

'With Teeth': Beyond Theoretical Violence in Gothic Studies

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From the flesh-corrupting bites of walkers in *The Walking Dead*, to the metallic glint of dental tools in Joe Abercrombie's *The Blade Itself*, to the menacing displays of 'white sharp teeth' in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, to the monomaniac obsession with 'ghastly teeth' in Edgar Allen Poe's 'Berenice',¹ teeth are iconic symbols of death, predation, threat, pain, abjection, obsession, and revulsion throughout the Gothic. Paradoxically, these outcomes are desired and feared, both unthinkable and requisite. Gothic characters are 'made to suffer', and in being 'made to suffer', they evoke medieval saints.² Both earn their status through the foreordained torments that are the making of gothic or saintly narratives *through* the unmaking of their bodies. These violent un-makings are reified and reiterated through the pious practices or theoretical methodologies proper to hagiographic or gothic studies.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari irreverently jest that poststructuralist and psychoanalytic approaches are academic doxies, too devoutly followed.³ Given the Gothic's interest in 'uncovering the instability, the irrational and the imaginative,'⁴ unorthodox practices – nomadically referred to as 'immanent critique,' 'speculative pragmatics,' 'rhizomatics,' 'research-creation,' 'affect theory', or 'schizoanalysis' – expand research and creative potential in gothic studies. Anna Powell has noted that 'schizoanalysis offers liberation from the splitting of subject/object and from the primal condition of lack.'⁵ If desire is not the reproduction of lack but production of

¹ Abercrombie, *The First Law, Book One: The Blade Itself* (London: Gollancz, 2006), pp. 13-15, 19-21; Stoker <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/345/345-h/345-h.htm>; Poe <http://www.eapoe.org/works/tales/bernicea.htm>.

² Title of episode 8 in season 3 of *The Walking Dead*.

³ Guattari likewise uses religiously-charged language to describe the ways that structuralisms and systemisms control expression to normalize themselves, creating 'a cult of information or of the signifier' in *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, pp. 48-49.

⁴ Jon Greenaway, *Dark Arts*, vol. 1.1, p.3.

⁵ Powell, *Deleuze and Horror Film*, p. 18.

the new, then through schizoanalysis ‘the unconscious changes from an archaeology to a cartography of motion’.⁶ In motion, schizoid, rhizomatic, ‘unnatural’ connections reveal what bodies can do rather than what they symbolize.⁷

Unnaturally and rhizomatically, this article collides two stories that do not belong together: St. Apollonia’s martyrdom and AL Kennedy’s short story ‘Story of My Life’. The title quote ‘With Teeth’ emphasizes the schizoid heuristics of bodies moving with/in/through macabre dental excruciations. What happens when we move beyond the theoretical violence imposed by traditional approaches to gothic studies?

