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Fearless Children and Fabulous Monsters: Angela Carter, Lewis Carroll, and Beastly Girls

Veronica L. Schanoes
CUNY Queens College

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Angela Carter's various revisions of "Little Red Riding Hood" lay open the violent, alluring, and often distressing reality of adult sexuality. Although the relationship between Carter's stories and the earlier tale has been ably analyzed,[1] relatively little attention has been paid to the figure of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Carter's work on "Little Red Riding Hood." I would argue that Alice is an important figure in and that Carroll's work is a vital intertext to Carter's short story "Wolf-Alice" and the film *The Company of Wolves*. Carter's stories are about the animalistic, exploitative potential of human sexuality, whereas *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* use animals to remind us of the seemingly arbitrary, nonsensical rules of the adult world. Both stories concern active girls exploring a world that is dangerous because of its unfamiliarity and the power of adults. By invoking both Alice and Little Red Riding Hood, Carter is able to present a more complex vision of female sexual awakening under patriarchy, its pleasures as well as its genuine risks and sufferings.

"Wolf-Alice," a short story that appeared in the collection *The Bloody Chamber*, is the tale of a girl raised by wolves who has been taken from her wolf-mother by the same hunters who killed that mother. She is trained to perform simple tasks by a convent of nuns and is placed as a servant in the castle of a duke who is a sort of werewolf-vampire composite. Here Carter gives us an Alice who grows up, unlike Carroll's, and her sexual maturation brings her and the beastly duke with whom she lives into humanity. Alice, like most children, begins her story as a beast, and like many children, she makes her home in the house of a monster, an incomprehensible adult. Raised by wolves, she lives in the castle of a man who may or may not be a werewolf,

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who may or may not be a vampire, but who most definitely is a ghoul, eats the dead, and does not cast an image in the mirror. In Carter's story, it is the man and not the girl who finds himself on the wrong side of the looking glass: "[His] eyes open to devour the world in which he sees, nowhere, a reflection of himself; he passed through the mirror and now, henceforward, lives as if upon the other side of things" (Carter, "Wolf-Alice" 222).

To live on the wrong side of the mirror, for both Carroll and Carter, is to become a monster. The duke eats corpses and wears a wolf's pelt. When Carroll's Alice goes through the looking-glass, she finds that *she* is the fantastic beast: "This is a child!" the White King's messenger tells the Unicorn. The Unicorn responds by exclaiming, "I always thought they were fabulous monsters!" The Unicorn then introduces Alice to the Lion by crying out, "It's a fabulous monster!" Subsequently, Alice is addressed as "monster" throughout the rest of the chapter (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 228–31). Both Carter and Carroll emphasize the affinity between children and monsters: Carter by allying Wolf-Alice with a man who masquerades as a wolf-man and Carroll by emphasizing the relative nature of the category of monster. To be a monster is to be out of one's own place, to be on the wrong side of the mirror.

Like Alice at the beginning *Looking-Glass*, Wolf-Alice is fascinated by the mirror, and in the beginning of their stories, neither girl seems to have quite grasped the purely imitative, two-dimensional nature of the glass. Although Alice remains in this childlike state, Wolf-Alice's realization of the meaning of reflection is connected to her menarche and maturation. Wolf-Alice initially understands her reflection as a playmate: "She rubbed her head against her reflected face, to show that she felt friendly towards it, and felt a cold, solid, immovable surface between herself and she" (Carter, "Wolf-Alice" 225). Carter's confusing syntax reflects Wolf-Alice's own confusion about the nature of her reflection and thus about her own identity, a confusion that is reminiscent of Alice's introspective meditations on *her* identity. The conflict set up in this passage between seeing and touching is reminiscent of the dichotomy Donald Haase notes between the two senses in the film directed by Neil Jordan and written by Jordan and Carter herself, *The Company of Wolves*, based on Carter's story of the same name. Nina Auerbach notes that Alice's inward focus is one of the most unusual characteristics of her adventures:

