PART FIVE

THE INHERITANCE OF EVIL

One could reasonably anticipate that an examination of *Jekyll and Hyde* would end with the focus totally on *Jekyll and Hyde*. But the text itself does not provide us with all of the information necessary for a complete understanding of Edward Hyde. We have seen that he is the Platonic embodiment of the lower elements in Jekyll's soul; that these lower elements are the satanic impulses fuelling the war in Jekyll's members; and that these lower satanic impulses spring from a lingering brutishness in civilized humanity, a remnant of our former primitive condition. But even when one takes all of the above into account, one is still uncertain what to make of Jekyll's great tragic cry:

> [H]e thought of Hyde, for all his energy of life, as of something not only hellish but inorganic. This was the shocking thing: that the slime of the pit seemed to utter cries and voices; that the amorphous dust gesticulated and sinned; that what was dead, and had no shape, should usurp the offices of life. And this again, that that insurgent horror was knit to him closer than a wife, closer than an eye; lay caged in his flesh, where he heard it mutter and felt it struggle to be born (95).

To understand this passage fully is to understand Edward Hyde and to see finally how all the elements we have been examining come together. And to understand this passage fully we must turn to 'Olalla', written almost immediately after *Jekyll and Hyde*, in which Stevenson deals explicitly with the inheritance of evil.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

OLALLA AND HYDE: KINSHIP WITH THE DUST

The theme of inheritance is strong in *Jekyll and Hyde* – Utterson spends most of his time fretting about Jekyll's crazy will, only to find himself in the end the beneficiary – and its cornerstone presence in such works as *Kidnapped* and *The Master of Ballantrae* shows that it exercised Stevenson's mind a great deal. Heir to his father's fortune – and for a time in peril of being denied it – Stevenson knew the worldly benefits of inheriting wealth and property. Heir also to chronic ill health and a highly-strung disposition, he knew the awful misfortune of inheriting his parents' and grandparents' physical and psychological failings. Heir also, from his cradle, to a fire-and-brimstone Biblical tradition, he knew the burden of sin which he had inherited from his forebears, as God visited their iniquity "upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."[1] He knew, as Kingsley puts it:

> of races; of families; of their wars, their struggles, their exterminations; of races favoured, of races rejected; of remnants being saved, to continue the race; of hereditary tendencies, hereditary excellencies, hereditary guilt.[2]

Heir also to a world now irretrievably altered by Darwin's theory of natural selection, he knew, again, as Kingsley puts it:

> the importance of hereditary powers, hereditary organs, hereditary habits, in all organized beings, from the lowest plant to the highest animal.[3]

Thus, as we shall see, Stevenson, like Kingsley, saw heredity having as much influence on character as on physique; and the biblical and Darwinian dance about each other, each coming centre-stage in turn in answer to the requirements of the moment. In a lighter mood Stevenson writes of:

> a certain low-browed, hairy gentleman, at first a percher in the fork of trees, next (as they relate) a dweller in caves, and whom I think I see squatting in cave-mouths, of a pleasant afternoon, to munch his berries—his wife, that accomplished lady, squatting by his side: his name I never heard, but he is often described as Probably Arboreal […].Each has his own tree of ancestors, but at the top of all sits Probably Arboreal; in all our veins their run some minims of his old,

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[1] Exodus 34.7.
[2] *Westminster Sermons*, p.xvii.
[3] *Westminster Sermons*, p.xvi.

> wild, tree-top blood; our civilised nerves still tingle with his rude terrors and pleasures; and to that which would have moved our common ancestor, all must obediently thrill.[4]

Stevenson here is using two terms employed by Darwin: "probably arboreal" and "common ancestor." He is at once drawing attention to our animal origin; while at the same time reminding us that we still carry our primitive animal tendencies and responses within us; and moreover that none of us is exempt from this inheritance.

But Stevenson is also aware that our common ancestor munched on more than nuts and berries:[5] he – and his wife – munched on fruit more bitter:

> [S]ome old Adam of our ancestors, sleeps in all of us till the fit circumstance shall call it into action.[6]

According to Stevenson, then, we have present within us both a biological common ancestor, from whose primitive drives and instincts we may distance ourselves, but whom we may never quite discard; and an existential common ancestor – fallen and full of sin – whose presence in us is even stronger, and potentially more dangerous. This sinful ancestor bequeaths his sinfulness to the next generation, who in turn bequeath both it and their own to the next, and so on, sin begetting sin, and accumulating down through the generations, until each succeeding generation is crushed beneath the load. The Darwinian common ancestor survives vestigially in our blood; the Adamic common ancestor lives on in our blood, along with all the generations between him and us. One can see this dual process at work in 'Olalla', which Stevenson wrote around the time he was writing *Jekyll and Hyde*, and which throws some light on its more famous companion.

'Olalla' presents the reader with an ancient noble House in Gothic decline, two of whose members are a Wild Man and a Child of Nature living in a traditional Wild natural environment. The narrator – a handsome Scottish officer recovering from wounds sustained fighting in Spain – goes to the mountains to convalesce in the residencia of an impoverished noble family consisting of the mother – the last high-born member of the line – and her son and daughter, whose father may have been a muleteer or smuggler who may or may not have married their mother. Felipe, the dim-

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[4] 'Pastoral', *Works*, XII, 81-82. Further references are given after quotations in the text.
[5] Lucretius describes the natural man subsisting on acorns and berries (*On the Nature of Things*, V, lines 939-42).
[6] *Weir of Hermiston*, *Works*, XVIII, 209-408 (p.299).

witted son, conveys the officer in a cart drawn by a mule. The landscape conforms to the Wild type:

> The country through which we went was wild and rocky, partially covered with rough woods […] and frequently intersected by the beds of mountain torrents.[7]

Felipe on first appearance conforms to the type of the Noble Savage:

> He was superlatively well-built, light, and lithe and strong; he was well-featured(178).

But he is more truly a Wild Man, displaying one of the Wild Man's defining characteristics: he is "of a dusky hue, and inclined to hairiness" (178). His occupation also belongs to one type of the Wild Man: he spends his days working in the garden of the residencia (186). However, he is also beginning to display some of the behaviour of an ape. He chatters (177); and when, some days later, the officer takes him on a walk in the woods surrounding the residencia:

> He leaped, he ran round me in mere glee; he would stop, and look and listen, and seemed to drink in the world like a cordial; and then he would suddenly spring into a tree with one bound, and hang and gambol there like one at home (187).

Felipe could simply be expressing more than most the wild tree-top blood of our common ancestor; indeed at this point he has the same naive innocence as one of Stevenson's Lucretian natural men.[8] But immediately afterwards, impelled by some vein of darker blood, Felipe catches a squirrel and begins to torture it. The enraged officer turns on him, and Felipe begs for forgiveness:

> "Oh, I try so hard," he said. "Oh, commandante, bear with Felipe this once; he will never be a brute again!" (188).

Here we have an individual whose line is degenerating. He is beginning to assume ape-like qualities, and his human self is fighting a constant battle with his emerging beast self. He is a fairly familiar figure.

Felipe's sister Olalla is a Child of Nature. She dwells amid the wild beauty which we have come to expect from *Fleetwood* and *Melincourt*:

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[7] 'Olalla', *Works*, XI, 173-239 (p.177). Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.