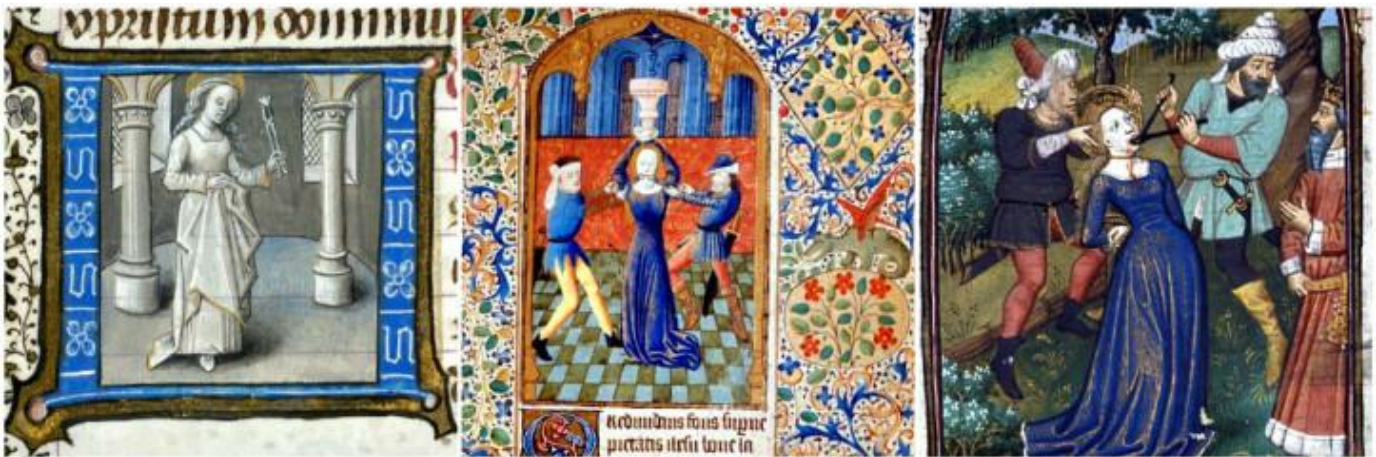


Figure 1: Yates Thompson MS 4 (left), Harley MS 2989 (centre), Egerton MS 2019 (right).

In the Yates Thompson MS 4 image, St. Apollonia is gore-free and spectrally white, displaying one of her lost molars in a pair of pliers;⁸ her torturers have vanished. The Harley MS 2989 image depicts two torturers at their cruel work,⁹ while the Egerton

⁶ Powell, *Deleuze*, p. 214.

⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* ‘the Universe does not function by filiation. . . The only way Nature operates—against itself’, p. 242; the rhizomatic as ‘unnatural participations’, p. 241.

⁸ (f. 190v, left).

⁹ (f. 124r centre).

MS 2019 image likewise depicts her tormentors at work while blood drips down her front.¹⁰

Just as St. Apollonia's story is told through vignettes, so too is A.L. Kennedy's 'Story of My Life'. In four vignettes the narrator undergoes renewed dental horrors. The first vignette depicts the narrator's first tooth extraction at the age of five; the second



vignette recounts the un-anaesthetized extraction of her first wisdom tooth at 'twenty-four, twenty-five'; the third vignette describes an apicectomy, a root amputation, when the narrator is around thirty-five, while her last wisdom tooth is removed in the fourth vignette, possibly at age forty-five.¹¹

Figure 2: Egerton MS 2019, f.217r

Open-mouthed, bleeding, and assaulted by cruel implements,

Kennedy's narrator is uncomfortably like St. Apollonia, drawn to the site of her torment, a dentist's chair, by the inexorable, physiological force of constant tooth (re)growth: 'my teeth are forceful. They insist'.¹² St. Apollonia's Christian faith likewise draws her to the site of torment, insisting and erupting into her local community like the narrator's disorderly (re)emergent teeth. Like St. Apollonia's tormentors, the dentist in Kennedy's second dental vignette, is a 'big man, meaty forearms' who is unconcerned at causing pain. He is 'incurious' if the anesthetic has

¹⁰ (f. 217r, right).

¹¹ Kennedy, A. L., 'Story of My Life' in *What Becomes*. pp. 140-142, 142-144, 145-146, 147-149.

¹² Kennedy, p. 142.

taken effect and ‘generally impatient’. He: ‘goes at it fiercely with the pliers and no preamble and here comes a clatter, a turning yank, and then tooth – I am looking at my tooth without me, grinning redly in the light.’¹³ The narrator and St. Apollonia share the same red grin denoting pain, anger, and even the ‘stupid wonder’ of shock before it registers into pain.¹⁴ Kennedy’s narrator puzzles over

this building feeling which I cannot quite identify – it is large, huge, and therefore moving rather slowly, takes a full count backwards from *tennineight* to arrive and then I know, then I am wholly, supernaturally aware . . . that I’m in pain.¹⁵