> Other little girls travelling through fantastic countries, such as George Macdonald's Princess Irene and L. Frank Baum's Dorothy Gale, ask repeatedly "*where* am I?" rather than "*who* am I?" Only Alice turns her eyes inward from the beginning, sensing that the mystery of her surroundings is the mystery of her identity. (Auerbach 33)

Similarly, Wolf-Alice turns her eyes outward, thinking she is exploring her surroundings, only to find that she is looking inward. When Wolf-Alice finds that her playmate is only a reflection, "a little moisture leaked from the corners of her eyes, yet her relation with the mirror was now far more intimate since she knew she saw herself within it" (Carter, "Wolf-Alice" 226). She then puts on a wedding dress that "the Duke had tucked away behind the mirror" and knows that she has "put on the visible sign of her difference from them [the wolves]" (226). Wolf-Alice becomes human, or at least unbeastly, when she understands the nature of mirrors and finds what is hidden behind them. That entrance to humanity is closely tied to sexual maturation not only by the similarity to Adam and Eve's fashioning of clothing after the Fall in Genesis but also by the fact that the clothing Wolf-Alice puts on is a wedding dress that doubled as a funeral garment, simultaneously signifying purity and sexual readiness. Taken from the corpse of one of the duke's victims, the gown prefigures the association between purity and death in the film *Company of Wolves*.

Wolf-Alice has the power to bring not only herself but also her beastly landlord into the human compass. Late one night after she becomes human—only five paragraphs later, in fact—the duke is shot and comes home injured. In fact, it is Wolf-Alice's new status as a sexually mature human being that ensures his safe return. Having been shot by the villagers, the duke is being pursued until Wolf-Alice is spotted by the pursuers. The wedding dress has forced her to walk upright, and from a distance, the villagers think she is the ghost of one of his victims come back to haunt him. When the duke and Wolf-Alice return to the castle,

> she prowled round the bed, growling, snuffing at his wound that does not smell like her wound. Then, she was pitiful as her gaunt grey mother; she leapt upon his bed to lick, without hesitation, without disgust, with a quick, tender gravity, the blood and dirt from his cheek and forehead. . . . As she continued her ministrations, this glass, with infinite slowness, yielded to the reflexive strength of its own material construction. Little by little, there appeared within it, like the image on photographic paper that emerges, first, a formless web of tracery . . ., then a firmer yet still shadowed outline until at last as vivid as real life itself, as if brought into being by her soft, moist, gentle tongue, finally, the face of the Duke. (Carter, "Wolf-Alice" 227–28)

The duke has been shot, and we find that he is only a man after all when he is forced to rise up on two legs and run. The multiplicity of roles that Wolf-Alice and the duke take on in this ending allows them both finally to enter the realm of the human. Wolf-Alice acts as her foster mother, taking pity on a wounded creature, but this scene also echoes one described early in the story; she had been found "in the wolf's den beside the bullet-ridden corpse of her foster

mother" (Carter, "Wolf-Alice" 221). Once again she is in a den in the company of an older being injured by bullets, but this time she can help. She is not only her mother but also an older, more competent version of herself. In his turn, the duke is not only an infant Wolf-Alice being tended by a pitiful creature but also Wolf-Alice's bullet-riddled mother, and Carter notes that he "howls like a wolf with his foot in a trap or a woman in labour, and bleeds" ("Wolf-Alice" 227).

