

CHAPTER TWO: INTERTEXTUALITY AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Carter, in her fictive appropriation of fairytales, uses different contexts for the bare bones of each tale in order to subvert the meanings of the prior discourse. The method of Carter's retellings does not stop here, since she also has the tendency of cross-referring one tale with another. She utilizes intertextuality in a fashion that allows the tales to be read off each other, displaying an interesting framework of stories intersecting with other stories. In this Chapter, I will show how the intertextual element facilitates a comparative reading of the tales, creating a framework which highlights differences as much as similarities. Graham Allen in *Intertextuality* commented that

[. . .]we can see that from its beginning the concept of intertextuality is meant to designate a kind of language which, because of its embodiment of otherness, is against, beyond and resistant to (mono)logic. Such language is socially disruptive, revolutionary, even. Intertextuality encompasses that aspect of literary and other kinds of texts which struggles against and subverts reason, the belief in unity of meaning or of the human subject, and which is therefore subversive to all ideas of the logical and the unquestionable. (45)

In Chapter One I have discussed how certain recurrences within the tales examined seem to echo a ritual in varied settings, thereby offsetting the hybridity of the human experience. This is in line with what Allen has stated above, because an intertextual reading of Carter's text reveals

a dialectic that is “subversive to all ideas of the logical and unquestionable”(45). In *The Virago Book of Fairytales*, Carter’s introduction states that:

I haven’t put this collection together from such heterogeneous sources to show that we are all sisters under the skin, part of the same human family in spite of a few superficial differences. I don’t believe that, anyway. Sisters under the skin we might be, but that doesn’t mean we’ve got much in common. (See Part Six, ‘Unhappy Families’.) Rather, I wanted to demonstrate the extraordinary richness and diversity of responses to the same common predicament – being alive – and the richness and diversity with which femininity, in practice, is represented in ‘unofficial’ culture: its strategies, its plots, its hard work. (xiv)

This statement of intent complements Carter’s own appropriation of classic fairytales, which are diverse and hybrid creations that constantly cross-refer with each other. The patterns, as noted in Chapter One, are those of ritual. Bacchilega, in remarking upon this seeming pattern within *The Bloody Chamber*, asserts that it is best to read the stories intertextually in order to tap into its transformative message:

I have argued that Carter revives the lost voices of “Red Riding Hood” by negotiating story with story, (were)wolf with (girl) wolf. But this transformation works only if we are willing to read these stories intertextually, within the volume *The Bloody Chamber*, and in the broader

wonder tale tradition. Otherwise, “Wolf-Alice” would display at best a female protagonist who remains an inarticulate, though crooning, new Eve.

(*Postmodern Fairy Tales* 66)

I generally agree with Bacchilega’s statement, though I would add that the half-human girl-children within Carter’s tales are not confined merely to *The Bloody Chamber*, nor are the stories the only location for Carter’s utilization of fairytale motifs, leading to a succession of repeated tropes and plots. Other tales found in different anthologies also feature the same components in sometimes startling contexts, such as in the post-colonial forests of the Amazon found in “Master”. The enclosed spaces can be found in either a cottage in the woods or the Transylvanian palace featured in “The Lady of the House of Love”. As Carter herself succinctly says, and puts into practice, “context changes everything” (*The Virago Book of Fairy Tales* xv).

Prior to this she provides a kind of blueprint for the different ways of appropriating fairytales in different cultures:

Ours is a highly individualized culture, with a great faith in the work of art as a unique one-off, and the artist as an original, a godlike and inspired creator of unique one-offs. But fairy tales are not like that, nor are their makers [. . .]The chances are, the story was put together in the form we have it, more or less, out of all sorts of bits of other stories long ago and far away, and has been tinkered with, had bits added to it, lost other bits, got mixed up with

other stories, until our informant herself has tailored the story personally, to suit an audience of, say, children, or drunks at a wedding, or bawdy old ladies, or mourners at a wake – or, simply, to suit herself. (x)

While it may be argued that similar patterns appear in Carter's tales simply because she has drawn them from the same bag of tales, several scholars have concurred (as shall be shown below) that there is a very strong intertextual element to her text from which meaning or inference may be derived. Whether the choice of motifs is random or not, there is a ritualistic element to the structure of the fairytales selected for this study. For instance, Carter's narrative inducts the reader into the enclosures where the acts or events of transformation take place. The question that then begs to be asked is whether this transformation resolves into an act of liberation or into another sort of trap.