[8] Ed Block equates Felipe with Hyde in his hairiness, and with Probably Arboreal in his sylvan pursuits. See *Rituals of Dis-Integration: Romance and Madness in the Victorian Psychomythic Tale* (New York & London: Garland, 1993), p.148. (Hereafter Block, *Rituals*.) Kenneth Graham sees Felipe

> The residencia stood on the crown of a stony plateau; on every side the mountains hemmed it about […]. The air in these altitudes moved freely and largely; great clouds congregated there, and were broken up by the wind and left in tatters on the hill-tops; a hoarse and yet faint rumbling of torrents rose from all round; and one could there study all the ruder and more ancient characters of nature in something of their pristine force (189).

Her private chamber, "ascetic to the degree of sternness", faces "to the north, where the mountains [are] most wildly figured" (203). Whereas Anthelia Melincourt seeks romantic nourishment in Italian poetry, Olalla seeks redemption in books "devotional, historical, and scientific, but mostly of a great age and in the Latin tongue" (203). She is beautiful (208); and, of course, associated with flowers (209; 211). Finally, her body is a true Platonic representation of her soul:

> It was a lovely body, but the inmate, the soul, was more than worthy of that lodging (211).

So, curiously, is her mind. Whereas Felipe is "half-witted" (209), and his mother the Señora directs a "blankly stupid" (192) gaze on the officer, Olalla has escaped this mental retardation. How? Simply, it would seem, by virtue of being a Child of Nature, who, by definition, "imbibes beauty, innocence and an unerring moral sense from the scenery which surrounds her."[9] It would appear that Stevenson was relying on his readers' familiarity with the type in order to make further explanation unnecessary. Olalla therefore represents, in part at least, a triumph of environment over heredity.

The Señora, whose blood is entirely noble and degenerate, has sunk into some kind of feline existence: she spends her days in the court of the residencia "seated in the sun against a pillar, or stretched on a rug before the fire" (192); if she moves it is only to keep herself in the sun (191); her eyes are large and golden (192); and the officer remarks, "I never knew her to display the least spark of energy beyond what she expended in brushing and re-brushing her copious copper-coloured hair" (193)—an activity analogous to a cat grooming itself.

Stevenson had obviously spent some time observing cats dozing in the sun while keeping one eye open for birds. The officer tells how he would stop and greet the Señora on the way out for his walk and on the way back. He relates:

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as a Child of Nature. See 'Stevenson and Henry James: A Crossing', in *Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed. by Andrew Noble (London and Totowa: Vision and Barnes & Noble, 1983), pp.23-46 (pp.38; 39).

[9] Fairchild, p.366.

> Now she would speak of the warmth in which (like her son) she greatly delighted; now of the flowers of the pomegranate trees, and now of the white doves and long-tailed swallows that fanned the air of the court. The birds excited her. As they raked the eaves in their swift flight or skimmed sidelong past her with a rush of wind, she would sometimes stir, and sit a little up, and seem to awaken from her doze of satisfaction. But for the rest of her days she lay luxuriously folded on herself and sunk in sloth and pleasure (193).

But within this large placid pussy cat there lurks a being far more dark and terrible. One day an unsettling high wind begins to blow about the residencia. The officer's nerves begin to unravel, as do those of Felipe and the Señora. In the middle of the night the officer is awakened from an uneasy sleep by

> an outbreak of pitiable and hateful cries. […] Now they would dwindle down into a moaning that seemed to be articulate, and at these times I made sure they must be human; and again they would break forth and fill the house with ravings worthy of hell (199).

The officer runs to his door, but finds that he has been locked in. Not knowing that the cries are coming from the Señora, all he can do is wonder at their source:

> Who was the author of these indescribable and shocking cries? A human being? It was inconceivable. A beast? The cries were scarce quite bestial; and what animal, *short of a lion or a tiger*, could thus shake the solid walls of the residencia? (200). [my emphasis][10]

Here Stevenson is establishing a definite link between the "domestic" feline Señora and her wild feline progenitors. He goes on in a later scene to make this link overt. The officer cuts his wrist, and, with his other hand covering the wound, goes down into the courtyard looking for assistance. Finding the Señora dozing before the fire, he asks for help:

> She looked up sleepily and asked me what it was, and with the very words, I thought she drew in her breath with a widening of the nostrils and seemed to come fully alive.
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> "I have cut myself," I said, "and rather badly. See!" And I held out my two hands from which the blood was oozing and dripping.

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[10] This scene probably has its origins in Silverado: "Again late at night we heard from up the cañon three strange squalls or screams; like, but somewhat different from, those I had attributed to a wild cat, on our first arrival. In our usually silent cañon, they made a great effect. One thought it was an eagle; […] another was sure it was a California lion; a third was once more in favour of the wild-cat theory." 'The Silverado Diary', *Works*, II, 581-608 (p.606). By the time the diary appears in print, the cries are definitely coming from a wild cat: "Away up the cañon, a wild cat welcomed us with three discordant squalls." *The Silverado Squatters* (1883), *Works*, II, 439-578 (p.546).

> Her great eyes opened wide, the pupils shrank into points; a veil seemed to fall from her face, and leave it sharply expressive and yet inscrutable. And as I still stood, marvelling a little at her disturbance, she came swiftly up to me, and stooped and caught me by the hand; and the next moment my hand was at her mouth, and she had bitten me to the bone. […] I beat her back; and she sprang at me again and again, with bestial cries, cries that I recognised, such cries as had awakened me on the night of the high wind (221).

Some commentators feel that in this scene the Señora is revealing "the strain of vampirism" that runs in the family.[11] Julia Briggs regards her as a werewolf,[12] as does Michael Hayes.[13] Stevenson's language, however, gives no indication of vampirism or lycanthropy, but is directed towards degeneration and Wildness. Ed Block sees the attack as indicative of "primitive behaviour"[14]; and Edwin Eigner attributes it to "the wild animal in her nature"[15]—correct, but not specific enough. The Señora's cries are "bestial" (221) and "savage" (222). The family has a "savage and bestial" strain running through it (223). The Señora was "wild" when she was young, and even "wilder" as she grew older (176). The old Padre who ministers to the family refers to her as a "wild lamb" (232), a reference both to her Wild inner condition and to the lost sheep of Luke 15.4 which has wandered from the flock. But in this defining moment, when the Señora is emitting the cries previously associated with a lion or a tiger (200), as Olalla shields the officer with her body while Felipe tries to drag the Señora away, the officer lies on the floor listening to "the yells of that catamount" (222). All of the feline imagery surrounding the Señora comes together at this moment. In the United States a catamount is a puma or cougar (*OED*); Stevenson may have encountered this usage during his stay at Silverado. "Catamount" is also a contraction of "catamountain"—a leopard, panther, ocelot, "or other Tiger-cat" (*OED*). The Señora, therefore, is a large, wild cat, strongly identified with a tiger.

In 'Olalla' Stevenson is interweaving two main themes: degeneration, and inheritance. Felipe and the Señora represent the degeneration theme, and Olalla

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[11] Irving Massey, 'The Third Self: "Dracula", "Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" and Mérimée's "Lokis"', *Bulletin of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, 6 (1973), 57-67 (p.62). See also Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction: Mapping History's Nightmares* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.158. Julia Reid (87) quotes Mighall approvingly. In his edition of *Jekyll and Hyde* Mighall suggests that the scene may have influenced Dracula's attack on Jonathan Harker (172).

