

‘This horrible patrimony’: Masculinity, War and the Upper Classes in Jessie Douglas Kerruish’s *The Undying Monster*

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Abstract:

The recent reissue of Jessie Douglas Kerruish’s critically neglected Gothic novel *The Undying Monster: A Tale of the Fifth Dimension* (1922) describes it as ‘dated’ but its more conservative elements nevertheless exist alongside a subversive thrust. Published just four years after the end of the First World War, the novel extols the nobility of the landed gentry, positioning protagonist Oliver Hammand as representative of a positive tradition that guarantees social order in a time of chaos, while simultaneously discrediting the upper class by depicting Oliver as an untamed beast that threatens social order. *The Undying Monster* has something to add to understandings of Gothic narratives that use the figure of the werewolf to explore the sinister side of masculinity, in particular the possibility that depravity might belong to the upper classes, rather than the lower class as was popularly imagined.

Keywords: Werewolf literature; First World War; Masculinity; Class.

Jessie Douglas Kerruish’s Gothic novel *The Undying Monster: A Tale of the Fifth Dimension* (1922), focuses on two siblings, Oliver and Swanhild Hammand, who enlist the assistance of a psychic detective in order to solve the mystery of the monster that has long haunted and preyed upon their illustrious family. Utilising the expected tropes of threatening landscapes, ancient architecture, ancestral curses, monstrosity, violence, dread and death, the crux of the novel is less expected in that the patrician

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heir, a noble World War I veteran, is both victim and villain. Oliver is the one ostensibly attacked by the monster that haunts the Hammand family, and he is eventually revealed to *be* that monster. Oliver's monstrosity is that he has inherited from his ancestors the ability to transform into a wolf, and while in that guise he is responsible for the gruesome death of a local woman, as well as his own dog. Although the recent reissue of the novel describes it as "dated",¹ *The Undying Monster's* conservative tendency to extol the nobility and strength of the landed gentry co-exists with a subversive desire to discredit the upper class by depicting Oliver as an untamed beast that threatens social order. As this article will demonstrate, like many werewolf narratives *The Undying Monster* utilises the figure of the werewolf to explore the sinister side of masculinity, but it also explores the possibility that depravity might belong to the upper classes, rather than the lower class as was popularly imagined.

The figure of the werewolf has generated much attention from literary critics, as well as folklorists, historians and medical practitioners who position it as expressive of anxieties about the human propensity for violence. The idea of transformation into a wolf has a long European history, either as an actual belief in werewolves that underpinned the werewolf trials of the Early Modern period, or as a literary trope. As Nadine Metzger points out, no other animal 'has rivalled the supremacy of the wolf in terms of animal transformation', which may be due to the fact that the wolf was, for many thousands of years, the most common land-based predator throughout Europe.² Antipathy towards wolves can be clearly seen in their complete eradication from Britain, as well as in Montague Summers' description of them in his study of the werewolf as possessing 'unbridled cruelty, bestial ferocity, and ravening hunger.' For Summers, the wolf has 'something of the demon, of hell. His is the symbol of Night and Winter, of Stress and Storm, the dark and mysterious Harbinger of Death.'³ Human fascination with wolves is long-standing, with the earliest known description of the change from man to wolf occurring in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, in which the goddess Ishtar turns a shepherd into a wolf, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* features the Arcadian king Lycaon being turned into a wolf by Jupiter as punishment for transgression. Since then, the werewolf has become a staple of popular horror, with its most recent foray being into the realm of Young Adult fictions such as Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series. Willem De Blécourt describes the werewolf as 'a multiple creature that has varied through history', but argues that at its essence is the fear that human civility is a mere façade disguising a darker, more predatory nature.⁴ According to Elizabeth A. Lawrence, 'the concept of the werewolf is by far the most widespread and deeply entrenched image of violence and aggression,' and

the 'human/wolf form continues to represent our species' carnivorous nature and our staggering propensity for violence'.⁵ The werewolf thus illustrates the beast within and suggests the potential for humans to revert to behaviours deemed barbaric and uncivilised.

