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Immortal Melancholia: A Psychoanalytical Study of Byronic Heroes

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**Immortal Melancholia:
A Psychoanalytic Study of Byronic Heroes**

A culminating thesis submitted to the faculty of Dominican University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Humanities

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San Rafael, CA
December 2018

This thesis, written under the direction of the candidate's thesis advisor and approved by the Chair of the Master's program, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of Graduate Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Humanities.

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Abstract

This culminating project examines Byronic heroes using psychoanalytic theory across four case studies in media, including classic literature, theater, film, and television. The Byronic hero is a literary archetype inspired by the poet George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824). Typical characteristics include angst, arrogance, cunning intelligence, criminality, desire, passion, dominance, and otherness. The characters I have chosen to study include Mr. Rochester from *Jane Eyre* (1847), the Phantom from the 2004 film *The Phantom of the Opera*, James Bond from the 2012 film *Skyfall*, and Damon Salvatore from the hit television series *The Vampire Diaries* (2009-2017). Through examining the actions of these characters through a psychoanalytic lens, I argue that the Byronic hero is driven by his experience of intense loss and state of melancholia, as defined by Freud. When a subject is in a state of melancholia, they have lost an ideal or love object, and they fail to move on with this intense loss. They become outcasts of society through this loss. In addition to Freud, I also incorporate psychoanalytic theories and ideas from Melanie Klein and Silvan Tomkins. The purpose of my study is to examine how Byronic heroes, who are in a state of melancholia, deal with the losses they have suffered from.

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Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to Lord Byron. Thank you for showing the darker sides of humanity, and for inspiring generations of artists.

Descending into Darkness: An Introduction

The Byronic hero is a pervasive figure in popular culture, although many people don't recognize these characters as 'Byronic.' The Byronic hero is an archetype based on the nineteenth-century Romantic poet, George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824). Byronic refers to the types of characters Byron created in his stories and poems, and since his characters were often a reflection of himself, Byronic refers to the poet as well. Byron was a dark, brooding, passionate, complex figure, who never fit cleanly into society. Byron was neither a good man, nor a typical selfless hero, and yet audiences are continually drawn to him and the heroes that he has inspired. In each Byronic hero, there is a darkness, or melancholia, that threatens to overwhelm the corresponding heroine or audience.

Byronic heroes first appeared in novels — Byron's own works, the Brontë sisters' works, and various novels in the romance genre all depict these dark figures. As our world of technology has evolved, and fiction has adapted into new media, the Byronic figure has continued to be a presence in theater musicals, films, and television.

Many scholars have investigated Byronic heroes in fiction, film, and television. Three critical contemporary scholars I have studied are Deborah Lutz, Atara Stein, and Sarah Wootton. Lutz has done tremendous work in defining the dark lover archetype in fiction, and both Stein and Wootton have made Byronic heroes relevant to adaptation studies and multimedia studies. While there has been research done on specific Byronic heroes, there have

been very few connections made between the ideas of psychoanalysis, modern media, and Byronic heroes.

My contribution to this field of study is an interdisciplinary critique of Byronic heroes across four media types using the theories of psychoanalysis. I treat each medium as a case study, which includes Fiction: *Jane Eyre*, written by Charlotte Brontë (1847); Theater: *The Phantom of the Opera*, composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber (1986); Film: *Skyfall*, directed by Sam Mendes (2012); and Television Series: *The Vampire Diaries*, created by Kevin Williamson and Julie Plec (2009-2017). By using a case-study methodology, I will illustrate not only the prevalence of the Byronic hero in contemporary culture but also how an intense sense of loss or melancholia drives the Byronic hero. My investigations will be supported using the psychoanalytic ideas of melancholia, affects, repression, desire, mourning, anger, and shame, as outlined by psychoanalytic theorists Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, and Silvan Tomkins.

Byronic heroes represent operations of desire, repression, and loss in literature that can be apprehended through frameworks in psychoanalysis and affect theory. In using psychoanalytic theory, I hope to explain not only why these characters act in the way they do, but to also gain an understanding of why we, as an audience, connect to the characters so deeply. The dark qualities of Byronic heroes are drawn from a sense of intense loss. This state of melancholia drives these characters to act out in ways that they feel are completely justifiable. As an audience, we recognize these feelings of mourning and melancholia, and are drawn to these characters' sense of loss. When we experience stories with Byronic heroes, we can surrender to our own sense of loss in a safe space.

Review of Literature

The intertextuality of Byronic heroes, psychoanalysis, and multimedia studies is the basis for my research. The aim of my thesis is to explore the ways in which the state of melancholia drives Byronic heroes in four case studies of fiction, film, musical, and television. These distinctive case studies reveal how Byronic sensibilities continue to persist in media and entertainment. How have these different media forms appropriated the Byronic archetype? How can psychoanalytic theory further our understanding of this archetype, and why we are drawn to it? I will briefly explain key theories and terms developed by Freud, Klein, and Tomkins in order to create a cohesive foundation of psychoanalytic theory so that I can apply it to the aforementioned case studies. I have also investigated related studies of Byronic heroes by contemporary scholars Lutz, Stein, and Wootton.

George Gordon, Lord Byron lived between 1788 to 1824. The chronology of events in Byron's life is unique; Byron lived during a poignant time of artists coming to terms with the contrasting values of scientific reason and feeling. The Enlightenment institutionalized the ideas of individualism, relativism, and rationalism (Porter 12). The Romantics fought against the realities of capitalism and industrialization, brought about by the Enlightenment. The Romantics asserted the "painful conviction that present reality lacks certain essential human values" (Löwy 55). These contrasting ideas of reason and feeling, along with his close relationships with extraordinary poets of the time, known as the literary circle of Romantics, helped develop in Byron a negative view of people and society. The running narrative in all of Byron's works is that men are corrupt, chaotic, and ultimately self-destructive. But Byron's preoccupation with

heroism (Napoleon was a particular hero of Byron's) is a Romantic characteristic, as well as the idea that creating art brings about sanity and meaning. Byron was an unhappy and brooding person and believed the world to be full of chaos and insanity. Creating poetry and volunteering in revolutionary activities was Byron's way of dealing with the chaos (Franklin 13).

The term 'Byronic hero' describes the characters that Byron created in his own works, but the term has also come to mean an extension of Byron himself. D. Michael Jones describes the characteristics of the Byronic hero in his text *The Byronic Hero and the Rhetoric of Masculinity in the 19th Century British Novel*: "He exists, therefore, beyond the pleasures of aristocratic libertinism and middle-class moral regeneration... The Byronic hero is thus defined by an internal classlessness that is deepened by his exile from any recognizable domestic life" (10). Jones continues, saying that "The Byronic hero's inability to find wholeness and redemption in domesticity... leaves him to roam, forever outside of stable class and domestic constructions... the Byronic hero to follow is thus always on a search for a wholeness denied him, he is defined by always being *in search of*... This internal volatility drives the search for wholeness, the romance" (Jones 10-11). Living outside of societal bounds is a major characteristic of Byronic heroes.

Byronic heroes possess power and authority over others; Atara Stein describes this quality of power: "With his superior capabilities, the Byronic hero, whether in his nineteenth-century or contemporary incarceration, provides his audience with a satisfying vicarious experience of power *and* empowerment, autonomy, mastery, and defiance of oppressive authority" (Stein 1-2). This power is often related to the character's position in society. For

example, Mr. Rochester is a wealthy landowner; the Phantom is a musical genius and master; James Bond is a skilled and cunning secret agent; and Damon Salvatore is a powerful vampire capable of compelling humans to do his bidding. The power that the Byronic hero wields over others invariably appears through affective responses of violence and anger.

Deborah Lutz describes the Byronic hero as an “erotic wanderer... he has no place in the domesticity of society” (49). Lutz also points out that the Byronic hero is often “a criminal, an outlaw who is not only self-exiled, but who also actively, hatefully works against society, as a murderous pirate or vengeful lover” (50). Being outside the bounds of societal domesticity, the Byronic hero is affected by a feeling of homesickness. Lutz states “The eroticism of homesickness settles around the desire for one who restlessly pines; who searches always for something long gone; who, in a word, desires” (48). Desire, for the Byronic hero, can be erotic in nature, but it ultimately seeks to fill the loss of home. Although the Byronic hero might operate outside the ‘normal’ bounds of society, “The Byronic philosophy sees love as the ultimate, and only, essential truth and final resting place for one in this life. Love is the only force that still holds meaning” (Lutz 52). This criminality of the Byronic hero condemns him further as an outcast, but love can ultimately redeem him.

The Byronic hero can thus be categorized as a figure who is an outcast of society; he is not suited for domesticity; he pursues anything that will make him feel whole; he rebels against conventional social and philosophical elements; he holds power over others and fights against oppression; he is prone to moments of anger, violence, desire, and passion; romantic, reciprocated love is a true redeeming power for the Byronic hero. Through examining the

actions of these characters through a psychoanalytic lens, I argue that the Byronic hero is driven by his experience of intense loss and state of melancholia and can only move out of this state through reciprocated, romantic love.

Although the preponderance of Byronic heroes in Western popular culture might be lost on the general audience, there are three critical works by contemporary scholars that explore this archetype across fiction, film, and television.