[12] *Night Visitors: The Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story* (London: Faber, 1977), p.68.

[13] *The Supernatural Short Stories of Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed. and intro. by Michael Hayes (London: Calder, 1976), p.10.

[14] Block, *Rituals*, p.152.

[15] *Robert Louis Stevenson and Romantic Tradition* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1966), p.203.

represents the inheritance theme. This, as we shall see, is something of a simplification, but it provides a platform on which to proceed.

On his first night in the residencia the officer is both beguiled and repelled by the image of an ancestral lady in a portrait in his room. When he first meets the Señora he is "reminded of the miracle of family descent" (192); but whereas the beautiful face in the portrait is "marred by a cruel, sullen, and sensual expression" (183), the Señora's face is "devoid of either good or bad—a moral blank expressing literally naught" (192). After observing Felipe and the Señora for some days the officer concludes:

> The family blood had been impoverished, perhaps by long in-breeding, which I knew to be a common error among the proud and the exclusive. No decline, indeed, was to be traced in the body, which had been handed down unimpaired in shapeliness and strength; the faces of to-day were struck as sharply from the mint as the face of two centuries ago that smiled upon me from the portrait. But the intelligence (that more precious heirloom) was degenerate (195).

Here Stevenson has begun to introduce the underlying principle of the family's long degeneration; and it falls to Olalla to articulate this principle in words which echo strongly the words of Kingsley's Mrs Bedonebyasyoudid and the story of the Doasyoulikes. As we have seen, she tells Tom and Ellie:

> Folks say that I can make beasts into men […]. Whatever their ancestors were, men they are; and I advise them to behave as such, and act accordingly. But let them recollect this, that there are two sides to every question, and a downhill as well as an uphill road; and if I can turn beasts into men, I can, by the same laws […], turn men into beasts (177).

When Ellie asks, "But could you not have saved them from becoming apes?", Mrs Bedonebyasyoudid replies:

> At first, my dear; if only they would have behaved like men, and set to work to do what they did not like. But the longer they waited, and behaved like the dumb beasts, who only do what they like, the stupider and clumsier they grew; till at last they were past all cure, for they had thrown their own wits away (176-77).

Likewise Olalla's ancestors have thrown their own wits away through the same process. Olalla tells the officer:

> My fathers, eight hundred years ago, ruled all this province: they were wise, great, cunning, and cruel; they were a picked race of the Spanish; […] Presently a change began. Man has risen; if he has sprung from the brutes, he can descend again to the same level. The breath of weariness blew on their humanity and the cords relaxed; they began to go down; their minds fell on sleep, their passions awoke in gusts, heady and senseless like the wind in the gutters of the mountains;

> beauty was still handed down, but no longer the guiding wit nor the human heart; the seed passed on, it was wrapped in flesh, the flesh covered the bones, but they were the bones and the flesh of brutes, and their mind was as the mind of flies (228).

Eight hundred years ago Olalla's house was wise, great, cunning, and cruel. Now it is merely cunning and cruel. Each generation is in the slow and painful process of losing its human soul, and replacing it with an animal soul. It is significant, therefore, that in this moral descent Felipe and the Señora should be identified with an ape and a tiger, the two animals which Tennyson has told us we must overcome if we are to achieve full humanity:

> Arise, and fly
> The reeling Faun, the sensual feast;
> Move upward, working out the beast,
> And let the ape and tiger die. (*In Memoriam*, CXVIII. 25-28)

The beautiful pious Olalla, trapped in a decaying mansion with an ape and a tigress, is a potent symbol of the pure soul trapped in its clay continent with the bestial urges of the flesh. Olalla has the same blood in her veins as her mother and brother, but she possesses the discrimination which they have lost, and her mind and soul both yearn towards God. Meanwhile Felipe's mind is "like his body, active and swift, but stunted in development" (180) (a case of the body reflecting the mind rather than the soul). Likewise the Señora "live[s] in her body; and her consciousness [is] all sunk into and disseminated through her members, where it luxuriously dwell[s]" (212). Olalla is therefore "dwelling in a great isolation of soul with her incongruous relatives" (204). But, as we shall see, this unfortunate domestic arrangement is but the physical reflection of a deeper inner torment.

Stevenson explores the theme of inheritance through the portrait in the officer's room, and its resemblance to the present members of the family. The officer gazes on it for the first time:

> Her figure was very slim and strong, and of a just proportion; red tresses lay like a crown over her brow; her eyes, of a very golden brown, held mine with a look; and her face, which was perfectly shaped, was yet moved by a cruel, sullen, and sensual expression. Something in both face and figure, something exquisitely intangible, like the echo of an echo, suggested the features and bearing of my

> guide [Felipe]; and I stood a while, unpleasantly attracted and wondering at the oddity of the resemblance (183).[16]

After meeting the Señora for the first time the officer returns to his room and compares her with the image in the portrait:

> I was again reminded of the miracle of family descent. My hostess was, indeed, both older and fuller in person; her eyes were of a different colour; her face, besides, was not only free from the ill-significance that offended and attracted me in the painting; it was devoid of either good or bad—a moral blank expressing literally naught. And yet there was a likeness, not so much speaking as immanent, not so much in any particular feature as upon the whole (192).

When the officer finally meets Olalla, although she neither moves nor speaks, he is struck with her liveliness:

> I beheld this maiden on whom God had lavished the richest colours and the most exuberant energies of life, […] and in whose great eyes he had lighted the torches of the soul (209).

When he returns to his room he looks again at the portrait; but now there is a difference:

> It had fallen dead, like a candle after sunrise; it followed me with eyes of paint. I knew it to be like, and marvelled at the tenacity of type in that declining race; but the likeness was swallowed up in difference (210).

Although Olalla continues the family likeness, there is a quality about her which sets her apart from her fellows.

But Stevenson is interested in the inheritance of more than physical likeness. The officer wanders through the residencia and finds many ancestral portraits in the empty rooms. He is of course taken by the family likeness:

> Never before had I so realised the miracle of the continued race, the creation and re-creation, the weaving and changing and handing down of fleshly elements (202).

There is nothing new here. But he goes on to introduce the next strand of the inheritance theme—the inheritance of physical behaviour:

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[16] Kenneth Graham regards the woman in the portrait as "feline", but not so the Señora, whom he regards as "something of a vampire". See Graham in *Robert Louis Stevenson*, ed. by Noble, pp.39; 43.

> That a child should be born of its mother, that it should grow and clothe itself (we know not how) with humanity, and put on inherited looks, and turn its head with the manner of one ascendant, and offer its hand with the gesture of another, are wonders dulled for us by repetition (202).

The looks and the gestures are wonders enough, but they are mere curiosities; the great mystery lies in the inheritance of character. "Now I often wonder", writes Stevenson in 'The Manse', "what I have inherited from this old minister [grandfather]."[17] He lists their shared fondness for preaching; their love of Shakespeare; their taste in food and wine; and their infirmities. He goes on:

> I would much rather have inherited his noble presence. Try as I please, I cannot join myself on with the reverend doctor; and all the while, no doubt, and even as I write the phrase, he moves in my blood, and whispers to me, and sits efficient in the very knot and centre of my being (88-89).