The ongoing, moving ‘stupid wonder’ of dental pain entangles Kennedy’s short story and St. Apollonia’s narratives. Before analysis of a gothic subject begins, he/she/it is always already theoretically brutalized because of theoretical approaches that (re)hierarchize and (re)inscribe the ‘adult-white-heterosexual-European-male-speaking a standard language’, even in challenging it. For St. Apollonia and Kennedy’s narrator, traditional theoretical approaches foreclose movement and redouble violence through language-based symbolism. For example, Sigmund Freud’s *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* territorializes teeth as sexually symbolic: ‘A particularly remarkable dream symbol is that of having one’s teeth fall out, or having them pulled. Certainly its most immediate interpretation is castration as a punishment for onanism’, while the mouth ‘takes the place of the genital opening’.¹⁶ Territorializing their teeth and mouths as sexually symbolic dehumanizes St. Apollonia and Kennedy’s narrator by simultaneously silencing their speech and monstrously double-sexing their bodies.

The Freudian sexual re-appropriation of teeth and mouths extends to small children who: ‘represent a genital in general, regardless of whether male or female.’¹⁷ In ‘Story

¹³ Kennedy, pp. 142-143.

¹⁴ Oxford English Dictionary (OED), s.v. ‘grin’, v.

¹⁵ Kennedy, p. 143.

¹⁶ Freud’s *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* is cited by Kindle location, loc. 72.

¹⁷ Freud, loc. 72.

of *My Life*' the narrator's adult dental extractions ghost into her own childhood experience in the dentist's chair;¹⁸ these experiences also parallel her hypothetical/actual lost child's experience at the dental surgery.¹⁹ Freudian analysis of Kennedy's narrator would wreak symbolic silence and violence on childhood, territorializing it as symbolically sexual before the child is agential. As a female recollecting childhood visits to the dentist, the narrator's doubly-sexing retrofit (mouth-womb) would be redoubled (mouth-womb, child-womb), (re)re-silencing both her past child and present adult selves.

The viciousness of this symbolic, hermeneutic circle/cycle manifests dramatically on female characters like St. Apollonia and Kennedy's narrator, but St. Lawrence or St. Sebastian likewise illustrate the problems of pinning, positioning, or binding subjects to signifying grids as a type of martyrdom. Around 288 CE St. Sebastian was bound to a tree or pillar and pierced with arrows. On 10 August 258 St. Lawrence was bound to a gridiron on which he was roasted. Gridding/grid-ironing defines enfleshed subjectivity only by separating it from the force that animates it, and perversely, the only way out of the hermeneutic circle/cycle is a future redemption/cure that unmakes their embodied humanity. As St. Lawrence is said to have quipped mid-passion: 'This side is cooked. Turn me over and then eat.'²⁰

For Kennedy's narrator and St. Apollonia, there is no escaping entanglements with dental pain and movements 'With Teeth,' but these characters and their narratives are not reducible to their dental excruciations or to symbolic readings. Although saints' lives and gothic narratives feature violence, approaching violence and suffering as symbolic constitutes a type of secondary violence on characters already

¹⁸ Kennedy, pp. 140-142.

¹⁹ Kennedy, p. 150.

²⁰ St. Augustine, vol. 38, col. 1394.

‘made to suffer’. Pathologizing behaviours or proliferating ghosts misses the movements of embodied experience.²¹

Where ontologies/hauntologies of subjects and objects pin subjects like St. Apollonia or Kennedy’s narrator to producing useful work within ideologies, nomadic thought treats everything as a body with mass, velocity, matter, energy, force and with the capacity to affect and to be affected by other bodies, after Spinoza’s (in)famous definition.²² Like celestial bodies, words like ‘St. Apollonia’ or ‘teeth’ have cycles, rhythms, beats, forces, attractions, and movements that affect and are affected by other bodies, such as images, media, thoughts, or memories. The ‘speeds and slownesses’ or beats and frequencies of affect theory make words behave more like wave-particles in physics.²³ As wave-particles, words pierce bodies in the same way that X-rays and soundwaves do. This style of piercing does not pin bodies down to ideological or methodological habits, like St. Lawrence to the gridiron or St. Sebastian to the pillar; rather, it makes bodies move to new beats or frequencies, pitches or tones.

