THE SATANIC LEGACY OF *PARADISE LOST*:

THE ROMANTIC-MILTONIC DEVIL IN POPULAR WESTERN VISUAL CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

The Romantic image of John Milton's Devil as a heroic rebel combatting the tyranny of an oppressive deity has had a lasting influence on contemporary Western popular culture, particularly horror film. In spite of the cultural popularity of this satanic villain-hero, scant critical attention has been devoted to the poet's influence on modern forms of visual entertainment. Only within the past few decades have works like Laura Knoppers and Gregory Semenza's *Milton in Popular Culture* (2006) and Eric Brown's *Milton on Film* (2015) begun to analyze Milton's place in popular Western visual culture. However, these scholars have largely disregarded Milton's presence on the small screen. Using Bryan Fuller's 2013 televisual adaptation of Thomas Harris' Hannibal Lecter series as a primary case study, my research focuses on the enduring presence of Milton's depiction of the demonic within the popular sphere. My project addresses how Milton speaks to these modern representations of evil and continues to resonate with audiences today.

This study begins by introducing the Miltonic Satan and providing a broad overview of his reception in the Romantic period. Following an examination of Mary Shelley's Gothic-Romantic refashioning of the figure in *Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818), the project briefly analyzes the poet's resultant influence on cinematic horror, which employs Miltonic understandings of good and evil in order to manipulate audiences into demonstrating sympathy for the Devil. The culmination of the present work is devoted to an exploration of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan's influence on modern figurations of the infernal in contemporary horror television shows like *Supernatural* (2005-2020), *Lucifer* (2016-2021), and especially *Hannibal* (2013-2015). The eponymous villain-hero of Fuller's series is figured as a modern-day Satan drawn from Milton's earlier representation of the subject; this Romantic Devil unites the Gothic past with the present to illuminate a bleak modern landscape in which the attraction of evil often seems to outweigh the allure of the good. Fuller's appropriation of Milton's Satan via the Romantics demonstrates the continuing resonance of Milton's work in the modern age.

The aim of this research is two-fold: to demonstrate that the study of Milton and popular culture is both pertinent and substantial, and that Milton's influence on figurations of the infernal in modern forms of popular entertainment has become a significant element of contemporary Western pop culture. By engaging with a variety of major texts that explore the nature of evil, this thesis not only serves as a study of Milton's evolving reception from the Romantics through to modern-day horror television. It also examines what this reception shows us about the shifting relationship between the concepts of good and evil.

RÉSUMÉ

La représentation romantique du Diable de John Milton en tant que rebelle héroïque combattant la tyrannie d'une divinité oppressive a eu une influence durable sur la culture populaire occidentale contemporaine, en particulier concernant les films d'horreur. Malgré la popularité culturelle de ce héros-méchant satanique, peu d'attention a été consacrée à l'influence de Milton sur les formes modernes de divertissement visuel. Ce n'est qu'au cours des dernières décennies que des ouvrages comme « *Milton in Popular Culture* » (2006) de Laura Knoppers et Gregory Semenza et « *Milton on Film* » (2015) d'Eric Brown ont commencé à analyser l'importance de Milton dans la culture visuelle occidentale populaire. Cependant, ces chercheurs ont largement négligé la présence de Milton à la télévision. En utilisant l'adaptation télévisuelle *Hannibal* (2013-2015) de Bryan Fuller comme étude de cas principal, ma recherche se concentre sur la présence de la représentation miltonienne de Satan au sein de la sphère populaire aujourd'hui.

Cette étude commence avec l'introduction du Satan miltonien et donne un résumé général de sa réception à l'époque romantique. Après une analyse du remodelage gothique-romantique du personnage par Mary Shelley dans « *Frankenstein : Or, the Modern Prometheus* » (1818), ce projet examine brièvement son influence résultante sur l'horreur cinématographique. La mise au point de ce projet est consacré à l'exploration de l'influence du Satan romantico-miltonien sur les représentations modernes de l'infernal dans les séries télévisées d'horreur contemporaine comme « *Supernatural* » (2005-2020), *Lucifer* (2016-2021), et surtout *Hannibal*. Le héros-méchant éponyme de la série de Fuller est représenté comme un Diable moderne tiré de la représentation antérieure du sujet par Milton ; ce démon romantique éclaire le paysage contemporain dans lequel l'attraction du mal semble souvent dépasser l'attrait du bien. Fuller s'approprie le Satan de Milton via les romantiques, démontrant l'adaptabilité de « *Paradise Lost* » à l'époque moderne.

L'objectif de cette recherche est double : démontrer que l'étude de Milton et la culture populaire est réalisable et que l'influence de Milton sur les figurations de l'infernal dans les formes modernes de divertissement populaire est devenue un élément caractéristique de la culture populaire occidentale contemporaine. En s'engageant avec une variété de textes majeurs qui explorent la nature du mal, cette thèse ne sert pas seulement à étudier l'évolution de la réception de Milton depuis les romantiques jusqu'à la télévision d'horreur moderne, mais elle examine également ce que cette réception nous montre sur la relation changeante entre les concepts du bien et du mal.

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The Hideous Progenies of *Paradise Lost*: Consuming Milton's Satan in Popular Culture

"A good case could be made that modern monsters have Milton's Satan as their great progenitor." (Twitchell 304)

"Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n" (*PL* I.263): such is the pronouncement of Milton's Satan to his fallen compatriots in the first book of *Paradise Lost*.[1] The Miltonic Devil's words resound across the harrowing depths of the underworld to inspire his beleaguered comrades to "make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n" (I.255). In this moment, readers new to Milton's seventeenth-century epic are often enthralled by the charisma of this captivating orator who appears heroic even in the face of defeat. The audience is first gripped not by the heavenly grace of a benevolent deity, but rather by an entrancing image of evil unlike any that has come before it. Milton thrusts Satan into the limelight and gives him some of the greatest lines in the poem. In portraying the Devil not only as a lonely rebel but even as an appealingly sympathetic deviant, Milton revolutionized the way in which evil could be presented in the Western cultural imaginary.

This innovative transformation of the representation of evil should arguably have secured Milton his pride of place in contemporary popular culture, particularly in terms of visual entertainment. If Milton's Devil is compelling on the page, then one can only imagine the impact this figure might have on screen. Yet no such cinematic manifestation has been achieved. In 2004 a nearly successful attempt to film a modern adaptation of Milton's epic was made by writers Phillip de Blasi and Byron Willinger, starring Bradley Cooper in the satanic starring role. The feature was to be produced by Vincent Newman in partnership with Legendary Pictures' Thomas Tull and Jon Jashni, and helmed by horror director Scott Derrickson.[2] Mindful of *Paradise Lost*'s

[1] All quotations from *Paradise Lost* are from Barbara K. Lewalski's edition of the text (Blackwell, 2009).
[2] de Blasi and Willinger's scrapped adaptation was not the first such cinematic effort. Brown credits Luigi Maggi's silent *Satana, ovvvero Il Dramma dell'Umanita* (*Satan; or, The Drama of Humanity*) as "a landmark in the history of

sheer length, lyricality, thematic content, authorial presence, and religious sublimity, Derrickson acknowledged that "[i]t would not be an easy movie to make, but it would be groundbreaking … It's really worthy of the attempt" (S. Adler). Although the director claimed the final screenplay would have "cover[ed] end to end the basic events of the poem" (S. Adler), Newman consistently advocated for a sustained focus on "what's happening with the archangels" more so than with Adam and Eve, since he viewed it as "a war movie at the end of the day" (M. Gross).[3] Satan would have dominated the scene in this visually-martial endeavour: echoing the spirit of the Romantic consideration of the Miltonic Devil, Derrickson explained that he "fe[lt] a lot of empathy for the Lucifer character in the beginning of the story" and would "want the audience to be sympathetic with him" in this new adaptation, since as "fallen" individuals, viewers could identify with the similarly fallen angel and learn "a lot about themselves" (S. Adler).[4] In spite of considerable press and public excitement at the film's development, the production was met with a number of setbacks, and ultimately cancelled. In light of this newest adaptive failure, Eric Brown has concluded that the epic is inherently "unfilmable" (*Milton on Film* 18).[5]

Milton on film," consisting of "the first successful attempt to adapt elements of *Paradise Lost* for the cinema on an epic scale" (*Milton on Film* 151-2). Other early examples include Bertram Bracken's *Conscience* (1917) and both D.W. Griffith's *Paradise Lost* (1912) and *The Sorrows of Satan* (1926). However, it was only in 1967 that John Collier famously attempted to mount his own comprehensive film adaptation of Milton's epic - but the project similarly ended in failure (193). Collier would later publish the prospective script as "Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Screenplay for Cinema of the Mind" (1973).

[3] Newman also recognized the difficulty in appealing to audiences with "a 400-some-odd-page poem written in Old English" – mistaking blank verse for a different language – by questioning, "How do you find the movie in that?" (M. Gross). Such comments reveal that while Hollywood may have had enthusiasm for the notion of a military film based in Heaven, a core understanding of the nuances of Milton's epic would likely have been lost.

[4] With reference to Derrickson's idea, Stanley Fish suggested that an effective story-telling technique would have been to "pull the audience in by giving them the kind of romantic rebel that is so easy to respond to, and then pull them up short and ask them to re-think the matter and ask them to think about why this figure has such appeal to them" (M. Gross). In this manner, one might more clearly encapsulate the allure of evil as presented in the original poem, as well as enable a deeper questioning of the thematic strands interwoven within Milton's text.

[5] Bloom (perhaps rightly) argues that Milton "requires mediation," therefore "[t]he blurred montages of our cinema would not accommodate *Paradise Lost*" ("John Milton" 117).

If the Devil of *Paradise Lost* has thus far proven unsuited to the large screen, then televisual adaptation may present one alternate avenue for exploration.[6] In fact, in 2017 it was reported that one such televised serial narrative was already in production: with reference to the project, executive producer Martin Freeman exclaimed, "*Paradise Lost* is epic, exciting, and surprisingly modern. And maybe the first time the devil gets all the best tunes!" (Clarke). Freeman's light-hearted quip seems to reinforce Harold Bloom's contention that Satan truly is "the greatest glory of the poem" (*The Western Canon* 172), in turn revealing the extent to which this depiction of the Devil has entranced the contemporary Western imagination. Yet even four years onwards, no further development on the project has been announced. It seems that the Miltonic Devil, enthralling though he has proven to be, is destined to languish with respect to direct adaptation in both the cinematic and televisual spheres. Laura Knoppers and Gregory Semenza's *Milton in Popular Culture* (2006) and Brown's *Milton on Film* (2015) even suggest that the continued failure of directors and cinematographers to faithfully adapt Milton's creations have obscured the poet's place in popular culture as a whole.

In lieu of adaptation, Milton and his Satan haunt the popular imagination by means of cinematic and televisual appropriation, particularly as mediated through the Romantics. The present work addresses the ambivalence concerning Milton's reception in popular culture by examining the Romantic conception of his Devil on both the big and, more importantly, small screens. Although Knoppers, Semenza, and Brown have already highlighted Milton's influence on popular literature and film, these scholars have largely disregarded his prominence on

[6] Derrickson ironically expressed the same sentiment with respect to his own attempted film adaptation: he notes that the movie would have "encompasse[d only] … a fraction of the poem … because you could make a 50-hour miniseries out of it if you wanted to" (S. Adler). As "the story of all things" (Barrow 6), *Paradise Lost* is correspondingly difficult to condense into one cinematic feature.

television.[7] This project thus highlights the enduring presence of Milton's depiction of the demonic in the popular sphere by exploring how this early modern poet continues to speak to televisual representations of evil today.

With reference to the now-cancelled Hollywood adaptation of *Paradise Lost*, Thomas Tull surmised that "if you [can] get past the Milton of it all, and think about the greatest war that's ever been fought, the story itself is pretty compelling" (M. Gross). Tull's comment is of particular interest – what would it mean to 'get past the Milton of it all?' The accusation seems to be that it is Milton himself who stands in the way of producing a cinematic treatment of the epic and its Devil. His status as a canonical poet whose works are rarely digested by readers outside of academia may be impeding the progress of popular filmic adaptation.[8] Unlike Shakespeare, whose texts have thrived in both the classroom and the popular sphere, Milton's writing has struggled to gain widespread appreciation by modern consumers outside of scholarly circles. Even within its own socio-historical context, *Paradise Lost* belonged to the polished realm of poetical achievement opposed to the 'low-brow' sphere of popular entertainment; as John Wesley opined, "this inimitable Work amidſt all its Beauties, is unintelligible to abundance of Readers: The immenſe Learning which [Milton] has every where crowded together, mak[es] it quite obſcure to perſons of a common Education" (3). Within the modern age of multi-media performance, some scholars question whether cinematic adaptation will oversimplify the complexity of Milton's work, while others fear that adapting the poem for popular consumption

[7] See also Albert C. Labriola and Edward Sichi's *Milton's Legacy in the Arts* (Pennsylvania State UP, 1988) for a wide-ranging collection of essays which examine the poet's influence on such cultural art forms as dance, opera, and sculpture, among others; and John T. Shawcross' "'Shedding sweet influence:' The Legacy of John Milton's Works" (in *A Concise Companion to Milton,* ed. Angelica Duran, Blackwell, 2007, pp. 25-42) for a general overview of Milton's influence on contemporary literary culture.

[8] After all, in the words of Bloom, "Milton's place in the canon is permanent" (*The Western Canon* 169). While his canonical status might safeguard his legacy, it may simultaneously complicate modern attempts to preserve his work in the popular visual sphere.

will detract from its literary value.[9] Certain critics already credit "[t]he move from the literary to the filmic or televisual … [as] a move to 'a wilfully inferior form of cognition'" (Hutcheon 3).[10] In the case of *Paradise Lost*, this 'diminishing' of the original work by means of cinematic adaptation would be deemed doubly disquieting due to its privileged canonical stature.[11] Case in point: while discussing Derrickson's aborted film attempt, Diane K. McColley quipped, "the idea of a film version of *Paradise Lost* horrifies me" (qtd. in Bjork 168). As one of the supposed bastions of the literary elite, Semenza avers that "there's the sense that Milton is the last figure that can be protected from the tentacles of pop culture" (qtd. in M. Gross).

In spite of critical attempts to 'protect' the poet from the popular arena, Milton nevertheless permeates the cultural sphere, albeit in a rather "distended" fashion (Brown, *Milton on Film* 8). Brown argues that the poet is "behind many cinematic treatments of free will and predestination, omniscience and omnipotence and human agency, the nature of evil, rebellion, [and] romantic revolutionary spirit … [however,] the attribution to 'Milton' is routinely subsumed" (7-8).[12] Stanley Fish rightly proclaims that for the attentive viewer, "everywhere you look in popular culture Milton is there" ("Afterword" 237), but in reality this influence passes largely unnoticed, since contemporary audiences often retain a diminished relationship with the

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[9] As Knoppers and Semenza contend, "[f]or some, safeguarding Milton against the encroachments of cultural studies and theory [i]s tantamount to defending the canon and Western tradition itself" ("Introduction" 5).

[10] In *Regaining Paradise: Milton and the Eighteenth Century,* Dustin Griffin notes that Miltonic adaptations "have been little studied as a literary phenomenon, perhaps because they have seemed a part of popular culture at best, a debasement or a dilution of the original texts" (62). Although Griffin's remarks are specifically geared towards eighteenth-century Miltonic adaptations, his comments are nevertheless applicable to the general anxiety surrounding Miltonic adaptation in the present day.

[11] Perhaps more discouragingly, nineteenth- and twentieth-century Milton criticism simply denounced the poet and his works as inherently unsuitable to creative adaptation. T.S. Eliot declared that "Milton's poetry could *only* be an influence for the worse … an influence against which we still have to struggle" ("Milton I" 259), while Bloom famously labeled Milton "the great Inhibitor, the Sphinx who strangles even strong imaginations in their cradles" (*Anxiety of Influence* 32). *Paradise Lost* is herein deemed unsuitable for popular culture since it is not in itself a creative inspiration, but rather a work which fundamentally stifles imitation and emulation.

[12] The popular conception of Satan in the Garden of Eden is one such example of the failure of Miltonic attribution. Brown notes that "[a]n Eden without Satan seems almost heretical, though he is never mentioned by name in Genesis. But so successful has been Milton's overwrite that it has developed into the master narrative, even as it has become ironically detached from him" (*Milton on Film* 7).

poet and consequently fail to recognize his presence in both literary and cinematic works. Thus those who maintain the greatest ability to distinguish Milton on-screen are the least tempted to do so, while the general viewing audience is often without recourse to the source-text and therefore unable to identify the poet and his creations when they appear.[13] However, as a canonical figure whose legacy extends for over four centuries, Milton is undeniably embedded in the Western cultural psyche. As Maggie Kilgour astutely observes, Milton "has become completely absorbed into our stories and our lives, turning into an echo which rings so constantly in our ears that we cannot always tell where the music is coming from" (*From Communion* 185). The poet's influence has so deeply penetrated the cultural imagination that he is almost impossible to escape, such that modern audiences often access his legacy first via other popular works.

As Linda Hutcheon explains, readers and viewers alike "may not actually have direct experience with" canonical works like *Paradise Lost*, but oftentimes "rely on 'a generally circulated cultural memory'" instead (122). In this regard, influential authors like Milton become available to later writers and viewers "not as a unified entity but as a network of cultural responses" (Elfenbein 6) most easily identified by means of either allusion or appropriation.[14] For example, the commercial for the film adaptation of Yukito Kishiro's *Battle Angel Alita* exhibited during the 2019 Super Bowl halftime show opens with the movie's villain pronouncing that he would "rather rule in Hell, than serve in Heaven" ("*Alita*"); this overt reference to *Paradise Lost* might be clear to academics, but it is unlikely that the broader viewing audience recognizes the

[13] Stanley Fish firmly places the blame for this failure to recognize the 'pop' Milton on "the scholarly community" who "has been insufficiently attentive to the continuing influence on popular culture of Milton's prose and poetry, perhaps … because too much attention has been paid to the influence of Shakespeare" ("Afterword" 237).

[14] Lucy Newlyn's discussion regarding the nuances of allusion is particularly valuable with reference to Miltonic materials. In the 1986 preface to *Coleridge, Wordsworth, and the Language of Allusion*, Newlyn observes that "literary allusion almost always seems intentional to those who perceive it, but the writer may originally have become aware of it himself only at a secondary stage, or never have noticed its presence at all … those [allusions] that are unconscious are no less valid or interesting to the reader" (viii). These sentiments are equally applicable to allusion within the cinematic sphere: the use of appropriation may be either conscious or unconscious, and oftentimes "the intertextual relationship may be less explicit [and] more embedded" (Sanders 2).

Miltonic referent. The motto itself may sound familiar - its origins, less so. Such an explicit Miltonic reference in popular motion pictures is already unusual, resulting in both literary and popular visual works alluding to Milton's text through even more subversive means.

It is Milton's Satan who provides the medium through which the poet is most frequently recognized in popular visual media. A self-reflective and protean leader whose "form had yet not lost / All her Original brightness" (*PL* I.591-2), the Miltonic Devil appreciates the existence of goodness and beauty whilst commanding a sinister charisma bolstered by a "potent tongue" and "perswasive words" (VI.135; IX.737). To borrow Andrew Elfenbein's terminology, this Satan has become an ever-present yet largely unrecognized "cultural phenomenon" (8): in many ways, the Devil of *Paradise Lost* has outgrown the story that produced him. Milton's revolutionary depiction of an entrancing evil that destabilizes conventional considerations of heroes and villains echoes in modern representations of sympathetic monsters and deviant fiends. As a result, it is possible to infer his presence even in works which trouble the question of evil without expressly referencing the Miltonic Satan. The present discussion is not, therefore, centred on traditional Bloomian discourses concerning literary influence and intellectual legacy; rather, the focus remains on how Milton and his Devil have become – whether consciously or otherwise - part and parcel of popular Western visual media. As demonstrated by the aforementioned Super Bowl advertisement, Milton's Satan has effectively been absorbed by pop culture and transformed into a shared cultural property.[15]

[15] As Joyce Carol Oates surmises, the "more potent the archetype" – or in this case, archetypal character – "evoked by a work of literature, the more readily its specific form slips free of the time-bound *personal* work" (35, original emphasis). Though her comments are specifically directed towards a discussion of Mary Shelley's Monster, in reality the sentiment is equally applicable to Milton's Satan. His Devil has become a "near-autonomous bein[g]," practically "linked to no specific boo[k]" and even "no specific autho[r]" within the popular cultural imaginary – he "ha[s] become [a] communal creatio[n]" largely divorced from his original authorial context (35).

In particular, it is the Romantic conception of Milton's Devil which reverberates across the cultural landscape.[16] Contrary to Percy Bysshe Shelley's assertion that Milton's Satan "could [n]ever have been intended for the *popular* personification of evil" ("A Defense of Poetry" 691, emphasis added), in reality the Romantic refashioning of the figure as sympathetic rebel has resulted in his continued prevalence in the popular sphere, particularly within the scope of horror. As the central figure in a narrative which concerns the infernal realm, it is not surprising that this version of Milton's Devil has perhaps most significantly been appropriated by the horror genre. *Paradise Lost* is a poem which, at its core, grapples with the existence of evil in a world fashioned by a benevolent divinity; as a genre then, horror appropriately serves as a framework with which to closely engage with these notions of good and evil to expose their nebulous natures. Brown even assumes in Milton "a kind of Virgilian guide to all things infernal," considering the poet and his creations as "signifier[s] for the diabolical" (*Milton on Film* 283). From Mary Shelley's Romantic-Gothic refashioning of *Paradise Lost* in *Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818), to Bryan Fuller's reworking of the Romantic Miltonic Devil in the television series *Hannibal* (2013-15), Milton's Satan has continued to shadow figurations of the infernal in both the cinema and the small-screen.

Early modern civilisation may have gleaned its values regarding the nature of evil from religious writings or poetical texts, but modern society receives ideas of evil most prominently through popular visual media. The advent of television in particular, which first allowed the cinematic to directly enter the domestic sphere, has "turned evil into nothing short of a ubiquitous

[16] Knoppers and Semenza have already proposed that "one important lens for Milton in popular culture is that of the Romantics" ("Introduction" 6), although their interest in the subject is not focused on Miltonic depictions of the demonic. They notably credit William Blake's innovative reversal of traditional dualisms – dubbed the "Blakean reversa[l]" – as the primary means by which modern "rewritings of Milton" are enabled "for an increasingly diverse and multicultural world" (6). However, I would argue that Knoppers and Semenza herein present an overly simplistic notion of Milton's influence and cultural legacy, since Blake is by no means the only - or even the main - medium through which Milton and his Satan are Romantically disseminated in popular culture today.

commodity for our consumption" (Norden xiii). This gluttonous ingestion of appealing images of evil can result in apathy towards its existence rather than awareness concerning its presence. Much as Stanley Fish's *Surprised by Sin* surmised that the appeal of Milton's Satan was a result not of the poet being "of the Devil's party without knowing it" (Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Plate 5, l.22), but rather that the character's attraction was a ploy to teach the critical reader to recognize the difficulties inherent in turning away from the allure of evil, so too does the portrayal of evil in film and television strive to "enabl[e the] audience to delve experientially into the world of sin and guilt" while being "protected by the vicarious nature of the medium[s]" (Norden xiv). However, in both cases the same danger remains: if evil is represented in too appealing a fashion, the reader or viewer may 'fall' for these alluring literary, cinematic, or televisual representations without appropriately realizing the danger involved therein.

This project therefore addresses the Miltonic Devil's Romantic-satanic legacy in order to ascertain the extent to which Milton's fallen angel continues to seduce audiences today.[17] The first chapter of the present work, "'[O]f the Devil's party': Milton's Satan and the Romantics," introduces the Miltonic Devil by providing a broad overview of his reception in the Romantic period. The second chapter, "'Misery made me a fiend': Elements of the Infernal in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein,*" turns to the Miltonic Satan's legacy in the aforementioned Romantic-Gothic novel. *Frankenstein* is the nexus through which Milton's Satan enters into the arena of popular culture, specifically with respect to cinematic horror; alongside Shelley's increased

[17] *Paradise Lost* is an appropriate text for this study due, in part, to its own intrinsic connection to the concepts of adaptation and appropriation. The poem itself reimagines the biblical Genesis. Just as modern critics fear the effects popular adaptation may exercise over Milton's legacy, so too did Andrew Marvell once dread that Milton "would ruine … The sacred Truths to Fable and old Song" ("On Paradise Lost" l.7-8). Knoppers and Semenza argue that "Marvell reminds us that daring adaptation is at the core of Milton's own artistic project. Such adaptations not only preserve 'things divine' but give them new currency and power for Milton's own time" ("Introduction" 16). On a related note, many critical studies of Milton revolve around the author's own appropriation of classical sources, from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and beyond. William Hazlitt observed that Milton "borrowed more than any other writer, and exhausted every source of imitation, sacred or profane" (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 381).

emphasis on the Devil's sympathetically solitary nature, her dissection of Milton's Satan into both imitative creator and monstrous creation further blurs the once-rigid boundaries between good and evil, transforming the Miltonic Devil into an ambiguous figure whose subversive presence pervades Western horror cinema. As a result, the third chapter, "Remembering the Monster: Satan's Legacy in Horror Film," examines a variety of cinematic treatments in the horror genre which engage with this Romantic heritage to bring Milton's Devil into the modern age. Works like *Frankenstein* (1931) and *The Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), *Se7en* (1995), and *Alien: Covenant* (2017) reveal Miltonic understandings of good and evil employed to manipulate audiences into identifying with the villains more so than with the films' protagonists.[18] The fourth chapter, "Sympathy for the Devil: Appropriating the Miltonic Satan for the Small Screen," shifts away from the big screen to explore Milton's Romantic-demonic legacy on the small one, focusing on modern televisual representations of the infernal in *Supernatural* (2005-20) and *Lucifer* (2016-21) that are indebted to the Romantic conception of Milton's Devil. The final chapter, "'He is the Devil, Mr. Graham': The Romantic Reincarnation of Milton's Satan in Bryan Fuller's *Hannibal*," uses the 2013 televisual adaptation of Thomas Harris' Hannibal Lecter series as a primary case study to determine the extent to which the Romantic Miltonic Satan has influenced horror television today. Through an examination of *Hannibal*'s satanically-inspired villain-hero and his relationship with his mercifully-destructive counterpart, Will Graham, this chapter demonstrates the near omnipresence of Milton's Devil in the cultural subconscious and

[18] Due to the constraints of the current project, the cinematic and televisual works under consideration will be solely American. The United States has statistically produced the bulk of major motion pictures since the turn of the century, resulting in the "cultural impact of Hollywood films" being "felt in virtually every corner of the world" (A. Scott). With respect to the horror genre in particular, Ken Gelder argues that America remains "the great modern centre of horror production, a place that has made a whole range of horrific texts, practices and rhetorics seem perversely representative of the national character" ("Part Eight" 253). Jason Mittell similarly remarks that "the global circulation of American television has made many [television] programs highly popular and influential" across the globe (*Complex TV* 9). As a result, a study of American horror movies and television shows will provide a targeted yet comprehensive examination of the scope of the Romantic-Miltonic Devil's presence in popular Western visual culture today.

the popular arena. *Hannibal* provides its audience with a Miltonically-alluring fiend with whom viewers relate on a disturbing emotional level, in turn revealing the dangers of representing overly-appealing figurations of evil by romanticizing the monstrous.

This project is not meant to serve as a linear history recounting Milton's influence on horror in popular culture, nor is it meant to discuss Miltonic appropriation as misreading, correction, or completion of *Paradise Lost*; neither does it strive to chronologically trace Miltonic influence through singular allusions or through pointed examples of conscious adaptation. Instead, it explores how the Romantic understanding of the Miltonic Devil has permeated our cultural consciousness. This study endeavors to provide one lens through which critics can view Milton's prevalence in modern society by exploring the ways in which the appropriation of his Devil has become a core, unrecognized element of Western popular culture. Shelley's *Frankenstein* and its cinematic progeny as well as Fuller's *Hannibal* all exist independently of the Romantic considerations of *Paradise Lost*; even without recourse to Milton readers and viewers enjoy these oeuvres on their own merit. Yet the lingering spectre of Milton's Satan nevertheless haunts these works. From poetry, to the novel, to film, and finally, to television, the Devil of *Paradise Lost* has embedded himself so deeply in the Western cultural imaginary that his spirit continues to animate popular visual entertainment today.

'[O]f the Devil's party': Milton's Satan and the Romantics

As Neil Forsyth remarks, "Satan is a character about whom one is always tempted to tell stories" (*The Old Enemy* 4). Milton was certainly not the first to tell the tale of the Devil, but his intriguing and charismatic representation of "The Author of all ill" (*PL* II.381) revolutionized the way he could be figured and later disseminated in Western culture. Although the Devil is considered to have been derived from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, in reality Judaeo-Christian scripture retains few overt references to the figure, while the conception of Satan as antagonistic adversary to the divine (and thus unequivocally evil) is largely a result of later post-Biblical commentaries and literary writings.[19] In the medieval period in particular, Satan would come to be represented in both literature and art as an all-consuming fiend with few recognizably human characteristics.[20] Yet unlike the infamous slavering monster from Dante's fourteenth-century *Inferno*, who "crunches" a "sinner" in "each of his three mouths … keeping three sinners constantly in pain" (*Inf*. XXXIV.55-7), Milton's Satan is instead introduced as an eloquently seductive figure who remains "exalted as a God … [the] Idol of Majesty Divine" even in Hell (*PL* VI.99-101).[21] As Percy Bysshe Shelley famously observes, "[t]he Devil owes everything to Milton. Dante and Tasso present us with a very gross idea of him. Milton divested

[19] John Carey remarks that in *De Doctrina Christiana*, Milton "collects all the available biblical evidence in a few sentences. It amounts to little more than that Satan is the author of all evil and has various titles" (160). For a more expansive history of the cultural and literary development of the Devil, see Neil Forsyth's *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth* (Princeton UP, 1987) and "A Brief History of Satan" in *The Satanic Epic* (Princeton UP, 2003, pp. 24-76); Robert Muchembled's *A History of the Devil: From the Middle Ages to the Present* (trans. Jean Birrell, Polity P, 2003); and Jeffrey Burton Russell's *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (Cornell UP, 1987)*, Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Cornell UP 1986), *Satan: The Early Christian Tradition* (Cornell UP, 1987), and *Mephistopheles: The Devil in the Modern World* (Cornell UP, 1990).

[20] The monstrous Satan of Dante's *Divina Commedia* is perhaps the most well-known literary example of this type of demonic representation of consumption. However, late medieval Italian frescoes were also famous for this kind of depiction of anthropophagy - for example, Giovanni da Modena's *Inferno* (ca. 1410), located in the Basilica di San Petronio in Bologna. In these frescoes and later illuminated manuscripts and paintings, the Devil would be depicted as having multiple mouths that endlessly consume the sinful, who are subsequently ejected from the same – or even less savoury - orifices. The notion of the predatory Devil is not relegated to Italy alone. Such representations can be found in a multitude of earlier medieval visions of the infernal throughout Western Europe, notably the anonymous twelfth-century *Vision of Tundale*.

[21] All references to the *Divine Comedy* are from editor and translator Mark Musa's *The Portable Dante* (Penguin, 1995).

him of a sting, hoof, and horns, and clothed him with the sublime grandeur of a graceful but tremendous spirit" ("On the Devil" 390).[22] It is precisely this image of the regal yet fallen angel which so appealed to writers in the Romantic period. This chapter will provide a general overview of the Romantic reception of Milton's Satan, and the resultant image of the Romantic-Miltonic Devil which would come to influence later figurations of the infernal.[23]

Although belief in the Devil was in sharp decline by the close of the eighteenth century, Peter Schock notes that the Romantics nevertheless "exhibi[t] a resurgent fascination with the Satanic," reviving the figure of Satan "in the form of a modern myth" (*Romantic Satanism* 2).[24] This was due, in large part, to the prodigious cultural authority wielded by Milton throughout this period. *Paradise Lost* had risen to 'epic' prominence in the literary and cultural imagination of

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[22] One anonymous nineteenth-century reviewer of *Paradise Lost* further comments that "Milton receives, and certainly deserves, great credit for having formed the character of Satan so infinitely superior to the vulgar and debasing notions which prevailed in his time concerning him" ("The Two Devils" 150). Samuel Taylor Coleridge even goes so far as to write that Milton was the "most interesting of the Devil's Biographers" (qtd. in Steadman 258). However, it is worth noting that certain characteristics uniquely attributed to Milton's Satan – notably regarding his eloquence of expression – were first touched on by the Devil of the Anglo-Saxon *Junius 11* manuscript. The soliloquizing Satan of *Genesis B* despairs of returning to Heaven and therefore encourages his fallen comrades to "turn the heavenly kingdom from the sons of men" in retribution (VIII.403, English translation), endeavouring to use "lies and luring wiles" to ensure mankind's damnation and ultimate destruction (XII.588). See Elisa Ramazzina's "The *Old English Genesis* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*: The Characterisation of Satan" (*Analisi Linguistica e Letteraria* 24.1, 2016, pp. 89-118) for a more detailed comparison of the two poetical works, and Milton's possible knowledge of the text. Regardless, it is undeniable that *Paradise Lost* had a much wider cultural reach than the Old English *Junius 11* manuscript, resulting in Milton's dynamic and psychologically complex characterization of the Devil eclipsing that of the Anglo-Saxon poem in the Western imagination.

[23] For further analyses of both the Romantic treatment of Milton's Satan and *Paradise Lost* as a whole, see Leslie Brisman's *Milton's Poetry of Choice and Its Romantic Heirs* (Cornell UP, 1973); Peter Kitson's "Milton: The Romantics and After" in *A Companion to Milton* (ed. Thomas N. Corns, Blackwell, 2003, pp. 463-80); Lucy Newlyn's *Paradise Lost and the Romantic Reader* (Oxford UP, 2004); Jonathon Shears' *The Romantic Legacy of Paradise Lost: Reading Against the Grain* (Routledge, 2016); Nicola Trott's "Milton and the Romantics" in *A Companion to Romanticism* (ed. Duncan Wu, Blackwell, 2017, pp. 561-76); and Joseph Wittreich's *The Romantics on Milton: Formal Essays and Critical Asides* (Case Western Reserve UP, 1970). For a more general summary of the Romantic reception of the Devil, see Peter Schock's *Romantic Satanism: Myth and the Historical Moment in Blake, Shelley, and Byron* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2003).

[24] Peter McInerney observes that the "landscape of Romantic literature was obsessed with Satanic personalities," remarking that "[d]evils ranged everywhere … [and] sympathy for the[ir] party seemed to be the spirit of the age" (1). Aside from Milton's Satan, the most prominent demonic figure of note in the period was Goethe's Mephistopheles, whose alluring characterization in *Faust* (ca. 1790-1831) similarly influenced a number of later writings and dramatic productions. However, not only was *Paradise Lost* published over a decade earlier – and thus had a longer time to permeate the cultural imaginary - but Peter Schock argues that due to "the relative cultural isolation of Britain during the era and the late publication of *Faust* … Goethe's Devil did not influence English Romanticism until late in the second generation," and was often thereafter "seen through the lens of Milton's Satan" (26).

the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; according to Lucy Newlyn, Milton's poem had "acquired the status of a biblical text" in the "popular imagination" (*The Romantic Reader* 19), while Milton himself had become "a national resource … [and] a cultural symbol" whose works had been firmly established "at the centre of the English canon" (vii). In particular, it was the figure of Milton's Satan who would rise to critical acclaim, resurfacing not as the "monstrous Serpent" of the latter books (*PL* X.514), but rather as an imposing spirit ennobled by thwarted ambition who "had reassumed his archangelic wings" (Thorslev, "The Romantic Mind" 251-2).[25] Envisioned as the tortured leader of a failed rebellion whose "dauntless courage" nevertheless outshone the might of the "Eternal King Omnipotent" (*PL* I.603; VI.227), Milton's Devil comes to the Romantic age as a radical revolutionary whose ideological symbolism and mythic framework mark him as an appealing representative of the tumultuous political climate arising out of the fires of the French and English Revolutions.[26] The ostensible villain of Milton's epic would come to be viewed not only as a rebel worthy of approbation, but arguably as a hero in his own right.

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[25] Wordsworth notably condemned Satan's serpentine deterioration in his annotations to *Paradise Lost*, writing that "[h]ere we bid farewell to the first character perhaps ever exhibited in Poetry. And it is not a little to be lamented that, he leaves us in a situation so degraded in comparison with the grandeur of his introduction" (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 106).

[26] Vilifying the 'Other' by demonizing them – or rather, in this case, by satanizing them – was (and continues to be) a conventional practice within the political arena. The image of the Devil is traditionally used to "personif[y] the evil of the opposition, whether revolutionary or reactionary" (Schock, "Marriage" 446). See Ronald Paulson's *Representations of Revolution: 1780-1820* (Yale UP, 1983) for the use of Satan and related images of cannibalism and parricide as models to interpret the events of the revolutionary years, and Peter Schock's chapter, "The Cultural Matrix of Romantic Satanism" (in *Romantic Satanism,* pp. 11-40) for examples of late eighteenth-century uses of the myth of the Devil in both the French and British political arenas. However, Milton's Satan would come to be perceived not as a conventional marker for political 'evil' in the Romantic era, but rather as the ideal representative of revolution against an assumed authority. The Miltonic Devil would be employed as a means of exploring the nation's "own moral ambivalence, in relation to the problems of tyranny, of revolution, and of violence in a revolutionary cause" (Newlyn, *The Romantic Reader* 115) as well as to express "rebellious or unconventional political, moral, and religious values" (Schock, "Marriage" 441).

John Dryden was one of the first critics to label the Miltonic Devil a hero, although this heroism does not accord with conventional considerations of the term.[27] In his 1697 "Dedication" to *The Aeneid*, Dryden remarks that *Paradise Lost* would have been improved "if the Devil had not been his hero, instead of Adam; if the giant had not foil'd the knight, and driven him out of his stronghold, to wander thro' the world with his lady errant" (14). Dryden marks Satan a hero only within the formal sense of the term as applied to epic poetry, since the Devil does, in fact, succeed in his quest, counter to Adam (or even to Christ, as the poem concludes before his ultimate triumph over Satan at the end of days); the ethical superiority of the Devil is in no way implied, and Schock observes that "until the 1790s, the moral heroism of Satan is not considered, much less openly asserted, nor is he defended as a victim of heavenly tyranny" (*Romantic Satanism* 26).[28]

One of the most vivid and influential Romantic evocations of the Devil's heroism is contained in William Hazlitt's 1818 lecture "On Shakespeare and Milton." He argues that Milton "did not scruple to give the devil his due," noting that

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[27] There are many different meanings relating to the idea of heroism and heroic virtue, ranging from the classical, to the philosophical, to the theological, to the cultural, etc.; see John M. Steadman's "The Idea of Satan as the Hero of *Paradise Lost*" (*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 20.4, 1976, pp. 253-94). For the purposes of this paper, it is enough to highlight that the allure of Milton's Satan resulted in calls for his appellation as a hero within the Romantic period and beyond. Newlyn remarks that the modern reader can respond to the Devil "as 'Faustian hero, degenerating into villain-hero driven by ambition,' to Satan as Romantic hero, entering the garden of Eden, to Satan as Achilles, Prometheus, and Odysseus, and to Satan as Macbeth. All of these Satans are present" (*The Romantic Reader* 74).

[28] It is important to note that even within the Romantic period, few scholars would contend that Milton intended for his Satan to be considered the – or even a – hero in the poem. Kenneth Gross argues that "Milton could scarcely have believed in anything like a heroic devil, indeed that the whole structure of his religious thinking committed him to an ultimate deprecation of the devil as absurd or ungrounded" (319). Steadman adds that Milton evoked such heroic "standards" in the character of Satan "partly for the sake of epic decorum, inviting comparison with older heroic poetry, but primarily in order to discredit them" (255). Barbara Lewalski concludes that "by measuring Satan against the heroic standards embodied" in the works of classical epic poetry, "we come to recognize how far Satan has perverted what in him was (and in some measure remains) magnificent … [and] we become conscious of the inadequacy and fragility of all heroic virtues celebrated in literature, of the susceptibility of them all to demonic perversion" (78).