The ancestors live on, not just in looks, gestures, and even in character, but as residual memory which can be awakened at any moment. In 'Pastoral', writing about literature, Stevenson writes:

> The fortune of a tale lies not alone in the skill of him that writes, but as much, perhaps, in the inherited experience of him who reads; and when I hear with a particular thrill of things that I have never done or seen, it is one of that innumerable army of my ancestors rejoicing in past deeds (80).

In 'The Manse' he traces back through the innumerable army of his ancestors, beginning with those known to family history, and ends with a passage which we have already seen:

> And away in the still cloudier past, the threads that make me up can be traced by fancy into the bosoms of thousands and millions of ascendants: […] and, furthest of all, what face is this that fancy can see peering through the disparted branches? What sleeper in green tree-tops, what muncher of nuts, concludes my pedigree? Probably arboreal in his habits (92-93).

Thus every aspect of each individual's existence – looks; physique; mannerisms; character; tastes; even dormant memories – every aspect is determined by hereditary factors. And so it is with Olalla. She shares the family likeness with Felipe and the Señora. She has the "lightness and swiftness" of Felipe (209); and, even though she lives like a virtual anchoress within the residencia, she dresses with "something of her

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[17] *Works*, XII, 88. Further references are given after quotations in the text.

mother's coquetry, and love of positive colour" (211). But the burden of inheritance lies heavily on her. "Have you", she asks the officer,

> seen the portraits in the house of my fathers? Have you looked at my mother or at Felipe? Have your eyes ever rested on that picture that hangs by your bed? She who sat for it died ages ago; and she did evil in her life. But look again: there is my hand to the least line, there are my eyes and my hair. What is mine, then, and what am I? (226).

What, indeed? Is she Olalla, an individual made up of an amalgam of all her ancestors? Or is she, as Henry Jekyll writes that he is, "a mere polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens" (82), one of whom is Olalla? In her opinion she is the latter; and she tells the officer so after the Señora has bitten him. As he lies on his bed she takes his hand and places it on her heart.

> "There!" she cried, "you feel the very footfall of my life. It only moves for you; it is yours. But is it even mine? It is mine indeed to offer you, […] as I might break a live branch from a tree, and give it you. And yet not mine! I dwell, or I think I dwell (if I exist at all), somewhere apart, an impotent prisoner, and carried about and deafened by a mob that I disown" (225).

Here Stevenson is moving beyond the benign image of his grandfather handing on his arthritic knuckles, or his taste for port; or beyond even the equally benign image of Probably Arboreal chattering away in the old man's brain as he sits in his study composing a sermon. In Olalla we find an individual under siege, and in constant danger of defeat, by the blood which bred her. In fact she has accepted defeat:

> The hands of the dead are in my bosom; they move me, they pluck me, they guide me; I am a puppet at their command; and I but re-inform features and attributes that have long been laid aside from evil in the quiet of the grave (226-27).

Why this defeatism? Her inherited features are an asset; and she could either rise above her attributes, or at least keep them under control by a mixture of outdoor exercise, cold showers, good works, and prayers before bed. The reason is twofold.

First, her passion for the officer is immediate and overwhelming, and of a nature that bothers even him:

> Was this love? or was it a mere brute attraction, mindless and inevitable, like that of the magnet for the steel? […] I thought how sharp must be her mortification, that she, the student, the recluse […], should have thus confessed an overweening weakness for a man with whom she had never exchanged a word (214-15).

Before the end of the tale he will come to view this brute attraction in a different light. The fact remains, however, that Olalla is powerless before this influence (whatever it is), and, whereas Henry Jekyll's response to his troublesome passions is to separate himself physically from the passions themselves, Olalla's only remedy is to separate herself physically from the object of her awakened passion, and to send the officer away.

The second reason for Olalla's defeat lies not with her body but with her mind, or, more precisely, with her understanding of the process of inheritance. She has stood apart from herself, and viewed her own existence as a mere drop in the biological ocean that is her family, or "race." In 'The Manse' Stevenson approaches this process from the point of view of the individual. He writes that he (Stevenson) was present at significant moments in the lives of his ancestors, but has simply forgotten. "I have forgotten, but I was there all the same" (90), he writes, meaning that he is made up of all of his ancestors; and although their looks, tastes, and mannerisms continue to manifest themselves in him, their history needs to be recovered consciously through stories, histories, and literature. He continues:

> But our ancestral adventures are beyond even the arithmetic of fancy; and it is the chief recommendation of long pedigrees, that we can […] be reminded of our antenatal lives (91).

But then he shifts suddenly from the point of view of the individual, to an assessment of the individual's place in the process which produced him:

> Our conscious years are but a moment in the history of the elements that build us (91).

Put that way, it sounds rather grand—that, just as we have been fashioned over centuries by the romantic, or adventurous, or exotic, or quaint, or wonderful lives of those who went before us and continue to live in us, so we in our turn will remit our bodies to the dust, but continue to live on in our descendants, thus achieving a kind of immortality. It is as if there were some kind of purposive intelligence moving ever forward through the generations.

Put another way, it is a nightmare. Having declared herself a puppet in the hands of her ancestors, Olalla asks the officer:

> Is it me you love, friend? or the race that made me? The girl who does not know and cannot answer for the least portion of herself? or the stream of which she is a transitory eddy, the tree of which she is the passing fruit? The race exists; it is old,

> it is ever young, it carries its eternal destiny in its bosom; upon it, like waves upon the sea, individual succeeds individual, mocked with a semblance of self-control, but they are nothing (227).

If the race is the true ongoing entity, and the individual nothing, what is the status of the body of the individual? We gain our first clue with the officer's musings on the dark lady of the portrait. He recognizes the evil in her face, but he is seduced by her beauty:

> Day after day the double knowledge of her wickedness and my weakness grew clearer. She came to be the heroine of many day-dreams, in which her eyes led on to, and sufficiently rewarded, crimes. She cast a dark shadow on my fancy; and when I was out in the free air of heaven, taking vigorous exercise […], it was often a glad thought to me that my enchantress was safe in her grave, her wand of beauty broken, her lips closed in silence, her philtre spilt. And yet I had a half-lingering terror that she might not be dead after all, but re-arisen in the body of some descendant (184).

Is this reincarnation? Yes; but who, or what, is reincarnating? The dark lady? Or the family? Olalla provides the answer. She tells the officer:

> Individual succeeds to individual, mocked with a semblance of self-control, but they are nothing. We speak of the soul, but the soul is in the race (227).

As far as the race-soul is concerned, then, the body is simply a vehicle which it fashions for itself over and over again in order to achieve its purpose: in the case of the women it fashions beautiful and sensual bodies in order to snare men. Stevenson appears to have regarded the soul as a thing dynamic, able to project itself like an aura, and able to influence other souls in its vicinity. Hyde's presence causes others to feel rage, disgust, loathing, fear, depression, and hatred. Likewise the race-soul of Olalla – which in the image of the dark lady of the portrait has filled the officer's mind with daydreams worthy of the basest villain – fastens on the soul of the officer like some kind of burrowing parasite. At first he feels simply the magic and wonder of his first meeting with Olalla:

> Surprise transfixed me; her loveliness struck to my heart; she glowed in the deep shadow of the gallery, a gem of colour; her eyes took hold upon mine and clung there, and bound us together like the joining of hands; and the moments we thus stood face to face, drinking each other in, were sacramental and the wedding of souls (208).