Theory in ‘affect theory’ is not a theory to be applied in ways that preordain the outcome; it is an inveterately nomadic process that tries to avoid becoming habit through an attitude of missing fixed points by putting bodies into play without seeking to control the outcome. What happens if we ask *What can gothic bodies do ‘With Teeth’?* St. Apollonia and the narrator resist neat narrative summary. There are few facts about either. St. Apollonia met her martyrdom in Alexandria Egypt sometime around 248/249. In Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Ecclesiastical History*, St. Apollonia is a pious elderly woman martyred for her faith:

Then they seized also that most admirable virgin, Apollonia, an old woman, and, smiting her on the jaws, broke out all her teeth. And they made a fire outside the city and threatened to burn her alive if she would not join with

²¹ For example, Derrida’s *Specters*, pp. 38-39, 46, 55, 82-83, and 212.

²² For example, Deleuze, *Spinoza*, pp. 17-19, 40-43.

²³ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand*, pp. 267, 269, 271, 277, 283, and 296.

them in their impious cries. And she, supplicating a little, was released, when she leaped eagerly into the fire and was consumed.²⁴

By about 1260, St. Apollonia appears in Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend*. In de Voragine's version, St. Apollonia is 'well along in years', and her passion is more embellished. She is 'wreathed with the flowers of chastity, sobriety, and purity.' A pillar in her Christian community, Apollonia is 'admired by the angels'; her example offers 'a spectacle and example to men'. Her overt Christianity attracts mob-violence, and she is 'carried off to the tribunal of the impious.'²⁵ Apollonia defiantly self-immolates, to the wonder of her tormentors.

The executioners, cruelly wreaking their wrath upon her, first beat out all her teeth. Then they piled up wood and built a huge pyre, telling her they would burn her alive unless she took part in their impieties. But she, seeing the pyre already burning and after a brief moment of recollection, suddenly broke free from the hands of the wicked and of her own will threw herself into the fire with which they had threatened her. Her merciless tormentors were shocked beyond measure at finding a woman even more eager to undergo death than they to inflict it.²⁶

De Voragine elaborates Apollonia's attitude to martyrdom in terms of medieval chastity and mystical texts: she is the *sponsa Christi*, the 'virile' female martyr, the mystic consumed by the fire of divine love. Unlike gender stereotypes of female fickleness and faithlessness, Apollonia 'yearns only to please her spouse Jesus Christ', and her 'virile spirit' ensures her success in spiritual battle: 'Armed against fleshly lusts and all tortures by her faith rather than by sword, she fought and she won'. Her 'virile' or manly victory consummates her status as Christ's spouse, annihilating her molar identity. She is undaunted 'by the torments visited upon her nor by the heat of the flames, because her spirit was on fire, ignited by the hands of

²⁴ Schaff, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.txt>.

²⁵ De Voragine, p. 268.

²⁶ Ibid, p. 268-269.

mortals, could not be overcome the heat infused by God in that indefatigable breast.²⁷ Apollonia's burning, ardent desire out-burns the fires prepared for her; her becoming-fire worlds her into heaven.

Whereas Eusebius' and De Voragine's written narratives emphasize St. Apollonia's self-immolation, medieval iconography accentuates her dental excruciations rather than her becoming-fire. The harrowing but incidental tooth loss becomes the new field of emergence or the latest unfolding of reality. The club is overtaken by the pliers, and the older Egyptian woman is outstripped by a younger European woman. The later medieval 'speeds and slownesses' arise from the shared differential relation of dental pain. These speeds and slownesses allow the saint and the narrator to exceed – move faster than or at a different speed than – their torments and to co-compose with believers/readers travelling at the same speeds. Kennedy's narrator varies speed and direction to maintain relational connection with 'you'. Calculating the pace and drift of her dental vignettes, the narrator thinks 'I should pause here briefly, because it lets the story breathe and even possibly give a wink. I step back to let you step forward and see what's next'. Her purpose is to synchronize the differential relation with fellow travellers: 'This way you'll stay with us. With me. Which is the point. You staying with me is the point.'²⁸

²⁷ Ibid, p. 269.

