins deny her the money and status that would make her marriageable. Her mother is dead and her father exposes her to the perils taken up by a substitute mother, Mrs. Gereth, who, with the best

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* Macmillan, London, 1922.

intentions harms her interests. She does everything she can to bring about Fleda's marriage to her son, Owen, but is, in fact, instrumental in preventing it. Fleda is also faced by a rival figure, Mona Brigstock, to whom Owen is about to become engaged at the time when Fleda meets him and falls in love with him. Owen is typical of the ineffectual and helpless young man who is the victim of women of superior will. He allows himself to be entrapped by Mona, thereby failing to seize the occasion that Fleda offers for him to win her honourably.

Although all the figures who characteristically act as the agents of the frustrated love fate are operative in Fleda's case, there is a sense in which she is less purely fated than earlier heroines. Like the hero she is doomed to suffer an inextricable set of determining circumstances, and it is to some extent an illusion to suppose retrospectively that things might have worked out differently. Yet throughout James maintains the tension between her fatedness and her freedom, making the quality of her nature vital to her eventual loss. Hers is not a drama of the unconscious in which the elements of her fate merely enact themselves. It is her capacity for consciousness and her exemplary values which prove decisive. Her understanding of the implications of everything that happens to her only contributes to the tragedy. It requires that she should win honourably. Had she been unscrupulous she might easily have won, but she is manipulated by persons less scrupulous than herself, and she cannot owe her happiness to interference in her own life or those of others. Her problem is largely to determine her own future and to remain free, and though her hopes are frustrated her consciousness is redemptive. Her capacity to live mentally and imaginatively is greater than that of any previous heroine and qualifies the end of her story. For it cannot be said that she has not lived, even if she does not get her man, and in the future she will continue to live through her mental apprehension.

The sense in which Fleda is fated to lose Owen lies partly in conditions antecedent to her acquaintance with the Gereths. The story of the Gereth family is centred in Poynton, a magnificent old house which contains the artistic treasures of the past. It is "all France and Italy, with their ages composed to rest."(20) Upon the death of her husband, Mrs. Gereth loses the house and its contents to her son. She dreads "the inevitable surrender"(13) of her possessions, but also fears Owen's choosing a wife "so exceptionally tainted"(14) as not to appreciate them while depriving her of them. She argues her right to the things by virtue of her appreciation of their value and a lifetime spent in collecting them. One reason that she recognises Fleda as an "exemplary contrast"(18) to Mona is that Fleda appreciates beauty and would allow her to retain her possessions, whereas Mona is tasteless and would not allow her in the house. She therefore takes up Fleda as her candidate for Owen's hand in order to prevent his marrying Mona. This puts Fleda in an inevitably false position, especially as Owen is evidently physically attracted to Mona. Fleda is invited to visit Poynton and perceives that she will be condemned to a fairy tale dream of enjoying everything she most desires in the world but is bound not to have.

Behind the story there lies, too, the legacy of the Gereth family relationships at Poynton. Part of the history is the destruction of the ineffectual male by the dominant mother, which predisposes Owen to fall victim to Mona, who is "<u>all</u> will,"(AN,131) and lose Fleda. The mother is a perverse example of a heroine guarding her treasure to prevent her son from attaining it. Mrs. Gereth has an "almost maniacal disposition to thrust in everywhere the question of 'things,' to read all behaviour in the light of some fancied relation to them."(22) Her "effort toward completeness and perfection"(44) in the creation of an artistic environment has been engaged at the expense of human values. She argues that the treasures she and her husband collected represent a life of "perfect accord"(12) and beauty. They were

"our religion, they were our life, they were us!"(27) It is implied that Mr. Gereth himself was submerged by her passion for things. She claims that he was weak and needed the direction of a woman. She does not mourn him in the least and is merely concerned with her own position. Owen is clearly heir to a situation in which his father fell victim to his mother's superior power, giving him no example of masculine strength whereby to build a defence against her. Mrs. Gereth displays the contradiction in the mother who is, in her own words, "a subject for poetry, for idolatry,"(43) yet at the same time destroys her men. Everything she touches is arranged to make an harmonious ambience. But everyone is sacrificed to it. The dark underside of her qualities threatens all who come close to her. This comes to include Fleda.

Mrs. Gereth takes up Fleda with a violence of intention that destroys her possibility of maintaining other relations. She is placed at her sponsor's mercy. From the first Fleda's position is made untenable, for in her presence Mrs. Gereth makes it clear to Owen that she would forgo everything for her but not for Mona. Shortly afterwards Owen becomes engaged to Mona. Since there is "no fundamental tenderness"(39) between mother and son "out of which a solution would irrepressibly spring,"(39) Fleda is forced to negotiate between them in order to reach a resolution. She is placed in the "false and horrid"(52) position of having to play the double game of attempting to reinstate Owen in his rights while acting for Mr. Gereth virtually as her paid companion. She becomes aware of an affinity between herself and Owen. But as Mrs. Gereth has no conscience about using her as an instrument in her battle against Owen, it is imperative that she conceal her feelings.

Despite the ambiguity of Fleda's position, as the battle between mother and son develops events seem to suggest that she has a real possibility of winning Owen. The compromise whereby Mrs. Gereth takes some of her

prized possessions to her dower house at Ricks furthers the drama when she virtually strips Poynton. This makes Mona determined to recover all of the things, for they were part of her marriage bargain. The two women become locked in a battle of wills. Fleda glimpses a solution when Owen suggests that he would be happy to live with her at Ricks if everything were restored to Poynton. Her real temptation comes when he reveals "with an art beyond his own dream"(92) the secret conditions of his freedom: if she were to tell Mrs. Gereth that the marriage would not take place unless the things were returned then Owen would be released from Mona and free to choose her. But she feels unable to act as the instrument of Owen's freedom. She will not owe her happiness to her own interference, or profit by Owen's weakness. Nevertheless Mrs. Gereth is astute enough to see that she might tire Mona out, and to guess the secret of Fleda's love for Owen. She is at once triumphant and behaves as if all their troubles were over. She exhibits "the loud lawful tactless joy of the explorer leaping upon the strand"(116) about to "take possession of the fortunate island."(116) However, for the moment Fleda feels the pressure of her own crisis spreading forth "big encircling arms - arms that squeezed till they hurt and she must cry out."(115) She is sure that Mrs. Gereth will destroy her hope by the "brutality"(116) of her good intentions. Now she can only keep Owen's secret from his mother, whom she swears to silence about her own secret lest it be abused. Moreover there is some ambiguity in Owen's position as it is uncertain whether he is still committed to Mona.

Fleda's situation reaches a crisis when Owen visits her on her return to London. He realizes that if she has fallen out with his mother it has been over an attempt to reinstate him in his rights. He reveals that Mona is at last tired out. Fleda understands that if she were to inform him of his mother's stand she would "effectively raise a hand to push his impediment out of the way,"(139) yet she feels that Mona too should have every chance to secure her entitlements. She learns that relations between

the young couple have virtually broken down, though they still say they love each other. Fleda's possibilities of happiness are enhanced when Owen asks her whether he should get his solicitor to force his mother to return the things. She feels "she might put out her hand and take him":(145) the suit would obviously go against Mrs. Gereth, "but the proceedings would last longer than Mona's patience or Owen's propriety."(145) "With a formal rupture he would be at large; and she had only to tighten her fingers round the string that would raise the curtain on that scene."(145) Yet she is still doubtful that Owen now has the right to declare his love for herself by dint of Mona's attitude having released him from his obligations.

Aware of the danger of her daughter losing everything, Mrs. Brigstock attempts to get Owen back regardless of the possessions. Fleda feels that she can do no more for him; he must now act for himself. She also feels an increasing need to distance herself from the constrictions of her circumstances. She leaves London to visit her sister, realising that

> she never knew the extent of her tenderness for him till she became conscious of the present force of her desire that he should be superior, be perhaps sublime. She obscurely made out that superiority, that sublimity, mightn't after all be fatal. (158)

Her hopes seem about to be realised when Owen follows her to her sister's home and proposes marriage, believing himself to be free. He at last realises that Fleda has been in love with him from the first:

> With the click of a spring, he saw. He had cleared the high wall at a bound; they were together without a veil. She had not a shred of a secret left; it was as if a whirlwind had come and gone, laying low the great false front that she had built up stone by stone. The strangest thing of all was the momentary sense of desolation. (165-66)

Now it is Owen's turn to behave with his mother's premature joy. He exults in the fact that he is "saved".(167) Still, his need of Fleda's sanction and support make her feel that he is not free, while he has not as yet received a letter from Mona breaking off the engagement. Fleda sends him

back to Mona that he might sever the commitment and be free to claim her.

At the moment when everything might have been hers Fleda is foiled by the machinations of the two women and the weakness of Owen. Mrs. Gereth, believing that everything is safe, sends the things back to Poynton, and Mona, at once aware of it, takes immediate steps to ensure Owen. She "let{s} herself go,"(199) asserting her sexual attractiveness as a means of getting Owen to the Registry before the church ceremony in which their public avowals are made. It is only when Fleda has in effect lost Owen that she submits to Mrs. Gereth, agreeing to do anything to get Owen back. Her submission results in part from her sense of the magnitude of Mrs. Gereth's sacrifice, in part from her love of Owen which makes her prefer to undergo any humiliation rather than that he should be blamed.

Like the hero, Fleda asserts her nobility by not making use of her advantages. She too wins by forfeiture, though her moral gains are more definite. She proves herself to be an exemplary character and to be fully human. Unlike the women whom James presents as projections of the male imagination she is deeply concerned with her moral stance. Although it is possible to review her fate in the light of a different outcome, it is composed of elements external to her nature. Her nature contributes to her defeat not by any defect but by its elevated imaginative conception of the complexities of the human situation. She confronts the characteristic difficulties of falling in love with a young man whose affections are already engaged with a rival of superior will; yet there is an ambiguity about Owen's position which makes it seem that he is really in love with herself but understands it too late. She seems more perversely a victim of circumstances and yet emerges triumphant, free from the situations that would limit her. Nevertheless she is felt to be the victim of a mother whose dominant will is a threat to her. Mrs. Gereth seems a prime cause behind the disaster, and she acts, as Fleda says, like the Fates:

> "You simplify far too much. You always did and you always will. The tangle of life is much more intricate than you've ever, I think, felt it to be. You slash into it ... with a great pair of shears, you nip at it as if you were one of the Fates!" (198)

Mrs. Gereth's simplication makes her anti-heroic and is the consequence of a will informed by self interest rather than intelligence. She lacks imagination "about anybody's life save on the side she bumped against."(122) She has "a sort of arrogance of energy"(204) that sweeps everything else before it, and a "pugnacity"(122) which is one "with her constant habit of using such weapons as she could pick up."(122) She is used to working her own will, for "what she undertook was always somehow achieved."(204) Her "perfect blankness" (32) is a sign of her "smooth conscience"(32) which she uses to mask her ungovernable will. She is "secretly surprised" that Fleda should not be "as happy to be sacrificed to the supremacy of a high standard as she was happy to sacrifice her."(32) Fleda has "a sacred perception"(32) from the beginning that "her own value in the house"(32) is the value of "a good agent."(32) However, she learns "with growing terror"(183) and "unbearable pain"(183) what it is to be "buried alive"(183) and "smothered in the mere expansion of another will."(183) In the thick of the fight, Mrs. Gareth's scruple is more obviously absent and her perception becomes wildly distorted. She is unconcerned about the possibility of being taken to court over the restitution of objects that are already Owen's. "Proud and fastidious all her life, she now showed so little distaste for the world's hearing of the broil"(42) that she would "prefer the constables and the dragging"(42) to the certainty of losing everything. As she tells Fleda, "when I know I'm right I go to the stake."(100) Owen may "burn me alive!"(100) Her justification for everything lies in the "cruel English custom of the expropriation of the lonely mother."(14)

> She hated the effacement to which English usage reduced the widowed mother: ... contrasted it with the beautiful homage paid in other countries to women in that position, women no better than herself, whom she had seen acclaimed, and enthroned, whom she had known and envied; made in short as little as possible a secret of the injury, the bitterness she found in it. (42-43)

Her bitter sense of her own injury and justification excludes her from conceiving of anyone else's rights, and her "ruling passion"(33) divests her of her humanity.

Mrs. Gereth's passion is a tragic flaw precipitating the fate into which the young people are drawn, and indeed her own fate, for she brings about the loss of the things she most prizes. There is sadness in her having harmed Fleda by refusing to accept what was inevitable for herself. She comes to recognise this after she loses everything, when she blames herself, bearing Fleda no ill will for the part she has played. Her encounter with Fleda's "clever sympathy"(196) and "beautiful feeling for those accursed vanities"(196) which encouraged her to suppose that the things might be saved. She rises to the height of her tragic intensity in the restoration of Poynton, when the purity of her passion is revealed. Fleda recognises: "It was absolutely unselfish - she cared nothing for mere possession. She thought solely and incorruptibly of what was best for the things."(188) She took a noble risk and lost the prize, but it is only after she has been divested of her possessions that her humanity is restored. She resembles other dominant women who become figures of pathos once their passion is spent, but she is not so depleted that she must die. Her passion has been for her things and there can be no thought of ever starting another collection. But in losing everything she recognises "the final vanity"(211) of human wishes. By a strange irony she makes the deceased maiden-aunt's house at Ricks beautiful, without realising the infallibility of her own hand. Then, when she offers her a home for life, she is seen to love Fleda for herself. There is an equality of suffering between the two women which cancels out the past and makes it possible for them to live together on the basis of a new future in which they exist comfortably and humanly together.

Poynton, with its unity and harmony, is a symbol of romantic illusion, of a perfection unattainable in terms of human living. It indicates the peace and happiness that might have reigned had Fleda married Owen, the life

that might have answered human aspirations. Yet it is a "fool's paradise"(11) for those who appreciate it, exposing them to the conditions of life in the world. It is a place for Buddhistic contemplation of the ideal, leaving no room for ordinary artistic activity, making no allowance for imperfect human expression. It already represents the culmination of artistic values. Fleda finds it too perfect a place in which to paint, and its combining of the culture of the ages seems more apposite to a museum. She finds the things "too proud"(208) to be reducible to private possession. No person should have a right to them. The loss of the things is the only part of her loss that Fleda can bear to think of, not only because they too have been agents of her fate because of the passions they have aroused, but because she can only worship them freely when she has no direct connection with them.

For the male, Poynton is a symbol of the rightful inheritance to life of which he is defrauded. The battle between Owen and his mother signifies the psychological conditions in which he is swindled out of his rights. He is an example of "manly magnificence"(51) come to nought, a young man of potentiality, who falls victim to a woman's will. Behind his marriage to Mona lies his upbringing; he resembles his father in his weakness and dependence upon a strong woman. The implication is that he would have flourished under Fleda's care in conditions in which he could live fully. Yet Poynton is also a symbol of the unattainability of romantic fulfilment, which is part of the reason for it burning down after his marriage to Mona.

Unlike most of the disinherited princes in James, Owen seems to assert his right to life in every feature of his personality. He is a representative of natural life, with innate goodness and honesty, and a superb physique. Fleda observes his splendid appearance, whether he is "'turned out'"(132) for town or country:

> In the country, heated with the chase and splashed with the mire, he had always reminded her of a picturesque peasant in national costume. This costume, as Owen wore it, varied from day to day; it was copious as the wardrobe

> of an actor; but it never failed of suggestions of the earth and the weather, the hedges and the ditches, the beasts and the birds. There had been days when it struck her as all potent nature in one pair of boots. It didn't make him now another person that he was delicately dressed, shining and splendid, that he had a higher hate and light gloves with his black seams and an umbrella as fine as a lance; but it made him, she soon decided, really handsomer, and that gave him - for she never could think of him, or indeed of some other things, without the aid of his vocabulary - a tremendous pull.[132]

His "natural honesty"[90] is like "the scent of a flower,"[90] and his instinctive sense of justice reveals that "natures that are right just do the things that are right."[120] He is incapable of telling a lie, or of dissimulating, and wants to be right. He is quite without rancour, resentment or reproach, though he is sickened by many of the things which happen in the course of his battles. His "simplicity"[35] makes "almost any direct relation with him pleasant,"[35] but "the happy youth"[18] has "no more sense for a motive than a deaf man for a tune,"[18] a limitation by which, as Fleda reflects, one could gain as well as lose. He is innocent of the motives of others and has "a frank dread of people's minds."[37] He seems incapable of dealing with difficult questions, and unarmed against abuse by others.

While Owen's unconsciousness makes him seem a decent young man in a calculating world, it also allows his dramatic presentation as an ambivalent lover simultaneously courting two women but ignorant of his standing with either. He marries the girl he does not love and abandons the one that he does, only because the superior will of the former entraps him. It is impossible to know what his feelings are. Fleda can never understand "the way a man was made who could care in any relation for a creature like Mona Brigstock when he had known in any relation a creature like Adela Gereth."[41] She cannot bear Owen's opinion of Mona. He is too easily guided by her and she does not consider him at all. She simply wants to make a match and only, he believes, if she gets the things she wants from him. He goes so

far as to say, "You can take it from my honour, ... that she quite loathes me,"(172) and "I don't think I can have really loved her."(164) But Fleda has good reason to doubt whether he is actually free from his entrapment by her. He seems to need to be saved from her, and to be unable to achieve his break. This proves to be the case. Fleda's own attitude is justified by the demonstration of the fact that he was not free when he tried to propose to her.

His attitude to Fleda is complicated by her own desire to prevent him from avowing his love unless he is free. In consequence he never knows where he is with her. At one moment she seems to shine at him like an angel, at another to be as cold as stone. She repeatedly puts him off. She is too subtle for his simplicity, yet he seems genuinely enough to have fallen in love with her. She has a clear conception of her superiority - and of the matching superiority she expects of him. He tries to behave as she wishes and swears he never looked at her until Mona drove him to it by his attitude. He finds her at times painfully perverse, especially when she tries to do justice to the Brigstock side in excess of the occasion. It would be easier for him to be managed by Mona than to try to match a woman of such subtlety. There is a sense in which he would be more completely dominated by Fleda than by Mona since Fleda is an ideal woman. Also there is an aspect in his nature which courts disaster and ensures that he will subject himself to a woman of will. Whatever the ambiguities of his situation he is weak. His mother says he is too abjectly weak to deserve the name of a man, and that he should have imposed his will on Fleda's "incredible folly."(193) She cannot comprehend "the inanity of a passion that bewilders a young blockhead with bugaboo barriers, with hideous and monstrous sacrifices."(198) It is impossible not to feel that Owen lets Fleda down by failing to stand up for himself. What she requests of him is that either he stick by the honour of the sacred vow he originally made, if he is not free, or that he prove himself man enough to break his engagement and claim

her. One is left to conclude that he is entrapped, has failed his critical test in life, and will end his days subject to Mona's will.

Mona is *all* will."[AN,131] She is upset by failure and blooms with success. Undoubtedly she will flourish at Owen's expense. She is "a person whom pressure at a given point infallibly cause{s} to expand in the wrong place instead of ... the right one."[24] She is mulish and is unlikely ever to give Owen up. She walks so as to catch the sheen of her patent-leather shoes, which resemble a man's, and which she kicks forward a little to help her admire them. Through her indomitable will and romping sexuality, she expresses life in the most minimal forms. She is without any redeeming quality whereby she might be recognised as human. She reveals not "the ghost of an expression"[8] on her face, nor any "perceptible intention"[8] in any other feature. Her talk is "an unaided emission of sound."[8] No sense of a personality lies behind her features. She inherits the gross avidity and vulgarity of her family, and responds only to a direct challenge to her will. Mona is an unusual figure because she embodies the kind of amoral energy James characteristically associates with the older woman. Moreover, the figure of the sexually attractive woman is normally associated with life, whereas Mona barely lives and could not endow a man with life. James moves away from his usual contrast between the attractive dominant woman and the unattractive sacrificial one, to endow the latter with life. It is the woman of imagination who could provide Owen with life. This is one reason why the reader supports Mrs. Gereth's interpretation of the nature of Owen's marriage. It is impossible not to feel that the wrong marriage has taken place and that Owen will be destroyed.

There is a disturbing element in Fleda's idealism and an ambiguity in her conduct. In prescribing a "rigid honesty"[175] and "perfect faith - faith so literal that the smallest subterfuge would always be a reproach to him"[176] - she condemns Owen to a marriage with Mona. The "exact fruits

of her beautiful and terrible admonition"(120) to do his duty that he might be without reproach include this result. It is distinctly perverse of Fleda to consider guarding Mona's rights and to regard the question of Mona's personal qualities as irrelevant. Certainly, her consistency in reinstating Owen's rights is the only correct position she can take up. But the reader must partially agree with Mrs. Gereth's assessment of Fleda's "idiotic perversity,"(193) her "wonderful exactions,"(193) "extraordinary precautions,"(193) and "sweet little scruples,"(193) and of their effect on her son's life. Fleda has too passionate a need to serve and to be exemplary in all her relations in life, though it is true that had she won everything this criticism would fall away. For although of a selfless devotion, Fleda is not without a will, and it is her personal independence of character that Mrs. Gereth has admired in her. It represents a change in the figure of the sacrificial woman that she is invested with a will, albeit subtle in its expression.

It is an aspect of Fleda's diplomatic pity and charity that she conceives of others' rights as they never could for themselves. Fleda contrasts with them all in her desire to be exceptionally human; all her energies go into her duty as she conceives it for herself. Her treasure lies in her subtle mind and imaginative faculty, which embrace "all the heights and depths and extremities of things."(120) She understands everybody's point of view sympathetically. Her quality lies in her capacity to keep up with life imaginatively, to think ten thoughts at once, to know the potential pitfalls at each instant. She is without illusions and judges with generosity. Unlike Mrs. Gereth, who tries to escape her fate, she confronts the problems involved in false positions and knows that there is no escape.

James places Fleda in circumstances that make it difficult for her to find a satisfactory life. As her father does not want to be bothered with her she is without a home. She has some skill in painting but it would hardly

support her. She is aware of being thought a "leech"(58) hanging on to Mrs. Gareth, and from the beginning the implications of being taken up by her are threatening. The very force of Mrs. Gereth's will, which threatens to smother her and undermine her dignity, demands that Fleda fight for independence. She can only be heroic by avoiding submersion. Although her imagination is a source of her defeat and heroism, the impediments to her fulfilment lie almost entirely in the world. She is bedevilled by circumstances, and becomes "a free spirit"(AN,130) only by surmounting them.

Fleda lives in the light of ultimate values, seeking the union of beauty, truth and justice in human relationships. Although passionately in love with Owen, her quality of feeling is demonstrated through the operation of her pity and charity. She emphatically has character and the story lies in "the process and duration of that emergence."(AN,128) She is more truly a centre of consciousness than any previous heroine, for she is the only character who "both sees and feels, while the others but feel without seeing,"(AN,129) and she sees and feels "in acres and expanses and blue perspectives."(AN,131-32) The others

> are the fools who minister, at a particular crisis, to the intensity of the free spirit engaged with them. The fools are interesting by contrast, by the salience they acquire, and by a hundred other of their advantages; and the free spirit, always much tormented, and by no means always triumphant, is heroic, ironic, pathetic, or whatever, and, as exemplified in the record of Fleda Vetch, for instance, 'successful', only through having remained free. (AN,129-30)

James acknowledges that he "is foredoomed to a well-nigh extravagant insistence on the free spirit,"(AN,130) and the one logic in the development of his action is that Fleda should remain free. The manner in which he has demonstrated his theme implies that Fleda lives imaginatively to her fullest capacity, and this qualifies the tragedy of her loss. He last represents her as conferring life upon the ghost of the maiden-aunt among whose things she and Mrs. Gereth are to live. She finds in the home a "fourth dimension"(220) - "a presence, a perfume, a touch. It's a soul, a story, a life."(220) She

finds in the maiden-aunt a kindred spirit, for her things speak with a voice "so gentle, so human, so feminine - a faint, far-away voice with the little quaver of a heart-break."(219) They are a reminder that she has had her story as the maiden-aunt has done and that she is not alone in discovering the tragedies of life in the face of the failure of the human spirit to find fulfilment. Fleda remains with her fate, but she will continue to live fully in the confrontation of it and in the apprehension of the meaning of life.

