

A Projected Place of Past Perfection:  
Reading Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* through a Jungian Literary Lens

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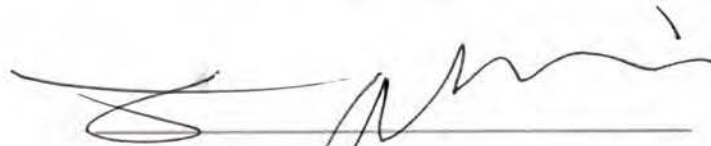
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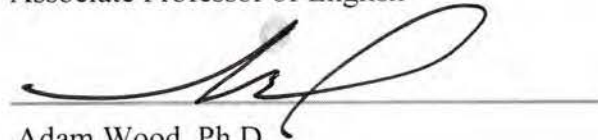
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## Abstract

Vladimir Nabokov's controversial novel *Lolita* has always been known to scholars as parodying psychoanalytical concepts. Nevertheless, recent scholarship has shown how psychologically in-depth and penetrating Nabokov's novels are. As Brian Boyd, an eminent Nabokovian scholar, states in the chapter, "The Psychological Work of Fictional Play," "Nabokov's psychology, like his ethics and metaphysics, is another dimension of his work that I think we cannot separate from his work as literature" (109). Consequently, contemporary scholarship has analyzed Nabokov's *Lolita* through many psychological angles and theories. Yet, none so far has seen *Lolita* through the psychological process of projection and shown how the narration of *Lolita* reveals the unconscious projection at work through Nabokov's acute understanding of the psyche.

Furthermore, there is a lack of Jungian literary perspective being applied to *Lolita* in *Lolita*'s literary criticism. Thus, this thesis aims at applying, well-known Jungian analyst James Hollis' projection process, discussed in his book, *The Eden Project in Search of the Magical Other*, to Humbert Humbert's relationship with Dolores, and how this prompts an individuation journey for Nabokov's self-deceptive narrator.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the fictitious character Humbert Humbert. From our first meeting – the first reading of *Lolita*, you captivated, charmed, and clasped me; of course, I did not know then that was because of my own fatherly abandonment wound. Naively, I believed you, just as I had believed all the “adult” men in my life during those formative, young years.

Yet, upon our second meeting, I had grown wiser, more discerning, more conscious. No longer did you seduce and deceive me. I hated you, rage seethed and boiled up within me, pouring slowly onto you – onto men. I saw through you and your lies: you, what a sham, such a farce. Your transgression grew to transparency. You became nothingness to me. I recognized your victim, Dolores, I heard her and cared for her as my own inner child. For months, I could not look at you.

In my third reading, our last meeting, I had grown deeper, and you had grown frailer. I pitied you. I grieved for you. I resaw you. Who could have known that the same projection you pushed upon Dolores, I pushed upon you? Humbert Humbert, thank you, for helping me heal my projections upon men. You, who could represent the best and worst in men; you, who represents the best and worst in me.

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## Chapter I: Introduction

*“The role of the artist is exactly the same as the role of the lover. If I love you, I have to make you conscious of the things you don’t see.” - James Baldwin*

Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita* has been many things to many people: a faithful depiction of love, a sickening depiction of pedophilia, or a philosophical depiction of fantasy over reality, just to name a few. Moreover, the variety of interpretations echoes the infamous narrator, Humbert Humbert, and his numerous interpretations of Dolores. As he states in the beginning, “She was Lo, plain Lo, in the morning, standing four feet ten in one sock. She was Lola in slacks. She was Dolly at school. She was Dolores on the dotted line,” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 9) and, even though he claims she was always Lolita to him in his arms, she was more than *just* that; for Lolita, Humbert Humbert’s forever nymphet (Nabokov, *Lolita* 65), was never a person but a place: his paradise and Dolores’ prison when examining *Lolita* from a psychological perspective.