Historically, theorists have not allowed for such flexibility or mutuality in their consideration of the role of mirrors or mirroring in psychoanalytic development. D. W. Winnicott and Heinz Kohut agree that mirroring is the necessary role of the mother (Jacques Lacan's mirror stage seems to be largely gender neutral, although at least one critic assumes that the "mirror" in which the infant sees itself as a cohesive, potent figure, distinct from its subjective feeling of itself, is in fact the infant's "mother").[2] They also agree that, unless the mother is a sufficiently good mirror, the infant will never understand himself as a unified being, or "the infant's creative capacity [will] begin to atrophy" and prevent "that which might have been the beginning of a significant exchange with the world" (Winnicott 19), or the infant will develop a narcissistic personality disorder. Of these three theorists, Winnicott's concept of mirroring is most interesting from a relational point of view:

> What does the baby see when he or she looks at the mother's face? I am suggesting that, ordinarily, what the baby sees is himself or herself. In other words, the mother is looking at the baby and *what she looks like is related to what she sees there*. . . . I am asking that this which is done naturally well by mothers who are caring for their infants shall not be taken for granted. (Winnicott 19)

Here, when the baby looks at her mother, she is participating in a reciprocal interaction: She responds to her mother's response or view of her. This mirroring is not capped and finite on the mother's part, unlike Kohut's mirroring. Kohut refers to good mirroring as "the gleam in the mother's eye which says it is good you are here and I acknowledge your being here and I am uplifted by your presence" (226).[3] The mirroring described by Winnicott is far more fluid than the frozen response granted to Kohut's ideal mother, and it is of greater and more flexible duration than the mirror stage described by Lacan. Yet all three theorists make the classic mistake of writers considering infant and child development before Nancy Chodorow's influential work on the way that the subjectivity of the mother affects child development; none of the three consider the mother's internal life and its impact on her child care. In that sense, all three flatten and freeze the mother into a mirroring screen, and none consider how her own experience of self affects her ability to mirror and to be mirrored. When considering the role of the mirror in a story as invested in mothering as

"Wolf-Alice" (the duke howls like a "woman in labour"; Wolf-Alice is as "pitiful as her gaunt grey mother"), no consideration of subjectivity can be complete without a consideration of maternal subjectivity.

Luce Irigaray takes up exactly this problem in her influential essay "And the One Doesn't Stir Without the Other," in which she examines the consequences of a lack of attention to mothers' internal selves on their capacity to mirror. Such selfless mothers, Irigaray writes, produce selfless daughters, a set of empty mirrors reflecting infinite absence. The first sentence of the essay is usually translated as "With your milk, Mother, I swallowed ice" (Irigaray 60), but Laurie Corbin, in her study of the mother-daughter relationships in the works of Colette, Simone de Beauvoir, and Marguerite Duras, notes that

> the word "glace" can be read as meaning either ice or mirror but in this context I would suggest that the emphasis is on the mirror that the mother gives to her child so that the child can reflect an image back to her mother. This is again an inversion of Lacan's theorization of the mirror phase as Irigaray makes the mother dependent on her daughter for a coherent self-view. . . . The mother in these texts can only reflect the daughter's imposition of her own view. . . . If a mother's face appears in the mirror, it is the daughter's vision of herself which put it there. The concept of mother as mirror will always relegate the mother to the position of object, rather than subject. (99, 144)

And a subjectless mother, a selfless mother, will pass on to her daughter the empty mirror, the lack of self that informs both daughter and mother in Irigaray's essay:

> By pouring your ice [mirror] into me, didn't you quench my thirst with your paralysis? And never having known your own face, didn't you nourish me with lifelessness? . . . Of necessity I became the uninhabitable region of your reflections. . . . Each of us lacks her own image; her own face, the animation of her own body is missing. (Irigaray 64)

The mother's mirror is empty—she cannot see her own face—and when she gives that emptiness of self to her daughter, the daughter too becomes paralyzed.