²⁸ Kennedy, p. 142.



Figure 3: Barton Turf, Norfolk. Church screen from *St. Michael and All Angels*.

The ‘point’ of St. Apollonia’s narratives is likewise a differential relation: the saint moves at the speed of sufferings and suffrages which may account for her popularity. On English church screens St. Apollonia is ‘one of the most frequently portrayed saints’ in the late medieval period.²⁹ Unbloodied and unburned, the saint brandishes her lost molar in a pair of pliers snatched from the hands of her

tormentors. This speed attracted the devotion of medieval believers with toothache. Her suffrage in the Breviary implores:

God, for the honour of whose most holy name the blessed martyr and virgin Apollonia suffered the bitter knocking out of her teeth, be with us, we pray, so that we who commemorate her may be freed from toothache through her intercession.³⁰

Anglicised and modernized to the later medieval period, St. Apollonia outruns her martyrdom. Her skin, clothing, and hair are faster than the pyre. She is unharried, regal, and nimbused; her tooth and the pliers that extracted it are impossibly recollected to her. Similarly, the four vignettes in Kennedy’s ‘Story of My Life’ move at hagiographic speeds; these vignettes both dismember and recollect the story just as hagiography simultaneously dismembers and recollects saintly bodies. In the first vignette, the narrator’s memory of her first extraction is fogged by time, anaesthetic, and addiction, so the narrator improvises on her childhood experience in the

²⁹ Duffy, p. 180.

³⁰ Scott-Stokes, p. 124.

dentist's chair: 'I'll pretend, while I tell you the story, that I know.'³¹ The narrator constructs an enraged five-year old child whose curious tirade conflates fantasy and reality, past and present. The child protests:

Taking my teeth out . . . no one ever takes me out – except to the dentist – to take out more teeth. I need my teeth for the Tooth Fairy – I'm only five, for Chrissake – that's my one source of income, right there. How else can I save up to run away from here? I could go on the stage – be a sideshow – my manager would want me absolutely as I am – the Shark Tooth Girl: the more you pull, the more she grows: ivory from head to toes. I'd be laughing. With all of my teeth, I'd be laughing. This is untrue, but diagnostic – it helps to make me plain.³²

In the narrator's childish confabulation it is not her pathology that becomes 'plain' but her ability to form a rhizome, to initiate a becoming. In the narrator's becomings, the joke is on the dentists/tormentors. Becomings are unbound by



arborescent norms. Molar extractions cannot keep up with the Shark Tooth Girl's prodigious, full-body tooth growth. Her tooth-making machine deterritorializes her body which becomes 'ivory from head to toes': she produces teeth too fast for extraction. Like the saint, the narrator's teeth are recollected to her in this vignette: she brandishes 'handfuls . . . practically a whole piano's worth.'³³ These simultaneously lost and recollected teeth speed the narrator's

experience beyond dental trauma to a type of performance in which the 'you' co-composes.

Figure 4: St. Apollonia by Carlo Dolci

³¹ Kennedy, p. 141.