In What Maisie Knew* (1897) James develops to the limits of its possibilities his theme of a frustrated love fate that can be redeemed only by the power of consciousness. He invests his child heroine, Maisie Farange, with a double fate. For she is the victim of parents who seek to disinherit her, and subsequently of step-parents. Yet, though she is doomed to the repetitive experience of abandonment by her protectors, she is also fated "to see more than, at first, she understood,"(9) and "even at first, to understand much more than any little girl, however patient, had perhaps ever understood before."(9) "Her whole history"(249) lies in "the successive stages of her knowledge,"(249) and she is shocked into knowledge by the law of "mutability"(71) which governs her life and makes it imperative that she comprehend what is happening to her. For she may be abandoned at any moment. The possibilities of her ceasing to remain a victim of circumstances lie solely in her capacity for consciousness and her sympathetic understanding of the complexities of life.

James so constructs Maisie's situation that she is doomed to lose. Her parents, Ida and Beale Farange, are divorced when she is six. In the absence of any responsible person to act in loco parentis she is "divided

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* Macmillan, London, 1922.

in two and the two portions tossed impartially to the disputants"[4] in the case. She takes six-monthly turns with her respective parents. This arrangement becomes the pretext for the introduction of the governess her mother has hired, Miss Overmore, into her father's house. Subsequently she becomes his wife. At the same time her mother remarries, and her new husband, Sir Claude, appears to wish to undertake Maisie's care. It is clear that both parents wish to disburden themselves of their responsibilities. However, Maisie becomes "a centre and pretext for a fresh system of misbehaviour,"[(AN,143)] for she introduces her father's second wife, Mrs. Beale, to her step-father. Mrs. Beale is largely the cause of her mother's second failed marriage, for she makes her inherited right to Maisie a pretext for securing Sir Claude as her husband. When she is released from her marriage to Beale Maisie has no hope of finding in Sir Claude the loving father that she seeks. For she is pitted against an invincible rival in Mrs. Beale. Moreover, Sir Claude is a poor plastic male, a helpless victim of passions, and he cannot rise to his better nature or fulfil his promises to Maisie. He therefore lets the child down and she is left to the care of the governess her mother has subsequently hired, Mrs. Wix.

James characteristically gives importance to the facts of Maisie's case by making the centre of consciousness a heroine of rare value. However, he rises to a technical challenge in presenting his action through a child's consciousness, because he must "invest her with perception easily and almost infinitely quickened,"[(AN,144)] "yet not in a manner to affront probability,"[(AN,144)] and must attempt "to make and to keep her so limited consciousness the very field of my picture while at the same time guarding with care the integrity of the objects represented."[(AN,144)] To this end the reader's "own commentary constantly attends and amplifies,"[(AN,146)] supplying details that she might fail to understand or might positively misunderstand, though it is "her relation, her activity of spirit, that determines all our own concern."[(AN,146)] While James consistently portrays innocent women grappling

to understand an evil world, Maisie is an extreme example of the innocent who cannot possibly know the facts of the world - and especially not the facts of sexual passion which make her rival invincible. James's success with the novel hinges upon what he elsewhere describes as "the independent life of the imagination,"(AN,152) which he implicitly posits as the faculty whereby Maisie lives. By not precluding her from "romantic" knowledge in her quest to unify her divided world he can so present her story as to maintain the illusion that her fate is reversible. Though she is doomed to a frustrated love experience, happiness appears to be within her reach.

There is a degree of abstraction in James's presentation of her love fate, partly because of the distance she maintains from the action, though she is central to it. Her stance as observer seems partly to protect her, and she is the sole case of a child who is not emotionally crippled by the evil effects of passion. It is significant here that her mother in particular does not love her and that she knows it. In the beginning both her parents want her because of the harm they can do each other with her unconscious aid. She is thereby introduced to the magnitude of the passions that impel her fate.

> Only a drummer-boy in a ballad or a story could have been so in the thick of the fight. She was taken into the confidence of passions on which she fixed just the stare she might have had for images bounding across the wall in the slide of a magic-lantern. Her little world was phantasmagoric - strange shadows dancing on a sheet. It was as if the whole performance had been given for her - a mite of a half-scared infant in a great dim theatre. She was in short introduced to life with a liberality in which the selfishness of others found its account, and there was nothing to avert the sacrifice but the modesty of her youth.(9)

She is the observer of her fate throughout, but it is important that while she is physically divided between her parents she is not divided within herself. She has a firm ego, which develops partly from a perception of the function she fills as a "centre of hatred"(15) and "messenger of insult"(15) between them. Her concept of an "inner self"(15) results from the "moral revolution"(15) that this discovery brings about in her nature. As in the

case of Catherine Sloper and Fleda Vetch she maintains her sense of self and integrity by refusing to be manipulated by others who intend to abuse her. As a result she becomes a fruitless tool of vengeance and deprives her parents of a lucrative means of tormenting each other. Consequently she is abandoned for longer periods by each. While her nature does in this sense contribute to her developing fate, it is her parents who are culpable. Ironically, she develops a sense of responsibility for her inconvenience to them.

Following a disproportionate stay at her father's home, Maisie becomes frightened by her first dawning suspicion that "a better way had been found (by her mother) to torment Mr. Farange than to deprive him of his periodic burden."(37) Her suspicion is strengthened by Miss Overmore's view that her mother will not "stickle this time for her rights."(36) Maisie's sense of her doom is deepened when Mrs. Wix, as her mother's representative, visits her father's house to inform Maisie of her mother's intended marriage. It is as this moment that Miss Overmore reveals that in fact she has become Mrs. Beale. The exchange of asperities between the two governesses forms "a fresh incitement to the unformulated fatalism"(45) in which Maisie's observation of her own career has "long since taken refuge."(45) It is "the beginning for her of a deeper prevision that, in spite of Miss Overmore's brilliancy and Mrs. Wix's passion, she should live to see a change in the nature of the struggle she appeared to have come into the world to produce. It would still be essentially a struggle, but its object would now be _not_ to receive her."(45)

Maisie perceives a possibility of personal happiness when Sir Claude comes to collect her to take her to her mother's. Sir Claude holds himself up as a "family man"(57) who likes "babies,"(58) and wishes to live a domestic life. He is so charming that "it was as if he had told her on the spot that he belonged to her."(53) In fact Sir Claude already speaks of the possibility of the failure of his three-month-old marriage, in the event

of which he undertakes to be a "responsible nurse."(58) Mrs. Beale likewise asserts that through her own "sacrifices"(59) she has acquired rights to the child. The two step-parents seem to get on so well that Maisie feels the benefit of a happy atmosphere, and glimpses "the pleasant possibility, in connexion with herself, of a relation much happier as between Mrs. Beale and Sir Claude than between mama and papa."(56)

Upon her return her mother refuses to see her, on the ground that Sir Claude has brought about the transfer by underhand means. Sir Claude makes up for Maisie's "fallen state"(53) and she meditates on "good omens and future fun"(80) under his protection. Ida's jealousy and resentment achieve new proportions when Mrs. Beale, as Farange's pretended representative, tries to see Sir Claude. Though Sir Claude seems prepared to make Maisie his "particular lark"(81) and her hopes are fed by Mrs. Wix, who "loves" him and dreams of the three of them sharing an "asylum"(93) together, there is a constant sense that the happy spell is fragile. When Mrs. Wix refers darkly to her intention to "save" Sir Claude, Maisie recognises "the hour that in troubled glimpses she had long forseen, the hour when - the phrase for it came back to her from Mrs. Beale - with two fathers, two mothers and two homes, with six protections in all, she shouldn't know 'wherever' to go."(90) Mrs. Wix holds passionately to the prospect of a snug home and a prosperous future should Sir Claude make Maisie his duty and his life. However, by making an appeal to Sir Claude in front of her she encourages Maisie's fundamental sense of fatalism. In seeing Mrs. Wix rise to a new height of dignity

> there was in fact at this moment a fascination for her pupil in the hint she seemed to give that she had still more of that surprise behind. So the sharpened sense of spectatorship was the child's main support, the long habit, from the first, of seeing herself in discussion and finding in the fury of it - she had had a glimpse of the game of football - a sort of compensation for the doom of a peculiar passivity. It gave her often an odd air of being present at her history in as separate a manner as if she could only get at experience by flattening her nose against a pane of glass. (97)

Yet, Maisie has Sir Claude's word that he will "stick"(97) to her "through everything,"(97) and for a wonderful month he demonstrates what it would mean if he were to make her his life.

Following her dismissal from her mother's, Maisie suffers a period of deprivation with Mrs. Beale. Though she has been repudiated by both parents Sir Claude remains in the background. She feels the radiance of his influence operating at a distance. After her final rejection by her father (who had long before placed upon her mother the whole "intolerable burden"(100) of providing for her), Sir Claude takes her to Folkestone. There her mother agrees to a divorce settlement in which she will receive no alimony provided that he supports the child. Sir Claude thus becomes Maisie's legalfather. They proceed to Boulogne, where Maisie feels that her happiness is about to be complete.

> {Mrs. Wix} had clung day by day to their plastic associate, plying him with her deep, narrow passion, doing her simple utmost to convert him, and so inspiring him that he has at last really embraced his fine chance. (169)

Maisie is "able to piece together the beauty of the special influence"(182) that has acted on her behalf. However, in this moment, Sir Claude receives a letter from Mrs. Beale informing him that Beale Farange has freed her and laid the way open for her own divorce proceedings. He cannot help but return to see her, though Mrs. Wix, who has now joined them, rises to an even greater height of passion in an attempt to prevent his departure, for she is well aware of its potential meaning.

Sir Claude does not return as expected. Mrs. Beale arrives in his place, and Maisie feels the victim of a "violent substitution."(267) She understands the implication that if she can live with one step-parent alone she can also live with the other, but she will not accept Mrs. Beale. She has no ambivalence about what she wants, and it is Sir Claude whom she loves. The position that Mrs. Wix has taken with regard to Mrs. Beale makes it

impossible for the four of them to live together; she has asserted that in a household of four two of them would be "improprieties".(240) It is significantly the battle between the two women, both substitute mothers, which partly impels Maisie's loss.

When Sir Claude returns he tries to offer Maisie the choice of accepting an unconventional home with himself and Mrs. Beale and sacrificing Mrs. Wix, or remaining with Mrs. Wix. However, she has no real choice in the matter, for Mrs. Wix is the sole adult who stands by her. There is no escape for "father" or child from this conclusion, and Maisie apprehends it before it happens, understanding too how little Sir Claude was really tempted to make her his life. She also comprehends the complexities in his situation that make it impossible for him to choose her in preference to Mrs. Beale. James has provided for this conclusion by laying down at the start funds that have been left Maisie by a "crafty godmother"(8) "in such a manner that the parents could only appropriate the income."(8) If the complexity of her affairs can be unravelled she and Mrs. Wix will have the means to live on. Otherwise Mrs. Wix must work herself to the bone for the child who is the only thing in the world that she has.

The effect of maintaining a tension between the sense of Maisie's fate and its possible reversal is to keep the hope of happiness alive while implying that it is an illusion. As in the case of The Spoils of Poynton, the determinants are placed firmly in the world, and life is shown indeed to be a Barmecide banquet at which the fruits are taken away the moment that they appear to be within grasp. Maisie's parents appear to offer her the freedom to determine her own future by choosing her protector, but the choices are spurious, mere devices to divest themselves of their responsibility for her. In effect, she has no freedom, except in the manner that she accepts her fate, by which she proves her heroism.

In this novel James contrasts most dramatically the direct and the indirect experience of life: even more than Fleda Vetch is Maisie condemned

to live through her imagination. She lives through her apprehension of her experience. She is kept in the schoolroom, at a distance from her parents and the world. She is aware that life is taking place elsewhere, on the great stage of action. Her parents live directly and especially in terms of passional experience. They enter into successive "love" relationships, travel to exotic places and move in a social context. On the other hand, Maisie hangs about the banisters listening to the sounds of banging doors, arguments, and ribald laughter that waft up to her. The life of the adults seems full of fun and amusement, of which she is deprived. There is never any money for her proper education, or for pleasurable excursions. Her parents pursue their own desires oblivious to her needs and she is called upon to pay in every sense for their selfishness.

Furthermore she is deeply contrasted with her parents in the quality of her love. She loves in terms of pity and charity, they in terms of the erotic. Of course, she is precluded from understanding fully the nature of passion, but she does learn about it in two different ways: first, in the way that she is treated by her parents; and secondly, through her observation of passion at work in their lives. Her glimpses of passion come to her indirectly, magnify it, and make her feel that she is picking her steps through the great things of life. Moreover Mrs. Wix, by exaggerating the destructive potentialities of passion, further enlarges the child's apprehension of it. What she understands mainly is the contradiction inherent in passion, for she both sees and is subject to its confusions and bewilderments.

Maisie's experience of the contradiction inherent in passion comes to her most directly through her mother. Ida treats her at times as a "precious pet,"(36) at others as a "little horror",(201) "a dreadful dismal deplorable little thing."(201) She is subject to her mother's hatred, resentment and jealousy, and at the same time to her "demonstrations"(79) that the child's affections have been stolen from her. But though her mother

makes much of her rights to her, Maisie is clear, both because she knows it and is told it, that her mother wishes to be rid of her.

Ida is the figure of the sexually aggressive woman, though her passions are evident mainly in relation to her lovers and the child does not essentially suffer from them. Her sexual attractiveness is emphasised, for she is described as a "gorgeous idol,"(63) with eyes like Japanese lanterns, and a face which gives off "an éclairage as distinct and public as a lamp set in a window."(189) Her aggressiveness is first seen in the "length and reach"(6) of her arm, whereby she distinguished herself at billiards against her ex-husband, who, she says loses because his resentment finds expression in physical violence. She is characterised by the variations in the forms of violence that her passions take. She is a woman of extremes whose anger is more evident than her love. Everyone, including Maisie, is in fear of her at some stage. She lives in an aura of banging doors, vulgar rows, and trips off somewhere. Maisie's sharpest impression of her, is of her desire to torment Beale, but, as she discovers, the forms her passion will take are never clear.

> It was because mama hated papa that she used to want to know bad things of him; but if at present she wanted to know the same of Sir Claude it was quite from the opposite motive. She was awestruck at the manner in which a lady might be affected through the passion mentioned by Mrs. Wix; she held her breath with the sense of picking her steps among the tremendous things of life. (64)

The only time her mother talks to her (and then incoherently, starting sentences she does not finish because she can give no proper account of herself) is when she hands Maisie over to Sir Claude. Here Maisie's fear of her mother is diminished by her understanding that she is observing her "in the act of getting rid of her burden with a finality that showed her unprecedently relaxed."(187) Ida wished to live for herself "at last."(196) Some pity is aroused for her because she has lost her lover (clearly she still loves Sir Claude), her passion is spent, and she is condemned to a future of further losses. Moreover she is not "wholly insincere,"(195) and she

betrays some sense that "she quite did think her wretched offspring better placed with Sir Claude than in her own soiled hands."(195) However, she also displays "the necessity of selfishness"(195) and "the habit of brutality,"(195) against which is contrasted Maisie's desire to show her what justice she can. Maisie's recollection of the only kind words that she has ever heard spoken about her mother by one of her lovers, a Captain whom she met in Kensington Park, only angers her mother. But Maisie has understood that he was a kind man, potentially capable of loving her mother for ever. The fact of their having fallen out gives rise to a precocious vision of the tragic fate her mother might suffer in having forfeited such a loyalty. "There was literally an instant in which Maisie fully saw - saw madness and desolation, saw ruin and darkness and death."(201) She has only pity for the mother who has hated her.

Likewise the only time that Maisie talks with her father is when he repudiates her. Here again she displays her superior humanity. Beale Farange bears some of the marks of a sexually aggressive figure - a burnished beard and smiling teeth which exemplify the joy of life - but he is also the helpless male and ineffectual father who has never fulfilled his function as Maisie's "natural protector."(166) The scene in which he seizes her by an "act of possession"(157) from Mrs. Beale, who has taken her to an Exhibition at Earls Court, starts with all the possibilities of an Arabian Nights romance in which all might come right if she uttered the right word. However, Maisie has been so much the diplomatist whose function has been to keep the peace between the opposing powers that her parents represent, that she is keen to intuit his moods. She guesses that he has an ulterior motive in taking her up, and gradually comes to see that what he wants of her is that "she should let him off with all the honours - with all the appearance of virtue and sacrifice on his side."(167) He tries to turn the tables on her by giving her a now-or-never offer to take up his protection, only to show that it suits her book not to do so. He wants only to appear in the right and

unburden himself of his responsibility for his daughter. He is characterised as the complete realist, informing Maisie that

> your mother will never again have any more to do with you than if you were a kitchenmaid she had turned out for going wrong. Therefore of course I'm your natural protector and you've a right to get everything out of me that you can. Now's your chance, you know - you won't be half-clever if you don't. (166)

His brutality towards Maisie is deepened by his knowledge of the world, and he puts it to Maisie that Mrs. Beale will soon be "as free as she likes,"(171) "as free, you see as your mother's muff of a husband,"(171) and that "they won't have anything more to consider and they'll just put you into the street."(171) Maisie is precluded from this knowledge. Her whole effort goes into trying to give her father what he wants. She wishes to see him as dazzling and beautiful, and takes joy in the fact that his anger against her mother has spent itself. She has nothing but compassion for his floundering human condition, and realises afterwards "she must have been sorry for him ... so well could she privately follow his difficulty in being specific to her about anything."(162) There is something touching in his need to ask her to help him "pretend" that their relations were "easy and graceful,"(162) and all she needs is the cue to know how to help him. When toward the end of the scene he is joined by his current lover, the Countess, Maisie intuitively understands the degradation of his having become the paid lover of an extremely rich and "unfortunately hideous"(173) woman. Nevertheless she comprehends the Countess's desire to be kind and to be liked, and has already had "a sharp foretaste of compassion, of something that was strangely like a relegation to obscurity"(158) of the woman of taste. The ugliness inherent in the situation makes her wish to get off, but she is sustained by the reflection that she has given her father what he wanted.

The drama of passion in which the helpless male is destroyed by the superior power of the female is played out through the relations between

Maisie's step-parents. Maisie is intimately involved in this complicated case, in which the figures approximate to her parents. Mrs. Beale is the woman of sexual passion and amoral psychic drive. Sir Claude is her helpless victim and an ineffectual father to Maisie, unable to protect her from the machinations of Mrs. Beale.

Mrs. Beale is the true villain of the piece because of her unscrupulous pursuit of her goals. She is the only character who gets what she wants, and her services turns on her amoral drive to power. Maisie sees her first as bright and beautiful, as genuinely loving her and prepared to make sacrifices for her. However, from the first the reader recognises the falsity of her position; she depends on Maisie as a pretext to give her the appearance of being in the right. Her contradictory nature is demonstrated by her changeability. She is utterly different as Maisie's governess and as Beale's wife, and she rises from poverty and obscurity to the status of a lady of fasion. She inspires fear in the male and promises that once she has secured Sir Claude she will "pick him to the bone".(114) She gives Maisie a positive impression of power. During the course of the story, her character is diminished but her power grows. At first it blends with her immense attractiveness to inspire confidence, but it becomes more clearly daemonic. Maisie defends her for the most part but gradually sees through her, finally realising that she is no better than her own mother. Mrs. Beale treats her as an angel if she does what she wants and a devil if she does not. She is the only person for whom Maisie does not show compassion in the end. She does not explicitly condemn her but her judgement is implied in her refusal to be cared for by her. Her true character is so dramatically exposed in the final scene of the novel as to obviate need for comment.

Sir Claude is an example of the princely male whose potentialities for life come to nought because he allows himself to be the victim of women of superior force. He seems capable of becoming a glorious figure in the world and all hopes are centred on him. He is the most radiant person to enter

Maisie's life, and she worships his "princely"(232) quality. He is indifferent to her years, understands her feelings, and explains things to her on a level approaching equality. His explanations have an authority which transcends the wisdom of woman. Maisie's perception of his scruples endears him to her. He is gallant, generous and sympathetic, kind and considerate even to Mrs. Wix, who is normally treated as a figure of fun. But he is an object seen too close so that Maisie cannot see his edges, and, although he does love the child for herself, it is only gradually revealed that he is no better than the rest of the adults - except that he has a redeeming sense of humanity and of the complexity of human situations.

Maisie's first faint disappointment in him comes when he seems prepared to see Mrs. Beale and hides the fact from Mrs. Wix. He too is something of a realist, for he tells Maisie that Ida lets him do what he wants if he lets her do what she wants. He also says he will help Maisie if she helps him. He is moved partly by concern for his own gain, which further relates him to Beale Farange. He lies to Maisie, but this can be forgiven as an aspect of his attempt to shield her from knowledge of his improprieties. His exaggerated professions of innocence do confess his guilt, and, though they are also intended to protect Mrs. Beale's reputation, they show him not to be a man of his word. His great flaw is weakness in relation to women, and Maisie sees him unmistakably quail before three of them - her mother, Mrs. Beale, and Mrs. Wix. His want of valour indeed explains in large part Maisie's tender compassion for him. Ida and Mrs. Wix also come to the perception that he has no strength of character but they judge him more harshly for it. He cannot go into his situation with Maisie, but he makes her aware that the infinite complexity of things prevents his seeing them as "straight" as Mrs. Wix. Indeed, Mrs. Wix comes to attain for him the stature of a mother figure against whose power he is helpless, and whom finally he can only dodge. He will do for Maisie what he can, but no more, and he cannot let her stand in the way of his life. However, Mrs. Wix is

an obstacle that cannot be shuffled away.

In the final scene of the novel Sir Claude acts more explicitly in the manner of Maisie's parents: though he is now legally her father he asserts that she is free to make her choice of protector. Maisie senses his fear of commitment to Mrs. Beale, though he does not wish to expose it. She has become increasingly aware that he wants to disown herself, and that he has accepted the worst: he cannot help himself and Mrs. Beale will never leave him. Maisie has fantasies of escape. They might set off for Paris together, or wait until they have tired the two women out in the hope that they will leave. But there is no escape and once she reaches this dreaded realization her fear recedes and she is able to confront her fate. She has an indescribable sense of loss as she sees the last flare of her dream of a life with Sir Claude vanish. However, she helps him to regain his sense of himself and wishes to be as solicitous and magnanimous towards his interests as he appears to be towards hers. For he says that she was the finest thing in their lives, but that she was too good for them and they could never have worked her in. He tries to protect her from the brutal demonstrations of Mrs. Beale, who tries to detain her by physical force. Moreover he promises to try to sort out Maisie's affairs so that she will be secure in the future. In these scenes Maisie reveals her heroism and deep human compassion. Furthermore she tries to invest others with the freedom to please themselves by exonerating them from judgement. As Mrs. Wix says, she appears to know everything without condemning what are clearly immoral actions. But as James makes clear Maisie embodies heroic values that far surpass a merely conventional moral sense.