Irigaray's daughter has a wistful fantasy of the kind of mirroring relationship she and her mother might have had if the mother had not been without a sense of self:

> I would like us to play together at being the same and different. You/I exchanging selves endlessly and each staying herself. Living mirrors. We would play catch, you and I. But who would see that what

> bounces between us are images? That you give them to me, and I to you without end. And that we don't need an object to throw back and forth at each other for this game to take place. I throw an image of you to you, you throw it back, catch it again. (Irigaray 61–62)

The daughter's fantasy is not one in which the mirrors are shattered but one in which they are full of selves and infinite images. This is a playful, mutual, reciprocal interchange, based on the mother's subjectivity rather than objecthood, a fluid exchange rather than a frozen surface. This concept of mirroring requires two selves to be present; it is Lacan's, Winnicott's, and Kohut's mirroring, and it is more as well. Carter's girl, who is both beast and human, child and mother to the duke, and the duke, who is both wolf and man, mother and child to the girl, provide just such a fluid exchange, and so both parties are able to become fully human.

Wolf-Alice is able to bring herself into humanity by putting on human clothing in the same evening that her care brings the duke back into the world reflected by the glass, and it is no accident that their rapprochement comes when they are both able to occupy a multiplicity of roles and subject positions, including the subjectivity of a mother. For Carter, the ability to shift among identities is necessary to fully realize one's sexuality and one's humanity. Nor has Lewis Carroll been forgotten at the end of this story: the reference to photography conjures up Charles Dodgson's photographic artistry.

Dodgson is recognized as an influential photographer of great skill: "In the international 'Family of Man' exhibition of 1956, Dodgson was one of the three British photographers represented" (Roy Aspin, qtd. in Cohen 24).[4] And of course his hobby was deeply entwined with his affection for little girls. Not only were his child-friends some of his favorite models, but Alice Liddell Hargreaves, the model for Alice, reminisces that

> much more exciting than being photographed was being allowed to go into the dark room, and watch him develop the large glass plates. What could be more thrilling than to see the negative gradually take shape, as he rocked it to and fro in the acid bath? Besides, the dark room was so mysterious, and we felt that any adventures might happen there! . . . [We felt that] we were assisting at some secret rite. (qtd. in Cohen 8)

As the duke and Alice bring each other into humanity, the photographic metaphor suggests the mutual midwifery of Carroll and Alice: it was Dodgson who fictionalized and immortalized Alice, bringing her into existence for children and adults that the real Alice Liddell would never meet, and it was Alice who created Lewis Carroll as a public figure and famous writer, alter ego to the more private Charles Dodgson.

But what about those Alices who, unlike Wolf-Alice, never reach sexual maturity, who are eternally caught in the timeless moment of Wolf-Alice before her menarche?

In the film *The Company of Wolves*, the Little Red Riding Hood figure is named Rosaleen, and her older sister is named Alice. This film Alice shares a fate with Lewis Carroll's fictional Alice: they never grow up. Carroll's Alice is surrounded by jokes about her death. When she speaks to Humpty-Dumpty in *Looking-Glass*, the egg asks her age and then comments that 7 years and 6 months is "an uncomfortable sort of age. Now, if you'd asked *my* advice, I'd have said, 'Leave off at seven'; but it's too late now." Alice tells him that "one can't help growing older," to which Humpty-Dumpty replies "*One* can't perhaps . . . but *two* can. With proper assistance, you might have left off at seven." Alice quickly changes the subject (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 211). Early in *Wonderland*, Alice muses to herself as she falls down the rabbit hole, "Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell on the top of the house!" The narrator dryly adds, "Which was very likely true." (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 13). Alice conscientiously checks to see whether the bottle she is to drink from is marked "poison," and she wonders nervously as she shrinks whether she is "going out altogether, like a candle. I wonder what I should be like then?" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 17). Alice runs a similar risk later on as she fans herself and shrinks without noticing it: "She dropped [the fan] hastily, just in time to save herself from shrinking away altogether. 'That *was* a narrow escape!' said Alice . . . very glad to find herself still in existence" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 24).