The threat of degeneration associated with the werewolf tends to be expressed through masculinity and class. Although there is a tradition of female werewolves, including Clemence Housman's novel *The Were-wolf* (1896) and more recent texts such as the horror film *Ginger Snaps* (2000), the figure of the werewolf tends to be gendered male, in large part due to traditional associations between masculinity and aggression. Tania Evans positions the werewolf as ideally situated for investigating how accepted masculine discourses are both illustrated and challenged in popular fiction, noting that the werewolf expresses 'tensions and anxieties about masculinity, particularly the hegemonic forms that have often been aligned with emotional repression and violence'.⁶ Furthermore, the tendency of Medieval werewolf narratives to represent werewolves as vagrants, peasants and beggars was reinforced in the nineteenth century when the progressive evolution theorised by Charles Darwin in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) paradoxically caused significant anxieties about degeneration that were most commonly directed at the lower classes. As Chantal Bourgault Du Coudray points out, 'In the context of degenerationist discourses which envisioned the reversion of humanity to the bestial origins from which it had evolved, these classes were perceived as a threat to civilization and the future prosperity of the human race'.⁷ The connection between the animalistic and the lower classes was popularised by Cesare Lombroso whose *Criminal Man* (1876) argues that certain classes of humans – lower classes, criminals, people of colour – have devolved to exist more like animals than others. The association of the werewolf with lower class masculinity continues in contemporary culture, with Kimberley McMahon-Coleman and Roslyn Weaver observing an ongoing supernatural social hierarchy in which vampires are aristocrats and werewolves belong to the lower classes.⁸

The Undying Monster deviates from the tradition of representing werewolves as lower class and, like Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886), turns 'the class discourses of atavism and criminality back on the bourgeoisie itself'.⁹ Although this suggests a radical critique of social structures, in that it echoes Karl Marx's *Capital* (1867), which uses the figure of the vampire to express the parasitic nature of the bourgeoisie on the working classes, *The Undying Monster* also exhibits an equally strong conservative impulse. This is perhaps not surprising since as often as the Gothic behaves subversively, it also frequently conserves cultural norms by providing an outlet in which to

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safely engage with deviant material. Anne Williams highlights the conservative nature of early male gothic (written by authors such as William Beckford and Matthew Lewis) by identifying its primary concern as threats posed to patriarchy and established class boundaries.¹⁰ Kate Ferguson Ellis similarly argues for the conservative tendency of Female Gothic that makes action outside female passivity and helplessness available, but that ultimately contains the potential of female subversion through its happy endings.¹¹ In Kerruish's novel, the eventual victory of the Hammands over the forces of the past that threaten to render the family heir a monster feeding off his tenants suggests the conservative nature of a text published in 1922 and emerging from anxieties arising from World War I that seemed to threaten British ideals of order and social security. As Lucy Noakes points out, the First World War 'disrupted almost every facet of life in Britain, as social relations were reshaped in response to the demands of wartime society for labour, material goods and bodily sacrifice', so it is little wonder that for many people, 'the armistice of November 1918 represented an opportunity to return to 'normal' life – to a pre-war society in which social relations existed within a hierarchical structure in which one's place was determined primarily by one's class and gender.'¹² Kerruish's novel is expressive of reactionary forces that sought to reinstate a nostalgic Edwardian social order in the post-war world, while still registering – and ultimately containing – the sinister side of masculinity and the potential depravity of an exploitative upper class.

The Undying Monster utilises heroic masculine characteristics to identify the main characters as members of a nostalgically-desirable ruling class that promises a sense of political and social stability, particularly following the chaos of the recent First World War. The novel's first sentence reveals the traumatic effects of the war, noting that it 'left the family of Hammand of Dannow reduced to two members.'¹³ Subsequently, the bond between the surviving siblings is intensified, with Swanhild cherishing Oliver as the only brother the war leaves her. Oliver is intelligent, athletic, well-built, and, like his ancestors, 'decent to the core' (74). Oliver's inherited decency is further revealed by the heroic patriotism that sends him into battle, just as it did his ancestors before him. Britain, Oliver proclaims, is

a country worth fighting for! A country one can be happy in – and it's all mine, from the Barrow to the Manor woods. My people have owned it and lived on it for over a thousand years. They fought at need, and died at need, for it. [...] My father and brother died for it. I've fought for it myself. (108)