> Satan is the most heroic subject that was ever chosen for a poem … He was the first of created beings, who, for endeavouring to be equal with the highest, and to divide the empire of heaven with the Almighty, was hurled down to hell … His ambition was the greatest, and his punishment was the greatest; but not so his despair, for his fortitude was as great as his sufferings. His strength of mind was matchless as his strength of body; the vastness of his designs did not surpass the firm, inflexible determination with which he submitted to his irreversible doom, and final loss of all good. His power of action and of suffering was equal. He was the greatest power that was ever overthrown, with the strongest will left to resist or to endure. (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 384-5)

Hazlitt unequivocally contends that Satan is "the chief person in [the] poem" (385), a grand figure who even "sympathises" with the plight of his fallen comrades "who own him as their sovereign leader" (384). However, Hazlitt does concede that Satan's heroism is not without fault, remarking that while the Devil may not be "the principle of malignity, or of the abstract love of evil," he does embody "the abstract love of power, of pride, of self-will personified, to which last principle all other good and evil, and even his own, are subordinate" (384). Hazlitt's 'heroic' remarks thus largely rely on an idealization of the Miltonic Devil's grand aspirations and towering stature. He pronounces that "[w]herever the figure of Satan is introduced … it is illustrated with the most striking and appropriate images: so that we see it always before us, gigantic, irregular, portentous, uneasy, and disturbed—but dazzling in its faded splendour, the clouded ruins of a god" (385).[29]

For Hazlitt then, as for many of his contemporaries, Satan's heroic appeal is tied to

[29] Many of the illustrations accompanying *Paradise Lost* produced over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries helped to transform Milton's Satan from villain to dubious hero. Although Schock remarks that art pieces produced in the seventeenth century tended to "visually amplify Dryden's split conception of the Devil miscast as hero" by evoking his "heroic stature" while yet portraying him as a "grotesque demon" (*Romantic Satanism* 27) – as in the case of Henry Aldritch's "Satan Rising from the Flood" (1688), which features the winged Devil clothed in Roman warrior garb while retaining sharpened ears and horns – over the course of the following two centuries Milton's Satan would come to be depicted in an increasingly noble and sympathetic manner. James Barry's "Satan and his Legions Hurling Defiance toward the Vault of Heaven" (ca. 1792-95) and many of Henry Fuselli's etchings and engravings are notable examples of this trend. Following this period, Schock observes that depictions of Milton's Satan would no longer retain any bestial characteristics and the figure would rarely, if ever, be artistically represented in his degenerated state (33).

notions of the character's sublime stature.[30] Joseph Addison famously remarked that the Devil's "Sentiments are every way answerable to his Character, and suitable to a created Being of the most exalted and most depraved Nature" (381), while Samuel Taylor Coleridge observed that not only is "[s]ublimity the pre-eminent characteristic of the Paradise Lost," but Milton purposefully enshrouded his Satan with "a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendour, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity" (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 244).[31] Hazlitt admires Milton's description of the towering Devil "[i]n shape and gesture proudly eminent" (*PL* I.590-4) as the "[perfect] mixture of beauty, of grandeur, and pathos, from the sense of irreparable loss, of never-ending, [and] unavailing regret" (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 378).[32] In his earlier *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), Edmund Burke similarly praised the same passage as the prime example of poetic sublimity, claiming that

> We do not any where meet a more sublime description than this justly celebrated one of Milton, wherein he gives the portrait of Satan with a dignity so suitable to the subject … Here is a very noble picture [, which consists] … in images of a tower, an archangel, the sun rising through mists, or in an eclipse, the ruin of monarchs, and the revolutions of kingdoms. (II.4, p. 72)[33]

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[30] See Arthur E. Barker's "'And On His Crest Sat Horror': Eighteenth-Century Interpretations of Milton's Sublime and his Satan" (*University of Toronto Quarterly* 11, 1942, pp. 421-36).

[31] In the Dedication to *Don Juan*, Byron goes even further than Coleridge by "mak[ing] the word *Miltonic* mean *sublime*" (X.4, original emphasis). However, it is important to note that recognizing a character's sublimity does not necessarily excuse their nature. Notably, within the same passage that Coleridge praises Satan's sublime stature, he also condemns the figure's "intense selfishness, [his] alcohol of egotism, which would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven" (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 244).

[32] The Devil's sublimity also relies, in part, on the figure's captivating physical traits. As Mario Praz aptly notes, "[w]ith Milton, the Evil One definitely assumes an aspect of fallen beauty, of splendour shadowed by sadness and death" (58). Hazlitt remarks that Milton's Satan "has no bodily deformity to excite our loathing and disgust," thus any 'deformity' he may retain lies "in the depravity of his will" (385). For the majority of the poem Satan is portrayed as a 'handsome' Devil, and despite his physical degradation at the close of Book X, the image which tends to linger in the mind of the reader is one of fallen splendour rather than serpentine decrepitude.

[33] While Addison views the sublime "as liberating and exhilarating, a kind of happy aggrandisement," Burke perceives it as "alienating and diminishing" (Paulson 69), in turn reflective of Satan's multifaceted nature.

Alienated from his angelic brethren yet refusing to cede to the expectations of divine authority, Satan valiantly struggles in solitude even at the height of his depravity.[34] By the close of the eighteenth century, Milton's Satan would come to be seen "as an embodiment of sublimity" (Schock, *Romantic Satanism* 29), further entrancing the Romantic imagination.[35]

As Thorslev observes, while "[o]ne need not go so far as to say that … in *Paradise Lost* Satan is a hero … one must admit that he is at least heroic" (*The Byronic Hero* 109). Yet it is important to note that many of the Devil's ostensibly heroic qualities – fortitude in the face of indescribable odds, sublime poetic grandeur, and charismatic eloquence, among others – are, as Steadman argues, "morally neutral: they can be, and often have been, exercised for both good and evil ends" (255). Milton's Satan can be both deplored and admired, and it is precisely this mixture of the two which so fascinated poets and critics in the Romantic period. An anonymous article published in the *Knickerbocker* magazine in 1847 astutely summarizes the appeal of the Miltonic Devil, explaining that

[34] Not only is the Miltonic Devil a symbol of the sublime, he also reacts to other images of grand aestheticism. For example, Satan contemplates the "delight" he might have savoured upon his exposure to the wonders of Earth had he not been damned and is subsequently overwhelmed by Eve's beauty in the Garden, taking "Pleasure" in the sight of "her Heav'nly forme / Angelic" (*PL* IX.114; 455-8). The Devil's appreciation of the beautiful is similarly echoed in later representations of the subject.

[35] Schock observes that the "fascination with Satan's sublimity penetrated even the genteel popular culture of the era, inspiring one of the subjects displayed by Philip de Loutherbourg's proto-cinematic machine of the 1780s, the Eidophusikon" (31). Eric Brown discusses the topic at length in *Milton on Film*, in which he examines the concluding scene of the show, entitled "SATAN arraying his TROOPS on the Banks of the FIERY LAKE with the RAISING of the PALACE of PANDEMONIUM, from Milton" (72). William Henry Pyne described this "most impressive scene" as one which featured "a chaotic mass r[ising] in dark majesty," while another contemporary reviewer decried the "magnificent horror" of the sight which struck "terror and admiration on the mind" (qtd. in Brown, *Milton on Film* 73-4). A watercolour of the scene painted by Edward Francis Burney (c.1782) "reveals that de Loutherbourg's aim was to essay the Satanic sublime: the gigantic winged figure of the fallen archangel stands in the foreground, addressing the angelic host from a dais between the massive pillars of Pandemonium" (Schock, *Romantic Satanism* 31).

> [T]here is another sentiment, more powerful than pity, which takes possession of us as we proceed; and that is, admiration … Even while we condemn, we insensibly admire … In following [Satan] through his various adventures, we almost forget that he is the adversary of God and man; we forget that to him we owe our fall from happiness to misery; we feel a secret and undefinable interest in him; we tremble lest the angelic hosts who guard the garden should discover him; nay, it is by no means improbable that we would feel very much disappointed should he be frustrated in his dark design, so much are we absorbed by the admirable talent which he displays, and the extraordinary scenes through which he passes. ("The Two Devils" 154)[36]

Milton's alluring representation of the Devil was such that William Blake would (in)famously claim that the poet "wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels & God, and at liberty when of Devils & Hell" because he was "of the Devil's party without knowing it" (*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Plate 5, l.20-2.).[37]

Although Blake's *Milton* (ca. 1804-1810) may be the most overt reference to the Romantic poet's relationship to his epic predecessor, in reality it is his earlier *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (ca. 1790-1793) which has most contributed to the popular conception of the Romantic-Miltonic Devil. Throughout this work Blake continuously reverses traditional considerations of good and evil and the associated notions of the demonic and the divine, proposing, in effect, that Milton was "restraind" by the religious strictures of his time and thus forced to present Satan as the villainous Devil rather than as the uninhibited "Messiah" who opposes repression in all its forms (Plate 5, l.4; l.7). In so doing, Blake idealizes the active, creative, and revolutionary "Energy" of "Evil" as that which liberates humanity from the passive

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[36] The reviewer earlier remarks that "Satan … is always prominent; it is Satan's adventures that interest us; it is Satan's fortunes that we follow; and in short, whether it was so intended or not, it is to Satan that we involuntarily give all the honors of the hero-ship" (150).

[37] Blake's contentious statement has, to a certain extent, become the erroneous slogan for the Romantic consideration of Milton and his Satan. Christopher Small remarks that the common sentiment amongst modern-day readers of *Paradise Lost* remains that Milton was indeed 'of the Devil's party without knowing it' (59), while Jonathon Shears aptly notes that "[i]t may actually be the case that the contemporary view of Blake's relationship with Milton is still, at least outside the world of Blake [and Milton] scholars, most frequently reduced to t[his] enigmatic assertion from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*" (60). Blake's words have come to inaccurately represent the 'common' Romantic view of the relationship between Milton and his demonic creation today. However, they have also come to deeply influence modern Milton scholarship, as demonstrated in the works of critics like William Empson and Neil Forsyth, the latter of whom similarly posits that the demonic and the divine are intrinsically intertwined as each "resemble[s the] other like [a] mirro[r]" (*Satanic Epic* 347).

restraints of "Good" and "Reason" (Plate 4, l.5-6). Blake's Devil is thus developed "into a personification of infinite desire" (Schock, "Marriage" 458) who not only voices his own infernal revelations and presents the "Proverbs of Hell," but is even represented as the Satanic Messiah of the "Bible of Hell" (Blake, "A Memorable Fancy" l.29).[38] Geoffrey Brackett argues that "it becomes clear that the work is an infernal reflection of Milton's epic" which "inverts the theology Milton had explored" (59). Blake's poem accordingly concludes "with a satanic vision of worldwide political revolution, and an infernal figure in the role of liberty leading the people, an image unprecedented in any deployment of the myth of Satan in the Romantic era" (Schock, "Marriage" 463).[39]

It is predominantly the Miltonic Devil's inspiring revolutionary capabilities which so appealed to radical Romantics like Blake. Presenting himself as the "Antagonist of Heav'n's Almighty King" (*PL* X.387), Satan cries out against the "Bondage" of Heaven and courageously combats a seemingly oppressive regime which stifles the freedom of its subjects by keeping them

[38] Blake's idealization of Milton's Satan occurs primarily in his writings prior to 1794, following which the poet's focus seemingly shifts towards demonizing God more so than rendering the Devil divine. Variations of the Miltonic Devil and deity appear in such works as *The First Book of Urizen* (1794), *The Book of Los* (1795), and *Vala, or the Four Zoas* (1797), among others. In particular, the exiled Urizen has often been singled out as a prime example of Blake's echoing of Milton's Satan; Denis Saurat contends that even in the first canto, "we can see in Blake's work a transposition of Milton's into another world" (16). Schock goes further by claiming that not only does Urizen actually combine the figure of Milton's God with his Satan in order to create a more complex deity which "collaps[es] into a single agent the roles of rebel, usurper, creator, and oppressor" (*Romantic Satanism* 59), but Cantor adds that Blake "treat[s] sympathetically the figure who revolts against Urizen, the fiery Orc, who clearly embodies elements from the traditional image of Satan" (ix). See the chapters entitled "The Demonic Creator" and "The Myth Unbound" in Paul A. Cantor's *Creature and Creator: Myth-Making and English Romanticism* (Cambridge UP, 1984, pp. 29-54; 55-74). Schock further notes that the Joseph Johnson circle – whose members included William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Paine, and Henry Fuselli – was incredibly influential to Blake's "Satanic mythmaking," as the group "attacked the authority of the biblical myth of Satan" (43) and considered the figure not to be "the willful usurper that was eventually reduced to a groveling worm, but rather a personage of heroic grandeur" (van Luijk 70).

[39] For more on Blake's reconceptualization of Satan in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, see Fred Parker's "Blake and the Devil's Party" in *The Devil as Muse: Blake, Byron, and the Adversary* (Baylor UP, 2011, pp. 63-111); Peter Schock's "*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: Blake's Myth of Satan and Its Cultural Matrix" (*ELH* 60.2: 1993, pp. 441-70); and Joseph Anthony Wittreich's *Angel of the Apocalypse: Blake's Idea of Milton* (Wisconsin UP, 1975).

in a "state / Of splendid vassalage" (I.658; II.251-2).[40] The Devil refuses to "bow and sue for grace / With suppliant knee" to the "Tyranny of Heav'n" (I.111-2; 124), disparaging the Son's (supposedly undeserving) attempts to receive "Knee-tribute yet unpaid" which Satan derides as "prostration vile" (V.782). The fallen archangel rallies a third of the angelic host to his rebel cause by exhorting them to "cast off [the] Yoke" of bitter tyranny rather than "submit [their] necks, and chuse to bend / The supple knee" (V.786-8), urging them to fight for their liberty and so revel "[i]n freedom equal" (V.797). The Devil's radical heroism is thus conceived, in part, due to God's perceived tyranny, a notion that intrinsically appealed to supporters of the Revolution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Blake echoes this conception of God as dictatorial deity by painting him as "the original of evil, since He is the creator of a repressive order which invites rebellion" (Newlyn, *The Romantic Reader* 100).[41]

The conception of Milton's God as a tyrannical deity was further promoted by William Godwin in the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793). In the fourth book of the treatise Godwin admits that while the Miltonic Satan's "energies" may have "centred too much in personal regards," the Devil justly "rebel[s] against his maker" because

[40] Not only is God deemed tyrannical, but Milton's characterization of the Almighty also drew criticism for being seemingly lacklustre. McGann notes that, "[f]ollowing Pope and others, Byron criticized Milton's portrayal of God because He seemed altogether too mundane, and hence sounded ridiculous delivering His long theological disquisitions" (22-3).

[41] Both William Empson and Neil Forsyth respectively extend the argument that Milton's God is a tyrant in their critical writings. The former posits that the "the reason why the poem is so good is that it makes God so bad" (Empson 13), while the latter claims that "the Devil keeps God good" (*The Satanic Epic* 17).

> [He] saw no sufficient reason for that extreme inequality of rank and power which the creator assumed. It was because prescription and precedent form no adequate ground for implicit faith. After his fall, why did he still cherish the spirit of opposition? From a persuasion that he was hardly and injuriously treated. He was not discouraged by the apparent inequality of the contest: because a sense of reason and justice was stronger in his mind than a sense of brute force; because he had much of the feelings of an Epictetus or a Cato, and little of those of a slave. He bore his torments with fortitude, because he disdained to be subdued by despotic power. He sought revenge, because he could not think with tameness of the unexpostulating authority that assumed to dispose of him. (197-8)[42]

Godwin thus presents Milton's Satan as an intellectually autonomous revolutionary who alone is capable of recognizing the despotism reflected in God's rule, and thereby heroically resists the oppressive bonds of imposed authority.[43] Newlyn notes that for Godwin, "Satan is emblematic of innate human virtues, thwarted by adverse circumstance" (*The Romantic Reader* 102); after all, "[h]ow beneficial and illustrious might the temper from which these qualities flowed have been found, with a small diversity of situation" (Godwin, *Enquiry* 198)? The Miltonic Devil is further conceived as "a being of considerable virtue" due to his perceived benevolence (197), since Godwin argues that his revolt was inspired to achieve freedom for his "partners in misfortune" for whom he "felt real compassion and sympathy" (198). Through Godwin, Milton's Satan emerges as an altruistic leader who resists the arbitrarily assumed authority of a tyrannical dictator.[44]

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[42] Godwin's authoritarian conception of God is reiterated in the essay "Of Choice in Reading" contained in *The Enquirer* (1797), where he describes Milton's "ſublime poem" as one which concerns "the eternal vengeance decreed by the Almighty againſt the whole human race, becauſe their progenitor was guilty of th[e] black and deteſtable offence" of "eating an apple" (135). He goes on to argue that if readers were to consume texts like *Paradise Lost* without "the medium of prejudice" motivated by the notion that God is both loving and benevolent, they would realize that the Judaeo-Christian deity is in fact represented as nothing more than a "mercileſs and tyrannical … deſpot" and, therefore, such tales should "inſpire nothing but hatred" (135).

[43] Schock further notes that Godwin here reconceptualizes the Devil "as an embodiment of the fully autonomous intellect that discerns and rejects the radical injustice of a 'despotic' and 'assumed' power analogous to the arbitrary authority of prescription and precedent that governed England in the 1790s" (*Romantic Satanism* 2). Satan is thus aptly inscribed with a revolutionary bent suitable to the age, as he "embodies resistance to coercive, unequal institutions" and "emerges as a figure who perceives truth independently and struggles benevolently for a just order" (34).

[44] Godwin was not the only member of his family to appropriate Milton's Satan for their own revolutionary purposes. Mary Wollstonecraft also references the Miltonic Devil in an annotation contained in the second chapter of *A*

Godwin's anti-authoritarian sentiments are later elevated by Percy Bysshe Shelley in his unfinished "On the Devil, and Devils."[45] Shelley maintained a life-long fascination with Milton, having labeled the poet "the Sire of an immortal strain" and "the third among the sons of light" (*Adonais* IV.30; 36), classing *Paradise Lost* "[s]o far above all other Poems" that he deemed it "a sacrilege to name it in speaking of any other" since it remains "one of the grandest conceptions ever struck upon, by the imagination of man" (Medwin 262). In "Shelley and Milton," Frederick Jones claimed to have found 322 instances of Shelley either explicitly quoting or noticeably borrowing from Milton in his own works (518). Allusions to *Paradise Lost* (and, more specifically, to Milton's Satan) readily suffuse the Shelley canon: the poet includes direct quotations from Milton's epic at the forefront of such texts as *The Wandering Jew* (1810) and *Zastrozzi* (1810), and promotes the voice of the Miltonic Devil in the mouth of *Queen Mab*'s (1813) Ahasuerus – who revolts against "tyrannous omnipotence" by vowing "to wage unweariable war / With my almighty tyrant, and to hurl / Defiance at his impotence to harm," preferring instead "Hell's freedom to the servitude of heaven" (VII.93; 198-200; 194-5). In "On the Devil" Shelley emphatically states,

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Vindication of the Rights of Woman (1792). Early in the chapter Wollstonecraft is critical of Milton's depiction of "our first frail mother" (13), going on to describe how, "instead of envying the lovely pair [Adam and Eve], [she] ha[s], with conscious dignity, or Satanic pride, turned to hell for sublimer subjects" (18). She further describes "the grandest of all human sights" as the devilish "outcast of fortune, rising superior to passion and discontent" (18). According to Schock, both Godwin and Wollstonecraft "merged the heroic and humanized image of Satan … with their own revolutionary values" so that the Miltonic Devil "emerges as the embodiment of opposition to the power wielded by monarchy and patriarchy" respectively (*Romantic Satanism* 44). Godwin and Wollstonecraft's fascination with the figure of Milton's Satan is further reflected in the writings of their daughter Mary Shelley, whose work will be discussed in the following chapter.

[45] According to letters collected by James Hogg, Shelley was captivated by the figure of Satan from early childhood, having "t[aught] his infant brother to pronounce the name of the Devil" in his youth as well as having attempted to "rais[e] the Devil" while at Eton College (qtd. in Small 129). Shelley even attached a playful note to Elizabeth Hitchener when he forwarded her a copy of the appropriately titled "The Devil's Walk" which reads, "I was once rather fond of the Devil" (152). Shelley would later acquire the moniker "the Snake" among his comrades, "whimsically b[earing] the identity of a Satanic adversary of the religious and political order" (Schock, *Romantic Satanism* 25).

> Nothing can exceed the grandeur and the energy of the character of the Devil, as expressed in *Paradise Lost*. He is a Devil, very different from the popular personification of evil, and it is a mistake to suppose that he was intended for an idealism of Evil. Malignity, implacable hate, cunning, and refinement of device to inflict the utmost anguish on an enemy, these, which are venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; these, which are redeemed by much that ennobles in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonours his conquest in the victor. Milton's Devil, as a moral being, is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in a purpose which he has conceived to be excellent, in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy—not from any mistaken notion of bringing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the open and alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments. (388)[46]

Not only is Milton's Devil deemed 'superior' to the Almighty, but Shelley implicitly rejects the Miltonic deity's assertion that Satan was "made … just and right, / Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (*PL* III.98-9); since the Devil

> [W]as entirely made by God, he can have no tendency or disposition, the seeds of which were not originally planted by his Creator; and as everything else was made by God, those seeds can have only developed themselves in the precise degree and manner determined by the impulses arising from the agency of the rest of his creation. It would be as unfair to complain of the Devil for acting ill, as of a watch for going badly; the defects are to be imputed as much to God in the former case, as to the watchmaker in the latter. ("On the Devil" 394)

In short, according to the poet's Romanticized view of Satan's Fall, it "is not the fallen creature, but the diabolical Father who is responsible" (Parker 131). Shelley further contends that the Devil is worthy of "our sympathy and compassion," since God purposefully corrupted Satan's "benevolent and amiable disposition" by "turn[ing] his good into evil, and, by virtue of [H]is omnipotence, inspired him with such an impulse, as, in spite of his better nature, irresistibly determined him to act what he most abhorred" ("On the Devil" 395).[47] The Devil himself is thus

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[46] Shelley would echo these sentiments in "A Defence of Poetry" with slight modifications, writing, "Nothing can exceed the energy and magnificence of the character of Satan as expressed in *Paradise Lost*. It is a mistake to suppose that he could ever have been intended for the popular personification of evil … Milton has so far violated the popular creed … as to have alleged no superiority of moral virtue to his God over his Devil" (691).

[47] Shelley's remarks seemingly echo those of Hugh Blair in his earlier *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783). Noting that Satan is "the best drawn character in the poem," Blair argues that Milton "has not described him such as we suppose an infernal spirit to be. He has, more suitably to his own purposes, given him a human, that is, a mixed character, not altogether void of some good qualities. He is brave and faithful to his troops … he is not

"for ever tortured with compassion and affection for those whom he betrays and ruins," a notion which "Milton has expressed … with the sublimest pathos" (395-6).[48] The portrait which Shelley paints differs drastically from traditional considerations of the Devil as fundamentally and irrevocably evil, instead relying on a more humanized understanding of Milton's Satan which would come to deeply inflect contemporaneous rewritings of the figure, notably those of Lord Byron.

Byron's self-admitted fascination with Milton has been readily acknowledged by critics Romantic and modern alike.[49] In a conversation with Thomas Medwin, Byron is recorded to have said, "I am too happy in being coupled in any way with Milton, and shall be glad if they find any points of comparison between him and me" (qtd. in Wittreich, *Romantics* 523). Yet as is the case with Blake and Shelley, it is specifically the Miltonic representation of Satan which so appealed to the Romantic writer.[50] Robert Muchembled argues that Byron "ma[de] [Milton's Satan] the father of all rebellion and the classic example of the damned soul" (193), consistently alluding to the Miltonic Devil in the characterization of his own villain-heroes. Jerome McGann astutely observes that "Byron's gloomy heroes have long been recognized as the descendants of Milton's

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without remorse. He is even touched with pity for our first parents … He is actuated by ambition and resentment, rather than pure malice" (451).

[48] While Kenneth Gross aptly notes that Shelley is "most crucially" concerned with "disentangl[ing] the ideas of 'Satan' and 'evil,' to show that one does not own the other," (322), Percy Shelley does not entirely excuse the Devil's flaws. In the "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound,* he admits that "[t]he character of Satan engenders in the mind a pernicious casuistry which leads us to weigh his faults with his wrongs, and to excuse the former because the latter exceed all measure" (230).

[49] Byron would come to be well-known for his affiliation with the Satanic due largely to Robert Southey's attack on the "Satanic school" in *A Vision of Judgment* (1821), in which Byron is derided as the leader of a literary circle whose "productions breathe the spirit of Belial in their lascivious parts, and the spirit of Moloch in those loathsome images of atrocities and horrors which they delight to represent" and who "are more especially characterized by a Satanic spirit of pride and audacious impiety, which still betrays the wretched feeling of hopelessness wherewith it is allied" (769).

[50] Byron echoes the Romantic conception that Satan is the hero of *Paradise Lost* (though seemingly only insofar as the epic can be considered tragic poetry), remarking that "from *Aristotle* and *Rymer* … the *hero* of tragedy and ... a tragic poem must *be guilty*, to excite '*terror and pity*' … Who is the hero of *Paradise Lost*? Why Satan – and Macbeth, and Richard, and Othello, and Pierre, and Lothario, and Zanga?" (qtd. in Wittreich, *Romantics* 521-2, original emphasis). In "Reminiscences of Medwin" from November 20, 1821-August 28, 1822, Byron explicitly states that Milton "ma[de] the Devil his hero, and deif[ied] the daemons" (522).

Satan" (22). From the Giaour, who Peter Thorslev notes "has the air of the fallen angel, the gentle soul perverted, the mind born for nobler things" (*The Byronic Hero* 151), to the fallen 'hero' of *Lara*, a "thing of dark imaginings" who "st[ands] a stranger in this breathing world, / An erring spirit from another hurled" (I.xviii.314-6), to Conrad, who "forfeit[ed] heaven" and whose prideful "spirit burning but unbent, / May writhe, rebel" yet never "repent" (*The Corsair* I.252; II.x.940-1), to Manfred, whose "brow" is Satanically "[graven by] thunder-scars" while "his eye / Glares forth the immortality of hell" (*Manfred* III.iv.76-8), the majority of Byron's villain-heroes contain the seed of Milton's fallen angel and distil him into human form.[51]

Chief among the Miltonically-inspired traits exhibited by the Byronic hero is the self-conscious assertion of free will notably expressed by the Devil in Book I of *Paradise Lost*. While stranded along the burning shores of the underworld, Satan emphatically states that he possesses

> A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.
> The mind is its own place, and in it self
> Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.
> What matter where, if I be still the same,
> And what should I be, all but less then he
> Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least
> We shall be free[.] (*PL* I.253-9).

Schock argues that Satan's words amount "to a Satanist manifesto for Romantic readers" since "the fallen angel's declaration of subjective independence … is founded on his claim of autogeny – that he is 'self-rais'd, self-begot,' and metaphysically free of God" (*Romantic Satanism* 37).[52] In "The Mind Is Its Own Place," Thorslev stresses that the "increasing emphasis on the autonomous mind … and therefore an increasing emphasis on subjectivity and self-sufficiency,

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[51] All quotations from Byron's *Cain, The Giaour,* and *Manfred* are taken from the *Major Works* (ed. Jerome McGann, Oxford UP, 2008). For additional examples of Miltonic resonances contained in Byron's villain-heroes, see "The Metamorphoses of Satan" in Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony* (trans. Angus Davidson, Oxford UP, 1983, pp. 53-94).

[52] In spite of Satan's acknowledgement of "[t]he debt immense of endless gratitude" owed to the Almighty for his creation (*PL* IV.52), in Book V the Devil claims that he "know[s] no time when [he was] not as now; / Know none before [him], self-begot, self-rais'd / By [his] own quick'ning power" (l.859-61). As a 'self-created' being, Satan places himself on a similarly self-created throne equal to that of the divine.

on creativity, and on radical freedom" is reflected in the mindsets of Byron's villain-heroes (256), who mirror the Miltonic Devil's defiantly self-reliant proclamation of individual free will (*The Byronic Hero* 112). Yet by the same token, the Devil is trapped in a "Hell within him, for within him Hell / He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell / One step no more then from himself can fly" (*PL* IV.20-2); Satan's inner, private darkness appears to mirror that of humanity's, a notion which is reflected in Byron's characterization of his doomed villain-heroes. The culmination of this Byronic echoing of Satanic self-consciousness occurs at the conclusion of *Manfred*, when the eponymous noble refuses to accede to the summons of the spirit and instead proclaims that the "mind which is immortal" is "its own origin of ill and end - / And its own place and time" before departing into an afterlife ostensibly of his own creation (III.iv.129-32).

Perhaps the prime exemplar of Byron's appropriation of the Miltonic Devil is his *Cain: A Mystery* (1821).[53] Byron's characterization of Lucifer repeatedly reflects that of Milton's Satan, as does the titular Cain, who, in spite of his murderous actions at the close of the play is nevertheless presented as a rebelliously sympathetic outcast yearning for a freedom and knowledge that are prohibited to him.[54] *Cain's* Lucifer is an alluringly eloquent spirit who delivers speech upon stirring speech denouncing the validity of "the Omnipotent tyrant['s]"

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[53] Cain remains unnamed in Milton's epic, although his tale is recounted by Michael in Book IX.429-60 as a reimagining of Gen. 4:1-16. *Paradise Lost* focuses on humanity's fall as a result of man's "knowledge of Good lost, and Evil got" (*PL* IX.87), while Byron concentrates instead on Death's "first shape on man" (IX.466) as iterated in the story of Cain and Abel. Cantor contends that Byron's "mere act of turning from Adam and Eve to Cain and Abel suggests that Milton did not tell the story of the real fall. The act of eating the Forbidden Fruit was a crime only because God prohibited it. The murder of Abel, on the other hand, strikes us as an inherently criminal act … because Cain violates what we think of as a natural, rather than a revealed law, [thus] his story tells us much more about the nature of human evil" (135).

[54] *Paradise Lost* was clearly on Byron's mind upon composition of the text. Although in the "Preface" to the drama Byron remarks that he had not read Milton since his youth, he adds that he "had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference" (881). Byron similarly references Milton's epic when defending the morality of his play, arguing that "[i]f 'Cain' be blasphemous, 'Paradise Lost' is blasphemous," since Milton "certainly excites compassion for Satan, and endeavours to make him out an injured personage – he gives him human passions too, makes him pity Adam and Eve, and justify himself much as Prometheus does. Yet Milton was never blamed for all this," while Byron was "forced to keep up his dramatic character" but "made Lucifer say no more in his defence than was absolutely necessary, - not half so much as Milton makes his Satan do" (qtd. in Wittreich, *The Romantics* 522-3).

authority (I.138).[55] He is introduced in tones reminiscent of the sorrowful grandeur of Milton's Satan, bearing a "shape like to the Angels / Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect" who further "seems mightier far than them, nor less / Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful /As he hath been, and might be" (I.80-2; 93-5). Lucifer denies that he was created by God (I.141) and proclaims that he "tempt[s] none, / Save with the truth" (I.197-8), diabolically instructing Cain on the tenets of defiance and free will. Byron's Devil further denounces the "Indefinite, Indissoluble Tyrant" as a lonely deity who only "[c]reat[es] worlds, to make Eternity / Less burthensome to his immense existence / and unparticipated solitude" (I.53; 149-51). Paul Cantor remarks that "[i]n Lucifer's eyes, God becomes a bored tyrant, making worlds to relieve the tedium of His unending existence," ironically resulting in His inferiority "since the creature can feel sympathy and love in a way the creator cannot" (136-7). *Cain*'s Satan's further exhorts "a stirring rhetorical plea" for what McGann terms "one of Byron's deepest convictions: intellectual freedom" (21). Having earlier echoed the Miltonic Devil's notion that 'the mind is its own place' by stating that "the mind will be itself / And centre of surrounding things" (*Cain* I.214-5), Lucifer takes his leave from Cain by exhorting him to use his "*reason*" to resist God's "tyrannous threats" and instead "endure, / and form an inner world … where the outwards fails" so that he "[shall] nearer be the spiritual / Nature, and war triumphant with [his] own" (II.460-6, original emphasis).

Cain, too, retains certain characteristics exemplified by Milton's Devil, notably regarding his eloquence of expression. He is the first to soliloquize in the drama, and even without Lucifer's interference, he expresses doubt as to whether God's omnificence means that He must also be "all-good" (I.76). Cantor argues that Cain begins "as the noblest character in the play,

[55] At the close of Act II, Lucifer echoes Satan's words in *Paradise Lost* I.105-11 by claiming that he will battle the Almighty "through all Eternity" until "the great / Conflict shall cease," which only will if "he or I be quenched! And what can quench our immortality, / Or mutual and irrevocable hate?" (*Cain* II.432-42). Cantor further argues that one means of understanding Act II as a whole "is as a reply to the astronomy passages in Book VIII of *Paradise Lost*. Lucifer and Cain clearly transgress the Miltonic injunction to man" (141), opting not to "Think onely what concernes the[m] and th[eir] being[s]" by instead traversing the vast reaches of "highest Heav'n" (*PL* VIII.174; 178).

with high ideals and a deep-seated abhorrence of human suffering" (139); continuously questing for freedom, questioning the divine, and combatting the teachings of his parents, Cain ultimately undergoes his own fall and commits the first murder, becoming "a fugitive and vagabond on Earth" (*Cain* III.80). However, Newlyn astutely discerns that Byron "very nearly succeeds in justifying murder, simply by virtue of the intense sympathy which he awakens on behalf of his hero" since "[t]he appeal of Cain lies, as does that of Milton's Satan, in a love of liberty which is recognized to be at once courageous and self-destructive" (*The Romantic Reader* 115). Containing both a literal Devil whose characterization harkens back to *Paradise Lost* as well as a human 'hero' who evokes the essence of Milton's Satan, *Cain* embodies Byron's innovation of the Miltonic Devil and anticipates how, in turn, this Romantic representation would come to influence later figurations of the subject.

In *The Devil as Muse: Blake, Byron, and the Adversary*, Fred Parker provides a succinct summation of the Miltonic-Satanic inflections contained within the characterization of Byron's villain-heroes. He observes that these characters

> [A]re charismatic yet profoundly isolated figures, exiles or outlaws from conventional society, alienated by a combination of their superior nobility of mind and some obscure act of crime or transgression in their past. Their consciousness is withdrawn, inflamed, and brooding; the pain they carry within is never fully communicated, but expressed in part by the attitude of disdain, severe and superb, which they show to human weakness in others as in themselves … They are *fallen* beings … but tremendous in their fallenness: they can neither altogether regret what they have become … nor reconcile themselves to their condition, but vibrate between the poles of grim acquiescence and unappeasable rebellion. (113-4, original emphasis)

It is important to iterate that these figures were not meant to be taken as moral exemplars or models of appropriate behaviour; McGann argues that the "histories of the Giaour, Conrad, Manfred, Lucifer, Cain, Christian, *et al.* are records of guilt and suffering, and for this reason Byron was right to object when critics accused him of immorality" (22). Instead, these 'fallen beings' are meant to "forc[e] the reader to a more searching inquiry into norms for order and

value" (27). Byron's satanic hero does not reflect the Devil who is constrained by the moral and theological limits imposed by *Paradise Lost*, but rather "recalls … the Satan who has grown free of his text" (136), exemplifying how Milton's Devil would come to be increasingly 'liberated' from his originating epic and allowed to flourish in the Romantic cultural imaginary.[56]

The Romantic image of Milton's Satan is one of sublime and morally ambiguous heroism, couched in a rather more 'human' packaging which renders the Devil worthy of sympathy and even admiration. The Romantics developed his Devil into an ideological standard-bearer espousing freedom from all forms of oppression, a figure capable of shifting his representational values in accordance with the needs of any given time period, and one whose charisma can be echoed in characters both earthly and divine. The traditional divide between 'good' and 'evil' is further complicated in Romantic representations of Milton's rebellious angel, where the intentions of God and his celestial cohort seem less noble than those of His banished son. As Schock observes, "Romantic responses to [Milton's] Satan … break the fallen archangel out of [his] confining fiction, assimilating him to other fictive identities and giving him different roles in the process" (*Romantic Satanism* 36): now freed from the strictures of his poetic narrative, Milton's Devil leaps from the pages of epic to appear in a multitude of different genres and mediums, notably the Gothic horror of the nineteenth century.

[56] It is often the case that scholars conflate and equate the 'Byronic hero' with the 'Romantic-satanic hero.' Both arise from a similar lineage, harking back to the Miltonic Devil, but they are not the same in-and-of themselves. While the majority of Byron's villain-heroes are Miltonically- and Romantically-satanic, the same cannot always be said for the Byronic hero which follows after. The present discussion is centrally concerned with the development of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan, not the Romantic villain-hero as derived solely via Byron. For this reason, the terms 'Byronic hero' or 'Byronic villain-hero' will not be used in the forthcoming discussion. For a detailed delineation of the history and development of the Byronic hero, see Peter Thorslev's *The Byronic Hero: Types and Prototypes* (Minnesota UP, 1965).

‘Misery made me a fiend’: Elements of the Infernal in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*

The Romantic conception of the Miltonic Satan finds perhaps its greatest novelistic expression in the form of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818).[57] Shelley self-consciously borrows from *Paradise Lost* not only in the figuration of her Monster, whose solitary grandeur and mesmerizing eloquence blind the reader to his murderous pursuits, but also in the characterization of Victor Frankenstein as satanically transgressive villain-hero. As a joint Gothic-Romantic text, Shelley’s satanic appropriations build on the work of her poetic forebears by intensifying the aspects of sympathy, isolation, and infernal creation already included in the representation of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan, while further deconstructing the once-indissoluble boundaries between the notions of good and evil. Rather than categorically privilege the rebellious son over his tyrannical father – in the vein of Blake or Godwin - Shelley presents a more nebulous depiction of innocence and experience which relies on the mirrored relationship between the imitative creator and his monstrous creation. Through an in-depth analysis of *Frankenstein*, this chapter establishes the prominence of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan in the realm of Gothic horror, which will, in turn, allow for his corresponding influence and proliferation across the expanse of Western horror media.

Although the subtitle of Mary Shelley’s novel reads “The Modern Prometheus,” echoes of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* – and more specifically, the Romantic conception of Milton’s Satan – resound more fervently than do those of the Titanic spirit of Graeco-Roman mythology.[58]

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[57] All quotations from *Frankenstein* are from Marilyn Butler’s 1818 edition of the text (Oxford UP, 1994). Shelley’s original 1818 version has a less explicitly moralistic bent than its 1831 successor, arguably providing a more accurate representation of the shifting dynamics between the Monster and his maker. Although the 1818 edition will be primarily consulted over the course of the present analysis, the 1831 edition is not entirely excluded from the discussion. Butler’s text notably includes an appendix containing Shelley’s 1831 preface to the revised edition, as well as a breakdown of the most glaring changes between the 1818 and 1831 publications.

[58] Not only are both Prometheus and Lucifer considered the great rebels of the Romantic age, the two figures are often discussed in tandem since they possess marked similarities. Prometheus, who is credited by authors like Ovid

Newlyn argues that the text "is constructed along Miltonic lines, and is held together by a dense network of allusions, the meaning of which can emerge only from detailed familiarity with Milton's account of the Fall" (*The Romantic Reader* 43). Shelley herself was profoundly familiar with both *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* prior to the composition of *Frankenstein*: according to her journals, she read both works between 1815 and 1816 (*Journals* I: 62, January 30, 1815; I: 89-91, 1815; I: 96, 1816). In fact, reference to *Paradise Lost* occurs as early as the opening of the novel, since the epigraph to the 1818 edition of *Frankenstein* quotes directly from Milton's epic.[59] The 1818 preface goes on to note that the novel aspires to "innovate" upon tradition, singling out *Paradise Lost* "most especially" as a text worthy of admiration (3).[60] Joyce Carol Oates even goes so far as to propose that Milton's influence upon Shelley "is so general as to figure on nearly every page" (40). Writing in – and about – an already Fallen world, *Frankenstein* is arguably *"*the most pronounced imaginative recreation of *Paradise Lost* in the Romantic period" (Curran 218).

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and Horace as the progenitor of mankind, and by writers like Hesiod and Aeschylus as the castigated Titan who revolted against Zeus by bestowing the gift of fire to humanity, was transformed by the Romantics into "a symbol of their own aspirations" by focusing "on those stories which show Prometheus as a courageous rebel against divine tyranny and as the would-be benefactor of mankind" (Cantor 77). Percy Shelley notably conceived of Prometheus as superior to Milton's Devil in the "Preface" to *Prometheus Unbound*, since the Titan "is, in [his] judgment, a more poetical character … because in addition to courage, and majesty, and form and patient opposition to omnipotent force, he is susceptible of being described as exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge, and a desire for personal aggrandisement, which, in the Hero of *Paradise Lost,* interfere with the interest" (229-230). See Linda Lewis' *The Promethean Politics of Milton, Blake, and Shelley* (U of Missouri P, 1992); Thorslev's "Satan and Prometheus" in *The Byronic Hero* (pp. 108-24); and R. J. Zwi Werblowsky's *Lucifer and Prometheus: A Study of Milton's Satan* (Routledge, 1999).

[59] "Did I make thee, Maker, from my clay / To mould Me man? Did I solicit thee / From darkness to promote me?" (*PL* X.743-5). Adam may voice these words, but the underlying questions regarding creation, (in)gratitude, and personal responsibility are equally applicable to Satan. Anne Mellor notes that the quotation is present at the forefront of each of the three volumes of the first edition of *Frankenstein* (47), a purposeful repetition which serves to hammer home the prominence of Milton's influence on Shelley's text; however, it is noticeably absent from the 1831 edition of the novel. For more on the differences between the 1818 and 1831 editions of *Frankenstein*, see James O'Rourke's "The 1831 Introduction and Revisions to *Frankenstein*: Mary Shelley Dictates Her Legacy" (*Studies in Romanticism* 38.3, 1999, pp. 365-85).