Carroll prefaces and ends *Looking-Glass* with poems that surround his vision and memory of Alice Liddell with the language of death. In the second stanza of the opening poem he writes that "no thought of me shall find a place/In thy young life's hereafter" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 135). "Hereafter" carries with it the suggestion of an afterlife, allying adulthood with death. A stanza later, Carroll makes explicit what had been only a suggestion when he writes,

> Come, hearken then, ere voice of dread,
> With bitter tidings laden,
> Shall summon to unwelcome bed
> A melancholy maiden!
> We are but older children, dear,
> Who fret to find our bedtime near.
> (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 135)

Here Carroll draws on the long association between marital beds and deathbeds, associating the "melancholy maiden's" death with sexual maturation: both lead to an "unwelcome bed." But perpetual, fictional childhood can keep Alice from both:

> Without, the frost, the blinding snow,
> The storm-wind's moody madness—
> Within the firelight's ruddy glow,
> And childhood's nest of gladness.
> The magic words shall hold thee fast;
> Thou shalt not heed the raving blast.
> (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 135)

The power of narrative cannot extend into real life, however, and Carroll describes Alice as a ghost in the final poem: "Still she haunts me, phantomwise/Alice moving under skies/Never seen by waking eyes" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 273).

Despite Carroll's unhappy poetry, Alice Liddell was not dead in 1871, when *Looking-Glass* was published. Indeed, she was alive and well at the age of 19. Dodgson's close friendships with little girls sometimes, though not always, ended when the child-friends entered puberty. He writes about encountering Alice Liddell during her adolescence in his diary: she had "changed a good deal, and hardly for the better—probably going through the usual awkward stage of transition" (qtd. in Hudson 116). Although they spoke warmly of each other after Alice had passed into adulthood, their relationship could never again be described as close. Dodgson kept his *fictional* Alice in prepubescence. Dodgson is haunted by the ghost of *child*-Alice, prepubescent Alice, and the word *phantom* links that child with death.

Thus Carroll presents us with a complicated network of connections between sexuality and death. In the first poem, sexual maturation is linked with death, and that death can be staved off by a perpetual childhood, but the second poem is considerably darker. Death, it seems, cannot be staved off by perpetual, imagined childhood—perhaps the same goes for sexual maturation. Here the perpetual child is a figure of death; she haunts Dodgson; she is a phantom. Sexual maturation is a form of death, and in order to refrain from that maturation, the perpetual child enters another kind of death state. It is this contemplation of sexuality, death, and eternal childhood that I would suggest attracted Angela Carter. Carter picks up on Carroll's darker tones; her use of Carroll's Alice suggests that rejecting puberty and sexual awakening in favor of a child's ever pure virginity is to choose death, that to live is perforce to

move into the company of wolves. Such a reading is consistent with the disdain Carter expresses for Sade's Justine as an ever innocent, ever abused figure. Carter emphasized the active, brutal sexuality of women and intervened in contemporary feminist debates about female sexuality, sadomasochism, and patriarchy.

The film *The Company of Wolves* tells a number of stories about werewolves, framed by a younger sister named Rosaleen, who, alienated from her family by adolescence, dreams herself into the story of Little Red Riding Hood. Her sister, the film's Alice, preserves her innocence at the expense of her life (the grandmother says that when the wolves killed her, Alice "went straight to heaven"—as opposed to those girls seduced by the sexualized werewolves, who drag such unfortunates with them to hell). Alice is Rosaleen's older sister, and the first thing Rosaleen does in her dreamworld is to dispose of her. This ill-fated Alice is the very image of the little girl drawn by Charles Dodgson in the handwritten, self-illustrated version of *Alice's Adventures Underground* that he presented to young Alice Liddell: a girl with long, dark, center-parted hair, wearing a frothy white dress bound with a thin sash at the waist. The girl killed by wolves looks exactly like Carroll's first fictional Alice. We see Rosaleen's older sister Alice fleeing from the wolves as a maiden all in white; the red belt and shoes that she wears in the opening nondream scenes are gone. Alice, here turned into a literal dream child, is first pursued by children's toys her own size, such as stuffed bears and toy sailors, and it is unclear whether they have grown or whether she is small. She reaches for a dollhouse, only to find it occupied by rats; overgrown mushrooms recall Wonderland. The same size as the toys and the mushrooms, she is cornered and killed by wolves.