Ultimately, the secrets behind the tales are in the tales themselves. As Italo Calvino, Italian folklorist and writer notes:

Therein lies, for us, its real moral: the storyteller, with a kind of instinctive skillfulness, shies away from the constraint of popular tradition, from the unwritten law that the common people are capable only of repeating trite themes without ever actually "creating"; perhaps the narrator thinks that he is producing only variations on a theme whereas actually he ends up telling us what is in his heart. [xxxix]

This is a statement which is very applicable to Carter, who has shied away not only from the constraints of patriarchal stereotypes, but also the stock arguments within feminism itself. In presenting the transformation in different cultural frameworks and varying the details in each tale, Carter provides cues into the sort of transformation taking place within the respective plots¹⁵. I would suggest that this mimics the way fairytales blend and fit into different civilizations and frameworks in order to gain relevance. Carter's focus for her relevance is the patriarchal framework which is inherent and present in every tale, from the post-colonial slant of "Master" to the baroque landscape of "The Tiger's Bride".

This is relevant when one takes into account the historical and diasporic progress of the fairy tale as an entity moving from culture to culture. Jack Zipes in "Cross-Cultural Connections and the Contamination of the Classical Fairy Tale"¹⁶, discussed this aspect of the way fairytales get transmitted. In it, he explained how storytellers borrowed elements from other cultures when they select a story to be retold and appropriated within their own context (*The Great Fairy Tale Tradition* 845):

Of course there can be no denying that the tales in this collection are culturally marked: they are informed by the writers, their respective cultures, and the socio-historical context in which the narratives were created. In this regard one can discuss the particular Italian, French, German, or English affiliation of a tale. Nevertheless, the tales have a great general paradoxical appeal that transcends their particularity: they contain "universal" motifs and components that the writers borrowed consciously and unconsciously from

other cultures in an endeavor to imbue their symbolical stories with very specific commentaries on the mores and manners of their times. (845)

While the idea of universality may be spurious, it is axiomatic that certain elements do recur in the narration of the tales. Vladimir Propp, in *Morphology of the Folk Tale*, refers to these elements as functions (19). He comments:

The names of the dramatis personae change (as well as the attributes of each), but neither their actions nor functions change. From this we can draw the inference that a tale often attributes identical actions to various personages. This makes possible the study of the tale *according to the functions of its dramatis personae*. (20)

This idea is salient in considering Carter's fairytales. Although the tales cross-refer and constantly repeat, thereby displaying a variety of ways in which a single fairytale plot can be related, there is a certain familiarity about the journey undertaken in each story. It is my opinion that these matching themes are familiar rather than similar because Carter adapts the fairytale to different climates, situations and ideologies of a particular time and place. Kaiser has talked about these cultural contextualizations in her article "Fairy tale as sexual allegory: intertextuality in Angela Carter's 'The Bloody Chamber'", which states that:

Carter's use of intertextuality in *The Bloody Chamber* moves the tales from the mythic timelessness of the fairy tale to specific cultural moments, each of

which presents a different problem in gender relations and sexuality. Although she recounts the plots of the same fairytales —“Beauty and the Beast” twice, “Little Red Riding Hood” three times – Carter changes the cultural context from tale to tale, and, as a result, each retelling generates a different narrative” (par. 3)

I primarily agree with Kaiser’s analysis which is echoed by the critiques of both Bacchilega and Armitt (see below for Armitt) (88-89). However, I would suggest that this pattern or narrative framework of repetition and intertextuality be read alongside other tales in Carter’s anthologies prior to as well as succeeding *The Bloody Chamber*. For instance, I would add “Ashputtle or The Mother’s Ghost”¹⁷ to Kaiser’s list of tales because it embeds three different variations of a tale within one narration. The tale is therefore a microcosm of what Carter has achieved with her other fairytale retellings.