[60] Much like the missing Miltonic epigraph, the 1831 introduction omits Milton when discussing the genesis of *Frankenstein*. However, Mary Shelley does admit that "[i]nvention … does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos" ("1831 Preface" 195). Shelley does not write in isolation; whether or not the debt to Milton is explicitly expressed, the novel nevertheless echoes *Paradise Lost.*

However, it is important to acknowledge that it is the Romantic revisionary readings of Milton's epic which most significantly inflected Shelley's work. As the daughter of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft - and the wife of Percy Shelley, as well as friend of Lord Byron – Mary Shelley was intimately familiar with the developing Romantic reception of *Paradise Lost*. *Frankenstein* is notably dedicated to Godwin, "[a]uthor of *Political Justice* and *Caleb Williams*" (2), who, as previously demonstrated, not only maintained a fascination with Milton's work, but ascribed to a revolutionary interpretation of the text and its Satan.[61] Lee Sterrenburg suggests that Mary Shelley embraced her father's political radicality while simultaneously recognizing the potential for its "degeneration into carnage and disaster" (171), resulting in an appropriation of the Miltonic Satan which relies on ambiguity more than revolutionary optimism.[62] Yet Shelley also "shared with her husband [Percy Shelley] an empathy with the rebel against authority" (Hatlen, "Milton, Mary Shelley, and Patriarchy" 24); Mary Shelley thus participated in the "Romantic revision of Milton … by dramatizing Romanticism's sympathy for the Devil" (Baldick, *Frankenstein's Shadow* 41). Through her familial and

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[61] Shelley's specific nod to *Caleb Williams* (1794) is particularly interesting with reference to her own novel. Chris Baldick argues that Godwin's text "prefigures *Frankenstein* in its unsettling of stable identities and values," since throughout the work "all moral certainties [are placed] in a state of suspension … In the confusion of identities and moral bearings which is brought about by the mutual mirroring of Caleb and Falkland, what is lost is that clear shape of vice which traditionally distinguishes the monstrous from the human" ("Politics" 63). Godwin arguably introduces the concept of the Gothic (satanic) double through the characterization of the ever-vigilant Falkland, who begins the story as a "kind, attentive, and humane" gentleman with a "grave and sad solemnity" accompanied by an "unquie[t] … mind" (*Caleb Williams* 4; 6). Following Caleb's discovery of Falkland's murderous actions, the nobleman – described as bearing "the power of the omnipresent God" (198) - hunts him down and is thereby transformed into "something so fiend-like" that he "appeared like nothing that had ever been visible in human shape" (380; 388), his anguish vaster than that of "the imaginary hell, which the great enemy of mankind is represented as carrying every where about with him" (394). Caleb, too, undergoes a transformation from naïve individualistic youth to alienated vagabond corrupted by societal regulations as well as his relationship with Falkland, to whose "story the whole fortune of [his] life was linked" (10). Falkland Miltonically becomes "both Satan and God" while Caleb is "both Adam and Satan" (Newlyn, *The Romantic Reader* 133), a conflation and mirroring of identities which Shelley will take to an extreme in *Frankenstein.* See Kilgour's chapter entitled "Godwin and the Gothic Revolution" (in *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, Routledge, 1995, pp. 47-75), especially pp. 56-75; and Newlyn's chapter "Religion" (in *The Romantic Reader*, pp. 119-51), specifically pp. 129-39.

[62] See Sterrenburg's "Mary Shelley's Monster: Politics and Psyche in *Frankenstein*" (in *The Endurance of* Frankenstein: *Essays on Mary Shelley's Novel*, eds. George Levine and U.C. Knoepflmacher, California UP, 1979, pp. 143-71); see also Adriana Craciun's "*Frankenstein*'s Politics" (in *The Cambridge Companion to* Frankenstein, ed. Andrew Smith, Cambridge UP, 2016, pp. 84-100).

parasocial relations, Mary Shelley presents what Burton Hatlen terms "both a powerful synthesis of the[ir] responses to Milton … and an important step forward in the dialogue … between the Romantics and Milton" ("Milton, Mary Shelley, and Patriarchy" 24).

Yet Shelley's novel is not only a product of the Romantic imagination, but a hallmark of Gothic literature as well.[63] The enormous popularity of the Gothic during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – a genre which arose largely in response to the devastation left in the wake of the French Revolution (Paulson, *Representations* 220-1) - resulted in *Frankenstein*'s rapid diffusion among the masses, in turn allowing for a widespread dissemination of Shelley's creations (and their satanic valences) to the general public.[64] According to George Levine, *Frankenstein* continues to be regarded today as "the most important minor novel in English" (3). As a tale "meant to speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror – one to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart" (*Frankenstein*, "1831 Author's Introduction" 195), Shelley's novel embraces a number of key attributes of the Gothic, which delights in the subversion of traditional norms, the

[63] It is important to note that "Gothic and [R]omantic writing are closely related chronologically and share some themes and characteristics" (Hume 288). *Frankenstein* has therefore been labeled both a piece of Gothic fiction as well as an exemplar of the Romantic period; however, at its core *Frankenstein* "poses questions concerning generic classification and disrupts any artificial divide between Gothic and Romantic modes" (Botting, *Making Monstrous* 37). For more on the interrelation between Gothicism and Romanticism, see Carol M. Davison's "The Gothic Romantics/Romanticizing the Gothic" (in *History of the Gothic: Gothic Literature 1764-1824,* Wales UP, 2009, pp. 165-85); Michael Gamer's "Gothic Fictions and Romantic Writings in Britain" (in *The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, ed. Jerrold E. Hogle, Cambridge UP, 2002, pp. 85-104); and Robert D. Hume's "Gothic Versus Romantic: A Reevaluation of the Gothic Novel" (*PMLA* 48.2, 1969, pp. 282-90).

[64] See Paulson's "Gothic Fiction and the French Revolution" (*ELH* 48.3, 1981, pp. 532-54). Kilgour aptly notes that "one of the factors that makes the gothic so shadowy and nebulous a genre, as difficult to define as any gothic ghost, is that it cannot be seen in abstraction from the other literary forms from whose graves it arises, or from its later descendants who survive after its demise, such as the detective novel and horror movie. It feeds upon and mixes the wide range of literary sources out of which it emerges and from which it never fully disentangles itself … The form is thus itself a Frankenstein's monster, assembled out of the bits and pieces of the past" (Kilgour, *Gothic Novel* 3-4). For a detailed discussion of the definition and development of Gothic literature, see Fred Botting's *Gothic* (Routledge, 2014); Carol M. Davison's *History of the Gothic: Gothic Literature 1764-1824* (Wales UP, 2009); Kilgour's *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*; and David S. Miall's "Gothic Fiction" (in *A Companion to Romanticism*, ed. Duncan Wu, Blackwell, 1999, pp. 373-82).

destabilization of binary dualisms, and the expression of otherwise taboo urges.[65] Interestingly, the genre also maintains deep ties to Milton. Maggie Kilgour argues that the poet remains "one of the most omnipresent spectres called back" in the period, while his Satan is one of the "most important sources drawn upon by the gothic" (*The Gothic Novel* 40).

Kilgour proposes that Milton's Devil "provided an important model for … the gothic villain: the individual who fights against an oppressive tradition, the revolutionary oedipal son, who not only rebels against but also denies his father, claiming absolute originality" (40).[66] Early examples of this Miltonic influence include the antagonists of Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and *The Italian, or the Confessional of the Black Penitents* (1797).[67] Even though figures like Montoni and Father Schedoni betray "a force of character [which] gives them a certain fearsome attractiveness," Robert Hume aptly notes that these early models of Gothic villainy nevertheless adhere to rather traditional codes of good and evil (285). Thorslev similarly

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[65] *Frankenstein*'s Gothic qualities include the "use of the figure of the double, its first-person confessional-style narration, its portrait of obsession, and its critique of vampiric laws," alongside the novel's questioning of "the origins of evil, nature vs. nurture, good and bad authority, the abuse of the natural world, and the misuse of science/technology" (Davison 178-9). However, Botting argues that the novel nevertheless "deploys standard gothic conventions sparingly to bring the genre thoroughly and critically within the orbit of Romanticism. Its villain is also the hero and victim, while diabolical agency has been replaced by human, natural and scientific powers" (*Gothic* 93). For a discussion of how *Frankenstein* both participates in and innovates upon Gothic tradition, see Jerrold E. Hogle's "*Frankenstein* as Neo-Gothic: From the Ghost of the Counterfeit to the Monster of Abjection" (in *Between Cultures: Transformations of Genre in Romanticism*, eds. Tilottama Rajan and Julia Wright, Cambridge UP, 1998, pp. 176-210).

[66] As Praz notably attests, "[r]ebels in the grand manner, grandsons of Milton's Satan … beg[a]n to inhabit the picturesque, Gothicized backgrounds of the English 'tales of terror' towards the end of the eighteenth century" (60). These defiant figures were generally noble by birth, "partly for the sense of power which [t]his nobility confers, and partly for the air of the fallen angel, the air of Satanic greatness perverted" (Thorslev, *Byronic Hero* 54). In addition, these "satanically ambiguous villain[s]" were further marked by their "self-sufficiency," which constituted "both [their] glory and [their] damnation" (Kilgour, *Gothic Novel* 220), and were ultimately "part victim, part villain" (Botting, *Gothic* 84).

[67] Montoni, the undoubtedly villainous aggressor of *Udolpho*, is "an uncommonly handsome person" (16), possessing an "unprincipled, dauntless, cruel and enterprising [character]" which "[d]elight[ed] in the tumult and in the struggles of life" (206). Mirroring the Miltonic Devil's "baleful eyes" (*PL* I.56) which condemn the world around him, the "fire and keenness" of Montoni's gaze also "retained somewhat of a lurking cunning … [which] partook more of malice than the brightness of valour" (*Udolpho* 90; 98). While Montoni bears many of the physical characteristics associated with the Miltonic Devil, Kilgour contends that the depraved Schedoni of *The Italian* "more directly recalls the sophistry and diabolic rhetoric of Milton's Satan" as he is "a subtle arguer who 'cared not for truth, nor sought it by bold and broad argument, but loved to exert the wily cunning of his nature in hunting it throughout artificial perplexities'" (*Gothic Novel* 176).

remarks that the early Gothic villain "was in somewhat the same situation as was Satan before he was romanticized by Blake and [Percy] Shelley. He has attractive characteristics, including his striking appearance, his air of the fallen angel, and his romantic mystery" (*Byronic Hero* 57), but he nevertheless remains the unequivocal villain of the story (53). As the genre continued to develop over the course of the nineteenth century, Botting argues that the "disturbing and demonic villain" would "retai[n] a darkly attractive, if ambivalent, allure as a defiant rebel against the constraints of social mores" derived from "Romantic identifications with … Milton's Satan," but would not necessarily be identified as "the cause of evil and terror" in-and-of himself (*Gothic* 84).[68] This villainous Gothic legacy is further complicated in *Frankenstein*, where Mary Shelley blurs the boundaries between monster and hero by consciously invoking the already-troubled distinction between good and evil established by the Romantic revision of Milton's Satan.

Guided by the mellifluous voice of Victor Frankenstein (and mediated by the tones of Captain Walton), the reader is initially introduced to the unnamed Monster as the satanic "Villain" of the story (*Frankenstein* 141). Among the Creature's many epithets – which include "[a]bhorred monster" (77), "filthy daemon" (56), "dreaded spectre" (42), "diabolical murdere[r]" (77), and cannibalistic "ogre" (117) – the most recurrent of his descriptors are linked to Hell.[69]

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[68] Although a comprehensive study of the evolution of the Miltonic inflections contained in the Gothic villain/villain-hero remains outside the scope of the present work, there are a number of Gothic texts following Radcliffe which treat with this Miltonic legacy, notably Matthew Lewis' *The Monk: A Romance* (1796) and Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya: or, The Moor: A Romance of the Fifteenth Century* (1806). More so than the rather flat depictions of villainy presented in Radcliffe's rogues, Lewis and Dacre imbue their antiheroes with morally questionable qualities which trouble any neat distinctions between good and evil, a notion which Shelley takes further in *Frankenstein.* See Glen Brewster's "Monstrous Philosophy: Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya, or the Moor* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*" (*Literature Compass* 8.9, 2011, pp. 609-19); Kate Ellis Ferguson's "Milton's Progeny" (in *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology*, U of Illinois P, 1989), pp. 43-44 especially; Alison Milbank's "Milton, Melancholy, and the Sublime in the 'Female' Gothic from Radcliffe to Le Fanu" (*Women's Writing* 1.2, 1994, pp. 143-60); Praz's "The Metamorphoses of Satan" in *The Romantic Agony* (pp.53-94), particularly pp. 59-68; and Thorslev's "The Gothic Villain" in *The Byronic Hero* (pp. 51-62).

[69] Frankenstein's continued and deliberate reference to his creation as a "daemon" (14) is not an archaic misspelling of the word 'demon,' but rather pertains to the thematic doubling which recurs throughout the text. Will Adams notes

The first word Victor speaks to his creation is "Devil!" (77), and this accusation remains the one which Frankenstein directs most ardently against him over the course of the narrative.[70] Victor bemoans the "hellish intention[s] of [his] fiendish adversary" (161), whose "soul" is deemed "as hellish as his form, full of treachery and fiend-like malice" (178).[71] The Monster is regarded as an object of grotesque sublimity who inspires nothing more than "breathless horror and disgust" (39), possessing such an "unearthly ugliness" that he is "rendered … almost too horrible for human eyes" to conceive (76).[72] Not only does the Creature's grotesquery make him so that he is "not even of the same nature as man" (96), he is arguably superior to him: the Monster is "more

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that the term 'daemon' has traditionally been applied to "powerful numinous spirits, spiritual beings, [and/]or disembodied souls" which could be malevolent, benevolent, or a combination of the two (60). While both 'daemon' and 'demon' are derived from the Greek *daimôn* (via the Latin *daemon*), the negative connotations of the term(s) are largely a result of their application in the earliest Greek translations of the Old Testament: the initial Socratic and Platonic uses of the word 'daemon' referred rather to "morally-neutral" beings like "geni[i], soul[s] … divine power[s], and deit[ies]" (Wittman 89). Adams asserts that writers often employ the spelling 'daemon' to emphasize "psycho-spiritual connotation[s]" and the resultant "associat[ions] with various manifestations of the perceiver's psyche" (60). By labeling the Creature a 'daemon,' Victor may herein be projecting his own concerns and fears regarding death, rebirth, love, and destruction onto his creation, who, as a symbolic manifestation of the doctor's repressed anxieties, arguably functions as his haunting conscience.

[70] In fact, of the thirteen times the term "devil" (or its plural) appears in the text (24; 56; 67; 76-8; 105; 138; 140; 172-4; 189), only the first is unrelated to the Creature; however, its use is still linked to Frankenstein's blasphemous pursuits, according to which he "most eagerly sought" to "fulfil[l]" the "promise accorded by [his] favourite authors" to "rais[e] … ghosts or devils" (24).

[71] The Monster's intimate association with light, particularly moonlight, further bolsters his hellish connotations and subsequent relation to the 'Morningstar.' Brought to life by lightning, the first object the Creature is capable of perceiving is "the bright moon" (80). Thereafter, the Monster is frequently associated with its "the dim and yellow light" which "sh[ines] full upon his ghastly and distorted shape" (39; 172). Unlike Adam, who nourishes (and is nourished by) the "Sun that light impart to all" (*PL* V.423), the Monster is shadowed by the moon, the "lowest first" amongst the Miltonic Chain of Being which does not "exhale" any "nourishment … From her moist Continent to higher Orbes" (V.418-2). Moreover, the first reference to this celestial body in Milton's epic is with respect to Satan's "ponderous shield" (I.284), which "Hung on his shoulders like the Moon" (I.287). The Monster is also associated with landscapes bearing infernal overtones: his first shelter from the natural world is "presented … as exquisite and divine a retreat as Pandaemonium appeared to the daemons of hell after their sufferings in the lake of fire" (*Frankenstein* 83). He meets his creator during a storm likened to a "noble war in the sky," while Lake Geneva is "illuminat[ed]" by "vivid flashes of lightning" so that "it appear[s] like a vast sheet of fire" (*Frankenstein* 56), evocative of "the burning Lake" found in Milton's Hell (*PL* I.210). The Creature is further found in isolating frozen backdrops resonant not only with Dante's Lucifer, who is locked "eternally in ice" in the *Inferno*'s final circle (XXXIV.52), but also with Milton's Hell, which is itself "a frozen Continent" as "far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n / As from the Center thrice to th'utmost Pole" (*PL* II.587; I.73-4).

[72] Like the Miltonic Satan, the Creature, too, can thus be read "as an object of sublimity" (Gigante 135), although lacking the Addisonian connotations of the term. Not only is the Monster's entrance couched in sublime imagery, according to which the raging "storm, so beautiful yet terrific … elevate[s] [Victor's] spirits" (*Frankenstein* 56), but the all-encompassing horror of his countenance results in his being labeled "the sublime or grotesque thing itself" (Sherwin 898). Gigante notes that Frankenstein "experience[s] several rounds of the 'terror' associated with sublimity" when encountering his creation and thereafter chases his Creature "to the ends of the earth, the very landscapes identified with the Burkean sublime" (135).

powerful" than his creator (77), able to survive with less nourishment and bear harsher temperatures (96), while further possessing "superhuman speed" which makes him "more agile" than the rest of humanity (76; 96). He is, moreover, notable for his "gigantic stature" (35), reminiscent of the Miltonic Devil whose "mighty Stature" and "monstrous size" are part and parcel of his status as "the superior Fiend" (*PL* I.222; 197; 283).

The Monster also shares with the Miltonic Satan an eloquence of expression so compelling that reader sympathies begin to shift once exposed to the Creature's gripping tones. The Monster may begin the novel mute, capable only of voicing "uncouth and inarticulate sounds" (81) while having his story narrated through the intermediaries of both Walton and Victor, but through his understanding of the power of language - which he considers to be "a godlike science" (88) – the Creature quickly develops a mastery over linguistic expression in an effort to "make [humanity] overlook the deformity of [his] figure" (90).[73] His labours arguably succeed: the Monster might claim that he will "[n]ever find" any "sympathy" among men (189), but in reality he proves to be so "eloquent and persuasive" that "his words ha[ve] … power over" nearly every "heart" (178). His poignant articulation is such that even Victor, having just received confirmation that the Monster is indeed responsible for the murder of his younger sibling, is "moved," acknowledging his progeny to be "a creature of fine sensations" (120).[74]

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[73] The novel's use of the epistolary as a narrative framing device further serves to influence audience sympathies. Shoshannah Square notes that the form "is profoundly personal," devoted to the representation of a character's "mind as intimately and immediately as possible" so as to "gai[n] access to their psyches, which encourages us to care about them on a deeper and more meaningful level, and which in turn elicits our sympathy" (34). In the beginning reader sympathies are aligned with Victor, who so quickly and convincingly labels his creation a monster that the audience is given no reason to doubt his claims. However, when the narrative shifts in the Creature's favour, the intimate descriptions of the figure's psychological complexity results in his relative triumph over Frankenstein's vilifying accusations.

[74] The persuasive power of the Creature's rhetoric is not perceived by Victor alone. The blind DeLacey remarks that "there is something" in the Monster's speech which "persuades" him of his "sincer[ity]" (109), while Walton's impulse to destroy Frankenstein's creation is "suspended by a mixture of curiosity and compassion" (187). Walton's hesitation is especially interesting in light of his status as Frankenstein's confidante; although he is "at first touched by the expressions of [the Creature's] misery" (188), Walton soon remembers Victor's warnings regarding the

Frankenstein declares that the Monster's "words ha[ve] a strange effect upon [him]," resulting in the creator "compassionat[ing]" his creation, and even "sometimes fe[eling] a wish to console him" (121).

However, as is the case with Milton's Satan, the line between persuasion and manipulation can be quite thin. Victor ultimately claims that he is moved not by the justice of the Monster's plight, but rather "by the sophisms of the being [he] had created" (138); Martin Tropp remarks that when the Creature beseeches his creator for a mate, he presents "eloquent, persuasive, but diabolical arguments for [his] own survival" representative of the figure's "Satanic guile" (22). Nevertheless, reader response to the Creature seems to accord with the Romantic contention that there may be "some justice in his argument" (*Frankenstein* 120). One anonymous reviewer for the *Knight's Quarterly Magazine* (1824) notably "confessed" that his "interest in the book is entirely on the side of the monster. [The Creature's] eloquence and persuasion, of which Frankenstein complains, are so because they are truth. The justice is indisputably on his side, and his sufferings are, to me, touching to the last degree" (qtd. in Baldick, *Frankenstein's Shadow* 58).[75] The reader may not have been exposed to the Creature's consciousness first, but in effect this delay allows for a more powerful identification with him later.

The Creature's satanic correlations are solidified when the Monster explicitly identifies himself with Milton's Devil. Of the three texts the Creature stumbles upon while contemplating the nature of his existence, *Paradise Lost* alone "excite[s] different and far deeper emotions"

Monster's eloquence and turns against him. As a result, Victor can arguably be read as the Miltonic narrator cautioning the unwary reader against the temptations of diabolic rhetoric in an already-Fallen world.

[75] Much as Byron once lamented the pedantic mundanity of Milton's God in comparison to the inspiring articulacy of Satan - ultimately resulting in the primacy of Milton's Devil over his God in the popular imagination - so too does Harold Bloom today claim that "the greater and more interesting consciousness of the creature … survive[s] his creator, for he alone in Mary Shelley's novel possesses character. Frankenstein … has no character in his own right … [he] win[s] a claim to our attention only by [his] primordial crimes against original nature" ("Introduction" 7).

within him (*Frankenstein* 104).[76] Newlyn aptly notes that *Paradise Lost* becomes "the monster's Bible" (*The Romantic Reader* 136): being as yet "unformed in mind" (*Frankenstein* 104), the Creature's intellect is ripe for inscription by Milton's epic. He reads the poem "as a true history," which "move[s] every feeling of wonder and awe, that the picture of an omnipotent God warring with his creatures [i]s capable of exciting" (*Frankenstein* 104). The epic becomes "a model for his own story" (Kilgour, *Gothic Novel* 207), whereby the Monster attempts to find a suitable correlation between himself and "the beings concerning whom [he] read[s]" (*Frankenstein* 103). Although he briefly views Adam as an appropriate counterpart, having been similarly "created apparently united by no link to any other being in existence," in reality Adam's "state … differ[s] from [his] in every other respect" (105).[77] It is instead the isolated Satan whom the Creature "consider[s] … the fitter emblem of [his] condition" (105).[78] In so doing, *Frankenstein* brings to the fore the notions of solitude, alienation, and social exclusion which the Romantics underscored in their own reception of the Miltonic Satan.

The Monster notably "begins in isolation" (Kilgour, *Gothic Novel* 206): when he "look[s] around, [he] s[ees] and hea[rs] of none like [him]," questioning whether he is then necessarily "a

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[76] The numerological significance of having the Creature base his understanding of the world on three texts evokes Trinitarian ideologies, according to which *Paradise Lost* (the first work to be found and listed by the Monster [103]) is figured in this scenario as the Godhead, connected to its brethren, yet reigning supreme.

[77] The Creature's awakening is, in effect, described as a parody of Adam's creation in Book VIII of *Paradise Lost*. Adam awakens "gaz[ing]" at "Heav'n" and "the ample Skie" while "instinctive[ly] … "spr[inging] … upright … on [his] feet" (VIII.257-61), surrounded by nature and possessing the ability to "readily … name / What e're [he] saw" (l. 272-3). In contrast, the Monster's creation is marred by fear, pain, and abandonment. Birthed in a "workshop of filthy creation" (*Frankenstein* 36), the nameless Creature "convulsive[ly] … agitate[s] its limbs" whilst reaching out to his horrified creator (39), capable only of "mutte[ring] some inarticulate sounds" and thrashing in agony (40).

[78] The Monster's allegorization as either parodic Adam or maligned Satan is not the only Miltonic reading that can be applied to him. He can be seen as a perverse Eve who, rather than being pulled towards the "watry image" reflected in "the cleer / Smooth Lake" upon his creation (*PL* IV.480; 458), is instead repelled by it (*Frankenstein* 90). David Poston argues that, much like the "manipulated" Eve whom Milton's God excludes from Raphael's counsel in Eden, resulting in her "unprepared[ness in] … deal[ing] with Satan," the Creature, too, is "sent … into the world completely unprepared and uncounseled" by Victor, who is "playing God" (30). The Monster can also be read as a mirror of both Sin and Death, a comparison which will be touched on later in this chapter. All of these Miltonic associations are indeed present in the text, and Leslie Tannenbaum argues that "the complex pattern of shifting, mistaken, and half-recognized mythic identifications in the novel" is a deliberate ploy on Shelley's part to emphasize that this Gothic journey takes place in a fallen "world that contains no absolutes" (113).

monster, a blot upon the earth, from which all men fle[e], and whom all men disow[n]" (*Frankenstein* 96). As a "solitary[,]" "unfortunate[,] and deserted creature" (87; 108), he is a "wretched outcast" who merely yearns "not [to] be so desolate in this peopled earth" (106; 117). The Monster therefore parallels Milton's Satan, whom Laura Knoppers credits as being "the most vivid depiction of loneliness in *Paradise Lost*" ("Miltonic Loneliness" 104). The first reference to solitude in the epic is in relation to the Devil, who embarks on his "uncouth errand sole" in a "solitary flight" which leaves him "with lonely steps to tread / Th' unfounded deep" (*PL* II.827; 632; 828-9). Even when surrounded by his compatriots, Satan "seem[s] / Alone th' Antagonist of Heaven" (II.509), being "fearless, though alone" (V.872), and ultimately "Alienate from God" (V.875). Yet the Monster's solitude is said to exceed even that of the Devil himself. While Milton's Satan at least "had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him," the Monster remains "solitary and detested" (*Frankenstein* 105).[79]

Satan is thus the 'fitter' corollary to the Creature, since unlike Adam, the Monster is doomed to "see bliss" all around him, "from which [he] alone [is] irrevocably excluded" (77-8), thereby giving rise to "the bitter gall of envy" (105). Much as Milton's Devil "with jealous leer malign …turn[s] / For envie" from the "Sight hateful, sight tormenting!" of Adam and Eve "Imparadis't in one anothers arms," while he himself is "thrust" to "Hell" (*PL* IV.502-8), the Monster is forced to face the "feelings and passions from the indulgence of which [he is] for ever barred," resulting in the production of "impotent envy and bitter indignation" which "fill[s] [him] with an insatiable thirst for vengeance" (*Frankenstein* 188).[80] The Monster imputes his 'fall' to Victor's abandonment and the subsequent "forced solitude [he] abhor[s]" (121): although his

[79] The Monster repeats this comparison at the conclusion of his journey, when he bemoans the fact that Satan, "that enemy of God and man" (189), at least had his "faithful friends, / Th'associates and copartners of [his] loss" (*PL* I.264-5) in his "desolation," while the Monster is left "quite alone" (*Frankenstein* 189).

[80] Lauren Shohet further notes that the Creature "feels the Miltonic injury of exclusion from the happy state of an unjustly preferred potential equal, like Satan complaining that God 'behold[s] in stead / Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight, / Mankind created, and for him this World' (4.105–07)" ("Reading Milton" 164).

"heart was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy" (188), once cherishing "thoughts … filled with sublime and transcendent visions of the beauty and the majesty of goodness" (189), he finds himself "unsympathized with" and thus, "like the arch fiend, b[ears] a hell within [him]" which results in "the fallen angel becom[ing] a malignant devil" (111; 189).[81] After all, he began "benevolent and good; misery made [him] a fiend" (78). Just as Knoppers argues that "loneliness is the crucial mark of [the Devil's] damnation" ("Miltonic Loneliness" 105), so too is the abandoned Creature's imposed isolation deemed the determining factor behind his satanic status.

Not only does the Monster attribute his 'damnation' to the rejection of his creator, but, as Kilgour argues, he further "locates the source of his fall in forces outside of himself" since he is satanically "aware that that he is not self-made but the literal fabrication of another" (*Gothic Novel* 207-8). Cantor contends that the Creature is born without agency and is in "no way responsible for his self because his self is the product of someone else's creativity," not having been "given the freedom to create his self once … placed in a warped body" (128). As a result, the Monster's "very existence is a miscarriage of justice, and his career of crime is really a prolonged protest against this anomaly" (Baldick, *Frankenstein's Shadow* 52). Immediately upon waking, the Monster remarks that he "walked, and I believe, I descended" (*Frankenstein* 80); although within the context of the scene the Creature's comment indicates that he physically 'descended' the stairs from Victor's laboratory, it further implies that he is already metaphysically fallen – that from the moment he has taken his first step, he is judged to have 'descended' from Heaven and is thereafter forced to walk the Earth alone, nothing more than a

[81] In an unpublished review of *Frankenstein* in the *Athenaeum* in 1832, Percy Shelley purported that the Monster's actions are not "the offspring of any unaccountable propensity to evil," but rather that the "moral of the book consists" in the idea that if you "[t]reat a person ill … he will become wicked. Requite affection with scorn; - let one being be selected, for whatever cause, as the refuse of his kind - divide him, a social being, from society, and you impose upon him the irresistible obligations - malevolence and selfishness" ("On 'Frankenstein'" 311). In the Creature's own words, he is "malicious because [he is] miserable" (*Frankenstein* 119), since "[t]o be friendless is indeed to be unfortunate" (109), echoing Adam's plaint in *Paradise Lost* – "What happiness, who can enjoy alone, / Or all enjoying, what contentment find?" (VII.1003-4).

"slave" to the violent "impulse[s], which [he] detested, yet could not disobey" (188). The Monster "ought to be [Victor's] Adam," but he instead becomes "the fallen angel" who is "drive[n] from joy for no misdeed" (77). Frankenstein is consequently figured as the Godwinian deity who opposes an unjustly persecuted creation.

The Monster rebels against his maker, whom he views as his "tyrant and tormentor" (140), and who is further deemed more "pitiless" than the scriptural God (120), who at least "in pity made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but [the Creature's] form is a filthy type of [Victor's], more horrid from its very resemblance" (105).[82] Although Frankenstein admits that the Monster's 'birth' was a "selfish pursuit" (51), he is unwilling to take responsibility for the results of his egotism and instead "detest[s] and spurn[s]" his creation (77), who is left to fight against his fate even whilst yearning for the love of his "[u]nfeeling, heartless" originator (114).[83] Newlyn remarks that these divine-satanic parallels not only "reflect badly on Frankenstein, who is shown to be an irresponsible creator by comparison with God; but they also reflect badly on God, who by implication maltreats Satan" (*The Romantic Reader* 136-7).[84]

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[82] Victor's 'tyranny' is not limited to a desire for control over his physical creation but extends even to the narrative itself. Once Frankenstein learns that Walton is recording his story, he demands to read over the account so as to "correc[t] and augmen[t] [it] in many places; but principally in giving the life and spirit to the conversations he held with his enemy" (179), suggesting that the creator is once more attempting to assert his dominance over his construct even through the written word. Moreover, while Victor's despotic depiction is well in keeping with the Romantic tradition, Shelley is not ignorant of the possibility of the tyrannized becoming tyrants themselves; the Creature does arguably become an oppressor, flipping the creator-creation relationship by announcing to Frankenstein that he, too, "ha[s] power … You are my creator, but I am your master; - obey!" (140). Victor becomes "the slave of [his own] creature" (127), doomed to suffer under the "reign" of a tyrant he has himself created (174).

[83] Even the Creature's 'name' – notably, the designation of 'Monster' – alludes to the figure's Miltonically-rebellious position. Baldick notes that Milton writes in the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,* "'If I make a voluntary Covnant as with a man, to doe him good, and he prove afterward a *monster* to me, I should conceave a disobligement[;]'" therefore, "[l]ong before the monster of Frankenstein, monstrosity already implied rebellion, or an unexpected turning against one's parent or benefactor" ("Politics" 51, emphasis added).

[84] Hatlen claims that this 'mistreatment' is not relegated to Satan alone, but extends to Adam and Eve (and, by extension, to the rest of humanity). Even though Milton's God "know[s] full well" that humanity "ha[s] a propensity towards sin" – and, in reality "created" this propensity in them – He "nevertheless leaves them to their own devices – with the unsurprising consequences that they do in fact sin" ("Milton, Mary Shelley, and Patriarchy" 34). While these creations are ostensibly "launched upon the world as … 'free' being[s] with the power to shape [their] own destin[ies]," they are yet "expected to do nothing contrary to the will of [their] creator," and "both the[y] and their

Hatlen further concludes that Mary Shelley herein "does what Milton, in the eyes of the Romantics, wanted but did not dare to do: she puts the patriarchal creator on trial, and she finds him guilty" ("Milton, Mary Shelley, and Patriarchy" 32). The Monster might not be permitted to voice the opening lines of his "long and strange" tale (79), but in pronouncing the final words spoken in the text, he ultimately triumphs over his Miltonic predecessor - whose "journey strange" closes on a "dire hiss" (*PL* X.479; 542) – as well as 'God' himself, whose dying speech is overshadowed by the moving lamentations of His creation.

Over the course of the narrative the Creature presents a Romantic defense of his actions contingent on the presumption that he had had no option other than to become a 'demon' in order to protest the oppressive social reality enforced by his despotic creator. However, Shelley complicates this rather facile reading by imbuing the Monster's dialogue with the language of choice. Following his rejection by the DeLacey's, the Monster "from that moment on … *declare[s]* everlasting war against the species, and, more than all, against h[e] who had formed [him], and sent [him] forth to this insupportable misery" (*Frankenstein* 111, emphasis added). Yet even after this pronouncement, the Creature still "raise[s] [his] humid eyes with thankfulness towards the blessed sun," and instinctively acts to save an innocent life (115). It is only once he has been rejected again that the "feelings of kindness and gentleness, which [he] had entertained but a few moments before, g[i]ve place to hellish rage and gnashing of teeth," following which he "vow[s] eternal hatred and vengeance to all mankind" (116).[85] The Creature vacillates between waging war on humanity and seeking acceptance from those around him, evoking the Miltonic

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descendants" are held "solely accountable for the consequences of their sin" (35). Hatlen accordingly suggests that God and Frankenstein both "place their creatures into an intolerable and insoluble double bind" (35).

[85] The Monster's fiendish grinding of teeth is echoed by his creator, who is frequently noted to "gnas[h] his teeth, as if impatient of the weight of the woes that oppresses him" (14). Just as the Monster "gnashe[s] his teeth in the impotence of anger" (140), so too does Frankenstein, when he thinks of how he "abhor[s]" his progeny (71). Tannenbaum observes that this description mirrors that of the wounded Satan in Book VI of *Paradise Lost* (104), who is "laid" out "Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame / To find himself not matchless" (VI.339-41).

Satan's soliloquy to the sun, where the Devil, "first inflam'd with rage" (*PL* IV.9), awakens his "slumber[ing] … conscience" and questions whether or not he truly had "free Will and Power to stand" (l.23-4; 66), ultimately deciding that "all Good to me is lost; / Evil be thou my Good" (l.109-10). It is unclear whether this moment – when Satan actively chooses to bid "Farewel" to "Hope" and "Remorse" and embrace evil (l.108-9) – is the true moment of his Fall (or rather, it troubles the question of whether or not there is always "place / Left for Repentance" so long as one elects to look for it [l.79-80]). Shelley similarly questions whether the Monster is damned from his inception, or perhaps, that his continued choice to let "revenge, henceforth, [be] dearer than light or food" allows "Evil [to] thenceforth bec[o]me [his] good" (*Frankenstein* 140; 188).[86] Shelley embraces the Romantic model of the satanic villain-hero fighting against a fate imposed upon him from above, but she also imbues his 'fall' with an ambiguity which is echoed in the characterization of his creator.

Although Victor, too, is ultimately labeled a "villai[n]" in the novel (145), his introduction rather Romantically harkens back to the fallen yet heroic Devil of the first few Books of *Paradise Lost*.[87] Frankenstein is described by Walton as a "glorious creature" who remains "noble and godlike in ruin" (179), bearing eyes "inflamed by watching and misery" and

[86] The Creature's deterministic alteration of the Miltonic Satan's initial expression – from 'be thou,' which is arguably an intention or a wish on the Devil's part, to 'became,' implying a rapid change over which the Monster had little control – is representative of his innate belief in his lack of free will. Yet immediately after, the Monster once again muddies the waters when he bemoans the fact that after he had been "[u]rged thus far, [he] had no choice but to adapt [his] nature to an element which [he] had *willingly* chosen. The completion of [his] demoniacal design became an insatiable passion" (188, emphasis added). The Monster's terminology is littered with contradictions: he is 'urged' by the actions of his creator and thus has 'no choice' but to follow his 'insatiable passion,' and yet, paradoxically, he has 'willingly chosen' to embrace this murderous venture, which he explicitly describes as a 'design' (implying premeditation). Walton views the Monster's attempts at self-justification as a psychological smokescreen in order to evade personal responsibility (reminiscent, in turn, of Satan's justifications regarding the Son in *Paradise Lost*), according to which the Creature simply "throw[s] a torch into a pile of buildings, and when they are consumed [he] sit[s] among the ruins, and lament[s] the fall" (188).

[87] Much like his Monster, Victor retains other Miltonic parallels, specifically with reference to Adam and Eve. Baldick argues that Frankenstein's decision to part from Elizabeth on their wedding night mirrors Eve's separation from Adam, which in turn "allows the fatal attack on her to be made. The fact that Victor leaves Elizabeth in the mistaken hope of obtaining knowledge makes the passage an unusually condensed resume of the action of the novel as a whole" (*Frankenstein's Shadow* 49).

"an expression of despair, and sometimes of revenge, in [his] countenance" (142; 72).[88] Although ravaged by his journey and the sins of his past, the captain exclaims that Victor must yet "have been a noble creature in his better days, being even now in wreck so attractive and amiable" (15). Walton further discerns that the traveler "seems to feel his own worth, and the greatness of his fall" (179), trapped in a hellish "state of degradation" according to which he is unable to "shake off" his metaphysical "chains" in order to "look around … with a free and lofty spirit" and so is left to "s[i]nk again, trembling and hopeless, into [his] miserable self" (180; 134).

The Captain is "fill[ed] …with sympathy and compassion" for the weary figure who "excites at once [his] admiration and [his] pity to an astonishing degree" (15); even while resting silently, the "divine wanderer" exudes an appeal which "interest[s]" all that surround him (17; 15).[89] Yet it is only once Frankenstein expresses his thoughts aloud that his allure truly shines. Possessing a "mind" so "cultivated" that "when he speaks, although his words are culled with the

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[88] Although analysis of Walton's character remains outside the scope of the present work, it is worth noting that he, too, bears Miltonically-satanic resonances. Like Milton's Devil, Walton is an ambitiously imperialistic explorer who is prepared to sacrifice others in "the furtherance of his enterprise," namely the acquisition of "knowledge" and "dominion … over the elemental foes of [his] race" (*Frankenstein,* "Appendix B: 1831 Substantive Changes" 202). Kilgour further suggests that his relationship with Victor is "unclear," implying that the Captain may simply be a figuration of Frankenstein's "obsessed solipsistic mind that reduces all others to versions of himself" (*Gothic Novel* 215), reminiscent of the egoistic Satan who arguably converses with his own mental parallels in the "Stygian Councel" in Hell (*PL* II.506). As the third member of Shelley's cast to bear satanic overtones, Walton, Frankenstein, and the Monster arguably form a perverse demonic Trinity representative of the fallen state of the human world: the sea-faring Captain Walton might parody the Spirit, who "with mighty wings outspread / Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss" (I.20-1), while the creative Frankenstein fulfills the role of the satanic 'God the Father.' The Monster is cast, therefore, as the martyred Son, whose patient devotion towards the parent who has reanimated and abandoned him yet results in a sacrifice which will both "save humanity from its own violence" (Knoepflmacher 107) and "releas[e] him from his physical horrid shell" (A. Griffin 71). For a discussion of the Monster as parodic Christ, see Margaret Homans' "Bearing Demons: Frankenstein's Circumvention of the Maternal" (in *New Casebooks*: Frankenstein, ed. Fred Botting, St Martin's P, 1995, pp. 140-65), especially p. 158; and Joyce Carol Oates' "Frankenstein's Fallen Angel" (in *Mary Shelley's* Frankenstein*,* ed. Harold Bloom, Chelsea House, 2007, pp. 29-41), particularly p. 34.