In this respect Maisie contrasts with Mrs. Wix, who has no imagination and an exceedingly limited moral sense. However, Mrs. Wix forms a contrast with the other adults in that she is capable of selfless love of Maisie, has a vision for her that is untainted by any ulterior motive, and is a woman of her word. She is the figure of the nursing and succouring mother

who thinks mainly of the good of the child. It is significant that her own child is dead, run down by a hansom cab, so that Maisie knows she has, "with passion and anguish"[24] been a mother. She is a pathetic figure who has suffered, is poor, old, and has nothing. She is a "nobody"[274] and without status. She is ill-educated, cheap to hire, and unattractive. However, while she is an object of derision and fun, Maisie very early recognises that behind her appearance lies a quality that is "peculiarly and soothingly safe,"[26] which gives her a "tucked-in and kissed-for-good-night feeling."[26]

> It was from something in Mrs. Wix's tone, which in spite of caricature remained indescribable and inimitable, that Maisie, before her term with her mother was over, drew this sense of a support, like a breast-high banister in a place of 'drops', that would never give way. (26)

Whatever the limitations of her teaching "her conversation was practically an endless narrative, a great garden of romance, with sudden vistas into her own life and gushing fountains of homeliness."[27] Moreover Mrs. Wix is intensely personal and makes her individuality felt in a world in which Maisie is kept at a distance from parents who are devoid of character. She helps Maisie to unravel the clues to her domestic labyrinth, filling in details that belong to the world of experience about which Maisie is necessarily innocent.

In the series of contrasts that James establishes between Maisie's associates Mrs. Wix stands out strongly against Ida and Mrs. Beale, with their protestations and demonstrations of affection. In Maisie's parting from her there is a silent "screwed-up intensity",[28] which reminds Maisie of the dentist, and makes her know that she is "embedded in Mrs. Wix's nature as her tooth had been socketed in her gum, the operation of extracting her would really have been a case for chloroform."[28] Mrs. Wix is present to Maisie even in her absence, and her glasses, her "straighteners," are always fixed on Maisie, somehow trying to put right the crookedness which surrounds her. Despite her limited moral sense, James shows her to have a strong and formative influence on the child's life. The image of an old woman sitting on a

battered bench with a child (which comes from the scene in Boulogne where Mrs. Wix tries to inculcate Maisie with a moral sense) overshadows the book. Though it is a qualified representation of the mother - for they sit beneath the statue of a gilt madonna on the church above them, shining into the blue sky and revealing "the courtesy in romantic forms"(240) - it is the best that can be hoped for in a world where the sacrosanct mother no longer exists. Maisie recognises that "the quality of her motive"(264) far surpasses "the sharpness of her angles,"(246) and knows that had her dream come true it would have been largely due to Mrs. Wix's instigation.

Mrs. Wix is the apostle of conventional morality, propriety and decency. Though she simplifies life, her suffering has given her a degree of consciousness, and she is prepared to make any sacrifice for Maisie so as not to lose her. She so increases in dignity that none of the other adults can surpass her. In the final scene, Sir Claude himself is severely diminished by contrast with her. Though she appears to use morality as a weapon in her fight for the child it is not because she is driven by a desire to assert her power. She appears to be a severe obstacle to a happy ending for Maisie because it is inconceivable that Sir Claude should accept her proposal that the three of them set up together with herself as general factotum, while it is partly her battle with Mrs. Beale that makes the household of four impossible. However, James uses her as an instrument to underline his theme that not everyone can win, and she does represent, in however qualified a sense, the one person capable of acting <u>in loco parentis</u>. Throughout the novel she and Maisie have been fellow mariners on life's troubled sea. When they take the boat back to England from Boulogne it is to confront the difficulties of life.

Maisie wins knowledge of the tragedies of life whereby she is doomed to lose what she has most desired. Life has been produced in her: she has been able to translate the unspoken into the spoken, and to comprehend

conceptions that are beyond her capacity to formulate. Through suffering she has put her imaginative understanding at the service of her charity. She has an intuitive romantic and historic knowledge which make impressions signify to her. Her manner of accepting her fate has demonstrated a redeeming consciousness whereby she will live. She has proved herself the victor of her circumstances, though she might have been their victim.

She could not have avoided her fate. Part of that fate has taken her into a world of extraordinary disjunction between things, in which nothing is as it ought to be. Through his ironies James constantly reminds the reader of the separation between what is and what ought to be. In this world of division, Maisie, as a romantic quester, has attempted to bring the disparities into an harmonious relation. Behind her assertion that she brought Sir Claude and Mrs. Beale together lies her hope of a peaceful and harmonious union in a world of happiness in which she could live on the ground of the love that she has sought. In this novel James presents a further refinement of the nature of the world in which he places his heroine, and a deepening of his exposition of her fate.

7. THE NOVELS: MAN AND WOMAN

In the major novels James remains concerned with the disinherited heirs of life who suffer injuries in love. He reaches the ultimate variations on his persistent theme of fate in love. Though he continues to create situations in which lovers are frustrated because of love-rivalries, the causes are much more complex; they lie more in the general nature of a "world of cleft components" than in the particular flaws in the minds of men. Yet, though his heroes and heroines are enmeshed in a deepening and inextricable web of circumstances in the social world, their natures continue in some sense to concur with their fate. With the male this may lie merely in his general plasticity and decency, which renders him subject to the forces which operate upon him. Though no longer ambivalent to love in itself, he may be forced into positions of ambivalence.

In The Wings of the Dove Densher finds himself entrapped between two women of different types, neither of whom he may marry because he is forced by circumstances to court them both. Though throughout he has wanted the one woman he may not have her because circumstances prove inimical to their love. In The Ambassadors Strether is sent by the woman to whom he is "engaged" to release her son from the influence of a woman of her opposite type, only to find that she is quite different from what had been supposed. His appreciation of her shows the former woman to him in a new light and makes his marriage to her impossible. The Prince in The Golden Bowl, though married, is forced into a relation with the woman he has formerly admired. The circumstances of this affair, however, cause him to fall in love with his wife, but the forfeit he pays is that of his submission to her.

The male in these novels is still essentially of one type: plastic and helpless, dependent on women for his sense of life and in their power. He also retains blocks to conciousness, though he may

arrive at an imaginative awareness of life through his capacity to suffer and to love. This represents a substantial difference from the short stories and the male-centred novels. There are no more "monstrous" males and the male is largely released from the barriers which have kept him from erotic experience, though he may also love charitably. But it is only in Strether's case that a redeeming consciousness is actually arrived at, and he has largely decided that life in the primary sense is over for him, that he will only live imaginatively through his indirect experience of life. Yet he is left with his consciousness on his hands, with a sense of a divided world in which there is no place for him to go. Densher arrives at consciousness through suffering an excoriating knowledge which can provide no resolution to his irreconcilable difficulties. The liberation of the Prince for erotic experience virtually makes it impossible for him to arrive at a consciousness of his situation, and ironically places him in the power of his wife. Consciousness is still problematical for the male. He is left with his consciousness on his hands, for it cannot lead him anywhere.

James still represents the two types of women, the eagle and the dove, but his presentation of their characters is more complex. The woman of erotic nature may be virtuous and the sacrificial woman may represent life. Moreover these women are presented largely from their own point of view and are less dependent on a masculine perspective. Also they may even assert their power through a renunciation of it, or be depleted of their power through their display of it. With the exception of The Golden Bowl - and it may be argued that Maggie becomes a mother figure of power - James is still concerned with the figure of the elder woman of amoral psychic energy whose drive allows her to attain her desires. But here she is assisted by circumstances in the world which further her desires. Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove is the sole example of the totally injured lover doomed to die. The circumstances

of those women fated to lose in love still predominantly lie in the world, and are infinitely complex.

There is in the major novels a greater consciousness of the intrinsic ambiguity of things - in ways of loving, living, and thinking - which is extended into the treatment of individual characters, who are all capable of both good and evil, instead of being representative of one or the other. Power becomes a much more ambiguous quality and certainly does not reside simply in the woman who is all will. It may result even from selfless sacrifice or from sheer impersonality, and the woman of mature sexuality may not possess it. It is finally recognised to be a feature of the development of all personality in a world in which it is a necessity for anyone who is not to be a victim. But though there are reversals of effects and inversions of the characteristics of power, it still resides mainly with the female. In the only case in which James can envisage it in the male, in Adam Verver, it is a kind of disembodied power.

There is a further development of the fateful disparity of things whereby some people are endowed with everything in monetary terms and yet nothing in terms of life, while others are deprived of a means of practical existence and yet have the strongest capacity for life. James tightens the conditions of the life-quest so as to present perverted questers, realists who are virtually forced to go about things the wrong way because there is no other way in which they can secure anything at all. This particularly applies to the fate of women, but though their way is doomed, the romantic quester is also doomed not to be able except in a shaky sense to achieve an ideal synthesis of the practical and the vital. The forces which are splitting the world apart are too great to be contained by the ordered forms of life. At the same time, there is a new appreciation of these orders as being necessary if life is to continue in any valuable sense. It is Maggie, the ultimate heroine, who most fully

perceives this. But although life and love and personal happiness are at last within her grasp, she has no final "answer" to the problems of existence. To the end, love remains problematical, the crucial issue upon which the experience of life and fate depends, as well as the ground upon which life and knowledge meet in a conflict which brings consciousness into being.

One of the outstanding features of these late novels is that they render a life-experience which is so intense and stressful that it amounts to a virtually phantasmagoric world, in which images thrown up from the unconscious reveal the nature of underlying passion. Passion itself is treated as a psychic force let loose upon the world to its destruction. The life-question is not only how to confront an adverse individual will, though it may be that too. The psychic force operating behind the social world and in the world of mental operations, as with Maud Lowder and Adam Verver respectively, is an inscrutable and frightening form of energy which appears to be uncontained. Even where two lovers meet, as in the case of Charlotte and the Prince, passion in its essence destroys individual identity and extends beyond the realms of the personal into a world of chaos. The perverse law which governs fates and determines the failure of the quest for union may well, as the image of the golden bowl suggests, lie in the defects of the structure of individual personality, which are reflected in the personal world by the dualities of personal experience. But the world of experience is at the same time a constituted objective reality in which there is a violent disjunction between the accepted versions of order, propriety, and decency and the forces which lie behind them, the unconscious drives which threaten to overturn them.

Heroism still lies in the confrontation of the fate, and it is the anti-heroic characters who attempt to escape it. However, the increasing capacity for consciousness which allows life to be lived on an imaginative plane provides some ground for existence. James still pictures a world

in which the only winning is by forfeiture of something, though it is no longer necessarily a total forfeiture of life. Also heroism lies in the renunciation of a potentially vindictive advantage and the attempt to strive for the good of others. But James no longer projects the kind of redemptive hero or heroine who can "save" the world. Significantly Strether provides the closest approximation to this through his redemptive consciousness. But the increasingly complex defeats which the heroic character faces reveal the inescapable ambiguity in all actions. It is as if both heroic and anti-heroic characters can be seen in a dual perspective and it is less possible to be wholly heroic. Though James continues to posit the sacrifice of the will as the antidote to its uncontained expression, there is a recognition that the development of the will is necessary in order to live. He reveals that everything is terrible in the heart of man because the psychic drive is the force of life, though it is the cause of all division in the world.

In The Ambassadors* (1903) James portrays the ultimate case of the hero doomed to a perverse fate in Love. At fifty-five, Lambert Strether repeats the experience of being the disinherited heir of life by the inexorable logic of a "perverse law"(II,81) which governs his "poor personal aspects."(II,81-82) At the outset he is engaged to a rich American woman, Mrs. Newsome. His fate hinges ostensibly upon his successful completion of a mission to Paris to rescue her son, Chad, from the influence of a woman, Madame de Vionnet, whom she believes to be "base" and "venal".(I,48) However, Chad does not ultimately need to be saved, and Strether's real mission is the discovery of himself.

* Macmillan, London, 1923, 2 Vols.
Though published later the novel was in fact completed earlier than The Wings of the Dove.

Nevertheless his marriage to Mrs. Newsome is dependent upon his bringing her son home in triumph as a commemorative wedding present. Strether is, in effect, in the grips of the type of American mother figure who is all will, and who intends to make him a mere adjunct of her own personality. He seems unconsciously aware of his dilemma for in Paris he decides to "let himself go" and accepts the possibility of "being influenced in a sense counter to Mrs. Newsome's feelings."(I,98) As a result he allows himself to appreciate Madame de Vionnet's qualities to the extent of "falling in love" with her himself, so that his "love" of the Parisienne makes his marriage to the American impossible.

Strether is caught in a relation between two women of different personality types in a situation in which it is impossible to marry either. Madame de Vionnet has a husband whom she cannot divorce and Mrs. Newsome disinherits Strether beyond appeal in consequence of his attitudes. His problem lies partly in his own psychology, for he believes that it is his inevitable fate to forfeit everything, whereas for other persons, such as Chad, no forfeit is required. What is different about Strether in comparison with previous heroes is that he achieves an integrated personality and an identity independent of his relation to women, though he arrives at this position through his relation to them. Moreover he earns a consciousness through his suffering, though his consciousness profits him nothing in a practical sense and compounds the difficulty of his capacity for life. However, he lives specifically in terms of his imaginative awareness of his fate and proves his heroism in terms of his acceptance and comprehension of it. His consciousness does effectively redeem him from his fate because it allows him to comprehend why he cannot live, though it does not help him know how to live. He believes that personality and fate are unalterably laid down and that it matters little what these component elements are so long as they are comprehensible. He is the sole example of a male who arrives at a redeeming consciousness

and who thereby becomes fully human. Moreover his conflict in relation to the two women releases him to love charitably, and, though his dilemma is analogous to that of the ambivalent lover, his sense of division is reinforced by an observable division in the different worlds in which he moves.

Although Strether is doomed a tension is nevertheless maintained between the possibility of belated happiness and the inevitability of loss. When he arrives in England on his way to France he gains a "consciousness of personal freedom."(I,4) He is "like a man who, elatedly finding in his pocket more money than usual, handles it a while and idly and pleasantly chinks it before addressing himself to the business of spending."(I,4) He is acutely aware of fresh possibilities which are disconnected from his past. His meeting with Miss Gostrey, a professional guide to Americans in Europe, increases his sense of his potentialities. For she is equipped to lead him forth to see the world and to show him how to enjoy it. He is introduced to the "full sweetness of the taste of leisure"(I,34) and pleasure, which makes him "want more wants"(I,34) - more than he should know how to cope with.

When he arrives in Paris "the cup of his impressions"(I,70) seems to overflow, and he has an "extraordinary sense of escape."(I,71) Like other males in the James canon whose lives have been truncated he finds himself in the position of rediscovering the lost threads of his youth. Nevertheless he imagines himself "washed up on the sunny strand by the waves of a single day," "thankful for breathing-time and stiffening himself while he gasped"(I,72) under the impression that if he were to see Mrs. Newsome there he would have to pull himself together before facing her. To spend only a few hours in Paris is for Strether to find in himself "the process of feeling the general stirred life of connexions long since individually dropped,"(I,76) and the capacity to regain the "handful of seed"(I,76) that has lain "buried for long years in dark corners"(I,76) from the period of his first encounter with Europe.

Strether has failed to achieve any of the goals that he set himself at that time. He has nothing to show for himself but the failures of his past.

> Everything he wanted was comprised moreover in a single boon - the common unattainable art of taking things as they came. He appeared to himself to have given the best years to an active appreciation of the way they didn't come; but perhaps - as they would seemingly here be things quite other - this long ache might at last drop to rest. He could easily see that from the moment he should accept the notion of his foredoomed collapse the last thing he would lack would be reasons and memories. Oh if he should do the sum no slate would hold the figures! The fact that he had failed, as he considered, in everything, in each relation and in half a dozen trades, as he liked luxuriously to put it, might have made, might still make, for an empty present; but it stood solidly for a crowded past. (I,74)

Strether's fate is epitomised in his premature marriage - a failed union which resulted in the early death of his young wife, followed by the death of their son, "stupidly sacrificed"(I,74) out of "the soreness of his remorse."(I,74) For the boy had been "banished and neglected, mainly because the father had been unwittingly selfish."(I,74) This characteristic failure in which one partner survives at the expense of another has sown in Strether's nature "the secret habit of sorrow."(I,74) He is reminded that his vow to himself, made before his wife's death, was that his relation "with the higher culture"(I,75) should bear "a good harvest".(I,75) Now his undeveloped literary gifts are symbolized for him in "the mere sallow paint on the door of the temple of taste he had dreamed of raising up." - the image of "his long grind and his want of odd moments, his want moreover of money, of opportunity, of positive dignity."(I,76) He has only achieved the position of editor of a review of economy, ethics and politics - handsomely paid for by Mrs. Newsome's dollars to rescue him a little "from the wreck of hopes and ambitions, the refuse-heap of disappointments and failures."(I,57) This gives him his "one presentable little scrap of an identity",(I,57) and he is mainly reminded of his unfulfilled potentialities.

The fact that Strether has been paralysed by an emotional conflict

relating to woman and life is emphasised by the effect Paris has upon him. His previous incapacity for life is challenged by "the presence of new measures, other standards, a different scale of relations"(I,100) from that which he has known. The impossibility of loving which has bedevilled the American male seems swept away by an environment in which everything is possible. This is symbolised in the attitude of Miss Barrace, an acquaintance of Chad's, who is like "some high-feathered, free-pecking bird",(I,179) standing before life "as before some full-shop window"(I,179) through which she can select her desired sweets. People in Paris have cultivated "wants" and can achieve their desires. More especially they can achieve the kind of human and love relationships that have always seemed unattainable to the American hero. Paris is the symbol of life and woman. It seems to hang before Strether's eyes like a

> vast bright Babylon, like some huge iridescent object, a jewel brilliant and hard, in which parts were not to be discriminated nor differences comfortably marked. It twinkled and trembled and melted together, and what seemed all surface on moment seemed all depth the next.(I,78-79)

It embodies the wonderful- terrible, seductive-destructive and unfathomable power of life itself.

This is the power of Madame de Vionnet herself, the beautiful cultivated woman, as she turns out to be, who takes "all {Strether's} categories by surprise."(I,239) Strether is paralysed by so much life and by erotic love, yet he knows that his fate lies in his developing appreciation of Madame de Vionnet, that he can see her and her influence upon Chad in a light which to the people of Woollett would be inconceivable. As he tells Miss Gostrey,

> "... the party responsible is, I suppose, the fate that waits for one, the dark doom that rides. What I mean is that with such elements one can't count. I've but my poor individual, my modest human means. It isn't playing the game to turn on the uncanny. All one's energy goes to facing it, to tracking it. One wants, confound it, don't you see? ... one wants to enjoy anything so rare. Call it then life ... call it poor

dear old life simply that springs the surprise. Nothing alters the fact that the surprise is paralysing, or at any rate engrossing - all, practically, hang it, that one sees, that one can see." (I,148)

Before he meets Madame de Vionnet, he has already measured the extraordinary effect of her influence upon Chad, which is impossible to calculate by ordinary standards, for she has effected an "alteration of the entire man."(I,148)

When he meets her it is in the garden of the artist, Gloriani, a setting in which his mind is assaulted by images which embody the exquisite, threatening, and incalculable force of life. Strether is overwhelmed by his sense of "names in the air, of ghosts at the windows, of signs and tokens, a whole range of expression, all about him, too thick for prompt discrimination."(I,171) The place itself is as "striking to the unprepared mind"(I,171) as "a treasure dug up."(I,171) The signs speak of "survival, transmission, association"(I,171) and "a strong indifferent persistent order"(I,171) behind which there lies destruction as well as creation. He is elated and overwhelmed by the pressure and weight of so much life bearing down upon him and rises to the height of delivering an encomium upon life, which he now realises has passed him by: though the train had fairly waited for him at the station, he had not "the gumption to know it was there" and now hears only "its faint receding whistle miles and miles down the line."(I,191)

He sees no alternative in his own case to a fate of frustrated possibilities. His sense of his fatedness results from the nature of the mind, the proclivities of which were laid down in the far past. His life has been the living out of these proclivities, as he tells Chad's friend, Little Bilham.

> The affair - I mean the affair of life - couldn't, no doubt, have been different for me; for it's at the best a tin mould, either fluted and embossed, with ornamental excrescences, or else smooth and dreadfully plain, into which, a helpless jelly, one's consciousness is poured - so that one 'takes' on the form, as the great cook says, and is more or less compactly held by it; one lives in fine as one can. (I,191)

However, the point for him now is that it does not matter what one's life

has been "so long as you have your life."(I,190) For "if you haven't had that what have you had?"(I,179) What Strether loses he loses irrevocably, but what he gains is an imaginative consciousness of his life no matter what degree of immersion in actual experience this has involved. For he has "an amount of experience out of proportion to his actual adventures".(I,199)

In opening "all the windows of his mind"(I,172) and "letting himself go" - keeping in mind that he must not dispossess himself of the faculty of seeing things as they were - Strether automatically endangers himself. For his imagination is the cause of his defeat as well as of his heroism. From his arrival he has found that

> wherever one paused in Paris the imagination reacted before one could stop it. This perpetual reaction put a price, if one would, on pauses; but it piled up consequences till there was scarce room to pick one's steps among them.(I,84)

He becomes "conscious of everything"(I,122) except what will serve himself and his own ends. For to appreciate the Parisian world and Madame de Vionnet necessitates that he put himself in a false relation to Mrs. Newsome. In one sense the value he places upon the "virtuous attachment"(I,177) between Madame de Vionnet and Chad gives him almost a new lease of life. But in another sense, "thanks to his constant habit of shaking the bottle in which life handed him the wine of experience, he presently found the taste of the lees rising as usual into his draught."(I,158-59) If fate works for Madame de Vionnet it must work against himself and he must play a losing game. If all the accidents are on her side, then he must give himself up.

Strether's dominant impulse is "to let things be, to give them time to justify themselves or at least to pass."(II,4) He is essentially passive to the intervention of the women in his case. However, he makes up his mind to stand by Madame de Vionnet and to be for her "a firm

object"[II,10] to which she can clutch in her own battle to retain Chad. He cannot ask Chad to sacrifice her in order that he might win Mrs. Newsome, for this would necessitate that Chad suffer the greatest loss imaginable. Yet Strether hopes to make Mrs. Newsome see the affair as he has come to see it, in which case all might not be lost to him. Yet he has, in effect, fallen in love with Madame de Vionnet himself, albeit at a distance. So he lets his situation run away from him and awaits what is to happen.

Strether is involved in a complete volte face. He receives his ultimatum from Mrs. Newsome, demanding that he return himself if he cannot come with Chad. Chad is ready to return, but Strether asks him to remain in Paris for his own sake. This is largely because he wishes to know where he stands in relation to his fate, and he can only do so by letting events take their inevitable course. Mrs. Newsome decides to send out her own daughter, Sarah Pocock, as her second ambassador, thereby depriving Strether of his function. But Strether will be able to sort out his "muddle"[II,37] by seeing how Sarah will react, for her reactions will be identical to those of her mother. On the one hand, he adopts the line that his "smash"[II,45] will not occur. On the other hand, if he is going "by an inexorable logic to pay"[II,46] for his behaviour he is anxious to learn the "cost".[II,46] While waiting for Sarah to come Strether is obsessed by his sense of Mrs. Newsome's views. He has never lived with her as in this period, in which her silence creates a "clearer medium"[II,41] in which her "idiosyncrasies"[II,41] show. His fear of what is to come is projected in "fantastic waking dreams"[II,52] of the dreaded effect of a single hour with her daughter. Sarah looms "larger than life"[II,52] as she approaches Paris, and his ears burn under her probable reprobation. He feels guilty and already consents "by way of penance, to the instant forfeiture of everything."[II,53] He sees himself under her directions as "recommitted"[II,53] to Woollett like "juvenile offenders are committed to reformatories."[II,53] Yet he keeps before him "the idea of the honour of such a woman's

esteem"(II,42) as Mrs. Newsome's.