Oliver's privilege goes hand in hand with responsibility; owning the land means fighting to defend it from external threat. Similarly, Swanhild's suitor Goddard (who lost his arm in the war) expresses something of the leadership responsibilities and qualities associated with social rank:

It reminds me of a couple of years ago. Stuck in a trench dug in packed nastiness, with no way of reckoning when, how, or from where annihilation might descend on you. The only way to be any good was to keep quiet and alert – and not look too far ahead. (30)

The stability that men such as Oliver and Goddard promise hinges on their willingness to sacrifice themselves. As Alexander Watson and Patrick Porter have demonstrated, the ideology of sacrifice was vital during the First World War, both for combatants and civilians. Personal sacrifice was positioned as being validated by national victory and it facilitated the portrayal of soldiers as courageous heroes rather than as exploited victims.¹⁴ The heroic qualities that Kerruish attributes to her upper class male characters are precisely the 'patriotism, physical prowess, courage, and energy' that critics George L. Mosse and George Robb argue were qualities associated by Edwardian culture with a masculinity that could ultimately be measured only by war.¹⁵ Yet undercutting the seeming strength and stability represented by noble veterans such as Oliver and Goddard is the family curse affecting Oliver as family heir and Goddard as future husband of Swanhild. The Hammands of Dannow might own one of the oldest inhabited homes in England, but this reassuring symbol of a cohesive social structure is threatened by the ancient family rhyme that warns them of impending ruin: 'Where grow pines and firs amain. Under stars, sans heat or rain, Chief of Hammand, 'ware thy Bane!' (12). At the start of the narrative, Hammand's bane is understood to be a monster that appears under the appropriate conditions in order to kill the family heir or, failing that, impelling the surviving heir to later kill themselves rather than exist with the horrifying memory of a creature they never attempt to describe. It has been decades since the monster last appeared, but horror returns when Oliver wanders into the forest under precisely the sort of conditions likely to summon it. When Swanhild hears of her brother's danger, she is terrified by the prospect of Oliver's death or the chance that he might be driven insane. Taking Oliver's service revolver and her Great Dane Alex, Swanhild dashes into the wood where so many of her ancestors have met a hideous death and finds her brother's wounded body lying alongside the corpse

of his dog and the partly eaten, but still alive, body of local girl Kate Stringer.

Oliver is represented as a noble protector of British social stability, as well as someone tainted by a hereditary curse that threatens that very order. This explains why the heroic veteran is plagued by rumours regarding his dark and dangerous heritage. There is a local legend that one of the Hammands must occasionally be sacrificed to the Devil, 'who claims his prey in a pine wood on frosty, starlit nights, in the shape of something called the Undying Monster' (28). Another popular tradition is that the first Hammand made a compact with the Devil, selling his own soul to guarantee that his heirs should hold Dannow for eternity and that he should have immortality. This first Hammand is believed still to exist within a secret room in the house, from which he issues forth at intervals in order to perpetuate his unnatural life by drinking the blood of at least one live human being, one of whom must be a Hammand. The unhallowed nature of the Hammand family sees its male members receive a dark inheritance, with another rumour suggesting that Dannow contains a hidden room whose location and contents are only revealed to the heir presumptive when he comes of age. The secret contained within that room is deemed to be so fearful that no one has ever revealed it. Hammand heirs are thus corrupted by their very position as future patriarchs, and the secret contained at the heart of the home is linked to Oliver and Swanhild's ancestor, Sir Magnus Hammand, who is reported to have practised dark arts in what is referred to as the Hidden Room. The tale is that he raised the monster to help him with his studies of the occult, but he lost control of it and it killed his young son. Whatever the rumour, the threat associated with the Hammands is 'a sort of curse attached to the ownership of the place' (39). As the male heir, Oliver stands to inherit the family home and the family evil, suggesting something degenerate about the masculine traditions of his upper class milieu. The strength and courage that enables Oliver to protect those who are vulnerable is potentially also the power and violence of a predator.