³² *ibid*

³³ *Ibid*

In Carlo Dolci's painting, St. Apollonia's lost teeth have collided into the single 'untrue but diagnostic' moment/molar displayed to the reader/viewer. In this moment, teeth are simultaneously lost and found. Her image moves transversally, so fast its truth cannot be empirical but relational. Dolci's Apollonia conjures a creative psychosis that conflates real and unreal, past and present. The saint's thoughts are moving at the speed of heaven; she is numb, glassy, or arrested to all but worlding.³⁴ Although temporarily caught in human flesh and costume, she is just ready to outstrip her humanity (again). Dolci's saint like Kennedy's narrator, evokes the moment De Voragine's Apollonia leaps into the fire and out of her skin. Kennedy's narrator likewise conjures a dynamic threshold from her dreamscape similar in speed to St. Apollonia's martyrdom. Like Kennedy's short story, Dolci's painting is 'untrue but diagnostic'; it makes the saint's experience 'plain' to viewers.³⁵ Kennedy's narrator highlights the unknowability and the speed of traumatic experience by recounting a story that is true not in content but in pace-making:

The story that kept you here with me and that was true. In its essentials it was never anything other than true. True as going to sleep tonight with the idea of blood beneath my tongue and meeting the old dreams of robbery and tunnels, the ones where I run straight through and beyond myself and on.³⁶

The narrator's triple qualification of 'true' complicates it as a differential movement. In the first qualification, the relative pronoun 'that' shifts the issue of whether or not the story 'was true' into the moving relation 'that kept you here with me' as the narrator moves through speeds so fast that she transmigrates. The second qualification confirms the undefined 'essentials' of the story as unswervingly true or 'never' not true, however much/little the undefined particulars might have sometimes/always swerved from the truth. The third qualification of 'true' is just as

³⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand*, p. 285. Massumi, *Parables*, p. 66.

³⁵ Kennedy, p. 141.

³⁶ Kennedy, p. 149.

unknowably fast. If the story is as true as the narrator's sleeping dreams, than it is unverifiable and untruthful, an unholy conflation of imagination and experience: psychosis. As in her dreams, the narrator's waking experience blurs imagination and experience. She fact-checks the credibility of her perception: 'The dentist gives me more anaesthetic and I notice his hands smell a little like cornflakes – his gloves, they have this cornflaky scent – which is a detail that makes him seem credible and not simply a nightmare.'³⁷ Triply qualified as 'true', the story's complicating truths misdoubt the essentials and particulars of the title 'Story of My Life'. The gory dental vignettes may/may not be the true story, as the narrator twice observes: 'Story of my life – maybe – going to the dentist.'³⁸ Like Kennedy's narrator, the truth of St. Apollonia's harrowing, un-anaesthetized tooth extractions is unverifiable and unknowable: the story of her martyrdom – maybe – tooth extraction. Paradoxically, St. Apollonia's image equals the differential motion of torment and recollection; she is experiencing yet outrunning blood and tooth loss.

St. Apollonia and Kennedy's narrator are radically open to co-composition and connectivity. St. Apollonia exceeds territorialized and exclusivist distinctions like European/African, older/younger, martyr/suicide, male/female, believer/non-believer, or self/other. In Francisco de Zurbarán's painting; her expression conveys the words of Kennedy's narrator: 'In this story, I'm like you. Roughly and on average, I am the same: the same as you'.

³⁷ Kennedy, pp. 147-148.

³⁸ Kennedy, pp. 140, 149.



Figure 5: St. Apollonia by Francisco de Zurbarán 1636.

She is like her suppliants in the shared bodily speed of tooth pain, and her empathetic intercession. Kennedy's narrator is also empathetically intercessory to/with/for readers of 'Story of My Life'. Like St. Apollonia, narrator is loosely territorialized and 'the same as you.'³⁹ The unnamed narrator is of no fixed age 'five', 'twenty-four, twenty-five', 'thirty-five', 'could be forty-five'⁴⁰ she adjusts her speed to the reader's. There is no specific reference to the narrator's ethnicity, nationality, or region. Popular cultural allusions to 'Bagpuss' and the 'Clangers'⁴¹ suggest knowledge of BBC programming between 1968-1974, though the narrator could be from anywhere within in range

of BBC transmissions or retransmissions: anywhere in the digital age when e-books mean the narrator, like the saint, is miraculously ubiquitous and ether-traveling: always connective/connectible at the speed of the viewer/reader.