However, when he returns to his room and remembers the moment, he realizes that he has not fallen in love with Olalla so much as been overcome by the power of her soul:

> The thrill of her young life, strung like a wild animal's, had entered into me; the force of soul that had looked out from her eyes and conquered mine, mantled about my heart and sprang to my lips in singing. She passed through my veins: she was one with me (209).

But whereas the decadent soul of the race is strong in Olalla, and ever-watchful for the opportunity to reincarnate itself, the love of God is equally strong, leaving Olalla even more divided than Henry Jekyll. Rather than surrender to the brute passion that has grown between them, she determines to send the officer away. As she approaches the officer, Stevenson yet again stresses her intense vitality:

> She seemed in her walking a creature of such life and fire and lightness as amazed me; yet she came quietly and slowly. Her energy was in the slowness (216).

She sends him away; but when he holds out his arms and calls her name she rushes back and embraces him. The ensuing sequence reads much like the sequence in which Jekyll takes the potion for the first time.

Following the drinking of the draught Jekyll feels elation. So too does the officer, following the passionate embrace. Jekyll writes:

> There was something strange in my sensations, something incredibly new and, from its very novelty, incredibly sweet. I felt younger, lighter, happier in body (83).

The officer writes:

> I stood and shouted to the mountains; I turned and went back towards the residencia, walking upon air. […] And once more the whole countenance of nature […] began to stir before me and to put on the lineaments of life and wear a face of awful joy (218).

However, Jekyll's sweet new sensations are tainted:

> [W]ithin I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul (83).

And the officer is beginning to burst with passions more akin to those of a Wild Man:

> I felt a thrill of travail and delight run through the earth. Something elemental, something rude, violent, and savage, in the love that sang in my heart, was like a

> key to nature's secrets; and the very stones that rattled under my feet appeared alive and friendly. Olalla! Her touch had quickened, and renewed, and strung me up to the old pitch of concert with the rugged earth, to a swelling of the soul that men learn to forget in their polite assemblies (218-19).

Hyde stands "exulting" (84) in the new sensation of being undivided evil; but the officer exults in the wildly divergent passions which the divided Olalla's embrace has unleashed. His own better part responds to her purity; but his own lower self responds violently to the primitive forces at work within her:

> Love burned in me like rage; tenderness waxed fierce; I hated, I adored, I pitied, I revered her with ecstasy. She seemed the link that bound me in with dead things on the one hand, and with our pure and pitying God upon the other; a thing brutal and divine, and akin at once to the innocence and to the unbridled forces of the earth (219).

In both instances Hyde and the officer are responding to the mysterious force that lies at the heart of *Jekyll and Hyde* and 'Olalla'—a force that is at once vital to a degree unknown to modern civilized humanity, and yet at the same time evil. Jekyll describes an "unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul" (83); and the officer declares of Olalla: "I could not doubt but that I loved her at first sight, and already with a quivering ardour that was strange to my experience" (209). What is this strange and unknown force? In Hyde it is "the raging energies of life" (95); in Olalla it is "the most exuberant energies of life" (209).

Whatever it is, it accumulates. The old Padre tells the officer that the Señora was more normal in her younger days, although already exhibiting traits observable in her father and his forebears. "But", he adds, "these things go on growing, not only in the individual but in the race" (232). That which is handed on, constantly growing as each new generation inherits part of all the lives before it, is the inherited experience of the race, all the way back to Probably Arboreal. In 'Pastoral' Stevenson presents this process with a child-like wonder:

> [I]n all our veins there run some minims of his old, wild, tree-top blood; our civilised nerves still tingle with his rude terrors and pleasures; and to that which would have moved our common ancestor, all must obediently thrill (81-82).

But in *Jekyll and Hyde* he shows it in its full horror. Jekyll describes the existence of Hyde, who contains nothing but negative qualities:

> I would leap almost without transition […] into the possession of a fancy brimming with images of terror, a soul boiling with causeless hatreds, and a body that seemed not strong enough to contain the raging energies of life (95).

One could argue that Hyde's "images of terror" are simply "the terrors of the scaffold" (91), which in part they would be. But they could also be the "rude terrors" of Jekyll's ancestors which live on in his more primitive self. Likewise Hyde's "causeless hatreds" could be inherited, since, as they are causeless, nothing in Jekyll's life has prompted them. The "raging energies of life" could be the desires and impulses inherited from countless ancestors, both brute and human.

Olalla likewise describes her predicament from her own viewpoint:

> I dwell, or I think I dwell (if I exist at all), somewhere apart, an impotent prisoner, and carried about and deafened by a mob that I disown (225).

Overwhelmed by the presence of her clamouring ancestors, Olalla is driven to the realization that everything that she is, in looks, in gestures, in attitudes, everything belongs to them. She shares her body with her ancestors. "And shall I—", she cries,

> I that dwell apart in the house of the dead, my body, loathing its ways—shall I repeat the spell? Shall I bind another spirit, reluctant as my own, into this bewitched and tempest-broken tenement that I now suffer in? (228).

Here is the paradox: that Olalla, this "creature of such life and fire" (216), and "the most exuberant energies of life" (209), is so strongly associated with the dead. The officer writes, "She seemed the link that bound me in with dead things" (219). And indeed she is. She tells him:

> The hands of the dead are in my bosom; they move me, they pluck me, they guide me; I am a puppet at their command (226).

Hyde also like Olalla contains "the raging energies of life" (95); and also like Olalla is definitively associated with the dead. Jekyll thought of Hyde,

> for all his energies of life, as of something not only hellish but inorganic. This was the shocking thing; that the slime of the pit seemed to utter cries and voices; that the amorphous dust gesticulated and sinned; that what was dead, and had no shape, should usurp the offices of life (95).

Commentators respond to this passage variously. Leonard Wolf takes the biblical approach:

> The "slime of the pit" refers to the biblical tar pits known as the Vale of Siddim (Genesis 14.3,8,10). Finally, we note that the "amorphous dust [that] gesticulated

> and sinned" describes Adam, who was made from dust (see Genesis 4.7) and therefore, by extension, describes what all the rest of humanity is made of.[18]

Wolf has identified the biblical flavour in Stevenson's language, but, in mentioning the tar pits in the Vale of Siddim, "which was full of slimepits" (Genesis 14.10), he has failed to grasp Stevenson's intentions. It would seem that Wolf has focused on "slime"; whereas the real focus (as we shall see) should be on "pit."

Other commentators take the evolutionary approach. Lawler, for example, writes:

> [T]here is no doubt that Hyde represents pre-evolved man in his atavistic, degenerated physical and psychological state. Jekyll himself goes even further:
> [Quotes passage.]
> Hyde appears to Jekyll so primitive as to be primordial, a lost link between the preanimate and animate life of the mind (*100 Years*, 252).

Julia Reid sees Jekyll's horror as twofold:

> Jekyll's account is a devolutionary narrative. He portrays Hyde as atavistic […]. Indeed, he imagines Hyde as having regressed even further down the evolutionary ladder, describing him as 'inorganic' […]. This imagery resonates with contemporary evolutionist visions of the origins of life. […] Interestingly, it is evolutionary progress as much as degeneration that is seen as grotesque: the 'slime of the pit … utter[ing] cries', the inorganic becoming organic (97).