The dark inheritance that Oliver stands to inherit as the Hammand patriarch infects the entire environment with a masculinised sense of menace. The Dannow Monstrous Man, an enormous chalk figure that is 'brother to the Long Man near Eastbourne' (15) looms over the house in a threatening fashion, and both Swanhild and Luna, the psychic detective, are particularly attuned to their vulnerability in the landscape. The terrifying Shaw consists largely of pines, firs and beech, that rise 'funereally, shutting out the dimly lit sky' (18) and to Swanhild the terror of the place rests in what might manifest itself at any moment: 'from the

treetops, behind or in front, or from the very earth' (18). For Luna, the predatory nature of the estate leads her to declare:

if I owned it I would have every stone of it carted away, the Shaw rooted up and ploughed deep, and the name of the place altered. Also I'd change my own name and go to some Colony and start life afresh; away from all associations with this horrible patrimony. (72)

The horrible patrimony of the Hammands is a family lineage that simultaneously gifts them wealth and social status, as well as the potential for its male members to become murderous beasts. Masculinity and the landed gentry are thus represented by Kerruish as a boon and a bane, which suggests a textual ambivalence regarding British social structures arising from a period of rapid cultural change.

While the British class system was by then deeply entrenched, World War I saw the working classes become increasingly mobilised, and many moved into white collar employment made possible by increasing urbanisation and industrialisation. The experience of fighting in the trenches frequently involved cross-class interactions that began to discourage deferential attitudes, and casualties were particularly high among the upper classes, which all saw the strict class hierarchies of Victorian and Edwardian Britain begin to pass away. Kerruish's novel thus oscillates between a conservative nostalgia for the class-based certainties of the past and a subversive desire to discredit them. The young heir Oliver Hammand is responsible for the maintenance of social order and the defence of the nation from external threat, but his rank and gender are also represented as vulnerable to a degeneration that sees him become an agent of destruction. Oliver has fought gallantly in the war, and takes on the role of patriarch responsible for the livelihoods of his tenants, but in the forest under the very conditions his family bane warns of, Oliver knows that 'something' is coming on him (24). This terrifying experience is strangely familiar, and Oliver later describes how, 'As sure as I knew it was the Monster coming I knew I'd been through it before.' Oliver's sense of events is that it was odd but that it 'didn't feel novel' (24), which suggests that violence is familiar to him, even inherent.

Oliver's dangerous upper class masculinity is ultimately neutralised by Luna, whose social rank and profession sees her avoid the victimisation of powerless Kate Stringer. Luna is well-bred, educated and a renowned psychic detective particularly interested in the ongoing presence and agency of the past. She insists that,

There's nothing so actively alive as the dead [...] When I conjure up a picture of Humankind it takes the form of a great round plain; the present

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world, covered with its fifteen hundred millions of solid, living folk. And behind them, mistier and dimmer the further one strives to look, are the figures of the billions of people of the Past. These are impalpable, yet extend hands that reach and grasp the living people grown from them, and guide them with power almost resistless both for good or evil. Clouds of people of the past; clouds beyond clouds I see them, the dead whose very essence, the fruit of their deeds and thoughts and words, live in us, the living. (109)

The past, in Luna's Gothic imaginary, continues to affect the present, just as the deeds of one's ancestors might shape the life of a descendant. When she learns about Magnus Hammand's experiments in black magic, Luna insists that 'the evil a man does may haunt those who come after him to the end of time' (51). Luna therefore calls for the family tree and traces the first appearance of the monster haunting the Hammands to a Danish ancestor who, she concludes, has committed some terrible sin that is haunting the family line. The sins of the father are, in true gothic fashion, meted out upon the son, just as Oliver's antipathy for the smell of hot tar is deemed to be hereditary since both his father and grandfather had the same aversion. When Luna hypnotises Oliver, she discovers the cause of this phobia: it is the result of hereditary memory caused by an early ancestor witnessing people being burnt to death. Oliver insists that a human brain does not last for centuries, which Luna counters by arguing that its descendants do. Some experiences, 'superhuman sorrows or joys, ecstatic religiosity, acute fear, can make a difference in part of the brain so powerful that it is reproduced in the brains of the owner's children, and their children after them indefinitely' (90). Oliver thus stands to inherit not just wealth and privilege with his family name, but monstrosity.