Carter and Jordan's association of the imagery of purity and childhood with Alice's destruction suggests that it is that very childhood purity that kills her. Childhood has turned on and attacked Alice; she cannot overcome it or leave it behind; she cannot grow beyond it; it occupies too large a place in her life and her inability to leave childhood—precisely what Carroll had fantasized for his Alice, judging by the prefatory poem to *Looking-Glass*—leaves her helpless to counter the attack of the wolves. Her corpse is then laid out in a white dress similar to the one she is wearing when she dies. In the coffin her skin takes on an unnatural pallor and she wears a garland of white flowers. The visual link is thus between purity and death. Even her name is associated with death—we do not find out that she is called Alice until we see the name carved on her tombstone halfway through the film. Alice's purity is fatal. Although Rosaleen's sexuality makes her vulnerable, her red cloak and dangerous game with the huntsman leave her open to pain but prevent her from following in her sister's footsteps.

The dichotomy presented here between Alice and Rosaleen mirrors that analyzed by Carole Zucker in her discussion of the conflicting attitudes toward sex offered by Rosaleen's grandmother and mother. Zucker notes that, although the grandmother portrays sexuality as "demonic . . . brutal, fearful, and evil," Rosaleen's mother provides Rosaleen with a view of sex that foregrounds mutuality between man and woman, saying, "If there's a beast in man, it meets its match in woman, too" (67). Rosaleen "must choose between these competing attitudes to determine her sexual and social roles" (Zucker 68), and, as demonstrated, those attitudes are demonstrated in the persons of the younger girls themselves by the invocation of Carroll's Alice.

But Alice is not the only Carrollesque girl in the film. What, then, can we make of all the allusions identifying Rosaleen herself as the Alice who has gone underground, into Wonderland, and through the looking glass? The most important indication we have that Rosaleen too is Alice is that Rosaleen creates the story through her dreaming, just as Carroll's Alice does. The threat with which Rosaleen grapples in her dream is nothing more than herself, that the darkness of her own sexuality and dreaming subconscious may obliterate her. Furthermore, the appetite and adventurous spirit that Rosaleen displays throughout the film finds its parallel in Carroll's Alice. Auerbach argues that the Alice of *Wonderland* is a realistic, voracious, threatening girl of appetites:

> Most of Wonderland's savage songs come from Alice. . . . She is almost always threatening to the animals of Wonderland. . . . The more sinister and Darwinian aspects of animal nature are introduced into Wonderland by the gentle Alice. (Auerbach 35)

Rosaleen's more explicitly sexual desires and appetites ally her with a voracious Alice who consumes buns, drinks, and mushrooms and threatens to set her pet cat on the various rodents of Wonderland. Alice's threatening desire to consume finds its echo in Rosaleen's sexual desires, which threaten the ordered morality of her grandmother, not to mention her eagerness to devour gingerbread men and windfall apples. Significantly, the first story Rosaleen tells within the dream is one in which a woman magically takes revenge for her sexual exploitation at a feast from which she has been excluded, suggesting the relationship between hunger, female sexuality, and power. But the parallels between Alice and Rosaleen are not confined to the frame stories of each girl's narrative and to general character traits.

About halfway through the film, Rosaleen climbs a tree to find a stork's nest containing a vaginal tub of lipstick and eggs. As she watches, the eggs hatch, and Rosaleen takes from one of the eggs a miniature baby doll that weeps real tears when she shows it to her mother. The scene suggests a sense

of wonder at the potential of female sexuality and symbolizes Rosaleen's menarche. When Rosaleen brings the baby home, she and her mother gaze at each other in joy and wonder. Eggs play a most prominent role in Carroll's Alice books: Humpty-Dumpty is, of course, an egg; Alice finds him because she inexplicably desires to buy an egg from a shop in looking-glass land; the egg flits farther and farther away from her, and she has to chase it. The association between innocence and an unbroken egg is an old one that Carroll could not have helped but be aware of, and it is that association that Carter evokes when she writes in the short story "Company of Wolves" that Red Riding Hood is "an unbroken egg" (Carter, "Company of Wolves" 215). Similarly, in Carroll's photograph of Agnes Weld as Little Red Riding Hood, the basket she holds is empty, except for one egg.

