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1-1-2014

Tales of Wonder [supplemental material]

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Tales of Wonder, by an unknown author.

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MLA Citation

Unknown. *Tales of Wonder: Containing The Castle of Enchantment or The Mysterious Deception; The Robber's Daughter or The Phantom of the Grotto; The Magic Legacy; and The Enchanted Knight; or Phebe*. London: Ann Lemoine, White Rose Cot. Coleman St., 1801; sold by T. Hurst, Paternoster Row. 50p.

MLA Citation from the Gothic Archive

Unknown. *Tales of Wonder: Containing The Castle of Enchantment or The Mysterious Deception; The Robber's Daughter or The Phantom of the Grotto; The Magic Legacy; and The Enchanted Knight; or Phebe*. Published 1801. E-Publications Marquette. The Gothic Archive, Marquette University, Wisconsin.

http://epublications.marquette.edu/english_gothic/22/. Accessed 9/16/13. Web.

Full Title

Tales of Wonder: Containing The Castle of Enchantment or The Mysterious Deception; The Robber's Daughter or The Phantom of the Grotto; The Magic Legacy; and The Enchanted Knight; or Phebe.

Summary

Contents of *Tales of Wonder*:

1. *The Castle of Enchantment or The Mysterious Deception*

An old, needy stranger takes refuge from a storm in a tower; he meets an unfortunate boy and the stranger then removes his mask to show that he is a young man like the boy. The stranger tells his story upon the arrival of two more cavaliers. The stranger is Osmandy, the son of Lasiris who is the chief minister of the Sultan in Egypt. Educated in Greece, he was initiated into all the mysteries. However, he was rebuked by his father for opening a forbidden cabinet in his father's study to find a virginal statue of Greek origin. His father attempted to persuade him out of the fantasy, but he continued to believe that a real virgin was trapped in the statue under the power of enchantment. Osmandy remained under the power of the virgin, finding himself unable to eat, drink, or sleep and only snuck into his father's cabinet to spend an hour with the virgin every day; and when his father caught him with it, he confessed his love for the virgin and his father began to find other women for his son at the Festival of Isis, but Osmandy still preferred the virginal statue of Matilda. His father tells him to dress like an old man and go to Gaul to find a tower to discover the world's wonders. The youth reveals his tower is the tower Osmandy is looking for. Then the youth, Clodio, tells his story. He fell in love with a young sylph, an invisible fairy of the air, and became uninterested in women. Later, he was led by a light to the tower he was in now and was seduced by a lovely woman. He awoke and returned to his father's mansion, but she returned to him and revealed herself to be a fairy. They professed vows and he gave over his soul. Clodio returned every night to her, but she was not here. Instead, a dragon attacked him; he killed the dragon; and a vision informed him that he had been the one to free the fairy Diana. He was tested for his admiration to her; and when he won, he lost faith in why he wanted her. He was under Diana's spell and he did not pass her test; then she disappeared, but still remained an invisible presence in the castle. After the youth's story, they fall asleep and awoke to see their beloveds brought in by Lasiris and Aranes. Clodio and Diana forgive one another and Osmandy looks upon his Matilda and she comes to life. They had been disguised as the two cavaliers. Lasiris reveals that he and Aranes wanted to unite their families in a double marriage and each of the couples is united in marriage.

2. *The Robber's Daughter or The Phantom of the Grotto*

In Germany, a knight, Wilibald, lived with his wife Matilda and two daughters. While out on a long campaign, his wife became worried that he was dead; she went to the nymph's fountain. The nymph appeared and she thought the nymph was a harbinger of bad news about her husband, but the nymph delivered a prophecy that Matilda's husband will return, Matilda will die first, and then asked to be godmother of Matilda's new daughter. Matilda agreed to cast a pebble into the fountain to summon the nymph for the baptism. Matilda's husband returned; Matilda got pregnant; and then, the nymph came to the baptism and gave