When Sarah arrives, Strether responds to the familiar with an instant "renewal of his loyalty,"(II,64) gasping "at what he might have lost."(II,64) Madame de Vionnet's attitude to him places him on her side, though he is as yet opposed in a "covert"(II,86) way and a "semi-safe fashion"(II,86) to those who are against her. The arrival of Sarah brings the battle between the women out into the open. She comes out "to act"(II,74) and to see in Madame de Vionnet what she expected to see. She considers Strether's view an insult to her mother and herself. The "perverse law"(II,81) which governs his personal life begins to reveal itself once more. Though Strether is in a state of suspense about his own case everything is all to inevitable. There is no possibility of winning back Mrs. Newsome's confidence, and he is already "disinherited beyond appeal."(II,126) Strether recognises that he is doomed to miss out on things always "while others were for ever picking them up through a contrary bent."(II,65) By an inexorable logic it is he who finally pays and others who mainly partake. Though he feels about to be led to the scaffold, as the moment of clarification approaches he is not unpleased. When it comes Sarah lets fly at him "as from a stretched cord",(II,183) with such violence of outrage that it takes him time to "recover from his sense of being pierced."(II,183) It is the penetration of "certainty,"(II,183) a certitude that has been tested and put through the fire, a view of his case he has previously put only to himself. The reckoning has come and all is at an end. It makes him feel as if he were going to die, but die resignedly. He has ceased to measure or to understand what he wants, though the only logic in the case is his forfeiture of everything.

Strether's relationship with Mrs. Newsome is treated tentatively from the start. He has admired her as a "moral swell,"(I,58) but seems to have been passive to her will. It is thought that she proposed to him, and it is believed that she keeps a close watch on him. Strether has thought

her admirable, delicate, sensitive, and of a highly strung nervous constitution, yet with a capacity for great generosity. What her real nature is and what his marriage would have been emerge through the circumstance in which he is attracted to her opposite type. He disccovers that what has exposed him to her criticism of his behaviour in Paris is his independence of mind, which has made his "thinking such an offence."(II,179) If he had simply had an affair he would have been less "monstrous"(II,179) in her eyes. He has never had a relation with Madame de Vionnet and his association with her has looked worse than it was. His chance of marriage is partly lost through his perverse insistence that Mrs. Newsome should prove capable of seeing all that he has seen. In this he is disappointed. However, what he discovers is more important: that he was to have become a function of her personality, and to have no other existence but to express her views. She emerges as a "moral swell"(I,58) whose fine morality is merely the mask of an amoral energy. She is reduced finally to nothing but will.

Mrs. Newsome's extraordinary power is magnified through her indirect presentation in the novel. She never appears personally but is evident as a conscious influence: exerting herself as a continuous pressure upon Strether's consciousness. Also her indirect presentation through her daughter, a woman absolutely in her own mould, is a further demonstration of her threatening power. What Sarah brings with her is "the woman herself,"(II,199) the "whole moral and intellectual being or block",(II,199) for Strether to "take or leave."(II,199) Mrs. Newsome is so "essentially all moral pressure"(II,177) that "the presence of this element"(II,177) is "almost identical with her own presence."(II,177) As Strether tells Miss Gostrey, she is all

> "... fine cold thought. She had, to her own mind, worked the whole thing out in advance, and worked it out for me as well as for herself. Whenever she has done that, you see, there's no room left; no margin, as it were, for any alteration. She's filled as full, packed as tight, as she'll hold, and if you wish to get anything more or different either out or in ... you've

got morally and intellectually to get rid of her."(II,198)

The inequality of power in their relationship is revealed in the extent to which Mrs. Newsome reaches Strether "by the lengthened arm of her spirit",(II,177) so that he must constantly take her into account whereas he can neither touch nor reach her. She has no consideration for him or his point of view.

Sarah indicates the extent to which Mrs. Newsome threatens Strether's destruction while being herself the victim of a life-denying morality. Sarah is likewise a strong woman, and her strength is held up, backed up, strengthened and sustained by her mother's moral view. Strether sees her as "built in", "bricked up,"(II,156) and "buried alive,"(II,156) though by no means dead - free only "from the chin up."(II,157) The sound of her respiration drowns all other sounds for him. It is literally all he hears. Sarah's fear of life keeps her from exposing herself to life - and Paris. But in consequence of her own incapacity for life she also has a great resentment against those who, like Chad, can live. She sees Chad's development as "hideous".(II,183) Madame de Vionnet is not even "an apology for a decent woman."(II,180) She illustrates dramatically the threat that is contained within her mother's will by demonstrating how her nobly officious morality masks her hatred and need of a vindictive victory. She finds her triumph in her revenge on Strether.

Madame de Vionnet is the woman who symbolises life and whose contrasting qualities liberate Strether from his domination by the type of the Puritan mother of amoral psychic force. She is "a strange blank wall"(I,215) for his adventure "to break his nose against,"(I,215) for though she indirectly frees him from a marriage that would have been a mistake she does not lead him to a life of practical possibilities. She is the archetypal woman latent in his imagination, who signifies the highest possibility of expansion in terms of a completion of self and liberation of the spirit. She is "fifty women"(I,232) - life in all its variety and brilliance, a woman "for all your 'times of life'."(I,203) She takes all categories by surprise, and her infinite

extension, or that which she would bring to a relationship, is suggested by her capacity to indicate the feminine in social and psychological terms, in terms of the real world and the world of the imagination. Strether

> could have compared her to a goddess still partly engaged in a morning cloud, or to a sea-nymph waist-high in the summer surge. Above all she suggested to him the reflexion that the femme du monde - in these finest developments of the type - was, like Cleopatra in the play, indeed various and multifold. She had aspects, characters, days, nights - or had them at least, showed them by a mysterious law of her own, when in addition to everything she happened also to be a woman of genius. She was an obscure person, a muffled person one day, and a showy person, an uncovered person the next. (I,239)

She is a creature "half mythological and half conventional."(I,238) She is the ideal to which he pays tribute in Paris, the altogether rare woman who suggests the possibilities of a high fine friendship, and whose influence transforms the man she loves.

Though Strether is shocked to discover that her relation with Chad is erotic and not completely "virtuous,"(I,177) it does not alter his sense of the value in the relationship. To see her as exemplifying "the typical tale of Paris"(II,243) is to put the lowest possible estimate on the affair. For she takes all the ugliness out of it in the way that she presents it, and she has remade Chad in terms of his social being, manners, morals and character. She saves him from what he had been before: an unattractive, callow youth. To do this she has had to sacrifice herself in every way, managing appearances, taking the blame, doing everything for Chad, and paying the price of forfeiting her lover. Her transformation of Chad has also involved his liberation from his mother's influence. Strether notices that Chad's resemblance to his mother has quite disappeared, "no resemblance whatever to the mother had supervened."(I,123-24) She releases Chad from the domination of the American mother of Puritan cast to whom he has been bound, and does so at her own expense.

It is partly because she is a victim figure that she is an idealised portrait of the woman of erotic nature. The Jamesian male characteristically

attempts to annex life through a woman and to live through her, but the hero has never observed a woman to do so much for a man as in this case. Strether is lost in admiration of the transforming effect that Madame de Vionnet has had on Chad. She has made him a thoroughly civilized and cultivated human being. She is utterly divested of the threatening power normally associated with erotic passion because she gives everything of herself and is doomed to be "the loser in the end."(II,258) As she tells Strether, the only safe and right thing is to give and not to take, for "one has to take so much, to be happy, out of the lives of others".(II,253) Madame de Vionnet is doomed likewise to a perverse fate in love. She is helplessly bound by a set of conditions she cannot escape and which determine that she must lose her lover. Behind her lies the history of mankind, the history of days and nights of revolution, of blood and sacrifice, indicating the destruction that lies behind the creation of civilization. She has, in fact, been a victim from the beginning. She was a "charming girl"(I,200) a young creature of nature and spontaneous feeling, who was "married out of hand by a mother ... full of dark personal motive"(I,200) to a man unworthy of her, who has destroyed her prospects of a happy life. The mother, like the daemonic American mother figure, "interested and prone to adventure, had been without conscience,"(I,201) and desirous merely of "ridding herself most quickly of a possible, an actual encumbrance".(I,201) Her father, an ineffectual male, had been unable to protect her, despite his love of her, and his fortune moreover constituted the trap "to make her more or less of a prey"(I,201) to the unscrupulous fortune hunter.

She is also caught between two men: a husband she cannot divorce and who is unlikely to die, and a lover who cannot marry her and will not stick by her. She is inevitably "a creature exploited"(II,255) by Chad. It is her plight to love more than she is loved and ultimately to be abandoned by her lover. For Chad will seek a union where marriage is possible. Strether cannot bear to see so fine a creature so "vulgarly troubled"(II,256) and cast down in the dust. He suffers to think of her as

a woman "hit"(II,269) in consequence of a passion "mature,"(II,256) "abysmal"(II,256) and pitiful, condemning her to cry like a maidservant for the loss of her young man, yet judging herself as a maidservant would not. Strether has nothing but pity for her, and the indirect way in which he has enacted the drama of a relationship to two women of different personality types, enables him to love Madame de Vionnet in a charitable sense, though he has no pretensions to carrying his feelings further.

Although Madame de Vionnet has done everything a woman can do for a man, she is not a redeemer figure in the sense that James projects such women in the short stories - as a means of resolving the hero's life problems. However, it is important that Strether, in attempting to reunite himself with the lost threads of his youth, transfers his lost opportunities upon this couple. He sees them in the light of what he might have had but now has no hope of attaining. He therefore places his whole energy into the project of making Chad stick by Madame de Vionnet, asserting that in this relationship he will find everything, which he will forfeit if he returns to America. But Madame de Vionnet has released Chad from the crippling effects of a dominant mother, and he no longer needs her. Moreover he is his father's son, and a young man of another generation, whose problems are not those of the older generation of American males.

Chad is not as good as Strether would like to think. The older man idealises him as an aspect of his own lost youth made over into a potent example of masculinity combined with romantic opportunity. He is the type of alter ego, the man for whom everything works, and who does not suffer from crippling emotional conflicts. He is one of those persons who get everything, and somehow others will always be turning his wheel for him. It is implied that he will return home, develop his obvious professional abilities and marry a nice young American girl, which is what he wants to do. He is a man who may attain everything, and though he must forfeit Madame de Vionnet to do so, he is already tired of her and wants to ditch

her. Indeed, in order to assume his fortune Chad must return home, for his inheritance is contingent upon conditions laid down in his deceased father's will, which demand his immediate return to take up his interests in the "big brave bouncing business"(I,52) that his father established. It is a "particular chance"(I,61) which carries with it a "definite material reward."(I,52)

Chad is "an eminent case"(I,134) of "a man of the world,"(I,133) who presents himself with "his massive identity so rounded off, his palpable presence and his massive young manhood, as such a link in the chain as might practically amount to a demonstration."(I,137) He manipulates Strether into seeing what he wants him to see, and so carefully prepares his presentation of himself that it amounts to a gilded trap to ensnare his mother's ambassador. Strether is not without the consciousness that there is something at the back of this that would give one pause.

> It was as if - and how but anomalously? - he couldn't after all help thinking sufficiently well of these things to let them go for what they were worth. What could there be in this for Strether but the hint of some self-respect, some sense of power, oddly perverted; something latent, and beyond access, ominous and perhaps enviable?(I,137)

Strether finds that there is "no computing at all"(I,132) what such a young man will "think or feel or say on any subject whatever,"(I,132) and he becomes increasingly unfathomable and inscrutable for his admirer. He knows how to live, and this involves not only his liberation for erotic experience, but also his capacity to sacrifice others to his advantage. Both these attributes involve a suppression of the imagination. Chad has too little imagination whereas Strether may have too much. He is too much of a conscious success and his secrets of "personal magnificence"(II,24) mask the brutality of "an irreducible young Pagan."(I,137) He is "an extraordinary case of the equilibrium arrived at and assured,"(I,157) but "there's a lot behind it."(I,157) Chad might not have been originally worth the process to which Strether's spirit has been the arena, but his value is "quintupled"(II,280)

by what Madame de Vionnet has made of him. Chad owes her "everything"(II,281) - very much more than she can owe him. He has incurred duties "of the most positive sort"(II,281) that override any other. Chad abounds for Strether in "conscientious assurances"(II,277) that he will meet these obligations, but he "protests too much"(II,291) and falls away from Strether's conception of him. Implicit in his portrait is a variation upon the figure of the monstrous selfish male who cannot love and who has been "ineffably adored"(II,255) by a woman he has sacrificed. Strether does his utmost "to save" Chad's life according to his sense of the value in the affair, despite the fact that he knows of the "lie"(II,235) in it. The entire imaginative effort leaves him as depleted of energy as if he had spent his last sou.

Although Strether presumably fails in his quest to preserve the values of the past through his fatherly direction of Chad, romantic values which he esteemed and were unattainable to him, he is unlike other failed heroes (except the artist hero whom he emulates) because if he does not live directly he lives imaginatively up to the hilt of his possibilities.

To enforce the values of the imaginative life and to show how far Strether has grown in his Parisian experience, James contrasts him with a friend of his own age, type, and background, Waymarsh. Unlike Strether Waymarsh has enjoyed worldly success in his profession, law, but he has also made a mistaken marriage, the difficulties of which he passes off simply by not living with his wife and letting her pursue her own intentions. He is the type of joyless Puritan who cultivates the habit of disapprobation and travels through Europe like "a person established in a railway-coach at a forward inclination."(I,23) Europe is for him an "ordeal"(I,23) and he can respond only to the known set of assumptions which belong to his home environment. Strether's instinct towards a spirit so "strapped down"(II,49) as Waymarsh's is "to walk round it on tiptoe for fear of waking it up to a sense of losses by this time irretrievable."(I,49) Yet there is little fear that Waymarsh

will awaken to life's possibilities. He is a variation upon earlier figures of the male who has not achieved an integrated identity. He is all "depth of good conscience"(II,49) and super-ego and lacks a central self as well as a capacity for pleasure. He is invested with the sacred qualities of the father, but also with the helplessness of the child. He does not exist in the dimension of husband and lover although he has attempted a marriage. His value is overblown by Miss Barrace's witty characterisations of him as the Hebrew prophet, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, or Moses brought down to the floor and made portable. But he has suffered a partial breakdown earlier in his life and is supported only by forms and manners which are obsolete in the world of complexities in which Strether moves.

A difficulty that arises out of Strether's achieved consciousness is that he becomes split between two worlds, out of harmony with both. He starts out with a Woollett consciousness and gains a Parisian one through his exposure to a different air and other outlooks on life. The two ways of looking at the world are totally opposed. Strether moves from the one to the other, finding himself embarrassed by being unable to live in Paris with a Woollett consciousness or in Woollett with a Parisian one. This is a more difficult dilemma than that of specifically losing Mrs. Newsome by seeing Madame de Vionnet, and therefore herself, in a different light. It is not clear where Strether can go or where he can live. He is faced with a divided world and a disjunction of values that cannot be unified.

At the end Miss Gostrey offers him a potential escape: "exquisite service"(II,292) and "lightened care"(II,292) for the rest of his days. Significantly she is the type of exocentric personality, the woman who is all service, and who seems to represent herself as the woman out of Strether's past, though they have only recently met. She has been a kind of buffer between the two violently opposed images of women embattled in Strether's mind. For she has helped him mentally and emotionally to make

the transition to a more realistic appreciation of woman in all her complexities of nature. But she loses her appeal once her function has been served. Moreover it is Madame de Vionnet alone who represents life and the highest ideal of human value. As he comes to appreciate Madame de Vionnet he recognises how far off the time was "when he had held out his small thirsty cup to the spout" of Maria Gostrey's "pail".(II,42)

> Her pail was scarce touched now, and other fountains had flowed for him; she fell into her place as but one of his tributaries; and there was a strange sweetness - a melancholy mildness that touched him - in her acceptance of the altered order. (II,42)

It seems to him "but the day before yesterday that he sat at her feet and held on by her garment and was fed by her hand."(II,42) Her function is served by helping him to stand on his own feet and to establish his identity independently of his relation to a woman. He sees how "the pure flame of the disinterested"(II,166) burns in her "cave of treasures"(II,117) "as a lamp in a Byzantine vault."(II,117) But she now seems to belong to an older world that has not kept pace with the changes that have taken place in Strether's consciousness. She seems to have remained in harmony with this world because she has never departed from it. Her offer of succour is a kind of bliss that might once have been but no longer tempts him.

> It built him softly round, it roofed him warmly over, it rested, all so firm, on selection. And what ruled selection was beauty and knowledge. (II,292)

To sit in her dining-room is "to see life reflected for the time in ideally kept pewter,"(II,286) which is "becoming, improving to life, so that one's eyes were held and comforted."(II,286) Though she represents an impossible escape from his fate, and Strether must prove his heroism by remaining "dreadfully right,"(II,293) without gaining any personal advantage, she has also ceased to compel as a figure. Her offer represents a return to a world to which Strether no longer belongs.

There is a sense in which Strether, like Chad, is remade by Madame de

Vionnet, and he consecrates her work in relation to Chad. Through her influence he incorporates the feminine within himself. He is the sole example of a man who sees and feels, and is impelled into a complete awareness by the shock of an experience which exposes him to a new set of conditions that falsify his old assumptions. Through it he becomes thoroughly civilized and deeply human, and invests the world in which he moves with a higher value than it would otherwise have. His mission has really been to discover himself and to achieve an integrated personality. He also remakes himself through his imaginative awareness of others, and puts his charity and comprehension of the complexities of the lives of others into this service. However, although his consciousness is redemptive, it is a "double consciousness."(I,5) For he sees the dualities of life, the ambiguities of things, and the fatal division which separates his disparate worlds. There is no way in which these divisions can be bridged or a final harmony achieved. He is somehow left with his consciousness on his hands. He has life only for others, not for himself.

The Wings of the Dove* (1902) is James's most deeply tragic presentation of his theme of the fate of frustrated love. All the main characters are doomed to lose by their natures and the inextricable web of circumstances that determine their personal and social lives. The heroine, Milly Theale, is the apotheosis of the injured lover and disinherited princess of life. Although mortally afflicted, Milly dies because she cannot marry the man of her choice, Merton Densher, who is in love with Kate Croy. Kate returns his love and is therefore an invincible rival to Milly. Densher is doomed to lose Kate partly because his passive nature lends him to her manipulation, so that he finds himself in the intolerable situation of courting both women

* Macmillan, London, 1923, 2 Vols.

at the expense of Milly's life. What he suffers in consequence of the complexity of his situation makes it impossible for him to accept Kate on her own terms. Kate is doomed by social circumstances which make it impossible for her to marry Densher because he is poor. Her nature contributes to her doom because she tries to get what she wants through appropriating Milly's wealth. In effect she is prepared to "kill" Milly, knowing she will leave her money to Densher, and assuming that there will then be no barrier to their marriage. However, Densher refuses to accept the money and marry Kate. She can only have the money through him but can only have him without the money. Although James refrains from indicating Kate's choice it is clear that too much has happened for her to achieve happiness.

In a world of such division as James here represents none of the lovers can bridge the gaps and attain his desires. However, there is a daemonic mother figure behind the general doom, Kate's aunt and sponsor, Maud Lowder, who gets what she wants through her amoral psychic drive. She represents the social world and demonstrates the principles upon which it operates. She is the ultimate example of female power. The inequality of power in the relationships between men and women has always lain behind the fatality of James's lovers. But here his analysis of power is more complex and affects every aspect of life; power is worshipped and feared, retaining its psychological emphasis because it stems from psychic energy. The analysis is carried further, so that it largely explains why the world is so disastrously divided.

In previous representations of the theme of the fate of love James has concentrated largely on a single protagonist whose acceptance of the fate is the central action. However, in this triangular love relation, he traces the fates of all three participants. This makes it inevitable that he should not proceed through one centre of consciousness. Moreover his theme involves complex tangles between the related fates of the three participants.

He begins from the concept of his heroine, Milly, as "a young person conscious of a great capacity for life, but early stricken and doomed, condemned to die under short respite, while also enamoured of the world."[AN,288] He finds a "supremely touching value"[AN,292] that attaches to her situation as "the heir of all the ages,"[AN,292] destined "as that consciousness should deepen"[AN,292] to know herself as "balked"[AN,292] of her inheritance. He conceives of her great desire for life as rendering her in *herself* the opposition "to the catastrophe announced by the associated Fates,"[AN,290] powers conspiring to a sinister end "in such straits really to *stifle* the sacred spark"[AN,290-91] of her animated life. However Milly's doom is not simply to take "full in the face the whole assault of life,"[I,112] for she exists in a current determined by the will of others who are the agents of her fate. "Her impulse to wrest from the shrinking hour still as much of the fruit of life as possible"[AN,291] can only take effect with the aid of others, for Milly can only live for particular things, for human desires, for love. This involves her in relationships with others in which she acts on them as much as they act on her, so that "their participation becomes their drama too - that of their promoting her illusion, under her importunity, for reasons, for interests and advantages, from motives and points of view of their own."[AN,291] While Milly's life hangs on her relation to others she also determines their doom, for the effect she creates is much the same

> whirlpool movement of the waters produced by the sinking of a big vessel or the failure of a great business; when we figure to ourselves the strong narrowing eddies, the immense force of suction, the general engulfment that, for any neighbouring object, makes immersion inevitable.[AN,293]

Because of the nature of her doom, her personality, and her mortal disease, Milly cannot be "the one reflector"[AN,299] of the action. There are things she cannot know, and sufferings that cannot be rendered from her point of view. James proceeds by means of "centres" of consciousness, adopting the related points of view of the persons concerned in the action, and building up "under certain degrees of pressure, a represented community

of vision between several parties to the action when it makes for concentration."(AN,300) He presents his material by means of "blocks"(AN,305) of narrative, which enable him to take up the centre of consciousness that will most reflect the intensity of his situation. While this gives him flexibility of presentation and heightens the sense of tragedy, it means that his heroine is not always in the foregound. Moreover James cannot make Kate a centre of consciousness for the greater part of the novel, for once she sees how events may play into her hands she cannot be represented as observing the consequences of her plan, as actually watching Milly suffer and die. The logic of the situation effectually places Densher at the centre of the action. He is the hero whom both women want, and he is operated upon by their elder female sponsors, who wish to work their will through him. The victim of four women, he is at the centre of everybody's operations. Though he is the hero caught in the classic situation, it is his nature to be acted upon rather than to initiate action, and he cannot know, until it is too late to withdraw, the plan through which Kate thinks they will profit from Milly's love of him. Densher becomes increasingly the centre of consciousness as the novel moves toward its conclusion; but he could not have been the single centre because of his need to block from recognition much that happens, until, through the gravity of his suffering, he is impelled toward consciousness. His consciousness, which is of an excoriating knowledge, leaves him a broken man. It does enable him to assert his heroism but not to resolve his problems.

James chooses a heroine to represent the apotheosis of the fate of the injured lover "since men, among the mortally afflicted, suffer on the whole more overtly and grossly than women, and resist with a ruder, an inferior strategy."(AN,290) Furthermore, although doomed to die, and the figure of the sacrificial woman, Milly represents life. She is "the real thing, the romantic life itself,(I,197) and her nature "draws 'feet of water'".(I,101) Like the leviathan she stirs the stream, leaving others to rock violently in

her wake. Although potentially the redeemer figure such as James projects to resolve the love injuries of the hero in the short stories, she is placed in too deeply ambiguous a world to have this effect. Her own problems are so tenderly, subtly and indirectly presented that James must provide her with a "confidant",(I,108) Susan Stringham. Susan fills in those details which Milly could not herself present, but also loves the girl so much that she magnifies her character as a tragic princess. She presents the poetry of Milly's nature and history.