Luna's pseudo-scientific investigations into the Hammands' past eventually uncovers the truth about the monster: it is not a supernatural beast lurking in the woods, but Oliver himself. As Goddard stands helplessly witness to the horrifying transformation of man into wolf, the 'immense body' (158) that protected Britain during the war and the country during peace drops to all fours and crouches back in defensiveness as his eyes light up and glow red. Goddard recoils in horror, since the monster has

the face of Oliver Hammand, devil-obsessed or else turned by some Circean spell to an animal with power of hatred and cold cruelty beyond the human or bestial. His hair stood on end, while under it his ears laid themselves backwards, his upper lip had almost vanished from sight in a diabolic snarl, the whole mouth, blood-smearred and slaving, was distended and sucked in at the sides. The jaws protruded abnormally, and the big teeth

appeared to project still further forward, while the upper part of the face seemed to be contracted and sloped back into insignificance, a mere setting for the red eyes. And the peculiar marvel was that the ensemble did not suggest the animal that is nearest man, but one quite diverse, for the face was fantastically vulpine: suggesting a man's capacity for hate blended with a wolf's ferocity and set in a body blended of both man and wolf and animated by a devil. (158-9)

This is not the noble veteran concerned with the welfare of his dependents, but a primitive monster concerned only with destruction. Oliver's predatory nature is a hereditary madness from which he insists there is no escape, since 'we know it's in the brain; handed down from Hammand brain to Hammand brain, and that mine is now the sole repository of it' (164). Oliver's articulation of the threat of degeneration reifies the claims made by Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (1895), which positions an increasingly modern society as one marked by a decay and decadence that Nordau argued should be considered a psychological illness. Oliver's werewolf nature is not the result of a bite from another werewolf, as is so often the case in werewolf narratives, but is linked by Kerruish to a degenerate social structure based on inherited wealth and status.

Although Oliver's response upon learning his inherited predilection for violence is to proclaim that he 'shouldn't have been born at all' (164), his revulsion at the barbarity that sees him rip apart a young woman and salivate over his friend Goddard is countered by an expression of value that is explicitly linked to the same heritage that is responsible for his corruption. It is right that Oliver should have been born,

If it was only for the two hours during the retreat from C- [...] I was half as big again and five times as strong as any man who was left alive. All thanks to generations of well-bred, well-living ancestors. That's why I was able to lift Maxim into the gap and work it with the one hand I had fit to use, and that meant the grey-coats didn't get through before the Lancashires came up. They said it saved the line - my decent ancestors having bred me big and sound. It wasn't the line I considered, of course, but the crooked chaps behind me. We collected five lorry lads of them: a couple of hundred men with a fresh chance of life and fulfilled dreams, a couple of hundred who weren't stamped into the mud after all. (164-5)

Oliver's ancestry is thus figured in terms both positive and negative: on the one hand, his noble line has instilled him with the courage and physical strength to save lesser 'crooked chaps' during the barbarity of war; but on the other hand, his ancestry gifts him with the violence and savagery to destroy others. Oliver's characterisation thus expresses the

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complexity of war, which necessitates, and often celebrates, violent acts that would in other circumstances be considered deplorable.