Ashputtle consists of three tales within one short story, using the bare bones of the very familiar plotline of “Cinderella” and generally centers on the figure of the dead mother of the heroine. The method of storytelling is rather elliptical, containing a self-conscious sort of discourse as though the author is analyzing some other text. This is particularly evident in the first tale where Carter begins:

But although you could easily take the story away from Ashputtle's and center it on the mutilated sisters – indeed, it would be easy to think of it as a story about cutting bits off women, so that they will fit in, some sort of circumcision-like ritual chop, nevertheless, the story always begins not with Ashputtle or her stepsisters but with Ashputtle's mother, as though it is really always the story of her mother even if, at the beginning of the story, the mother herself is just about to exit the narrative because she is at death's door: 'A rich man's wife fell sick, and, feeling that her end was near, she called her only daughter to her bedside.' (*Burning Your Boats* 391)

By beginning with a "But", Carter creates the feeling in the reader of walking into the middle of a reflection or a conversation. By centering each of the successive tales on the mother, Carter brings the story back to the idea of intergenerational conflict. This is also present in "The Werewolf" where a granddaughter ends up cannibalizing her grandmother (109-110) and in "The Snowchild", where the younger, soundless girl is perceived as a threat to the countess (91). It is no coincidence that these dramas take place within very patriarchal frameworks. While the father and the suitor are outlined as superfluous to the plot, it is their very presence that speeds events up in the story (391). Carter notes that the father is only a biological and textual necessity in the plot which centers around the drama between women:

In the drama between two female families in opposition to one another because of their rivalry over men (husband/father, husband/son), the men

seem no more than passive victims of their fancy, yet their significance is absolute because it is ('a rich man', 'a king's son') economic. (390)

This is an important indicator of Carter's belief: that most of the stereotypes and archetypes relating to the sexes arose merely out of economic necessity (*The Sadeian Woman* 6). The idea of certain themes within fairytales being the result of intergenerational conflict has been discussed before. An important instance is Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic*, where the idea of a patriarchal base being the source of the conflict between the two main women in Snow White was dealt with (38).

This intergenerational conflict gains a different sort of resonance in Carter's retelling of Cinderella within the framework of three stories in one. One of the primary reasons for this is Carter's startling technique of retelling it as though it is a dialogue or monologue of a potential storyteller trying to figure out (as well as remember) the motifs in the tale. In the process, she also introduces elements of other fairytales, primarily Beauty and the Beast, as may be seen from this excerpt:

This is the essential plot device introduced by the father: he says, 'I am about to take a business trip. What presents would my three girls like me to bring back for them?'

Note that: his three girls.

It occurs to me that perhaps the stepmother's daughters were really, all the time, just as much his Ashputtle, his 'natural' daughters, as they say, as

though there is something inherently unnatural about legitimacy. (*Burning Your Boats* 392)

Carter proceeds to take the reader through the thought processes of a storyteller trying to decide how she would retell the Ashputtle story although she does not particularly remember all the details (392). The story changes in all three versions. The first tale is similar in flavour to the Cinderella told by the Brothers Grimm, because there is both a tree and a turtledove, embodying the mother of the girl. However, Carter changes the meaning of the Grimms' text by likening the shoe which the girl has to put her foot through as an "open wound" (394). By doing so Carter links the shoe, which is Cinderella's ticket to another life, to the bloodied feet of her stepsisters which have stained the slipper. The hacked off big toe or heel almost seems to be a sacrificial offering in this tale, anointing yet another portal of transformation. Ashputtle places her foot in because her mother, embodied as a cooing turtle-dove, urges her on. Her foot is described as being

the size of the bound foot of a Chinese woman, a stump. Almost an amputee already, she put her tiny foot in it.

