

Opening the Box: Narratives of Fantasy, Desire, and Marginalized Women in *Idyll 2* and *Mulholland Drive*.

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CW: Suicide

Narrative Progression:

1. Fantasy (in which love is mutual and thriving) → **Flashbacks** (when relationship brought joy; moment of traumatic betrayal) → **Determination to kill** ex lover because fantasy is impossible

Narrative Step	<i>Idyll 2</i>	<i>Mulholland Drive</i>
1. Fantasy	1a. Simaetha imagines that magic can bring Delphis back, bind him to her, and make him love her/forget other lovers	1b. Diane imagines self as Betty, savior to a new version of Camilla named “Rita” who depends on her and returns her love
2. Flashbacks	2a. When she met Delphis; when they slept together; hearing rumors about his new love affair	2b. Camilla breaks up with Diane; Camilla flaunts relationship with Adam; Camilla gets engaged; Diane hires assassin
3. Determination to kill ex-lover	3a. If magic fails (likely) Simaetha will poison Delphis	3b. Diane hires assassin; resulting murder of Camilla results in Diane’s death by suicide

1a. Fantasy for Simaetha: that magic can bring Delphis back to her and make her love her more than any mythical character has loved anyone else

ὥς τοῦτον τὸν κηρὸν ἐγὼ σὺν δαίμονι τάκω,
ὥς τάκοιθ’ ὑπ’ ἔρωτος ὁ Μύνδιος αὐτίκα Δέλφισ.
χῶς δινεῖθ’ ὄδε ρόμβος ὁ χάλκεος ἐξ Ἀφροδίτας,
ὥς τῆνος δινοῖτο ποθ’ ἀμετέραισι θύραισιν.
ἴυγξ, ἔλκε τὸ τῆνον ἐμὸν ποτὶ δῶμα τὸν ἄνδρα.
ἐς τρίς ἀποσπένδω καὶ τρίς τάδε, πότνια, φωνῶ·
εἴτε γυνὰ τήνῃ παρακέκλιται εἴτε καὶ ἀνὴρ,
τόσσον ἔχοι λάθας ὅσσον ποκὰ Θησέα φαντί
ἐν Δίᾳ λασθῆμεν εὐπλοκάμῳ Ἀριάδνας. (28-46)

As I with the goddess’s aid melt this wax, so may Myndian Delphis melt at once with love. And as this bronze rhombos turns round by the power of Aphrodite, so may he turn to and fro about my door. [Magic wheel, draw that man to my house.] Three times I pour a libation and three times, lady, I utter these words: whether it is a woman who lies with him or a man, may he have so much forgetfulness of them as they say Theseus on Dia had of Ariadne with her lovely tresses.

1b. Fantasy for Diane: that she is the successful, naive Betty acting as savior to a new version of Camilla named “Rita” who depends on her and returns her love



2. Flashbacks

2a. Flashbacks for Simaetha: Simaetha tells the moon about the first time she and Delphis slept together; Simaetha recounts that she has heard rumors that Delphis is seeing someone else

οὐτ' ἀπὸ τᾶς χλαίνας τὸ κράσπεδον ὤλεσε Δέλφισ,
ὡγὼ νῦν τίλλοισα κατ' ἀγρίῳ ἐν πυρὶ βάλλω.
αἰᾶτ' Ἔρως ἀνιαρέ, τί μευ μέλαν ἐκ χροῶς αἷμα
ἐμφύς ὡς λιμναῖτις ἄπαν ἐκ βδέλλα πέπωκας;
Νῦν δὴ μῶνα ἐοῖσα πόθεν τὸν ἔρωτα δακρῦσω;
ἐκ τίνος ἄρξωμαι; τίς μοι κακὸν ἄγαγε τοῦτο; (64-65)

“From his cloak Delphis lost this fringe, which I now shred and cast into the wild fire. Ah, cruel Love, why, like a leech from the marsh, have you fastened on me and drunk all the black blood from my body? And now that I am alone, from what point shall I lament my love? Where should I start? Who brought me this trouble?”

χῶς ἴδον, ὡς ἐμάνην, ὡς μοι πυρὶ θυμὸς ἰάφθη
δειλαίας, τὸ δὲ κάλλος ἐτάκετο. οὐκέτι πομπᾶς
τήνας ἐφρασάμαν, οὐδ' ὡς πάλιν οἴκαδ' ἀπῆνθον
ἔγνω, ἀλλὰ μέ τις καπυρὰ νόσος ἐξεσάλαξεν,
κείμεν δ' ἐν κλιντῆρι δέκ' ἄματα καὶ δέκα νύκτας.
φράζεό μευ τὸν ἔρωθ' ὅθεν ἴκετο, πότνα Σελάνα. (80-87)

And when I saw them I was seized with madness, and my wretched heart was caught with fire, and my beauty wasted away. I no longer took notice of that procession, and I had no idea how I got home again, but a burning fever shook me, and I lay on my bed ten days and ten nights. Note, lady Moon, whence came my love.

2b. Flashbacks for Diane: Camilla tells Diane that she needs to end their relationship; Diane attends a party with Camilla and watches her get engaged to the man for whom she left Diane



3. Determination to kill ex lover because fantasy is impossible:

3a. Simaetha: reveals at the end of the poem that if her spell is unsuccessful she can simply poison Delphis

νῦν μὰν τοῖς φίλτροις καταδήσομαι· αἰ δ' ἔτι κά με
λυπῆ, τὰν Αἴδαο πύλαν, ναὶ Μοίρας, ἀραξεῖ·
τοῖά οἱ ἐν κίστῃ κακὰ φάρμακα φαμί φυλάσσειν,
Ἀσσυρίῳ, δέσποινα, παρὰ ξείνοιο μαθοῖσα. (159-162)

Now I shall bind him with my charms; but if he still gives me trouble he shall knock at Death's door, by the Fates; such evil drugs, I say, I keep in my box, which I learned about, Queen Moon, from an Assyrian stranger

3b. Diane: hires an assassin to kill Camilla; when she gets word that Camilla has been killed, she has a traumatic confrontation with the Real, resulting in her ultimate death by suicide.



Lacanian patterns

- Impossibility of *jouissance* in *object petit a* leading to creation of fantasy world in which *jouissance* is possible
 - Simaetha retreats to witchcraft in fantasy of binding Delphis to her
 - Diane constructs fantasy narrative where she and Camilla are together happily
- Traumatic confrontation with the Real as it conflicts with the drive of desire for the *object petit a*
 - Simaetha
 - “Betty” and “Rita” fantasy identities fall apart shortly after
- Insight (via flashbacks) into the relationship between the subject and the *object petit a* and the way their previous *jouissance* has exceeded the pleasure principal to cause pain
- Recognition of impossibility of fantasy; determination to end cycle of desire by eliminating the *object petit a* through murder
- Confrontation with the Real & the fact that eliminating *object petit a* does not eliminate desire, only cements impossibility of *jouissance*

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