



the tables below. First, explain the similarity or connection between the allusion and the literary elements in “The Bloody Chamber”. The first one has been done for you.

**1. The name of the previous wife, the Romanian countess, is named after the title of Gothic novella “Carmilla” written by Sheridan La Fenu (1872).**

Similarity or connection: The character in “Carmilla” is a female vampire who preys on young women.

Device: This is an example of dramatic irony, as the audience is aware of the connection between the probably bloody death of the countess and predatory nature of the Marquis just before the heroine realises what has happened to her predecessor.

Effect: This could suggest to the reader that the Romanian countess was perhaps (at least initially) a willing participant in some of the Marquis’s darker sexual games.

**2. The narrator describes her mother as “a medusa”, (a Greek, mythical monster) when she bursts into the courtyard.**

Similarity or connection:

Device:

Effect:

**3. The painting the heroine sees is of “Saint Cecilia”, the Christian martyr and patron saint of musicians and poets who was beheaded.**

Similarity or connection:

Device:

Effect:

**4. The Marquis is based on a historical figure, The Marquis De Sade (1740-1814), a French nobleman whose perverse sexual preferences and erotic writings gave rise to the term sadism.**

Similarity or connection:

Device:

Effect: The horror that the audience feel at the torturous actions of the Marquis are further intensified by the fact that his methods are “matched” to the interests, passions or personality of the wife, which makes the action seem even more tragic and brutal.

### Evaluation

7. “Although Carter’s stories depict female sexuality and pleasure, they still fail to challenge the views of a patriarchal society since female characters are still victims of male sexuality.” Do you agree with this statement? Why/ why not? Make a mind map of your ideas answering this question.

Consider:

- How is female sexuality and pleasure depicted within “The Bloody Chamber” and other stories in the collection?
- Does this aspect of the stories contribute to Carter’s feminist message?
- Is this in some way less effective if the females are still victims, even if only at the beginning of the stories?

You might consider:

- The representations of female sexuality and victimisation in “The Bloody Chamber” and other stories
- The narrative structure of these stories
- An evaluation of the similarities and differences between these stories and the original fairy tales which they aim to subvert

Challenge: Read an example of literary criticism that responded directly to the critique of Carter’s feminism, and consider how Wardle’s perspective supports your answer (remember to cite appropriately):

<https://www.polyphonyjournal.com/post/critiques-of-the-sadean-male-in-angela-carter-s-the-bloody-chamber>

## Glossary

- **martyr (noun)** – a person who is killed because of their religious or other beliefs.
- **Liebestod** – German for "love death" and the title of the final, dramatic music from the 1859 opera *Tristan und Isolde* by Richard Wagner.
- **sadistic (adjective)** – deriving pleasure from inflicting pain, suffering, or humiliation on others.
- **intertextuality** – the shaping of a text's meaning by another text; the interconnection between similar or related works of literature that reflect and influence an audience's interpretation of the text.
- **depredations** – the acts of preying upon, ravaging or damaging something or someone
- **inexorability** – the state of not being persuaded, moved, or stopped
- **Iron Maiden** – An instrument of torture consisting of a coffin-shaped box lined with iron spike