Milly is already doomed by the characteristically extreme family circumstances out of which she has arisen. Her family epitomises the pattern of Americans of extraordinary potentialities which have all come to nothing. As Susan reflects:

> New York was vast, New York was startling, with strange histories, with wild cosmopolite backward generations that accounted for anything; and to have got nearer the luxuriant tribe of which the rare creature was the final flower, the immense extravagant unregulated cluster, with free-living ancestors, handsome dead cousins, lurid uncles, beautiful vanished aunts, persons all busts and curls, preserved, though so exposed, in the marble of famous French chisels - all this, to say nothing of the effect of closer growths of the stem, was to have had one's small world-space both crowded and enlarged.(I,100)

Milly inherits "a New York legend"(I,95) involving the loss of her family "all on a scale and with a sweep that had required the greater stage."(I,95) She is alone and stricken, and invested "in respect to the mass of money so piled on the girl's back"(I,95) with "a set of New York possibilities."(I,95) However, her wealth carries "a perfectly definite doom"(I,108) and her potentialities are qualified by disasters. She lives with a void in her life. For all her capacity to be "the potential heiress of all the ages"(I,98) she is starved for culture.

Milly's first presentation is through Susan's eyes as unobserved she watches Milly confronting her doom. She has wandered off alone, and is sitting on a slab of rock commanding a vertiginous view. She is somehow

seated on the dizzy edge of it. Susan intuits her heroic acceptance of her doom, for

> the future wasn't to exist for her princess in the form of any sharp or simple release from the human predicament. It wouldn't be for her a question of a flying leap and thereby of a quick escape. It would be a question of taking full in the face the whole assault of life, to the general muster of which indeed her face might have been directly presented as she sat there on her rock. (I,112)

Susan discovers her in the act of imagining herself as "unmistakably reserved for some more complicated passage,"(I,112) the "obscure cause"(I,115) of which is her unrequited love of Densher, whom she has recently met, and her mortal disease. Yet she speaks of being overwhelmed by the joy of life and the "bliss of what I have,"(I,118) though it is scarcely bearable that she should see and feel such happiness only to know that she is to be deprived of it. Directly after this her sense of fate and her potentialities for life take her to London to her doctor and Densher's return from America.

Although Milly is James's most deeply doomed character, he maintains a tension between her disease and her life force with the effect largely of underlining her tragedy. For Milly there can be no escape. In London Milly lives at a great rate while her doom is consolidated. She is like a princess who has come of age early and has begun to receive and to express the boundless freedom of her endless wealth. She is introduced to a fairy tale world in which people seem anxious to wave the wand over her, envelop her in magic carpets, and further her prosperity. Yet behind this appearance lie "labyrinths" and "abysses" and Milly is once more on the edge of a great darkness. These elements reach a climax when she is invited to Matcham by Lord Mark, Aunt Maud's candidate for Kate's hand. Here the reaches the social apex of her "magnificent maximum".(I,195) It is the dawn of her apotheosis. Things will never seem so right again. Yet at the same time she is introduced into a great gilded historic chamber containing works of art which overwhelm her with their impressions of death and desire. She confronts herself in the portrait of a Bronzino girl who is "dead, dead,

dead."(I,195) Lord Mark and Kate, both agents of her tragedy, observe her and guess her doom. By a perverse act of generosity Milly is inspired to demonstrate her confidence in Kate (to whom she has been introduced through Susan's old friendship with Maud) by requesting her company on a visit to her doctor. She has learned to her shock that Densher has preceded her in a relation with Kate and wishes to show that she does not blame Kate for her reserve in not speaking of him. The act foreshadows the larger way in which Milly will lend herself to Kate's scheme.

Milly's sense of her doom becomes more explicit as a result of her visit to Sir Luke Strett. He advises her to live by option and volition and to rejoice in her beautiful active nature. She must be as active as she can or would like to be. She senses a double edge in his remarks.

> That had been in fact the final push, as well as the touch that most made a mixture of her consciousness - a strange mixture that tasted at one and the same time of what she had lost and what had been given her. It was wonderful to her, while she took her random course, that these quantities felt so equal: she had been treated - hadn't she?- as if it were in her power to live; and yet one wasn't treated so - was one? - unless it came up, quite as much, that one might die. (I,219)

Milly confronts the practical question of life that she shares in common anxiety with others in "this grim breathing-space".(I,221) She puts the opposition between her own fate and the capacity of others to live: "it was perhaps superficially more striking that one could live if one would; but it was more appealing, insinuating, irresistible, in short, that one would live if one could."(I,224) She braces herself to accept her fate. She takes off the jewel she might wear "to take up and shoulder as a substitute some queer defensive weapon, a musket, a spear, a battle-axe - conducive possibly in a higher degree to a striking appearance, but demanding all the effort of the military posture."(I,219)

Milly's meditations lead her to look around corners; intuitively she knows herself doomed in love before Densher returns. "Something" is "perversely <u>there</u>"(I,119) - "the perversity being how she kept in remembrance

that Kate was known" to Densher.(I,199) In Kate's "conscious eyes"(I,240) she reads "the total of her identity"(I,240) in "the person known to him."(I,240) "The air"(I,211) takes on for her "from the very nature of the case"(I,211) "a considerable chill"(I,211) destined never to evaporate. When Maud tries to discover through Milly whether Densher has yet returned, and Milly gathers from Kate's eyes that he has, she feels the pressure of being "in a current determined"(I,241) by others. It is the current that acts, not herself, and someone else, Kate, is the keeper of the lock that would open the flood-gates wide. Milly knows she has something "to supply"(I,242) and Kate has something "to take".(I,242)

> Milly knew herself dealt with - handsomely, completely: she surrendered to the knowledge, for so it was, she felt, that she supplied her helpful force. And what Kate had to take Kate took as freely and, to all appearance, as gratefully; accepting afresh, with each of her long, slow walks, the relation between them so established and consecrating her companion's surrender simply by the interest she gave it.(I,242-43)

Such scenes have for Milly "the quality of a rough rehearsal of the big possible drama."(I,242)

When Densher returns Milly discovers no alternative to liking him. She is led to believe that he is hopelessly in love with Kate and that his love is not returned. She therefore considers herself free to act. However, on the occasion of Maud's dinner party on Densher's return, Milly is too ill to be present, partly fearing what she might find. The occasion provides Densher with an intuition of her fate, for he sees her socially dealt with, disposed of, and dispensed with in conversation. The occasion takes on for him "the air of a commemorative banquet, a feast to celebrate a brilliant if brief career."(II,33) It is watched over by Susan "as some spectator in an old-time circus might have watched the oddity of a Christian maiden, in the arena, mildly, caressingly, martyred"(II,38) before "domestic animals let loose as for a joke."(II,38) The image seems comparatively benign, but the creatures of the social world develop into lions and eagles, creatures of prey who will devour Milly, the dove.

As a countermove against fate, Milly takes a palace in Venice to be her fortress against death. She imagines it as "the ark of her deluge,"(II,129) a place in which she may continue to float and never go down. She uses her great wealth to demonstrate her potentialities for life and to exhibit the values whereby she lives, creating an atmosphere of harmony and unity in which all may rest. By her attitude she purges the world of the evil she confronts in it. The rest of the party follow her there. As the darkness gathers about her she receives a proposal of marriage from Lord Mark which precipitates her fate. She understands that her value for him is precisely her disease and that he merely wishes her money, but her refusal leads Lord Mark to respond to his blow vindictively, by hunting for a possible motive for her refusal. He believes that Densher is at the back of it, but the information he extorts from Milly - that she believes that Kate is not in love with Densher, leads him to assume that the way is open for him to propose to Kate in the belief that he will be accepted. His refusal by Kate confirms his suspicion that Densher has always had her affection. He returns to Milly out of vengeance with the idea of disabusing her of her illusion and of harming Densher. The knowledge she has tried to avert kills her. What small ground she has had to stand on is violently removed. She and Densher have by this time become firm friends, but it alters their relation for her to know that his reality lies elsewhere for him. Susan tries to get Densher to deny the truth to save Milly's life, but he cannot do so without breaking faith with Kate. However it is already too late to save Milly. Though she clings to life and does not want to die, she turns her face to the wall, for she is deprived of her will to live and her capacity to fight for life. Only the redemptive love Densher might have given her could have saved her life.

Milly dies the characteristic death of the injured lover who cannot win young man because she confronts a superior rival. She dies, like the fatally wounded lovers of the short stories, after she has shown her potentialities

for life at a magnificent Veronesean feast, where she exhibits herself as the first young woman of her time in relation to the "grand young man,"(II,187) Densher, who surpasses all the others but holds up a wine cup from which he cannot drink. She leaves her great wealth to her lover as a symbol of her devotion in lieu of the life of love she might have been able to give him.

However, though there is "the rift in the lute,"(I,155) her mortal affliction, she is purged from the psychological flaws inherent in the nature of her prototype. This is for two main reasons. First, Milly's death is determined by factors external to her. She is the victim of a society in which the strong devour the weak and exact admiration for their power. It is the law of the jungle which determines that one eats or is eaten. Behind the social world lie the same psychic drives that are fatal to erotic relationships. In this way the social world borders on the fantastic, although it is portrayed with realism. Milly is the victim of people who operate on this principle, lending herself to their use. She accepts her sacrifice and spreads her wings for the protection of others. Secondly, it is the sacrificial aspect of her personality that exempts her from any supposition of a flaw. She is the quasi-religious figure of the pure martyr, who lays down her life that others may live. She is like an island floating in warm seas, which create ideal conditions in which others may float and enjoy themselves. She gives the value of her life to others, and restores beauty, truth, and justice to human relationships. She is conceived of as too pure to live and her purity is a countervalue to the evil of others who would use her life to their own advantage, dispensing with her as if she had no inherent value. Her purity is magnified by the ugly motives attributed to her adversary. Her whole world is in dissolution, and it is only momentarily that she can present an ideal synthesis of values by drawing upon the idiom of past centuries, when values did seem to harmonise. Her palace is a Renaissance dream in which she borrows elements out of the traditions of the past in an attempt to bring the disjunctions of the world

into harmony. Milly is the ultimate example of the romantic and heroic figure, who is doomed "to live fast,"(I,142) and to experience a "short run,"(I,142) with a "consciousness proportionately crowded,"(I,142) though her consciousness is not fully represented and is not redemptive to her.

Milly's fate arises out of the extremity of American domestic situations as James portrays them. The determinants in Kate's fate belong to the European world and are infinitely more complex. They are laid down well before Milly's appearance and are necessary to an understanding of how the facts of Milly's life feed Kate's fantasy that she may please everybody and herself. James arouses sympathy for Kate by representing these determinants before Milly's appearance. Kate is born to a family without means, who have suffered every kind of humiliation, disaster and distress. Experience has presented her with multiple proofs of "the heaviness, for them all, of the hand of fate."(I,59) "The dark disasters of her house"(I,59) constitute an amount of life of a devastating kind from which Kate wishes to be released. She wishes to remake her family name, redress her father's dishonour, and compensate for the tragic sufferings of her dead mother, which she cannot recall without an overwhelming sense of pain. Her father will have nothing to do with her and is the type of ineffectual father figure incapable of protecting his child. Rather he injures her as he injures everybody, for there is no side upon which he can touch anybody without hurting them or trying to turn the tables on them. For Kate life presents "the face of a striking and distinguished stranger."(I,25) At twenty-five she has nothing to show for herself but a sense of a wasted past. Moreover she has seen too much too early. She has been exposed to the law whereby one eats or is eaten, and grows brutal "indifferently, defensively and, as might be said, by habit of anticipation"(I,161) of the disasters that may befall her. She lives in dread of an adverse will to her own, which will prove destructive. Behind her great desire for life, and her capacity for it, lie the wasted, wounded and frustrated conditions that have

prevented her from living. She yearns for freedom, but her only freedom has lain in her capacity to think.

Her fate is precipitated by her aunt's offer of protection, an offer which looks inviting but carries with it heavy penalties and great dangers. Maud wishes to do something for the blighted house into which her sister, Kate's mother, married and died, for her sister's disasters have lain on her conscience. She looks on Kate as the comfort of her declining years, but she wishes to do what she thinks best for Kate without considering Kate's feelings - that is to provide her with the best husband on the market she can arrange, Lord Mark. The price of her protection is the forfeit of the man she loves, Densher. Her family force her into an acceptance of Maud's offer because they see in "one of the belated fancies of rich capricious violent old women"(I,153) the possible results which might be worked to their advantage. Kate represents for them "a tangible value,"(I,8) "the value,"(I,64) "the only one"(I,64) they have. They look to her to redress their wrongs, also without considering her feelings. She is to burn her boats that her sister and father should profit, and they care nothing of what should become of her in the process. She is to be deprived of her natural right to happiness because she is "hideously relative to tiers and tiers of others."(I,247) People are always eating Kate up, and the moral for her is "that the more one gave oneself the less of one was left."(I,30)

Kate is effectively caught between two different sets of menacing conditions. Her escape might have lain in marrying Densher in his poverty, but her sister has made an "unnatural"(I,59) marriage of this kind, the evil effects of which Kate has perceived. Moreover material things speak to her and she is encouraged to believe that she might do everything, please her family, her aunt, and herself. She wants to "sacrifice nobody and nothing,"(I,65) and to "try for everything"(I,65) clinging for herself to the notion of "the saving romance in things."(I,65) She wishes to invest

the cruel world of merciless power and mercenary attributes with human values, and to do justice to the value of her personal relationship with Densher. Kate is framed for being and seeing, and has a strong imagination together with an intelligence which is at one with her passion and concentrated upon discovering a means of fulfilling her desires. There is no flaw in her physical constitution or her capacity to love. She has the bloom of strength and will not die. She shares with Densher "the selfish gladness of their young immunities – without a flaw – each {having} the beauty, the physical felicity, the personal virtue, love and desire of the other."(II,49) Yet marriage seems "a temple without an avenue"(I,54) because of the pressures of their social and personal determinants.

Kate's illusion that she can win is perfectly human and understandable, but James places her in a world in which she cannot please both herself and her aunt. She is therefore in a false position from the start. She leads a double life as Maud's "chosen daughter"(I,152) and as Densher's lover: she plays a public role as her aunt's niece, while privately her identity lies in her secret relation to Densher. Before her aunt's continuous scrutiny she appears as a "faultless soldier on parade,"(II,31) always under arms. Her disciplined fate requires a constant effort. Kate must constantly square herself with the appearance of being in the right, but her circumstances make it impossible for her to be so. She possesses a direct talent for life and is made for great social uses. She would have been magnificent had she been born to Milly's wealth and opportunities, but she is born to conditions which deprive her of the chance to develop her potentialities. Nevertheless she promises to provide Densher with a continuous interest in life by virtue of her personal qualities - incalculable depth, variety, intelligence, imagination, and insight into the mysteries of life and nature. She is for him "a whole library of the unknown, the uncut."(II,55) He too expects to annex life through her. Her own desire for life is set against a crippling set of conditions in the world. It is

her great desire to win, together with the possibilities that the use of Milly's life gives her, which maintains the tension between her possible success and ultimate failure.

Kate's is a perverse presentation of the doom whereby, after fatal set-backs, fortune seems to favour her opportunities as a lover and to make everything triumphantly hers, only to prove that she is frustrated in her hopes and has lost her prize. Milly lends herself to Kate's fantasy and seems to make everything so easy. Kate knows that the occasion of Milly's magnificent revelation of her potentialities in Venice is her death song. She sees Milly surrounded by the power of her wealth, and hung with rich pearls which symbolize the difference between them. But she is sure that Milly will leave Densher her fortune and that all will be theirs. Her eyes are already "perched"(II,206) on the fact of her triumph.

Once her scheme is put into operation and Densher remains in Venice with the freedom Kate gives him to make up to Milly, even to marry her, Kate cannot be represented in relation to the affair. She returns to London where she is protected by the fact that she knows nothing of what is actually happening. However, she is put more and more into the posture of having to right wrong appearances, and begins to simplify and to give "poetic versions"(II,165) of the truth, in order to prove her potential success. When Densher returns, before the actual event of Milly's death, she is sure that they have won. Maud's attitude to Densher has changed, for she believes him to have been in love with Milly. Lord Mark has convinced her of this. Densher is therefore free to come and go, and seems to have pleased everybody. Kate's need to hold things together arises partly from the desperation of the situation that has arisen for herself and Densher. She has discounted what has happened to him, and does not anticipate that as a result of his own sufferings and the complications of feeling that have arisen for him, new elements will prove fatal to her. At the moment that she scents victory, when Densher has received the

communication from Milly's solicitors containing the details of her bequest, Densher presents her with the failure of her scheme. Densher asks her to accept him and to renounce the money, but leaves the choice with her. It is impossible not to feel that the love between them has in some sense been destroyed, and that the money is a worthless substitute for the love they once had. Whatever Kate may do she is doomed to fall back upon the devouring world from which she has sought her freedom.

Although Densher must assert his heroism through renouncing the material advantage that Milly's bequest gives him, and can assert his integrity for himself in no other way, James presents Maud as the real force which lies behind the fatality of their frustrated love. Kate has always understood the potential threat to herself inherent in her aunt's power, but has not foreseen the way in which her aunt might defeat her. She has tried to gain time by playing a waiting game, but time has put the advantage in her aunt's camp and not her own. By giving her niece the apparent freedom to come and go and to see Densher privately, Maud has in fact given the girl enough rope to hang herself with. Her tactic has been "to keep all reality"(II,24) out of the relation in the expectation that it will be destroyed. From the beginning she has treated Densher as if he were an adversary not worth making a martyr of, treating him "but with one hand,"(I,72) and "a few loose grains of stray powder",(I,72) to a display of her power. He is aware that she could bite his head off any day should she regard him as a real threat to her designs. She is astute in knowing the weaknesses of others. She has the capacity to reach them in the place where it hurts in order to ensure that they comply with her wishes. In Densher's case, she demands a favour in return for treating him well over the affair with Kate: that he make good her own "lie" to Milly, that Kate is not in love with him, and make up to the girl himself. In Kate's case, her appreciation of the girl is essentially "managerial,"(II,31) watchful and possessive. Characteristically of the mother figure of

apparent conscience and personal force, she believes she is doing everything for Kate's good. However, her conscience is a disguise of her own will which is related to erotic feeling. Densher is sickened by his perception of a relation between aunt and niece "lightened for him by the straight look, not exactly loving nor lingering, but searchingly soft, that, on the part of their hostess, the girl had to reckon with"(II,30) "habitually and consummately,"(II,31) which takes her in "from head to foot."(II,30) Her possessiveness of the girl has in it a destructive element for her.

Maud's personality is essentially "Passionate:"(I,70) the passion of the mother figure of will and amoral psychic drive. She is "a grand natural force,"(I,191) a woman with "a strong will"(I,27) and "a high hand."(I,27) She is "menacing"(I,29) and "uncompromising,"(I,29) a "strong, original, dangerous"(I,56) force. Her personality looms through the abysses of the London social world to give a glimpse of the dark recesses whence human motives and energies spring. As Kate puts it to Densher,

> the very essence of her ... is that when she adopts a view she - well, to her own sense, really brings the thing about, fairly terrorises with her view any other, any opposite view, and those not less who represent that. I've often thought success comes to her ... by the spirit in her that dares and defies her idea not to prove the right one. One has seen it so again and again, in the face of everything, become the right one.(II,170)

She operates on a social plane as "Britannia of the Market Place,"(I,28) and sits in the midst of her great wealth in her own "provisioned citadel"(I,28) at Lancaster Gate. When she requests her help to make Milly happy Susan sees her sitting

> back there, her knees apart, not unlike a picturesque ear-ringed matron at the market stall; while her friend, before her, dropped their items, tossed the separate truths of the matter one by one, into her capacious apron.(II,99)

Amidst the complexities which surround Milly's situation, her confidant sees "Maud Manningham's large seated self"(II,104) loom "as a mass more and

more definite, taking in fact for the consultative relation something of the form of an oracle."(II,104) Maud acts like the Fates and handles everyone. She is in possession of all the threads of the case which she is busily interweaving. For she would be helped by helping Susan in her plan for Milly's happiness. It would be to her own advantage to remove Densher, who is incompatible with her plans for Kate. In the social world of the worker and the worked, people consent to be fitted into her plans because of the advantage they find for themselves. This is true even of Lord Mark. She sees in him "personally the note of the blue - like a suspended skein of silk within reach of the broiderer's hand,"(I,168) and her "free-moving shuttle"(I,189) takes in "a length of him at rhythmic intervals."(I,189) He consents to be worked into her scheme of things because his success in life is dependent upon her belief in him. This is his greatest advantage. Maud's power is infinite because everyone wants what she wants and because the world worships power. This imparts to her psychic energies a limitless capacity to get what she wants. She exemplifies "the great public mind."(I,82) Her movements are on the scale of "the car of the Juggernaut,"(I,81) exacting a terrible sacrifice with the worship of her power. She is munificent when pleased and dangerous as an adversary. In a world in which others are perched precariously in the face of imminent disaster, she alone is fairly and squarely seated in the midst of her great wealth and the successful administration of her purposes.

While the psychic drive that lies behind the world is most evident in Maud, the complete powerlessness of the male who can only annex the life force through women, is evident in Densher. He falls subject to the combined force of the wills of all the women in the novel. Densher is not originally an ambivalent lover with a fear of the erotic. He is forced to become one by the injuries he suffers in consequence of his manipulation by females. His defect lies partly in his passivity, though it is impossible

to see how he might have acted differently, given the complicated determinants in his case. He knows himself to bear the marks of "the brand of the passive fleece,"(I,57) "the pair of smudges from the thumb of fortune"(I,57) laid down on his forehead from the primal hour. His "deeply diplomatic"(I,68) and pliant nature, together with his "spring of mind"(II,63) and imagination, contributes to his passivity, for he has an imaginative understanding of the complexities of life. He represents mind as Kate represents life. He is represented at that

> wondrous state of youth in which the elements, the metals more or less precious, are so in fusion and fermentation that the question of their final stamp, the pressure that fixes the value, must wait for comparative coolness.(I,44)

The stamp he receives is dependent upon his fate in love.

Originally the barrier to his marriage lies not in his mind but in his conditions, for Densher is poor. Moreover, he knows that the ways of making money are for others, not for himself. Whichever is the greater cause of shame, to marry in penury and suffer various degrees of privation, or to marry for money, he is sure he will be a loser. There is a continuous tension between this kind of conviction about himself and his love for Kate, which is both real and reciprocated. Although they are deeply in love and committed to each other, James represents their passion as erotic and therefore a cause of division. "The red spark of conflict"(II,5) is ever latent in their passion partly because of the inequality in their respective wills. Their love is that of "the famous law of contraries,"(II,46) for Kate is rich where he is poor and he is rich where she is poor. He has strength merely for thought, and she has it for life, and this is "what he must somehow arrange to annex and possess."(I,47) The inequality of their powers is expressed in his vision of unequally balanced scales.

> The scales, as he sat with Kate, often dangled in the line of his vision: he saw them, large and black, while he talked and listened, take, in the bright air, singular positions. Sometimes the right was down and sometimes the left; never a happy equipoise - one or other always kicking the beam.(I,57)

The unequal balance of power between the lovers is reinforced in the inequities of social conditions. Some people have money and opportunity and others do not. Maud likes Densher personally, but she disapproves of him for Kate because he is poor. In Maud's house, with all its ominous and cruel symbols of wealth, which are the negation of thought, Densher is forcibly made aware of the humiliation of his inability to provide for Kate. It is this disparity in the nature of things which also puts him at Kate's mercy, for he is in no position to force her hand.