Deborah Lutz presents *The Dangerous Lover: Gothic Villains, Byronism, and the Nineteenth-Century Seduction Narrative* (2006) as an exploration of the dangerous lover archetype through a philosophical framework. According to Lutz, the dangerous lover archetype has not hitherto been examined or defined in this capacity. *The Dangerous Lover* provides a context of Byronism, the romance genre, and the nineteenth-century seduction narrative. It is worth pointing out that Lutz distinguishes this new dangerous lover archetype as different from the Byronic hero archetype. The two are related, but Lutz sees the dangerous lover as an extension of Byron, or a "post-Byron," (Lutz 67). The dangerous lover "exists in a spectral afterlife — *after* life has failed, *after* possibility itself has been long gone" (Lutz 88). This text infuses examples of the dangerous lover archetype with important ideas and terms from the likes of Heidegger, Derrida, Hegel, Kant, and Barthes. Lutz explains "But our authentic self is only to be found on the edge of the abyss, at the limit of darkness, of the dizzy rapture of the unknowable. Meeting the dangerous lover for the first time, the heroine discovers what will be, in the logic of the romance, her true self, her essential being, but which she initially regards as a deeply threatening order" (Lutz 33). The heroine feels threatened by the eroticism and danger

posed against the Victorian ideals of female purity. This excerpt puts into perspective the rationale of the heroine (and by extension the reader) at the first meeting of the lovers. It is also indicative of how Lutz blends critical analysis with psychoanalytic terminology (*essential being, deeply threatening order*). Lutz also discusses how drive affects the actions of the dangerous lover: "The drive in the dangerous lover that makes him dangerous - revenge - takes the blackened heart and turns it into outward violence. Full of vengeance, the dangerous lover wants to assuage his pained existence through making others feel torment as he does. The latent violence in his eyes turns on the whole world a hate that desires destruction" (Lutz 66-7). This thirst for revenge is a drive, or instinct, that the dangerous lover cannot overcome until it is fulfilled.

This body of work is closely related to my research in that Lutz uses a philosophical framework to examine literary characters from "canonical, popular, philosophical, and theoretical texts" (Lutz xii). Texts from these various "female-coded genres" (Lutz xi) which range from canonical literary and popular romance fiction, are presented as equals among one another. Examples of these far-ranging texts include *Seduced by a Scoundrel*, *Wind of Promise*, *Paradise Lost*, *Othello*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

In addition to defining the Byronic hero, Lutz examines how the erotic antihero, the Regency dandy, the Gothic demon lover, and the Early Seduction Narrative Rake have elements of the dangerous lover archetype. Lutz has created a historical and philosophical context for the dangerous lover archetype and its many variations, including the Byronic hero. This crucial text creates a discourse between the dangerous lover, philosophy, and human experiences of

desire, eroticism, and death. Lutz leaves room for further research on the dangerous lover by pointing out that she does not explore any female dangerous lovers.

Atara Stein is a contemporary scholar in the fields of Romanticism, Comparative Literature, and Byronism. Her text, *The Byronic Hero in Film, Fiction, and Television* (2004), most directly correlates to my research of Byronic heroes, as it is a multimedia study. As the title suggests, Stein looks at characters in films (*The Terminator*), fiction (*Vampire Lestat*), and television (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*). She has a strong background in Byron's works, other Victorian and Romantic writers, and command of popular culture. This text reaffirms the pervasiveness of the Byronic hero in contemporary and popular culture. Although Stein's work is within the parameters of my research, we differ on several key points.

Firstly, her study focuses "primarily on heroes who are in some way supernaturally or superhumanly superior to ordinary humans" (Stein 5). My case study in television, which looks at Damon Salvatore from *The Vampire Diaries*, deals with a supernatural hero, but it is not his vampirism which makes Damon a compelling Byronic hero. Damon is certainly powerful because of his superhuman abilities, but it is his past traumas that he experienced as both human and vampire, which fuel his Byronic sensibilities.

Secondly, Stein compares each of her supernatural heroes to characters that Byron created (Manfred, Don Juan, Cain, Childe Harold, etc.). While these classic characters have indeed defined the characteristics of Byronic heroes, I am looking beyond them and focusing on the archetype itself, which is removed from its historical foundation. Through psychoanalysis, I

am examining the Byronic hero from a transhistorical perspective; in this way, the Byronic hero is not moored to the person of Byron or its historical context.

Thirdly, Stein looks to contemporary creators of Byronic heroes as creating story arcs which ultimately re-humanize the character to audiences, thus normalizing the “hero” into a form the audience can more easily relate to. While normalizing a character might make the audience more inclined to enjoy the story, it is not the ultimate reason these characters are compelling. Byronic heroes do not need to be redeemed or rehabilitated to a normative position in society in order for them to be relatable.

And lastly, Stein claims that the actions of contemporary Byronic heroes “satisfies simultaneously the audience’s own rebellious impulses against oppressive institutions and their desire for a heroic leader who will solve their problems for them” (7). Although this theme of defying authority is a key characteristic of the Byronic hero, I have decided to focus on other aspects of this archetype. My studies look beyond the audience’s need for “sympathetic identification” through themes of power structures, subversion, and re-humanization. Although Stein and I differ on the approach and content of our contemporary, multimedia examination of the Byronic hero, we are both ultimately aiming to bring more awareness to a nineteenth-century archetype that has continued to appear in popular culture.

The most recent example of another scholar that uses an interdisciplinary approach to Byronic heroes is Sarah Wootton. Her text, *Byronic Heroes in Nineteenth-Century Women’s Writing and Screen Adaptation* (2016) examines original texts and adaptations of “nineteenth-century poetry and prose to twentieth-and twenty-first-century films and television series,

whilst also remaining attentive to intertextual issues of gender and genre, creative medium, and cultural contexts” (Wootton 2). The female writers explored in this work are Jane Austen, Elizabeth Gaskell, and George Eliot. The film/television adaptations of these writers’ work explored by Wootton include *Pride and Prejudice* (1995 mini-series and 2005 film) *Sense and Sensibility* (1995 film), *Middlemarch* (1994 mini-series), and *North and South* (2004 mini-series).

Wootton’s text is a commendable model of an adaptation study, which is relatively new in the field of humanities. It is also significant because she approaches the Byronic hero from the female writers’ perspective. Wootton has expertly researched the relationships between these female writers and Byron, as well as a strong command of the historical context of the original texts and subsequent adaptations of these important works. This discourse allows for further intertextual studies and reaffirms the cultural pervasiveness of the Byronic hero. I believe she has left room for other scholars to explore the significance of adaptation studies of Byronic heroes.

History, Affect, and Psychoanalytic Theory

Byronic heroes have all suffered loss, whether it be an ideal or a love object. They have become outcasts through this state of intense loss, or melancholia. Sigmund Freud's theory of melancholia is the guiding definition of loss that characterizes each of the subsequent case studies. Melanie Klein's findings on the manic-depressive state, sadism, and criminalities provide insights into the characteristics of the Byronic hero. Silvan Tomkins' system of affects seeks to explain the motivations behind a subject's feelings of shame and anger, which are central to the Byronic hero. The theories presented by both Klein and Tomkins provide critical analyses to the behavior of the Byronic hero.

The Victorian period (1837-1901) witnessed a "veritable discursive explosion" around regulating sexuality in culture, law, medicine, and theology (Foucault 17). Discourses on sexuality increased rather than decreased in this new age of censorship, and fictional tales of dangerous lovers was one such place for audiences to explore these desires. Byronic heroes have an element of sexuality and desire that draw in heroines and audiences alike. In Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* (1978), the Victorians are posited as scapegoats of why we, in the modern age, still have feelings of sexual repression. "Illegitimate sexualities" were forced out of the home and the public spheres and into more accepting locales such as the brothel and mental hospital: "Only in those places would untrammelled sex have a right to (safely insularized) forms of reality, and only to clandestine, circumscribed, and coded types of discourse" (Foucault 4). Instead of prohibiting discourses on sexuality, however, this new 'censorship' only caused "an ever-greater quantity of discourse about sex" (Foucault 23). Fiction is one such discourse. The increase in media forms offers even more platforms or texts

to experience sexuality. Through the vessel of text (fiction, theater, film, television series), audiences can interact with a discourse of sexuality that they can relate to. Within a text, sexuality can either be presented as conventional or shown to be destructive in a way that posits the hero outside the society.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the founder of psychoanalysis, defined the case-study methodology with which patients were diagnosed and treated with mental illnesses. Freud's characterization of mourning, and its distinction from melancholia, are critical to understanding the effects of loss on a subject. The causation, or basis, for mourning and melancholia are the same, but the different states become altered depending on how the subject deals with the loss. Mourning can be described as "the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place to one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on" (Freud, *Mourning* 243). Freud explains that while mourning is normative behavior after a loss, it can be "overcome after a certain lapse of time" (Freud, *Mourning* 244). In contrast, melancholia expresses itself as "a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment" (Freud, *Mourning* 244). Based on these descriptions, it could be argued that while in mourning, the subject displays the effects of being disenchanted with their surroundings, whereas when the subject experiences melancholia, they become delusional about their very character. Another important distinguishing feature between the two is that in mourning, the object has most likely been lost due to death. The

mournful subject is eventually able to release or move past the lost object. In melancholia, it is more often that loss is associated with an ideal, or separation from a love object. The melancholic subject retains the lost object in the psyche and fails to move on. In melancholia, the subject has a penchant to be “morally despicable; he reproaches himself, vilifies himself and expects to be cast out and punished” (Freud, *Mourning* 246). Being morally bankrupt, the subject has no consequences to fear, and thus little regard to their own mortality.