Zucker reads Rosaleen's tree climbing as a reference to the tree of knowledge (68), but it is also an intertextual reference to Carroll's overgrown Alice's interaction with a bird who attacks her, thinking that she is a serpent come to steal eggs:

> "Serpent!" screamed the Pigeon.
> "I'm *not* a serpent!" said Alice indignantly. . . .
> "Well! *What* are you?" said the Pigeon. . . .
> "I—I'm a little girl," said Alice rather doubtfully, as she remembered the number of changes she had gone through that day.
>
> "A likely story indeed!" said the Pigeon in a tone of the deepest contempt. "I've seen a good many little girls in my time, but never *one* with such a neck as that! No, no! You're a serpent; and there's no use denying it. I suppose you'll be telling me next that you never tasted an egg."
>
> "I *have* tasted eggs, certainly," said Alice, who was a very truthful child; "but little girls eat eggs quite as much as serpents do, you know."
>
> "I don't believe it," said the Pigeon; "but if they do, why, then they're a kind of serpent, that's all I can say. . . . You're looking for eggs, I know *that* well enough; and what does it matter to me whether you're a little girl or a serpent?" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 52–55)

As in *Looking-Glass*, the distinction between little girl and ravenous monster, between eater and eaten, is being blurred and dissolved. Is Alice a little girl or a serpent, innocence or temptation, or are they both the same thing after all? Is Rosaleen a girl or a wolf, prey or beast, or are they both the same as well? This is the realization that Rosaleen comes to when she finds that the dreaded werewolf is "just a girl after all, who had strayed from the path, and remembered

what she found there" (*The Company of Wolves*). In other words, Carter suggests that girl and wolf, eater and eaten, purity and passion, are the same thing after all. Rosaleen, with that last story, narrates her own discovery of sexuality, thus assuring her control over the story, just as the red-haired witch she has created earlier calls the wolves to her for the pleasure of knowing the power she had over them.

The juxtaposition between white and red, innocence and passion, eater and eaten, purity and the serpent, and the ease with which one can be turned into the other runs through both Alice's and Rosaleen's adventures. Rosaleen wears a red cape in contrast to her sister's clothing all of white; the werewolf drips red blood onto the white snow; a white rose turns red as Rosaleen makes her way to her grandmother's house; the white moon floods over red. When Carroll's Alice first comes upon the cards, they are desperately painting white roses red at the behest of a passionate, volatile woman: "This here ought to have been a *red* rose tree," the Two of Spades tells her, "and we put in a white one in by mistake, and if the Queen was to find it out we should all have our heads cut off" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 80). And of course, the chess game in *Through the Looking-Glass* is played between red pieces and white.

It is as though Carter resurrects the Wonderland Alice in Rosaleen in order to turn her formidable appetites to sex while sacrificing her sister to what Auerbach argues is the looking-glass fate of "vapid[ity]" and "passiv[ity]." In *Looking-Glass*, Alice is made into a white pawn and may not even be the dreamer of the story.[5] Alice begins crying when she is first told that she is the dream of the Red King and that "if that there King was to wake . . . you'd go out—bang!—just like a candle!" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 189). The Alice in the film *The Company of Wolves* endures this fate: She is pure, she is white, she is not the dreamer, and she is disposed of very quickly.