Before Densher visits America he and Kate plight their troth. When he returns it is to "the act of renewed possession"(II,10) and the joy of contact with her. He is like a hidden master who might play upon a vast organ. Yet he returns to "bondage,"(II,16) to a position in which Kate keeps the keys to the cupboard, and he foresees the day when she will dole him out his sugar by the lump. Moreover he returns to a situation which is more than he bargained for, in which he is entrapped in a "wondrous silken web"(II,57) devised by others. Milly is unexpectedly in the foreground. Kate, aware of Milly's disease and her love for Densher, sees how Milly may help them and advises him to be kind to her. Maud tries to buy him off with Milly's money, requesting that he repay his obligations to her by being nice to Milly, and he is struck by the coincidence of the appeal of the two women. Moreover there is pathos in the shy appeal Milly herself makes to him. "The ground was there"(II,69) "in the impression she had received, retained, cherished."(II,69) Were he not kind he would strike at the root of a pleasure that flowers for him "in her soul".(II,69) Milly herself has been led to believe that she can receive this pleasure. Densher can neither expose and betray Kate nor challenge Milly. Although already subject to the pressure of three women his situation as yet seems relatively harmless and amusing, but he shrinks from scrutinizing its implications.

> Kate's design was something so extraordinarily special to Kate that he felt himself shrink from the complications involved in judging it. Not to give away the woman one loved, but to back her up in her mistakes - once they had gone a certain length - that was perhaps chief among the inevitabilities of the abjection of love. Loyalty was of course supremely prescribed in presence of any design on her part, however roundabout, to do one nothing but good. (II,68)

Characteristic of James's portrayal of a developing fate, Kate at this point gives Densher a chance of escape which is in effect an impossibility. She undertakes to explain everything to Milly and make it clear that Densher cannot visit her. However, he feels that his failure to oblige Kate would be poor and ugly, and her criticism of him as making too many conditions, makes him wish to show his tact, imagination and honour. Furthermore she argues that he need not see what he is doing, but can simply rest in Milly's nature, which will make everything right. Densher becomes aware of a force resident in the situation which is already acting beyond his power of personal control.

In following the entourage to Venice Densher sinks further into the web of complications and determinants which consolidate themselves about him. In being kind to Milly in circumstances in which Kate's love of him is kept secret he is complying with Kate's will. He feels "the awkwardness of his conscience"(II,165) in relation to his "general plasticity."(II,165) His "inward ache"(II,165) is not dispelled by the style of Kate's "poetic versions"(II,165) of the truth. "Even the high wonder and delight of Kate couldn't set him right with himself when there was something quite distinct from these things that kept him wrong."(II,165) His suffering forces him to come to a greater awareness of his situation.

> He was walking in short on a high ridge, steep down on either side, where the proprieties - once he could face at all remaining there - reduced themselves to his keeping his head. It was Kate who had so perched him, and there came up for him at moments, as he found himself planting one foot exactly before another, a sensible sharpness of irony as to her management of him. It wasn't that she had put him in danger - to be in real danger with her

> would have had another quality. There glowed for him a kind of rage for what he wasn't having; an exasperation, a resentment, begotten truly by the very impatience of desire, in respect to his postponed and relegated, his so extremely manipulated state. It was beautifully done of her, but what was the real meaning of it unless that he was perpetually bent to her will? (II,159)

Densher is indeed so manipulated that it becomes necessary for him to develop his will to counterbalance his submission to Kate. He agrees to tell any lie for Kate if she comes to his rooms, a condition which demands that she risk something for him and confirm their fidelity to one another. It is part of his integrity for himself to remain true to what he has always wanted, but his sense of life is strong with Kate and his depletion insists that he renew his sense of life through her, without which he cannot continue.

"Kate's pledge is an inestimable value"(II,212) paid in full, "a treasure kept, at home, in safety and sanctity, something he was sure of finding in its place when, with each return, he worked his heavy old key in the lock."(II,212) It renews his engagement to fidelity and to the future they anticipate, but at the same time it marks a change in their relationship. Densher feels "the oppression of success",

> the somewhat chilled state - tending to the solitary - of supreme recognition. If it was slightly awful to feel so justified, this was by the loss of the warmth of the element of mystery. The lucid reigned instead of it, and it was into the lucid that he sat and stared. He shook himself out of it a dozen times a day, tried to break by his own act his constant still communion. It wasn't still communion she had meant to bequeath him; it was the very different business of that kind of fidelity of which the other name was careful action. (II,213)

Densher assures himself that "something incalculable {was being} wrought for them - for him and Kate; something outside, beyond, above themselves, and doubtless ever so much better, than they,"(II,215) which was not a reason "for them not to profit by it."(II,215) Yet it is Milly herself who seems to be furthering their hopes, by her own attitude, her hospitality, her manner, her imagination, by the way in which she purges everything of

its potentially ambiguous content.

Kate's pledge takes place at the time of Milly's Veronesean feast, and as her mystery for him is partly dispelled Milly's mystery grows for him. From the occasion of his first outing in London with Milly, rugged up in softest silk and rumbling through the streets in her carriage, Densher has been aware of another element in his situation - his relation to Milly. He reflected to himself then that

> he was not there, not just as he was in so doing it, through Kate and Kate's idea, but through Milly and Milly's own, and through himself and his own - unmistakeably, as well as through the little facts, whatever they had amounted to, of his time in New York. (II,168)

He argues that his feelings for Kate leave not a feather's weight to spare for Milly, and that he is acting only for Kate. However, Milly begins to assume the character of her power in her ability to present herself to him as divinely inspired by her love for him. Her spiritual qualities make a grace of daily contact with her, which is quite different from his relation with Kate. Kate's power is diminished as Milly's becomes magnified, and Kate's ability to love erotically is supplanted by Milly's capacity to love romantically and selflessly.

After the rest of the party leave Venice Densher is left with Milly to live out the full implications of Kate's plan, the true nature of which he has only learned on the occasion of Milly's feast. He is in a situation of Kate's making, but his cultivation of his relationship with Milly is what all the women want, for motives very different. Densher is surrounded by a "circle of petticoats."(II,189) His freedom and independence are severely curtailed and his honour lies in his pure passivity. Milly has found a way to keep what she wants, but as Densher remains with her he is forced to recognise the extent of her dependence on him. "Anything he should do, or he shouldn't, would have close reference to her life, which was thus absolutely in his hands."(II,225-26) He discovers that it is on the cards for him "that he might kill her."(II,226)

> Destruction was represented for him by the idea of his really bringing to a point, on Milly's side, anything whatever. Nothing so 'brought,' he easily argued, but must be in one way or another a catastrophe. He was mixed up in her fate, or her fate, if that should be better, was mixed up in him, so that a single false motion might either way snap the coil. (II,226)

Densher's activity is centred upon the need to create "the minimum vibration,"(II,226) to keep alive the infinitely valuable life that so hangs in the balance.

It is into this situation that Lord Mark descends with a view to achieving his revenge. He is a man without imagination who probably does not understand the significance of what he does, but he nevertheless acts vindictively. He is an unusual rival figure, though he acts as a catalyst of Milly's fate, because he saves Densher from the appearance of being a brutal fortune hunter who would make up to a sick girl for her money and would destroy her for it. Because he has intended to do this himself he saves Densher from the spiritual danger of having appeared in such a light. He reveals by contrast how Densher has meant well and sought to preserve Milly's life. Sir Luke Strett, whose ministrations are now needed, also helps Milly to see this, and she sees Densher once more, perhaps hoping that he will deny Lord Mark's allegation, but not asking for it. She both forgives Densher and releases him from the need to stay for her end.

Densher returns to London, after suffering the last degree of abjection, to find a triumphant Kate asserting that "we've not failed.... We've succeeded.... She won't have loved you for nothing....And you won't have loved me."(II,296) Things seem almost too right. Maud is so far squared that Densher finds himself "too horribly trusted"(II,348) to be able to make appointments with Kate without abusing her aunt. Lord Mark has indirectly helped him by making Maud think he was in love with Milly. Indeed Maud is the only person to whom he can present himself as the bereaved lover, which he needs to do because he has fallen in love with

Milly. Susan does nothing but protect him, and Milly herself shows that she has forgiven, dedicated and blessed him. But Densher himself can bear the situation no longer. He is broken and divided. As he tells Kate: "That's simply what has happened. Something has snapped, has broken in me, and here I am. It's as I am that you must have me."(II,309) The only thing that will put him right with himself is that Kate should marry him as he is, without the money.

He proves his heroism in his acceptance of his fate, in the knowledge that he must forfeit something, Kate or the money. But, though he still wants Kate, it is Milly who now dominates his imagination and whom he loves romantically. He imposes his condition upon Kate as a necessity of his own nature, for he can only emerge from his battle straight if he maintains his integrity for himself. Moreover he cannot continue to exist if he is merely bent to Kate's will.

Circumstances have forced him into the position of the ambivalent lover: in love with the memory of a dead woman he can never marry, and able to marry a woman whose motives have grown to sicken him. Densher is left with his wasted passion and the proof of his early conviction that whatever happened he would be in the position of the one who would lose and pay all the forfeits. Milly's renunciation turns on itself to become an extraordinary assertion of power over the imagination against which Densher is helpless. Kate's power is diminished as she takes on the quality of the devil who is known and whose strategies can be anticipated. Despite their differences of nature, and manner of loving, both women have asserted their power over Densher to his own injury.

The novel ends with the implication that he will lose everything. Densher's sense of his own fatality, together with his suffering, which has brought him to an excoriating knowledge, has ensured this end. But it has come about as a result of the determinants in his world and not as a result

of his own nature. It is his comprehension of what has happened to him as the victim of women which makes him able to achieve the status of the hero by imposing his own conditions upon Kate, though he stands to forfeit everything, and though his consciousness leads neither to a resolution nor to a foreseeable future.

In The Golden Bowl* (1904) James presents the sole case of a heroine who does not suffer a frustrated love fate, although she is injured in love. This is primarily because she is invested with all the worldly advantages which allow her to "buy" the husband of her choice. And the wounds she receives occur after her marriage so that her problem is to win the love of the man who is already legitimately hers. Moreover the injury done her in love shocks her into consciousness and impels her to live. She is a unique figure, the woman of sacrificial cast who does not characteristically represent life, but who comes to do so. Furthermore she develops a will sufficiently strong to become self-determining, to create the conditions of her marriage on her own terms, and to get what she wants in winning her man. Though James does not project in her the kind of redeemer figure who alone can "save" the love-wounded hero, his increasing awareness of the terrifying nature of the psychic drive which lies behind manipulation, injury and destruction, leads him to project the kind of woman who can develop the necessary will to live while containing her will within the framework of the traditional orders of society. Nevertheless the assertion of her will necessitates the subjection of her husband to her and leads characteristically to an imbalance of power in her love relationship. Unlike the case of the male, whose hard-earned consciousness does not resolve his problems, the development of will and consciousness in Maggie is

* Macmillan, London, 2 vols.

directed toward the establishment of conditions of life in which she can live.

In the novel James returns to his starting point in presenting the oedipal relationship as primary and as formative to the development of further relationships. That Maggie wishes an intense romantic relationship with a lover is laid down in her intense devotion for her father. Unlike the male she is not emotionally crippled by her father's intense devotion to her. Furthermore James is able to present the parent-child relationship as sacrosanct because, unlike passion, it does not contain within it the seeds of division. Their wills are concomitant. It is a unique relationship which can never be repeated and to which an ultimate value pertains. However it is part of the "wonderful little world"(I,340) of childhood in which life did seem harmonious and unified, in which there was no disruptive influence. The world as such is a very different matter and it is this that Maggie must confront.

When the novel opens Maggie has gone through the forms of a marriage with the Prince before discovering that she and her father are no longer one and the same being. She tries to construct her marriage without breaking with her father. Indeed her marriage brings her closer to him because she presents him with another sacred parental role, that of grandfather to her beautiful son, the principino. But Maggie is forced to recognise that her marriage has exposed her father to predatory women because he necessarily appears single and marriageable. To redress the imbalance caused by her appearance of having abandoned her father by marrying herself, and to deter fortune hunting women, she invites the friend of her youth, Charlotte Stant, to join their household. Charlotte represents the life they need in order to carry on the practicalities of living and yet allow father and daughter to maintain their union. However, unbeknown to the Ververs Charlotte has previously been in love with the Prince and been prevented from marrying him because both of them lacked money. Unwittingly Maggie

introduces into her home a rival figure who sharply contests both her relationships. For unexpectedly Adam Verver marries Charlotte, seemingly to maintain the harmonious equilibrium they wish to retain. However, the intense devotion of father and daughter leaves Charlotte and the Prince free to fulfil the passionate relationship they were previously denied. Charlotte therefore becomes a rival both to her husband's and to her father's affections. The injury in love that Maggie suffers in consequence of Charlotte's adulterous affair with her husband makes Maggie aware of her inexpungable passion for the Prince and brings her to the point of being willing to forfeit her relationship with her father in order to retain her husband. Moreover the affair makes her true marriage to the Prince possible, for the way that Maggie handles her discovery of their illicit union causes the Prince to fall in love with her. Charlotte thus becomes the unique figure of a rival who extravagantly brings about her own doom in love. She is abandoned by her lover and condemned to a loveless union with Adam Verver, in which she is reduced to an adjunct of his personality and forced to live in conditions which destroy her life force. Nevertheless the passions which are unleashed to divide and destroy the ostensibly happy harmony among the four of them makes Maggie confront a world of division in which the appearance of unity can only be maintained in an extremely tenuous sense.

James divides the novel into two sections with the idea that the Prince should first exhibit Maggie according to his vision of her, and that the Princess should secondly exhibit her view of him. However, the difference between the two halves suggests the difference in the capacity for consciousness between the male and the female. In the preface James states that the Prince "virtually sees and knows and makes out, virtually represents everything that concerns us,"(AN,329) that he has "a consciousness highly susceptible of registration"(AN,329) which enables him to reflect the action "as in the clean glass"(AN,329) held up by the reflectors or

author's delegates in the short stories, except that he is more entangled in "the general imbroglio."(AN,329)

But the Prince only "nominally presides."(AN,330) His function is largely assumed by Fanny Assingham, the mutual friend who introduced the Prince to the Ververs and knew of his affair with Charlotte, and to whom the Prince himself must go to seek information about the family into which he has married. As an Italian the qualities of the American mind remain an enigma to him. He imagines himself much like the shipwrecked Gordon Pym, drifting toward a pole only to find "at a given moment before him a thickness of white air that was like a dazzling curtain of light, concealing as darkness conceals, yet of the colour of milk or of snow."(I,20) This veil, which conceals the operation of minds that function on principles so different from his own, is never removed from his eyes. He never follows Maggie's processes of thought and at the end of the novel he understands her moral and spiritual being no more than he does at the beginning. His comprehension is also limited because he is a passional being who knows "but one way with the fair."(I,147) The way in which women are known to him is simple. Moreover his descent into passional experiences precludes him from rising to a level of awareness that would allow him to reflect upon it. He cannot be represented as understanding more than the obvious elements in his situation.

In opposition to his lack of clarity Maggie rises from unconsciousness to a high level of awareness which makes her indubitably the central figure. She is a victim of fate in the beginning only because she is abjectly innocent, is unaware of life, and does not want to know anything which does not consort with her beautiful sense of harmony and order. It becomes the function of the first book to supply the background to Maggie's situation which makes possible the dramatic presentation of her growth of awareness. The second book is not a straight repetition of events given through other eyes. Maggie is the characteristically bewildered human being

who must arrive at consciousness against the force which makes for muddlement, and she represents the superior power of the female to do so, while the Prince represents his increasing submission to the complexities of a situation he does not fully understand.

At the start of the novel, Maggie, although an heiress with a fortune, is still the disinherited heir of life. She does not know how to live and remains within the world of her childhood. That she is still a child is indicated by a kind of asexual neutrality and impersonality which she shares with her similarly childlike father. Adam sees her "by some vague analogy of turn and attitude"[(I,167)] as "something shyly mythological and nymph-like."[(I,167)] The Prince is reminded of her analogy "to transmitted images of rather neutral and negative propriety that made up, in his long line, the average of wifehood and motherhood."[(I,288)] She signifies little to his imagination and appears to demand nothing worthy of the name of a personal relationship. Charlotte is critical of her for being negatively selfless in a way which is hard to take. As she puts it to the Prince,

> "... she's not selfish enough. There's nothing, absolutely, that one need do for her. She's so modest ... she doesn't miss things. I mean if you love her - or, rather, I should say, if she loves you. She lets it go.... She lets everything go but her own disposition to be kind to you. It's of herself that she asks efforts - so far as she ever has to ask them. She hasn't much. She does everything herself. And that's terrible.... Well, unless one's almost as good as she. It makes too easy terms for one. It takes stuff within one so far as one's decency is concerned, to stand it." (I,91)

These comments measure the distance Maggie must travel to achieve an identity for herself. For she has an inferior sense of herself, a terror of life, and an incapacity to do things, which would render her a victim.

The first soundless explosion in Maggie's life is represented by the appearance of Mrs. Rance, who looks for a husband in Adam Verver. Maggie discovers for the first time that her father is "on her mind"[(I,137)] and "on her hands-as a distinct thing,"[(I,137)] instead of being, as he has

always been, "too deep down"(I,137) in her heart and life to be "disengaged, contrasted or opposed, in short, objectively presented."(I,137) She would like everything to remain as it was, although she realises that for all their rightness, perfection, and helpless felicity, "it doesn't meet all contingencies to be right."(I,149) She is disinclined to accept any woman as her father's wife, for it is an aspect of her continued dependency upon him that she is unwilling to let him go and lead his own life. She brings in Charlotte without having any clear expectation of her future function, but comprehending that there is something wanting in their lives which Charlotte will fulfil, for she is "great in nature, in character, in spirit. Great in life."(I,161)

Maggie's flaw lies characteristically in her innocence of life and the world. As Fanny says, she is the last person to whom "a wrong thing"(I,344) can be communicated. For it is as if "her imagination had been closed to it,"(I,344) and "her sense altogether sealed."(I,344) Only "crude experience,"(I,344) something which threatens her existence, will impel her into life. This happens when the union between the Prince and Charlotte is consummated. Maggie is made aware that something has upset their happy equilibrium without knowing what. She suspects that her position is false because she has married without breaking with her past and because her father has married without relegating her. Her force of feeling suddenly vibrates with "a violence that had some of the effect of a strain."(II,7) Perhaps she is acting up to "the full privilege of passion,"(II,7) though she would not want to do this if it should carry "some consequence disagreeable or inconvenient to others."(II,7) Maggie does not know what has happened to her, where she is in her life, or who she is. Her primary effort must go into the construction of a personality that is not merely weak, manipulated, and sacrificed to others, but one that is strong, assertive, and capable of being self-determining.

Maggie discovers in the Prince a will adverse to her own, even if it is only that if he is not with her he must be against her. It is a fight for survival in which James shows that the capacity of the female to suffer in direct relation to life enables her to comprehend what she has suffered and thereby to develop an imaginative awareness of others. The intensity of Maggie's suffering subjects her to violent images which are thrust upon her from the depths of her unconscious, terrifying images such as belong to a nightmare existence. They force upon her a knowledge that the world is flawed: a flaw which results from the psychological constitution of man's nature.

When the affair between Charlotte and the Prince is consummated at Matcham she knows something has happened and that she must discover what. Her checking of her husband's account of the occasion against Charlotte's makes her realise that there is a discrepancy to be accounted for. The Prince tries to employ his magic charm to escape the necessity of speaking about the affair. Maggie is obliged to avert his exerted "grasp,"(II,50) which would entail her submission to him, in order to keep her head. In her capacity to resist him she discovers an advantage gained.

> The sense of possessing, by miraculous help, some advantage that, absolutely then and there, in the carriage, as they rolled, she might either give up or keep. Strange, inexpressibly strange - so distinctly she saw that if she did give it up she should somehow give up everything for ever. And what her husband's grasp really meant, as her very bones registered, was that she should give it up: it was exactly for this that he had resorted to unfailing magic. (II,50)

The idea that he can so readily reduce her to submission produces a terror of her potential weakness to him. She is not ambivalent to passion. Though she wants it she grows afraid of it because it destroys her autonomy and her capacity to think.

Maggie's sensibilities are quickened by the realization that she is in the presence of a problem to which she must intensely seek the solution. She tries to initiate experiments of her own but they tell her that the Prince and Charlotte are sustained by an ideal distinguishably different from hers, although they treat her too well by doing exactly what she might want, so that she has a sense of injury. To institute a plan of her own is to find that they are proceeding upon one which is an exact counterpart. She has a terrified sense of being manipulated by them.

> They had built her in with a purpose - which was why, above her, a vault seemed more heavily to arch; so that she sat there in the solid chamber of her helplessness as in a bath of benevolence artfully prepared for her, over the brim of which she could but just manage to see by stretching her neck. Baths of benevolence were very well, but at least, unless one were a patient of some sort, a nervous eccentric or a lost child, one usually wasn't so immersed save by one's request. It wasn't in the least what she had requested. She had flapped her little wings as a symbol of desired flight, not merely as a plea for a more gilded cage and an extra allowance of lumps of sugar. (II,39)

Until she gains her certainty, Maggie's interpretation of appearances is in advance of her exact knowledge of their causes. Though she would like to suppress her perception of appearances, she cannot stand off from knowledge. She gropes noiselessly among questions. Consequent upon its threat to her, the shared identity between her husband and Charlotte makes them loom before her as appearances larger than life. She measures her position by the effect her own small experiments produce and by the failure of plans earlier projected to be carried out. Her experiments seem defeated by Charlotte's superior capacity to rule the Prince and her father, which gives her a frightening sense of her rival's power. She is never sure whether her father plays into Charlotte's hands consciously or unconsciously, and lives in dread of his making some move that would force her to admit there was something wrong with her or that she was jealous of Charlotte. The success of her own plans lies in their covert nature, for only then can she act freely. Her father seems to wish to spare her, and they grope with sealed lips and mutual looks of tenderness "for some freedom, some fiction, some figured bravery, under which they might safely talk."(II,64) But she perceives "the prime source"(II,72) of her "haunted state."(II,72)

> It all came from her not having been able not to mind - not to mind what became of him; not having been able, without anxiety, to let him go his way and take his risk and lead his life. She had made anxiety her stupid little idol; and absolutely now ... she tried to focus the

> possibility of some understanding between them in consequence of which he should cut loose. (II,72)

It is not her own marriage which has caused the rift in relations but her father's, and Charlotte makes Maggie realise her separation from both her father and her husband. Charlotte seems to fling a fine tissue of reassurance of her own weaving over Adam's face so that Maggie sees him through a veil. He becomes more inscrutable to her as Charlotte more sharply contests her own possession of him. Though her father asserts that their plan has worked, that Charlotte only wants what they want (which is what they got her for), it is impossible to know what he really thinks behind the glasses that shield his eyes, and the habits of sacrifice whereby he takes the burden of things upon himself. But Maggie is now prepared to sacrifice him to Charlotte, provided that he does not know why and that she can maintain his appearance of dignity.

Maggie is fascinated and frightened by the knowledge she seeks. Her idea of her husband's culpability is mixed with a dire need to forgive, to reassure him, to respond to him - but only on ground she herself can fully measure.

> To do these things it must be clear to her what they were _for_; but to act in that light was, by the same effect, to learn, horribly, what the other things had been. He might tell her only what he wanted, only what would work upon her by the beauty of his appeal; and the result of the direct appeal of _any_ beauty in him would be in her helpless submission to his terms. (II,124)

She hides her growing validity for herself, and her growing importance for him, working steadily toward the certitude she seeks. When she accidentally discovers the golden bowl with its proof that his relation with Charlotte preceded her own, she presents it to him in the light of a person who is no longer a fool to be duped, but a person to take account of. This produces a sharp change in their relations. She leaves him to make his own adjustment to the fact. She discovers in herself a sharp split between the need for

conviction and action. To play the part of the outraged wife would damage the relations between them all. But she does not need to play this role for the Prince discovers "a new need of her,"(II,164) a need which results from his apprehension of what her proof means.

