

## Worksheet 6 – Angela Carter

### Review: Lecture 5

In Lecture 5, Prof. Mulvey-Roberts describes two symbolic objects and the significance of their representations in the story “The Lady of the House of Love”.

- One of these objects is a modern, mechanical mode of transport. What is it?
- Another one of these objects is a plant known for its intoxicating scent. What is it?

### Recall

**Answer these questions after watching the video lecture to check how much you remember.**

1. The protagonist of the story “Wolf-Alice” was brought up by wolves, and then taken to be “civilised” by which group of people?  

a) Nurses	c) Monks
b) Nuns	d) Dukes
2. Which object is used to injure the character of the Duke in, “Wolf-Alice”?  

a) A Bible	c) Silver bullet
b) Sunlight	d) Stake
3. Prof. Mulvey-Roberts references how the heroine’s self-conscious realisation reflects “the fall” of Eve in the Bible. Which section or book within the Bible contains this reference?  

a) Revelations	c) Psalms
a) Genesis	d) Exodus
4. Prof. Mulvey-Roberts references the allusion within the title to the famous children’s fiction novel “Alice through the Looking Glass” which was written by which English writer?  

a) George MacDonald	c) Anna Sewell
b) Rudyard Kipling	d) Lewis Carroll

### Analysis

5. In the lecture, Professor Mulvey-Roberts explains how this is a story about transitions, and discovering identity through transformation. Look at the following list of key moments within the story “Wolf-Alice” which lead to the transitions of the main characters.

- a) How do these key moments create intertextual connections or similarities with other stories in the collection?
- b) In what ways are these moments different from the other stories that they connect with?
- c) What is the significance of this key moment? Consider this idea of transition.

Complete the table with your ideas. The first one has been done for you.

**1. Wolf-Alice moves into the Duke's mansion and sleeps in the ashes of the fireplace instead of a bed. She sweeps up the remains of the Duke's victims when he is away.**

Similarity: The Duke is another bestial male exploiting his power, similar to Bluebeard and the Wolf characters in the other stories. The female is trapped within an enclosed environment, just like the heroine in the bloody chamber, or the one in the Erl-King's forest

Difference: There is not initially a sexual relationship between the Duke and Alice, unlike the other stories.

Significance:

**2. Wolf-Alice grows older in this environment, and one day she gets her first menstrual blood.**

Similarity:

Difference:

Significance: Carter highlights the shame associated with menstruation cycles and uses the mirror to symbolise cultural anxieties about identity. Alice begins to develop her humanity and sense of self.

**3. The Duke lies on his bed, in pain and caught mid-transformation, half-human and half-beast. Wolf-Alice licks his bloody face. The mirror across the bed at first shows only Wolf-Alice, but as she licks him the face of the Duke begins to appear there too.**

Similarity:

Difference:

Significance:

### Evaluation

Read the extract below. It describes Carter's engagement with the Gothic genre in *The Bloody Chamber*. Gothic literature has been a significant source of cultural inspiration, and it continues to be appropriated by popular culture in new ways. Carter is an example of a writer who develops the genre in this sense.

Write a paragraph which: a) Summarises the key point being made in the extract in your own words. b) Evaluate to what extent this idea or sentiment is effectively conveyed in "Wolf-Alice" and one other story of your choice from the collection.

"In her late twentieth-century fiction, Carter powerfully, and often critically, demonstrates the reversal of values and identifications that occurs via the Gothic genre. Otherness takes centre stage: sexual transgression, dark desire, and fantastic deviance wonderfully subvert the restrictive orders of reason, utility, and paternal morality... In Gothic times margins may become the norm and occupy a more central cultural place." Fred Botting, 'Aftergothic: consumption, machines and black holes', in *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* (Cambridge UP, 2002).

You might consider:

- Which cultural values and identifiers are often reversed via the Gothic genre
- The meaning of "otherness" and how this is represented by Carter
- The techniques Carter uses to expose and criticise "restrictive orders of reason, utility and paternal morality"
- The way in which the cultural impact of the Gothic genre is developed by Carter in *The Bloody Chamber*.

Challenge: Read and research about examples of Gothic subgenres and their development over time, and identify elements of these subgenres in *The Bloody Chamber* to further support your ideas: <https://www.nypl.org/blog/2018/10/18/brief-history-gothic-horror>

## Glossary

- **catalyst (noun)** – an agent (a person, event or thing) that provokes or speeds significant change or action
- **allegory** – a story in which the characters and events are symbols that stand for ideas about human life or for a political or historical situation
- **emanation (noun)** – the act of coming out of or exuding from a source
- **utility** – the quality or state of being useful
- **paternal (adjective)** – relating to a father figure, or the idea of fatherhood