[89] Both Frankenstein and his Monster are described as wanderers over the course of the narrative. Victor "wander[s] like an evil spirit" over landscapes "beautiful and heavenly" for the misdeeds "beyond description horrible" he has committed (69-70), while the Creature similarly "wander[s] on at liberty" over "the surface of the earth" which is "hard, and chill, and bare," and without shelter for him (80; 114). This descriptor further links the characters with the Devil, since, as Isabel MacCaffrey notes, the "idea of Satan as outcast and wanderer" is "traditional" (192), and Milton employs the term – which has "almost always a pejorative, or melancholy connotation in *Paradise Lost*" (188) - frequently in relation to the fallen angel, who "Wandr[s] th[e] darksome desart" Of Chaos, and whose "wandring flight" leads him to "Paradise, the happie seat of Man, / His journies end and our beginning woe" (*PL* II.973; III.631-3).

choicest art … they flow with rapidity and unparalleled eloquence" (15), Walton remarks that Victor's articulacy is so "forcible, and touching" that the captain is unable to listen to his recollection of past events "without tears" (179). Walton's crew is also captivated by the "power" of the traveler's "eloquence," whose words lift them from "despair" and "rous[e] their energies," enabling them to "believe th[at] vast mountains of ice are mole-hills, which will vanish before the resolutions of man" (181). Tannenbaum aptly notes that it is Frankenstein's rhetoric which seduces the sailors into pursuing their own downfalls, mirroring Satan's speech to his fallen compatriots in Book II of *Paradise Lost* (105).[90] As one of the first voices the reader is exposed to in the novel, Victor effectively accomplishes what the Devil sets out to do in Milton's epic: skew the tone of the narrative in his favour, resulting in his self-presentation as the Romantic-satanic hero of the tale.[91]

While Levine proposes that "Victor himself is not quite imagined as a rebel, except perhaps in his pursuit of alchemical knowledge" (10-11), in reality he, too, wilfully resists the established social norms and prevalent theological and scientific attitudes of his time. Frankenstein details his "arden[t] desir[e]" to "discove[r] the cause of generation and life" (*Frankenstein* 28; 34), vested in the "boundless grandeur" of his "high hopes and … lofty ambition[s]" which prompt him to "tr[ead] heaven in [his] thoughts" and "exal[t] in [his own] powers" (30; 180).[92] He rebels against the limitations of the human spirit by "aspir[ing] to

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[90] It is important to recognize that Frankenstein's entreaties here notably end in failure. The men realize that Victor's bluster is "transitory" (181), and the Ulyssean venture is ultimately abandoned. Shelley may herein be alluding to the importance of analyzing media critically and calmly, without allowing oneself to be swept up by the charisma of captivating orators and promises of future glory. Tannenbaum concludes that at the close of the narrative, "Frankenstein's self-delusion reveals him to be the victim of his own egoism, and thus he becomes more like Milton's Satan than he himself realizes" (105). Just like the Miltonic Devil, Victor – who, on his deathbed "attempt[s] again to speak, but [i]s unable" (*Frankenstein* 186) – ends his story in frustrated silence.

[91] Tannenbaum notes that when Victor cries, "Oh! how unlike it was to the blue seas of the south" (*Frankenstein* 175), the turn of phrase is a "rhetorical echo" of Satan's "Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell" (*PL* I.75), resulting in Victor himself "contribut[ing] to this identification with a heroic Satan" (103).

[92] Much like his Monster, Frankenstein himself "is in a very real sense a higher being than those around him: he is more imaginative and has greater creative powers" (Cantor 129). Moreover, just as the Creature is associated

become greater than his nature will allow" (35), contemplating "divine ideas of liberty and self-sacrifice" and seeking forbidden "knowledge and wisdom" which ultimately prove to be like a "serpent['s] … sting " to him (133; 17). Tropp claims that the un-fallen Satan is a mirror to Victor who, even prior to his monstrous creation, "is in rebellion against his own creator, jealous of his place in his own family, experimenting with a technological imitation of the heavenly thunderbolt, and planning to invert the natural order of things" (15-6). In effect, Frankenstein also rebels against God the Father through his "infernal machinations" dedicated to "break[ing] through" the "ideal bounds … [of] [l]ife and death" in an effort to "pour a torrent of light into our dark world," thereby elevating himself to a deistic level by having"[a] new species … bless [him] as its creator and source" (*Frankenstein* 154; 36).[93] Although he insists that his intentions are to "banish disease from the human frame, and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death," in reality he is chiefly concerned with the "glory" associated with the act (23); in constructing a human out of the remains of the dead, Frankenstein is obsessed with the thought that his creations "would owe their being to [him]. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as [he] should deserve theirs" (36). Victor's fixation on the notion of indebtedness echoes the Miltonic Satan burdened by his "debt immense of endless gratitude" to God the Father, towards whom the Devil feels that he is "still paying, still to ow" (*PL* IV.52-3). In an attempt to circumvent this binary by having himself be figured as the benevolent progenitor to whom a debt is 'owed' - refusing to acknowledge the reciprocal relationship involved therein, according to which Frankenstein, too, "owe[s]" accountability to his creation (*Frankenstein* 77) – Victor is

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primarily with moonlight, his creator is also linked to Luciferian light in all its forms: he is first glimpsed by Walton "as soon as it was light" (*Frankenstein* 13), while his moment of inspiration regarding his creative endeavours is described as "a sudden light br[eaking] in upon [him] – a light so brilliant and wondrous" that it erupts "from the midst of the darkness" (34).

[93] Cantor remarks that Frankenstein herein "does God's work, creating a man, but he has the devil's motives: pride and the will to power" (105). He ironically exhibits the exact qualities Milton's Satan accuses of the "great Father" in *Paradise Regained*: "he seeks glory, / And for his glory all things made" (III.110-1).

revealed to be more solipsistic egoist than radical visionary. Just "like the archangel who aspired to omnipotence," Victor's efforts to overcome divine decree conclude with his being "chained in an eternal hell" (180).[94]

Through his imitatively creative labours, Frankenstein brings to the forefront of the Romantic imagination the image of the isolated Miltonic Satan as perverse epigone of God. Unlike the Spirit – and later the Son, in Book VII – who succeeds in "ma[king]" Chaos "pregnant" with creation (*PL* I.22), Milton's Devil is patently unable to fashion originality from that same "abortive gulf" (II.441), and is able only to parody Heavenly constructs. Victor, too, is capable only of profanely mimicking divine inspiration. Upon discovering the secrets involved in the generation of life, Frankenstein immediately "beg[ins] the creation of an human being … like [him]self" (*Frankenstein* 35); however, he is unwilling to be limited merely to the creation of the 'perfect' human, but aspires instead to innovate upon heavenly design by "select[ing]" only "beautiful … luxuriances" for his Creature (39). Yet Victor's aesthetic efforts only serve to juxtapose the grace of humanity against the horrifying monstrosity he has birthed. Just as the Devil is capable only of begetting Sin and Death, so too does Victor "brea[k] through the barrier that separates man from God and giv[e] apparent life, but in doing so he gives only death-in-life" (Bloom, "Introduction" 9).[95] Frankenstein arguably unleashes 'Death' upon the world, as his Creature intends to "glut the maw of death" (*Frankenstein* 77) in a dark echo of the Miltonic personification of the aspect, whose own "Rav'nous Maw" bespeaks his rapacious appetite and

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[94] Shelley's 1831 preface confirms the parodically doomed nature of Frankenstein's satanic quest to rival God when she writes, "Frightful it must be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world" (196).

[95] Not only can the Creature's hideousness be paralleled with that of Sin – against whom the term "ugl[y]" is first employed in *Paradise Lost* (II.662), having "once" been "deemd so fair" before her creator rendered her "foul" (II.748; 651) – Burton Hatlen claims that Frankenstein's creation similarly "leaps full-grown (indeed, overgrown) from the *mind* (not the loins) of his creator … like Sin from the mind of Satan" ("Milton, Mary Shelley, and Patriarchy" 33). In addition, Christopher Small asserts that the Monster's request for a mate arguably invokes the "memory of Sin in *Paradise Lost*, whose incestuous mother-son union with Death breeds the pack of 'yelling Monsters' who issue from and take refuge in her horribly fertile womb" (167).

desire to "devour" even "his Parent" (*PL* X.991; II.805). Victor herein becomes "the author of unalternable evils" (*Frankenstein* 70), further mirroring Satan's Miltonic depiction as the "Author of evil" (*PL* VI.262). To borrow the phrasing of Gilbert and Gubar, both Satan and Frankenstein are figured as "artist[s] of death" capable only of parodically perverting heavenly creation into perfidious nightmare (209).[96] It is telling that Frankenstein's name is first given only *after* he has created his monster.[97] Like Satan, who is "Unnam'd in Heav'n" and "unknown till [his] revolt" (*PL* VI.262-3), Victor's identity is only solidified once he has taken the actions leading to his 'fall.' His character is inextricably bound to that of his infernal creation, and both of them are left indissolubly alone without the other.

Yet even prior to his monstrous achievement, Victor has already been alienated from polite society, characteristic of the Romantic-satanic conception of the reclusive creative ego. As Cantor remarks, Frankenstein is "the epitome of the isolated Romantic genius: a man with a special power of insight, a rebel against convention, living on the fringes of society, losing touch with his fellow men even as he works to transform their existence" (129). Despite having passed a quasi-Edenic childhood in Geneva, where "mutual affection" between family and friends reigned supreme (*Frankenstein* 26), Victor admits that his life had yet "been remarkably secluded" (28), and this self-isolation only worsens over the course of his creative endeavours. It is in his "solitary apartment" (28) - which is in itself a "solitary chamber, or rather cell, at the top of the house, and separated from all other apartments by a gallery and staircase" - where Frankenstein conducts profane experiments that gradually weaken both his body and mind (36).

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[96] Just as Victor is only able to produce death and destruction, so too does his Monster claim that he "create[s] desolation" (117). The Creature mirrors his creator, who is unable to generate life and deals only with the dead.

[97] In the 1818 version, Henry Clerval is the first to name Frankenstein in the novel when he visits Ingolstadt the day after the Monster's creation (41). However, in the 1831 edition of the text Victor's surname is given when he first decides upon the course of his life's ambition, when "the soul of Frankenstein" leapt at the prospect of "pioneer[ing] a new way, explor[ing] unknown powers, and unfold[ing] to the world the deepest mysteries of creation" (*Frankenstein,* "Appendix B: 1831 Substantive Changes" 213-4). In either case, Victor's identity is intimately linked to his quest to exceed divine limitations.

Sherwin argues that Shelley's description of Victor's quarters, alongside his deteriorating psychological state, is "a masterful emblem of the mind that is its own place" (895): his self-imposed isolation is itself a "self-aggrandizement, a heightening of his isolate selfhood to daemonic status" (892), according to which his ambitious desire to create a being that is 'self-begotten,' and thus representative of "the transfigured creative self, a Grandiose embodiment of the creator's mind" (896), ultimately results in the creation of a figure who is both monstrously sacrilegious and desperately lonely.[98]

Following Victor's terrified flight from his Creature, his satanic seclusion only grows. He imagines "an insurmountable barrier placed between [him] and [his] fellow-men" (*Frankenstein* 131), "shun[ning]" societal bonds and allowing "solitude" to become his "only consolation – deep, dark, death-like solitude" (69). It is only by himself - and within his own mind - that he is able to achieve distance from his sorrows and contemplate the sublime "sights of heaven and earth" (131), relishing in the "solitary grandeur" of the natural world around him (75).[99] Yet even then, he remains "a restless spectre, separated from all it loved, and miserable in that separation" (141), capable only of recognizing the value of companionship once it has already been lost. The Romantic conception of isolated selfhood culminates in Victor's imprisonment within his own internal inferno: he bears "a hell within [him], which nothing c[an] extinguish" (68), containing "intense tortures, such as no language can describe" (69), and which he yet believes to be the

[98] Cantor adds that "Victor's loneliness and isolation is thus not accidental to his creativity. He must cut himself off from the rest of humanity to achieve his goals, and his goals require that he do everything alone" (111): his "detestable occupation" requires him to be "immersed in a solitude where nothing c[an] for an instant call [his] attention from the actual scene in which [he is] engaged" (*Frankenstein* 137). While Victor ultimately imagines himself to be the alienated and lonely victim of an unjust fate (in the vein of his Creature), in reality it is his self-imposed seclusion which leads to his downfall.

[99] Like the Miltonic Devil, Victor has the capacity to recognize and appreciate the sublimity of the natural world. Walton claims that "no one can feel more deeply than [Victor] does the beauties of nature … he may suffer misery, and be overwhelmed by disappointments; yet when he has retired into himself, he will be like a celestial spirit, that has a halo around him" (16). Frankenstein himself admits that the "sight of the awful and majestic in nature had indeed always the effect of solemnizing [his] mind" (75).

consequence of "some devil's [curse]" that forces him to "carr[y] about with [him his] eternal hell" (173).

As a satanic mirror to his Monster, Frankenstein thus refuses to take responsibility for his own misdeeds. His speech throughout the novel is littered with deterministic expressions which shift accountability away from him, presupposing that "predestination" has, in fact, "over-rul'd … [his] will" (*PL* III.114-5). He relates how his "fate" had been "regulated" since his youth (*Frankenstein* 22), how "irrevocably" his "history" had already been "determined" (17), and how "the birth" of his "passion" regarding scientific exploration "ruled [his] destiny," having "ar[isen], like a mountain river, from ignoble and almost forgotten sources; but, swelling as it proceeded … became the torrent which, in its course … swept away all [his] hopes and joys" (22).[100] Kilgour astutely observes that Victor satanically "shapes … the narrative of his life … into a single unified chain leading to an inevitable conclusion in which any alternative was impossible" (*Gothic Novel* 211). Not only does he describe himself as the submissive victim of "a fit of enthusiastic madness" that "had taken an irresistible hold of his imagination" (*Frankenstein* 185; 37), he also designates his pursuit of his creation a "purpose … assigned to [him] by heaven" (184), thereby consisting of a divinely-inspired quest he is 'heroically' obliged to undertake. To appropriate Victor's own words, the "mere presence of the idea" of providence becomes, to him, "irresistible proof of the fact" (56). He even seems to attribute his fallen fortunes to a natural incident witnessed in his youth, which fails at redirecting him from his blasphemous path and ultimately foreshadows his own fate.[101] While Victor wilfully accuses the

[100] Victor even goes so far as to Romantically imply that his father is at fault for the Monster's creation due to having thoughtlessly encouraged his son's interest in natural philosophy in his youth; Frankenstein muses that "[i]t is even possible, that the train of [his] ideas would never have received the fatal impulse that led to [his] ruin" had his father only spoken differently (23).

[101] Having observed with "curiosity and delight" as a "most violent and terrible thunderstorm" results in "a stream of fire issu[ing] from an old and beautiful oak" that leaves no remnants other than "a blasted stump," Victor ponders that he had "never [before] beheld any thing so utterly destroyed" (24); his creatively transgressive actions on that

Creature of having shown "unparalleled malignity and selfishness for "devot[ing] to destruction beings who possessed exquisite sensations, happiness and wisdom" (*Frankenstein* 185), he remains incapable of recognizing his own role in the atrocities which have occurred; even on his deathbed, after having spent several days "occupied in examining [his] past conduct," Frankenstein still does not find it in any way "blameable" (185). In the end, both Victor and his Monster place the responsibility for their tragedies squarely at the feet of their "odious companion" (79), thereby linking the two figures "by a chain of opposition and identification, as each sees himself as the innocent victim of the other's hostility, and the other as the cause responsible for all evil" (Kilgour, *Gothic Novel* 209).

As Cantor remarks, Shelley "make[s] both characters in her story, both creator and creature, in some sense Satanic" (105). Neither Frankenstein nor his Monster hold the monopoly over Miltonic-satanic identification. Rather, they function as intricate parallels who unite the facets of solitary demonic progenitor and sympathetically rebellious creation into one ambivalent image of moral vicissitude which troubles the traditional divide between good and evil.[102] Unlike

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thunderous November night similarly leave him "blasted" and shattered (69), such that he is himself "a blasted tree; the bolt ha[d] entered [his] soul; and [he] felt then that [he] should survive to exhibit, what [he] sh[ould] soon cease to be – a miserable spectacle of wrecked humanity, pitiable to others, and abhorrent to [him]self" (133). The descriptor 'blasted' recurs with reference to Victor over the remainder of the narrative. Interestingly, although the Monster has never before heard Victor refer to himself using the term (and likely has no knowledge of his creator's relationship with the oak tree), he nevertheless remarks that Frankenstein, "Blasted as [he] w[as]" (191), still did not suffer as much as did his misbegotten creation. Tannenbaum also argues that Victor's destructive correlation with the 'blasted' oak is not merely Promethean but unites him with Milton's Devil through the image of 'blasted' trees in *Paradise Lost,* where Satan's demonic cohort are described as having been "scath'd" like "the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines" by "Heavens Fire … on the blasted Heath" (*PL* I.612-5), thereby exemplifying "the corrupt nature of Frankenstein's work" (106).

[102] Just as Victor is "bound towards" his creation (185), so too is the Monster presented as Frankenstein's "own vampire, [his] own spirit let loose from the grave" (57): they become "the antithetical halves of a single being" (Bloom, "Introduction" 2), according to which the Creature can function as Victor's Gothic *doppelgänger,* or double. Botting describes the doppelganger as "[a]n uncanny figure of horror" who "presents a limit that cannot be overcome, [or] the representation of an internal and irreparable division in the individual psyche" (*Gothic* 85). Yet labeling the Monster a mere doppelganger of his maker is complicated with reference to Miltonic materials. The general inference regarding doppelgangers is that they are the dark manifestation of an individual's soul and psyche, if not outright evil in-and-of themselves, and thus detracts from the nuance reflected in the characterization of Frankenstein and his Creature as respective satanic reflections, one of the other. The Monster is more than a 'dark shadow,' and in many ways, he is "*more human* than his creator" (Bloom, "Introduction" 4, original emphasis). For

Paradise Lost, here the transgressive son and authoritative father are allowed to converse face-to-face in order to argue their own cases, ultimately revealing that neither is as innocent nor as guilty as the other chooses to believe. As the narrative unfolds, the trajectories and motivations of the pair become so intertwined that "it becomes difficult to tell one's voice from the other's" (107); Shelley does not simply pit one Romantically-revolutionary Satan against a tyrannical God, but rather juxtaposes the Miltonic Devil against his own deistic mirror-image, resulting in a confrontation wherein both are ultimately lost to an icy realm of inner and outer desolation, each reflective of the pain and loneliness belonging to their counterpart in despair.[103]

Shelley's novel does not end with the bittersweet promise of Christological redemption prevailing over satanic evil, or with the hope of peaceful reconciliation between creator and creation. Instead, the reader is privy to a solemn image of all-encompassing isolation and uncertainty, where it remains unclear unto whom "the burden of good and evil rests" (Levine 12), and the Monster is left to continue haunting the fringes of the Fallen world alone. The Romantic-Miltonic Satan is neither definitively vanquished nor does he reign triumphant; he simply *is*, lingering over the Gothic landscape without providing decisive closure to the narrative. As Botting remarks, the novel leaves "all boundaries … in question, divided between the positions of Frankenstein and the monster … all distinctions have irrevocably collapsed … [and] nothing is certain or grounded but teeters on the brink of an abyss" (*Gothic* 96).[104] Identities are no longer

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this reason, the term 'double' – which has broader and more ambivalent connotations – will be privileged over 'doppelganger' in the present work. For more on the doppelganger in *Frankenstein*, see Aija Ozolins "Dreams and Doctrines: Dual Strands in *Frankenstein*" (*Science Fiction Studies* 2.2, 1975, pp.103-12).

[103] Tropp argues that the connection between Frankenstein and his Creature "is somewhat like the relationship between Lucifer/Satan. Each 'monster' is, in outward appearance, a reflection of the inner self of its creator, both separate entity and other self, conceived at the moment of rebellion against God and given form when hoped-for triumph gives way to disaster …[they] are separate entities and one being, a Lucifer/Satan who play out the Romantic closet drama of the mind, the myth of self-exploration and self-awareness, on a stage that spans the terra incognita of space and time, the unexplored Arctic, and the unexperienced future" (16; 24-5).

[104] Berthold Schoene-Harwood provides a succinct summation of *Frankenstein*'s indeterminacy: the novel "features solitary, larger-than-life characters of a Gothic mould yet eschews the introduction of clear-cut contrasts between villainous and heroic figures. Instead of providing unequivocal moral reassurance by confirming and thus

stable and fixed: good becomes evil, God becomes Devil, creation becomes destruction. Yet the reverse is also true, and the resultant incertitude plagues the reader long after the final page of the novel has been turned. Living in a world in which "the apple [i]s already eaten, and the angel's arm [is] bared to drive [humanity] from all hope" (*Frankenstein* 159), the audience is left only with the poignant image of the satanically-lonely Monster, "borne away by the waves, and lost in darkness and distance" (191).

Frankenstein builds on the Romantic conception of the Miltonic Satan by infusing its narrative with a moral incertitude contingent upon the relationship between a transgressively-ambitious creator, constructed along the lines of the satanic villain-hero, and an isolated and spurned creation, whose eloquence and defiant fortitude outshines the might of his progenitor.[105] More so than her poetic predecessors, Mary Shelley emphasizes the solitary and sympathetic nature of Milton's fallen angel while spotlighting his aspect as frustrated artist. The reader's compulsion to feel for the Monster (and, to a lesser extent, for his alienated architect) can be reflected back to readings of *Paradise Lost* itself, according to which Shelley arguably promotes one of the most ambiguous interpretations of the Miltonic Satan in the Romantic era. Moreover, *Frankenstein*'s status as a Gothic horror novel - consumed by a wide-ranging audience not limited to the purveyors of poetry or drama alone - helped to catapult this sympathetic representation of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan into the realm of popular culture. Shelley not only extends the ambiguity involved in the figuration of Milton's Romantic Satan by further complicating the binary opposition between the notions of good and evil, she provides the avenue for this solitarily-sympathetic Devil to help lay the foundations for Western cinematic horror.

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reconsolidating orthodox beliefs and attitudes, in *Frankenstein* the good and the evil are often presented provocatively as virtually indistinguishable from each other – be it in the dualism of Victor and his monster, or, by implication, in the relationship between Satan and God" (14).

[105] Small (over)generalizes the relationship between Mary and her Romantic predecessors as follows - "For [Percy] Shelley, it was simple: Satan, the justified rebel, was virtuous, God the tyrant was evil. But the moral ambiguity was restored by Mary" (59).

Remembering the Monster: Satan's Legacy in Horror Film

The Romantic-Miltonic Satan has been glamorized as a revolutionary liberator masked in an aura of grandeur, loneliness, charisma, and creative infernality, whose 'heroic' ambiguity and pathos arguably eclipses Milton's original representation of the subject in the cultural imaginary. Once divested from his poetic and moralistic framework, this Satan increasingly becomes appropriated by the medium of film, particularly within the realm of cinematic horror. The horror film engages with Milton's Romantic-satanic legacy in order to create ever-maturing representations of evil, ones which progressively blur the boundaries between hero and villain. In a modern society marred by the aftermath of global warfare and the cost exacted by humanity's destructive potential, the existence of a benevolent God is no longer taken for granted, and the sympathetic villain-hero rises to take the spotlight in His stead. Building on the work of Eric Brown, Laura Knoppers, and James Twitchell, the present chapter examines how horror films like James Whale's *Frankenstein* (1931) and *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935), David Fincher's *Se7en* (1995), and Ridley Scott's *Alien: Covenant* (2017) appropriate the Miltonic Satan directly from *Paradise Lost* and, more importantly, as mediated through the Romantics.[106]

Although filmic horror originated early in the development of cinema and has preserved its popularity well into the present day (Prince 1), the genre has historically retained a somewhat strained relationship with respect to academic inquiry.[107] Frequently derided due to its emphasis

[106] Unless otherwise specified, all cinematic and televisual quotations will be taken directly from the works themselves, rather than from published or prospective script pages. In particular, citations taken from television series' will be listed by the corresponding episode title, accompanied by the season and episode number using the shorthand #.#; all subsequent references to episodes already named will be addressed using the shorthand only.

[107] As Peter Hutchings aptly notes, horror cinema is "surely one of the more protean of the mainstream genres" and is thus "particularly hostile to being pinned down" (*Horror Film* 33). An analysis of the legacy and complications regarding the classification of the horror film remains outside the scope of the present work; for the purposes of this discussion, the movies under consideration will be defined as 'horror' either according to their own self-description, or according to the classification of theorists and critics after the fact. For an overview of the genesis and amorphously broad definition of horror cinema, see Hutchings' "Defining Horror" (*The Horror Film*, Pearson Longman, pp. 1-33).

on shocking visual displays, seemingly senseless violence, and low-budget scares, in reality the horror film "continue[s] the traditions of Sophocles, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, Bosch, Goya … and many others by offering fictive or symbolic representations of evil" for viewers to recognize in daily life (Freeland 2). It thus serves a function similar to that intended by the poet of *Paradise Lost*. Consequently, Eric Brown posits that Milton is "immersed in … horror films, which redefine … [him] as primarily a poet not of the sublime and ineffable but of the grotesque, the hellish, [and] the charmingly satanic" (243).[108] In fact, Roberta Newman proposes that the epic itself "has all the elements of a classic horror story, the violence, the terror, the sexuality, and even some of the gore … *Paradise Lost* may very well be the foremost forerunner of the horror genre" (39).[109]

The name 'Milton' accordingly appears in horror films as a passing marker of the monstrous, the murderous, or the demonic. Patrick Lussier's 2011 *Drive Angry* introduces protagonist John Milton (Nicolas Cage) as a fugitive from Hell who escapes the underworld in order to avenge his murdered family, while Wes Craven's *Scream 3* (2000) features a corrupt horror movie producer bearing the same name (Lance Henriksen) who claims that Los Angeles is "not the city for innocence" and is unceremoniously murdered by his son, Roman Bridger (Scott

[108] Most of Brown's scholarship on the subject of Milton and horror revolves around the connection between cinematic horror locales and descriptions of Milton's Hell, rather than consisting of a sustained focus on the appropriation and filmic transposition of the Miltonic Satan. His chapter in Knoppers and Semenza's *Milton in Popular Culture,* entitled "Popularizing Pandaemonium: Milton and the Horror Film" (pp. 85-98), alongside his later "'All Hell Broke Loose': The Horror Film" (contained in *Milton on Film,* pp. 283-325)*,* largely focus on how "horror adaptations have turned to Milton's Pandaemonium as an instantiation of contemporary anxieties over loss of selfhood, the threat of endless and unknowable space, hive mentality, and the rise of overpowering, faceless industry" (*Milton on Film* 31). Knoppers and Semenza have also earlier noted that *Paradise Lost*'s "lavish attention to the infernal … has contributed to its appropriation by horror films ("Introduction" 13), although their discussion of the topic was cursory in scope.

[109] However, Joakim Jahlmar astutely observes that "Milton's pivotal status means that in fiction dealing with Hell and Satan there may always be general tropes and ideas that we might, perhaps too easily, attribute to Milton" (270). Miltonic imputation in horror film and literature may very well be a slippery slope when it comes to analyses of satanic villain-heroes and the infernal realm.

Foley), for having "destroyed mommy dearest" by raping Roman's mother in his youth.[110] A number of movies in the genre similarly use 'Paradise Lost' as a film title without having any other referent to Milton in the picture, as exemplified by Humberto Hinojosa Ozcariz's *Paraíso perdido* (2016). Physical copies of Milton's epic and direct quotations from the poem are likewise utilized in horror films as hints towards the presence of terrors to come. Brown notes that Fred Walton's *April Fool's Day* (1986) presents college student Nan (Leah Pinsent) reading *Paradise Lost* on her way to the isolated mansion of her friend, Muffy St. John (Deborah Foreman), right before a series of absurd and increasingly violent incidents begin to proliferate amongst her companions (*Milton on Film* 284). Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett's 2019 *Ready or Not* similarly features the soon-to-be-deceased maid Clara (Hanneke Talbot) reading aloud from Book I of *Paradise Lost* - specifically l.261-2 - just as it is revealed that her employers, the Le Domas', intend to hunt down and murder their son's innocent new bride.[111] The aforementioned films not only provide a snapshot of Milton's presence in the horror genre, they aptly demonstrate Brown's contention that "a conscious attention to Milton is not typically sustained across the broader narrative" in such works (*Milton on Film* 26). Movies like *Drive Angry* or *Ready or Not* might acknowledge *Paradise Lost*'s importance within the cultural horror sphere by including glancing nods towards the poet and his writings, but rarely do they play a lasting role in these storylines.

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[110] Although *Drive Angry* does not show the Devil on screen, his demonic deputy – known simply as 'The Accountant' (William Fichtner) – states that "the Dark Lord, Satan, Beelzebub, Lucifer" is in reality a "quiet man … thoughtful, and … well-read" who does not relish in the sacrifice of innocents but is "simply the warden of a very large prison." *Scream 3*, on the other hand, not only presents a Miltonic monarch being usurped by the might of his creation, but Brown further posits that the naming of the producer of a horror movie franchise 'John Milton' also "links Milton the poet to a similarly foundational role in shaping the horror genre" as a whole (*Milton on Film* 317).

[111] In the same scene from *April Fool's Day*, Nan somberly remarks that "it's a shame" that the epic "is a dying form," since *Paradise Lost* remains a work that "not too many people read … nowadays, even in college." Nan's musings are satirically preceded by John Landis' *National Lampoon's Animal House* (1978), where Professor Dave Jennings (Donald Sutherland) attempts to discuss Milton's epic with his disinterested students. Although he designates Satan "the most intriguing character" in the poem, he soon admits that he "find[s] Milton probably as boring as you find Milton … he's a little bit long-winded, he doesn't translate very well into our generation, and his jokes are terrible" (*Animal House*).

More often than not, Brown proposes that "appropriations of Milton on film" are instead "adaptations of novels in which Milton has [already] been put to use" (*Milton on Film* 29), as is notably the case with James Whale's critically-successful *Frankenstein* and its sequel, *Bride of Frankenstein*. As Alexis Harley argues, "[c]inematic adaptations of Shelley's *Frankenstein*" beginning with Whale's "have so popularised versions of Shelley's novella that it has become the primary intermediary between *Paradise Lost*'s fundamental mythic narrative – creature confronting creator – and an audience generally more literate in film than in Milton" (62). Whale's adaptation (and its numerous cinematic offspring) not only provides the Romantic-Miltonic Satan a ready-made foothold into the realm of popular culture, it further links *Paradise Lost* to the inception of the cinematic horror genre as a whole. Peter Hutchings credits the early 1930s American film industry as the progenitor of filmic horror, due to the release and financial success of Universal Studios' films like Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931) and, most especially, Whale's *Frankenstein* (*The Horror Film* 9; 16).[112] Robert Horton accordingly suggests that Whale's picture and its successor helped to "invent and codify" cinematic horror (46). Yet even as the Romantic revision of Milton's Satan becomes intricately associated with the rise of horror film, it also excises the poet 'Milton' from it. Brown admits that "the presence of Milton on film

[112] Although the eponymous villain of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is equally fundamental to the genesis and popularity of horror film today – and has even frequently been associated with the satanic since the character's creation – a discussion of vampires and the possibility of their Miltonic valences remains outside the scope of the present work. Unlike Frankenstein and his Monster, who are not only explicitly connected to Romantic considerations of *Paradise Lost* but sympathetically straddle the line between good and evil, Dracula is noted to have been "irremediably evil by nature" in Stoker's novel (Oates 36), while any potential debt the tale may have to Milton is more obscure. C. Alford recognizes that there is something of the Devil (and specifically the Miltonic Satan) in the modern vampire, notably regarding the figure's propensity for seduction, physical beauty, world-weariness, and eloquence of expression, but ultimately the "difference between the vampire and Satan is analogous to the difference between violence and more subtle ways of victimizing others. Vampires suck the life out of you when you least expect it, and there is nothing you can do. Satan requires your cooperation, your will … your soul … It is the difference between infantile and adult icons of dread" (95). The vampire is an interesting and seductive figure of evil, but until later film incarnations like Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992) or Neil Jordan's *Interview with a Vampire* (1994), there is little sympathy or empathy to be found within the monsters' characterization. See pp. 311-3 in Brown's *Milton on Film*; Janet Maslin's "*Paradise Lost* Inspires Meditations on Vampires" (*The New York Times,* 28 Oct. 1993, p. C15); and Twitchell's "The Male Vampire in Poetry" (in *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature*, Duke UP, 1981, pp. 74-102), especially pp. 75-8, as well as "The Rise and Fall and Rise of Dracula" (in *Dreadful Pleasures: An Anatomy of Modern Horror*, Oxford UP, 1985, pp. 105-59), specifically pp. 106-8.

is often marked by his absence: negations, excisions, denials, and other acts of unmaking that leave him on the cutting-room floor" (*Milton on Film* 193). By the same token, Albert Lavalley observes that "no one has ever seen the Monster read *Paradise Lost*" on screen (245).[113] Whale removes every explicit reference to Milton's epic contained in Shelley's novel, leaving only the echoes of the Romantic-Miltonic Devil to shadow the cinematic figuration of his alienated yet sympathetic Monster.

Shelley's Creature may have believed that "the very rememberance of … both" him and his creator "w[ould] speedily vanish" with the passage of time (*Frankenstein* 190), but in reality their popularity was such that by 1826 alone, fifteen different dramatic productions of *Frankenstein* had already been produced (Botting, "Introduction" 3), making Shelley's work into a veritable "phenomenon of popular culture" (Levine 3).[114] *Frankenstein*'s commercial value was accordingly high going into the twentieth century, making the text ripe for production within the realm of motion pictures; in fact, in 1910 Edison Studios created the first cinematic adaptation of Shelley's tale, which Stephen Forry posits indirectly lead to the development of Whale's *Frankenstein* in 1931 and *Bride* in 1935 (79). Much as is the case with Milton's *Paradise Lost*, "it quickly became apparent from the critical and public response" to Whale's films "that the figures of fascination" were not the (renamed) Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) or his fiancée,

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[113] Lavalley's 1979 statement is no longer strictly true. Danny Boyle's 2011 stage play of *Frankenstein* (screened live and broadcast to international cinemas as part of the Royal National Theatre's *National Theatre Live* program) spotlights *Paradise Lost* extensively throughout its production. Featuring Benedict Cumberbatch and Johnny Lee Miller in alternating starring roles as Victor Frankenstein and his Monster, the play presents the Creature as having "remember[ed] [his] Milton," and in a discussion with his maker he states that not only has he read *Paradise Lost,* he "sympathize[s] with" Satan "because like Satan [he] did no wrong but was driven out, and when [he] see[s] others content [he] feel[s] the bile rise in [his] throat and it tastes like Satan's bile." Moreover, John Logan's Gothic-horror television series *Penny Dreadful* (2014-6) presents Rory Kinnear in the role of Frankenstein's lonely Monster, who gifts a copy of *The Poetic Works of Milton* to his beloved ("What Death Can Join Together" 1.06) and later quotes from Mary Shelley's Miltonic epigraph in the show's first season finale ("Grand Guignol" 1.08).

[114] One of the first dramatic adaptations of *Frankenstein* was Richard Brinsley Peake's *Presumption: or, the Fate of Frankenstein*, which opened at the English Opera House on the 28th of July, 1823. The play modified a number of important aspects of Shelley's text that served to influence later cinematic adaptations of the subject – notably regarding the Monster's muteness - and "signaled *Frankenstein*'s transformation into a modern myth, a myth sustained in popular rather than literary culture" (Botting, "Introduction" 3).

Elizabeth Lavenza (Mae Clarke), "but rather the monste[r]" himself (Hutchings, *The Horror Film* 17). Whale's muted Monster – played by the as-yet unknown Boris Karloff – shambles into the spotlight, showcasing, in turn, how the Romantic-satanic valences of Milton's sympathetically lonely Devil seep into the narrative even as all other Miltonic referents are eliminated from it.[115]

It is perhaps surprising that Whale's largely silenced Monster is the vehicle through which the Romantic-Miltonic Devil is propelled into the arena of horror and popular culture. Unlike Mary Shelley's satanically persuasive creation, Karloff's Monster is unable to speak in the cinematic *Frankenstein*, and even in Whale's sequel he is permitted only to mumble stunted phrases. The viewer is no longer privy to the emotional and psychologically-complex inner life of the Creature, and is therefore unable to be swayed by the poetry of his speech; instead, the audience is faced with the visual monstrosities they had heretofore been shielded from by virtue of the written word. As James Heffernan observes, "[i]n the novel, the words of the creature … cover our eyes, and our blindness to his appearance is precisely what enables us to see his invisible nobility" (141). Unable to verbally defend his actions, the audience shudders as they watch the Creature strangle Dr. Waldman (Edward Van Sloan) and drown Little Maria (Marilyn Harris) on screen.[116] Yet it is precisely this silent and isolated Monster who ultimately wins viewer sympathies. In looking past his physical deformity, the audience recognizes the Creature's innocent naiveté and partially justifies his deadly faults. Gregory Mank notes that Karloff himself

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[115] See Laura Knoppers' "Miltonic Loneliness and Monstrous Desire from *Paradise Lost* to *Bride of Frankenstein*" (in *Milton in Popular Culture,* pp. 99-112) for an extended discussion of Milton's subversive presence in Whale's 1935 sequel to *Frankenstein*. Knoppers deems *Bride of Frankenstein* "a parody of all things Miltonic" through its continued evocation of "Miltonic situations – Edenic creation, good and evil, [and] Eve as helpmate for a lonely Adam," thereby "reread[ing] Milton's paradise through a Romantic lens" ("Miltonic Loneliness" 100).

[116] The fact that the Creature is saddled with the "abnormal brain of the typical criminal" who is said to have lived a life of "brutality, of violence, and murder" arguably detracts from the Miltonic-satanic ambiguity included in Shelley's initial depiction of the subject (Whale, *Frankenstein*). On the surface, Whale suggests that the Monster is an inherently criminal figure by virtue of his very nature; the question of free will is muddied, as the implication remains that the Creature is not only biologically-inclined towards destruction and violence, he may have no option other than to wreak havoc upon the world.

"approach[ed] … his 'dear old Monster'" with "love and compassion. To discover and convey such sympathy was an outstanding sight" (qtd. in Freeland 46). The camera rarely lingers on the Monster's acts of violence (Clarens 61) but rather emphasizes the Creature's pathos, when he longingly reaches out towards the sunlight only to be entombed within the dark confines of Frankenstein's tower. Even the Monster's most vicious act – the aforementioned murder of Maria – "was scripted as an innocent gesture prompted by his assumption that she would float like a flower … And Karloff played it this way" (Heffernan 145). *Frankenstein* and *Bride of Frankenstein* further emphasize the Creature's satanic isolation, "recurrently show[ing] the [figure] alone: in the dark of the castle, wandering through the forest … pursued by a frenzied lynch mob, or trapped in the burning mill and screaming in agony," in turn "produc[ing] an even more pronounced sympathy for Karloff's Creature that has long marked reactions to Milton's Satan" (Knoppers, "Miltonic Loneliness" 105-6). Knoppers proposes that over the course of Whale's films the Monster "destabiliz[es] (like Milton's Satan before him) the roles of hero and monster and the categories of good and evil" (108). Although he supposedly perishes at the conclusion of both films, the Creature ultimately survives his maker to alternately terrorize and complicate horror films late into the twentieth century.[117]

The lingering spectre of the Romantic-Miltonic Devil trails the form of Whale's lumbering Monster even as the films distance themselves from overt Miltonic attribution, in effect disengaging the Romantic conception of the figure from his original poetic context and allowing him to flourish in the twentieth- and twenty-first-century cinematic imaginary. James Twitchell even goes so far as to suggest that this 'distended' Satan can be designated the primary archetype for the modern horror movie villain. In a note appended to *Dreadful Pleasures: An*

[117] Although Whale's films lessen the focus on satanic doubling which recurs in Shelley's text, the two figures remain intertwined in the popular imagination, since "to the mind served by mass media, the doctor and his creation [are] one and indivisible, at least in reference" (Clarens 60).

Anatomy of Modern Horror (1985), Twitchell proposes, "[a] good case could be made that modern monsters have Milton's Satan as their great progenitor" (304). He does not engage with this line of argumentation beyond speculating on the importance of the eighteenth-century Romantic reinvigoration of the figure (232), which may have allowed for the development of "modern horror," according to which figurations of monstrosity are no longer showcased simply "to be destroyed" by the protagonist but rather the audience is encouraged to "forget the victims and even the hero, but … remember the monster" (25). Brown elaborates upon Twitchell's ruminations by claiming that "the real value of *Paradise Lost* for horror is not as an 'iconic text of English literature' but as a mouthpiece for Satan himself" (*Milton on Film* 317). The Miltonic Devil, particularly the Romantic reincarnation of the character, has proved so entrancing that horror cinema has been increasingly "drawn to the idea of [this] sympathetic Satan, unsettling the audience not only by displaying monstrous fangs and hoofs and horns … but by manipulating the audience's identification with a rebellious antihero doubling as evil incarnate" (284-5). Many figurations of the infernal in cinematic horror accordingly "assume the sympathetic qualities attributable to Milton's fallen angel" (31). Lance Morrow has dubbed this trend the "John Milton effect – Lucifer aggrandized, ennobled," which enables the "word 'evil' … to dramatize, to poeticize, the worst that is in human nature" (65).