'Look! Look!' cried the turtle dove in triumph, even while the bird betrayed its ghostly nature by becoming progressively more and more immaterial as Ashputtle stood up in the shoe and commenced to walk around. Squelch, went the stump of the foot in the shoe. Squelch. 'Look!' sang out the turtle dove. 'Her foot fits the shoe like a corpse fits the coffin!' (394)

The coffin is of course symbolic of the cocoon of patriarchy and the wound is an image that can also be found in “Wolf-Alice”. It is interesting that the correlation between the womb and the tomb is also found in this tale¹⁸. In the first account, Ashputtle is made to step into a bloody shoe, a “hideous receptacle, this open wound, still slick and warm as it is” (*Burning Your Boats* 394) so that she can be fit to marry the prince whilst in the third account of this segmented story, Ashputtle is instead made to step into her mother’s coffin (396) in order to ride out of the story and into her future. These actions smack of ritual, and Ashputtle’s womb (symbolized by the shoe which leads to marriage) has been made synonymous with the coffin in the third account.

The mother in all three of the tales is the prime mover of the events, but she also consigns her daughter to doom in order to replace the mother’s position in the patriarchal wheel of life. This is made even more resonant in the third tale where the girl has to literally step into her mother’s coffin in order to get away (396). But this is where the discourse changes because of its very ambiguity. There is neither father nor prince in this tale, only the abusive stepmother, the dead mother and the girl who has her face burnt. Her mother rescues her in a rather bizarre fashion after kissing the scar away and asking her to put on a red dress, and to later step into her coffin, which turns into a coach, telling her daughter to “Go and seek your fortune”(396).

The open-ended possibilities of the final tale and the mother’s parting words is the thrust of all three sections of “Ashputtle”, particularly because there is no prince or ex-potential stepfather

to be married¹⁹. The girl, armed with the knowledge of the mother she replaces rides off into an undefined future.

Victor Turner, in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* equates this stage in ritual with Van Gennep's "threshold" or "liminal" stage (94) and comments that "liminal *personae* ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous" (95) because they have to operate outside of the "network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space" (95). I read these classifications as encompassing archetypes and stereotypes. The ambiguity of the protagonists in Carter's tales and the very fact that male/female, animal/human entities are interchangeable reinforces the transformation factor in the tales. Turner goes on to comment that:

Thus, liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon (95)

Within the context of *Ashputtle*, this apprehending of liminality is something which can only gain meaning and relevance when cross-referred with the preceding two tales. Sleuth-like, the narrator of *Ashputtle* manages to reinterpret and unveil the bare bones of the story. This reinterpretation is part of the storytelling process that Carter puts to good use, that of repetition with progressive variants.

It is significant that the narrator is actively present in this tale. It speaks volumes of the fact that this “narrator” is also a character, and her internal viewpoint and reflections have very much to do with why the tale evolves in each variation. It can be sensed as the narrator works out the different possibilities which the tale could take, and questions either herself or her reader (391). It reminds the reader that we are entering the story through the perception and consciousness of this literary narrator. This reminder causes the reader to be more aware that an opinion, or a point, is about to be made.

An example is this particular passage where the narrator of “Ashputtle” reviews the motivations of the tale’s *dramatis personae*, and how she is going to approach the retelling:

It occurs to me that perhaps the stepmother’s daughters were really, all the time, his own daughters, just as much his own daughters as Ashputtle, his ‘natural’ daughters, as they say, as though there is something inherently unnatural about legitimacy. That would realign the forces in the story. It would make his connivance with the ascendancy of the other girls more plausible. It would make the speedy marriage, the stepmother’s hostility, more probable.

But it would also transform the story into something else, because it would provide motivation, and so on; it would mean I’d have to provide a past for all these people, that I would have to equip them with three dimensions, with tastes and memories, and I would have to think of things for them to eat and

wear and say. It would transform 'Ashputtle' from the bare necessity of fairy tale, with its characteristic copula formula, 'and then', to the emotional and technical complexity of bourgeois realism. They would have to learn to think.

Everything would change.