> It struck her truly as so new that he would have felt hitherto none to compare with it at all; would indeed absolutely by this circumstance be really needing her for the first time in their whole connexion. No, he had used her, he had even exceedingly enjoyed her, before this; but there had been no precedent for that character of a proved necessity to him which she was rapidly taking on. (II,164-65)

From this point he takes his cue from her and places himself absolutely in Maggie's hands, undertaking to do nothing that is not in her own interests. He lies to Charlotte so that she cannot know what has happened. Maggie therefore emerges from her dark tunnel of suffering to breathe the air again and gather the fruits of her patience. She becomes the heroine like some

> young woman of the theatre who, engaged for a minor part in the play and having mastered her cues with anxious effort, should find herself suddenly promoted to leading lady and expected to appear in every act of the five. (II,184)

Maggie is now in charge of her destiny and in control of her life. She takes on a clear human value for the others as the person who can negate any sense in which orders have been violated. She preserves the appearance of an "unimpaired beatitude."(II,184)

> She knew accordingly nothing but harmony, she diffused restlessly nothing but peace - an extravagant expressive aggressive peace, not incongruous after all with the solid calm of the place; a kind of helmeted, trident-shaking pax Britannica. (II,185)

The others, who had previously, like herself, been checking each other for clues and appearances, now wish to escape notice. Yet relations become more tense and strained as the terrors, shames and uglinesses which have violated the orders of decency, threaten to break out. Each fears his own exposure and resorts to defences. Maggie has no doubt that it would tear

them all to pieces to suffer their suppressed relations to peep out. As she regards a symbolic scene - the image of the group gathered about the bridge table in a semblance of a constituted order - she knows why

> ... she must take it full in the face, that other possible relation to the whole face which alone would bear upon her irresistibly. It was extraordinary: they positively brought it home to her that to feel about them in any of the immediate, inevitable, assuaging ways, the ways usually open to innocence outraged and generosity betrayed, would have been to give them up, and that giving them up was, marvellously, not to be thought of. (II,210)

It is nevertheless the effect that while Maggie continues to attempt to preserve the consistency of appearances, the strain under which they all suffer produces violent images which reveal the psychic passions beneath the surface of their domestic world. The four find themselves in a destructive and binding situation in which they can only survive by importing life from outside. It makes Maggie feel she is in

> ... some spacious central chamber in a haunted house, a great overarched and overglazed rotunda where gaiety might reign, but the doors of which opened into sinister circular passages. Here they turned up for each other, as they said, with the blank faces that denied any uneasiness felt in the approach; here they closed numerous doors carefully behind them - all save the door that connected the place, as by a straight tented corridor, with the outer world, and, encouraging thus the irruption of society, imitated the aperture through which the bedizened performers of the circus are poured into the ring. (II,254)

The image reflects Maggie's heightened awareness of the extremity of the tensions under which family relationships are maintained. It conflicts violently with the symbols of the sacred nature of the human family she would like to maintain, and the public and official forms in which the values of this order are socially expressed.

Maggie is committed to a view of her world as ordered, beautiful and balanced, in which every member of the group must be preserved in his or her integrity and dignity. Her effort to serve the universal good of the group runs counter to the assertion of her own will, yet she develops her will in such a way as to serve the good of the whole and to become herself

a fully human person capable of the heroism of not using her advantages as an outraged wife. The need to preserve the orders of existence in the face of the capacity of life to destroy them is sufficiently great to suggest to her that it is only in the consecrated and preserved forms of existence that life can continue in any sense at all. She is therefore obsessed by notions of balance, symmetry, equilibrium, and harmony as expressed in public forms - forms which alone can contain the threatening psychic forces which lie behind them threatening to split the world open. She finds a value in maintaining these consecrated forms even where they are fictions.

Adam Verver liberates Maggie by deciding to return to America with Charlotte. Their separation takes place on the high level of official values, beneath the Florentine portrait of the sacred human faimily, given her as a wedding gift by her father. Maggie, however, is left with a split world. It is as if the picture will not stay in place, and the dark forces lurking behind it are ever ready to explode and reduce the picture to fragments. The violence of this psychic force impels Maggie into an unequally violent attempt at construction, at arriving at a synthesis of values, at a sense in which things will hold together.

She does not get the golden bowl as it was to have been - a life of happiness without a flaw in it. However, she does hold the golden fruit within grasp - the love relationship with her husband that she has sought, like all Jamesian questers throughout the canon. She has won her man, though he has not understood her romantic quest, her attempt to establish an ideal synthesis of values. Though she has established her life with him on her own terms and has got what she wants, there is a sense in which she will never be so happy as she had once been, before the wonderful world of her childhood had disintegrated. Her triumph, however, is that she lives in the direct confrontation of life, and does so imaginatively.

James habitually places the determinants of women's fate in the social world. While Maggie is given everything as an heiress of life who assumes her inheritance, Charlotte is given nothing. She is born the disinherited heir of life and doomed to a perverse fate in love. She comes of American parents settled in Florence: "a corrupt generation, demoralised falsified polyglot."(I,50) She is alone in the world and without money. Before Maggie invites her to their home she knows that Charlotte has suffered injuries in love and has borne them with character and heroism, which is partly why she admires Charlotte. The fact that Charlotte met the Prince and fell in love, and fled the situation to save herself and him from the humiliation of an inevitable rejection, shows how James increasingly reveals the complexity of characters. For characters are no longer "good" or "bad", but contain the elements of both potentialities. Charlotte originally acts heroically in forfeiting the Prince and accepting her fate with dignity.

Whatever her apparent reasons for marrying Adam Verver - security and the necessity of being provided with materials for the development of her potentialities - Charlotte in fact marries to be close to the Prince. In so doing she invites her fate to repeat itself. Nevertheless she is invested with great human values. She is "the real thing,"(I,174) what every woman would like to be, in imagination, conscience, attitude, appearance, social grace and charm. She is directly and immediately real, a woman of strong sensuous passion, who understands the shades of attention and recognition that make social intercourse with her pleasant and easy. She has a knowledge and appreciation of fine things. There is an ambiguity in her relation to the Ververs from the start, for if she uses them she is also used by them. They hire her very much as a servant to handle their worldly affairs, and her brilliant efficiency contributes to their greater ease. She is put into harness to carry out the social functions of both houses. They import her as a source of life. What happens to her,

regardless of her responsibility for her fate - for she cannot be held totally responsible for it - is that her life force is largely depleted by the Ververs. She loses her freedom, independence, and autonomy, all of which have been essential to her. She is deprived of love, which she has looked to as the ground of her existence. Her own needs are not fulfilled in her marriage. She cannot have a child. Her husband is capable of only one relationship - that with his daughter - and wants nothing more. She can have no relationship with him at all, for she is reduced to a function of his will. Her role is to minister to his needs. Marriage for her has to be lived on the level of the exercise of daily practical functions, which was not what she looked for. Moreover, she is transported to America, to live in the society she finds least supportive.

Charlotte has longed for love in a deeply personal relationship, and the presentation of her relation with the Prince is the nearest James comes to showing what Maggie herself seeks. It is part of the perversity of fates, which are dependent on the inevitable divisions in life, that Charlotte cannot have her Prince. For with him she has everything. Just as Maggie and her father represent a version of love which communicates silently and deeply and is a total communion, Charlotte achieves this in a different way with the Prince. They share a "perfect parity of imagination,"(I,310) share identities of impulse, want the same things at the same time. The communion between them is so deep that it makes a "mystic golden bridge"(I,291) between them which exists even when they are apart.

Theirs is the sole relation James projects in which there is not a division of wills or an inequality in powers of personality. Nevertheless James continues to see passion as in itself a force for destruction. In their first sacred pledge he describes their kiss as causing everything to break up, break down, give way, melt and mingle. The implication is that passion goes beyond the personal into the realms of the transpersonal

where identity no longer exists, and there is a chaotic diffusion of energies which seem to spread out into an endless sea. Moreover James portrays their passion as adulterous, in a situation in which it must be destructive and rebound upon themselves. A further defect James sees in achieved passion is its loss of mystery. Charlotte represents for the Prince what he already knows and what he can easily achieve with any woman. What he finds in Maggie ultimately is the kind of mystery represented by a woman who is other, and whose sublimity stirs his soul into a greater capacity for being. Although Charlotte loves the Prince more than he loves her, she is doomed partly because her love is primarily a passion.

Moreover Charlotte initiates the affair, and is doomed as a woman to look after the appearances of it and take the blame which attaches to it. She presents their case to the Prince in the light of what the Ververs have done to them, as if they were merely passive victims who would be fools not to grasp their opportunity.

> And she showed how the question had therefore been only of their taking everything as it came, and all as quietly as might be. Nothing stranger surely had ever happened to a conscientious, a well-meaning, a perfectly passive pair: no more extraordinary decree had ever been launched against such victims than this of forcing them against their will into a relation of mutual close contact that they had done everything to avoid. (I,258)

There is truth in her assertion, despite its exaggeration, and the Prince sees there is a case to be put. Maggie and her father clearly regard the filial relation as being more important than the marital one. They are taken up with themselves and leave their respective partners their freedom. They are free to do things together on the basis of common understanding and shared experience, which neither has with his own partner. Their relation in itself, as distinct from its inevitable injury to others, is of extraordinary value. The occasion at Matcham presents them with "a truth of an equisite order,"(I,310)

> the truth that the occasion ... couldn't possibly, save by some poverty of their own, refuse them some still other and still greater beauty. It had already told them, with an hourly voice, that it had a meaning - a meaning that their associated sense was to drain even as thirsty lips, after the plough through the sands and the sight, afar, of the palm-cluster, might drink in at last the promised well in the desert. There had been beauty day after day, and there had been for the spiritual lips something of the pervasive taste of it; yet it was all nevertheless as if their response had remained below their fortune. How to bring it by some brave free lift up to the same height was the idea with which, behind and beneath everything, he was restlessly occupied, and in the exploration of which, as in that of the sun-chequered greenwood of romance, his spirit thus, at the opening of a vista, met hers. (II,310)

The day in itself is a great golden cup, and they themselves are in possession of the full cup of love, life, experience, and consciousness, and in a position to drain this cup together.

After the fruition of their experience, Charlotte is seen only through Maggie's eyes. At first she is a rival who threatens her existence, but Maggie's sufferings in relation to her own fight for survival and for her Prince have given her an imaginative insight into Charlotte's situation, and she sees her as extravagantly doomed. As Maggie considers what it must be like to be relegated, abandoned, lied to, and kept in the dark, her sense opens

> ... as to the sight of gilt wires and bruised wings, the spacious but suspended cage, the home of eternal unrest, of pacings, beatings, shakings all so vain, into which the baffled consciousness helplessly resolved itself. The cage was the deluded condition, and Maggie, as having known delusion - rather! - understood the nature of cages. She walked round Charlotte's - cautiously and in a very wide circle; and when inevitably they had to communicate she felt herself comparatively outside and on the breast of nature: she saw her companion's face as that of a prisoner looking through bars. (II,202-03)

Although Charlotte maintains her dignity, she is the most humiliatingly diminished woman in the James canon.

Part of her humiliation lies in her ignorance of what has happened. She has no means of arriving at an independent awareness and no one will help

her. She becomes completely defined by her determining conditions. Her husband becomes her keeper and quietly goes about his business drawing her after him as if held by a silken halter in the crook of his thumb. He smiles as he daily demonstrates his power over her. She is rebuked by her lover and vainly seeks a spot in which to hide her shame. She is not even allowed the peace and quiet in which to be alone with her suffering to heal her wounds. She cannot even admit that she does suffer. Maggie sees her encapsulated within glass walls which stifle her cries and separate her from human compassion. Her pain at having been loved and set aside seems to break out in stifled protest, saying:

> Ours was everything a relation could be, filled to the brim with the wine of consciousness; and if it was to have no meaning, no better meaning than that such a creature as you could breathe upon it, at your hour, for blight, why was I myself dealt with all for deception? why condemned after a couple of short years to find the golden flame - oh the golden flame! - a mere handful of black ashes? (II,290-91)

Even the Prince seems to need to withdraw from the unbearable torment of her spiritual agony most evident in her tone of voice as she conducts people around the Verver mansion. Maggie's compassion for her is increased by her knowledge that Charlotte is dying that she and the Prince might have life. As she finally tells him, she is "dying for us, - for you and me; and making us feel it by the very fact of there being so much of her left."(II,305) Maggie does not believe that Charlotte can be entirely reduced, but she knows that "it's as if her unhappiness had been necessary to us - as if we had needed her, at her own cost, to build us up and start us."(II,305) Maggie is aware of the terrible complexity of the situation, but her husband fails to follow her. For him Charlotte is merely a fool and he retains no vestiges of affection for her. She ceases to exist for him and he is incapable of making a generous judgment of her. He simply turns to the woman who can now give him love.

The Prince is a natural heir to life and possesses the brutality of

those who know how to live. He is endowed with values as a human being which derive from his social and cultural heritage, but he is not totally aware of his private identity. His public history is well known and can be read in libraries. His unknown quality is what is tested in his relation to hislove experience. He marries an heiress in order to remake a past in which he has been financially disinherited. His properties are not all irreclaimably alienated, but are encumbered with unending leases and charges, difficulties of occupants, impossibilities of use, and sunk beneath mortgages that have from far back "buried them beneath the ashes of rage and remorse."(I,146) There are times when he could cry "for these brightest spots of his lost paradise."(I,146) He would be "an idiot not to be able to bring himself to face the sacrifices - sacrifices resting, if definitely anywhere, with Mr. Verver - involved in winning them back."(I,147) He wishes to escape his past and remake his future in search of new opportunities. This is the meaning of his marriage, as he understands it in the beginning.

> What was this so important step he had just taken but the desire for some new history that should, so far as possible, contradict, and even if need be flatly dishonour, the old? If what had come to him wouldn't do he must _make_ something different. He perfectly recognised - always in his humility - that the material for the making had to be Mr. Verver's millions. There was nothing else for him on earth to make it with; he had tried before - had had to look about and see the truth. (I,15)

When his fate is sealed at the opening of the novel, he does not know its meaning, what he will become, or what the Ververs expect of him.

He remains a baffled character who does not grow or earn a consciousness through suffering. He is a unique figure of a European male for whom the passional experience has held no terrors as for his American counterpart. He has princely qualities and an "unfailing magic"(II,50) which places other people in his power and makes it easy for him to fulfil his desires. Yet, through the complications of his affair, he is drawn into line with the plastic American males and comes under the submission of his

wife. At the outset he is described as a domesticated lamb tied with a pink ribbon, a creature to be educated and not controlled; but he is subdued. Maggie turns the tables on him in order to be self determining and to create her own conditions of life. Moreover he is guilty and must accept everything that comes to him as the direct result of his own actions. He is in Maggie's hands and must take his direction from her. His relative unconsciousness helps him because he takes things easily and does not ask too many questions about why things occur or what they mean. He fails to share the American necessity to discover the meaning of life. Moreover Maggie can act as the consciousness of his situation and she tries to get into his mental labyrinth, most especially when she confronts him with her knowledge of the affair.

> It had operated within her now to the last intensity, her glimpse of the precious truth that by her helping him, helping him to help himself, as it were, she should help him to help <u>her</u>. Hadn't she fairly got into his labyrinth with him? - wasn't she indeed in the very act of placing herself there for him at its centre and core, whence, on that definite orientation and by an instinct all her own, she might securely guide him out of it? (II,165)

Maggie does present him with the clues which help him to emerge from the difficulties of his situation, and to do the right thing, but his penalty is to be enclosed in a room of Maggie's keeping in which he cannot even touch the door without her knowing it. She watches him absorbed in his own thoughts, wanting to be quiet with himself, and reflects:

> It was like his doing penance in sordid ways - being sent to prison or being kept without money; it wouldn't have taken much to make her think of him as really kept without food. He might have broken away, might easily have started to travel; he had a right ... to so many more freedoms than he took! His secret was of course that at Fawns he all the while winced, was all the while in presences in respect to which he had thrown himself back with a hard pressure on whatever mysteries of pride, whatever inward springs familiar to the man of the world, he could keep from snapping. (II,258-59)

Undoubtedly he accepts his situation heroically, but his mind grows more obscure. He perceives Maggie's quality and accommodates himself to a new set of facts, but he never follows her mind or purposes, or understands

the nature of the questions she asks. She imagines there must be in his mind something to which he can refer things to take their measure and meaning, but he gives no evidence of what it is, and remains a baffled man. Yet he is a decent person and his very simplicity is appealing to Maggie. It is characteristic of strong women in James to find an appeal in masculine helplessness and to find a meaning in the dependence of their men upon them. He is her man and makes this appeal to her, but it is his fate to be subjected to her power.

Adam Verver is James's sole representative of a male with power, but it is an abstract power, and he suffers from the characteristic emotionally crippling past. He made an early and mistaken marriage to a young girl who died young. It was a marriage in which he paid by being deprived of his intelligence. It represents for him years of darkness in which his faculties were subservient to his wife's misdirected tastes. "The futilities, the enormities, the depravities of decoration and ingenuity that before his sense was unsealed she had made him think lovely!"(I,127) After her death, he discovers the source of his own "spark of fire,"(I,113) and wastes no time in subjecting it to an "unprecedented, a miraculous white-heat"(I,113) in the worship of his mind, whereby to forge a project that will make him a master of his world.

> The essential pulse of the flame, the very action of the cerebral temperature, brought to the highest point, yet extraordinarily contained - these facts themselves were the immensity of the result; they were one with perfection of machinery, they had constituted the kind of acquisitive power engendered and applied, the necessary triumph of all operations.(I,113)

His true friend becomes his own mind, and he becomes a kind of operator, who sets in motion a kind of machinery that wills a world of treasures and power into existence. His imagination cannot be distinguished from monotony because of the degree of discipline to which it is subjected. Mr. Verver's power remains inscrutably "monotonous behind an iridescent cloud."(I,114)

It is an unknowable power. He puts it to the quest of building his house upon rock, wresting the treasures of Europe from their hiding places to return them to the disinherited American to assist him to assume his rightful inheritance to life and culture. He plans to give to the adoptive city of his native state a house that will be a receptacle of the treasures of the world, sifted to a positive sanctity. His plan has not only "all the sanctions of civilization,"(I,129) it is

> civilization condensed, concrete, consummate, set down by his hands as a house upon a rock - a house whose open doors and windows, open to grateful, to thirsty millions, the higher, the highest knowledge would shine out to bless the land. (I,129)

He is like a pirate seeking buried treasure. It is his quest "to rifle the Golden Isles"(I,125) to acquire the world's riches. The role of patron of art gives him a sense of Cortez-like grandeur, a position from which he can look down on his Pacific as from a great height, and survey his possessions. "He was equal somehow with the great seers, the invokers and encouragers of beauty - and he didn't after all perhaps dangle so far below the great producers and creators."(I,125)

This may be his way of incorporating the feminine in culture within himself, but it is impossible not to feel that he puts to perverted use James's central symbols. With respect to life itself he is "economically constructed."(I,175) "He put into his one little glass everything he raised to his lips, and carries it in his pocket like the tool of his trade."(I,175) He is a totally impersonal man, incapable of an intense personal relation. His capacity for direct living and loving is reduced to its minimum. Even his relationship with Maggie is portrayed as an impersonal relation between two people who do not need to talk, and ask of each other nothing but a general assumption of harmony. Maggie's anxiety for him results partly from his presentation of himself as helpless in small matters. It is part of this child-like quality in him which assures that

he get succour and support, even reverence, from others. He is described at table as shyly entertaining like a little boy "in virtue of some supposed rank, that he could only be one of the powers, the representative of a force - quite as an infant king is the representative of a dynasty."(I,290)

Adam Verver is characteristic of the elder American male who is both a figure of authority and a child, but not a lover. When Maggie sees him bend over the cot of his "heir-apparent"(I,139) she feels as if she has been looking in on God in the act of generating the energies of the world. He retains this sacred and authoritative stature for her, though he is a child in relation to life and others. Maggie wants to know him in no other light than the perfect little father whom she reveres. Yet there is a reductive element in her anxiety to protect him from life, growth, taking his own chances, and standing on his own feet. Ultimately she understands he can look after himself and do what he wants, but her vision of him in this capacity is at the expense of the little man who invites compassion and human sympathy. Just as he takes the human content out of things he himself becomes dehumanised. He is revealed as a "little meditative man"(II,250) in a straw hat, who keeps coming into view, and has an "indescribable air of weaving his spell, weaving it off there by himself."(II,250) He is totally absorbed in this occupation as he takes himself about to review his possessions and verify their condition. He becomes "extravagantly addicted"(II,251) to this pastime, and he seems to sing as he goes sotto voce exemplifying "the greater depth of his small, perpetual hum of contemplation."(II,252) His power is rendered more inscrutable by his presentation through the eyes of his daughter, to whom he is unknowable. To her he is the successful, beneficent person, the beautiful, bountiful, original, dauntlessly wilful great citizen, the consummate collector and infallible high authority. For her he is a success in everything, and she believes in him more than in anyone. Yet behind the appearance of success lies the "inscrutable incalculable energy,"(II,241) one of the aspects

of which is his reduction of Charlotte. Charlotte's value for him is as a function of his plan, which is his motive in everything, and her value for that is great, though Maggie sees her as reduced to a mechanical creature wound up to follow up behind him, stop when he stops, walk when he walks. Holding "in one of his pocketed hands the end of a long silken halter looped round"(II,253) Charlotte's "beautiful neck,"(II,253) with his wordless smile and "the soft shake of the twisted silken rope,"(II,253) he demonstrates how he leads Charlotte to her doom.

Maggie and her father separate "in the upper air"(II,318) and on the ground of Charlotte's value, but Maggie's vision of his eye as he surveys their possessions and respective spouses is suggestive of the manner in which he divests things of their human and personal element.

> Their eyes moved together from piece to piece, taking in the whole nobleness - quite as if for him to measure the wisdom of old ideas. The two noble persons seated in conversation at tea fell thus into the splendid effect and the general harmony: Mrs. Verver and the Prince fairly 'placed' themselves, however unwittingly, as high expressions of the kind of human furniture required esthetically by such a scene. The fusion of their presence with the decorative elements, their contribution to the triumph of selection, was complete and admirable; though to a lingering view, a view more penetrating than the occasion really demanded, they also might have figured as concrete attestations of a rare power of purchase. There was much indeed in the tone in which Adam Verver spoke again, and who shall say where his thought stopped? "*Le compte y est.* You've got some good things."

Unlike the power which is attributed to women, Adam's power is an abstraction. It is attributed to him because of his money and capacity to be a large operator, but it is a curiously abstract power which exists as a free-floating mental attitude. He has the capacity to reduce everything - money, things, people - to the level of abstractions. Yet, whatever daemonic attributes it has, his power seems to drift off into the iridescent white cloud with which he is always associated and comes out nowhere. In a sense there is nothing behind the facade of the man whose dignity Maggie has tried to protect. It is impossible to tell whether his eyes carry

their possessor's vision out or most open "themselves to your own."(I,152) Power is only attributed to the male as an abstract entity because it has no relation to life or people. Moreover he cannot be represented as aware of his life and of the situation which has formed the action of the novel, even if it is Maggie's expressed wish not to know what he knows. It is said that "the play of vision"(I,168) is rooted in him, but what he knows is essentially obscure, and he reveals nothing of it. By contrast Maggie's power is real and palpable. It is directly related to life and to her capacity for love. She emerges as the real psychological force who holds the world together.