Together with the subject’s disregard for morality and mortality is an inclination for sadism. Freud explains:

The self-tormenting in melancholia, which is without doubt enjoyable, signifies, just like the corresponding phenomenon in obsessional neurosis, a satisfaction of trends of sadism and hate which relate to the object, and which have turned round upon the subject’s own self... the patients usually still succeed, by the circuitous path of self-punishment, in taking revenge on the original object and in tormenting their loved one through their illness, having resorted to it in order to avoid the need to express their hostility to him openly. (Freud, *Mourning* 251)

The subject is absorbed by hate for himself and hate for the object that caused them to experience melancholia. This hatred is then reflected in the ways the subject acts and the ways the subject treats their loved ones. If this trend towards hatred and hostility ultimately consumes the subject, the melancholia could turn into mania. In these rare cases, the subject ultimately transitions into letting go of the object that caused the suffering, by replacing it with another cathexis, or object with which the subject becomes obsessed (Freud, *Mourning* 255).

Melanie Klein (1882-1960) was a psychoanalyst who furthered Freud's ideas of the manic-depressive state. Some of the key terms and ideas she defined are the depressive position, envy, guilt, reparation, criminality, projective identification, and mourning and its relation to manic-depressive states. Klein's text *Love, Guilt and Reparation, and Other Works 1921-1945* (1975) is a posthumous collection of her findings on childhood psychosis, criminality, and her own take on the Oedipus Complex.

On manic-depressive states, Klein argues that when a subject has a change in the status of feelings for an object from 'good' to 'bad,' the result is an increased state of paranoid anxiety. Klein explains "loving an object and devouring it are very closely connected" (Klein 266). The feelings of love and hate are closely tied, and thus the status of the object could easily change. In the melancholic state, the subject is caught by an anxiety-inducing internal battle of the super-ego against the ego in relation to the cathectic (object). Klein explains that "the ego endeavours to keep the good apart from the bad, and the real from the phantastic objects... The stronger the anxiety is of losing the loved objects, the more the ego strives to save them, and the harder the task of restoration becomes, the stricter will grow the demands which are associated with the super-ego" (Klein 268-9). In attempting to preserve the goodness or perfection of an object, the subject runs the risk of perverting it into a bad object.

Klein also explored the presence of sadism in anxiety-prone subjects. Sadism is defined as a fusing of "phantasies and feelings of an aggressive and of a gratifying, erotic nature" (Klein 293). Each child goes through a period of sadism, which is eventually diminished. There are cases, however, in which the propensity towards sadism grows beyond the child development

stage. The propensity for sadism, in conjunction with a state of anxiety, could turn the subject towards a criminal predilection. Reflecting on criminals, Klein states,

One of the great problems about criminals, which has always made them incomprehensible to the rest of the world, is their lack of natural human good feelings; but this lack is only apparent... Love is not absent in the criminal, but it is hidden and buried in such a way that nothing but analysis can bring it to light... If there is nothing in the world but enemies, and that is how the criminal feels, his hate and destructiveness are, in his view, to a great extent justified - an attitude which relieves some of his unconscious feelings of guilt. Hate is often used as the most effective cover of love; but one must not forget that to the person who is under the continuous stress of persecution, the safety of his own ego is the first and only consideration. (Klein 260)

Although the actions of the criminal cannot be totally excused, Klein points out that the criminal feels he is justified, and that he is not without feelings of love or guilt.

We have seen how melancholia and sadism compel a subject to act in unfeeling, hateful, or criminalistic ways. Shame is another state, or affect, that motivates individuals to act out. Silvan Tomkins (1911-1991) was a psychologist who studied shame, drive, affects, and depression. *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader* (1995) is a collection of Tomkins' works that reveal affective responses in human nature. Other areas of psychoanalysis such as voyeurism, anger, shame, humiliation, contempt, sadomasochism, and guilt are explained.

Tomkins acknowledges that man's nature has been "identified with the unconscious, darker, irrational, lower, ungovernable, corrupting disorganizing elements" (Tomkins 61). The

affect system is Tomkins' explanation to describe these elements or sources of motivations that comprise the nature of human beings. There is a distinguished difference between the drive system and the affect system — the drive system operates on a “relatively primitive signal and feedback mechanisms... because of this predictable and small variability of the internal environment” (Tomkins 47). The drive system is closely tied to biological motives, which can have little freedom. In contrast, the affect system is managed “within a much more uncertain and variable environment” (Tomkins 47). The affect system is more general, which allows for more freedom. Affective responses are often triggered by external factors that the subject has little control over, but if these factors persist over a great period of time, the subject can learn to control them. Tomkins researched how different affective responses are triggered, and the circumstances in which the affects are maintained or reduced. Tomkins explains that “We must remember that each affect program is independent and capable of activation by specific triggers either simultaneously or in very rapid succession” (Tomkins 202). The different affective responses are not permanent; a subject can move between different affective responses depending on the outside stimuli.

The concept of the shame affect is central to Tomkins' work. Excitement, enjoyment, and fulfillment are limited to a subject if shame is present. Tomkins describes mankind as “not only an anxious and a suffering animal, but he is above all a shy animal, easily caught and impaled between longing and despair” (Tomkins 149). Humans are vulnerable to these feelings of shame and anxiety. Shame is a toxic affect, “felt as an inner torment, a sickness of the soul. It does not matter whether the humiliated one has been shamed by derisive laughter or whether

he mocks himself. In either event he feels himself naked, defeated, alienated, lacking in dignity or worth” (Tomkins 133). Tomkins goes on to explain that “In contrast to all other affects, shame is an experience of the self by the self. At that moment when the self feels ashamed, it is felt as a sickness within the self” (Tomkins 136). Shame is central to the core of a subject. Whereas in melancholia, the subject experiences loss by an outside force, in shame, the subject is responsible for its status of loss [of self-worth].

Within the shame affect are two responses: shame-humiliation and contempt-disgust. Shame-humiliation is a “negative affect linked with love and identification” (Tomkins 139). Contempt-disgust is a “negative affect linked with individuation and hate” (Tomkins 139).

Of the anger affect, Tomkins explains that it “cannot be ‘satisfied’ in isolation. It is normally felt as one demand among many. In the full flush of hot anger, its demands are peculiarly strident, but it remains one voice among many, within. Further, anger from a permanently provocative scene may be temporarily reduced by a covert fantasy until the next provocation, the next beating, when the victim must again address the unsolved problem. A fantasy of revenge which reduced anger once may not do so under repeated provocation, in which case the individual is driven either to ‘real’ revenge, to permanent helpless rage, or to magnified saintliness and love for his enemies” (Tomkins 209).

The Byronic hero has been marginalized by an intense feeling of loss and is consumed by melancholia. They have become outcasts in society as a consequence of this loss. This loss also engenders affective experiences around shame, anger, and desire. Through psychoanalysis, I will draw out how each Byronic hero is driven by this melancholia, and the process of how, or if,

they come to terms with the loss. Chapter One will explore how Tomkins' ideas of anger and violence are reflected in Rochester, from the novel *Jane Eyre*. Rochester's actions also display aspects of Klein's idea of early anxiety situations and defense mechanisms. Chapter Two will incorporate Klein's ideas of criminality and the manic-depressive state, and Tompkins' theories of the contempt-disgust affect and anger affect to analyze the Phantom, from the musical *The Phantom of the Opera*. Chapter Three will use Tomkins' theory of anger-rage affect and Klein's findings of manic-depressive states and early anxiety situations to explore the motivations and actions of James Bond, from the film *Skyfall*. Chapter Four will contextualize the actions of Damon Salvatore, from the television series *The Vampire Diaries*, using Klein's findings of manic-depressive states, early anxiety situations, and love.

Chapter One
The Wanderer's Repose:

A Case Study in Fiction

"I am here, sitting simply and calmly in the dark interior of love."

-Roland Barthes, *A Lovers Discourse*

Edward Fairfax Rochester is the male protagonist in *Jane Eyre* (1847). In this epistolary style novel, the point of view is entirely from Jane Eyre's perspective. The intimate quality of an epistolary novel offers a sense of verisimilitude and authenticity to the plot and characters. The audience is therefore compelled to accept the narration set forth by Jane as a true and faithful account of her life and by extension, the true character of Mr. Rochester. Rochester's state of melancholia has driven him to become an outcast. I will examine the source and transference of Rochester's melancholia, the ways in which his affective responses of anger and violence are triggered, his status of an outcast, his proclivity towards deception and his ultimate redemption through his reciprocated romantic love with Jane.

Rochester is one of the earliest examples of a Byronic hero in fiction after Byron died (1824). Born the second son of a wealthy landowner, Rochester was never intended to become the master of Thornfield Hall, the place where Jane later resides as governess for his ward Adèle Varens. Soon after he was forced to marry Bertha Mason, the daughter of a wealthy family in Spanish Town, Jamaica, Rochester learns that his wife is mentally ill. His father and older brother die, leaving Rochester to inherit the family estate, and he subsequently moves his "mad" wife to a secluded third-floor chamber of Thornfield Hall.

Due to his status of being the second son and a husband to a mad wife, it is no surprise that Rochester has anger issues. He has experienced the loss of an ideal — of marrying someone he could truly love. His father had forced him to marry a ‘monster’ for financial gain, thus causing Rochester to enter a state of melancholia. His loss is the ideal of true, romantic love, which he could never have with Bertha. Rochester subsequently seeks to replace his loss with other love-objects, such as his mistress Céline Varens. After spending a good amount of time and money on his mistress, he finds out that Céline is having an affair with another man. This leads Rochester to believe that the daughter Céline had given birth to months previous was not his. When Céline abandons her daughter years later, Rochester takes pity on the young girl Adèle, who he does not believe is his legitimate daughter, and takes her away to England. Although Adèle can’t completely resolve Rochester’s melancholia, she does become a love-object whom he seeks to ‘perfect.’ This is the reason for which he decides to hire a governess, Miss Jane Eyre.