I will stick with what I know. (392)

The narrative is very deliberate, and thoughtful, like that of someone fashioning a story, letting the reader know that we are not really dealing with characters per se, but concepts. A cue is when she says that to provide "motivation" would "transform the story into something else" (392). Carter's narrator then proceeds to outline the first tale within this narrative, which, as I have stated above, sounds like Beauty and the Beast, with a prince and a ball, rather than a Beast in an enchanted castle.

Because much of the fairytale genre has to do with the bare outlines of a tale, Carter sticks to that in "Ashputtle". However, she also makes a point of letting us know that her characters are not much more than plot devices and carriers of her agenda. We can therefore consider the slim confines of this three-in-one tale as a "discourse space" as explained by Seymour Chatman in *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* :

Thus, discourse-space as a general property can be defined as *focus of spatial attention*. It is the framed area to which the implied audience's attention is directed by the discourse, that portion of the total story-space that is "remarked" or closed in upon, according to the requirements of the medium,

through a narrator or through the camera eye – literally, as in film, or figuratively, as in verbal narrative.

How do verbal narratives induce mental images in story-space? One can think of at least three ways: the direct use of verbal qualifiers ("huge," "torpedo-shaped," "shaggy") reference to existents whose parameters are "standardized," by definition, that is, carry their own qualifiers ("skyscraper," "1940 Chevrolet coupe," "silver-mink coat"); and the use of comparison with such standards ("a dog as big as a horse"). (102)

More than one fairytale seems to coexist side by side in each one of Carter's 'fairytales', and certain theriomorphic attributes, such as leonine or lupine aspects seem to be present in almost all of her fairytales. These are presented within the discourse space or structure through the qualifiers Chatman has mentioned. The qualifiers encapsulate referents to "mane" or bestial aspects, or even the architecture of the different buildings in each tale. I believe it to be a very important cue into the narrative structure of Carter's tales. I would therefore contend that the reason for the apparent symmetry in tales scattered through different anthologies is because Carter uses the same imagery and plotlines as signifiers as well as possible metaphors for succeeding tales.

I believe Carter has created a sort of internal structure or mythology within her texts, which is nowhere more apparent than in the startling recurrence of ritualistic motifs in more than one tale. This is very evident in the third section of *Ashputtle*. In that tale, the red dress and the

ritualistic stepping into the coffin (396) are all cues towards the earliest recorded version of “Red Riding Hood”, namely, “The Story of Grandmother”. “The Story of Grandmother” outlines a matrilineal rite of passage (cited in Tatar, 10) and is one of the earliest variants of “Red Riding Hood” featuring a more resourceful heroine. It is interesting to note that red is the colour of menses, a fact Carter was aware of and utilized in “Master” (which is also explored in this chapter).

In “The fragile frames of *The Bloody Chamber*,” Lucie Armitt notes that the “chosen narrative form and structure contribute to” the “ideological reorientation” faced by readers of that anthology (89). She comments:

It is not simply the characters themselves (and the transformative potential of their bodily metamorphoses) that free up new and anti-conventional readings of women’s pleasure. The stories comprising *The Bloody Chamber* are also (inter) textual metamorphoses of both the fairy-tale and each other. (89)

As noted earlier, Armitt, Kaiser and Bacchilega have all written their conclusions on Carter’s intertextual strategies within the context of *The Bloody Chamber*. I find it interesting that Armitt has touched upon the cross-referring of the tales in order to facilitate a metamorphosis of a corporeal kind. I have also earlier noted that the illusion of coherence may well be the result of Carter’s use of images and language in order to create a metaphoric universe. This metamorphosis gains currency beyond the inter-connecting of tales within *The Bloody Chamber* trilogy, granting her tales a unique mythic significance. Margaret Atwood, in

“Running with the Tigers” summarizes this aptly by stating that “to combat traditional myths about the nature of woman,” Carter creates “other, more subversive ones” (122).

An example of this is “Master” which is told in a third person narrative. It appears in a prior anthology to *The Bloody Chamber, Fireworks: Nine Profane Pieces*. There are allusions here to both “Beauty and the Beast” and “Red Riding Hood”, set deep in the forests of the Amazon. The “Master” is an English hunter or poacher who comes to South America in order to hunt the jaguar. The jaguar is also the totem of the tribe from which he buys a young girl. He is described as a violent and sadistic man, who kills animals not for money, but for pleasure (75).