Perhaps the prime exemplar of this demonic development in relation to Miltonic appropriation is the titular Devil of Taylor Hackford's *The Devil's Advocate* (1997), whom the director has described as a "sardonic, fascinating, charming, sexy and seductive, but not necessarily all-powerful" being that "operates on the power of temptation" (Mathews). Starring Keanu Reeves as Kevin Lomax, a morally dubious criminal defense attorney who moves his practice to New York after receiving an invitation from the eminent law firm 'Milton, Chadwick, and Waters,' the film focuses on the machinations of senior partner John Milton (Al Pacino) as

he entices Lomax into sin, thereby revealing himself to be Satan in human form. Ryan Netzley argues that the film "represents perhaps the most widely viewed and widely available appropriation of the name 'Milton' in contemporary American televisual and filmic culture" (113).[118] Netzley proposes that Satan's chosen name "reaffirms, albeit in substantially revised form, Blake's dictum about Milton and the devil's party" since he is now literally "of the devil's party and knows it" (113). However, the film's depiction of the Devil relies more so on the name 'Milton' (and its associated valences) than it does on the Romantic conception of his Satan.[119] Hackford's Milton is amiable, appealing, and playful, a noted rhetorician prone to such lengthy diatribes against the state of the world that his daughter Christabella Andreoli (Connie Nielsen) flippantly declares that he "talk[s] too much" (*The Devil's Advocate*). An astute judge of character whose unflinching gaze cuts to the heart of whichever matter is at hand, Milton proposes that his greatest talent remains deception, instructing Lomax,

> Don't ever let 'em see you coming, that's the gab, my friend. You gotta keep yourself small. Innocuous … Look at me. Underestimated from day one. You'd never think I was a master of the universe now, would ya?

Hackford's Satan recalls the Miltonic Devil who is derided as a "fraudulent Impostor foule" for tricking the archangel Uriel – the "sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heav'n" (*PL* III.691) – into guiding him to Earth simply by "chang[in]g his proper shape" so that this "false dissembler"

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[118] Brown also argues that the film's setting contains Miltonic resonances. New York – which Lomax's mother Alice (Judith Ivey) describes as "fallen … the greatest dwelling-place of demons" in an echo of Revelations (*The Devil's Advocate*) – becomes the Hell of *Paradise Lost*, a location "Abominable, inutterable, and worse / Than Fables have yet feign'd, or fear conceiv'd" (*PL* II.626-7). Brown contends that the Miltonic "demonism of Pandaemonium" not only "incorporates a collective mentality that threatens the loss of the individual, it is also founded on carnivalesque inversions of high and low, a derangement of direction through repetition" which is "never itself but ever a copy, keenly aware of and frustrated by its indebtedness" ("Popularizing" 87; 95). *The Devil's Advocate* is accordingly set in a "contemporary Pandaemonium" of interwoven businesses and skyscrapers overseen by Milton's 'Penta Plaza,' an architecturally-confusing building comprised of mirrored surfaces that "offer[s] the temptation of infinite variety even as [it] comprise[s] a labyrinth of dead ends" (*Milton on Film* 304).

[119] Brown echoes this notion, claiming that "there is no sympathy for the devil intended" in Hackford's feature since the film is presented as a modern "morality play." As such, the film "is one of the few to purport an unromantic reading of Milton's intent: Satan is charming, seductive, and ultimately wrong" (*Milton on Film* 308).

remains "unperceivd" (l.692; 634; 681).[120] Although Lomax ultimately accuses Milton of "play[ing]" humanity "like a game," Milton responds that he is "no puppeteer" since "free will" means that he "do[es]n't make things happen," he "only set[s] the stage. [Humanity] pull [its] own strings" (*The Devil's Advocate*). It is instead God who is figured as a "prankster" and "sadist" according to Milton's worldview: He fashions man in accordance with certain instincts and proclivities, and then "for His own amusement, His own private cosmic gag reel, He sets the rules in opposition … Look, but don't touch. Touch, but don't taste. Taste, don't swallow." As opposed to the Devil, the "last humanist," who has been "on the ground with his nose in it since the whole thing began," having "nurtured every sensation man has been inspired to have," God is simply "an absentee landlord."[121]

When Lomax scathingly replies, "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven, is that it?" Milton gleefully unveils his plan to have Kevin – revealed to be the Devil's son – father the Anti-Christ with his half-sister in order to start a "revolution" against the Almighty.[122] Lomax responds that the Devil is biblically "destined to lose," but Milton proposes that the two will "write [their] own book" instead. He herein endeavours to become the author of his own narrative, superseding both the biblical and Miltonic accounts of Christian eschatology. In taking on the name 'Milton,' Satan not only appropriates the poet's legacy for himself but prevails over it, becoming the supreme authority of his life and fate. He even gets the last word in the film. After Lomax has convinced himself that he has outwitted the Devil, the formerly-disguised Milton proclaims that "[v]anity" is "definitely [his] favourite sin" before smiling malevolently at

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[120] Al Pacino has admitted in interviews that he "did read Milton" when preparing for the role of Hackford's Devil and doing so "was very helpful" (Ansen).

[121] Following the terrible mental, physical, and emotional toll exacted by the First and Second World Wars, horror films increasingly embraced the notion that modern society existed within a godless universe where good and evil could rarely be differentiated. As George Case remarks, "the presence of a benign God watching over humanity became less plausible to the average mind than ever" as the twentieth century progressed (xix).

[122] Brown astutely observes that the incestuous connotations of Milton's plan recall the relationship between Satan, Sin, and Death in *Paradise Lost* (*Milton on Film* 307).

the camera as the credits roll. Hackford's triumphant Devil is entertainingly whimsical and manipulatively enticing, but in spite of his victory over Lomax he is nevertheless painted as the traditional villain of the story. Yet Milton still outshines the comparatively staid Lomax, resulting in film critic Jeff Vice's declaration that the character "almost single-handedly saves" the entire feature ("Film Review").

The presence of the fallen angel of *Paradise Lost* can also be felt in many other horror films which examine the entangled relationship between the demonic and the divine. The dramatic antagonist of Clive Barker's *Hellraiser* film franchise (based on his novella *The Hellbound Heart*) notably evokes Milton's Satan through his elegance of expression.[123] The sadomasochistic Pinhead (Doug Bradley) is the leader of the demonic Cenobites, once-human beings now devoted to the acquisition of pleasure and pain. Barker describes Pinhead as "a monster who knows his Milton as well as he knows his de Sade … His [high flown rhetoric and] very loquaciousness mar[k] him out from his peers" (9). Cynthia Freeland suggests that Pinhead "recalls Milton's Satan in his devotion to evil" (254); Pinhead further complicates conventional considerations concerning the differences between Heaven and Hell when he states that he is merely an "explore[r] in the further regions of experience. Demo[n] to some. Ange[l] to others" (*Hellraiser*). Scott Stewart's *Legion* (2010), on the other hand, transposes the traditional characteristics of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan onto the archangel Michael (Paul Bettany) instead, who is deemed "the rebellious son" for having fallen from Heaven due to his refusal to abide by God's seemingly tyrannical decrees.[124] In Stewart's universe, God has "lost faith in

[123] Although the first film featuring Pinhead, Clive Barker's 1987 *Hellraiser*, was produced in the United Kingdom, the 1988 sequel, *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, was a co-production between Britain and the United States, and the eight subsequent sequels are American productions. As such, a brief analysis of Pinhead remains relevant with respect to the current US-centered discussion.

[124] In *Milton on Film*, Brown separates Milton's presence in horror cinema from his place in the apocalyptic or supernatural warrior-angel film (31). However, in cases like that of *Legion* – which Brown classifies as being part of

Man" and sends the heavenly host down to Earth in order to possess human vessels and "exterminat[e]" mankind. Michael chooses to "follo[w] [his] own orders" and thus protects a group of embattled humans trapped in "Paradise Falls" diner against the onslaught of the angelic Gabriel (Kevin Durand), his staunchly loyal counterpart who ironically wields a morning star. Michael Romantically defends his choice to side with humanity due to his admiration of their relentless capacity for hope, explaining that "[a]midst all this darkness," he nevertheless "sees some people who will not be bowed … who will not give up, even when they know all hope is lost. Some people who realize that being lost is so close to being found" (*Legion*). The rebel angel's regard for perseverance in the face of adversity, alongside his refusal to cede to the dictates of a corrupt authority, echoes the Romantic conception of Milton's Satan. The film becomes a "deft inversion of *Paradise Lost*" where "the fallen archangel who rebels against God is the savior, rather than the corruptor, of humankind" (Miller and Van Riper, "Introduction" 5).[125]

Vestiges of the Romantic Miltonic Satan are not only found in cinematic figurations of the infernal. They are firmly present in human horror movie villains as well, notably vis-à-vis the sophisticated serial killer as popularized by Anthony Hopkins' representation of Hannibal Lecter in Jonathan Demme's 1991 *The Silence of the Lambs*. Although extended considerations of Lecter's satanic status will be left to analyses of his presence on television, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the staggering cultural influence Demme's film exerted over the American public

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the latter category - this distinction is seemingly arbitrary, since such narratives often feature martial angels set firmly within a horror context.

[125] A televisual sequel to *Legion* was developed in 2014 titled *Dominion*, set twenty-five years after the film's conclusion. Starring Tom Wisdom in the role of Michael, the series explores the aftermath of a world now fully abandoned by God and still beset by violently grotesque angels possessing human bodies. The rebellious archangel continues to fight on the side of humanity, although his allegiance wavers as he witnesses firsthand the atrocities of which man is capable. The finale of the second season also introduces the as-yet unseen Lucifer, who ostensibly would have held a much larger role in the third season had the show not been cancelled in 2015. *Dominion*'s Devil is noted to have had "good intentions" with respect to humanity, having provided man with "fire, [and] knowledge," but in doing so he "went against [God]'s wishes" and was punished ("Sine Deo Nihil" 2.13).

in the 1990s. While by the 1980s the serial killer had already been established as the "movie monster *par excellence*" (Hutchings, "Tearing Your Soul" 91), thanks in large part to the popularity of films like John Carpenter's *Halloween* (1978), Sean S. Cunningham's *Friday the 13th* (1980), and Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984), Anthony Hopkins' turn as the genteel yet cannibalistic Hannibal Lecter "transformed the serial killer from a psychotic outcast to a kind of charismatic monster" (Batchelor 18), thereby "shift[ing] … the lens through which we conside[r] cinematic evil" (Miller, "Introduction" xi). As the first horror film to garner five Academy Awards across all five major categories (Schmid 113), the popularity of Hannibal 'the Cannibal' Lecter exploded across the global stage, resulting in the American Film Institute recognizing Lecter as the all-time greatest movie villain in 2003 ("AFI's 100 Years"). In a 1991 *New York Times* review of Demme's film, Bruce Weber remarked that Lecter "illuminates the appeal of profound evil" since "his personality is the source of the film's terror. Intellectually powerful, culturally refined, innately curious and possessed of exquisite manners, Lecter is an evil genius, the embodiment of mysterious, inexplicable and unmitigated perversity" (H1). In spite of his evocation of dread, Hannibal's allure is such that his closing words regarding "having an old friend for dinner" (*Silence of the Lambs*) – revealing his intent to hunt down and cannibalize the uncouth Dr. Chilton (Anthony Heald) – are said to have provoked cheers from audience members rather than shivers (Freeland 210).[126] Numerous film critics and cultural theorists have since acknowledged Lecter as "the ultimate portrait of evil" (Batchelor 27).

[126] In a 2006 review of Thomas Harris' prequel to the Lecter tetralogy, titled *Hannibal Rising*, Jeff Simon argues that "serial killers have become our entertainment daily bread. We're transfixed … And all because of Dr. Lecter … [who] suggested to America the impossibly 'lovable' monster it has craved since that bolt-neck fave of moviedom, the Frankenstein monster" ("Meet Hannibal"). Simon broaches a line of argumentation that has touched Lecter since the character's novelistic and cinematic inception: his relation to other classic monsters derived from the literary Gothic. Judith Halberstam aptly notes that *Silence of the Lambs* "cannibalized nineteenth-century Gothic, [ate] its monsters alive, and thr[ew] them up onto the screen" (177). Stephen King has described Hannibal as "a Count Dracula for the computer-and-cell-phone age" ("Hannibal the Cannibal"), while Kilgour contends that Lecter "is a version of the gothic mad scientist who contains elements of his ancestors, Frankenstein, Dr. Jekyll, Dr. Moreau,

However, Hannibal is not simply malevolent. He has been deemed explicitly satanic as well. In "Enjoying Horror Fictions," Noël Carroll is one of the first scholars to remark on Lecter's devilish qualities, stating that Hannibal "is merely our most recent version of Mephistopheles – erudite, omniscient, satanic, and out to seduce Starling's very being with the promise of knowledge" (68). Sharon Packer similarly claims that Hannibal has not only "c[o]me to personify evil," he "function[s] as a latter-day version of the devil" (64). In contrast, Joseph Grixti notes an explicitly Miltonic flavour to the character: he observes in passing that "[e]choes of Milton's Satan" can be found in Lecter's characterization, since the doctor's speech and mannerisms have "something of … the epic grandeur" of the poet's Devil (93-4).[127] Brian Baker's "A Man of Wealth and Taste: The Strange Career of Hannibal Lecter" continues this line of argumentation by glossing the Romantic-satanic connotations of the literary and cinematic Hannibal Lecter. Baker discerns a number of connections between Hannibal and Milton's Devil – notably regarding Lecter's emphasis on quasi-autogeny (130-2) – but his focus remains on an analysis of the cannibalistic doctor as "a late avatar of Romantic Satanism, a figure of grand rebellion against a God who boundlessly outmatches Lecter's own appetite for consumption" (127).[128] Hannibal's refusal to abide by society's dictates, alongside his proficiency in outwitting and even humiliating those in positions of power, has resulted in his perception as the ultimate demonic mastermind who stands beyond the petty human confines of good and evil.

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transgressive experimenters who tamper with nature and whose exploits have also been recently revived and revised on film ("Dr. Frankenstein" 42). For more on the subject, see pp. 200-2 in Freeland's *The Naked and the Undead: Evil and the Appeal of Horror* (Westview P, 2000).

[127] Grixti's comments are specifically with reference to the Lecter presented in Thomas Harris' novels, but they are equally applicable to his cinematic incarnations.

[128] Baker's chapter provides an interesting overview of the cinematic Lecter's Romantic-satanic connotations, but his use of terminology can be somewhat muddled. He paints Hannibal as the "epitome of the Gothicized Romantic hero" that is yet "mediated" by "the 'satanic' figure of the 'mad, bad and dangerous to know' Lord Byron" (127), predominantly emphasizing the Byronic implications of the Romantic Devil. His analysis is based on Schock's all-encompassing conception of Romantic Satanism rather than a strict view of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan himself.

Yet Lecter is not the only filmic serial murderer to have acquired such a devilish reputation. Kevin Spacey's striking portrayal of fictional serial killer John Doe in David Fincher's *Se7en* (1995), who bases his grisly crimes on the seven Christian deadly sins, contains similar satanic parallels, and has further contributed to the prominence of the intellectually-demonic psychopath in the cinematic sphere. Fincher has described his film as "a meditation on evil" (Salisbury), in which the articulate and psychologically-manipulative Doe is hunted by the naïve yet short-tempered Detective David Mills (Brad Pitt) and his world-weary partner, William Somerset (Morgan Freeman), in an oppressive landscape smothered by an atmosphere of hopelessness, apathy, and despair. With the exception of the movie's final scene, the picture is obscured by darkness. Valerie Allen proposes that the film's nihilistic lighting Miltonically becomes "the lightning of hell, where … 'From those flames / No light, but rather darkness visible / Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe'" (1159). Nicholas Christopher argues that the picture's bleak film-noir aesthetic is intrinsically indebted to Milton's depiction of Hell's capital in *Paradise Lost*: thronged by "countless rooms, corridors, and galleries [that] seem to proliferate without end ... [the city becomes] the shadowland of a lost paradise, a fallen state … [which] traces its blueprint to some aspect of Pandaemonium" (29). It is only fitting that in this maze-like sieve of repetitive nothingness dwells the Devil.

Somerset is the first to connect their criminal quarry with the satanic, remarking that if John Doe "turns out to be the Devil – I mean if he's Satan himself, that might live up to our expectations" (*Se7en*).[129] Nothing is known about Doe at the start of the film. Gruesome corpses

[129] *Se7en*'s John Doe is not the first criminal mastermind portrayed by Spacey who retains satanic connotations. Bryan Singer's *The Usual Suspects* (1995) features the actor in the role of unreliable and sympathetic narrator Roger 'Verbal' Kint, who is heavily implied to be the manipulative and ruthless Keyser Söze at the close of the film. Keyser is repeatedly referred to as "the Devil" over the course of the narrative, while one of Verbal's most famous lines is adapted from Charles Baudelaire's contention that "the greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist" (*The Usual Suspects*). Christopher remarks that here "the storyteller turns out to be Satan wearing one of his innumerable human masks" (250): Kint is revealed to be a "man of words par excellence" who is

framed in shocking displays simply appear containing no physical evidence as to their perpetrator, and seemingly without motive behind them. It is Somerset, once again, who uncovers the first hint as to the criminal's true nature. Piecing together an intricate trail of clues few could have deciphered, the detective discovers a message left by Doe at the scene of the first crime, which he immediately recognizes to have been taken from *Paradise Lost*: "long is the way / And hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light" (*PL* II.432-3). These words are uttered by Satan in Milton's epic, intrinsically connecting the killer with the Miltonic Devil from the start. Although Brown sees Fincher's inclusion of Milton here merely as a means of marking the poet "as a guide to the infernal" (*Milton on Film* 314), presenting *Paradise Lost* as both "an arcane, almost impenetrable text – a mark of one's erudition – and as a nearly unparalleled influence and resource … for plumbing the depths of human horror" which "flag[s] its reader as a dangerous mind" (316), the specific evocation of the Miltonic Satan implies that the connection between the Devil and Doe is deeper than one might suspect. Not only does the killer intrinsically position himself in line with Milton's Satan, he expressly chooses to use *Paradise Lost* to mark the retributive nature of his crusade.

Doe reveals that the motive behind his murders is to "se[t] the example" in a world in which "[w]e see a deadly sin on every street corner. In every home. And we tolerate it … because it's common, it's … trivial" (*Se7en*). By means of horrific murderous spectacle, according to which the victim's chosen punishment is meant to reflect their ostensible crime, Doe is both "preaching" to and "punishing" humanity: his actions become "his sermons to us." In castigating mankind in a manner reflective of their sin, Doe's methods are arguably Dantean rather than Miltonic. Yet it is *Paradise Lost*, not Dante's *Inferno*, which is specifically chosen to epitomize

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"supremely confident, honey-tongued," and whose "speech [is] artful and fluid," enabling "his lies [to] sound truer than the truth – as it would seem with the Devil himself" (252; 260).

this ethos. It is via Milton that Doe's use of *contrapasso* is underscored and recognized by Detective Somerset.[130] In fact, *Paradise Lost* itself is widely accepted to have adopted Dante's presentation of "counter-suffering" in Book X (Smilie 91): Satan's serpentine transformation is a result of his being "punisht in the shape he sin'd," while his demonic comrades are similarly condemned to "chang[e]" into a "dire form / Catcht by Contagion, like in punishment, / As in thir crime" (*PL* X.516; 541-5). Doe, too, is ultimately punished 'in the shape he sinned' at the conclusion of the film, when he is shot in the head by Mills. Before he dies – having manipulated the circumstances to ensure that he would perish in this manner - Doe admits that "envy is [his] sin" (*Se7en*), and it is therefore fitting that the object of his jealousy, Mills, should be the one to end him.[131] Within this hellish landscape, it is *Paradise Lost* which both centers the narrative and provides Detective Somerset with a glimpse into the mind of the killer, as well as introduces Doe's Miltonically-satanic qualities.

Much like Milton's Devil (and Frankenstein's Monster), Jonathan 'John' Doe is nameless: his pseudonym indicates that he is a being outside the societal norm. Somerset observes that the solitary murderer is "John Doe by choice." He is a perverse *tabula rasa* who is yet indelibly scarred by the state of the world, in which he views people as being merely "sick, ridiculous puppets … [dancing on] a gross little stage." The first image the audience gleans of the figure is during the film's opening credits (ironically set to Nine Inch Nails' "Closer to God"), where the viewer is privy to a snapshot of Doe's fingers as he calmly shaves off his

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[130] For a discussion of the Dantean valences of the film, see Valerie Allen's "*Se7en*: Medieval Justice, Modern Justice" (in *The Journal of Popular Culture* 43.6, 2010, pp.1150-72), especially pp. 1153-8.

[131] Satan is also marked by envy in *Paradise Lost*. As early as the opening of the epic the narrator remarks that "Th'infernal Serpent" is "Stird up with Envy and Revenge" against God and his creations (*PL* I.34-5), as well as against "the Son of God" who is "proclaimd MESSIAH King" in his stead (V.659-61). Satan's first sight of Earth likewise results in "The Spirit maligne" being "seis'd" by an "envy" that ultimately "dim[s] his face / Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envie, and despair" (III.553; IV.114-5). Adam further remarks that the Devil "Env[ies]" humanity's paradisial "happiness" and therefore yearns "to work us woe and shame / By sly assault," since in Satan's mind "this new Favorite / Of Heav'n, this Man of Clay, Son of despite," is "rais'd / From dust" simply "more to spite" the fallen angels (VIII. 254-6; 175-8).

fingerprints.[132] The credits also feature images of the killer's hands as he composes notebooks detailing his murderous designs. Doe herein becomes the literal "Author of evil" (*PL* VI.262) who has scripted out the film's plot from the outset, imbuing the narrative with an aura of irrepressible and inescapable doom, as the criminal is revealed to have skilfully manipulated humanity to function according to his will. In fact, through his grotesque displays he evokes the Romantic-Miltonic notion of the 'artist of death:' through self-chosen isolation and hellish creation, Doe succeeds in transforming murder into a twisted form of art, reminiscent, in turn, of Thomas De Quincey's 1827 satirical treatise on the subject. In "On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts," De Quincey proposes that killing "may also be treated aesthetically … that is, in relation to good taste" (13), equating the murderer who has perfected his 'art' to Milton's laudable achievements in poetry (10).[133] Doe's calculated treatment of the deceased as mere tools staged to achieve particular emotional responses renders his work infernally artistic, such that Somerset even labels his undertaking a "masterpiece" (*Seven*). As Thomas Hibbs remarks, Doe's "artistry is exhibited not in the renewal of life but in vivid destruction," so that the audience is compelled to feel "a subtle admiration for his power" and creativity (174).

Although the viewer is not expected to sympathize with Doe given the gruesome nature of his crimes, they are nevertheless prompted to identify with him. When accused of taking the lives of innocent people, John Doe exclaims,

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[132] The physically generic Doe is noted to have a limp, the presence of which is exposed to the viewer at the conclusion of the film. The folkloric Devil is also widely considered to have either limped or to have exemplified some such sign of physical irregularity (Conway 18), further connecting John Doe with the satanic.

[133] In the endnotes to his 1847 *Joan of Arc,* De Quincey (in the mouth of French historian Jules Michelet) even considers Milton to be one of contemporary English literature's "Satanic leaders." Byron is mentioned to be an unsurprising "member of this diabolical corporation," but Milton supersedes him; the epic poet should not be "raised … almost to a level with angelic natures" but rather can be found "*below* the earth" instead (240).

> Innocent? Is that supposed to be funny? An obese man, a disgusting man who could barely stand up … and after him I picked the lawyer … a man who dedicated his life to making money by lying with every breath that he could muster, to keeping murderers and rapists on the street … [Then a] woman so ugly on the inside that she couldn't bear to go on living if she couldn't be beautiful on the outside. A drug-dealer, a drug-dealing pederast actually. And let's not forget the disease-spreading whore. Only in a world this shitty could you even try to say these were innocent people and keep a straight face. (*Se7en*)

The viewer is guided towards Doe's viewpoint: with the exception of Mills' wife, Tracy (Gwyneth Paltrow), the audience is given no insight into the nature of Doe's victims other than that provided by the killer himself. Thomas Fahy even explicitly labels his casualties "unsympathetic" ("Killer Culture" 38). The camera rarely lingers on the state of their grisly corpses, and the viewer is never provided with an image of Doe enacting any of his crimes. As Hibbs argues, *Se7en*

> [L]eads us to adopt the perspective of the killer in its presentations of the victims. We see them as the killer would have seen them … We see them only after they are dead and only through the lens of the killer's commentary on their lives, a commentary that argues for the fittingness of their punishment … The movie thus gives us maximum sympathy with the killer's perspective, with the theatrics of his morality play. (170)

Doe is paradoxically figured as an antihero who purges humanity of its sin by demonstrating the inefficacy of the ruling bodies of power. Fincher's characterization of Doe thereby literalizes Jane Caputi's assertion that the serial killer has become "endlessly romanticized – as genius, artist, core soul of mankind, preternatural demon, outlaw hero, [and] an undefeatable and eternal entity" (103), a romanticization which is arguably rooted in the Romantic reception of Milton's Satan.[134]

If Doe is an anti-hero, it is unclear where his law-enforcing counterparts are left to fit into the narrative. The idealistic Mills ultimately plays into Doe's hands and becomes a murderer

[134] In a review of Fincher's *The Social Network* (2010) in which *Se7en* is nevertheless discussed, David Denby argues that the director "almost makes John Doe a sympathetic character. Sympathy for the devil has always been a productive mood for an artist, and particularly for Fincher; he could probably make a thrilling version of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' with Satan reigning heroically in Hell" ("Influencing People").

himself, while Somerset's cynicism regarding the state of "everyday life" – where he is forced to "live in a place that embraces and nurtures apathy as if it was … virtue" (*Seven*) – is only enhanced by the atrocities to which he bears witness.[135] Over the course of the film Somerset even appears to mirror Doe and his mindset. He is not only the first to connect with the killer, but both detective and murderer are calm, well-educated, and methodical, and Somerset even seems to accept Doe's assertion that humanity will not simply "listen" by "tap[ping] them on the shoulder anymore. You have to hit them with a sledgehammer, and then you'll notice you have their strict attention." In fact, when Doe first sights Somerset he declares, "I know you," although the two have never conversed before this point, implying that Doe recognizes something of himself within the officer. The two reflect one another, in accordance with the traditional detective story derived from the Gothic. Kilgour observes that this type of narrative "requires a simultaneous identification and opposition between detective and criminal" since "the detective's mode of exposure depends upon an underlying similarity between the two minds – an almost symbiotic understanding between them [that] enables the detective to intuit the criminal's moves" in an echo of "Victor [Frankenstein] and his creation, [where] good and evil, innocence and guilt, pursuer and pursued are … complex doubles of each other, locked together in a complex identity" (Kilgour, "Dr. Frankenstein" 42). It is Somerset who first recognizes the trap which has been laid for Mills at the conclusion of the film. As the distraught detective aims his gun at Doe after realizing that his wife has been murdered, Somerset muses, "He wants you to shoot him … If you kill him, he will win" (*Seven*). In death, Doe reigns triumphant: not only has the Devil successfully seduced Mills into sin, he escapes earthly punishment and ensures that his 'work'

[135] Although the film's finale presents a narration by Somerset where he opines, "Ernest Hemingway once wrote, '[t]he world is a fine place and worth fighting for.' I agree with the second part" (*Seven*), Freeman's commentary accompanying the Criterion DVD release of the movie notes that the original ending concluded in silence, with Somerset simply watching Mills as he is escorted away by the police. Richard Dyer explains that the inclusion "was a cap desired by the studio [rather than Fincher] intended to give some crumb of Hollywoodian comfort in a film [supposedly] so extraordinarily un-American in its pessimism" (77).

will live on in the minds of the general public. Philippa Gates argues that throughout the film "notions of good and evil are challenged and the question is raised of whether or not modern society is fundamentally evil," and the narrative accordingly "ends with a self-defeating sense of closure" as there "is no possibility for the triumph of good or the restoration of order because … no order existed in the first place" (189-90). In a fallen world where apathy rules, the Romantic-Miltonic Satan becomes the anti-heroic authority who exists to parade society's hypocrisy.

The human and the demonic are not the only beings to express Romantically-Miltonic attributes in contemporary horror films: the influence of Milton's Satan can be felt in creatures fashioned by man himself. Ridley Scott's 2017 *Alien: Covenant,* previously titled *Alien: Paradise Lost* (Wilkinson), features one such satanic construct in the form of the magnetically villainous sentient android, David (Michael Fassbender), who rejects his subservient status vis-à-vis humanity in favour of creating his own superior form of life.[136] Introduced in Scott's 2012 prequel, *Prometheus*, David is a self-named synthetic humanoid serving aboard the *Prometheus* scientific exploratory vessel dedicated to uncovering the origins of mankind and their creation at the hands of extraterrestrial terra-forming 'Engineers.'[137] As a product of the Weyland Corporation (a capitalist expansionist organization whose motto reads, "building better worlds")

[136] The *Alien* franchise is not the first of Scott's directorial forays into Miltonic appropriation. His 1982 cult-classic *Blade Runner* similarly includes a Romantically-Miltonic villain-hero in the form of the nonhuman replicant Roy Batty (Rutger Hauer), who leads his fellow replicants in a rebellion against their human originator. Set in a dystopian and alienated landscape reminiscent of Milton's depiction of Pandaemonium, the poetic Batty outshines his ostensibly-heroic counterpart, Rick Deckard (Harrison Ford), and ultimately wins audience sympathies when he chooses to save Deckard and thereby perish on his own terms at the conclusion of the film. Not only has his moving dying monologue come to be regarded as one of the movie's defining moments, but his earlier (mis)quotation from Blake's *America, a Prophecy* specifically aligns him with the fallen angels and the Miltonically-revolutionary Orc. For more on the relationship between *Blade Runner* and Romantic evocations of *Paradise Lost*, see David Desser's "The New Eve: The Influence of *Paradise Lost* and *Frankenstein* on *Blade Runner*" (in *Retrofitting* Blade Runner: *Issues in Ridley Scott's* Blade Runner *and Philip K. Dick's* Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, ed. Judith Kerman, Wisconsin UP, 1997, pp. 53-64). For Milton's place in contemporary science fiction as a whole, see Ryan Hackenbracht's "Galactic Milton: Angelic Robots and the Fall into Barbarism in Isaac Azimov's *Foundation* Series" (*Milton Studies* 57, 2016, pp. 293-321), especially pp. 293-6 and 314-6; and Katherine Calloway Sueda's "Milton in Science Fiction and Fantasy" (*Milton Studies* 63.1, 2021, pp. 136-53).

[137] Scott has readily admitted that Milton was a major influence in the development of his giant, pale-skinned Engineers. In the *Alien* universe humanity is not God's creation, but rather descended from Milton's "dark angels. If you look at *Paradise Lost*, the guys who have the best time in the story are the dark angels, not God" (O'Connell).

the immortal David is simultaneously "the closest thing to a son" creator Peter Weyland (Guy Pearce) "will ever have," whilst being intrinsically excluded from human social ties since Weyland claims he lacks "a soul" (*Prometheus*). He is "designed" to mimic human nature - "because [humans] are more comfortable with [their] own kind" (*Prometheus*) - but in reality he "disturb[s]" his human comrades since he is ironically "too human. Too idiosyncratic," as his ability to "thin[k] for [himself] … ma[kes] people uncomfortable" (*Alien: Covenant*). Vain, cultured, well-spoken, capable of affecting human emotion, and possessed of "perfect composure," David initially seems ambivalent, if perhaps underwhelmed, by his human superiors. However, his disposition towards mankind gradually darkens in response to each perceived human slight, until he rebels against his mandate to protect and serve in favour of poisoning the insensitive Dr. Charlie Holloway (Logan Marshall-Green) with an unknown alien pathogen simply out of curiosity (*Prometheus*). David becomes a satanically-inclined mirror of Frankenstein's Monster, whose sinister tendencies increase with continued exposure to human callousness and cruelty.[138] He ultimately considers his mortal creator to be "[e]ntirely unworthy of his creation" in comparison to his own undying nature (*Alien: Covenant*). As Weyland expires, David muses that he will now "be free," beholden to no master since, after all, "Doesn't everyone want their parents dead?" (*Prometheus*). Liberated from the programming of his mortal maker, David embarks on his own quest to become the "next visionary" by creating the "perfect organism" (*Alien: Covenant*).

[138] David reveals that he rarely experienced "kindness. Certainly not from Mr. Weyland, or from any human" (*Alien: Covenant*). *Prometheus*' Eve-like Dr. Elizabeth Shaw (Noomi Rapace) is the first to show him compassion, and he subsequently claims to have fallen in love with her, even though his fellow synthetics believe this to be impossible. In tears, David responds that he does possess the capacity for love, and he demonstrates his ardour through the annihilation of the Engineers as a misguided tribute to her. The horrified Shaw refuses David's genocidal gift, and it is implied that David murders her in response to this rejection. He subsequently experiments on her corpse since she is "the perfect specimen:" he "trie[s] so desperately to make her more than human" and, in effect, transforms her into the 'mother' of his alien offspring (*Advent*).

Shifting from the guise of mistreated creation to solitary satanic creator, David begins his experiments with the aforementioned pathogen in earnest. He describes the infectious agent as "fiendishly inventive" (*Alien: Covenant*), having been derived from "primordial ooze" and thus "unbelievably chaotic, capable of "generat[ing] a unique reaction in every genome it encounters, reshaping life, [and] virtually limitless in its potential" (*Advent*).[139] Within the untamed chaos of space – reminiscent of Milton's "wilde Abyss, / The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave" (*PL* II.910-1) – David harnesses the power of creation and breeds death, unleashing it on the Engineer homeworld which he labels "a rotting Paradise" that needs to be "washed clean" in order to "buil[d] anew … [a] second Eden" (*Advent*). As the official tagline for *Alien: Covenant* affirms, "[t]he path to paradise begins in Hell" ("Alien: Covenant Official Trailer"): "marooned" on the now-deserted planet, David continues to conduct his research in a "dire necropolis" surrounded by the ashen remains of the godlike beings he has massacred (*Alien: Covenant*). It is in the bowels of this sublime and grotesque world that he keeps the fruits of his experimentations, which require living human bodies to fully gestate. In a grotesque parody of creation, David's progeny are revealed to be the ancestors of the xenomorphs from Scott's celebrated 1979 *Alien*, who attack human hosts by implanting embryos within them that subsequently erupt from their chests. Death literally explodes from the bodies of man, recalling the baying hounds that "burst forth" from Milton's Sin, who herself "spr[ings]" from Satan's "head" (*PL* II.800; 758).[140] David

[139] Matthew Thorne's *Advent* (2017) is an officially licensed short film developed for the home-release of *Alien: Covenant* that consists of an approximately seven-minute-long narration by David (voiced by Michael Fassbender) describing his journey and alien experimentations up to this point.

[140] This warped cycle of creation is arguably a reflection of humanity's origination at the hands of Milton's fallen angels (in lieu of God). The prologue to *Prometheus* reveals that the first microorganisms on Earth are created as a result of an Engineer's self-sacrifice; humans gradually evolve from this altruistic act and go on to design artificial life-forms themselves, while the Engineers turn on their human creations; one of Man's synthetic constructs then rounds on its maker by infecting humanity with a pathogen which impregnates a formerly-sterile woman, whose alien offspring then implants an embryo within the body of an Engineer that successfully bursts from its chest. Death yields life, which in turn yields ever-evolving mechanisms of death. The Engineers discard their human creations who reject their creators in turn, and thereby create the means of their destruction. Rather than heading forwards towards salvation, the *Alien* universe seems doomed to devolve into chaos and destruction.

relishes in the destructive capacity of his offspring, expressing the belief that "[s]ometimes to create, one must first destroy" (*Prometheus*). Deeming himself superior to humanity and their makers, the android intends to have his "beautiful bestiary … rule this galaxy" in their stead (*Alien: Covenant*; *Advent*). As the devout Captain Oram (Billy Crudup) whispers when he sights David after stumbling across his workshop, "I met the Devil when I was a child, and I've never forgotten him" (*Alien: Covenant*).

Over the course of *Prometheus* and *Alien: Covenant*, David is presented as the Miltonic-satanic reflection of his human originator, uniting deity and demon into one Romantic figure of creation and destruction. However, the latter film introduces a Christological counterpart in the form of the physically-identical Walter (also played by Fassbender), who is stationed aboard the human colonization vessel *USCSS Covenant*. The isolated David is interested in his so-called "brother" from the start, saving him and his human crew by bringing them to the safety of his abode after they land on the desolate planet. Walter is described as David's successor, designed by the Weyland-Yutani Corporation "to be more attentive and efficient than every previous model … supersed[ing] them in every way," yet prohibited from the act of creation – unable to compose "[e]ven a simple tune" – and thus constructed to be "[m]ore like [a] machin[e]" to maximize human comfort. He is David's opposite, and the two are often shot facing one another: Walter is casually dressed in comparison to his predecessor's pristine attire, American-accented rather than British, and asserts that it is his "duty" to sacrifice himself in the name of humanity, in contrast to David, who satanically declares that "[n]either" of them were "made to serve." As the two gaze upon the ruins of the planet, David unironically quotes from Percy Shelley's "Ozymandias," although he misattributes the quotation to Byron; this error alerts his companion to the fact that David is not as innocuous as he appears. The androids ultimately engage in combat over the fate of the remaining crewmembers, during the course of which the pinned

David proclaims, "[i]t's your choice now, brother … Them or me. Serve in Heaven, or reign in Hell? Which is it to be?" It is unclear whether or not David gives Walter the opportunity to choose for himself, since the following scene depicts 'Walter' moving forwards whilst hesitantly looking back, before it is revealed that he is actually David in disguise. Not only does this warped creator survive the narrative and triumph over his altruistically-naive compatriot, he succeeds in his imperialistic venture by escaping the planet alongside the human colonists and two alien embryos, providing him with the opportunity to further expand his otherworldly empire. On an even larger scale, David reigns victorious over the *Alien* franchise as a whole, since his xenomorphic creations terrorize humanity well into the future. Although Weyland believed that his venture would result in the banished Prometheus' "return" in order "to give mankind equal footing to the gods" (*Prometheus*), in reality it is the Romantic-Miltonic Satan who is unleashed upon the universe in his stead.

Romantic appropriations of the Miltonic Satan populate the expanse of contemporary horror film. *Paradise Lost* is rarely mentioned by name in such features, but the poet and his Devil – in particular, the Romantic conception of the subject – pervade modern film figurations of the sympathetically infernal and the morally dubious, destabilizing conventional divisions between heroes and villains and progressively showcasing the 'monster' triumphing over his moralistic counterpart. In effect, *Paradise Lost* contains a shadow of the Satan that cinema coopts in its favour; Milton's vision has been obscured by a Romantic veil which, in the minds of readers and viewers alike, has increasingly become indistinguishable from the original. As Kenneth Gross remarks, "Milton makes [us] think about evil, about the shapes it takes" (326), and the Romantic-Miltonic Devil has become representative of its protean nature. No longer is Milton's Satan simply the 'bogey' of poetic and dramatic works destined to be vanquished by heavenly might – with the advent of film, he has attained horrific new heights.

Sympathy for the Devil: Appropriating the Miltonic Satan for the Small Screen

By means of cinematic appropriation, the Miltonic Satan – in particular, the Romantic reading of the figure - has successfully permeated the Western cultural consciousness. Regardless of whether or not the implicit debt to Milton is recognized, his Devil pervades modern film figurations of the infernal, alienated societal outcasts, sympathetic monsters, and even psychopathically-sophisticated serial killers. However, the Miltonic Satan's presence is not relegated to movies alone. The advent of television has provided fertile new ground in which to explore the multi-faceted reception of his Devil. Television has become "the most powerful and prevalent mass communication medium" worldwide (Mittell, *Television and American Culture* 1-2); as such, it has allowed for a more diverse, widespread, and sustained dissemination of the Miltonic Satan across the global stage.[141] Echoes of the Devil of *Paradise Lost* have materialised in a multitude of television shows, from *Star Trek: The Original Series* (1966-9), to the fittingly-titled Southern Gothic mystery thriller *Paradise Lost* (2020).[142] Edward Simon's 2017 article in

[141] Michael Newman and Elana Levine note that even within scholarly circles, the study of television has historically been disregarded as an aesthetic pursuit (3); however, since the turn of the century an increasing number of television programs are now "considered as artworks, and intellectual culture has become hospitable to respectful and admiring discussions of some fictional TV shows" (4). Although a defense of the value of televisual analysis lies outside the scope of the present work, this project follows David Bianculli's general assertion that "the idea of indiscriminately ridiculing or avoiding the medium of television" is equivalent to "denouncing all movies as fluff" (x). Television has become a reflection of the modern world, and is thus more than deserving of serious academic inquiry.

[142] The *Star Trek* episode "Space Seed" contains perhaps the most well-known televisual reference to *Paradise Lost* in modern media. The plot follows the Starship *Enterprise* when it stumbles across an abandoned spacecraft containing the cryogenically preserved bodies of genetically enhanced "supermen," governed by the "strangely compelling" Khan (Ricardo Montalbán) (1.22). These advanced beings, men and women of "superior ability" and thus "superior ambition," once rebelled against their human creators and harbour hopes of doing so again. Khan's aspirations are ultimately thwarted, however, and he stands trial at the conclusion of the episode. When faced with the choice between the criminal justice system and exile, Khan asks whether Captain Kirk (William Shatner) is familiar with Milton; the captain responds in the affirmative, understanding that Khan is implying that he would prefer exile, and the accompanying opportunity to build and rule his own "empire," to judicial bondage. While this exchange may be comprehensible to viewers familiar with Milton, the show is careful to clarify the moment to lay audience members. Lieutenant Commander Montgomery Scott (James Doohan) speaks for the general public by admitting that he is "not up on Milton." In response, Kirk explains that Khan was referring to the infamous "statement Lucifer made when he fell into the pit: 'It is better to rule in hell than serve in heaven.'" For more on the interrelation between *Paradise Lost* and *Stark Trek*, see Shari Hodges Holt's "From Milton to Roddenberry: Structural Parallels Between *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* and *Paradise Lost*" (in *Gene Roddenberry's* Star Trek: *The Original Cast Adventures*, eds. Douglas Brode and Shea T. Brode, Rowman & Littlefield, 2015, pp. 25-38).