a paltry present of a silk case with only a wooden musk-ball and left. The daughter, Little Matilda, grew up and Matilda died. Wilibald remarried to a mean stepmother who wanted more wealth. She sent the two eldest daughters to a nunnery, while Little Matilda was banished to a corner of the house. This new wife threw the nymph's present out the window where Matilda found it. Matilda dropped it in the fountain and the nymph appeared, raised Matilda, and told Matilda to take good care of the musk-ball. Wilibald was killed, the castle ransacked, and Matilda hid herself with the musk-ball and repeated the words the nymph told her would keep her safe. When the flames subsided, she was hired as a servant by Mother Gertrude at Count Conrad's palace. Matilda used the musk-ball to prepare herself for the Count's ball; the Count fell in love with her; and then, she returned to be a servant, planning to attend the ball the next night. The Count pledged his love for her on the second night and she accepted his marriage proposal. He held a party to announce his engagement, but Matilda was stuck in the kitchen cooking. For seven days, the Count got sick and Matilda made a special broth, putting her engagement ring in the broth; he returned to life, requested to see who made the broth, and they were married. Matilda returned to her father's castle to find the nymph, but to no avail. Matilda gave birth to a son who was kidnapped by a Griffin; then she gave birth to a second son and put a golden chain around this boy and connected it to her arm when she slept. When she awoke, the golden chain had been cut and her son was gone. The nurse who was supposed to be watching the Count's sons told him that Matilda was a sorceress who killed her infants to keep the Count's love. The Count asked the nurse to bring him the dead babies' bones. The Count confronted his wife before the nurse brought him the bones. He left the house and gave the nurse instructions to kill Matilda in her bath. The musk-ball fell upon the ground in the bath and Matilda summoned the nymph who told her that she was now out of wishes and that Mother Gertrude was the architect of her demise, telling Matilda that Mother Gertrude disposed of her sons in the nymph's fountain and that she had raised them. The Count returned, expecting Matilda to be dead, but Matilda told him she was alive and so were their sons. Then the Count locked the nurse in the bath to kill her.

3. The Magic Legacy

On his father's deathbed, Prince Alindor was given a key to open an ebony chest buried under the castle's fountain. The chest had instructions to help Alindor get gold, soldiers, transport himself from one place to another, or become the most powerful monarch. This was proved when Alindor got gold and soldiers. Alindor and his newfound wealth traveled to win the hand of Zenomia, the daughter of a wealthy caliph. She preferred Alindor over her other suitors, but she wanted to know his secret. He showed her the gold purse and she ran away with it. He learned that the caliph and his family had plotted to steal his money. He returned with soldiers and took them all captive. Zenomia returned the purse and apologized, but he thought she still loved him and tried to win her back by reconciling with them. But then she stole the soldiers' horn and commanded her own army to destroy

Alindor. Alindor used the magical belt to transport himself back to his castle. He plotted his revenge again by wishing himself into the princess's room to kill her and steal the purse and horn. He accidentally wakes her and they discuss their differences. Then Zenomia seduces him to get the belt and wishes herself to her father's apartment. Alindor tried to escape and fell into a fig tree, where he ate all the figs, but nose continued to grow with every fig he ate. He then drank water and his nose shrunk. Disguised as a peasant, he brought the figs and water into the palace to make Zenomia and her mother disfigured by the figs. The caliph summoned all the physicians to save them; Alindor disguised himself as an Egyptian physician and saved her mother with the water. The caliph kept rewarded him and urged him to continue to help his daughter. With Zenomia disfigured, she gave the disguised Alindor the purse, horn, and belt. Once he had them, Alindor revealed himself and disappeared, leaving Zenomia disfigured.

4. *The Enchanted Knight; or Phebe*

A widower with one child, Phebe, married a widow with a daughter named Martha, but then Phebe's father died and she became a servant. When Martha and her mother were out, an old woman came to the house and Phebe fed her. Then Phebe kissed her and the old lady blessed her. The old lady turned into beautiful vision and asked about her mother and sister; then when Phebe revealed her negative thoughts about her mother and sister, they walked in and the vision turned back into an old lady. She left the house with her cat; they made it through the bog where she saw an apparition with a torch that led her through the moor to a gothic castle. She went through the castle and found the enchanted knight, Oron, where a Glorious Hand of Necromancy hung above him. Phebe breathed on him to extinguish the flame and the knight came back to life. Oron and Phebe were married.