The difference between the man and the girl foreshadows not only the events in “The Bloody Chamber” but also those in “The Erl King”. The girl is called Friday (77) after the day he purchased her. This is an interesting reference to Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. Friday was raised in a tribe very close to nature, bearing a different world-view from the colonial intruder as is evident in this excerpt which also shows imprints of Carter’s authorial tone:

The beliefs of her tribe had taught her to regard herself as a sentient abstraction, an intermediary between the ghosts and the fauna, so she looked at her purchaser’s fever-shaking, skeletal person with scarcely curiosity, for he was to her no more yet no less surprising than any other gaunt manifestation of the forest. If she did not perceive him as a man, either, that was because her cosmogony admitted no essential difference between herself

and the beasts and the spirits, it was so sophisticated. Her tribe never killed; they only ate roots.

(Burning Your Boats 77)

This is contrasted with the bloodletting and meat-eating qualities of the hunter who is the male protagonist in this tale:

He taught her to eat the meat he roasted over his camp fire and, at first, she did not like it much but dutifully consumed it as though he were ordering her to partake of a sacrament for, when she saw how casually he killed the jaguar, she soon realised he was death itself. Then she began to look at him with wonder for she recognized immediately how death had glorified itself to become the principle of his life. But when he looked at her, he saw only a piece of curious flesh he had not paid much for. (77)

The story highlights a distinct sense of opposites that will come to be resolved in the enclosed space of the forest: the predator and the prey, male and female, civilization and the wild. These opposites are ultimately blurred by the transformation that takes place within the narrative. The site in which the girl seems to undergo some sort of theriomorphic transformation belongs to the mythology of her people. She becomes something akin to the totem of her tribe, the jaguar, which the “Master” hunts (80). In this tale, as opposed to “Wolf-Alice”, there is a female protagonist who slowly reverts to the wild even as she takes on the hunting (seemingly

civilized) habits of the “Master”. It is possible that the abusive presence of the male protagonist is an agent in this reversion or transformation, but also equally possible that it could be a latent trait in the girl which manifests in conditions of extreme adversity.

Of any of these possible interpretations, one thing is certain: the process of transformation itself speaks of a type of ritualized process which is foreshadowed in various ways. A suggestion of the ritual may be discerned from the narrator’s reference to the girl’s eating of meat as though partaking of a sacrament. It may also be found in the mention of the rituals and beliefs of her animal-respecting tribe which Carter portrays as being more sophisticated than the British hunter, who is half-crazed from fever and his own animalistic nature. The description of Friday is powerful and contains several indicators of how she is viewed by the narrator:

She wore a vestigial slip of red cotton twisted between her thighs and her long, sinuous back was upholstered in cut velvet, for it was whorled and ridged with the tribal markings incised on her when her menses began – raised designs like the contour map of an unknown place. The women of her tribe dipped their hairs in liquid mud and then wound their locks into long curls around sticks and let them dry in the sun until each one possessed a hairdo of rigid ringlets the consistency of baked, unglazed pottery, so she looked as if her head was surrounded by one of those spiked haloes allotted to famous sinners in Sunday-school picture books. Her eyes held the gentleness and the despair of those about to be dispossessed; she had the

immovable smile of a cat, which is forced by physiology to smile whether it wants to or not. (77)

The girl seems to be something confined not only by the actions of the Master, but also by her own family. Her entire being is composed like either a gracefully suffering martyr or a sinner. The fact that her father sells her for the price of a spare tyre adds to the drama of this situation. It also bears considerable resemblance to the plotline of "Beauty and the Beast". I would therefore read this tale as another cultural variant of the "Beauty and the Beast" tale, with the role of the Beast played by a mad colonial hunter and the role of Beauty played by a Native American tribal girl.