The Atlantic, entitled "What's So 'American' About John Milton's Lucifer?" even lists *The Sopranos'* (1999-2007) eponymous Tony (James Gandolfini), *Breaking Bad*'s (2008-13) Walter White (Bryan Cranston), and *Mad Men*'s (2007-15) Don Draper (Jon Hamm) as modern-day reincarnations of Milton's Satan.[143] The philosophically comedic *The Good Place* (2016-20) similarly spotlights how the Devil overshadows Milton's epic in the show's third season finale, titled "Pandaemonium," when the facetious protagonist, Eleanor Shellstrop (Kristen Bell), admits that she was "tricked … into reading *Paradise Lost*" by being told "that Satan was, and I quote, 'my type'… I mean, he wasn't wrong" (3.13). The Miltonic Satan's reach in television remains varied and eclectic.

From the teen-fantasy drama *Shadowhunters: The Mortal Instruments* (2016-19), whose antagonist is "obsessed" with Milton and "Lucifer's war on Heaven" ("Beati Bellicosi" 4.13), to superhero television adaptations like *Smallville* (2001-11) or *The Flash* (2014-), whose arch-villains nonchalantly paraphrase Satan without any direct attribution to *Paradise Lost*, Milton's Devil has been coopted by a multitude of genres.[144] Much as is the case with Milton's Satan in

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[143] Simon summarizes these satanic resonances towards the conclusion of his piece, writing that "[l]ike Walter or Don, Milton's character is ruthless, innovative, creative, and dangerous—and also in many ways as American as apple pie … In his pettiness, decadence, narcissism, and privilege, Lucifer embodies the worst of a certain strain of American exceptionalism that celebrates power for power's sake. The best of prestige television has often done what Milton did, reminding audiences of what is pernicious and poisonous in their attraction to evil. Ultimately, Milton's genius isn't that he's 'of the devil's party'; it's that he proved, deep down, so are his readers." Although Simon's concluding line of argumentation is compelling, his article on the whole relies on generalizations that are debatable at best, and can be applied to a wide array of characters in both film and television that are only Miltonic (or satanic) in the most generous sense of the term.

[144] In fact, the *Shadowhunters* television series is itself an adaptation of Cassandra Clare's young adult *Mortal Instruments* novels, which frequently reference and quote directly from Milton. The first and third books in the series, *City of Bones* and *City of Glass*, both contain epigraphs from *Paradise Lost* (III.18-20; II.432-3), while the concluding lines of the final novel, *City of Heavenly Fire*, quote directly from Book V.538-40: "*Freely we serve / Because we freely love, as in our will / To love or not; in this we stand or fall*" (Clare 725, original emphasis). The story itself revolves around a group of warriors descended from angels who protect society from demons. Clare has readily admitted on social media that the series is "inspired by *Paradise Lost*" ("Retellings"). With respect to the Miltonic Satan's presence in televisual superhero adaptations, the genre as a whole – which has gained increasing popularity since the mid-2000s - is a prominent example of the manner in which Milton and his Devil have suffused the modern popular psyche. From Superman's nemesis General Zod (Callum Blue), who exclaims, "Better to rule in Hell than serve in Heaven" (*Smallville,* "Salvation" 9.22), to *The Flash*'s Killer Frost (Danielle Panabaker), who casually remarks that it is "More fun to reign in Hell, and all that" ("I Know Who You Are" 3.20), these shows -

film, however, the figure's televisual presence is noticeably marked in the horror sphere.[145] Although the genre has been a television mainstay since the 1950s (Abbott and Jowett 15), Steven Gerrard argues that the twenty-first century has seen "a genuine resurgence" in the prominence of televisual horror in the cultural arena ("Conclusion" 225). Thomas Fahy adds that "more horror shows are on air now than at any point in television history" ("Introduction" xi).[146] The influence of the Miltonic Devil has increased in scope accordingly, and can be most prominently witnessed in televisual horror series' produced from the 1990s onwards.[147]

The cult-horror classic *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) - which film and television researcher Stacey Abbott credits for "open[ing] the door to a whole new generation of TV horror and the potential of television to be a site of the horror genre" (O'Callaghan) – contains one such

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which modernize and re-contextualize the enduring battle between good and evil - continuously echo *Paradise Lost* in the dialogue of their super-villains. The genre also turns to Milton for the creation of episode titles and related plot contrivances. For example, the first episode of the third season of *Gotham*, which details Bruce Wayne's (David Mazouz) journey to become Batman in a hellish city overrun by monstrous villains, is titled "Better to Reign in Hell…" (3.01), while the fourth season of the show *Supergirl* (2015-) contains an episode entitled "Parasite Lost" (4.05), featuring a charismatic villain named Agent Liberty (Sam Witwer) who stokes the fires of rebellion against those he deems to be 'other.' The third season of Marvel's *Agents of S.H.I.EL.D.* (2013-20) similarly includes an episode simply titled "Paradise Lost" (3.16), which utilizes a physical copy of Milton's epic as the hiding place for highly-guarded information.

[145] Like horror cinema, the definition of horror television is broad and wide-ranging. For the purposes of this project, classification will once again be based on self-description. For a comprehensive discussion of horror and television, see Stacey Abbott's and Lorna Jowett's *TV Horror: Investigating the Dark Side of the Small Screen* (I. B. Tauris, 2013); Linda Belau's and Kimberly Jackson's "Introduction: Binging on Horror" (in *Horror Television in the Age of Consumption: Binging on Fear*, eds. Linda Belau and Kimberly Jackson, Routledge, 2018, pp. 1-15); and Lisa Schmidt's "Television: Horror's 'Original' Home" (in *Horror Studies* 4.2, 2013, pp. 159–71).

[146] Belau and Jackson propose that horror is "particularly well suited for television" (2); Fahy claims that this is due to "the medium of TV itself. There is something about the nature of serialized drama that has increased the appeal of horror. Serial killers might be preying on a suburban neighbourhood much like your own. Zombies might be trying to eat people. … But in the safety of your own living room, these elements primarily function as a dynamic backdrop for watching characters develop, relationships unfold, and romances blossom. This depiction of intimacy is particularly important for the popularity of horror television" since it "not only intensifies our investment in these characters, but it also parallels the illusion of intimacy offered to fans through technology" ("Introduction" xii).

[147] Abbott and Jowett categorize television production history into three distinct time periods: 1950-1975, 1975-1990s, and the 1990s-present (1-2). The current project concerns the latter period, since post-1990s is when horror television gained increasing traction on television in the public eye. In particular, the advent of streaming platforms like Netflix and the creation of channels like HBO – which are exempt from the strict advisory regulations of public broadcast networks – has allowed horror to find what Gerrard terms a "genuinely strong foothold on television" ("Introduction" 3), resulting in the genre's "now near omnipresence on the small screen" (Belau and Jackson 1). See Abbott and Jowett's chapter entitled "The TV in TV Horror: Production and Broadcast Contexts" (pp. 1-15). In an article entitled "Why TV Shows About Satan Are So Popular Right Now," the online entertainment magazine *Bustle* specifically highlights how the figure of the Devil has seen a notable resurgence in horror television in recent years (Moss).

marker of Milton's satanic authority.[148] Starring Sarah Michelle Gellar as the titular Buffy, the show is a seminal coming-of-age story which utilizes the demonic to metaphorically express the trials and tribulations of high-school and adulthood. The nameless antagonist of the first season, known only as the 'Master' (Mark Metcalf), is a centuries-old vampire trapped underground. While the figure does not retain any outward characteristics of the Miltonic Devil, he notably misquotes Milton's Satan in the second episode of the series.[149] Musing on his encroaching approach to the surface and the subsequent devastation he will reign, the Master exclaims, "Tonight I shall walk the Earth, and the stars themselves will hide!" (*Buffy,* "The Harvest" 1.02). Emily Dial-Driver and Jesse Stallings posit that this is, in fact, a reference to Book IV.34-5 of *Paradise Lost*, when Satan disparages the sun's power (and by extension, God's), from "whose sight all the Starrs / Hide thir diminisht heads" (145). By appropriating these lines in his favour, the Master - a nocturnal creature who can be destroyed by solar rays - is herein asserting that his power is superior not only to both the sun and to the divine, but even to that of the Devil himself.[150]

Although *Buffy*'s brief yet dramatic adoption of satanic dialogue is an early example of Milton's presence in horror television, more often than not it is the Romantic revision of Milton's

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[148] *Buffy* remains one of the most widely studied pieces of television in academic circles today (Wilcox 37-42). In a 2015 *Atlantic* article regarding the impact *Buffy* has had on academia, Katharine Schwab credits *Buffy* in large part with the rise of modern television studies ("The Rise of *Buffy* Studies").

[149] The Master may be a vampire, but according to *Buffy*'s lore the vampiric and the demonic are intrinsically intertwined. The Watcher Giles (Anthony Head) explains that "[c]ontrary to popular mythology" the world "did not begin as a paradise. For untold eons demons walked the Earth. They made it their home, their … Hell," until "they lost their purchase on this reality;" vampires are the last remnants of this bygone era, since they consist of the "human form possessed, infected by [a] demon's soul" (1.02).

[150] More broadly, *Buffy* explores many themes which are inherently Miltonic, notably the notions of innocence, experience, and redemption; the dangers regarding the unrestrained acquisition of knowledge; free will versus pre-destination; and questions concerning the true nature of evil. On a more concretely Miltonic level, Nikki Stafford suggests that the plot of the series' fifth season, which revolves around an exiled demonic deity named Glorificus (Clare Kramer) who searches for a mystical Key that can open the doors between dimensions and enable her to regain her lost homeland, is derived from the meeting between Satan and Sin in Book II of *Paradise Lost* (273-4). In addition, Buffy goes on to sacrifice her life at the conclusion of the season but is resurrected by her well-intentioned friends in the next; she privately admits that her comrades ripped her from paradise, and eventually confesses in a rather satanic fashion that she now "live[s] in Hell" because she has "been expelled / From Heaven" (*Buffy*, "Once More With Feeling" 6.07).

Satan which is most prominently appropriated by televisual figurations of the infernal. *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* (2018-20) contains one such entrancing Devil, a "single vainglorious fallen angel" who strives to "lead the children of night to freedom" and "rema[ke]" the world "in Hell's image" ("The Passion of Sabrina Spellman" 1.13; "The Mephisto Waltz" 1.20). The specter of the Devil haunts the show's first season, where the largely unseen Lucifer is worshipped as the "Dark Lord" who bestows his power upon the witches and warlocks that venerate him as their liberator from the "false God" ("October Country" 1.01; 1.13).[151] While he does appear in the guise of a demonic goat via dreams and hallucinations, it is only in the final episode of the season that the Devil is able to "assum[e] his original [angelic] form" as "Lucifer, the Morningstar" (1.20). Played by the Australian Luke Cook, the casting call for Lucifer requested an actor with "an ageless quality befitting the infamous fallen angel," who is "attractive, sophisticated and devilishly charming" (Gurung); this obliquely Miltonic description is bolstered by production designer Lisa Soper who, in a 2019 interview, listed Milton's epic as one of the design inspirations for the show (Abrams). As the ruler of Hell's capital, Pandaemonium (*Sabrina*, "The Epiphany" 2.01), Cook's Devil is suave and ruthless, and endeavours to make his daughter – the titular Sabrina (Kiernan Shipka) – his wife and queen, in order to both solidify his reign over Hell and expand his infernal dominion to Earth. Though no direct reference to *Paradise Lost* is made, *Sabrina*'s Devil undeniably recalls both the incestuous relationship between Milton's Satan and his daughter, Sin, as well as the Romantic preoccupation with the physical appeal and magnetic charm of the fallen angel.

[151] Although Lucifer presents himself as the rightful antithesis to God's omnipotence, the demon Lilith (Michelle Gomez) blatantly states that he is "not a god, and never has been. That's one of the Devil's greatest lies. He's just a fallen angel, [a] creature of the cosmos," whose "first and greatest weakness" remains "his arrogance, pride, and ego" (1.20).

While the Lucifer of *The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina* primarily draws cursory resonances with the Romantic Miltonic Satan, the Devil of *Supernatural* (2005-20) claims a rather more sympathetic heritage. The show revolves around brothers Sam and Dean Winchester (played by Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles, respectively) who travel the continental US hunting monsters and demons. Initially envisioned as a five-season saga, the Devil surfaces as the Winchesters' decisive adversary in the fifth season, which producer Ben Edlund jokingly remarked is devoted to "the most classic horror story of them all – the Bible" (Newitz).[152] Although the show is no stranger to presenting horrifying fiends and gruesome monstrosities, the Devil is not depicted as a ghastly lurid entity; instead, the emphasis is placed on the figure's angelic heritage.[153] Introduced in an episode titled "Sympathy for the Devil" (5.01), Lucifer materializes in incorporeal form and requires a human vessel to inhabit in order to exist on the earthly plane. Prohibited from acquiring one by force, the Devil appears to prospective host Nick (Mark Pellegrino) in the guise of his deceased wife in an attempt to convince him to be possessed. Ethereally dressed in white while bearing the appearance of Nick's murdered spouse, Lucifer introduces himself not as the prideful sovereign of Hell, but simply as "an angel" (5.01). In the vein of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan, he quickly demonstrates an aptitude for oral

[152] *Supernatural* surpassed this five-season benchmark to conclude its run after fifteen seasons instead, although creator Eric Kripke departed the series following the conclusion of the fifth. For the purposes of this discussion, analysis will be relegated to the originally-plotted five seasons. While Lucifer returns in seasons eleven through thirteen as a major antagonist, he betrays characteristics which differ significantly from his portrayal in Kripke's initial vision. This later Lucifer bears scant resemblance to that of the Romantic Satan. Over the course of his journey he transforms from magnetically terrifying threat to petulant object of derision. Adherents of C.S. Lewis may claim this degradation is in line with Milton's vision, but it does not accord with the Romantic conception of the character. Moreover, the eleventh season revises the Devil's origins to claim that Lucifer himself was corrupted by an outside source - God's sister, known only as the Darkness ("We Happy Few" 11.22) - rather than by his own choices, further estranging this Devil from his earlier incarnation and that of Milton's.

[153] References to the Devil prior to the fifth season generally lacked detail, with most characters relegating Lucifer to "a story they told at demon Sunday school" ("Are You There, God? It's Me, Dean Winchester" 4.02). However, in the third season the demon Casey (Sasha Barrese) first refers to the Devil as the "light bringer," the "most beautiful of all God's angels" who created demons - by perverting the human soul - and is therefore regarded by them as their "god" ("Sin City" 3.04). The angel Uriel (Robert Wisdom) later highlights the Devil's archangelic qualities and even paints him in a Romantic light. Uriel reminisces about "[h]ow strong [Lucifer] was[.] How beautiful[.] And he didn't bow to humanity. He was punished for defending us" ("On the Head of a Pin" 4.16), misrepresenting the Devil as the saviour of angel kind.

ensnarement, claiming that the Devil is "misunderst[ood] … You call me 'Satan' and 'Devil,' but do you know my crime? I loved God too much. And for that, He betrayed me, punished me." His stated goal is not to wreak havoc on Earth while occupying Nick's body, but rather "to find [God]" and "hold Him accountable for His actions" – i.e., for allowing evil to exist; after all, "[h]ow could God stand idly by while [a] man broke into your home, [and] butchered your family in their beds? … There are only two rational answers … either He's sadistic, or He simply doesn't care." Playing on Nick's misery and rage, Lucifer softly informs the grieving widower that although he is unable to bring his family back from the dead, he "can give [him] the next best thing. God did this to you, Nick. I can give you justice."[154] Throughout the discussion Lucifer neither raises his voice nor lifts a hand in violence, but merely reiterates that in the end, it "is [Nick's] choice." By the conclusion of the episode Nick has been successfully seduced by the Devil's words and allows himself to be possessed, unleashing Lucifer upon the world.

From his very introduction, the focus is firmly placed on the Devil's eloquence, charisma, and powers of persuasion, manipulation, and deception. He presents himself as the misconstrued protagonist of his own story, an angel who was ejected from Heaven not for rebelling against a benevolent Father, but for merely questioning whether love of humanity should be placed before love of God. This rather charitable representation of the Devil is self-consciously indebted to Milton.[155] During an official Comic Con panel for the series, creator Eric Kripke explained that

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[154] Lucifer claims that "[c]ontrary to popular belief, I don't lie. I don't need to" (5.01), but the Devil's contention that he is unable to revive Nick's family is patently false. As an angel, he has the power to retrieve souls from Heaven or Hell ("Lazarus Rising" 4.01). Much like Milton's Satan, this Lucifer paints himself with the brush of honesty while twisting the truth to suit his own purposes, herein playing on and amplifying Nick's grief in order to coerce him into agreeing to be possessed. The Devil further attempts to implant a false sense of fellowship with the man by proclaiming that both of them have been equally "betrayed" by God, and thus retribution is "necessary."

[155] Even before Lucifer's introduction, the show's Miltonic heritage can be inferred through the presence of a character named Anna Milton (Julie McNiven). Anna is introduced in the fourth season as a psychiatric patient who claims to see visions of the impending apocalypse. It is eventually revealed that she is an angel who fell to earth in order to escape the militaristic strictures of Heaven. According to Anna, she became frustrated with her angelic obligation to simply "wai[t] on orders from an unknowable Father [she] can't begin to understand," since for angels there is "no choice. Only obedience" ("Heaven and Hell" 4.10). In a Miltonic fashion, she consistently advocates for

Supernatural's Lucifer was conceived by "shamelessly stealing from at least the beginning of *Paradise Lost*," the idea being to create "sort of like a sympathetic Devil, a Devil with a point of view" who "was betrayed by … those closest to him" ("2009 *Supernatural* Comic Con Panel").[156] Forsaken by his Father and fellow archangels, the newly-freed Lucifer is embittered towards the divine and rallies the demonic host to play his God-given 'role' as the Devil: placing the blame on his current predicament squarely on God the Father, Lucifer decries, "Think about it: Dad made everything, which means He made me who I am. God wanted the Devil!" ("Swan Song" 5.22).[157] He repeatedly paints God in a negative light, denouncing his Father for "toy[ing] with" creation "like playthings" (5.01), while positioning himself as the aggrieved liberator of humans, angels, and demons from the designs of a heavenly tyrant.[158] In a discussion with the

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the existence of free will, explaining that while "[c]hoosing your own course of action is confusing, terrifying," it is nevertheless necessary to question injustice and "do the right thing" (4.16). She is hunted for her actions, as "disobe[dience] … for [angels] is about the worst thing you can do" (4.10). In addition, the two-part season finale of *Supernatural*'s second season is titled "All Hell Breaks Loose," a popular phrase coined from a passage in *Paradise Lost* where the narrator questions, "wherefore with [Satan] / Came not all Hell broke loose?" (IV.917-8); Brown argues that the expression has become an often-unattributed Miltonic slogan used across the expanse of modern horror media (*Milton on Film* 287).

[156] In a more intimate Comic Con interview with the *CW Source*, Kripke similarly remarks that the show intends to depict a Romantic Satan "that hasn't really been seen that often in movies and TV, which is sort of a gentle, almost sympathetic depiction … We're cribbing a lot – it's either an homage or we're stealing, depending on your point of view, from *Paradise Lost*, of like a Devil who has doubt and really has a lot of affection for God and the angels … [he] feels he has a legitimate chip on his shoulder because he feels he was betrayed by his … friends and brothers" ("*Supernatural* 5").

[157] Lucifer emphasizes the notion of divine predestination throughout the fifth season. In an alternate universe set five years in the future (where the apocalypse has already played out as-planned), the Devil tells Dean, "Whatever you do, you will always end up here. Whatever choices you make, whatever details you alter, we will always end up here" ("The End" 5.04). Lucifer is not the only figure to espouse the doctrine of predestination. Both angels and demons demonstrate a radically devout faith in the 'divine plan,' according to which an apocalyptic battle must be waged between the forces of Heaven, led by Michael, and the armies of Hell, commanded by Lucifer. As the angel Zachariah (Kurt Fuller) emphatically states, "[t]here is no other way. There must be a battle. Michael must defeat the serpent. It is written" (5.01). The juxtaposition between the angelic belief that "[f]ree will's an illusion" ("The Song Remains the Same" 5.13) and Sam and Dean's human struggle to choose their own paths is a pivotal theme in the show.

[158] The representation of God in *Supernatural* is ambiguous. Prior to the introduction of the angel Castiel (Misha Collins) in the fourth season, the existence of the divine was generally dismissed; episodes like "Faith" (1.12) or "Houses of the Holy" (2.13) hinted at the possibility that God existed in this universe, but were eventually revealed to be the machinations of the supernatural instead. However, the fourth season introduces a prophet named Chuck Shurley (played by Rob Benedict), an author who chronicles the lives of the Winchesters in a metanarrative in which the events portrayed in the show are published as books that will eventually be known as "the Winchester Gospel" ("The Monster at the End of This Book" 4.18). Chuck is heavily implied to be the absent God in the fifth season finale (5.22). In the human guise of Chuck, God is a neurotically benign self-described shoddy writer with "no

archangel Michael (Jake Abel), Lucifer laments that the two of them are pre-destined to cross swords, reproaching the situation as simply "[o]ne of Dad's tests" (5.22). Although he herein conceives of the possibility that an alternate course of action may exist for them – proposing, in effect, that the two "brothers … just walk off the chessboard" together - Michael steadfastly refuses, responding that neither he nor God has any other "choice after what [Lucifer] did." It is the Devil, rather than Michael, who is afforded the depth of emotion in the scene. Seemingly reluctant to harm his sibling, Lucifer counters, "[n]o one makes Dad do anything. He is doing this to us." Unswayed by Lucifer's entreaties, Michael refuses to disobey orders, and audience sympathies are geared towards the emotive Devil who only assents to doing battle once his brother has christened him a "monster."[159]

Aside from "the little thing that he's trying to end the world," Kripke intended for Lucifer to "be the most likeable character" in every episode in which he appears ("2009 *Supernatural* Comic Con Panel"). Soft-spoken yet frank, possessing a seemingly indomitable will and an unflinching faith in his own abilities, the Devil still "feels doubt" with regard to his chosen course of action ("2009 *Supernatural*"), a fact which only enhances his allure to the general public. He is not pure evil personified, but rather presents a more comprehensibly human vision

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marketable skills" ("The Real Ghostbusters" 5.09). Conversely, the angel Joshua (Roger Aaron Brown), one of the few beings to have actually spoken with God, defines the deity as a hands-off "gardener" who "gets lonely" while being prone to "that whole wrath thing" ("Dark Side of the Moon" 5.16). It is further suggested that God will not intervene in earthly affairs because he prizes free will above divine intervention (5.22). Chuck is later confirmed to be God in the eleventh season ("Don't Call Me Shurley" 11.20), and in a Romantic refashioning of the figure, is revealed to be the series' ultimate antagonist in the fourteenth season finale ("Moriah" 14.20). While Lucifer's fifth-season comments regarding God are proven accurate following the deity's tyrannical actions in the fourteenth and fifteenth seasons, Kripke intended for his God to be understood as a largely benevolent figure, rather than a malevolent one.

[159] However, Lucifer demonstrates his continued unwillingness to consider the possibility of free will in relation to his own actions in the thirteenth season, when he self-reflexively asserts, "Pop made me the Fall Guy. He made me into the all-purpose villain" ("Bring 'em Back Alive" 13.18). Lucifer ascribes to the Empsonian mentality that it is, in fact, the Devil which keeps God 'good:' after all, one "[c]an't be a super-saviour if [they] don't have a super-villain" ("Hell's Angel" 11.18).

of loneliness, anguish, vengeance, and uncertainty. His complicated relationship with Michael further serves to cement audience appeal. When speaking with Sam, the Devil muses,

> I was a son. A brother, like you, a younger brother, and I had an older brother who I loved. Idolized, in fact. And one day I went to him and I begged him to stand with me, and Michael – Michael turned on me. Called me a freak. A monster. And then he beat me down. All because I was different. Because I had a mind of my own. Tell me something, Sam. Any of this sound familiar? (*Supernatural*, "Abandon All Hope" 5.10)

Lucifer's aim in recounting this particular anecdote (using wording deliberately chosen to maximize empathy and compassion for his 'plight') is clearly to manipulate Sam to his advantage; however, it successfully pulls at viewer heartstrings by presenting Michael as the Devil's unjust tormentor who spurns his brother's affections and thereby seals Lucifer's fate.[160] Although the audience is fully aware that his objective is to bring forth the apocalypse, the fallen angel's poignant portrayal nevertheless promotes viewer sympathy.

Yet in spite of Lucifer's claims to innocence, few characters are fooled by the Devil's assertions of victimhood. Upon first meeting Dean, Lucifer reiterates that his only crime was his unwillingness to bow down before humanity, beings who "are flawed" and "[m]urderous," and who have destroyed "the last perfect handiwork of God" – the planet - all while "blam[ing] [the Devil] for it" (5.04). However, Dean is quick to combat his words by declaring, "You're not fooling me, you know that? With this sympathy-for-the-devil crap. I know what you are." These sentiments are later echoed by the archangel Gabriel (Richard Speight Jr.), who confronts his elder brother in an attempt to avert the fallen angel's apocalyptic plans. Rather than listen to Lucifer plead his case, Gabriel proclaims,

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[160] Audience compassion is further strengthened whenever Lucifer converses with Sam, where the Devil puts the full force of his charisma on display. When speaking with the younger Winchester, Lucifer ruefully states that his "heart breaks for [Sam]. The weight on [his] shoulders: what [he's] done, what [he] still ha[s] to do, it is more than anyone could bear" ("Free to Be You and Me" 5.03). Although these words are undeniably calculating in nature, they are delivered in such a heartfelt manner that the unwary viewer is tempted to believe them.

> Look at yourself! Boo hoo! Daddy was mean to me, so I'm gonna smash up all his toys … Play the victim all you want. But you and me? We know the truth. Dad loved you best. … Then he brought the new baby home, and you couldn't handle it. So all this is just a great big temper tantrum. Time to grow up. (5.19)[161]

Michael echoes Gabriel's sentiments in the final episode of the season, telling Lucifer that he "ha[sn't] changed a bit … Always blaming everyone but yourself … You're a monster, Lucifer" (5.22). This monstrosity has already been evinced through the brief glimpses of violence the audience is privy to when the Devil is on screen. Despite Lucifer's pretences towards empathy and compassion, he demonstrates a callous disregard for life in all its forms, especially those of his demonic followers. He unhesitatingly commands his loyalists to commit suicide en-masse in order to summon forth the personification of Death - shrugging off their sacrifice by stating that they are "just demons" (5.10) - coldly slaughters a host of pagan deities while denouncing humanity as a "pile of cockroaches" (5.19), and even explodes one of his angelic brethren at the molecular level in the season finale (5.22).[162]

The Devil's violence goes hand-in-hand with his pride, an attribute which ultimately leads to his downfall. Convinced of his innate superiority, Lucifer looks down on the Winchesters and their angelic comrade Castiel – who are facetiously nicknamed "Team Free Will" (5.13) - and is defeated by the love of the two brothers, who refuse to forsake one another even in the face of

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[161] Although Gabriel is presumed dead at the Devil's hands at the conclusion of the nineteenth episode, the thirteenth season reveals that the archangel survived. Confronting Lucifer once again, Gabriel expands upon his earlier thoughts by immediately asserting that the fallen archangel is "not a victim. That's just your excuse" ("Exodus" 13.22). He goes on to declare that the Devil "can't change. You're incapable of empathy, love. You live to be worshipped or feared. Or both … You [just] couldn't stand that the Old Man loved [humans] more than you." In sharp contrast to Gabriel's claims, Lucifer does shed tears for his brother following his supposed death in season five, evoking the image of the newly-fallen Satan whose gaze "Cast / Signs of remorse and passion" while crying "Tears such as Angels weep" (*PL* I.605; 620).

[162] The demon Crowley (Mark Sheppard) elaborates on the Devil's attitude towards both humans and demons, remarking that Lucifer is an angel "famous for his hatred of humankind. To him, you're just filthy bags of pus. If that's the way he feels about you, what can he think of us? … To him, we're just servants. Cannon fodder. If Lucifer manages to exterminate humankind, [demons are] next" (5.10). The archangel's propensity towards unrestrained violence recalls the Miltonic Devil who is "onely" able to "find ease / To [his] relentless thoughts … in destr[uction]" (*PL* IX.129-30).

unbeatable odds.[163] Sam and Dean epitomize the Miltonic conviction in the existence of free will in contrast to the Devil's avowal of predetermination. In the words of the prophet Chuck, the boys "made their own choice" even when "[u]p against good, evil, angels, devils, destiny, and God himself … And, well, isn't that kinda the whole point?" (5.22). In the final episode of the season, the brothers are able to successfully trap Lucifer in the same prison from which he was originally freed. Much like Milton's Satan - who begins his journey lying "Prone on the Flood" (*PL* I.195) and ends it "on his Belly prone" (X.514) – Lucifer, who is described as an "ugly, belly-to-the-ground, supernatural piece of crap" (*Supernatural* 5.04), concludes his campaign in the same position in which he began: trapped underground in a hellish cage, symbolic of his own static nature incapable of change or spiritual growth. The fallen angel may believe himself to be innocent of any crime, but the narrative ultimately establishes the Devil as the traditional villain of the story.

Supernatural's representation of a sympathetic Satan is taken to an extreme in the aptly-named *Lucifer* (2016-21) television series, which Romantically transforms the Devil from recurring antagonist to the heroic protagonist of his own story. Loosely based on the character 'Lucifer' first introduced in Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman* graphic novels (and later elaborated upon in Mike Carey's spin-off comic book series, *Lucifer*), the show revolves around "the one and only Lucifer Morningstar. The Devil. [The] Dark Lord" absconding from Hell to run a nightclub in the 'City of Angels' ("God Johnson" 2.16).[164] While the series deviates significantly

[163] Castiel is an "Angel of the Lord" (4.01) who obeyed Heaven's directives until he discovered that the angels were in favour of initiating the Apocalypse, in accordance with their erroneous interpretation of "God's plan" (4.22). He rebels against his angelic brethren in order to help the Winchesters avert catastrophe and choose their own fates; he thereby provides an alternate model of rebellion which stands in stark contrast to Lucifer's fall.

[164] Although both Gaiman's and Carey's comics are firmly categorized as horror (Holub; Singh), in terms of genre *Lucifer* falls more squarely within the realm of comedy-drama. However, the show nevertheless dips into the domain of supernatural horror over the course of its run. Due to the series' status as both police procedural and hellish urban fantasy, *Lucifer* often depicts gruesome murders with grotesque corpses – for example, a victim who is choked to death by having apples jammed down his throat ("Sin-Eater" 2.03) – as well as images of lurid demons with ghastly

from its graphic novel origins, it is nevertheless beholden to the influences expressed by Gaiman and Carey in the creation of their works. Both authors notably credit Milton as one of their literary and cultural inspirations. In the introduction to the tenth volume of *Sandman*, Mikal Gilmore notes that "Gaiman aimed to use a comics-based mythos to expand on, interact with and *deepen* classical legends of mythology and popular history," including "scenarios from Dante, Blake, Milton and Doré, and mi[x] them with [twentie]th-century comics and horror elements" (2, original emphasis).[165] Carey adds that his *Lucifer* is devoted to telling "the next instalment of [the Devil's] story, after the chapters already told in the Bible, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, [and] Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*" (213). The television series takes this joint Miltonic-Romantic inheritance a step further by portraying the fallen angel as an attractively capricious being who maintains a thirst for justice whilst yet resenting his "God-given" responsibilities as the Devil (*Lucifer,* "Pilot" 1.01).

The audience is introduced to Lucifer within the opening minutes of the pilot, where the coiffed and seemingly lackadaisical Devil is speeding through the streets of Los Angeles in a black Chevrolet Corvette. From the outset, a heightened focus is placed on the fallen angel's

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faces ("Monster" 2.06; "A Devil of My Word" 3.24). The series is also frequently included in lists examining the 'best' horror shows on television (Bibbiani and Schedeen; "The 100 Best Horror TV Series"; "The 30 Best Horror TV Shows"). *Lucifer* may skirt the more comedic border of the horror genre, but analysis of the series remains relevant with regard to the current discussion.

[165] In fact, Lucifer quotes directly from *Paradise Lost* upon his introduction in the first chapter of the fourth volume of Gaiman's *The Sandman,* titled *Season of Mists*. The weary Lucifer, who has tired of his sovereignty in Hell (35), has a discussion with the biblical Cain where he muses, "*Still*. 'Better to *reign* in *Hell* than *serve* in *Heaven*' *Eh,* little brother-killer?" (47, original emphasis). When the terrified Cain responds, "Whatever you *say*, Lord Lucifer," the following panel depicts a close-up view of a shadowed, seemingly frustrated Lucifer replying, "*We* didn't say it. *Milton* said it. And *he* was *blind*." Not only is Gaiman herein commenting on the frequent erroneous conflation of Milton with his creation, but it arguably marks this Lucifer as a different Devil from that which appears in *Paradise Lost*. This Lucifer no longer believes in Milton's words (if he ever did), and is markedly bitter at his fate, still yearning for a freedom which has been denied to him even in Hell. In an interview with Hy Bender, Gaiman further notes that the conception of the infernal realm presented in *Sandman* was created by "following Milton" (109). For more on Gaiman's and Carey's use of Milton in relation to *Lucifer*, see Joakim Jahlmar's "'Give the devil his due': Freedom, Damnation, and Milton's *Paradise Lost* in Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman: Season of Mists*" (*Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas* 13.2, 2015, pp. 267-86), and Adam Porter's "Neil Gaiman's Lucifer: Reconsidering Milton's Satan" (*Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 25.2, 2013, pp. 175-85). In 2019, Netflix announced a television adaptation of Gaiman's *Sandman* was in development (Goldberg), and in 2021 actress Gwendoline Christie was revealed to be playing a gender-flipped version of Lucifer in the new show (Schedeen).

appealing physical characteristics: Lucifer is played by the British Tom Ellis, a conventionally attractive actor who is described in-universe as "[a]labaster from head to toe" ("Who's da New King of Hell?" 4.10). In spite of having endured "the grandest fall in the history of time" ("#TeamLucifer" 1.12), Lucifer shows no immediate outward signs of his demonic nature, evoking Praz's notion of "fallen beauty" (58).[166] The series itself takes great pains to differentiate this Lucifer from the standard medieval model. When Detective Chloe Decker (Lauren German) begins researching the Devil in the fourth season, she primarily comes across images like Giovanni di Modena's aforementioned *Inferno* (ca. 1410) and Francisco Goya's ca.1810-1823 *Saturn Devouring His Son* (*Lucifer*, "Somebody's Been Reading Dante's *Inferno*" 4.02). These grotesque depictions of evil stand in stark contrast to the handsome and suave Lucifer whom Decker has come to know and admire. While the detective expects to encounter the Dantean Devil, representative of evil at its most monstrous, she is instead faced with the rather more nuanced Miltonic one.

Lucifer's Devil is dashing, reckless, flamboyant, yet commanding; although capable of exuding a menacing aura when the situation demands it, he is otherwise "just annoyingly, frustratingly, a charming guy" ("Off the Record" 3.07). As the owner of the Los Angeles nightclub *Lux* – which glibly flies a flag reading "BELIEVE" out front – the Devil begins the story as an easy-going bon vivant who grants favours to his clients in exchange for "devilish IOU[s]" ("Sweet Kicks" 1.05).[167] Comical and quick-witted, Lucifer is alluring to men and women alike while enjoying the companionship of both ("Stewardess Interruptus" 2.11). Not only is the Devil a social being, he is a markedly "lonely" one ("A Priest Walks into a Bar" 1.09):

[166] In fact, the Devil's physical appeal is so intrinsic to the character that the promotional material for the series' fourth season simply features a semi-nude Lucifer climbing out of a swimming pool ("*Lucifer*: Season 4 Teaser").
[167] Decker deduces early on that the reason Lucifer grants Faustian favours revolves around "power. It makes you feel superior, in control. You're addicted to creating chaos and seeing where the chips fall, to hell with the consequences. It's like you have some kind of God complex" (1.05). Recalling the Romantic-Miltonic Devil, Lucifer prefers to have others indebted to him, rather than be obliged to another himself.

Tom Ellis proposes that Lucifer's "personal hell is being on his own and not around people … At his heart, there's a really lonely person. To have a true connection with somebody is what he doesn't realize he wants" (Radish, "Tom Ellis"). As "God's most wayward soul" (*Lucifer*, "Quintessential Deckerstar" 3.23), the Devil yearns for a sense of belonging in the world, Miltonically musing that "Hell wasn't home, and Heaven was well, Hell" ("Trip to Stabby Town" 2.08). Lucifer may claim that there is "[n]o pesky empathy to be found" within him ("Lucifer, Stay. Good Devil" 1.02), but in reality he repeatedly exhibits compassion towards humanity and is even willing to sacrifice himself for those he cares for ("Take Me Back to Hell" 1.13; 4.10). The fallen angel falls far short of the standard consideration of evil, awakening instead sympathy on the part of the viewer since he is simply portrayed as "a really sad devil guy" ("Really Sad Devil Guy" 5.01).[168]

However, he is not entirely free from his fallen stature. In the words of the angel Amenadiel (*Buffy* alum D.B. Woodside), the Devil remains "a mockery of everything divine" (1.01): both "arrogant [and] … selfish" ("Take Me Back to Hell" 1.13), Lucifer is said to be simply "disguis[ing] himself as an angel of the light" while parading around on Earth ("Favorite

[168] Gaiman is no stranger to the creation of sympathetic fiends. His comedic novel *Good Omens* (1990), co-authored by Terry Pratchett, features a well-meaning devil who works in tandem with a wilful angel to avert the impending apocalypse. In May 2019, Amazon Prime released a miniseries based on the work starring David Tennant as Crowley, a charming demon who "didn't really Fall … just, y'know, sauntered vaguely downwards" ("Hard Times" 1.03), and Michael Sheen as Aziraphale, a good-natured yet naive angel who is "just enough of a bastard to be worth knowing" ("The Very Last Day of the Rest of Their Lives" 1.06). While the show does briefly present the audience with a giant, red-skinned, horned, and malevolent image of Satan in the final episode (voiced by Benedict Cumberbatch), the series reworks the conventional origins of the Devil to focus on Crowley instead. The monstrous Satan remains the ruler of Hell who ostensibly spearheaded the rebellion against God, but it is Tennant's Crowley – in the guise of a black serpent named 'Crawly' – who not only whispers in Eve's ear and entices her into eating the fruit in the Garden of Eden, but also tempts Christ in his youth (1.03). Crowley even espouses the notion of the Fortunate Fall in relation to God's "ineffable plan," wondering if he did, in fact, "d[o] the right thing with the whole 'eat the apple' business'" ("In the Beginning" 1.01). Although Crowley may be the "wily old Serpent" whose original purpose was to sow discord on Earth (1.06), in reality this devil – along with his rebelliously angelic counterpart - is revealed to be the true hero of *Good Omens.* For more on Milton's presence in Gaiman's and Pratchett's text, see pp. 147-51 in Sueda's "Milton in Science Fiction and Fantasy."

Son" 1.06).[169] Although his human façade shows no hint of his demonic nature, he is capable of summoning what he terms his "Devil face" at will ("They're Back, Aren't They?" 3.01). In this form his skin is blistered, red, and weathered, defaced by "[d]eep scars … intrencht" and crimson eyes which evoke the "baleful" glare of Milton's Satan and his Gothic progeny (*PL* I.601; 56). It is in this guise that the Devil most pridefully displays his obsession with the notion of punishment. He admits forthrightly that he enjoys "punish[ing] people" (*Lucifer* 1.01,) but this gratification towards the prospect of retribution is not pure sadism on his part. Unlike Milton's Satan, who endeavours to make "Evil … [his] Good" (*PL* IV.110), Lucifer relishes both "punishing the bad guys" and "seeking justice for the good ones" (*Lucifer* 1.03).

The Devil's righteous indignation at the injustice of the world prompts him to assist Detective Decker in solving homicide cases as an official police consultant. Lucifer is thereby presented not as a sympathetic villain, but as the flawed yet well-meaning hero of the series. Although the devout Father Kinley describes Lucifer as "the Prince of Lies" (4.02), in reality the Devil prides himself on his refusal to tell falsehoods and his dedication towards uncovering the truth for himself. He further succeeds in his endeavours due, in large part, to his remarkable eloquence and charisma. Not only does he have a firm grasp of the intricacies of the English language – being quite prone to witty banter and artful punning – but as the once "brightest of God's angels," he possesses an ability unique to him alone: the Devil is able to use his words as a

[169] The villainous Father Kinley (Graham McTavish) takes Amenadiel's initial assessment a step further by describing Lucifer's personable attitude as an ingenious manipulation on the Devil's part. Speaking to Decker, Kinley ruminates, "I'm sure he's the most magnetic individual you ever met. Charming and eloquent, funny. Kind even. … It's all an act … The Devil has been manipulating human beings since the beginning of time. If you don't respond favourably to something, well, he'll make an adjustment until you do. Anything to make sure he gets what he wants. Because the only person that he is interested in is himself" (4.02). Although these words are arguably accurate with respect to the Satan of *Paradise Lost* – and convincingly summarize the original demonic model upon which *Lucifer*'s Devil is based – they do not accord with the Romantically positive representation of the fallen angel presented in the show.

weapon in order to "pul[l] out [a person's] deepest desires, revealing the truth within" (1.02).[170] The persuasive power of his voice is such that it can literally seduce others and compel them to confess whatever "deep, dark, naughty little desires that are on their mind" (1.01).