Constellation of Knowledge/Historical Context

Chapbook: A condensed, convenient bluebook format of 36-72 pages, back to back, stripped of the epistemological pessimism of their antecedents. The notion of the bluebooks as a Romantic narrative genre is as misleading here as that of the term "Romantic gothic novel," which is a collective representative of a few standardized landscape descriptions and the routine appearances of a mundane ghost that are determined by the readers' typical expectations and the desire "to be superficially tickled by the idea of a something beyond everyday experience, but at the same time to be reassured of the stability of their own concept of reality."¹ The academy has yet to fully consider the importance of these chapbooks; partially because the history of the critical perception of chapbooks will be examined and challenged with additional attention to the chapbook trade so that its literature can be identified as a legitimate field of study, as

¹ Koch, Angela. "'The Absolute Horror of Horrors' Revised: A Bibliographical Checklist of Early Nineteenth-Century Gothic Bluebooks." *Cardiff Corvey: Reading the Romantic Text*. Dec. 2002.

attended to by scholars such as Koch and Hoeveler. As separate categories of writers, publishers, printers and booksellers do not exist in the chapbook trade because all of these roles co-mingled making the determination of any individual's contribution to the chapbook almost impossible. Roy Bearden-White's article "A History of Guilty Pleasure: Chapbook and the Lemoines" provides an analysis of the complete publishing history of the most prolific and inventive chapbook publisher of the time, Ann Lemoine, the publisher of *Tales of Wonder*.²

Frontispiece:

"Naomi appearing to Clodio sitting among the Ruins of the Old Castle."

Key Words

Enchant

Found on: page 7, paragraph 1; page 8, paragraph 1 (2); page 12, paragraph 2; page 20, paragraph 2; page 28, paragraph 1; page 37, paragraph 2; page 38, paragraph 12; and page 48, paragraph 4 (2).

Used throughout the gothic, the term "enchant" indicates that a spell had been cast over something or someone. An enchantment is a charm or spell that uses words to invoke a spirit. Disenchantment comes to the Romantic Age and into the gothic through the concern with routines and procedures that have predictability and order, i.e. rationally following the scientific method. This process of rationalization created the disenchanted world; yet, through the gothic, there is a non-Christian re-enchantment with the world that is linked to more ancient sources. Re-enchantment is directly linked to the rise of the Gothic in the modern era. However, while disenchantment came from a strongly secularizing process, this re-enchantment that is present in the gothic chapbooks closes the gap between religious deviance and respectability, which allowed mysticism, Eastern religions, and alternative forms of spirituality the opportunity to gain credibility through the appreciation of variety and choice in forms of worship. Ultimately, in this time, the forces of re-enchantment are decidedly Christian so as not to become to divergent from the dominant hegemony of the time.³

Magic

Found on: page 6, paragraph 1; page 13, paragraph 2; page 15, paragraph 1; page 20, paragraph 1; page 20, paragraph 2; page 27, paragraph 4; page 35, paragraph 1; page 39, paragraph 3; page 41, paragraph 6; page 42, paragraph 3; page 43, paragraph 1; page 45, paragraph 3, 7, 9; page 46, paragraph 5; and page 50, paragraph 2.

Magic in the gothic is closely linked to Occultism and an individual's special access to secret information. The gothic genre essentially makes a cult out of the occult, relying on the ancient Greek revival that the Romantic Age brought into a time where modern science and

² Bearden-White, Roy. "A History of Guilty Pleasure: Chapbooks and the Lemoines." *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*. 103.3. (2009). 6-128

³ Ibid, 28.

Christianity were vying for popularity. There was natural or white magic, where the person working the magic could divine the nature of the universe, merely learning what was going to happen in the future. Or there was black magic, where the person working the magic influenced the universe for personal gain. At this time, occultism was very much on the fringe of society, barely even acknowledged by the superstructure. Religion, for many of its Enlightenment and Romantic Age critics, was understood to be little more than an immature response to a world that can be better explained by science. With religion faltering to explain the changing world, the gothic encouraged the possibility of magic be considered in any attempt to explain the world around the individuals.

Phantasy/Phantastic/Phantom

Found on: page 20, paragraph 1; page 21, paragraph 5; and page 25, paragraph 1.