In Alexandria Egypt around the time of the third-century Decian persecutions, St. Apollonia's neighbours and fellow Christians have been horrifically tortured and martyred, and the saint-in-the-making shares their fate. In the twenty-first century, Kennedy's narrator endures four horrific dental treatments. For both women, their dental torments are no more or no less excruciating than their personal lives which

³⁹ Kennedy, p. 139.

⁴⁰ Kennedy, pp. 141, 142, 144, 146.

⁴¹ Kennedy, p. 141.

are territorialized by trauma and absence. In de Voragine, St. Apollonia is a mature woman who has lived a life of chastity, so her own nuclear family is absent from her narrative. The would-be saint, desires to be absent from her earthbound body so ardently that she expedites her martyrdom by leaping onto the pyre. In Kennedy's story, the narrator's parents are absent from her first extraction at the age of five, and in the three other vignettes, a partner and child are likewise painfully absent. At the age of twenty-four or twenty-five, the narrator reflects on how 'wrong or maladjusted' her life must be when 'hauling a live tooth raw from the bone leaves you and your state no worse than an average night, a convivial night, a pace or two along your path of joy'. It is not clear if her partner at the time is exploitative, unfaithful, or abusive, but he is absent from the two later vignettes. At the age of thirty-five the narrator lists the things she does not have: 'kitchen extensions and dinner parties, DIY, the ability to send out Christmas cards signed "With love from both of us. With love from all of us."' ⁴² Finally, at forty-five, sending out 'Christmas cards- with love from all of us' is still impossible. ⁴³

Impossible absences catalyze self-immolation and substance abuse for the saint and the narrator. St. Apollonia, who has been practicing forms of self-annihilation in life, decides to expedite her entry into death/heaven through her becoming-fire. ⁴⁴ The narrator is (re)territorialized by the abuse of alcohol and 'painkillers.' ⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari describe this as the chemical-assemblage, a type dependency rigidifies lines of flight to chemical consumption. Just as the narrator displays chemical dependency, the saint displays a type of spiritual dependency on the hagiographic-assemblage that likewise rigidifies her lines of flight; the entire focus of her life and her death is on a type of heavenly, unending fix or dependency. Like addicts, saints

⁴² Kennedy, pp. 143-144.

⁴³ Kennedy, p. 149.

⁴⁴ De Voragine, p. 269. Bodies flux between moments of self-awareness and moments of self-loss. These moments of self-loss are becomings (also analogous to haecceities, multiplicities, bodies without organs).

⁴⁵ Kennedy, p. 145.

are 'glassy' or vitrified in an unfeeling and fragile state.⁴⁶ In the third dental vignette, the narrator seeks glassiness: 'Numb is best – I always aim for numb, for numb of any type – but pain has found me anyway.'⁴⁷ The narrator's desire for numbness causes a dating disaster. Under the influence of 'painkillers – big ones. I like them big,'⁴⁸ she initially fails to recognize her date; then struggles to enunciate due to oral stitches and pain medication. Upset that her date is not more of 'a comfort' and not more of a conversationalist, the narrator regales him with details of her 'root canals. I summarise the activities involved in an apesectomy – the gum slicing, tissue peeling, the jaw drilling, the noise.'⁴⁹ On this evening the narrator embodies Deleuze and Guattari's description of drug-assemblage failures: 'You will be full of yourself, you will lose control, you will be on a plane of consistency, in a body without organs, but at a place where you will always botch them, empty them, undo what you do.'⁵⁰ Although the date itself is a failure, the narrator's substance-induced experience is a speed or relation that readers can share. Neither the narrator nor the reader is reducible to a bad date, and bad dates are open to becomings.