Thus we find two readings of the passage—the biblical and the scientific. Each is valid, and each complements a reading of the other. Either reading, or both together, assumes that Jekyll is thinking of Hyde as originating either at the Fall, or at the moment when the first organic material formed. Stevenson's language in both *Jekyll and Hyde* and 'Olalla' makes it clear that he intended a complementary reading. But his language in 'Olalla' makes it clear that he intended more; and suggests that he intended more in *Jekyll and Hyde* as well. Hyde is "not only hellish but inorganic" (95), that is, there are two aspects to his being: the physical and the evil. In his evil aspect he equates with the strain of evil that lurks in Olalla's family from generation to generation; an evil which is both familial and personal. In other words, one is not excused simply because one's evil is inherited—it is still one's own, even though it derives from ancestors.

The biblical and the biological readings, however, lead one to conclude that Jekyll is thinking of Hyde in his manifested form; that in the "slime" and the "dust" he is referring to Hyde's origins, and nothing more. That, however, may not be the case.

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[18] *The Essential Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, illust. by Michael Lark (New York: Plume, 1995), p.135, n79.

Let us examine Stevenson's use of "the pit." In his letters he uses it exclusively in the biblical sense, which can at times incorporate the grave, perdition, and Hell. To Sidney Colvin he writes:

> O when shall I find the story of my dreams, that shall never halt nor wander nor step aside, but go ever before its face and ever swifter and louder, until the pit receives it, roaring?[19]

From Strathpeffer Spa he writes to James Cunningham:

> I must flee from Scotland. It is, for me, the mouth of the pit.[20]

Commenting on Edmund Gosse's biography of his father, he quotes Flaubert—"prose is never done". He continues:

> [I]t is *never done*; in other words, it is a torment of the pit, usually neglected by the bards who (lucky beggars!) approached the Styx in measure. I speak bitterly at the moment, having just detected in myself the last fatal symptom, three blank verses in succession – and I believe, God help me, a hemistich at the tail of them: hence I have deposed the labourer, come out of hell by my private trap, and now write to you from my little place in purgatory. But I prefer Hell: would I could always dig in these red coals.[21]

Later in the same letter he refers to the Samoan rainy season,

> which is really a caulker for wind, wet and darkness – hurling showers, raving winds, pit-blackness at noon.[22]

In a letter to Henry James he writes:

> I am writing – trying to write in a Babel fit for the bottomless pit.[23]

And in one of his prayers written at Vailima he refers to the pit as if it were a Bunyanesque moral slough. He prays to God:

> Help us to look back on the long way that Thou hast brought us […]; on the pit and the miry clay, the blackness of despair, the horror of misconduct, from which our feet have been plucked out.[24]

Wolf's reference to *Genesis 4.7* should be 'Genesis 2.7'.

[19] *RLS Letters*, letter 353, [14 January 1875], II, 106-07, (p.107).

[20] *RLS Letters*, letter 720, [September 1880], III, 99-100 (p.100). Cf. Psalm 69.15: "and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me."

[21] *RLS Letters*, letter 2313, April 1891, VII, 104-07 (p.105).

[22] Ibid., p.106.

[23] *RLS Letters*, letter 2374, 7 December [1891], VII, 209-11 (p.210). The term "bottomless pit" occurs seven times (and nowhere else in the Bible) in the Book of Revelations, where it is used to refer specifically to Hell (9.1,2,11; 11.7; 17.8; 20.1,3).

Jekyll's "slime of the pit" has nothing to do with pits of slime: it is slime which is in the Pit, in this instance, the grave, whose Hellish connotations reinforce the sense of Hyde's evil.[25] If we look again at Olalla's speeches to the officer we see that she regards her body as "the house of the dead" (228), in which she is "carried about and deafened by a mob" (225); and that she simply re-informs "features and attributes that have long been laid aside from evil in the quiet of the grave" (226-27). Jekyll's body too is a house of the dead – although, whereas Olalla regards hers as a "tenement" (228), Jekyll prefers to think of his as a more dignified "tabernacle" (83). Olalla is deafened by the mob of her evil ancestors, dating all the way back to their brutish state. Jekyll is deafened by the cries and whispers of his inherited evil—the slime of the pit, or the bodies of his ancestors going all the way back to Adam or Probably Arboreal.[26] These bodies have rotted and decomposed back into their constituents, and returned to the earth and slime from which they have arisen. "The hands of the dead are in my bosom", laments Olalla, acknowledging them, "they move me, they pluck me, they guide me; I am a puppet at their command" (226). Likewise Jekyll, still denying Hyde, laments that "the amorphous dust gesticulated and sinned" (95). Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. God made Adam from the dust of the ground, and all of our ancestors have returned to dust: this is the dust that causes Jekyll's body to gesticulate and sin in the form of Hyde.[27] Olalla laments, "I but re-inform features and attributes that have long been laid aside from evil in the quiet of the grave" (226); and Jekyll is shocked "that what was dead, and had no shape, should usurp the offices of life" (95). Hyde is both hellish and inorganic. His elements lie in the pit of the grave with the dust and the slime; and his evil dwells in the pit of Hell where it constantly "struggle[s] to be born" (95) into another body.

The image that we are left with, then, is a powerful blending of the biblical and the evolutionary, in which the slime (either the foamy scum of the Ancients which brings forth monstrosities; or the decomposed corpses of generations going back to the dawn of time) of the pit (either Hell or the grave; or a combination of both) calls commandingly to the one living tenant in the house of the dead; in which the amorphous dust (either the inorganic matter which has become organic; or Adam; or

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[24] 'For the Family', *Works*, XXVI, 153.
[25] Dury regards "the slime of the pit" as "the repulsive contents of Hell" (*Annotated*, p.184, n2).
[26] We should also remember that Stevenson heard his grandfather's voice: "he moves in my blood, and whispers words to me, and sits efficient in the very knot and centre of my being" ('The Manse', p.89).

the dust of the dead which has returned to the earth) assembles itself again into a living body which gesticulates (like a puppet) and sins; in which the dead and shapeless (either the clay of the earth; or the features and attributes of the evil ancestors) comes to life of its own volition.

There is a sense in which the body – and its impulses – is the dominant agent, and the conscious self a mere spectator. We can see this most clearly in a scene between Olalla and the officer in which he attempts to persuade her (with breathtaking inconsistency) that their love is more than a physical attraction. He begins by telling her,

> [W]here the body clings, the soul cleaves; body for body, soul to soul, they come together at God's signal; and the lower part (if we can call aught low) is only the foot-stool and foundation of the highest (226).

She replies that her body has been cobbled together from parts of all her ancestors, and they all inhabit it with her. "We speak of the soul," she says, "but the soul is in the race" (227).