In the course of explaining exactly how Adèle came to become his ward, Rochester confesses to Jane that he is poisoned by remorse. He says

I am not a villain: you are not to suppose that — not to attribute to me any such bad eminence; but, owing, I verily believe, rather to circumstances than to my natural bent, I am a trite commonplace sinner, hackneyed in all the poor petty dissipations with which the rich and worthless try to put on life... You would say, I should have been superior to circumstances; so I should — so I should; but you see I was not. When fate wronged me,

I had not the wisdom to remain cool: I turned desperate; then I degenerated. (Brönte 116)

Rochester does not deny having acted wrongly; he knows that he has made mistakes in his past. This confession is a recognition of his lack of morality. In his state of melancholia after his wedding, he was not able to care for himself or care about the status of his soul. When Jane suggests that repentance might cure his remorse, he disagrees — for he is not willing to confess all of his sins. At this point in the novel, Jane does not understand that Rochester is falling in love with Jane, or the fact that his wife is hidden away in an upstairs chamber. Through his confession of acquiring Adèle and alluding to his other past mistakes (unknowingly marrying an insane woman and then abandoning her in pursuit of mistresses), he is seeking to show Jane exactly who he is — a commanding, selfish, wearisome sinner. He attempts to shock her by his speech, to see if she would be offended by his personage enough to seek employment elsewhere. But Jane remains in his company and does not shun him for his past actions. He thus attempts to reform himself, “paving hell with energy” (Brönte 117). Jane is his new cathexis, or object of love. Through Jane, he can work to regain a sense of morality and reclaim his chance at true love.

Rochester’s plan to reform himself is a sort of delusion — for he cannot truly reform himself when he is deceiving Jane. Tomkins discusses how anger, provocation, and fantasy intersect, describing that “anger cannot be ‘satisfied’ in isolation” (Tomkins 209). Tomkins explains that anger that has developed from a permanent situation or provocation “may be temporarily reduced by a covert fantasy” (Tomkins 209). In Rochester’s case, his anger stems

from his unfortunate marriage to an insane woman. He is compelled to remain responsible for her, even though they do not live as husband and wife. His covert fantasy is to court Jane, and to marry her. He believes that by marrying Jane, he can reform his character and atone for the sins of his past. But the fantasy can only be a temporary reprieve from his anger because it does not solve the original problem of his first marriage.

The next provocation that will stir Rochester's anger affect is the revelation that he is in fact already married; this is revealed when he and Jane stand upon the altar of their own wedding ceremony. Bertha's brother, George Mason, interrupts the wedding ceremony to reveal that Rochester cannot marry Jane, for Rochester was already married. Jane recounts Rochester's countenance after George's confession:

His eye, as I have often said, was a black eye: it had now a tawny, nay a bloody light in its gloom; and his face flushed — olive cheek and hueless forehead received a glow, as from spreading, ascending heart-fire: and he stirred, lifted his strong arm — he could have struck Mason — dashed him on the church-floor — shocked by ruthless blow the breath from his body — but Mason shrank away, and cried faintly, 'Good God!'

Contempt fell cool on Mr. Rochester — his passion died as if a blight had shrivelled it up... (Brönte 248)

If this confession had perhaps taken place anywhere other than in a church, and in front of priests, Rochester may have struck George. His fantasy of marrying Jane and forgetting his first wife might have worked, if they had not been interrupted. Tomkins says "anger, like any affect, is a ballistic response of the body. It must be triggered to be kept alive. It is no more eternal

than love. If one engages competing affects via competing fantasies, then anger which might have continued indefinitely may not be renewed as long as its competitors seize center stage” (Tomkins 211). For Rochester, his fantasy that he could maintain a romantic relationship with Jane (even after she finds out about his wife) diminishes his anger affect triggered by George’s intervention.

Rochester’s anger then turns toward Jane when she attempts to leave him. When she tells him they cannot continue to be together, he is seized by a furious passion:

‘Never,’ said he, as he ground his teeth, ‘never was anything at once so frail and so indomitable. A mere reed she feels in my hand!’ (And he shook me with the force of his hold.) ‘I could bend her with my finger and thumb: and what good would it do if I bent, if I up tore, if I crushed her? Consider that eye: consider the resolute, wild, free thing looking out of it, defying me, with more than courage — with a stern triumph. Whatever I do with its cage, I cannot get at it — the savage, beautiful creature! If I tear, if I rend the slight prison, my outrage will only let the captive loose. Conqueror I might be of the house; but the inmate would escape to heaven before I could call myself possessor of its clay dwelling-place. And it is you, spirit — with will and energy, and virtue and purity — that I want: not alone your brittle frame. Of yourself, you could come with soft flight and nestle against my heart, if you would: seized against your will you will elude the grasp like an essence — you will vanish ere I inhale your fragrance. Oh! Come, Jane, come! (Brönte 271)

Rochester wants to possess Jane. She is innocent, virtuous, and kind, and he believes they are soul mates. Through possessing her body and spirit, he believes he can find salvation. His fantasy of keeping Jane first dissuaded his anger at George's intervention, but after Jane's rejection, his anger is once again dominant. Only once Bertha kills herself and Jane returns to his side can his anger finally subside.

Besides the consistency of his anger affect, Rochester's position of living outside of societal bounds is another characteristic of his Byronism. Before Jane's arrival, Rochester was not in a habit to occupy Thornfield Hall for any longer than several days at a time. Thus, Jane knows almost nothing about her employer. She seeks information about Rochester from the housekeeper. Mrs. Fairfax explains:

'He is rather peculiar, perhaps: he has travelled a great deal, and seen a great deal of the world, I should think. I daresay he is clever: but I never had much conversation with him.'

'In what way is he peculiar?'

'I don't know — it is not easy to describe— nothing striking, but you feel it when he speaks to you: you cannot always be sure whether he is in jest or earnest, whether he is pleased or the contrary; you don't thoroughly understand him, in short — at least, I don't: but it is of no consequence, he is a very good master.'

Brönte 89

Rochester is never present long enough for any of his tenants or employees to truly understand him. Mrs. Fairfax succinctly describes a quality of Rochester — that one can never tell if he is “in jest or earnest.” Rochester's melancholia and anger prevent him from interacting with society in a healthy manner, and thus he pushes himself away from society, and deeply distrusts

people. For much of her experience with Rochester leading up to his proposal, Jane is never entirely sure of Rochester's true nature or feelings. His clever conversation and unpredictable behavior are not within the standard behavior of his society. Rochester's absence from home further adds to his wanderer's idiosyncrasy.

After Rochester confesses the story of his first marriage to Jane, she asks him what he did next after he had settled Bertha in her prison at the top of the third story of Thornfield Hall:

What did I do, Jane? I transformed myself into a Will-o'-the-wisp. Where did I go? I pursued wanderings as wild as those of the March-spirit. I sought the Continent, and went devious through all its lands. My fixed desire was to seek and find a good and intelligent woman whom I could love: a contrast to the fury I left at Thornfield... For ten long years I roved about, living first in one capital, then another: sometimes in St. Petersburg; oftener in Paris; occasionally in Rome, Naples, and Florence. Provided with plenty of money and the passport of an old name, I could choose my own society: no circles were closed against me. I sought my ideal of a woman amongst English ladies, French countesses, Italian signoras, and German gräfinnen... Amongst them all I found not one whom, had I been ever so free... Disappointment made me reckless... Yet I could not live alone; so I tried the companionship of mistresses. (Brönte 264-265)

This discourse reflects the wild, erratic path that Rochester pursued after claiming his inheritance of Thornfield. He could not find happiness at home, in his own society, and so he sought refuge in wandering through Europe. Rochester desired an object onto which he could suppress his sufferings. He tried courting women but found none that was worth his time, so

he moved onto taking mistresses. Yet when he meets Jane and comes to understand her, he finally finds the woman he is meant to be with. He tries to pull Jane into his lonely existence, first by offering her marriage, then by offering her to be his mistress, removed from Thornfield. “Is it better to drive a fellow-creature to despair than to transgress a mere human law — no man being injured by the breach? For you have neither relatives nor acquaintances whom you need to fear to offend by living with me” (Brönte 270). Rochester cannot seem to live without Jane, and so he tries to convince her to live in sin with him, further removing himself and Jane from societal bounds. But Jane cannot comply — her own moral compass and desire to be accepted by society compel her to reject Rochester.

After Jane leaves Rochester, she finds out a year later that his wife Bertha had started a fire at Thornfield Hall and killed herself. Rochester was badly injured in the process of saving his tenants. Jane seeks an account of what had happened from the host of an innkeeper: “As he came down the great staircase at last, after Mrs. Rochester had flung herself from the battlements, there was a great crash — all fell. He was taken out from under the ruins, alive, but sadly hurt... He is now helpless, indeed — blind and a cripple” (Brönte 365). In the course of one evening, Rochester became a widower, a cripple, and a blind. Previously, he had been an outsider of society because of his melancholic personality; now, he is an outsider because of his injuries. He is dependent solely on his servants now. It is only after he has lost everything — lost his wife, his home, his eyesight, and the use of one arm — that he and Jane can finally be reunited and married.