The difference is that despite Friday's role of martyr within this framework she possesses strong ties to both nature and the wilderness, which the Master (although bestial in nature) does not have. By comparing Friday to a cat and later to a jaguar, Carter juxtaposes the different theriomorphic attributes in both male and female protagonists. The animal-like behaviour of the Master in his brutal killing of the creatures of the forest and his rape and abuse of Friday is highlighted even more by the way Carter portrays the other male in this tale, like a twisted version of the Big Bad Wolf in "Red Riding Hood":

His half-breed guide would often take one of the brown girls who guilelessly offered him her bare, pointed breasts and her veiled, limpid smile and, then and there, infect her with the clap to which he was a chronic martyr in the

bushes at the rim of the clearing. Afterwards, licking his chops with remembered appetite, he would say to the hunter 'Brown meat, brown meat.'

(76)

The theriomorphic allusions can be seen in his "licking his chops" which is a figure of speech usually assigned to animals (particularly of a lupine nature). The Master is the first predator glimpsed in this Amazonian landscape, a particularly dangerous one, because he is the white colonial to whom the coloured inhabitants of the forest are nothing more than "meat". The other predator is the half-breed guide who is also portrayed as a bestial, wolfish creature. He may not gobble up his victims like the wolf of fairytales, but he does sexually cannibalize them by using them and infecting them with his venereal disease.

Into this scenario comes Friday who also plays the role of Red Riding Hood since she wears red upon her person. This red comes in the shape of a kind of loin cloth which has been described as 'vestigial', as though there used to be more of that red cloth which could also be described as the rag used for her menses. This is comparable with "The Company of Wolves" where the wise child who is also the Red Riding Hood in this scenario wears a

red shawl that, today, has the ominous if brilliant look of blood on snow. Her breasts have just begun to swell; her hair is like lint, so fair it hardly makes a shadow on her pale forehead; her cheeks are an emblematic scarlet and white and she has just started her woman's bleeding, the clock inside her that will strike, henceforward, once a month. (*The Bloody Chamber* 113)

The linking of the red of the cloak with the girl's menses are elements also found in "Master". Although this may be the only point in the tale where there is this linkage to "Red Riding Hood", it inducts the reader into Friday's traumatic and perilous journey into the forests of her homeland as well as her eventual emancipation. It is no coincidence that the event of her emancipation incorporates the theriomorphic metamorphoses she undergoes. Such elements have also been found in tales such as "The Tiger's Bride", "Peter and the Wolf" and "Wolf-Alice".

In many ways, the Master is the predecessor of the Marquis in "The Bloody Chamber" in his sadistic and world-negating outlook (35). Similarly, "Master" brings his own form of civilization into the woods but is finally killed by Friday, the previously gentle woman-child he inducted into the rites of pain. He is a colonizer who needs to either conquer or destroy when he is confronted by the Other, represented by both Friday and the forest:

His heart leapt with ecstatic fear and longing when he saw how nothing but beasts inhabited the interior. He wanted to destroy them all so that he would feel less lonely, and, in order to penetrate this absence with his annihilating presence, he left the jeep behind [...] (*Burning Your Boats* 78)

The negating presence of "Master" is rendered all the more relevant by the cultural implications of the tale. Patriarchy in this story is synonymous with colonialism and slavery, which is

evident by the title of the story itself. He is “Master” or “mas-tuh”(80) because he possesses the creatures in the tale by destroying them, raping the forest even as he rapes Friday.

I have linked the different stories to show how intertextuality works to highlight the same fairytale motifs, modified in order to create context and therefore meaning. One of the most important of these is the trope of wilderness that runs through each narration, and how it transforms the conditions found at the opening of each tale. This invites the reader to infer a transformation which is a disruption of usual fairytale outcomes. One way in which this disruption is facilitated is through another important ingredient within Carter’s rituals of transformation, the enclosures which are synonymous with both the “Bloody Chamber” of Carter’s anthology of the same name as well as the labyrinthine intersections of the Gothic. In Chapter 3, I will look at the relevance and significance of these enclosures to both the anthropomorphic/theriomorphic tropes in the tales and the rituals within them.