Though James has moved in this novel to his most positive representation of the possibility of a life of love and imaginative awareness, there is a duality in terms of his presentation of character which underlines his sense of the division in the world. Maggie is left with this sense of duality. On the one hand, she herself is a little woman who has proved her strength by the passion with which she has fought for and won her man. On the other hand, she is the person of charity who has done everything "for love"(II,102) - not for anybody in particular, but for the highest ideal, which has demanded at times the sacrifice of herself to the greatest good of others. She and her father part on the sense of Charlotte's value in a plan for her in which she will not be wasted. Maggie is aware of Charlotte's superior human qualities despite the effect she has had upon her own life, which is indeed one of both good and evil. Her father's value is supreme for her, though it is implicit in her images of him and she has seen his daemonic side. And her husband has been diminished for her by his failure of comprehension, though he is what she wants. The reader is left with Maggie's sense that everything is terrible in the heart of man. The latent flaw in the crystal which divides the bowl is a symbol of the division that exists in a "world of cleft components,"(NSB,178) which is based upon the psychic flaw in the nature of the human personality.

8. EPITOME: "THE STORY OF LIFE"

Throughout his life James consistently represents the perverse fate of the injured lover: a fate which primarily adheres to the hero, though the heroine provides variants upon it. From his earliest representation of it as a psychic flaw in the constitution of his hero, whose drama enacts itself through the compulsion of repressed conflicts to manifest themselves, he constructs a view of the world in which the fate of love becomes characteristic of the condition of man at large. As he elaborates upon his theme through the developing stages of life, and throughout his writing career, it takes on an increasing significance. It becomes less the idiosyncracy of a particular kind of hero and more illustrative of the plight of modern man, caught between different worlds, at odds with himself, society and changing values. It is a world of disparities, dualities and ambiguities, in which emotion and spiritual desires conflict with forces inimical to personal fulfilment. Latent flaws in the structure of the psyche, the very constitution of man's nature, are the source of his heroism and his defeat; he is the sport of his own nature, either in its lowest form, psychic drive, or in its highest form, imagination. Yet as James justly observes

> we can surely account for nothing in the novelist's work that hasn't passed through the crucible of his imagination, hasn't, in that perpetually simmering cauldron his intellectual _pot-au-feu_, been reduced to savoury fusion. (AN,230)

His own free play of mind ranges over his subject matter to produce a consistent world view arising out of his own unique imaginative comprehension.

The story which most captures his imagination,* which he calls "the story of life,"(132) is one which appeals specifically to his imagi-

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* _A Small Boy and Others_, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1913, pp.120-153

nation as a male. It is the general sad case of his maternal uncles, all "obscurely afflicted"(131) and "untimely gathered,"(131) all dying "of melancholy matters."(131) It is told from a male perspective and is largely concerned with their sacrifice as the disinherited heirs of life subjected to the superior powers of their dominating female relatives. James, as the artist with a capacity to devise a possible history for these faded figures, consciously invests them with a potential awareness of their lives. Theirs is, however, a drama of the unconscious in which the contents of their lives become enacted as with "the fine artistry of fate,"(121) rendered comprehensible only after death, when the meaning of their lives becomes retrospectively illuminated. The question of how much they themselves knew or were heroic remains to some extent open, as James imagines the possibility of their awareness and acknowledges that he is acting as the consciousness of their situation.

James tells the story as an unfolding drama of life "at which my small wonder assisted."(143) The long decease of the participants enables him "to read back into it the old figures and the old long story, told as with excellent art"(121) by life. To his vision "the actors move again through the high, rather bedimmed rooms - it is always a matter of winter twilight, firelight, lamplight; each one appointed to his or her part in the picture."(125-26) The figures wait, "responsive to call",(134) for James to assist their emergence into the light, after which they once more recede. From "the free point of view"(126) James cultivates, the composition has to wait to find its centre for the long, slow, sustained action to take place. In effect the story illustrates how James's aunt, his mother's cousin, Helen Wyckoff, deprives her husband, her brother and her newphew of their potentialities in life by her domination of them, through her administration of their funds and life energies. However, he tells the story with a great deal of divagation, largely to illustrate the developing capacity for will in Helen's rise to power over her submissive males and to

provide cumulative instances of the power of the female in contrast to the fate of the male. The inheritance of funds and lands, to which James devotes much attention, is related both to the disproportion in life whereby some people are invested with funds and others deprived of them - in other words, external determinants - and to the distribution of life energies in the unequal battle of powers between male and female.

Helen cannot rise to power until after the death of her mother, Great-aunt Wyckoff, who is in herself an outstanding case of female drive and psychic energy. James has no means of ascertaining the Great-aunt's real age, whether she had really "drained her conceivable cup"[127] and lived beyond the limits of normal endurance, or whether, belonging to a period in which people aged earlier, she had merely given up. The one thing that is certain is that she has so outlived her husband that he has passed away "beyond recall."[129] He is not even "a dim ghost."[129] James remembers her as "an image of living antiquity,"[126] "solidly seated or even throned"[126] in a chair "with big protective ears"[126] which enshrine her, "with all the idol-quality that may accrue to the venerable."[124] "She signified her wants as divinities do, for I recover from her presence neither sound nor stir, remembering of her only that, as described by her companions, the pious ministrants, she had 'said' so and so when she hadn't spoken at all."[126] She is the image of the menace of female power in her capacity to retain her grasp on life beyond the point at which she could be thought to live at all.

By contrast the fate of the amiable males in the family is that of frustrated life-potentiality symbolized by their lost acres, evaporated sources of life which should have provided them with funds but which render them disinherited heirs of life. The uncles all seem to be dying of obscure afflictions.

James's maternal great-grandfather, Alexander Robertson (who arrived in the United States on the eve of the Revolution and whose portrait

James has recently seen "in a pious institution of his founding where he lives on in a world that knows him not"),[128] is recalled for his legendary connection with extant acres. The "legend of his acres"[128] "by some invidious turn of fate"[129] goes to "help to constitute the heritage"[129] of his descendant, Albert Wyckoff, Helen's nephew, "so that it forms a lean feast"[129] for the James family themselves to sit at. Albert's father, Alexander, is early widowed only to die of cholera, so that he inherits the lands only to transmit them promptly to his orphaned son. The extinguished Great-uncle Wyckoff appears to have had no connection with lands, for then "they could have descended to our grandmother but in a minor degree."[129] Yet, although it is supposed that the lands "had mostly gone off in smoke,"[129] there remains for the James family

> some rueful allusion to 'lands', apparently in the general country of the Beaverkill, which had recently come to my mother and her sister as their share of their grandfather Robertson's amplitude, among the further-apportioned shares of their four brothers, only to be sacrificed later on at some scant appraisement. (130)

James considers his family might have been "great proprietors"[130] if they had only taken more interest.

"Something of the mystery of vanished acres"[130] hangs around the image of John Walsh, James's maternal uncle, the only one in memory with a sufficient connection with them to have revealed what became of them. James's ineffaceable memory of him results from a visit to the "remote and unfriended arching attic" in the house of his elder brother, Robertson Walsh, "where the hapless younger brother lay dying,"[131] "the sinister twilight grimness of whose lot, stretched there, amid odours of tobacco and drugs,"[131] characterises the case of all the uncles. James supposes he was "sacrificed to far-off Robertson acres, which on their side had been sacrificed to I never knew what."[132] The effect of "the story of life"[132] is to show that none of the males received their inheritance: "the Barmecide banquet of another tract of the same provenance was always

spread for us opposite the other house {that is the Wyckoff house}, from which point it stretched, on the north side of the street {14th Street} to Sixth Avenue,"(132) where the site was diminished by the construction of a school.

The evolution of this history of the plight of the male sets the scene for James's narration of the Wyckoff drama, of which Helen is "the heroine,"(133) her ward and nephew Albert, "the young protagonist,"(133) and her brother Henry "the stake in the game."(133) A "pair of confidants",(133) accessory to the action, Helen's husband, and James's mother's sister, "our admirable aunt"(133) Catherine (whom he does not name as such), wait in the wings for their call on stage.

Henry Wyckoff can only emerge as a hero after the death of Helen's husband, whose portrait therefore follows. The two men have much in common, but what they mainly share is their common injury by Helen. The extent of the husband's submersion in his wife's personality is suggested by his failure to be called by his Christian name, and his namelessness is indicative of his "nullity."(135) But in "the rich perspective"(138) of "Uncle,"(138) James watches him as he

> comes and goes; out of the comparative high browness of the back room, commanding brave extensions, as I thought them, a covered piazza over which, in season, Isabella grapes accessibly clustered and beyond which stretched, further, a 'yard' that was as an ample garden compared to ours at home.(138)

The image of the golden fruit beyond grasp and yet within sight symbolizes the unattainability of life. The nameless gentleman is confined to pacing the well-worn carpet between the parlours, where from his imprisonment he looks out upon the vistas of life's possibilities. Yet he is bland and gentle, and reveals no resentments at being kept down by his wife. James is bemused by his case; the "rare case"(135) of being "no case at all."(135) He has but one identity by common consensus, that he is nothing and nobody. James observes that "the zero"(135) with "adjuncts,"(135) with "a

relation,"(135) may become "a numeral,"(135) but that Helen herself kept down what she thought of her "spectral spouse,"(136) thereby throwing over the whole case the mantle of the inscrutable. Sensitive to injury herself, she makes no claims for damages on the score of her husband's mistreatment. "Directly interrogated,"(136) she might have approved "of male society in stronger and more vivid hues - save where consanguinity, or indeed relationship by marriage, to which she greatly deferred, had honestly imposed it."(136-37) In other words she would not have contemplated a husband except as her dependent. The extent of the "dim little gentleman's"(135) domination and depletion by his wife is revealed in the marks of his character:

> his long, slight equine countenance, his eyebrows ever elevated as in the curiosity of alarm, and the so limited play from side to side of his extremely protrusive head, as if somehow through tightness of the 'wash' neckcloths that he habitually wore and that, wound and re-wound in their successive stages, made his neck very long without making it in the least thick and reached their climax in a proportionately very small knot tied with the neatest art.(139)

His suppression by his wife is the fate this anonymous man is in the process of living out, the full meaning of which is revealed in its conclusion. There are two legends which indicate his repressed desire for life. He is thought to have had "remarkable luck"(137) with women, twice to have approached and won a bride beyond his deserts. Furthermore, in connection with his early marriage and widowhood, he is thought to have enjoyed his "early Wanderjahre"(142) - "that experience of distant lands and seas which would find an application none the less lively for having had long to wait."(142) He waits half a century before making the grand tour with Helen, when his vision of everything he had wanted in life - and the vision of life itself, of which he has been deprived - kills him.

> The coming true of the old dream produced at any rate a snap of the tense cord, and the ancient worthy my imagination has, in the tenderest of intentions, thus played with, disembarked in England only to indulge in the last of his startled states, only to look about him in vague deprecation and give it all up. He just landed and died.(142-43)

The fact that Helen blooms at her husband's expense is indicated by her response, for

> the grand tour was none the less proceeded with - cousin Helen herself, aided by resources personal, social and financial that left nothing to desire, triumphantly performed it, though as with a feeling of delicacy about it firmly overcome. (143)

There is one ambiguous element in the portrait of the "spectral spouse."(136) For he is a "complete little old world figure,"(139) a Monsieur Prudhomme, the timorous Philistine in a world of dangers. He reveals himself to be a "type" with a degree of finish rare among the family at the time. Even his voice and speech are not those of New York. "At the risk of thinking too much,"(140) James considers the possibility that these forms, "as adjusted and settled things"(141) belonging to a "finer civilization",(141) had come down to him. This raises questions.

> Mayn't we accordingly have been, the rest of us, all wrong, and the dim little gentleman the only one among us who was right? May not his truth to type have been a matter that, as mostly typeless ourselves, we neither perceived nor appreciated? - so that if, as is conceivable, he felt and measured the situation and simply chose to be bland and quiet and keep his sense to himself, he was a hero without the laurel as well as a martyr without the crown. (141)

The possibility that he had been conscious of his situation and accepted his fate with such noble charity, heroism, and lack of expressions of resentment is "too fierce"(141) for contemplation. James has to tear himself away from this possibility and turn the light off the character he has helped to emerge into the brighter yet colder half of the scene.

The drama reaches its crisis when Henry, the brother, emerges from the Beaverkill, the estate to which Albert, the nephew also has entitlements, and which represents the Wyckoff fortune, so "destined to increase."(129) He emerges from "rustication"(143) to take up the well-worn field of his predecessor, to loom larger and assume his values as a hero as his deceased colleague shrinks and fades. He too is depleted and defrauded by Helen.

"The basis of his tutelage"(144) lies in her view that he is "not to be trusted"(144) with money. With her head for business and "a great calculating benevolence,"(148) Helen conducts "the consummately scrupulous and successful administration of his resources for the benefit of his virtue, so that they shall be handed over, in the event {of his death}, without the leakage of a fraction"(148) to fifteen single gentlewomen, "all of the second and third cousinship,"(148) whom she persists in regarding as nieces.

The climax depends on the critical issue of the disposition of the estate, which James treats from Helen's point of view. As there are no children her estate will go to her nearest of kin, Henry and Albert. Her own savings she can dispose of by her own will. James imagines that she lives until her death "without an instant's visitation of doubt as to the due exercise of her authority, as to what would happen if it faltered."(146) She has no thought for Henry. Her concern that he should profit by the event of her own death lies in her wish that these fifteen women should profit through him. Albert has by this time proved "wanton"(150) and broken away from the family. Helen's problem is, as James conceives it, that having created a world for Henry of such reduced proportions there is no honest way "of inspiring him to write cheques for hundreds"(157) and no natural way in which he could rise to the occasion by making her the most "princely presents"(151) "of his own magnanimous movement,"(151) by "his flashing to intelligence just long enough to apprehend the case."(151)

> She had been as earnest a steward of her brother's fortune as if directness of pressure on him, in a sense favourable to her interests - that is to her sympathies, which were her only interests - had been a matter of course with her; whereas in fact she would have held it a crime, given his simplicity, to attempt in the least to guide his hand. (150)

There lies the "rather tragic drollery" of the situation. On her death half her estate must go to Albert and half to Henry. Helen predeceases her brother with the painful sensation "that if half her residuum would be

deplorably diverted the other half would be, by the same stroke, imperfectly applied."(151)

The humility with which Henry exposes himself to the gaze of the family, his acceptance of "the dreadful view"(144) held of him, is simply heroic. It is in the "fairly dazzling"(146) light of "the grand dénouement, deferred for long years,"(146) that this heroism emerges. James sees him "as fairly sublime in his decision not to put anyone in the wrong about him a day sooner than he could possibly help,"(144-45) in which case "the whole circle of us would ... be so dreadfully 'sold', as to our wisdom and justice, he proving only noble and exquisite."(146) For to pass "for a dangerous idiot, or at least for a slave to his passions from the moment he was allowed the wherewithal to indulge them, was a less evil for him than seeing us rudely corrected."(145) "The troubled fold"(153) in "the perplexed brooding brow" (146) which characterises his pacings of the carpet form his only "criticism of adverse fate."(146)

Helen's "victim"(146) waits "in the handsomest manner"(146) till her death "to show us all - all who remained, after so long, to do him justice - that nothing but what was charming and touching could possibly happen."(146)After her death Henry not only comes into his rightful inheritance, but falls under the care of her representative, "our admirable Aunt"(133) Catherine. The first revelation then emerges for the embarrassment of his spectators, for

> poor Henry at large and supplied with funds was exactly as harmless and blameless as poor Henry stinted and captive; as to which if anything had been wanting to our confusion or to his own dignity it would have been his supreme abstinence, his suppression of the least 'Didn't I tell you?' (147)

Henry behaves as if he has noticed nothing. He handles his dollars as "decently"(147) and "profusely"(147) as his dimes, except that he cannot tell the difference.

> Not his heart, but his imagination, in the long years, had been starved; and though he was now all discreetly and wisely encouraged to feel rich, it was rather sadly visible that, thanks to almost half a century of over-discipline, he failed quite to rise to his estate. He did feel rich, just as he felt generous; the misfortune was only in his weak sense for meanings. (147-48)

The final revelation emerges when aunt Catherine settles to a "community of life"(152) in 44th Street, where they have now moved, with her "touching charge."(152) Under her care Henry enjoys "an Indian summer and a very wonderful time - so charmingly it shone forth, for all concerned, that he was a person fitted to adorn, as the phrase is, almost any position."(152) He assumes his life as he rises to his inheritance. His life blooms "like a garden freshly watered,"(152) the only sadness being "that so scant a patch was not left."(152) He is given enough time to rise to his estate and to meet every conception "as if he had all the while known"(152) and "been a conscious victim to the superstition of his blackness."(152) Under the care of a woman of imagination with a perfect confidence in him and devotion for him, he publishes "by his behaviour the perfection of his civility, and so, on that safe ground, made use of his pen",(152) making over his funds exactly as Helen might have wished.

> His competence was afterwards attacked, and it emerged triumphant, exactly as his perfect charity and humility and amenity, and his long inward loneliness, of half a century, did. He had bowed his head and sometimes softly scratched it during that immense period; he had occasionally, after roaming downstairs with the troubled fold in his brow and the difficult, the smothered statement on his lips ... retired once more to his room, sometimes indeed for hours, to think it all over again; but had never failed of sobriety or propriety or punctuality or regularity, never failed of one of the virtues his imputed indifference to which had been the ground of his discipline. (152-53)

By ill-fortune Henry and his protector fall ill at the same time, she dying shortly before him, he lying "deprived of her attention,"(153) though cared for by several of the interested female spectators. After his death Henry is vindicated, for "if his original estate reverted at law they presently none the less had occasion to bless his name."(153)

There is a firm connection between the fact of Henry's deprivation of funds by Helen and her depletion of him, and his assumption of his inheritance under the loving care of an imaginative being who allows him to live. Life is a Barmecide banquet while his possibilities are frustrated through Helen's fraudulent administration of his funds. In the last two years of his life he holds, as it were, the golden fruit in his hands. He is noble throughout in his manner of accepting his fate, in refusing to make use of his potential advantage - to set himself right by putting others in the wrong - and in displaying nothing but generosity and charity toward others. James finds in him "a splendid subject,"(145) considering his story "the most beautiful story"(153) - "so far as he was concerned."(153) He is a minimal version of the hero, but has sufficient grasp of his situation that James can impute to him a consciousness of it.

James is so sympathetically concerned for Henry's fate that the young protagonist, Albert, gets lost in the story. However, he represents another version of the male fate. He is described as a small New York Orestes ridden by the Furies. In other words he too is overdisciplined and underprotected, as is characteristic of the young American male bound to a dominant woman. In his early youth he seemed to James to epitomise potentialities, enviable horizons and prospects quite different from his own. "The extensions of his range and the charms of his position counted somehow as the limits and humilities of ours."(124) For the Beaverkill is his inheritance, a vast wild property

> in the wilderness, incalculably distant, reached by a whole day's rough drive from the railroad, through every danger of flood and field, with prowling bears thrown in and probable loss of limb, of which there were sad examples, from swinging scythes and axes; but we measured our privation just by those facts, and grew up, so far as we did then grow, to believe that pleasures beyond price had been cruelly denied us. (124-25)

Yet as the "fils de famille ideally constituted"(125) Albert's weakness leads him to develop only those possibilities which to the child had been

the vaguest of all. His apparently "odd shy air of being suspected or convicted on grounds less vague to himself than to us"(125) was the symptom of the course he was eventually to run. He is revealed to be so weak

> after the most approved fashion of distressing young men of means - that his successive exhibitions of it had a fine high positive effect, such as would have served beautifully, act after act, for the descent of the curtain.(149)

His inheritance represents a version of winning that turns out to be a loss, for he is an example of the helpless male fated to come into his inheritance only to throw it away in consequence of the emotional conflict aroused in him by the Furies' pursuit.

Aunt Helen is a perfect example of the dual nature of the mother figure, who destroys her men with the best of conscience. She has too little imagination and is without a comprehension of the lives of others or of her effect upon them. Her psychic drive to power asserts itself in an amoral manner in which the moral is a mask of her power. Yet her motives are "strenuously, actively good."(122) James has "the liveliest impression both that no one was ever better, and that her goodness somehow testifies for the whole tone of society, a remarkable cluster of private decencies."(122) "That there have been persons so little doubtful of duty helps to show us how societies grow,"(123) for "a proportionately small amount of absolute conviction about it will carry, we thus make out, a vast dead weight of mere comparative."(123) Her traditions are intimately connected with her. They are all she needs, all she lives by. She could not have conceived of acting except in terms of duty and conscience, though she entirely lacks imaginative consciousness of the complexities of life and of the situations of others. It is for this reason that she asserts her energy without compunction to the detriment of her male charges. Her husband and her two wards, brother and nephew (quasi-son), all fall victim to her.

James renders his earliest recollections of his family in terms of

the categories that have been appropriate to the analysis of the theme of the love fate throughout his fiction.

To the last he represents a world in which "producing causes and produced creatures correspond and interdepend."(MY,39) It is a world in which the internal qualities of nature concur with external determinants to produce an inevitably tragic fate. The hero's primary experience of this fate has consisted of his own flawed nature, the result of the injury he has originally suffered at the hands of the mother. Yet as "the story of life" reveals, the mother figure is also inwardly flawed. She is seen to possess a dual nature, but her duality appears to derive from her own power, under the pressure of which her nature is divided between a highly developed conscience and a principle of will. She remains the life principle, exemplifying the powers of destruction and creation inherent in life. Hers is the force that drives the world, and underlies society, culture and civilization, though it cannot be wholly contained within social or moral definitions.

The world is consequently a place in which no one can attain his desires. The union of the separate remains an alluring goal because the forces of division are so strong as to produce a continuous pressure. If man is not to remain wholly a victim he must rise to consciousness, for it is the sole means of encompassing his fate. This is a pyrrhic victory in some sense for it makes his life no easier and may indeed compound his problems. Yet only through an understanding of the nature of the mind can he arrive at a comprehension of life's meaning, accept his fate, and perhaps anticipate life's pitfalls and dangers. Through consciousness alone can the victim become the victor over circumstances and reduce the possibility of being subject to the adverse will of others, though the prospect of freedom may entail the necessity of loss. The laws of the mind dictate that all are subject to a tragic fate in which love is the crucial issue

and the exemplary case, epitomising the nature of all situations in life.

Notes on References and Abbreviations

As it is the James canon which is in question the practice has been adopted of dispensing substantially with footnotes and presenting references in abbreviated form within the text. The following abbreviations have been used:

AN - The Art of the Novel: Critical Prefaces, ed. Richard P. Blackmur. New York: Scribner's, 1934.

CH - Henry James: The Critical Heritage, ed. Roger Gard. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968.

MY - The Middle Years. London: Collins, 1917.

NSB - Notes of a Son and Brother. New York: Scribner's, 1914.

SBO - A Small Boy and Others. New York: Scribner's, 1913.

As noted at the beginning of Part I the following edition of the short stories has been used throughout:

The Complete Tales of Henry James, ed. Leon Edel. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1961-64, 12 vols.

For the novels in Part II the following edition has, with two exceptions, been used:

Novels and Stories of Henry James. London: Macmillan, 1921-23, 35 vols.

This edition has been selected because it embodies the revisions of the New York text and a Scribner edition is not available in Adelaide. The exceptions are the first two male-centred novels for which earlier revised texts have been preferred and consulted as follows:

Roderick Hudson, 1875 text, ed. S. Gorley Putt. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969.

The American, 1879 text, ed. Roy Harvey Pearce and Matthew J. Bruccoli. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961.

In all cases the numbers that appear in brackets after quotations refer to the text then under discussion, unless otherwise abbreviated according to the above scheme.

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B. Criticism and Biography

As the books, articles and learned journals on Henry James are exceedingly voluminous there would seem little point in attempting a comprehensive list of works consulted. The following items are therefore restricted to those that have seemed of particular relevance to the present study. Generally I have not listed works that do not relate directly to the novels and stories discussed in the thesis. Very substantial lists of works may be found in the Edel and Laurence bibliography of James (see below) and the

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