Rochester's penchant for deception is another significant quality of Byronic heroes. From the moment he imprisons his wife Bertha at Thornfield Hall, until the day of his ill-fated wedding ceremony with Jane, he deceives almost every person he knows. At his very first encounter with Jane, he seeks to hide his true character. Her sudden appearance in the lane leading towards Thornfield Hall causes his horse to rear back, and Rochester is thrown from his horse. She attempts to help him regain his seat, and he questions her.

'You live just below — do you mean at that house with the battlements? ...

'Yes, sir.'

'Whose house is it?'

'Mr. Rochester's.'

'Do you know Mr. Rochester?'

'No, I have never seen him.'

'He is not resident then?'

'No.'

'Can you tell me where he is?'

'I cannot.'

'You are not a servant at the hall, of course. You are —' He stopped, ran his eye over my dress, which, as usual, was quite simple: a black merino cloak, a black beaver bonnet: neither of them half fine enough for a lady's maid. He seemed puzzled to decide what I was: I helped him.

'I am the governess.'

'Ah, the governess!' he repeated; 'deuce take me, if I had not forgotten! The governess!' and again my raiment underwent scrutiny. (Brönte 97)

In this short exchange of words, Rochester demands information of Jane but never seeks to reveal himself to her. Why does he do this, rather than just admit that he is, in fact, the owner

of Thornfield Hall? It would have been simple enough to reveal to her who he is, and yet he believes he should keep her ignorant for a little while longer.

Later, once Rochester has decided he loves Jane, he seeks to amuse himself and to deceive his house-party by dressing up as a fortune-telling gypsy woman. Rochester leaves in the morning, and as far as his guests know, does not return until the next day. However, he slips back to the house and disguises himself, and insists on speaking to all the single young ladies of the house, in order to read their fortune. His first victim is Blanche Ingram, the woman that, from Jane's perspective, is his bride-to-be. He continues to give palm-readings and tells the fortunes of the other ladies in the party, and finally insists that the governess must come to speak to him. Jane complies, unknowingly sitting in front of Rochester, who is in disguise. Over the course of his interview of Jane, he attempts to stir feelings of jealousy in Jane, by making it known that Rochester will marry Blanche. He also tries to make Jane give her judgments about his house guests and to make her confess her true feelings about Rochester. After Jane suspects that the gypsy woman is in disguise, Rochester reveals himself:

'Now, sir, what a strange idea!'

'But well carried out, eh? Don't you think so?'

'With the ladies you must have managed well.'

'But not with you?'

'You did not act the character of a gipsy with me.'

'What character did I act? My own?'

'No; some unaccountable one. In short, I believe you have been trying to draw me out — or in; you have been talking nonsense to make me talk nonsense. It is scarcely fair, sir.'

'Do you forgive me Jane?'

'I cannot tell till I have thought it all over. If, on reflection, I find I have fallen into no great absurdity, I shall try to forgive you; but it was not right.' (Brönte 167)

It seems that Rochester can only seek to obtain Jane's true feelings by playing a game of deceit. It was a gamble to risk revealing himself, and yet he wanted to use this farce in order to get Jane to reveal her own feelings.

In further attempting to 'draw' her out, Rochester later tells Jane that he will, in fact, marry Blanche and that he is sending Adèle off to school and assigning Jane to a new governess position in Ireland. Upon sensing that Jane does love him and is upset by this news, he changes his discourse and confesses his love to her. Jane is rightly confused, for up to this point in their relationship, he has deceived her on several occasions, plays word games with her, and has seemingly courted another woman.

'Do you doubt me, Jane?'

'Entirely.'

'You have no faith in me?'

'Not a whit.'

'Am I liar in your eyes?' he asked passionately. 'Little sceptic, you shall be convinced. What love have I for Miss Ingram? None: and that you know. What love has she for me? None: as I have taken great pains to prove; I have caused a rumor to reach her that my fortune was not a third of what was supposed, and after that I presented myself to see the result; it was coldness from both her and her mother. I would not — I could not — marry Miss Ingram.' (Brönte 217)

Rochester would rather hurt Jane first — by trying to convince her that she must move to Ireland so that he can marry Blanche — before he can be vulnerable and confess his own love

for Jane. He plays with her emotions because he does not think she will ever reveal her true feelings without being manipulated to do so.

The final deception — and one that causes unforeseen circumstances — is that Rochester hides the fact that he is already married. He would have proceeded to go through the marriage ceremony if they had not been interrupted by his brother-in-law. Once his secret is revealed, he further tries to convince Jane to run away with him, which she protests:

His voice and hand quivered; his large nostrils dilated; his eyes blazed; still I dared to speak: — ‘Sir, your wife is still living: that is a fact acknowledged this morning by yourself. If I lived with you as you desire, I should then be your mistress: to say otherwise is sophistical — is false.’

‘Jane, I am not a gentle-tempered man — you forget that. I am not long-enduring; I am not cool and dispassionate. Out of pity to me and yourself, put your finger on my pulse, feel how it throbs, and — beware!’ (Brönte 259)

Rochester values Jane’s virtue and innocence, and yet he begs her to compromise her morality in order to live with him and to make him happy. He knows that she would never have agreed to be his mistress — or live with him in bigamy — from the very beginning, and thus he deceives her into thinking he is free to marry. He further threatens her by reminding her that he has a temper and she should not anger him so.

Over the course of this story, we have seen Rochester personify the Byronic hero through his affective responses of anger and violence, his stance of living outside the bounds of ‘normal’ society, and his proclivity to deceive others for his own gain. His covert fantasies of finding a romantic partner distract him from his loss until he meets Jane, who eventually reciprocates his love.

Chapter Two
**The Point of No Return:
A Case Study in Theater**

"I have a sensation at the present moment as though I were dissolving... I have been astonished that Men could die Martyrs for religion - I have shudder'd at it - I shudder no more - I could be martyr'd for my Religion - Love is my religion - I could die for that - I could die for you. My creed is Love and you are its only tenet - You have ravish'd me away by a Power I cannot resist."

-John Keats, *Love Letters and Poems to Fanny*

Brawne

The Phantom is the Byronic hero of the theatrical musical *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986). The musical was inspired by the novel of the same name, written by Gaston Leroux in 1911. The 1986 musical, created by Andrew Lloyd Weber, was then adapted into a film in 2004. For the purposes of this case study, and to eliminate confusion over which adaptation, the lyrics from the 2004 film version of the musical will be examined here. The Phantom's state of melancholia has driven him to become an outcast. I will examine the source of the Phantom's melancholia, the way his relationship with Christine changes from paternal to romantic, and the ways in which his affective responses of shame and anger are triggered.

When the Phantom was young, his face became disfigured and he was cast off by his family. He then came under the control of a cruel gypsy, who made the young boy a spectacle in the circus. The 'Devil's Child,' was brutally beaten in front of laughing crowds (Schumacher). After one of these performances, the boy murders his master. The scene is witnessed by a young ballerina dancer, later known as Madame Giry, and she helps him escape. She brings him to the Palais Garnier, where he grows up in the shadows and creates his own home, a lair beneath the walls of the opera building. In his artistic domain, he became "an architect and

designer, composer, and a magician, a genius” (Schumacher). Due to the violent and cruel experiences of his adolescence, the Phantom did not develop healthy emotional responses to his environment.

When the Phantom is much older, he comes to obsess over a young girl, Christine Daaé. Christine comes to live at the opera after her father dies. Her father tells her on his deathbed that he would send her an “Angel of Music” (Schumacher). An Angel of Music does come to visit her — but he is, in fact, the Phantom of the Opera, who comes to her and tutors her in secret for several years. In her ignorance, she believes the Phantom is truly an angel, and never sees the Phantom for what he really is. The Phantom sees himself as a replacement father to Christine. Not having any positive father relationships himself, the Phantom initially seeks to support and mentor Christine as a father never did for him. As Christine develops (musically and physically), his paternal love for her becomes perverted to romantic love.

One night, when Christine has mastered her singing lessons, the lead singer of the opera, Signora Carlotta, refuses to perform, and so Christine performs solo for the first time in front of an audience. Christine sings beautifully, and the audience delights in hearing a new voice at the opera. Later in her dressing room, Christine is visited by her Angel of Music, and he encourages her to follow him through a passageway in her mirror — down into his labyrinth beneath the opera. He sings to her, congratulating her for her performance and delighting in his own triumph as her tutor:

Close your eyes and surrender to your darkest dreams!

Purge your thoughts of the life you knew before!

Close your eyes, let your spirit start to soar—

And you will live as you've never lived before. (Schumacher)

At first, the Phantom emboldens Christine to surrender to the music — to truly embrace a life of music. As her mentor and father figure, the Phantom encourages her emotional relationship to the music:

Softly, deftly, music shall caress you.

Hear it, feel it, secretly possess you.

Open up your mind, let your fantasies unwind

In this darkness which you know you cannot fight,

The darkness of the music of the night. (Schumacher)

As he continues singing, the 'music' becomes a metaphor for himself. He wants to possess and caress Christine, for Christine to embrace his darkness. His sexual desire for Christine sublimates his need to father her. Christine has transformed from his daughter-object to his love-object.

Let your mind start a journey

Through a strange new world,

Leave all thoughts of the world you knew before.

Let your soul take you where you long to be!

Only then can you belong to me.

Floating, falling, sweet intoxication.