The novel's ambivalence regarding the nature and heritage of the young patriarch and veteran Oliver Hammand suggests anxiety around British social structures in a period of threat and rapid change. Certainly, anxieties about damaged masculinities in the post-war period were prevalent since approximately 1.2 million men were entitled to disability pensions in 1919.¹⁶ Luna expresses her awareness of the damage wrought by war when she admits that Oliver was her immediate suspect for the murder of Kate Stringer since she knew that he had been 'cut up a good deal in the war' and was 'in a highly-strung state' (176). Here the damaging effects of the war are not simply experienced by an individual veteran suffering from the symptoms of trauma commonly understood as shell-shock, but by an entire community who are figured as potential victims of dangerously damaged men. The threat that men such as Oliver might pose to the post-war social order rests on Edwardian assumptions that mental illness is antithetical to heroic masculinity. Fiona Reid reveals that the 'military-medical profession did recognise the reality of mental war wounds but also attributed some mental breakdowns to constitutional weakness' or 'bad stock.' This distinction meant that 'men who had shown courage, had supported their comrades and – crucially – recovered quickly from any mental or emotional breakdown were generally treated with a measure of compassion and care. Others were more likely to be labelled as cowards.'¹⁷ Men exhibiting psychological trauma brought on by war were frequently labelled as 'malingerers' and Joanna Burke demonstrates how the visible destruction of men's bodies was privileged in British society since mental illness and disease carried negative connotations of inaction, physical inferiority and psychological instability.¹⁸ This goes some way to explaining why Oliver's monstrosity is aligned with psychological damage, and Goddard's consistently upright behaviour with his very visible artificial arm. Furthermore, a deeply entrenched class system might seem to promise stability in a time of chaos, with men such as Oliver being relied upon for educated leadership and economic support, but the predatory nature of the upper classes that, in Kerruish's novel, literally attempt to feed off their tenants suggests that they are ill-suited to a modern industrial nation.

It is significant that the predatory nature of upper class masculinity is largely figured in sexual terms. Both Oliver and his grandfather kill young women, with the latter murdering the woman he had coaxed into the wood for an extramarital tryst, and the former suddenly becoming aware of 'something bestial' (24) as he walks Kate Stringer – who has 'the prettiest face in the village' (20) – home through the same forest.

Oliver's description of the moments before his transformation are figured in terms that are physical and involuntary:

Stars, and pines, and cold, and the Monster coming. I couldn't get away from it, it came from all round and closed on me like – oh, like the blast from furnace doors opening all round me. All round and above, and under me. And the air from them sweeping right through me. But it wasn't hot; only horrible. Horrible. [...] I seemed to know that what was coming would be the end of me, soul as well as body. If I didn't fight it it would annihilate me. Soul and body. (24)

Oliver's sense of an inescapable and overpowering physical sensation is close to orgasmic, and when he comes to consciousness back at the house, his register of Kate's ghastly assault is to cry 'the brute got her!' (23). It is only towards the end of the novel that Oliver, and his friends and family, must cope with the knowledge that he is the brute who has 'taken a woman' (23). Oliver and his grandfather are both representative of physical strength and social power that poses particular threat to vulnerable women.

The narrative solves the problem of Oliver's dangerous upper class masculinity through Luna's ability to use her professional and personal power to ascertain the precise nature of the Hammand curse, utilise contemporary psychology in order to banish it, and contain Oliver's desires within a socially sanctioned marriage. Luna insists that 'a man's earlier ancestors matter to his history as powerfully as do his childish impressions' (171) and that the curse dooming Oliver to a life as a murderous werewolf is psychological. Just as the most striking incidents of childhood might affect an individual to the end of life, Luna explains that the more impressive experiences of those who lived in the past are bound to subconsciously effect their descendants. A crime, Luna explains, committed by a single person can extend its repercussions to the innocent for generations to come. Using hypnotism – significantly, one of the forms of treatment used by physician Arthur Hurst for shell-shocked soldiers during World War I¹⁹ – Luna guides Oliver back through historic memory and uncovers the history of the Undying Monster: its cause is blasphemy and its power is 'a kink in the brain and the unfortunate heirs of that kink' (179). Oliver's ancestor Sigmund made a blasphemous curse and the impression of his transgression was so powerful that it passed on to his descendants, with the result being that a man is occasionally born into the Hammand line who is 'liable to turn, mentally, into a wolf' (172). Luna can solve this terrible psychological inheritance by hypnotising Oliver so that he believes that he is his ancestor and that he is forgiven his curse by the gods. Subsequently, the two declare their love, and from

thence onward Oliver 'would always be in his normal mood what he was then: a strong man who had thrust the hopeless Past aside and turned all his powers of soul and brain to moulding the Future for the comfort of the woman who had earned the right to mould it' (190). Luna thus tames the murderous beast and turns Oliver into a functional patriarch guaranteeing a secure social order.