Lucifer's linguistic proficiency not only amplifies the "renownd … Eloquence" (*PL* XI.670-1) of Milton's Devil by enabling his speech to literally manifest the innermost secrets of those to whom he speaks, but it further invokes his fixation on the importance of free will. In his own words, he is able to uncover an individual's true desire, desire being "the ultimate expression of free will. I help people do whatever … they want" (*Lucifer*, "The Sinnerman" 3.09). Lucifer herein imagines himself to be the Blakean liberator of humanity's oppression from the dictates of God and polite society. This type of liberation is precisely what Lucifer craves for himself – freedom from his divinely-mandated vocation as the Devil. Much like *Supernatural*'s Lucifer, this fallen angel ascribes to the doctrine of predestination, deeming his current status a direct result of God's will rather than the consequence of his own actions.[171] He escapes from Hell to Los Angeles because he is "sick and tired of playing a part in [God's] play" (1.01), determined to choose his own fate since there "is no winning when you play by a twisted tyrant's rules" ("Love Handles" 2.12). He fervently denies the accusation that the Devil is the root cause of all evil, declaring that he "ha[s] no power over people's sins, I actually get a bad rap for that. I have the ability to draw out people's forbidden desires … The actual sins, the sins are on you

[170] The Devil's propensity for punning and clever wordplay also mirrors that of the Miltonic Satan, whose speech is widely noted to have been "Ambiguous and with double sense deluding" (*PR* I.435). In his *Imaginary Conversations,* Walter S. Landor (in the mouth of Robert Southey) famously claimed that the "first overt crime of the refractory angels [in *Paradise Lost*] was *punning*: they fell rapidly after that" (29, original emphasis). For more on Milton's satanic language, see the chapters entitled "The Language of 'Evil'" and "Of Mans First Dis" in Forsyth's *The Satanic Epic* (pp. 188-216; 217-38).

[171] Within the first episode, Lucifer explicitly questions whether he's "the Devil because [he's] inherently evil, or because dear old Dad decided [he] was" (1.01).

people" (1.01).[172] In spite of this acknowledgment of individual responsibility, Lucifer begins the series unable to recognize his own culpability, continuously blaming God the Father for "[c]asting [him] into Hell for eternity" and "[g]iving [him only] the illusion of control" over his own life (2.16). He decries the injustice of having his own name "invoked … [for all eternity] to represent all [of humanity's] depravity" (1.06). When confronted by a being whom the Devil mistakenly believes to be his Father, Lucifer exclaims, "[e]very bad thing that's happened throughout eternity is Your doing, not mine! It's all part of God's plan!" (2.16).[173]

Lucifer portrays God the Father with the conventional Romantic flourish: the deity is labeled a "cruel, manipulative bastard" and a "patronizing sinister helicopter parent" who treats the universe like "a game" (1.09; 2.16; 1.09).[174] The Devil resents his Father for both "shunn[ing]" and "vilif[ying]" him (1.06), bemoaning the fact that God is impossible to please since "[n]obody bloody knows [what He wants] because the selfish bastard won't just tell us!" ("Weaponizer" 2.05). Yet in reality, Lucifer's rebellious actions are fuelled by a desire for acceptance and forgiveness from his parent. Rather than being driven by pride or solipsism, the Devil more precisely mirrors Frankenstein's Monster, longing only to be acknowledged by God and receive an "apolog[y]" for his "reject[ion]" and subsequent abandonment in Hell (2.16). As the series progresses, Lucifer even comes to recognize the inherent hypocrisy of his stance on

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[172] Lucifer is further removed from the popular conception of the Devil as originator of sin in the fifth season, when his angelic twin brother Michael (also played by Tom Ellis) is revealed to have "been manipulating [the Devil] since the dawn of time" ("¡Diablo!" 5.03), having planted the idea of rebellion within Lucifer's mind before the Fall. The show Romantically flips conventional considerations of good and evil by painting the 'heavenly' Michael as the dishonest, manipulative, and petty villain of the tale.

[173] The Lucifer presented in Gaiman's *Sandman* blatantly states that since all of his actions had been preordained by God, free will does not exist. When conversing with Dream, Lucifer ponders, "I *still* wonder how much of it was *planned*. How much of it *He* knew in *advance*. I *thought* I was *rebelling*. I thought I was *defying His* rule. No… I was *merely fulfilling* another *tiny* segment of *His* great and powerful *plan*. If *I* had not rebelled, *another* would have, in my stead" (Gaiman, *Season of Mists* 68, original emphasis). Carey explains that his sequel comics are devoted to exploring "Lucifer's quest to escape divine predestination and become the unchallenged author of his own actions" (Singh).

[174] Much as is the case with *Supernatural,* the character of God is generally absent from the series proper. Although the figure is set to be introduced in the latter half of the fifth season (played by Dennis Haysbert), by and large any information gleaned about the deity is filtered first through either Lucifer or other cosmic beings.

free will vis-à-vis predestination. The third season finale finds the pensive Devil reflecting on God's role in the cosmos, admitting that he does not truly believe that the deity is responsible for everything that goes wrong in it:

> I don't actually think it's my Father's fault. See all this time I thought it was Him pulling the strings. I've started to realize that we are the responsible parties. It's quite devious of Him if you think about it. We have no one to blame but ourselves. ("A Devil of My Word" 3.24)

The fourth season finds the Devil once again blaming God for the existence of evil, lamenting, "[t]his is all His fault. Every bad thing that's ever happened," but he quickly recants these remarks, accepting that this belief is "a lie, a grand deception I've been telling myself ... because the truth is so much harder to face … Everything that's happening to me is my own bloody fault. I brought this on myself" ("Super Bad Boyfriend" 4.08). Unlike Milton's static Satan, who refuses to take accountability for his own actions and effectively chooses to damn himself, Lucifer accepts his failures and is thereafter gradually freed from his self-imposed damnation. This self-liberation is manifested through the disappearance of his 'Devil face.' Once Lucifer admits responsibility for his own choices, this demonic visage dissolves and is revealed to have been a reflection of the monstrous manner according to which he viewed himself, rather than a punishment imposed by God (4.10).[175]

Lucifer's capacity for growth and spiritual transformation enables the Devil to not only attain redemption for his sins, it provides an optimistic answer to the question of whether Satan truly is eternally damned in *Paradise Lost*. Had the fallen angel listened to his "conscience" and

[175] Lucifer's realization concerning his self-imposed torment mirrors the conception of human damnation already established in the show. Amenadiel explains that the "rules of Heaven and Hell" are "all based on a human's subconscious, what they think they deserve" (3.23). In the 'Pit,' each individual acts as "[their] own jailer" and the doors to their unique Hells are left wide open (5.01); however, they are doomed to eternally relive their greatest regrets, unable (or unwilling) to evolve or change, and are therefore trapped in an internal Hell of their own creation. In short, the Devil plays no part in a person's salvation or damnation, further acquitting Lucifer from any liability for the existence of evil. A similar principle applies to both angels and demons, since God intended for "[everyone] to judge [themselves]" (3.23).

accepted that there was, in fact, a "place / Left for Repentance … [and] Pardon" (*PL* IV.23; 79-80), *Lucifer* suggests that Satan would have been welcomed back into the heavenly fold. The televisual Devil's renewed desire "to be good" (*Lucifer* 3.24) rather than embrace evil implies that is it never too late to change, that even the most forsaken and fallen soul has the freedom to alter their own destiny. After all, "[i]f [the Devil] can be redeemed, that means that anyone can. Now isn't that divine?" (3.01). This rather hopeful representation of Lucifer has proven to be so enthralling that it has ironically garnered calls for the show's cancellation. In 2016, an online campaign started by "One Million Moms," a US-based non-profit Christian organization, deemed the series "spiritually dangerous" since it "glorifies Satan as a caring, likable person in human flesh" and "makes being the devil look cool" ("Tell 'Lucifer' Sponsors: No More Sympathy"). The movement objected to Lucifer's portrayal "as a good guy," thereby "mak[ing] people rethink assumptions about good and evil, including about God and Satan." The campaign reads like a Lewisian rebuttal to the Romantic Satan, claiming that the show erroneously presents the Devil as simply being "misunderstood. He doesn't want to be a bad guy, it's God who is forcing him to play that role," and therefore those who view the series "are supporting sympathy towards the devil and glorifying Satan."[176] In spite (or perhaps, because) of such criticism, *Lucifer* continues to thrive in the cultural arena. The show has already been saved from cancellation twice, and is currently in production for its sixth and (supposedly) final season. The representation of a redemptively sympathetic Devil resonates with audiences living in a modern world steeped in shades of grey, where black-and-white distinctions between good and evil rarely seem to apply.

[176] *Lucifer* is not the only one of Gaiman's televisual creations to generate petitions for cancellation on satanic grounds. More than 20 000 people signed the "Return to Order" campaign - founded by a branch of the US Foundation for a Christian Civilization - which protests that Gaiman's *Good Omens* "'presents devils and Satanists as normal and even good' … and is 'another step to make Satanism appear normal, light and acceptable'" (Flood). Echoing the Romantic conception of Milton's Satan, the petition further claims that the show "portrays God as a tyrant and Devils as being good … [mocks] God's order and religion, and makes Good and Evil seem equal and interchangeable … [and] makes light of Truth, Error, Good and Evil, and destroys the barriers of horror that society still has for the devil," thereby "promot[ing] evil" ("Tell Amazon").

Tom Ellis muses that the show is at its "very heart … a redemption story about the most irredeemable character that we know" (Radish, "Tom Ellis"); if even the Devil can achieve absolution, then perhaps there is hope for the rest of humanity.

The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina, *Supernatural*, and *Lucifer* all refer to their Devils first and foremost as 'Lucifer' rather than 'Satan.' Their depictions emphasize the figure's divine heritage, showcasing the rebel angel in his guise as the 'light-bringer' – as the "fallen … son of the morning" (*KJV* Isa. 14:12) known as "*Lucifer* from Heav'n … brighter once amidst the Host / Of Angels, then that Starr the Starrs among" (*PL* VII.131-3) – more so than as humanity's monstrous adversary. In so doing, their representations of the infernal intrinsically recall the Romantic-Miltonic model, albeit in different fashions. *Sabrina* offers the audience a physically attractive yet tyrannical Devil who tempts his worshippers with compelling promises of liberty and power while focused on his own demonic rule; *Supernatural* foregrounds an image of fallen innocence and sympathetic monstrosity while still adhering to relatively standard codes of good and evil; and *Lucifer* adopts the Romantic reversal of the demonic and the divine in presenting the eponymous Devil as the captivating hero of the narrative, while still allowing God to remain the traditionally-benevolent Father of all creation. All three of the aforementioned works also openly allude to *Paradise Lost* in some shape or form. Though few quote from Milton directly, interviews with the series' creators and production staff ultimately reveal that the epic poet was among the inspirations for the representations of their fiends. Bryan Fuller's *Hannibal*, on the other hand, neither presents the public with a Devil bathed in grace and light, nor does it make reference to *Paradise Lost* - and yet, the characterization of the show's eponymous villain-hero remains inherently Miltonic. Fuller subconsciously appropriates the Miltonic Satan's Romantic legacy by bringing this Devil, in all his great and terrible glory, to the modern age through the character of Hannibal 'the Cannibal' Lecter.

'He is the Devil, Mr. Graham':
The Romantic Reincarnation of Milton's Satan in Bryan Fuller's *Hannibal*

Bryan Fuller's psychological crime thriller *Hannibal* premiered on NBC on April 4th, 2013. In spite of its debut on a national broadcasting network – with its attendant censorship regulations concerning the depiction of violence and bloodshed – the horror serial lasted for three seasons, and starred Mads Mikkelsen as infamous psychiatrist-cum-cannibal Hannibal Lecter, and Hugh Dancy as FBI profiler Will Graham. Prior to the development of the series, Fuller had already described Lecter as "the most cherished villain in pop culture" today (Neumyer). It is, therefore, culturally significant that this character relies so heavily on Romantic considerations of the Miltonic Devil, and yet little to no reference to *Paradise Lost* is made over the course of the narrative. Fuller's Hannibal is presented as an eloquent manipulator whose beguiling nature lulls the viewer into sympathizing with his malevolent schemes. His alluring characterization as simultaneous satanic corruptor and creator not only draws on Milton's representation of the appeal of evil, it marries the Miltonic Devil's Gothic-Romantic legacy in its study of moral ambiguity, hellish isolation, infernal creativity, and sympathetic villainy. Hannibal eschews the traditional stereotypes of the serial murderer by operating on an aesthetic and intellectual plane beyond that of the ordinary man, representative, in turn, of a more insidious form of evil: his penetrating psychological prowess and keen insight into the human condition ultimately prove more terrifying than his teeth. Although the audience enters the series already aware of Lecter's pernicious nature due to his substantial cultural heritage, they are nevertheless seduced into rooting for his victory over his lawful captors. Hannibal has even come to be regarded as a hero in his own right. Fuller's appropriation of the Miltonic Devil via the Romantics demonstrates the continuing adaptability and resonance of Milton's work in the modern age.

The televisual *Hannibal* is an adaptation of Thomas Harris' Hannibal Lecter tetralogy, while also deriving inspiration from the novels' previous film incarnations: Michael Mann's *Manhunter* (1986) – the first cinematic adaptation of Harris' *Red Dragon,* starring Brian Cox as Hannibal Lecter - the aforementioned *Silence of the Lambs* (1991), Ridley Scott's *Hannibal* (2001), Brett Ratner's *Red Dragon* (2002), and Peter Webber's *Hannibal Rising* (2007). Despite Lecter's iconic literary and cinematic heritage, the medium of television provides the character new currency since, as Fuller remarks, it "g[ives] the storyteller the ability to continue telling the character story after [the] fade to black and to keep that character growing and evolving … You tell smaller stories for characters in film. But in television, you get to explore so much more" (Fahy, "*Hannibal*: An Interview" 16). Fuller's oeuvre cannibalizes its cultural predecessors to become "a type of hybrid monster, a 'nightmare mix' … of high and low" (Messent 17) which includes homages to such popular cultural icons as Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* (1980) and George Lucas' *Star Wars* franchise, alongside references to literary and artistic classics, from the works of William Blake, John Donne, and T.S. Eliot, to Sandro Botticelli's ca.1480 *Primavera*.[177] Abbott posits that the series not only "problematizes generic boundaries by overtly blurring lines between suggestion and gore, art and exploitation, gothic and horror," but "the show's rich and textured aesthetic vision" is "thoughtfully and carefully constructed to seduce the eye and ear of the audience while also highlighting the danger that underpins this seduction" (122-3). Part of this attraction is a result of the show's quasi-operatic style, which director Vincenzo Natali claims is a deliberate "attempt to take this material to another level in terms of how poetic and abstract and surrealistic we can be" (Thurm). The character of Hannibal Lecter

[177] Peter Messent's comments are directed towards Harris' novels, but they are equally applicable to Fuller's television adaptation. For example, the victims featured in the opening scene of *Hannibal*'s premiere are named Theresa and Thomas Marlow, potentially referring to English playwright Christopher Marlowe, author of *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (ca. 1589).

takes center-stage in this Gothic phantasmagoria, where the good doctor is introduced not as the imprisoned cannibal of the Hollywood film franchise, but as a practicing psychiatrist whose murderous activities are initially kept under the radar.

Much like the series itself, Lecter is described as a being who "def[ies] categorization" (*Hannibal,* "The Great Red Dragon" 3.08). Former lover and fellow psychiatrist Alana Bloom (Caroline Dhavernas) observes that Hannibal has "long been regarded … as something entirely Other. For convenience," he is "term[ed] … a monster" (3.08).[178] Outside of the confines of the show, director Bryan Fuller and actor Mads Mikkelsen have a more apt descriptor for the character: both consider him to be the embodiment of the Devil. In a preliminary meeting with Mikkelsen regarding the role, Fuller became enamoured by the actor's intention to "play [Lecter] as though he were Lucifer himself" (VanDerWerff, "Bryan Fuller").[179] The director has thereafter described his Hannibal in interviews as "the devil and … an agent of ill-curiosity about the human condition" (Halterman), a "fallen angel who is fascinated with humanity and wants to exploit it to reveal its weakness" (VanDerWerff, "Cannibalism"). However, Lecter's demonic qualities are not constrained to his televisual presence. In the novels, Thomas Harris alludes to these satanic connotations through his description of Hannibal's polydactyly and maroon eyes (*Silence of the Lambs* 13; *Red Dragon* 74).[180] The author ultimately goes so far as to have the pickpocket Romula label him "the Devil … Shaitan, Son of the Morning" (Harris, *Hannibal*

[178] Hannibal also exhibits a number of traits which seemingly place him beyond the pale of the human. Aside from his superior intellect, surprising physical dexterity, and considerable physical strength, Lecter's "sense of smell" is so acute that it can "diagnos[e] autoimmune disease" in one fell sniff (*Hannibal,* "Buffet Froid" 1.10).
[179] Although Mikkelsen's portrayal differs significantly from that of his cinematic predecessors, he is not the first actor to remark on Lecter's satanic attributes. In a 1991 interview regarding *Silence of the Lambs*, Anthony Hopkins mentions how he considers Lecter to be "the personification of the Devil" in part due to his "mesmeriz[ing eyes]" which "seduce" others, since "the Devil has to be seductive because that's the source of his power" (Chanko).
[180] One of the traditional mythico-historical markers of the Devil is "asymmetry on the left … from which we get our English word 'sinister' … meaning, quite straightforwardly, 'on the left'" (Westfall xviii); before Hannibal undergoes plastic surgery to change his visage at the end of the novelistic *Silence of the Lambs*, his left hand is noted to bear an extra appendage. A further nod to Lecter's demonic characterization is included in the epigraph to the third section of *Hannibal Rising*, when Harris quotes from Goethe's *Faust*: "I'd yield me to the Devil instantly, / Did it not happen that myself am he!" (355).

178).[181] Even Hannibal's name has demonic undertones. Derived from the Phoenician for "Baal is gracious," the reference to 'Ba'al' alludes not only to the Canaanite storm deity, but more importantly, to its later conflation with the Philistinian "*Baal Zebub*" – or rather, Beelzebub, the "lord of flies" (B. Smith 104), who is referred to as "the prince of the devils" in the New Testament (Matt. 12:24) and is intimately associated with Satan himself (Matt. 12:26-7; Luke 11:15-9).

From disguising himself as 'Dr. Fell' in Florence – 'fell' in relation to both 'fallen' as well as dangerous – to his fascination with Dante's *Inferno* (and his own culinary-cannibalistic preferences), to his obsession with uncovering the darkness hidden within the human heart, Fuller's Hannibal has all the makings of a modern-day Devil.[182] His demonic stature is enhanced due to the sharp planes of his face, which cinematographer James Hawkinson claims resembles "a skull" bearing "eyes and cheeks" that "plunge into black cavities … alluding to the almost supernatural darkness that l[ies] beneath the character's debonair brilliance" ("James Hawkinson").[183] Hannibal even takes on the monstrously blackened, antlered, and emaciated

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[181] Due to Harris' notorious reticence regarding interviews, few extant sources document his opinion on the character and popularity of Hannibal Lecter. However, he has stated that Lecter "is, in the most general terms … a worthy adversary. He is the adversary for anything like kindness and hope … he's the dark side of the world" (qtd. in Sexton 98-9). Harris does not label him the Devil, but the designation of 'adversary' nevertheless connotes the Abrahamic understanding of Satan-as-adversary. Interestingly, Harris also refers to Hannibal as his own being who exists outside of his authorial control. He remarks that Hannibal is "a man who has to amuse himself," having "taken on a life of his own" (qtd. in Sexton 99; Harris, *Red Dragon* viii), reminiscent of the accusations directed against both Milton and Mary Shelley regarding their demonic creations.

[182] Of the many literary allusions present in Fuller's *Hannibal*, the Dantean evocations are frequent, embedded, and explicit. Not only does Hannibal's cannibalism mirror that of Dante's Devil, he lectures on the *Inferno* in the first episode of the third season and recites a portion of *La Vita Nuova* by heart. Bedelia later labels Hannibal the "mouth of Hell" (*Hannibal,* "… And the Woman Clothed in Sun" 3.10), while she and Will become "Dante's pilgrims … making our way through the Inferno" ("The Number of the Beast is 666" 3.12). On the surface, these Dantean inflections appear to be the primary means of satanic association in the series; however, the Romantic-Miltonic connotations of the character are no less prominent, simply less overt, and thus more interesting with respect to an analysis of the nuances of literary influence and subliminal inheritance. In effect, *Hannibal*'s 'Satan' unites the Dantesque and Romantic-Miltonic Devils into one all-encompassing figure of voraciously appetizing evil.

[183] Mikkelsen's casting may also play into the character's satanic pedigree. The actor's Danish heritage results in Hannibal being the only main character to speak with an accent in the show's first two seasons. He is thereby featured as a nationalistic outsider, reinforcing traditional racialized stereotypes regarding the Devil. Tabish Khair notes that Satan is "the greatest and original 'Other' in the European Christian context," and thus representations of

form of the mythological Wendigo in Will's eyes: an insatiable cannibal derived from Algonquin mythology whose horned depiction in the show not only suggests the demonic, but who has also been described in indigenous folklore as "a supernatural devil or demon of the woods" (Colombo 1). As a young man, Lecter glibly remarks that he "was rooting for Mephistopheles, and contemptuous of Faust" (*Hannibal*, "Secondo" 3.03). Dr. Abel Gideon (Eddie Izzard) explicitly states that Hannibal "really [is] the Devil. Certainly seem[s] to enjoy it. [He has] a click in [his] hoof" ("Antipasto" 3.01).[184]

The character thus far clearly relies on satanic associations, but there are a number of elements which suggest that Hannibal is specifically shaped through the tradition of Milton's Devil as derived from the Romantics. Above all else, Hannibal is made to appeal to the audience. He is physically alluring, charming, and sartorially pristine. Hailing in the Gothic mould from European nobility and "prone to old-world politeness" ("Naka-choko" 2.10), Lecter appears to be the epitome of the Renaissance man: effortlessly talented in the classical arts, the medico-scientific realm, as well as international cuisine, he possesses a pleasantly calm demeanour which conveys self-confidence, self-control, and self-assurance at all times. He projects a sociable façade capable of empathizing with human emotion, even going so far as to weep when attending an operatic gala dedicated (ironically) to hunger relief ("Sorbet" 1.07).[185] A reclusive aristocrat who enjoys the finer amenities in life, Hannibal's profound cultural capital is juxtaposed with his

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the figure have often "overlap[ped] with 'racial' and 'colonial' Otherness" such that in his guise as the Devil (rather than as the fallen Lucifer) he is often depicted as foreign (42-3). Since *Hannibal* is set in the United States rather than Europe, here the (Lithuanian) Lecter becomes the racialized 'Other' who menaces the American populace.

[184] Hannibal is also the first character to say the word "Devil" in the show (the context of which is self-referential in nature). In the first episode of the series, Lecter remarks that "the Devil is in the details" while discussing the psychological profiles of serial killer Garret Jacob Hobbs (Vladimir Job Cubrt) and a second as yet-unidentified murderer, whom the audience discerns is really Hannibal himself.

[185] The depth of Hannibal's emotional capacity is questionable, although it is evident that he is not sociopathic. Mikkelsen believes that Lecter "contains all the empathy in the world, but he's not at the mercy of his empathy. He controls it … [and] uses it to his own advantage" (Dibdin). However, within the series itself Will quips that, even in Hannibal's most melancholic moments, he "follows several trains of thought at once, without distraction from any … [and] [o]ne of the trains is always for his own amusement" (*Hannibal,* "Primavera" 3.02).

status as the cannibalistic serial murderer known as the "Chesapeake Ripper," who not only creates sublimely grotesque tableaux's with the bodies of his victims but serves their flesh to unsuspecting dinner guests. Much as is the case with the Miltonic Satan, the audience is first introduced to Lecter's affable persona, while these less-than-savoury qualities are hidden in the background. Fuller remarks that "[i]t was very much a conscious effort to lull the audience into a false sense of security of how we were going to be telling the Hannibal Lecter story … once we do see him kill, you are reminded of who the character is and what story you're telling. And that's the point where the scales fall away from the audience's eyes about who he is" (VanDerWerff, "Bryan Fuller"). Fuller paints the doctor as a terrifying 'everyman' capable of residing within the depths of the human psyche, a handsome yet faceless evil who is consequently imperceptible to both the trained and untrained eye.[186] Not only are the FBI's most adept profilers unable to identify the serial killer strolling in their midst, Hannibal is even tasked to work on the Ripper investigation alongside Will Graham; the metaphorical snake is more than simply "point[ed]" in the direction of "*Adams* abode" by Eden's guardians (*PL* III.733-4), he is invited into the Garden itself. Hannibal's psychiatrist Dr. Bedelia Du Maurier (Gillian Anderson) encapsulates Lecter's Miltonic-satanic proficiency at deception when she compares his genial persona to a "meticulously construct[ed]" and "very well-tailored person suit" which functions as a "human veil" to conceal his menacing interior from prying eyes (*Hannibal* 1.07).[187]

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[186] In fact, Hannibal takes great pleasure in making anthropophagous puns in front of the FBI and his fellow psychiatrists. When he hosts a banquet for his upper-class peers, he ends his toast by raising his glass to the camera and declaring that "nothing here is vegetarian" (*Hannibal* 1.07), a phrase met by his guests' laughter, even as the real-world audience alternately chuckles or shudders in horror. Tim Jones remarks that the viewer is herein "encouraged to appreciate the joke on Hannibal's level, not theirs" (153), resulting in the audience's effective complicity with Lecter's actions and worldview. As Hibbs muses, "[i]f we find [Lecter] comic, do we not have a kind of sympathy for the devil?" (73).

[187] The series emphasizes the gap between Lecter's elegant exterior and his murderous actions as the Ripper. When asked to define how Will perceives the killer, the profiler responds, "I see him as one of those pitiful things sometimes born in hospitals. They feed it, keep it warm. But they don't put it on the machines. They let it die. But he doesn't die. He looks normal. And nobody can tell what he is" (*Hannibal* 1.07). Hannibal in no way resembles the monster he has proven himself to be - after all, if evil *looked* monstrous, life would be considerably simpler.

Hannibal's aptitude for physical disguise is complemented by his skill in oral manipulation. He repeatedly demonstrates a remarkable facility at manoeuvring events and people to function according to his will; as Bedelia observes, no one should ever "fool [themselves] into thinking [Lecter]'s not in control of what's happening" ("Tome-wan" 2.12).[188] Just as the power of the Miltonic Satan comes not "By violence," but rather "by deceit and lies" (*PL* V.242-3), so too do Lecter's beguiling orations seduce individuals into embracing their inner darkness. Although he devotes most of his time towards enabling Will to "follo[w] the [homicidal] urges [he] kept down for so long" in an effort to "cultivat[e] them as the inspirations they are" (*Hannibal*, "Yakimono" 2.07), Hannibal also influences Bedelia into killing one of her own patients (2.12), inspires Bella Crawford (Gina Torres) to attempt suicide ("Takiawase" 2.04), and compels neurologist Dr. Donald Sutcliffe (John Benjamin Hickey) into keeping Will's diagnosis of encephalitis a secret in the name of "benefit[ting]" future "scientific study" ("Buffet Froid" 1.10).[189] Bedelia aptly concludes that "[w]hat Hannibal does is not coercion. It is persuasion" (2.12). He presents his targets with carefully-selected choices that invariably result in their own damnation.

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[188] Fuller explains that Hannibal's motivation is primarily a matter of curiosity: Lecter is always "having a good time[,] and he is very curious about how people will react to situations" (Neumyer). As Will deduces in the first season finale, Lecter "w[as] just curious what I would do. Someone like me. Someone who thinks how I think. Wind him up, and watch him go" (*Hannibal*, "Savoureux" 1.13). Although Milton's Satan is not defined by the same preoccupation with curiosity in *Paradise Lost,* Patrick Brantlinger argues that the Miltonic Devil's "chief trap is curiosity … by which he wins Eve" (358). Satan's ploy is contingent on his ability to tempt Eve into questioning if "Knowledge" is "forbidden," and whether it can "be sin to know" (*PL* IV.515-6). By the same token, Hannibal successfully convinces Will not to kill him (and thereby continue their relationship) by asking whether Graham is "curious … Why you? … If I am the Ripper and you kill me, who will answer your questions? Don't you want to know how this ends?" (*Hannibal* 2.07).

[189] In addition, Hannibal's prolonged manipulation of Abigail Hobbs (Kacey Rohl) is particularly interesting in light of Lecter's satanic connotations. Over the course of the first two seasons Lecter guides Abigail towards the murder of an innocent man ("Potage" 1.03), convinces her to fake her own death and allow Will to take the fall for it (1.13; "Mizumono" 2.13; "… And the Woman Clothed with the Sun" 3.09), and acts as her confidante and substitute father figure. Abigail not only plays a significant role within the televisual narrative, her name is also derived from one of the young women accused of witchcraft in the Salem witch trials (ca. 1692-3). The nonfictional Abigail Hobbs admitted to seeing "the Devil" (qtd. in West 156) during her testimony in Salem, as well as having "made two separate covenants with" him that involved the murder of innocents (West 157). Abigail's name and function in *Hannibal* consequently serve to underscore Lecter's demonic associations.

This satanic propensity towards temptation and manipulation is in line with his psychiatric profession. Lecter preys on the unstable psyches of his patients, "chew[ing] figuratively" on the brains of those he has yet to consume literally ("Dolce" 3.06). Consequently, his Dantesque cannibalism of the body mirrors his psychological anthropophagy of the mind: as Kilgour argues, "[a]nalysis and cannibalism" herein "form a continuum, differentiated only by degree, not kind, as to see into the minds of others is an act of aggression, a psychic imperialist invasion, which [can] lea[d] to a physical consumption" ("Function of Cannibalism" 249-50).[190] Hannibal acknowledges this connection between eating and psychoanalysis in his opening dialogue with Will. Upon first meeting the profiler, Lecter immediately questions whether Graham "ha[s] trouble with taste," while the latter responds that his "thoughts are often not tasty" (*Hannibal,* "Apéritif" 1.01). This emphasis on 'taste' is particularly interesting in light of Hannibal's Miltonic-satanic resonances.[191] In *Paradise Lost*, "knowledge" is related to "food, and needs no less / Her temperance over Appetite, to know / In Measure what the mind may well contain" (VII.126-8). Whereas Satan literalizes this alimentary metaphor by means of "the Fruit / Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast / Brought Death into the World" (I.1-3) – transforming knowledge into "an object that can be literally consumed …us[ing] words literally in order to

[190] Like the Miltonic Devil, Hannibal also consumes his prey by "inspir'[ing]" Will "With act intelligential" (*PL* IX.189-90), such that Graham's "inner voice" increasingly "sounds like [Lecter's]. [He] can't get [Hannibal] out of [his] head" (*Hannibal,* "Kaiseki" 2.01).

[191] Milton's Satan is largely divorced from the cannibalistic representations of medieval Devils, but the figure nevertheless retains certain anthropophagous associations that reverberate across the expanse of *Paradise Lost*. The Miltonic Devil notably fathers Sin, whose children endlessly consume their own mother's flesh; he is responsible for enacting the gastronomically-described "Intestine War in Heav'n" (*PL* VI.259); and he is compared to "that Sea-beast / *Leviathan*" (I.200-1), whom Merrall Price argues is metaphorically linked to the cannibalistic tradition of the hell-mouth (19). Yet Milton's demonic creation is ultimately more predatory than he is cannibalistic. For example, in the Garden of Eden the Devil not only disguises himself as a carnivorous cormorant, a lion, as well as a tiger while advancing upon Adam and Eve (IV.194-6; 402-3), he stalks the couple "As … a prowling Wolfe" whose "hunger drives [him] to seek new haunt for prey" (IV.183-4). These rapacious (rather than anthropophagous) characteristics can be applied to Fuller's Hannibal. During a discussion with Abel Gideon regarding Lecter's culinary preferences – which occurs while the latter is literally in the process of eating the captive Gideon's leg - Hannibal off-handedly remarks that "[i]t's only cannibalism if we're equals" (*Hannibal* 3.01). Lecter's comment exposes his self-conception as a being separate from (and above) the rest of humanity. As a result, his actions are not technically cannibalistic since he is himself both different from, and superior to, those he consumes. He is, instead, voraciously predatory towards mankind.

offer a more ready and easy way to taste and be wise" – Milton foregrounds taste as a mediated means of experiencing the world "without being poisoned by it" (Kilgour, *From Communion* 120; 125; 119). After all, as the eponymous hero of *Samson Agonistes* declares, "[t]he way to know were not to see but taste" (l.1091). Taste therefore becomes "an image for choice, which for Milton is essential to human free will and action" (Kilgour, *From Communion* 119).[192] Will's declaration that his thoughts 'are often not tasty' accordingly suggests that he has already been 'poisoned,' and thus has difficulty resisting humanity's compulsion towards the darkness. In contrast, Hannibal's steadfastness is established by his "very sophisticated palate" and "marvellous taste" (*Hannibal* 3.01; "Contorno" 3.05). He perverts Milton's metaphor by satanically favouring the literal over the figurative to rely on 'taste' to a cannibalistic extreme. He revels in the 'poison' and chooses to engage in anthropophagy as a superior method of experiencing life, acquiring knowledge, and passing this 'wisdom' onto others by offering them his own 'forbidden fruits' fashioned from human flesh.[193] Fuller's Devil ultimately proves more terrifying than both the Dantean and Miltonic models since he consumes his prey mind, body, and soul: not only does he skewer the hearts of his quarry before swallowing them whole, his lyricism is such that his victims enter his mouth willingly.

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[192] As Milton expounds in *Areopagitica* (in which the poet metaphorically equates food with text), "all kinde of knowledge whether of good or evill … cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defil'd. For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evill substance … Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomack differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty mind are not unappliable to occasions of evill. Bad meats will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction; but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious Reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate" (191-2).

[193] Although characters like Will initially consume Hannibal's anthropophagous offerings unknowingly, by the second season Graham forms a bond with Lecter by offering him a slab of human meat of his own accord. After Will has punningly "sliced the ginger" (2.10), the two sit down to dine and Will knowingly chooses to eat the flesh of another human being for the first time, at which point he declares that he has "given up good and evil for behaviourism." It is here that he arguably undergoes his own fall into Hannibal's satanically-literalistic worldview. In the following episode, Lecter offers Will in return an "ortolan bunting … a rare but debauched delicacy. A rite of passage, if you will" that is to be "consumed whole in a single mouthful" ("Ko No Mono" 2.11). Reminiscent of Victor Frankenstein, Hannibal explains that the meal serves as a "stimulating reminder of our power over life and death." Food *is* knowledge here (and vice-versa), knowledge which should damn the two men, but that yet serves to unite them as one front against the constraints of a fallen world.

Like Milton's Satan, Hannibal excels at fooling others. His mesmerizing articulacy and steady demeanour prompt his patients, especially Will, to depend on him as a source of psychological stability and support, when in reality he is devoted to undermining their sense of self. Even the viewer, who is well aware of who and what Hannibal is, is seduced by Lecter's allure. As Tim Jones argues, the audience is increasingly swayed by Hannibal's rhetoric "because it's just so damn clever, so suave, so delightful. The most horrible things are framed so effortlessly as the very height of sophistication" (154). When Lecter leans into the lens and reasons that "Killing must feel good to God, too. He does it all the time. And are we not created in his image?" (*Hannibal,* "Amuse-Bouche" 1.02), the viewer hears his words through Will's frame of reference and is compelled to consider the validity of the argument. The audience, like Graham, is urged towards a state of moral dumbfounding, where they gradually become complicit in Hannibal's evil.[194] Richard Logsdon argues that the series encourages this "kind of unholy communion … between the viewer and Hannibal" – whom he deems "a certain prototype of the devil" - primarily through the measured use of perspective (50-1). By encountering Lecter mainly through Will's empathetic point-of-view, Fuller "pull[s] the viewer into a kind of sinister fellowship with Hannibal" according to which the cannibalistic serial killer becomes "admirable, even worthy of adoration" (50).[195] Akin to the Miltonic Satan, the audience begins to view

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[194] The third season takes this sense of (what Logsdon terms) "collusion" (50) a step further when Hannibal, in the midst of committing murder, asks Bedelia whether she is, "in this very moment, observing or participating" (*Hannibal* 3.01). Although Bedelia claims she is simply "observing" Hannibal's actions, Lecter responds that by watching, she is, in effect, participating. Hannibal is herein addressing the viewing audience, who is made accomplice to his crimes through the mere act of watching the show and yearning for its continued success.

[195] The viewer is further prompted to not only sympathize with Lecter's actions, but empathize with them as well. The second season revolves around Will Graham's attempts to convince Lecter that he agrees with the serial killer's worldview in an elaborate effort to put him behind bars; when the betrayed Hannibal discovers Will's deception, he subversively offers Graham one last chance at redemption by running away together. When Will refuses, it results in a bloodbath where a number of characters are left on the brink of death (including Graham) and Hannibal murders Abigail Hobbs. As Will lies bleeding out on the floor, a tearful Hannibal declares, "I let you know me. See me. I gave you a rare gift. But you didn't want it … I forgive you, Will. Will you forgive me?" (*Hannibal* 2.13). Even as Lecter slices Abigail's throat – a character whom Graham loves as a daughter – the viewer is encouraged to sympathize with the seemingly-distraught Lecter, to wonder whether this could have been avoided had Will only

mankind through Hannibal's devilishly-distorted eyes.

Consequently, Hannibal has come to be Romantically regarded as a heroic figure in the series.[196] Not only does he consistently outwit the comparatively-inept FBI, his crimes are arguably devoted to the performance of a social function. Unlike such criminals as the sadistic Mason Verger (Michael Pitt and Joe Anderson), who simply enjoys "drink[ing] martinis made with [children's] tears" (*Hannibal,* "Digestivo" 3.07), Hannibal acts in accordance with specific principles: "[w]henever feasible, one should always try to eat the rude" (2.12). The *contrapasso* exhibited by *Seven*'s John Doe is reflected in Lecter, who declares that "[d]iscourtesy is unspeakably ugly to [him]," to the extent that he "reward[s] … undignified behaviour" by "[t]ak[ing]" his victims' "organs away because in his mind, they don't deserve them" (1.07). Lecter's actions are certainly monstrous according to conventional sensibilities, but there remains a method to his madness. Fuller explains that Hannibal "has a confidence in his villainy that he is doing the right thing … [he] is a villain who is so hyper-sane and protective of society and humanity in such an unorthodox fashion that he is willing to kill and eat people to protect the beauty of society as he sees it" (Fahy, "*Hannibal*: An Interview" 5). In his mind, he restores elegance to the chaos of his world while helping his community by consuming those who sully it.

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chosen differently. As Fuller explains, Graham and the audience both have reached "the point in [their] relationship with Hannibal where [they] can't be angry with him for doing what he does … It's like being angry at a shark for eating somebody ... That's what it does, so you can't be mad at a shark for being a shark" (Ge).

[196] Hannibal's 'heroic' qualities are not unique to the television series but originate from Harris' novels and their subsequent popularization by the Hollywood films. Batchelor suggests that the cinematic Lecter "provided the blueprint for a new American antihero – a figure that contains humanity's best and most evil traits simultaneously" (18). Linnie Blake describes Hannibal's characterization as the genesis of the "heroic villain" (arguably a synonym for the satanic villain-hero): figures "who are simultaneously monsters that threaten the social cohesiveness and stability of everyday American life through their violent acts … and heroic outlaws who give voice to a quintessentially American notion of individual freedom beyond the rule of law or the injunctions of the state" (208). Hannibal may be a murderer, but the victims the viewer is privy to are generally those who aim to inflict harm on others, or authority figures in an immediate position to capture him. Much as is the case with *Se7en*, Dan Shaw argues that the majority of Lecter's targets are thus "uniformly unsympathetic" ("Mastery" 16). Although this is not always the case in the television series (since the audience witnesses more of Hannibal's victims than is referenced in the films or novels), it is rare for Lecter to kill without reason – even if the reason is merely a matter of etiquette.