Since *Lolita*’s publication, literary critics have interpreted the novel — its greatness and grotesqueness — in widely different forms. Yet, the psychological stance towards *Lolita* has always contained a somewhat tainted viewpoint since Nabokov’s vehement statement on his distaste for the archaic thinking of Freuds, exclaiming all Freudians stay away from his novels (Shute 637). Sigmund Freud invented psychoanalysis and the idea of the unconscious through his work *The Interpretation of Dreams* which was published in 1900. Though Freud specifically founded psychoanalysis, under the big umbrella of the psychological discipline, his type of psychology which focuses on the conscious and unconscious aspects of the human psyche is known as depth psychology, in contrast to other forms of psychology such as Cognitive, Behavioral, or social psychology. Freud was a contemporary of Nabokov, and during Nabokov’s time in America, Freudian psychoanalytical theories dominated the American academic

dialogue. Nabokov was not impressed. Rather, he “is known for being ‘one of the century’s most active and vociferous anti-Freudians” (Blackwell, “Nabokov’s Wiener-schnitzel Dreams” 129).

In *Lolita*, his distaste for Freud’s archaic theories is shown through multiple forms of parody.

One way is directly through *Lolita*’s self-deceptive and devious narrator Humbert Humbert. He confesses to the reader how he

discovered there was an endless source of robust enjoyment in trifling with psychiatrists: cunningly leading them on; never letting them see that you know all the tricks of the trade; inventing for them elaborate dreams, pure classics in style ...; teasing them with fake “primal scenes”; and never allowing them the slightest glimpse of one’s real sexual predicament” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 34).

Humbert Humbert directly taunts psychoanalytical practice but inadvertently so too does Nabokov. Whereas Humbert Humbert delights in eluding his psychiatrists making them draw false diagnoses, Nabokov’s humor lies in playing games with the reader as nothing can be truly taken seriously in Humbert Humbert’s narration. This parody of psychoanalysis in *Lolita* stems from Nabokov’s view of Freudian theory as vacuous and corruptive (Boyd, “The Psychologist”). Thus, earlier *Lolita* scholarship either stayed away from Nabokov’s psychological parodying or took their chances with a Freudian perspective anyway risking the admonishment of the author. Nevertheless, as Boyd suggests and other scholars have attuned to, Nabokov’s writings and psychology are more parallel than hitherto thought. For instance, independent researcher Frances Peltz Assa argues in her article, “Nabokov the Psychologist” that Nabokov’s novels are more aligned with recent discoveries in behavioral and cognitive psychology than Freud’s own theories, which were more myth than actual science (1).

Therefore, instead of reading Nabokov's novel *Lolita* as a rebuttal of psychological theory and practice in general, it may be time to examine *Lolita* as Nabokov's contemporary *challenge* to the academic fanaticism surrounding Freudian theories during his lifetime. Importantly, *Lolita* not only has aligned with recent psychological theories on pedophilia and trauma alongside discoveries on empathy and memory but also provides a near-perfect example of the psychological process of projection. Many scholarly articles have discussed the psychological aspects of *Lolita* despite Nabokov's widely known disdain for Freudian psychology, but none so far have analyzed Humbert Humbert's narrative and character growth through the psychological concept of projection, and how the novel's structural form represents Humbert Humbert's projection onto Dolores, the disintegration of that projection, and Humbert Humbert's inner psychic individuation and integration at the end. Many psychological articles focus either on Humbert Humbert's complexes, his unreciprocated desire for Lolita, or how scientifically accurate Nabokov was in his character portrayal. However, Jungian and post-Jungian theories may help to illuminate other aspects of Nabokov's characters than just complexes, disorders, or ontological lack. Most importantly, unlike Freudian psychology which can be limiting in its "concretistic and dogmatic biological approach" (Monick, *Castration and Male Rage the Phallic Wound* 39), a Jungian psychological lens encompasses and enjoins the greater topics of Nabokov's novels such as dichotomies, reality vs. artifice, time, intertextual relatedness, monism vs. dualism, etc, (Boyd, "The Psychologist Work of Fictional Play" 60). Lastly, a Jungian interpretation connects with the symbolic and mythic interpretations hidden within Nabokov's writings, allowing the psychic processes and archetypal images to emerge.