Touch me, trust me,
Savour each sensation.
Let the dream begin,
Let your darker side give in
To the power of the music that I write,
The power of the music of the night. (Schumacher)

In the film version of this performance, Christine is entranced by the Phantom and seems willing to submit to him. He leads her into his underground lair, where he continues to sing to her and caress her. Up until this point in the seduction scene, it seems innocent enough — the Phantom has clearly felt a paternal love for his student, and they share a passion for the music they have created together. Yet when she performed for the first time in front of an audience, and the Phantom witnessed the audience's approval and admiration for her, he feels a sense of anxiety over losing his love-object. This event has transformed the Phantom in two ways: his paternal love turns into romantic love; second, he senses her newfound fame will cause their separation, and his anxiety over losing her makes him manic. The scene turns disturbing when he shows her a wax model he had made to look exactly like her. The wax figurine is wearing a wedding dress, and Christine is so shocked by the image that she faints. The Phantom does not want to merely make love to her and to tutor her — he wants to possess her, body and soul.

After Christine stops taking music lessons from the Phantom, he grows angry. Their separation — the Phantom's separation from his love-object — is felt by the Phantom as rejection and alienation. This rejection triggers his shame as being abandoned by his family, and

humiliation by the people who forced him to perform in the circus. His anger and shame-humiliation drive creative expression. He writes a new opera, called *Don Juan Triumphant*, and he demands that the opera produce it. He writes the role of Don Juan for himself, which is the counter to Christine's character. This is an intertextual reference to Byron himself — an allusion to Byron's own story of *Don Juan* (1822). In Byron's version, Don Juan is seduced by multiple married women. By using Don Juan as the subject of his opera, the Phantom is signaling to the audience of his sexual desire and his need to possess Christine. In the Phantom's version, he makes it clear that he knows Christine wants to surrender to him, in the song "The Point of No Return:"

You have come here
In pursuit of your deepest urge,
In pursuit of that wish,
Which 'till now has been silent, silent.
I have brought you
That our passions may fuse and merge,
In your mind, you've already succumbed to me,
Dropped all defenses, completely succumbed to me,
Now you are here with me,
No second thoughts,
You've decided, decided. (Schumacher)

By forcing Christine to submit to him in song, he is manipulating her to surrender her life over to him. When Christine and the Phantom are together in song, she becomes entranced by him. Although she sees him as a deeply threatening order to her essential being, the music draws her to him. As soon as the song ends, however, she regains her senses.

Past the point of no return,
No backward glances,
Our games of make-believe are at an end.
Past all thoughts of 'if' and 'when,'
No use resisting,
Abandon thought and let the dream descend.
What raging fire shall flood the soul?
What rich desire unlocks its door?
What sweet seduction lies before us? (Schumacher)

In contrast to "Angel of Music," "The Point of No Return" does not make mere allusions to the Phantom's passion for Christine — he makes it perfectly clear that he will possess her.

In addition to the Phantom's affective responses of contempt-disgust, he experiences deep anger. His anger is triggered by the way he is treated by Christine and the people who defy his commands. He thus displaces his anger onto the people at the opera. Although he came to live at the opera in refuge, the Phantom's rise to power and his role at the opera is never fully explained. He spends his life in hiding, watching ballet dancers and singers. When he is older, he embraces his role as the opera "ghost" and demands that the managers give him a

stipend. He also insists that Box 5 be kept empty for his use and that Christine is given the main role in the new upcoming opera. The managers spurn his requests, and the Phantom exacts his revenge. The Phantom replaces Signora Carlotta's throat spray with something that turns her voice into a toad-like croak; during a ballet performance, the body of the stagehand Joseph Buquet is hung by a noose, which drops down the rafters and onto the stage. The audience screams and flees the opera house. This aggressive and violent nature, combined with his erotic and romantic love for Christine, reveal the Phantom to be a sadist.

The Phantom's anger is further fueled shortly after this incident, when he follows Christine and her sweetheart, Raoul, up to the roof of the opera. Unbeknownst to them, he listens to Christine and Raoul confess their love for each other, and Raoul's promise to protect Christine from the Phantom.

All I want is freedom,

A world with no more night;

And you, always beside me,

To hold me and to hide me.

Then say you'll share with me one love, one lifetime;

Let me lead you from your solitude.

Say you need me with you, here beside you,

Anywhere you go, let me go too.

Christine, that's all I ask of you.

These words wound the Phantom, and after the lovers depart, he mirrors their song to Christine:

I gave you my music
Made your song take wing
And now how you've repaid me
Denied me and betrayed me
He was bound to love you when he heard you sing
Christine
Christine
Say you'll share with me, one love,
One lifetime.
Say the word and I will follow you
Share each day with me, each night, each morning
You will curse the day you did not do
All that the Phantom asked of you!
Go!

The Phantom then goes quiet for several months, so he could compose the opera, *Don Juan Triumphant*. He dramatically disrupts a masquerade ball to provide his instructions for the opera and warns that his requests should not be ignored this time. The opera is executed as he wishes, and the performance commences.

After he and Christine share their passionate duet in "The Point of No Return," Christine rips the mask off the Phantom's face and exposes his disfigurement to the shocked audience. Christine's betrayal makes him furious. In this act, she has humiliated him in front of an

audience, revealing his mangled face. Her rejection of him triggers his contempt all over again. In response to this, the Phantom steals her down into a secret passageway and takes her down to his lair. He forces her to put on a wedding gown and says that he will keep her down with him forever.

Ultimately, the Phantom releases Christine. He recognizes that his actions, triggered by desire, shame, and anger, have forced Christine to despise him. His covert fantasy of making Christine his wife is never realized because Christine will never reciprocate the feelings of romantic love that he has for her. So, he renounces his love object, even in his own misery, so that she may be happy. The Phantom will remain in his state of melancholia, and thus his status of an outcast will continue.

Chapter Three
In the Shadows:
A Case Study in Film

“I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heaven and earth? We are errant knaves, all. Believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery.”

-William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

James Bond is an agent of darkness, a British secret agent who operates “in the shadows.” The story of Bond originated in a series of books written by Ian Fleming (published from 1953 - 1966). There have been seven actors who have portrayed Bond across twenty-six films (1962 - 2015). For my purposes, the Daniel Craig iteration of Bond in the film *Skyfall* most clearly exemplifies the qualities of a Byronic hero. Bond’s choice of career as a secret agent and his state of melancholia, caused by the death of his parents, have driven him to become an outcast. I will examine the source of the Bond’s melancholia, his defiance of authority, his sadistic qualities as defined by Klein, and his complex relationships with women.

At the beginning of the film, Bond is on a mission to retrieve stolen information. Over the course of the chase scene, Bond is shot down off a moving train by a fellow British agent, Eve. His body is seen falling down into a river far below, and he is believed to be dead by MI6. He spends the next several months living in hiding, sleeping with women and drinking himself into oblivion. He is flouting his responsibility as an agent by pretending to be dead. His desire not to feel, and his selfishness to live his own life is interrupted when he sees a news report

showing the MI6 building being attacked. He decides to come out of hiding and return to service.

Upon his return, M asks Bond “Where the hell have you been?” as if she had been expecting him to appear this whole time. His amused reply “Enjoying death,” reveals a disenchanted coldness, a disillusionment towards the complexities of being in the secret service. Before Bond can re-enter active service, he must be cleared physically and psychologically fit to serve. This request that he prove himself after many years of service triggers his anger. His resentment of his superiors is stronger now more than ever. He struggles to complete the physical tests — running, target practice. In the psychological evaluation, the doctor asks Bond to play a word association test:

Doctor: I would like to start with some simple word associations, just tell me the first word that pops into your head. For example, I might say ‘Day,’ and you might say?

Bond: Wasted.

D: Gun.

B: Shot.

D: Agent.

B: Provocateur.

D: Woman.

B: Provocatrix.

D: Heart.

B: Target.

D: Bird

B: Sky

D: M

B: Bitch

D: Sunlight.

B: Swim.

D: Moonlight.

B: Dance.

D: Murder.

B: Employment.

D: Country

B: England

D: Skyfall.

[*Bond pauses*]

D: Skyfall.

[*Continued pause from Bond*]

B: Done.

[Bond exits the room] (Mendes)

Bond's resentment of authority is plain in his sarcastic and demeaning replies to the doctor. The doctor's attempt to draw out Bond's childhood trauma by saying "Skyfall," his family's home, results in Bond walking out of the interview. Later on, when the villain Silva has Bond tied up, he reveals to Bond the results of these physical and psychological evaluations: "Medical evaluation: fail. Physical evaluation: fail. Psychological evaluation: alcohol and substance addiction indicated. Ooh! Pathological rejection of authority based on unresolved childhood trauma" (Mendes). In this exchange, Silva seeks primarily to emphasize the fact that M has betrayed Bond by letting him re-enter the service without clearing his physical and psychological evaluations, but also to draw out an angry reaction from Bond.

Although the audience is never given the full story of how Bond came to be a secret agent, the last part of the film provides some clues. When Bond takes M to Skyfall, his childhood home in Scotland, M asks him how old he was when his parents died. His easy, cold reply is “You know the answer to that. You know the whole story.” After a short pause, M replies “Orphans always make the best recruits.” Bond’s coldness is a mask to cover his anger and hurt over the death of his parents. Each new case he is assigned is a new fantasy to temporarily distract him from this loss. Becoming an orphan at a young age impacted the emotional development of Bond. His subsequent career path — becoming a secret agent trained in the arts of deceit and murder — only further restricted his ability to cultivate relationships with authority figures and romantic partners. Lacking any true emotional relationships, Bond’s only source of validation comes from his achievements of maneuvering life-threatening missions and killing the targeted enemy.