The fantastic in the gothic is represented by the uncanny and supernatural, explained or not. These fantastic stories are classified by the weird fantastic ghost stories of novels, exaggerated in chapbooks. The fantastic or supernatural events take place within a framework of realism, where the author provides additional evidence to show that the events in the gothic work really did happen. Somewhere in the story “something” strange and unknown breaks into the everyday world and this “something” remains unexplained and unexplainable to the characters and the reader until the very end of the story; additionally, many of these stories have an open ending because of narrator’s inability to explain away the fantastic elements, thereby indicating the existence of a symbolic layer of meaning underneath the realist surface of the narration. The fantastic exists to elaborate on something that is marginalized, hidden, or taboo to mainstream society. At the same time as the rise of the gothic, sexuality and sexual activity became more hidden from society and further judged by the rising bourgeois middle class because their virginity and sexual purity could save even the most terrible of the gothic era. However, these fantastic writers did not advocate for sexual liberalism, but merely suggested that female virginity could save even the most othered of all “Others.”

Travel

Found on: page 3, paragraph 1; page 9, paragraph 6; page 18, paragraph 3; and page 23, paragraph 2.

Travelling or travelers are a common theme in the gothic. Psychogeographers have recently found analytical space in the fields of Cultural and Literary Geography. Kevin Lynch suggests that the traveler has a “mental map” always with him as he travels, formed by both cultural and literary sources. The gothic traveler’s world is mentally shaped by the experiences the traveler has gone through and/or the traveler’s fascination with the unknown.⁴ Lynch’s theory of travelers carrying “mental maps” works seamlessly into Fredric Jameson’s concept of cognitive mapping. For Jameson, the term has more value when re-conceptualizing cognitive mapping in terms that are more accessible to the traveler. Without these maps or the ability to think about the world as non-threatening, the traveler is estranged from the outsider world, which causes the traveler to creep back into

⁴ Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City*. Cambridge: MIT and Harvard Fellows Press, 1960. 22.

a secreted mental state or push further through the travel adventure. Jameson's concept of cognitive estrangement brings new clarity to a discussion of traveling as it gives the means to describe de-familiarizing or estranging events, which are both natural and expected parts of any travel journey. Jameson provides "an aesthetic of cognitive mapping (. . .) which seeks to endow the individual subject with some new heightened sense of its place in the global system."⁵ The gothic genre itself attempts to de-familiarize and estrange the reader and the traveler from the world of the gothic.

Virginity

Found on: page 6, paragraph 2; page 7, paragraph 6; page 8, paragraph 4, 5, 6; page 9, paragraph 2; page 13, paragraph 5; page 14, paragraph 1, 2, 3; page 15, paragraph 1,3; page 16, paragraph 5; page 29, paragraph 2; and page 48, paragraph 3 (3), 5.

Virginity is closely linked to beauty and purity in the gothic. It is most closely described by its opposite, that which is man-made or corrupted. Therefore, for the gothic, virginity is an indication of the individual's state of mind. For example, beauty is brought to perfection in women, who are likened to the Virgin Mary or Greek or Egyptian virgins. These women usually fit into traditional moral and domestic definitions. Beauty is stereotyped in the gothic by its ability to seduce and bring out the irrational in man. The idea of virginity is relevant to the individual who possesses an unblemished character, innocence, and sexual purity.

Weather

Found on: page 3, paragraph 1, 2; page 4, paragraph 4; and page 13, paragraph 1.

While the landscape plays a strong role in the gothic, the shifting weather patterns play just as strong of a role in determining or foreshadowing the end of the adventure. Usually sympathetic to the characters' moods, the weather determines, magnifies, or alters the feelings of the characters throughout the work. Storms are harbingers of evil; and, into the readers' mind, they bring an uneasiness that conveys the dread and fear of what is riding with that storm into the story. This oversimplification of the world and its connection to the characters' needs or desires hearkens back to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Prospero's control over the weather; however, instead of the characters magically having the ability to control the weather, the weather seems to simply be a projection of the characters' mental state. Reading a work of gothic fiction based on its weather patterns alone helps to signal changes and the mood of the work, but it by no means tells the whole story.

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⁵ Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991. 54.

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