He insists that their attraction is in response to "the common law, […] the voice of God" (227). And here again we have that curious blending of the divine and the biological that we find in Kingsley, in which all of nature's laws are governed by God's will. Note the movement of the images: from their joined hands; to her heart; to their separate and then combined elements; to the clay of the earth; to the stars in space; all, as Stevenson well knew, composed of the same dust:

> Your hand clings to mine, your heart leaps at my touch, the unknown elements of which we are compounded awake and run together at a look; the clay of the earth remembers its independent life and yearns to join us; we are drawn together as the stars are turned about in space, or as the tides ebb and flow, by things older and greater than ourselves (227).[28]

This curious example of Scottish wooing would hardly set Olalla's mind at rest; the officer is simply repeating all of her fears back to her, but viewing them in a positive light; and, despite the nod in God's direction, the picture which he paints is one of

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[27] Dury glosses "amorphous dust" as "the remains of a dead body" (*Annotated*, p.184, n3); and quotes Genesis 3.19: "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return". He regards Hyde as "a symbol of death and decay" (*Annotated*, p.60). See also *Annotated*, p.184, n6.

[28] The officer relates an earlier scene in which the biblical, the Platonic, and the natural are all brought together in a Kingsleyan moment: ""Nature," I told her, "was the voice of God, which men disobey at peril; and if we were thus dumbly drawn together, ay, even as by a miracle of love, it must imply a divine fitness in our souls"" (217).

mindless organisms impelled by cosmic forces. The "unknown elements" which compound them consist on the one hand of the features, attributes, memories, and inclinations passed down through the generations;[29] but they also consist of the physical elements that make up their bodies. Both senses are present, but the dominant one is the physical, which then leads into the "clay of the earth". The clay of course is loaded with biblical meaning; and here it – and not the soul – is the active agent in this cosmic marriage. Here the clay – like Jekyll's "slime of the pit" and "amorphous dust" which struggle "to be born" – remembers its independent life: it remembers the countless times in which it had moved and sensed and been aware as part of a body, no matter whether animal or human. The clay – which is a malignant presence in both *Jekyll and Hyde* and 'Olalla' – "yearns to join" Olalla and the officer. "Join" here is an ambiguous word: it can mean that the clay simply wishes to commune with them and partake vicariously in their existence. But given the context, the meaning is clear—the clay wants them to join in sexual union, to produce another organism in which the clay may once again enjoy its independent life. Olalla's reply renders this meaning unequivocal:

> And shall I—I that dwell apart in the house of the dead, my body, loathing its ways—shall I repeat the spell? Shall I bind another spirit, reluctant as my own, into this bewitched and tempest-broken tenement that I now suffer in? Shall I hand down this cursed vessel of humanity, charge it with fresh life as with fresh poison, and dash it, like a fire, in the faces of posterity? (228).

At this point Olalla is fighting on two fronts in a very complicated battle for her body. We recall that when the officer first sees the portrait of the dark lady, he is attracted by her beauty but repelled by the aura of evil about her. But over the next few days he begins to be seduced by, and to dwell upon, the lure of that very evil. Having been given a taste for it in his fancy, he immediately responds to it in the flesh of Olalla; and the portrait loses its hold on him. One should not, however, overlook the fact that, while the officer is falling in love with Olalla, the more potent attraction is between their respective "unknown elements" which have awoken to each other: she is not the only one with a long ancestry. Nor is she the only puppet living with a mob in the house of the dead.

The officer is besotted with Olalla, but equally repelled by the savagery and madness in her blood. However, he allows his infatuation to overrule his judgment.

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[29] "Our conscious years are but a moment in the history of the elements that build us" ('The Manse',

Having had his elements awakened, he unwittingly becomes their puppet in his attempts to seduce Olalla away from her resolve. She thus has to struggle to subdue not only her own demons, and her feelings for the officer, but also the passionate advances which her own dark nature has inspired. Besotted though she may be with the officer, she is more horrified by the evil in her blood. With Christ as her example, and, at the end literally, her support, she chooses a life of celibate renunciation: "the race shall cease from off the earth" (228).

At the end Olalla and the officer stand together at the foot of a life-size crucifix on the rocky ledge of a hill overlooking the residencia. By now we know that the line is tainted, and that the taint keeps on growing both in the line and in each individual during his or her lifetime; therefore Olalla herself is likely to deteriorate as she ages (although this possibility is not mentioned in the text). Still the officer importunes her yet again. She places her hand upon the cross. "Behold", she tells him,

> the face of the Man of Sorrows. We are all such as He was—the inheritors of sin; we must all bear and expiate a past which was not ours; there is in all of us—ay, even in me—a sparkle of the divine. Like Him, we must endure for a little while, until morning returns bringing peace. Suffer me to pass on upon my way alone; it is thus that I shall be least lonely, counting for my friend Him who is the friend of all the distressed, it is thus that I shall be the most happy, having taken my farewell of earthly happiness, and willingly accepted sorrow for my portion (238).

The officer gazes up at the crucifix:

> The face looked down upon me with a painful and deadly contraction; but the rays of a glory encircled it, and reminded me that the sacrifice was voluntary. It stood there, crowning the rock, […] an emblem of sad and noble truths; that pleasure is not an end, but an accident; that pain is the choice of the magnanimous; that it is best to suffer all things and do well. I turned and went down the mountain in silence; and when I looked back for the last time before the wood closed about my path, I saw Olalla still leaning on the crucifix (239).

Olalla has come in for some criticism for her stand. Eigner writes that her theology is "twisted" (211); Block writes that her "interpretation of Christ is idiosyncratic" (*Rituals*, p.158); Reid finds her version of Christianity "warped" (88).[30] Likewise, no one is very happy with the officer. Block finds him "almost indifferent", and "passive" (*Rituals*, p.160); Reid thinks that he "acts fairly unheroically" (88). What, then, is going on in this crucial final scene?

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p.91).

By the time that Olalla and the officer come to stand on the hill by the crucifix, they are highly ambiguous figures. She is the virgin penitent embodiment of an evil and decadent line. He is the thrall to an aura of sin, bent on drawing her unwillingly deeper into its power so that it can pass itself on to another generation.

Olalla's invocation of Christ serves a double purpose. Her first point is, "We are all such as He was—the inheritors of sin" (238). By this she is not seeking to identify with Christ, but to cite him as an example – the only example – of the point which she wishes to make: by incarnating, Christ took on sin which was not his. Olalla's sin is not hers (because she did not incur it herself), and yet it becomes hers (because she shares her body with it; in fact it makes up her body). Sin and evil (whether from the Fall or from our bestial ancestry) is a fact of our existence. It lives inside us, as Hyde lives in Jekyll. Having become hers, it then goes on to make her sin further. From this it follows that "we must all bear and expiate a past which was not ours" (238). We must acknowledge the wrong done by our ancestors, and acknowledge our potential to repeat it. We must bear the burden of our collective individual taint, and endeavour to expiate it by curbing its appetites at all times, until the vessel that holds it returns to the dust and sets the suffering individual free. Jekyll provides an example of what happens when we unleash the evil; Olalla provides an example of self-containment through abandonment to a higher power.

Viewed in this light, we can see the officer's "passivity" as a genuine acceptance and approval of her position. Admiring her resolve and her faith in Christ's example, he quietly departs, leaving her in communion with her saviour.

There is, of course, another way of viewing the scene. If we step back and regard the iconography which Stevenson establishes, we see Christ on the cross on a hill, flanked by two sinners, one of whom is penitent, and one of whom is not. Can it be that, in the officer, Stevenson has given us another narrator whose witness is just as unreliable as Henry Jekyll's? If Olalla is identified with the good thief, and the officer is identified with the bad thief, then 'Olalla' becomes the story of the self-deluded officer's fall from grace, and subsequent perdition.