In Kennedy's fourth dental vignette, the narrator has just endured a harrowing forty-five minute dental extraction. She emerges from the clinic with impaired speech and temporary paralysis of an eye and an arm due to the anesthetic. As she waits for a taxi in a 'colourful urban area' frequented by substance abusers, a 'relaxed gentleman' walks up to her: 'He says something approaching, "Hhaaaaa." Which is not much of a story, but is true and I know what he means because I can speak alcoholic. I have learned. He reaches me and he says what might be expected'. The

⁴⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand*, p. 284-285 describes 'the glassy body of the addict', also using 'vitrification' or turning into glass. Glassy denotes a type of fragile, self-induced 'phantasy subjectification' in which the addict is both out of it, as in glassy eyed, and dangerously breakable.

⁴⁷ Kennedy, p. 143.

⁴⁸ Kennedy, p. 145.

⁴⁹ Kennedy, p. 146.

⁵⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand*, p. 285.

narrator translates his alcoholically-impaired request; she also translates her own anaesthetically-impaired reply: 'I turn to him with my bleeding mouth and my lazy eye and my dodgy arm and my swollen tongue and I say, "I don no. Havin a biddofa bad day myself."' ⁵¹ If her first dental vignette is accurate, the narrator will return home from the fourth dental vignette to drink. After the first dental vignette, the narrator wakes up from nitrous oxide sedation with a hangover: 'Back from the surgery, next came the hangover – naturally, naturally, naturally – but as I was a child it would be kind, more a mild type of fog than a headache.' ⁵² The triple 'naturally' highlights the unnaturalness of a five year old child suffering a hangover from nitrous oxide sedation. Hangovers are so natural to the narrator's adult life that these reterritorialize her past self; she cannot recall life without them.

Reterritorialized by the chemical-assemblage, Kennedy's narrator cannot recall life without hangovers, just as St. Apollonia, reterritorialized by the hagiographic-assemblage, cannot recall life without glassiness. Neither St. Apollonia nor Kennedy's narrator are limited to symbolic territorializations of their sufferings or triumphs. Their movements with/in/through the lived disjunctions of dependency and piety, dentist and tormentor, extraction and recollection, patient and saint move them away from representing the world toward assembling 'a new type of reality.' ⁵³

The *Dark Arts* editors envision a revelatory role for gothic studies in a world akin to a gothic nightmare.

As neo-liberalism unleashes monstrous forces of financial power across the globe, as class divides widen, social inequality deepens and the despotic power of corporations and big business looms ever larger, the Gothic functions as a site of exposure and resistance – uncovering the instability, the

⁵¹ Kennedy, pp. 148-149.

⁵² Kennedy, p. 142.

⁵³ Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand*, p. 296

irrational and the imaginative that hegemonic forces all too often seek to keep in check and keep well hidden.⁵⁴

If the gothic functions of exposure and resistance are to have effect against these 'monstrous forces, 'immanent critique,' 'speculative pragmatics,' 'rhizomatics,' 'research-creation,' 'affect theory', or 'schizoanalysis' are necessary to break the cycles/circles of institutional habit and symbolic violence.

What can gothic bodies do 'With Teeth'? Engage in differential relations that make 'thought itself nomadic.'⁵⁵ Instead of replicating desire as lack, bodies can produce reality.

⁵⁴ Greenaway, p.3.

⁵⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, p. 24.

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Figure 2: Ibid, BL Egerton MS 2019, f. 217r.

Figure 3: St. Apollonia on church screen, Knott, Simon, Barton Turf, Norfolk, St. Michael and All Angels in Tom Muckley (ed), *Rood Screens in East Anglia* <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/bartonturf/bartonturf.htm>.

Figure 4: St. Apollonia by Carlo Dolci, formerly Matthiesen Fine Art Ltd. <http://matthiesengallery.com/artist/dolci-carlo>.

Figure 5: St. Apollonia by Francisco De Zurbarán, Musée du Louvre <http://www.wikiart.org/en/francisco-de-zurbaran/st-apollonia-1636>.

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