Bond’s character traits are in alignment with Klein’s definition of a sadist. He has aggressive “phantasies and feelings,” as well as an “erotic nature” (Klein 293). This sadistic nature affects Bond’s capacity for love and the ability to develop socially. The secret nature of his job further alienates his ability to interact in normative social engagements and romantic relationships. Bond’s relationships with women are complicated, as they either provide him with loyalty, betrayal, or sexual desire (sometimes all three at once). Bond often feels protective of women, but he views physical love as the only kind of love he can experience with a woman. As a secret agent, emotional relationships are a weakness and potential target to any enemy. At the beginning of the film, when Bond is “enjoying death,” there are several scenes

that show him seeking oblivion. He spends his days either in bed with a woman or drinking heavily at the bar. Bond's relationship with Eve, the agent who shot him, is never consummated physically, but each scene they share together is heavy with sexually suggestive speech. He often teases her about her suspension from working in the field as a secret agent and seems to disregard her as a serious agent, possibly due to the fact that Eve shot him.

Later in the film, Bond meets Sévérine, a woman who works for Silva. Bond questions Sévérine about her employer and believes her to be held against her will. While Bond recognizes that she is being manipulated into working for Silva, he doesn't attempt to her 'save' her. Instead, he disrupts her in the shower and they spend the night together. Once Bond meets Silva, he is forced to shoot at a glass of scotch perched upon the head of Sévérine. It is obvious that the woman will not survive this game, either at the hands of Bond or Silva. Bond misses the target, either on purpose or because of his recent physical difficulties. Silva shoots Sévérine in the head, to which Bond coolly replies "a waste of good scotch" (Mendes). Even though they had spent the night together, and Bond could see that she was under distress, he did nothing to help her escape. This lack of attachment for women is indicative of Klein's findings on the psychogenesis of the manic-depressive state. Klein explains,

The hunger for objects, so characteristic of mania, indicates that the ego has retained one defence-mechanism of the depressive position: the introjection of good objects. The manic subject *denies* the different forms of anxiety associated with this introjection; his denial relates not merely to the impulses of the id but to his own concern for the subject's safety... The ego incorporates the object in a cannibalistic way, but denies that

it feels any concern for it. 'Surely,' argues the ego, 'it is not a matter of such great importance if this particular object is destroyed. There are so many others to be incorporated.' This *disparagement of the object's importance and the contempt for it is*, I think a specific characteristic of mania and enables the ego to effect the partial detachment which we observe side by side with its hunger for objects. (Klein 278-9)

Bond's hunger for objects is his desire for sexual love with women. Though he is perhaps concerned for the safety of the women he has had physical relationships with, he is ultimately detached from them and moves on. Bond's relationships with women are transitory and predominantly limited to physical love.

Bond's relationship with M is the only constant relationship he has with a woman that is not physical in nature. She is a mother-figure to him, and he is loyal to her and trusts her. In a way, both his country and M have replaced the loss of his parents. At the beginning of the film, M breaks Bond's trust when she instructs Eve to shoot the man with which Bond is fist-fighting. Upon Eve's insistence that she did not have a clean shot, M commands Eve to "take the bloody shot" (Mendes). The result of this incident is Bond absorbing the bullet and falling down into the river far below. This betrayal causes Bond to want to play dead for several months. Bond feels obliged to come back to M when Silva attacks the MI6 building. He feels compelled to protect his country, but also M. In this way, Bond has characteristics of what Klein refers to as the depressive state. Klein explains that the subject in the depressive state acts to preserve "the good internalized objects with which the ego is identified as a whole" (Klein 269). The preservation of his country and his employer urges Bond to 'resurrect' himself from death. Silva

tries to convince Bond to join him as a renegade operative, urging him to understand that M will ultimately let her agents die at the expense of the mission. When Bond later learns that M betrayed Silva (and thus Silva enacts revenge on M and the secret service), Bond continues to stay by her side and protects her. At the end of the film, M dies in Bond's arms, and he cries.

Bond fundamentally has no chance at resolving his sense of loss, or melancholia. Each new case is a covert fantasy that distracts him from his pain. M is replaced by Gareth Mallory, and thus becomes another good object for Bond to protect (and perfect). His career has sublimated his feelings of loss for his parents, and due to the constant violent aspects of his career, he is constantly navigating anxiety-situations that act to sustain his depressive state.

Chapter Four
An Eternity of Misery:
A Case Study in Television

“Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living. You said I killed you — haunt me then. The murdered do haunt their murderers. I believe — I know that ghosts have wandered

the earth. Be with me always — take any form — drive me mad. Only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! It is unutterable! I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!”

-Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

Damon's state of melancholia has driven him to become an outcast. By looking at the causes and transference of Damon's melancholia, his steep gradient reduction from pain to joy, and his ultimate redemption through true romantic love, I will illustrate how television has propagated Byronic sensibilities.

The television series *The Vampire Diaries* is a story of two brothers who fall in love with the same woman. Within the story are humans, vampires, witches, werewolves, and doppelgängers. Damon Salvatore and his brother Stefan were turned into vampires in 1864. Over a period of eight seasons (2009-2017), Damon's character arc changes frequently between villain and romantic hero. The multiple points of perspective increase this diversity of Damon's character. At the beginning of the series, brothers Damon and Stefan both return to their hometown of Mystic Falls, Virginia, after decades of being away. Damon is posited as the villain. He is brooding, cunning, clever, and plays up the fact that he is an "eternal stud" (*The Vampire Diaries* 1.04). Vampire fiction itself is associated with a hyper-sexual tone since vampires have an intense thirst: they feed on blood for survival, which requires physical touch, and the bloodlust often leads to sexual union. Vampires make exemplary Byronic heroes: they are outcasts, have little regard for morality or mortality, and their physical desire and lust for blood create a sadistic disposition. For Damon, his eroticism is part of his identity. Of Damon, Stefan says "I felt there was hope that somewhere deep inside... something in Damon was still human,

normal. But I was wrong, there's nothing human left in Damon. No good, no kindness, no love. Only a monster... who must be stopped" (*The Vampire Diaries* 1.03). The reappearance of both brothers in Mystic Falls has to do with the fact that they discover a teenage girl, Elena Gilbert, who is the doppelgänger of Stefan and Damon's first love, Katherine Pierce.

Katherine is the main source of Damon's melancholia. Over the course of several flashback episodes, it is revealed that Katherine is a vampire, and it was her blood that turned both brothers into vampires. While Damon was aware of her vampirism and loved her completely, Katherine manipulated Stefan into loving her through her vampire compulsion. On the night that both brothers were turned into vampires, they believe that Katherine was kidnapped and trapped by magic into a tombstone underneath a church. Damon blames Stefan as the reason that Katherine was taken away, and he spends the next century hating his brother and looking for a way to free her. After Damon loses his love-object, he turns his humanity off several times over the years and acts out in violent ways. In reality, Katherine was never in the tomb; she escaped and didn't bother telling either of the brothers. When her character reappears in season two, she makes it plain that she never truly loved Damon, and that she only loved Stefan. Damon questions her motives for coming back after so many years and threatens to kill her for deceiving him. She tells him "Trust me, Damon. When I'm up to something, you'll know it. C'mon. Kiss me ...or kill me. Which will it be Damon? We both know that you're only capable of one" (*The Vampire Diaries* 2.01). Damon is hurt by this betrayal, firstly, due to the fact that she was never imprisoned, and secondly, that she didn't love him. His idealized love for her was never reciprocated.

The other reason for Damon's melancholia is the fact that his brother forced him into becoming a vampire. Damon was so heartbroken that Katherine was taken away from him, that he was going to let himself die. Stefan instead forces Damon to complete his transition to becoming a vampire. Damon believes that Stefan took his choice away and has been forced to live forever without his love object. For this crime, Damon has promised to give Stefan a "lifetime of misery" (*The Vampire Diaries* 1.01). When Damon returns to Mystic Falls in 2009, he taunts Stefan about taking his girlfriend Elena away from him:

Stefan: They are people, Damon. She's not a puppet - she doesn't exist for your amusement; for you to feed on whenever you want to.

Damon: Sure she does. They all do. They're whatever I want them to be. They're mine for the taking.

S: All right, you've had your fun. You used Caroline, you got to me and Elena. Good for you. Now it's time for you to go.

D: That's not a problem. Because...I've been invited in. And I'll come back tomorrow night, and the following night, and I'll do, with your little cheerleader, whatever I want to do. Because that is what is normal to me. (*The Vampire Diaries* 1.03)

This dialogue shows Damon's cold, heartless attitude towards his brother and human life. He views the existence of humans as purely for entertainment and blood. Damon tries to convince Stefan that he has "turned off" his humanity switch. Vampires have the supernatural ability to turn off their emotions, or humanity, in order to save them from emotional pain. When vampires are operating without their humanity, they feel no guilt, remorse, or love. Damon

pretends to have turned off (repress) his emotions so that he can excuse his cruel behavior towards Stefan.

In each of the eight seasons, Damon has moments of absolute violence and cruelty, and moments of compassion and kindness. In his periods of melancholy and anger, Damon often likes to play a game where he lies in the middle of the road and waits for a concerned human to get out of their car to see if he is hurt; once they get out of their car, he quickly gets up and attacks, leaving them for dead. Damon also frequently lashes out at the people Stefan and Elena love: he kills Stefan's best friend Lexi, kills Elena's brother Jeremy, and attacks many of their friends. Damon constantly mocks Stefan's preference for feeding on animal blood, calling him 'pathetic' and 'weak,' and occasionally tries to tempt Stefan into drinking human blood. These instances of anger and violence persist as what Tomkins would describe as "covert fantasies," until Damon's permanent sense of loss (Katherine) is resolved.