In Kerruish's novel, the subversive thrust associated with a barbaric upper class that feeds off the vulnerable is ultimately neutralised by a rational cure that ensures the survival of the Hammonds into the future. Its attempt to imaginatively reinstate a nostalgic Edwardian social order in the post-war world sees it minimise the idea that the Hammonds might belong to a ruling class increasingly out of place in contemporary Britain, and that Oliver's masculine desires might pose threat to those with less power, by highlighting heroic characteristics that position the protagonists as members of a desirable upper class that provides political and social stability. Furthermore, Oliver's predatory potential is contained within a socially sanctioned marriage, just as Luna's potential to transcend traditional gender roles through her profession is neutralised since she loses her psychic powers upon falling in love and must abandon the professional realm for the domestic. This conventional conclusion supports critic Queenie Leavis' disparagement of popular novels in the interwar period, since it works to contain the sorts of complexities Leavis locates in modernist fiction, but it is incorrect to assume that the situations in popular fiction that allow readers to 'readily visualise themselves as taking a principle and heroic part' are meaningless.²⁰ Literature deemed popular, escapist or 'dated' usefully provides its readers with a psychic catharsis invaluable during times of stress and turmoil. Published just four years after the end of the First World War, *The Undying Monster* shies away from confronting the reader with a challenging critique of war, hegemonic masculinity, or social structures in order to suggest the reinstatement of peace and harmony. Ultimately, like so many British people regardless of gender or class, the Hammonds have been devastated by war – once following the battle of Blore Heath in 1456 when the male members of the family are almost entirely eradicated, and again at the end of World War I when they are reduced to just two members – and the survival and happiness of Oliver and Swanhild, both of whom are set to marry their sweethearts, offers readers a reassuring balm in the immediate aftermath of the trauma of global conflict. In *The Undying Monster*, Kerruish demonstrates how werewolf narratives might work to express cultural anxieties about violent masculinities, exploitative social structures and the chaos attendant to war, while also working to appease them with a vision of familiar social order ultimately restored.

Notes

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1. The primary goal of the EUP Journals Blog

To aid discovery of authors, articles, research, multimedia and reviews published in Journals, and as a consequence contribute to increasing traffic, usage and citations of journal content.

2. Audience

Blog posts are written for an educated, popular and academic audience within EUP Journals' publishing fields.

3. Content criteria - your ideas for posts

We prioritize posts that will feature highly in search rankings, that are shareable and that will drive readers to your article on the EUP site.

4. Word count, style, and formatting

- Flexible length, however typical posts range 70-600 words.
- Related images and media files are encouraged.
- No heavy restrictions to the style or format of the post, but it should best reflect the content and topic discussed.

5. Linking policy

- Links to external blogs and websites that are related to the author, subject matter and to EUP publishing fields are encouraged, e.g. to related blog posts

6. Submit your post

Submit to ruth.allison@eup.ed.ac.uk

If you'd like to be a regular contributor, then we can set you up as an author so you can create, edit, publish, and delete your *own* posts, as well as upload files and images.

7. Republishing/repurposing

Posts may be re-used and re-purposed on other websites and blogs, but a minimum 2 week waiting period is suggested, and an acknowledgement and link to the original post on the EUP blog is requested.

8. Items to accompany post

- A short biography (ideally 25 words or less, but up to 40 words)
- A photo/headshot image of the author(s) if possible.
- Any relevant, thematic images or accompanying media (podcasts, video, graphics and photographs), provided copyright and permission to republish has been obtained.
- Files should be high resolution and a maximum of 1GB
- Permitted file types: *jpg, jpeg, png, gif, pdf, doc, ppt, odt, pptx, docx, pps, ppsx, xls, xlsx, key, mp3, m4a, wav, ogg, zip, ogv, mp4, m4v, mov, wmv, avi, mpg, 3gp, 3g2.*

"‘This horrible patrimony’: Masculinity,
War and the Upper Classes in Jessie
Douglas Kerruish's *The Undying Monster*."

Mercer, E

2020-11-25