What, then, does it add to our understanding of Carter's work to read Carroll's Alice, the movie's Alice, and Rosaleen as aspects of the same person? Rose Lovell-Smith examines the relationship between animal and human in Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in the context of nineteenth-century England's discourses about natural history. She highlights the egg episode as an allusion to the "egg-thief" motif in natural history books and dioramas, which often portrayed animals such as snakes, rats, and cats attacking bird nests in an effort to steal eggs. This motif, Lovell-Smith writes, "is probably best understood as a kind of subgroup of the many Victorian depictions of predation and conflict in the animal world" (31), and thus Carroll's "Pigeon's outrage is better read . . . in the context of Victorian depictions of the struggle for survival in nature—such as the egg-thief pictures" (36).

Carroll's Alice finds the Pigeon to be unwaveringly hostile and defensive—she is beaten off, and made to question the very nature of her being. Lovell-Smith writes that the "threat to her sense of self . . . is specifically directed at Alice *by nature*" (emphasis in the original) and that the nature of that threat is based on an attack on any comfortable distinction between animal and human: "When the Pigeon refused to recognize or believe her, Alice was temporarily shaken from comfortably knowing her own humanity by knowing herself to be not-animal" (39, 43). By allowing herself to be beaten off and by rejecting her identity as an eater of eggs and therefore a member of the animal kingdom, Alice is rejecting Wonderland's continuing conflation of human and animal, "a world of human and animal interchangeability . . . express[ing] anxiety over the blurring of separate kinds or classes" (Lovell-Smith 46).

Both the short story "Company of Wolves" and the film *Company of Wolves* are works about human and animal interchangeability, and I would suggest that Carroll's Alice's rejection of that mix is linked to her perpetually prepubescent state. Certainly, the film's Alice similarly rejects any traffic with the animal, running in terror from the wolves in her path. But Rosaleen does not. Where Carroll's Alice is attacked by the Pigeon and rejects the creature's eggs, Rosaleen ends the dream by accepting her identification with the animals, and her status is accepted by the stork whose nest she finds. The stork flies away, ceding the nest to Rosaleen, who takes an egg. Rosaleen thus accepts not only sexuality, as noted, but also, reading her actions in light of Lovell-Smith's analysis, the integration of the animal and human. How fitting for a movie about werewolves! Thus Carter's use of Carroll's *Alice* books serves to reinforce the movie's insistence on the confluence of the human and the animal, the beautiful and the beastly.

Notes

1. See, for example, Zipes, *Trials and Tribulations*.
2. Lacan's essay suggests to me that he is literally writing about physical mirrors, but Muller and Richardson, in *Lacan and Language*, comment that "the essential here apparently is that a human form be the external image in which the infant discovers himself and the 'reality' around him, but presumably that human form could also be—and in concrete is more likely to be—the mothering figure" (30).
3. I am not suggesting that this kind of response is somehow inferior to the interaction described by Winnicott; of course it is not, and it is utterly necessary for babies and children (to say nothing of adults) to have that sort of positive response from their mothers. I am merely noting that Kohut's conception of mirroring requires nothing in return from the child.

4. For other accolades and praise for Dodgson's photographic skills, see Cohen, *Reflections in a Looking Glass* (25).
5. Auerbach argues that the looking-glass Alice is a pallid and idealized version of the more threatening, voracious little girl of Wonderland. Although I find Auerbach's analysis compelling, I would note that Alice's constant project, from which she never wavers throughout the book, is to become a queen and thus to participate in "all feasting and fun!" (Carroll, *Annotated Alice* 166). Indeed, looking-glass Alice reaches her breaking point when she is *prevented* from eating at her banquet by the overly correct manners of the Red Queen, who persists in introducing her to the food and then telling her that "it isn't etiquette to cut anyone you've been introduced to" (262). Shortly after this point, her desires and speech thwarted, Alice seizes the tablecloth, gives it one good pull, sends "plates, dishes, guests, candles . . . crashing down together in a heap on the floor," and physically attacks the Red Queen (266).

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