Among the abilities of vampires is the power to compel humans — to command them to do whatever the vampire instructs them to do. Damon abuses his power of compulsion to get others to do his bidding, ranging from spying on others to get information, to forget that Damon bit them, or to pick fights with other vampires. His philosophy as a vampire is "kill or be killed" (*The Vampire Diaries* 2.06). Tomkins describes anger as "an innate affective response which consists of deep and rapid breathing, a loud, sustained cry, the mouth opened, the jaw clenched, and the eyes narrowed, with a reddening of the face which stimulates the heat receptors and makes anger a hot affect" (Tomkins 197). For vampires, the facial responses of anger also include a narrowing of the eyes and a darkening of the veins underneath the eyes —

its a visual affectation of bloodlust, triggered by hunger, anger or physical desire. Damon is quick to anger; he uses compulsion to get what he wants, no matter how it affects the people that love him; his unresolved issues with Stefan cause Damon to lash out at his brother's happiness. Damon resents his brother's existence, and although they ultimately repair their relationship at the end of the series, Damon's anger thwarts his happiness and positive relationships throughout both of their lives.

Damon's redemption develops out of his love-object transference from Katherine to Elena and his forgiveness of Stefan. He is not naturally evil, and his acts of violence and murder are triggered by his anger about the past. In contrast, Stefan is naturally kind and compassionate, but when he drinks human blood he turns into a monster and is dubbed as the 'ripper;' he bleeds his victims dry and rips their heads off, and yet everyone believes Damon is the evil brother. The softer, more genuine side of Damon is revealed in moments without witnesses. When Damon's friend Rose is dying of an agonizing werewolf bite, Damon creates a dream for her to imagine she's in a peaceful place. She dies in peace, thanks to his kindness.

Elena finds out about this event over a year later, and questions Damon:

Elena: You never told me about that. What you did for Rose.

Damon: It wasn't about you.

E: Why don't you let people see the good in you?

D: Because when people see good, they expect good. And I don't want to have to live up to anyone's expectations. (*The Vampire Diaries* 3.19)

Damon likes to keep up the appearance of being dangerous and uncaring because it gives him an edge. People continue to fear him and hate him because he hides his goodness. In the early seasons of the series, Elena recognizes Damon's true character and encourages him to reveal his authentic self, but his cunning and violent reactions to minor setbacks often push Elena away. Elena tells Stefan that "You know, I really think that Damon believes that everything he's done, every move that he's made, he's done for love. It's twisted, but... kind of sad" (*The Vampire Diaries* 1.13). Damon's anger and thirst for revenge slowly fade away as his love for Elena grows.

In season three when Stefan is away on a 'ripper bender,' Damon decides to fight for Stefan's humanity and to bring him back. This contrasts with the previous two seasons when Damon tries to goad Stefan into drinking human blood and drawing out 'the ripper.' Elena asks Damon why he is now willing to support Stefan. He replies "I changed my mind because, even in his darkest place, my brother still can't let me die. So I figure I owe him the same in return. I'll help you bring him back" (*The Vampire Diaries* 3.02). Despite all of Damon's faults, Stefan loves his brother and would die to protect him. Damon slowly forgives Stefan, and his character evolves.

In the beginning, Damon's pursuit of Elena is a game. He views her as a pawn in which to torture Stefan. He frequently teases Stefan that he will seduce Elena away, and delights in shocking Elena with his violent and sadistic actions. Elena's initial view of Damon is deeply threatening towards her essential being. Although Elena is in love with Stefan, she is drawn to Damon. Towards the end of season one, Damon and Elena start to hate each other less and

often have sparring conversations rife with sexual tension. Even though it becomes obvious that Damon has fallen in love with her, he persists in the guise of the villain, because he believes he doesn't deserve Elena. In season two, Damon confesses to Elena that he loves her, and then compels her to forget. He tells her: "I just have to say it once. You just need to hear it. I love you, Elena. And it is because I love you that I can't be selfish with you, why you can't know this. I don't deserve you. But my brother does." (*The Vampire Diaries* 2.10). Elena struggles with her feelings for Damon over the next several seasons, but she eventually breaks up with Stefan when she can't deny her feelings have transferred to Damon. Although Damon and Elena reciprocate their feelings for one another, their relationship is frequently on and off because Damon believes he's not good enough for Elena.

Damon's relationship with Elena's best friend, Bonnie, is indicative of Tomkins' theory of steep gradient reduction. This theory has to do with a steep, or great reduction of pain, which evokes a new sense of enjoyment. Tomkins explains, "The smile of joy is innately activated, in our view, by any relatively steep reduction of the density of stimulation and neural firing. Thus, sudden relief from such negative stimulation as pain or fear or distress or aggression will produce the smile of joy" (Tomkins 81). Once that sense of pain is resolved, the affect of enjoyment is produced. For the first five seasons, Damon and Bonnie are constantly at odds with each other and they don't hesitate to put one another in life-threatening circumstances. In season two, Bonnie puts herself in a dangerous situation where she had a fifty-percent chance of dying. Damon supports the plan and hides it from Elena. Upon discovering the risky plan, Elena questions why Damon would let Bonnie die. Damon replies "Let me be clear about

something, alright? If it comes down to you and the witch again, I will gladly let Bonnie die. I will always choose you" (*The Vampire Diaries* 2.18). Damon's anxiety over losing Elena triggers an affective anger response. Although he has transferred his love object from Katherine to Elena, Elena is in love with Stefan. Damon resents Elena's friends and disregards them as important to Elena. Thus, Bonnie is a dispensable object in his pursuit of Elena. Damon and Bonnie's relationship evolves once Damon and Elena are together and in love. Damon's sense of pain is reduced until Damon and Bonnie become stuck in a prison world alone together for several months. Although his pain is greatly reduced, his fear over never seeing Elena again triggers his anxiety. Although their relationship is still rife with animosity, Damon's character has evolved. He no longer sees Elena's friends as dispensable. Damon escapes the prison world with the help of Bonnie, but Bonnie gets left behind. Damon is relentless in his search to help Bonnie escape, and she eventually does. After this point, Damon is relieved of his pain and fear, and thus he can experience joy in his relationships with others. Damon and Bonnie no longer hate one another. Damon even goes so far as to describe Bonnie as his best friend. At the end of season six, Elena and Bonnie's lives become linked; Elena is put into a dreamlike state, and won't awaken until Bonnie dies. Damon has an opportunity to let Bonnie die after a fatal fight with another witch, but instead, he saves her. He teasingly tells her, "You thought I was going to leave you all alone? No way. I'm not out of nicknames for you yet" (*The Vampire Diaries* 6.22). His evolution in his relationship with Bonnie is clearly linked to his reduction in pain and his love for Elena. Once Elena reciprocates her love to Damon, he no longer depends on violence as the only way to express his feelings or achieve his goals.

Damon has a chance of “taking revenge on the original object” (Freud 251), which is Katherine, in season five. Katherine had been injected with a cure for vampirism and had returned to a human state. Damon and Elena had broken up for a brief time, and Damon was in a dark mood. After taking ill, Katherine is on her deathbed surrounded by all the people in Mystic Falls that she wronged. Damon plies her with opium and uses his mind control to force Katherine to relive some of her most painful moments. He also forces her to see her murder victims come back and taunt her. Holding a pillow over her sleeping form, Damon confesses “Every awful thing I've ever done is linked to her. She taught me how to kill. I don't enjoy it. She ruined me and I can't take any of that back” (*The Vampire Diaries* 5.11). Even though Elena has become his new love object, and knows that Elena loves him back, his anger towards his first love still affects him. The effects of Katherine’s cruelty towards Damon were life-altering. Even though Damon has forgiven Stefan at this point, and knows that Elena reciprocates the love he has for her, his past trauma consumes him in the last moments of Katherine’s life.

For Damon, a vampire, immortality is meaningless without revenge or love. Through transference of his love object, revenge is cast off. In the end, reciprocated, romantic love saves him from an endless existence of misery. This love essentially saves him from his state of melancholia, and by extension, an angry and vengeful disposition.

Conclusion

'Reading' a text has expanded beyond the pages of a novel. In our modern age, a text can be presented as music, memes on social media, theater, film, advertisements, and television. Utilizing the many varied texts of the day, it is apparent that the modern mind is still enamored with characters that explore unconventional sexualities and exhibit Byronic sensibilities. This archetype has sustained a place in the public imagination because it is compelling — because we see the truth of these characteristics in the people we know, and even in ourselves.

It might be hard to relate to a wealthy landowner, a musical genius, a secret agent, or even a vampire. These plots are not fundamentally realistic situations. But within each of these characters is a true likeness of humanity. The dark parts of humanity — melancholia, anger, violence, shame, contempt, a desire on the edge of possession — these characteristics are real and relatable. Through the theories and ideas of psychoanalysis, these parts of human nature can be better understood and applied to critical analysis. Fiction — in any medium — is a study of human nature and a place in which to explore the darker sides of humanity. Fiction can be a place of freedom from repression.

These Byronic outcasts — Rochester, the Phantom, Bond, and Damon — they have all experienced an intense form of loss that thrust them into a melancholic state. For Rochester and Damon, the transference of their love objects and their reciprocated romantic love ultimately save them from a melancholic existence. The Phantom and Bond never truly resolve their feelings of melancholia. By examining these characters through a psychoanalysis lens, the

Byronic hero transcends its historical moorings and provides a discourse on loss, sexuality, anger, and shame.

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