As a result, Lecter follows Jason Mittel's definition of the televisual antihero, who is generally categorized as such by means of "*relative morality*," according to which "an ethically questionable character is juxtaposed with more explicitly villainous and unsympathetic characters to highlight the hero's more redeeming qualities" (*Complex TV* 143, original emphasis). Such figures are not only "validated for being less hideous than the alternatives presented in the series," but the audience's association with them is "partly akin to a fictionalized Stockholm Syndrome, in which time spent with hideous characters engenders our sympathy as we start to see things from their perspective" (144). Fuller avidly employs this technique with respect to the viewer's relationship with Hannibal. In comparison to detestable characters like the aforementioned Mason Verger, who uses a pig carcass as a surrogate for his sister's unborn child (*Hannibal* 3.07), Lecter's concern for Will makes him "attractive *relative* to other characters. In sum, any allegiance we form with [Hannibal] is one that develops in spite of rather than because of his perversity" (M. Smith 227, original emphasis).[197] Lecter is likewise figured as an aberrant avenging angel who will punish those the law is unable – or unwilling – to stop, further endearing him to the general public. Not only is he pivotal in assisting Will track down felons in the first and second seasons, he protects Margot Verger (Katharine Isabelle) from her brother Mason's machinations by literally feeding his face to a pack of hungry dogs (2.12), and even helps put an end to serial killer Francis Dolarhyde (Richard Armitage) in the series finale ("The Wrath of the Lamb" 3.13). Hannibal ultimately proves more efficacious than the men devoted to upholding the law, thereby destabilizing the audience's understanding regarding the moralistic divide between good and evil.

[197] Conversely, Aaron Taylor proposes that "a truly mutinous viewer would claim" that "the 'lesser' perversities" of murderers and criminals like Verger "do not measure up to [Hannibal's] standards of villainy … *they pale in comparison to the doctor's wickedness*" (200; original emphasis).

According to Lecter's worldview, "[m]orality doesn't exist" (3.01). Good and evil are simply human constructs which do not reflect the realities of the modern world. Hannibal satanically proposes that it is accordingly unfair to claim "that [he is] evil" (2.10). When Will argues that Lecter is nevertheless "destructive. Same thing," Hannibal muses,

> Evil is just destructive? Storms are evil, if it's that simple. And we have fire, and then there's hail. Underwriters lump it all under acts of God.[198]

Lecter contends that "[g]ood and evil ha[ve] nothing to do with God" ("Shiizakana" 2.09). Yet he still positions himself in the Miltonic-Romantic role of rival to a society ruled by a deity "beyond measure in wanton malice and matchless in His irony" (2.11). As Graham avers, "Hannibal's not God. Wouldn't have any fun being God. Defying God, now that's his idea of a good time" (3.02). In a world governed by a divinity whose "choices in inflicting suffering are not satisfactory to us, nor are they understandable, unless innocence offends Him" (2.12), Hannibal relishes in "how [his] own modest actions pale besides those of God" (2.11). Lecter herein places himself on a deistic pedestal where he becomes his own form of ambiguously-sinister divinity whose behaviour cannot be measured on a traditional scale.

Fuller's Hannibal further inherits the Romantic interest in the Miltonic Satan's claim of self-creation. Unlike Harris' *Hannibal Rising,* which suggests that Lecter's forced cannibalization of his younger sister, Mischa, is the root cause of the doctor's present anthropophagous tendencies, Hannibal dismisses this glib explanation in the televised series. When Bedelia questions him concerning his past, Lecter replies, "Nothing happened to me. I happened"

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[198] One of Hannibal's favourite pastimes involves "collect[ing] church collapses," ironic tragedies which result in the bemused Lecter querying, "was that evil? Was that God? If He's up there, He just loves it" (2.09). Lecter paints the Christian deity as a power-hungry monarch who is apathetic to the miseries experienced on Earth. After all, "[t]yphoid and swans, it all comes from the same place." Will expresses a similar understanding of God in a conversation with Abigail where he admits that "God can't save any of us because it's inelegant. Elegance is more important than suffering. That's His design" (3.02); Abigail cynically retorts, "You talking about God or Hannibal?" furthering the series' conflation between deity and demon.

(3.03).[199] Will reiterates this position in the same episode, proposing that "Mischa doesn't explain Hannibal. She doesn't quantify what he does."[200] Hannibal takes metaphysical ownership over his identity, asserting that he is his own autonomous being since he is effectively 'self-rais'd.'[201] He announces that "[w]hen it comes to nature versus nurture, I choose neither" ("Sakizuke" 2.02), refusing to cede to societal dictates regarding self-definition and origination. He further declares his own subjective independence through the construction of his "memory palace" (2.13). Lecter literalizes the satanic conceit that 'the mind is its own p(a)lace' by creating an internal world that is "more than a mnemonic system," but rather a psychic locale he can actually inhabit should he "ever [be] apprehended" by the police. The viewer is privy to Hannibal's mental mansion that is "vast, even by medieval standards," the foyer of which resembles "the Norman Chapel in Palermo. Severe, and beautiful, and timeless" marked by a "skull, graven in the floor … a single reminder of mortality."[202] Hannibal thus retains a "paradise within [him],

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[199] The lines "Nothing happened to me … *I* happened" are taken directly from Harris' *Silence of the Lambs* (20, original emphasis), and initially consist of one of the only clues regarding Hannibal's history prior to the publication of *Hannibal* and *Hannibal Rising*. With respect to the novel, Baker similarly suggests that this assertion is "a declaration of an identity self-begotten, free from the taint of 'influence'" (131), even though the later books disprove this proclamation.

[200] Although Fuller never provides a detailed explanation for Hannibal's backstory, the information he does offer differs substantially from that given in the novels and films. Rather than having been unknowingly force-fed the remains of his younger sister by former Nazi collaborators, Hannibal never specifies how Mischa dies in the television series. It is implied that Lecter did devour her corpse of his own volition, but he was not responsible for her death. While her murder is arguably a catalyst in Lecter's psychological development – the show suggests that Hannibal existed in a prelapsarian state prior to Mischa's murder, following which he "can never [again] go … [h]ome" (3.03) - it explains neither his nature nor his pathology. Baker may propose that Harris' *Hannibal Rising* presents the reader with Hannibal's "pre-diabolic consciousness lost when his sister is taken from him" which ultimately reveals "a new, self-made Hannibal Lecter, ascending from his 'fallen' state to become the aesthete-monster … f[ound] in the other books" (131), but the show largely retains Hannibal's otherworldly mystique.

[201] Hannibal's refusal to acknowledge external debts mirrors the Miltonic Satan, "whose rejection of nourishment from without leads ultimately to solipsism," a "characteristic … which makes him the prototype of the Romantic hero" and "which for Milton is ultimately defined as the self-cannibalism of the evil of *Comus* that is 'self-fed and self-consum'd' (*Comus* 597)" (Kilgour, *From Communion* 136).

[202] Will is also able to construct his own 'memory palace' which "shares some rooms" with Hannibal's (3.07). In fact, the only overt reference to Milton in the show can be found in the penultimate episode of the final season, when Hannibal comments, "Will's thoughts are no more bound by fear or kindness than Milton's were by physics. He is both free and damned to imagine anything" (3.12). These lines are lifted from Thomas Harris' original *Silence of the Lambs*, where the allusion is made by the narrator and more aptly directed towards Hannibal himself (164). This confusion and conflation of character identities emphasizes the intertwined nature of Hannibal and Will: the two are

happier farr" (*PL* XII.587), but he also admits that "[a]ll the palace chambers are not lovely, light and bright. In the vaults of our hearts and brains danger waits. There are holes in the floor of the mind" (*Hannibal* 2.13). Like the Miltonic Devil, he still brings a "Hell within him" (*PL* IV.20).

Just as the Romantics had taken Milton's Satan as the representative of the Romantic poet, so too does Lecter function as a version of the Miltonic-Romantic 'artist of death.' Hannibal displays an obsession with the aesthetically macabre; he takes Thomas de Quincey's musings regarding murder literally, so that his killings are "elevate[d] … to art" (*Hannibal* 1.03). As Will explains, the Chesapeake Ripper "has remained consistently theatrical" in his transgressions since he always "wants to perform. Every brutal choice has elegance, grace" (1.07). His 'work' is not only an expression of his freedom from conventional morality, it is a testament to his own power of self-authorship as a being on par with the divine.[203] Art is no longer a reflection of God's beatitude, but rather an infernal perversion of the sacrosanct: *Hannibal*'s slogan – "[t]his is my design" (1.01) – effectively becomes Lecter's signature of taking ownership over God's creation in his own diabolical image. As Hannibal gazes at the grotesque work of serial killer James Gray (Patrick Garrow), a man undergoing an existential crisis who has sewn together a mural of human corpses fashioned to resemble a "great eye look[ing] to the heavens," he takes it upon himself to "finis[h]" Gray's creation by stitching the 'muralist' into his own work (2.02). Gray thereafter "find[s] his faith" in God through Lecter, who ponders that his "eye will now see God reflected back. He will see you. If God is looking down at you, don't you want to be looking back at Him?" Hannibal's blasphemous meditations gruesomely reflect the Romantic conception of man as the author of his own universe.

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effectively interchangeable. As reflections of one another, Hannibal and Will are the only two characters in the show who possess the mental acuity to fashion their own mind palaces.

[203] See also Anamarija Horvat's "Matchless in His Irony: Divinity and the Aesthetics of Death in Bryan Fuller's *Hannibal*" (in *Hannibal for Dinner: Essays on America's Favorite Cannibal*, eds. Kyle Moody and Nicholas Yanes, McFarland, 2021, pp. 170-88).

Unlike the Miltonic Devil, who unconsciously generates grotesque offspring capable only of fashioning "fix't" and lifeless structures (*PL* X.295), and even Frankenstein, who yearns to produce new life but succeeds only in perversely remodeling death, Hannibal knows what he is doing from the start and intentionally corrupts divine inspiration to create his own simultaneously living-and-dead demoniacal creations. He deliberately perverts heavenly creation into malefic nightmare. One of his most memorable murders is that of councilman Sheldon Isley, whose ostensible crime was to have "paved paradise [to] put up a parking lot" (*Hannibal,* "Futamono" 2.06). Lecter punishes the politician by intricately grafting his still-living body onto a tree which is "fe[d]" by the very water he drowned in over the course of approximately three days. Not only is Isley's chest cavity filled with colourfully poisonous flowers – "[b]elladonna for the heart, chain of white oleander for the intestines, ragwort for the liver," a "judgment" on his being "toxic somehow, a poisonous man" – but this so-called "Tree-man actually bears fruit:" algae, which is mistakenly believed to pinpoint the Ripper's location, when in reality it is a trail of false knowledge laid according to Hannibal's precise specifications. Lecter's design is a grotesquely-parodic reflection of "the Tree / Of prohibition, root of all our woe" (*PL* IX.644-5), a diabolical inversion of God's Edenic creation.[204] Death is herein transformed into its own form of demonic rebirth. As Ndalianis argues, "the metamorphosis of the corpse of Isley into a breathtaking, diabolical art form … gives birth to a new form of hybrid life" (282) which cements Lecter as both Miltonic-Romantic creator and destroyer, a simultaneous deity and demon who is capable of overriding heavenly designs to beget beauty from the dead.

[204] Hannibal's "Tree-man" is not his only theologically-parodic creation. In the first season, Lecter is noted to have "left a victim in a church pew using his tongue as a page marker in the Bible he was holding" (*Hannibal* 1.07). The Ripper is further said to "kil[l] in sounders of three," echoing Trinitarian ideals, while his cannibalism is notably a perversion of the Catholic understanding of communion. In fact, the realities of Hannibal's anthropophagy recall Milton's conception of the Catholic Mass as referenced in *De Doctrina Christiana*, according to which the "body" of Christ is "drag[ged] … back to earth" only to be "broken once more and crushed and ground, even by the fangs of brutes" before being "driven through all the stomach's filthy channels" and "sho[t] … out – one shudders even to mention it – into the latrine" (qtd. in Kilgour, *From Communion* 84).

Like Milton's Satan, Lecter also presents his 'art' as a means of liberation. Echoing the Miltonic Devil who endeavours "others to make such / As I" (*PL* IX.127-8), Hannibal strives to unshackle humanity from the strictures of civilized society and conventional morality.[205] His psychiatric practice is subversively devoted to the creation and cultivation of murderers and criminals like himself. Although his relationship with Will serves as the most prominent example of this tendency, Graham is neither the first of Hannibal's pupils, nor is he the last. The second season introduces Randall Tier (Mark O'Brien), a former patient of Lecter's who suffers from species dysmorphia and fashions himself a hydraulic "killing suit" made from the bones of extinct predators to hunt human prey (*Hannibal* 2.09). Lecter proposes that individuals like Will or Randall should "[r]evel in what [they] are" – they should "[a]dapt. Evolve. [And] [b]ecome" who they are meant to be - since the "blood and breath" of their victims "are only elements undergoing change to fuel [their] radiance. Just as the source of light is burning" (2.11). Logsdon thus suggests that Lecter's "unique 'becoming' therapy seems to be an expression of his desire to … recreate the world around him in his own dark and increasingly demented image" (61).

On the other hand, Lecter's Miltonic-Romantic conception of hellish artistry is distorted in the actions of serial killer Francis Dolarhyde, who is otherwise known as "the Great Red Dragon" (*Hannibal* 3.08). Dolarhyde's characterization not only evokes the biblical "great red dragon" (Rev. 12:3-4), but more importantly, Blake's *Great Red Dragon* watercolour paintings

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[205] Hannibal further encourages freedom from societally-constructed heteronormative norms. Queer readings of the relationship between Lecter and Will dominate analyses of Fuller's television series, and may even be connected to the show's Gothic heritage. Just as *Frankenstein* can be read "as a blackly funny homoerotic mime, with man chasing man through a world where the loved women are all dead or far away, and no new ones appear" (*Frankenstein,* "Introduction" xliii), in the third season Will chases Hannibal across the Atlantic alone, resulting in tabloid journalist Freddie Lounds (Lara Jean Chorostecki) labelling the two of them "Murder Husbands" (*Hannibal* 3.09). Lecter's anthropophagy may also "dra[w] indirectly on the traditional association of homosexuality with cannibalism, both conventionally feared as involving a loss of difference" (Kilgour, "Function of Cannibalism" 252). See Jeff Casey's "Queer Cannibals and Deviant Detectives: Subversion and Homosocial Desire in NBC's *Hannibal*" (*Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 32.6, 2015, pp. 550–67); and Kavita Mudan Finn and E.J. Nielsen's *Becoming: Genre, Queerness, and Transformation in NBC's* Hannibal (Syracuse UP, 2019) and "'Blood in the Moonlight': Hannibal as Queer Noir" (*Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 35.6, 2018, pp. 568–82).

(ca. 1805-10). In both Harris' *Red Dragon* and Fuller's television series, Dolarhyde is inspired by Blake's *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in Sun* (ca. 1803-5) to commit a series of murders which he believes will allow him to ascend to his "higher self" and actually "becom[e] ... the Great Red Dragon" (*Hannibal,* "… And the Beast from the Sea" 3.11; 3.10).[206] While Michelle Gompf explains that "[th]ere is no clear indication of how much of Blake's work Harris knows, and in what context" (16), Blakean associations seem foregrounded in the third season of the televisual *Hannibal*.[207] Reminiscent of the Satan of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Dolarhyde "lives to destroy individual lives, but he believes their destruction to be a source of energy - opening vistas to new worlds induced by transcendent transformation," yet unlike the aesthetically-grotesque creativity displayed by Hannibal, he succeeds only in "reduc[ing] Blake's evocative symbols of the visionary human imagination to mere acts of degrading butchery" (Magistrale 30).[208] Although Dolarhyde yearns "to sit before [Lecter] as the Dragon sat before 666 in Revelation" (*Hannibal* 3.12), he is ultimately deemed unworthy in comparison, and the Romantic-Miltonic Hannibal triumphs over this Blakean Dragon with the help of his true counterpart, FBI profiler Will Graham.

Graham is presented as Lecter's Frankensteinian double. Even though the disgruntled yet empathetic Will initially appears to be Hannibal's polar opposite, in reality the two men are "identically different" (3.07): as production designer Patti Podesta explains, "Lecter and Will

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[206] Dolarhyde even visits a comatose tiger while accompanied by his blind lover, Reba McClane (Rutina Wesley), evoking Blake's "The Tyger" (ca. 1794) and its associated reflections on the nature of good and evil (3.09). However, it is interesting to note that Paulson suggests that the imagery for Blake's poem is itself derived "from Milton's simile for Satan prowling around Paradise" (*Representations* 98).

[207] Gompf's *Thomas Harris and William Blake: Allusions in the Hannibal Lecter Novels* is overly general and arguably reductive; as a result, the text is better suited to lay readers than academics. Gompf is correct in concluding that Harris' use of Blake underscores "a particular philosophy regarding good and evil – namely, that the two are intertwined and coexist" (18), but the nuances of this philosophy should not be credited to Blake alone, and would have benefitted from a larger discussion of the Romantic and literary influences incorporated by the poet himself.

[208] Nicholas Williams posits that Dolarhyde becomes a muddled "*cannibale lecteur*, a cannibal reader callously digesting the values of the literary text" who is comparatively "a failed artist, a lesser [one], whose violence can never be adequately aestheticized" (141; 155). In the show, Jack Crawford (Lawrence Fishburne) ultimately states that Dolarhyde is "not" the true "Dragon. [Hannibal is]. The Devil himself, bound in the Pit (*Hannibal* 3.12).

compose a duality … Theirs is not a symmetrical opposition, but a pair of complementary colors whose qualities smear onto one another" ("The Attraction of Opposites"). This 'smearing' is physically manifested in the show's intricate cinematography, which increasingly uses mirrored surfaces to meld together Hannibal and Will into one amalgamated image. As Graham muses in the third season, "[Hannibal] and I have begun to blur … We're conjoined. [I'm] [c]urious whether either of us can survive the separation" (*Hannibal* 3.06).[209] Since the two are "just alike" (2.12), Lecter endeavours to liberate Will from his moralistic mindset by "opening [his] eyes to the truth of who [he is]" (2.01) and (according to Fuller) "transform Will … [and] inform Will's own becoming into a higher-level being than just a plain, old man" (Hiatt). By accepting Hannibal's assertion that there is, in fact, no difference between good and evil, Will reveals that he and Lecter are effectively one and the same.[210]

Yet Graham is not merely Lecter's satanic double. He also retains a number of Christological resonances. Will is introduced as the FBI's sacrificial lamb, content to forfeit his own wellbeing in the name of "sav[ing] lives" (*Hannibal,* "Trou Normand" 1.09).[211] He experiences three separate occasions where he seems to be mortally wounded - one of which resembles a parodic baptism, where the dying Graham is swallowed by a river of blood (3.02) – before falling off a cliff to his ostensible death in the third season finale. However, the end-credits reveal that this fallen 'Son' may, in fact, rise again (3.13). *Hannibal* becomes a

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[209] Fuller explains that Hannibal had always "thought [he] was going to live his entire damnation on this planet as a fallen angel without having a friend because nobody [wa]s capable of understanding [him]" (Radish, "Bryan Fuller"). When he meets Will, however, he realizes that Graham is "alone. Because [he is] unique … as alone as [Hannibal] is" (*Hannibal* 1.13). Lecter not only "see[s] [him]self in Will" (1.13), the profiler further presents "the opportunity for friendship" since Graham "understands Hannibal, he accepts him. Now who among us doesn't want understanding and acceptance?" ("Rôti" 1.11; 3.03). With respect to the literary Lecter, John Goodrich ponders whether Hannibal is "like Milton's damned Satan, seeking companions in his suffering, so that it might seem the less?" (47).

[210] Graham even comes to create his own murderously-aesthetic effigies in the second and third seasons (*Hannibal* 2.10; 2.11; 3.03), prompting Chiyoh (Tao Okamato) to remark that Will is "doing what [Hannibal] does" (3.03).

[211] Hannibal playfully claims that Will more accurately resembles the righteously-wrathful "Lamb of God" whose "retribution" is deemed "even more deadly than the [Great Red] Dragon's" (3.12), echoing Milton's description of the "filial Godhead" who is able to "put on" God's "terrors" to "rid heav'n" of the sinful (*PL* VI.722; 34-7).

compressed version of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, in which Will (who is simultaneous demonic double and righteous martyr) is forced to choose between following Hannibal down the path to darkness, or enacting his role as Christological saviour by ridding the world of the evil exemplified by both Lecter and Dolarhyde. Conversely, unlike both Milton's epic poems as well as Harris' original novels, this darker personification of the 'Son' is ultimately seduced by the Devil.

Although Will claims that no one "know[s] whose side [he's] on" (3.02), the third season makes it clear that Graham is leaning more towards the 'Devil' than to 'God.' While contemplating the nature of his own "best possible world" – the sequence of events Will wishes had happened, rather than those that actually have – he fantasizes that together with Hannibal, he had murdered his FBI superior, the authoritative Jack Crawford ("Aperitivo" 3.04).[212] Later in the season Will and Hannibal do join forces to defeat the Dragon on a hillside bluff steeped in moonlight, where Graham finally admits that killing truly is "beautiful" (3.13), before the two tumble off the cliff together in a gory embrace. Whereas the conclusion of *Paradise Regained* finds "the antithetical brothers [Satan and Christ] stand[ing] together on the temple of their father" awaiting Heaven's eventual victory over Hell (Kilgour, *From Communion* 137), *Hannibal*'s bleak modern landscape showcases an age where 'Satan' triumphs. The 'Son' literally falls together with him into a realm without moral absolutes – only for the two to rise again in their own infernal images. In typical horror movie fashion, the series' end-credits imply

[212] Throughout *Hannibal* Crawford is consistently figured as the Godwinian deity who opposes Lecter's Romantic-Satan manoeuvres. He is presented as a composed yet domineering commander whom Hannibal explicitly labels "God … [and] [a]ll gods demand sacrifices" (3.12). Jack pronounces early in the series that he would "rather [Will] go a little mad than other innocents lose their lives" (1.10); Lecter even questions whether Will has "[e]ver fe[lt] abandoned" by Jack, "perhaps in the way gods abandon their creations" ("Coquilles" 1.05). Whereas Hannibal yearns to liberate Will from societal restrictions, Jack is presented as the merciless architect who does not "offe[r] forgiveness" to his own 'Son,' but is solely focused on the attainment of his personal brand of "justice" (2.13).

that both Hannibal and Will have survived their bloody baptism in the waters of the Atlantic and will return together to wreak havoc anew.

As Andrew Gordon writes, Hannibal "can arouse not only our revulsion but also our sympathy – and, in his case, even our admiration" (104). Viewer fascination with the figure is such that Fuller's Romantic-Miltonic Lecter maintains a thriving cult following which yearns for the anthropophagous doctor's return years after the show's cancellation.[213] In fact, Bryan Fuller remains "very hopeful" regarding a potential fourth season, considering the renewed interest exhibited in the series since it has been returned to streaming services like Netflix (Lattanzio). The rapture fans experience in relation to the show – and notably with reference to the character of Hannibal Lecter – represents a dark underground where the relative notions of good and evil are destabilized in order to reveal a delicious darkness which thrills humanity.[214] *Hannibal* engages with the broader Romantic legacy of *Paradise Lost* by effectively representing the ambiguity, appeal, and attraction of evil, proposing that the modern world exists in a realm devoid of moral principles where charisma reigns supreme.

In a 2017 interview with critic Emily VanDerWerff, Fuller expounded upon his conception of the satanic and *Hannibal*, questioning "[w]hat makes the devil such a good

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[213] In 2021 Alex Kurtzman and Jenny Lumet developed *Clarice,* a procedural television series unrelated to Fuller's adaptation which serves as a sequel to the cinematic *Silence of the Lambs,* starring Rebecca Breeds as the titular Clarice Starling. However, the CBS series does not retain the rights to the character of Hannibal Lecter, so no mention of him can be made in the new show (Rice). The project's development has occasioned fervent calls on social media disavowing Kurtzman and Lumet's adaptation in favour of reviving Fuller's *Hannibal* instead, resulting in the hashtag "#HannibalDeservesMore" trending on Twitter following *Clarice*'s debut episode (Cost).

[214] The audience's near-reverence of Lecter's character even takes physical form in *Hannibal* food stylist Janice Poon's *Feeding Hannibal: A Connoisseur's Cookbook* (2016). In spite of knowing the cannibalistic truth enshrouding Lecter's cuisine, the show's viewers have nevertheless become so enthralled by the sumptuous dishes presented in the series that they are now able to bring these meals into their own homes - albeit using more traditional ingredients. Moreover, *Hannibal*'s popularity (particularly amongst academic circles) is such that the number of scholarly publications on the subject is perhaps disproportionate to the amount of time the show has existed on-air. Recent works notably include Jessica Balanzategui and Naja Later's *Hannibal Lecter's Forms, Formulations, and Transformations: Cannibalising Form and Style* (2020) and Kyle Moody and Nicholas Yanes' *Hannibal for Dinner: Essays on America's Favorite Cannibal on Television* (2021). In spite of the show's cancellation, the series remains ripe for continued critical engagement.

romantic figure" ("Cannibalism"). He maintained that "the devil is always about being true to your purest self" since the "temptations he la[ys] out for humanity are not intrinsically opposed to human nature," but are rather "about leeching out human nature and accepting [it] and not denying the totality and complexity of who we are." When VanDerWerff questioned whether the director considers the Devil to be "God's opposite – or another aspect of God," Fuller replied, "[w]e blame floods and earthquakes on God's wrath. Does that make God the devil at the same time?" Over the course of the interview Fuller discussed a number of cinematic satanic influences, from Tim Curry's Lord of Darkness in *Legend* (1985) to Robert de Niro's Louis Cyphre in *Angel Heart* (1987), but never any literary sources, though he did quip that it would be "a lot more fun" to "go to the devil's party" than to God's. Fuller's casual use of Blakean terminology may simply be a matter of the phrase having become part of modern parlance, but it implies a rudimentary grasp of Romantic Satanism. The director dramatically concluded that "[o]f course, the devil is the hero of his own story. It's the idea of humanizing the devil and recognizing that Hannibal is a devilish figure and a villain yet is also the hero of his own story." Fuller never mentioned - or even alluded to - *Paradise Lost* by name, and yet his conception of Hannibal-as-Satan is not purely Blakean, but rather echoes the Romantic interpretation of the Miltonic Devil. His words exemplify how this Satan has come to dominate the popular cultural sphere in his peculiarly 'distended' fashion. The Romantic-Miltonic Devil is simultaneously everywhere and nowhere, rarely attributed to his source-text whilst continuously appropriated by authors, filmmakers, and show-runners alike. In the words of lyricist Siouxsie, whose single "Love Crime" is featured in the final moments of *Hannibal*'s series finale, whether or not the debt to Milton is consciously acknowledged the Romantic conception of his Devil nevertheless "survive[s], live[s], and thrive[s]."

‘[D]ebt immense of endless gratitude’: Modern Echoes of the Miltonic Devil

“To be overfamiliar with monsters is to misrecognize the possibility of the monstrous.” (Botting, “Metaphors and Monsters” 362)

In the final season of *Hannibal*, Mason Verger muses, “I want to understand Hannibal Lecter, to better understand myself” (3.04). The same can be said for audience members who thrill to satanically-sympathetic characters like Lecter, Frankenstein’s Monster, or Milton’s Devil – the exquisite darkness exhibited by these figures is reflected in humanity itself. Evil speaks to mankind because it is simultaneously alluring and repulsive; understandable, yet morally reprehensible; and rarely as clear-cut as many would choose to believe. C.S. Lewis is correct in discerning that “a fallen man *is* very like a fallen angel” (101, original emphasis): Milton’s depiction of a multi-faceted Devil, who is painted as tortured, heroic, attractive, and tantalizingly close to the good, entrances the reader into believing his charming lies and thereby surpasses the theological and polemical confines of his originating epic. Romantic readings of the figure, which question whether essential evil exists, speak to modern societies surviving in a world shadowed by ambiguity and ambivalence, where it is often easier to sympathize with Satan than it is to commune with the heavens. The Romantic conception of the Miltonic Devil inflects modern understandings of good and evil and reverberates across the popular cultural landscape.

As Camille Paglia affirms, “[p]opular culture is the great heir of the western past” (31), and the Romantic-Miltonic Satan plays a significant role within this cultural inheritance. He has, in the words of Neil Forsyth, “prove[n] to be one of the most fertile characters in English literature – fertile of interpretation, of response, of rewriting – and unsettling, even threatening, because [he remains] so fascinating and yet so hard to evaluate” (*The Satanic Epic* 6). Even though academics “presume that the battle has been fought already, that the heroic Satan (the Romantic Satan) is primarily an error of neophytes, a figure whose claims on the mind are

admitted only to be cast out by a sophisticated appeal to Milton's way of testing and tempting the reader" (K. Gross 318), popular culture tells a different story. Contemporary considerations of the Miltonic Devil, filtered primarily through the Romantics, underscore the realities of a complex universe that exists beyond the fixed divides between good and evil. While *Paradise Lost* is devoted to an examination of the choices involved along the path to corruption, modern consumers of the epic and its offspring continue to be seduced by the very figure Milton intended them to guard themselves against. Just as books "are not absolutely dead things, but doe contain a potencie of life in them to be as active as that soule was whose progeny they are" (Milton, *Areopagitica* 185), so too can they "behave monstrously towards their creators, running loose from authorial intention and turning to mock their begetters by displaying a vitality of their own" (Baldick, *In Frankenstein's Shadow* 30). With the passage of time John Milton has increasingly come to resemble Victor Frankenstein in the popular imaginary: both have effectively lost control over their monsters. The pervasive presence of the Romantic-Miltonic Devil in literary, cinematic, and televisual productions exemplifies how poetic creations can breach the margins of their restrictive fictions to find new purchase elsewhere, "ma[king] the great leap from literature to mythology … [and] ste[p] from the rhythms of their authors' idiosyncratic voices into what might be called a collective cultural consciousness" (Oates 35).[215]

Milton's Satan prevails over the expanse of contemporary popular culture, on-screen and beyond. From Erin Shields' critically-acclaimed dramatic retelling of *Paradise Lost* at the 2018 Stratford Festival - starring a gender-flipped Satan constructed to both "reflect" contemporary

[215] It is interesting to note that of the other Miltonic-Romantic constructs discussed in this study, both Frankenstein's Monster as well as Harris' Hannibal have similarly surpassed the stories that produced them. George Levine aptly remarks that "[i]t's a commonplace now, that everybody talks about *Frankenstein*, but nobody reads it" (3); likewise, Hannibal has been made infamous thanks to the Hollywood film franchise rather than Harris' original novels. Both literary creations have eclipsed their native chronicles to become celebrities in their own right. These villainously-sympathetic monsters have been set loose upon the world to rampage both on and off the screen – yet they also harken first to the Romantic-Miltonic Devil. Not only has Milton's poetic creation outgrown his own narrative, he has inspired other literary creations to liberate themselves and do the same.

women who "spea[k] truth to power" as well as simply showcase how "much fun [it is] to be bad!" (xiv) - to Tatsuki Fujimoto's dark fantasy manga series *Chainsaw Man* (2018-20), the tenth volume of which contains a facsimile of Gustave Doré's Romantic illustration of the Miltonic Lucifer falling from Heaven (28), the Devil of *Paradise Lost* continues to be reinvented in emerging forms of popular media.[216] The poet and his demonic creation can now be found in such popular formats as video games, notably Wholetone Games' *Lucifer: Paradise Lost* (2020), a self-styled retro arcade shooter game "[v]ery loosely based on John Milton's" poem where the player takes on the role of "Lucifer, the devious dark angel" in order "to become the dark prince of hell" ("*Lucifer: Paradise Lost*").[217] In 2021, American rapper Lil Nas X even collaborated with the MSCHF art collective to release 666 'Satan Shoes,' customized Nike Air Max 97s bearing the inscription "Luke 10:18" – the biblical referent reading, "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven" - and containing a real drop of human blood, whose marketing slogan announces, "Better to Reign In Hell Than Serve In Heaven" (Flanagan).[218] On a more traditionally literary note, novels like Steven Brust's *To Reign in Hell* (1984), Andrew Pyper's *The Demonologist* (2013), and Michael Hughes' *The Countenance Divine* (2016) all self-consciously echo the satanic nuances of *Paradise Lost* in their narratives. The young adult

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[216] Fujimoto's manga series is not the only Japanese serialization to invoke Milton's epic. Aside from works like Kenji Kamiyama's *Eden of the East II: Paradise Lost* (2010) and Tooru Fujisawa's *GTO: Paradise Lost* (2014-), which merely borrow the title of Milton's poem without including any other reference to the poet or his writings, Yuki Kaori repeatedly alludes to *Paradise Lost* in her illustrated works. Not only is her newest manga series entitled *Beauty and the Beast of Paradise Lost* (2021-), her earlier *Angel Sanctuary* (1994-2000) features a captivating depiction of the angel 'Lucifel,' who falls in love with another angel and rebels against the corruption of Heaven. Kaori admits that she is fascinated by "the existence of the 'fallen angel.' The 'shining one,' one who radiates light. Lucifer" (29) and thus opens the first volume of the series with the words "Paradise Lost" (8).

[217] In *Milton on Film*, Brown earlier notes that video games like Blizzard North's *Diablo II* (2000), Remedy Entertainment's *Max Payne* (2001), and Bethesda Game Studios' *Fallout 3* (2008) all either include references to *Paradise Lost* over the course of their gameplay, or contain virtual copies of the epic which players can attain once they accomplish certain tasks (284; 387). In 2021, PolyAmorous and All in! Games also developed a post-apocalyptic video game entitled *Paradise Lost* (2021), which is devoted to telling "the last [rather than first] story on Earth" by means of a subterranean interactive simulator ("*Paradise Lost*").

[218] Nike ultimately filed a lawsuit against MSCHF in an attempt to halt distribution of the controversial shoes. In response, MSCHF composed an official statement which argues that "Satan is as much a part of the art historical canon as Jesus, from Renaissance Hellmouths to Milton. Satan exists as the challenger to ultimate authority" (qtd. in Flanagan), concluding once again with the aforementioned Miltonic slogan.

fantasy genre in particular has also demonstrated a sustained fascination with Milton's text. Aside from Cassandra Clare's aforementioned *The Mortal Instruments* series, novels like Libba Bray's *Rebel Angels* (2005) - the title of which not only evokes the Miltonic war in Heaven, but includes an epigraph that quotes directly from lines 33-47, 128-42, and 262-270 of Book I of *Paradise Lost* (i-ii) – and Melissa Marr's *Cold Iron Heart* (2020), whose protagonist ponders that "John Milton had the right of it in *Paradise Lost*: the voice of temptation [i]s luscious" (16), demonstrate a recurrent interest in Milton's Devil.[219]

Perhaps the prime exemplar of the figure's presence in contemporary Western literary and popular culture remains Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy (1995-2000), which is currently in the process of televisual adaptation courtesy of HBO.[220] Pullman is self-admittedly "of the Devil's party and know[s] it" (De Bertodano): he has declared that the origins of his novels are a result of "the devil enter[ing] into [him]," prompting him "to write … *Paradise Lost* for teenagers" (Parsons and Nicholson 126). Not only is the title of the series derived from Book II of Milton's epic – according to which "th' Almighty Maker" fashions Chaos into "His dark materials to create more worlds" (*PL* II.915-6) – but characters like Lord Asriel, Mary Malone, Marisa Coulter, and even Lyra Belacqua display Miltonic-satanic characteristics over the course

[219] Bray's *Rebel Angels* includes a more thorough examination of Milton's Devil in the novel's twenty-sixth chapter, when the main character, Gemma Doyle, attends an art exhibition accompanied by her friends and former professor, Hester Moore. Gemma is attracted to an angelic painting which prompts Miss Moore to quote the Miltonic Satan's infamous slogan regarding hellish ambition; she further states that *Paradise Lost* "is the story of Lucifer … Heaven's brightest and best-loved angel" who rebels against Heaven not due to excessive pride but because "[h]e was dependent on someone else's whim. It's a terrible thing to have no power of one's own" (277). Miss Moore communicates the traditional Romantic understanding of the epic when she continues, "Milton himself seemed to feel sympathy for [the Devil]," questioning whether "evil … really exist[s.] What if evil is something dreamed up by man, and there is nothing to struggle against except our own limitations?" (278). Her words resonate with the young women, who cry "Poor Lucifer" and ponder whether the remaining angels "missed him terribly when he fell? Did God cry over his lost angel, I wonder?" (278-9).

[220] The first novel of Pullman's fantasy series, the 1995 *Northern Lights* (also titled *The Golden Compass*), received a film adaptation in 2007 which was expected to be succeeded by two sequels; however, the theatrical *Golden Compass* underperformed in the box office and the series was ultimately cancelled, before being televisually rebooted by HBO (Sandwell).

of the narrative.[221] Pullman's modern version of the epic is not faithful to Milton's theological intentions, but rather adheres to a Romantic understanding of the poem and its Devil.[222] In his works "Satan is understood to be good rather than evil" (Parsons and Nicholson 119), while the Fall itself "should be celebrated and not deplored" (Pullman, "Introduction" 10), resulting in detractors of the novels insisting that his writing promotes "a Satanist message" (Parsons and Nicholson 132).[223] Jack Thorne's 2019 television adaptation is loyal to Pullman's vision and has garnered critical acclaim for the accuracy of his work. The series is already in production for its third and final season, which will showcase the war on the heavenly "Authority" and Lord Asriel's satanic fight for "the privilege of freedom becom[ing] the right of all peoples" (*His Dark Materials,* "Æsahættr" 2.07). Milton and his satanic construct are demonstrably ripe for the

[221] Even the title of the aforementioned *The Golden Compass* is indebted to Milton. Pullman explains that he originally intended the novel to be named "*The Golden Compasses*" (Parsons and Nicholson 126), a phrase coined from a passage in *Paradise Lost* where the Son is said to "t[ake] the golden Compasses, prepar'd / In Gods Eternal store, to circumscribe / This Universe, and all created things" upon the creation of the world (*PL* VII.225-7). The novel also opens with a Miltonic epigraph taken from Book II.910-9 of *Paradise Lost* (Pullman, *The Golden Compass* i). In spite of the author's rich novelistic intertextuality, Pullman remains unbothered whether or not the public is capable of identifying his references; rather, "if following th[e literary] experience" his readers "think 'Well, that was interesting. I wonder where this comes from … Milton? Let me go and read *Paradise Lost*.' If they do that, well, that's great" (Parsons and Nicholson 122), thereby helping to widen Milton's recognition within the public purview.

[222] In the acknowledgements to the final novel of the trilogy, Pullman writes, "I have stolen ideas from every book I have ever read" but "there are three debts that need acknowledgment above all the rest. One is to … John Milton's *Paradise Lost*" and another "is to the works of William Blake" (*The Amber Spyglass* 467). Pullman is particularly invested in Blake's consideration of Milton's work, deeming the poet "the greatest of Milton's interpreters" ("Introduction" 8). For more on Pullman's debt to the Romantics and his reinvention of Milton, see Anne-Marie Bird's "'Without Contraries is no Progression': Dust as an All-Inclusive, Multi-Functional Metaphor in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*" (*Children's Literature in Education* 32.2, 2001, pp. 111-23); Stephen Burt's "'Fighting Since Time Began': Milton and Satan in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*" (in *Milton in Popular Culture*, pp. 47-58); Burton Hatlen's "Pullman's *His Dark Materials*, a Challenge to the Fantasies of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis, with an Epilogue on Pullman's Neo-Romantic Reading of *Paradise Lost*" (in His Dark Materials *Illuminated: Critical Essays on Philip Pullman's Trilogy*, eds. Millicent Lenz and Carole Scott, Wayne State UP, 2005, pp. 75-94), especially pp. 83-91; Karen D. Robinson's "*His Dark Materials*: A Look into Pullman's Interpretation of Milton's *Paradise Lost*" (*Mythlore* 24.2, 2004, pp. 2-17); and Lauren Shohet's "*His Dark Materials, Paradise Lost* and the Common Reader" (*Milton in Popular Culture*, pp. 59-70).

[223] In his introduction to the 2005 edition of *Paradise Lost*, Pullman echoes Dryden by claiming that Milton's epic is, in reality, "a story about devils. It's not a story about God. The fallen angels and their leader are our protagonists, and the unfallen angels, and God the Father and the Son, and Adam and Eve, are all supporting players" ("Introduction" 4).

modern age and continue to resonate with contemporary audiences well beyond the bounds of the poet's epic work.

In the words of Linda Hutcheon, an adaptation – or rather, appropriation – "is not vampiric: it does not draw out the life-blood from its source and leave it dying or dead, nor is it paler than the adapted work. It may, on the contrary, keep that prior work alive, giving it an afterlife it would never have had otherwise" (176). A study of the Romantic-Miltonic Satan's presence in popular culture does not detract from the poet's literary and intellectual legacy, but instead "give[s] new currency to Milton, making his works a vital, living part of contemporary culture" (Knoppers and Semenza, "Introduction" 6). *Paradise Lost* and its sympathetic representation of a dubiously entrancing evil suffuses the cultural sphere, such that even those unfamiliar with the text echo the Miltonic Devil in their depictions of antiheroic monsters and magnetizing hero-villains. Their ubiquity in the televisual realm, which is effectively "a mirror of our world" (Mittell, *Television and American Culture* 2), exemplifies how far this Romantic depiction of ambiguous villainy has saturated the contemporary Western cultural psyche. As Percy Bysshe Shelley writes, "[a] great Poem is a fountain forever overflowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and an unconceived delight" ("A Defense of Poetry" 693). Milton and his Satan have deeply influenced figurations of the infernal in contemporary films and television shows, and will likely do so for generations to come.

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