If we look at the narrative arc we see the officer's bestial side being awakened by the dark lady of the portrait. Later when he meets Olalla he loves her "at first sight […] with a quivering ardour […] strange to [his] experience" (209). After their first

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[30] For their complete arguments on this point, see Eigner (210-11); Block (*Rituals*, pp.157-60); Reid

embrace he feels within himself "something elemental, something rude, violent, and savage" (219). As he is drawn further into this elemental vortex, his attitude towards his feelings changes. He is "unpleasantly attracted" (183) by the dark lady's portrait, but, as he writes: "its beauty crept about my heart insidiously, silencing my scruples one after another" (184). After his first meeting with Olalla, despite falling in love with her, his soul is "besieged by cold and sorrowful considerations" (209). At their second meeting, although he is drawn to her "like a magnet," he is held back by "something yet more imperious" (211). But by now he is in thrall, and as he considers their situation afterwards, he comes to a decision: "All side considerations fell off from me; were she the child of Herod I swore I should make her mine" (212). After their third intense, silent, and unfulfilling meeting he has a moment of petulant vanity as he dwells on the nature of their relationship:

> Of me, she knew nothing but my bodily favour; she was drawn to me as stones fall to earth; the laws that rule the earth conducted her, unconsenting, to my arms; and I drew back at the thought of such a bridal, and began to be jealous for myself. It was not thus that I desired to be loved (215).

But then, at their next meeting, when she unexpectedly tells him to go away, he pours out a succession of desperate lovelorn promises, "And then, strongly commanding [him]self, [he] change[s] the note" (217). He then attempts to win her around by using exactly the same argument which he has recently found so personally offensive:

> "Nature," I told her, "was the voice of God, which men disobey at peril; and if we were thus dumbly drawn together, ay, even as by a miracle of love, it must imply a divine fitness in our souls; we must be made," I said—"made for one another. We should be mad rebels," I cried out—"mad rebels against God, not to obey this instinct" (217).

The officer's infatuation thus makes him sophistically attribute to God the very process which he has always found so questionable.

Olalla is then left to choose between the officer's God of nature, and her own God of Heaven. It is, after all, nature that she is trying to overcome. Again she looks to Christ as an example: by his suffering he overcame death. She, by her renunciation of happiness, will overcome the dead, who, paradoxically, live again through the living. But the officer is now in thrall to the dead, and can gain only "some sense" (239) of Christ's importance. Whereas Olalla apprehends all of Christ's religious significance

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(88).

for the sinner, the officer can only appreciate him as a noble example of a life well-lived.

Olalla's rejection of the officer signifies more than a triumph over the flesh; she has, in a sense, broken the family curse. The officer is not the first to be drawn into the family's clutches. Just before Olalla's arrival at the crucifix, the officer has been talking with an old friend of Olalla's father, who describes their last fateful meeting at the residencia many years before:

> I took him by the arm, Señor, and dragged him to the gate; I conjured him, by all he loved and respected, to go forth with me; I went on my knees before him in the snow; and I could see he was moved by my entreaty. And just then she came out on the gallery, and called him by his name; and he turned, and there was she standing with a lamp in her hand and smiling on him to come back. I cried out aloud to God, and threw my arms about him, but he put me by, and left me alone (235).

In this moment of high melodrama we see the pattern emerge of generational temptation by the women of the house, and the corruption, degeneration, and eventual destruction of their hapless consorts. The Señora employs her sensuality willingly, and the clay fashions itself into more vessels for the dead to share with the willing. The men, once drawn in, lack the strength to resist; and only Olalla has the power to break the cycle, overcoming both her own sensual impulses, and the increasingly desperate urgings of her victim-turned-pursuer, whose life she has probably saved, but whose soul he has probably lost.

Whatever its final meaning, 'Olalla' shows us that Hyde embodies the clamorous residue of Jekyll's ancestry, both moral and biological. Paradoxically, the "energies of life" (95) which Hyde contains are in fact the seemingly immortal accumulated memories and experiences of the dead which survive in the living; and since by their very nature they represent the most intense memories and experiences, they constitute the more vital part of the individual. Jekyll's insight, "the doom and burthen of our life is bound for ever on man's shoulders" (83), is true, because each new generation inherits it. But Jekyll is just an ordinary middle-aged urban professional, who is keen to indulge his sensual side, but anxious to preserve his public image. Olalla, however, is a Child of Nature—the symbol and embodiment of purity and virtue. We recall Fairchild's definition: the Child of Nature

> is born and grows to maturity in the heart of some wild region untouched by civilization, and […] imbibes beauty, innocence and an unerring moral sense from the scenery which surrounds her (366).

In the Platonic system beauty is indicative of a pure soul; therefore Olalla's soul is pure, as Anthelia Melincourt's soul is pure. But Olalla's pure soul has incarnated along with the oppressive baggage of her evil ancestors; and she shares her body with them. Olalla's case is therefore the most extreme example possible of the duality which afflicts Stevenson's characters. If even she, a long-established symbol of innocence and purity, is found to be infected with the curse of ancestral sin, then none can escape.

Jekyll comes to recognize that Hyde is the embodiment not of an individual self, but of the compound presence of Jekyll's ancestors. This compound presence is composed of two aspects: the physical and the moral. Hyde is "much smaller, slighter, and younger" (84) than Jekyll. Jekyll explains this by saying that Hyde had been relatively dormant. However, Hyde also exhibits signs of "decay" (84). There is, then, something about Hyde that is both young and old. Olalla says, "The race exists; it is old, it is ever young […]. We speak of the soul, but the soul is in the race" (227). Jekyll shares his body with his race-soul and its accumulated evil. This race-soul is what Jekyll refers to as "lower elements in [his] soul" (83). Hyde is the Platonic "expression" (83) of these elements.

Hyde's troglodytic appearance reflects the increasingly ape-like presence of Jekyll's early ancestors. This presence is not necessarily a bad thing. In 'The Manse' and 'Pastoral' Stevenson presents Probably Arboreal as a pleasant enough fellow. Likewise, in 'Olalla', when the officer takes Felipe for a walk in the woods, Felipe scampers about like a monkey. The officer reports:

> I have rarely enjoyed more stirring company; the sight of his delight was a continual feast; the speed and accuracy of his movements pleased me to the heart (187).

But when Felipe proceeds to torture a squirrel, and the officer turns on him in anger, Felipe begs for mercy and forgiveness:

> Oh, commandante, bear with Felipe this once; he will never be a brute again! (188).

Here we find a clear distinction between behaving like a primitive man, and behaving like a brute; between natural behaviour and evil behaviour.

An examination of *Jekyll and Hyde* in the light shed by 'Olalla' allows a fuller understanding of both the origins and the persistence of the living force which manifests itself as Hyde. His hairiness signifies the presence of ancient inherited characteristics and tendencies which, although they might be primitive or Wild, are not necessarily evil, and can be exhilarating. His disquieting aspect is not his Darwinian apishness, but his Platonic unspecified deformity, which arises, as it does with the Yahoos, from his moral turpitude. He is thus at once both archaic and evil; at once both Darwinian and Christiano-Platonic. He is Probably Arboreal and he is Adam; and he is their combined dust which frets impatiently to be born in each new generation.