Though Nabokov did not have a title, specialty, or background in psychology, he intimately understood it, and this intuitive understanding can be seen in Nabokov's portrayal of

Humbert Humbert's mind, narrative, and interpersonal relations with the other characters. As Brian Boyd, an eminent Nabokovian scholar, stated in the chapter, "The Psychological Work of Fictional Play," "Nabokov's psychology, like his ethics and metaphysics, is another dimension of his work that I think we cannot separate from his work as literature" (109). By viewing *Lolita* from this psychological perspective, we can see the novel's plot not only as transgressive, but also as transformative, revealing the power of projection and its place in human lives. The text becomes an illuminating and illustrative story of one man's disillusion, entrapment, and eventually death through the agency of the unconscious. Humbert Humbert's narration becomes a place of projection where an engaged and enlightened reader can navigate the human experience of "falling in love" and being overpowered by one's unconscious desires, patterns, complexes, and archetypes. Contrary to the common saying "ignorance is bliss," *Lolita* illustrates the psychological truth that what one does not know does and will hurt you and others. *Lolita* exemplifies Nabokov's acute understanding of the human condition. Therefore, in this thesis, I examine *Lolita* through a Jungian literary lens seeing how Humbert Humbert's narrative depicts the psychological process of projection exactly, in turn representing an inside look at Humbert Humbert's unconscious workings and how Nabokov's self-reflexive novel mimics these psychological processes.

## Chapter II: Literary Criticism and Jungian Literary Theory

### *Lolita's* Literary Criticism

Upon *Lolita's* release, literary critics were pushed to two extremes: adoration or abhorrence. It was a book that divided friendships, scholarship, and even the ethical understanding of the literary novel. This transgressive and divisive quality impacted the first few years of literary criticism. Critics focused on the ethics of the book, the moral grounds or debauchery of the main character, and the formal aspects of the novel. Even those literary critics who were sympathetic to Freud's theories took Nabokov's statements and sentiments at face-value, not daring to examine a through a lens the author disliked (360). Trilling, in support of Nabokov's views, stated, that the author's "purpose cannot be explained by any interest in the 'psychological' aspects of the story; he has none whatever" (14).

Yet, some scholars, like L.R. Hiatt, contrary to Nabokov's blatantly known disgust for Freud, did analyze *Lolita* through a psychoanalytical lens. Though the article was not published until twelve years after *Lolita* was first published, "Nabokov's 'Lolita': A "Freudian" Cryptic Crossword" begins by acknowledging Nabokov's remarks on psychoanalytical theory and that those who apply it to his novels are in the same distasteful category as Freud (360). Yet, Hiatt argues that a psychoanalytical reading is indeed needed because "Trilling's own interpretation leaves unexplained many puzzling features of the novel, of which the most important is the peculiar role of Quilty" (361). Thus, for Hiatt, Quilty represents Humbert Humbert's father, and in turn, the novel illustrates a classically, Freudian Oedipal complex within the narrator. Humbert Humbert's love for nymphets and Lolita is an unconscious wish to re-experience "the fresh, unspoiled love of his mother during infancy" (361), but to do this Humbert Humbert must commit patricide, which occurs with Quilty's death. Hiatt's article offers readers a traditional

psychoanalytical of *Lolita*, while acknowledging that this reading could be a complete set up from the author. Hiatt concludes that he tried to reveal the cryptic Freudian subplot, but why Nabokov would even choose to have this puzzling aspect may be due to his love chess and the creation of “fiendishly subtle false clues” and false starts (370).

During the 1970s, the academic field’s focus shifted in response to political and social movements of the era and explored issues of identity: who should be seen, how they should be seen, and how issues of equity and power should be analyzed. One minority group that was rising and demanding to be seen was women. This visibility of women would be seen more in *Lolita*’s scholarship more prominently in the two decades after the 70s. In contrast, articles in *Lolita* scholarship focused more on the philosophical, theoretical, and textual seen in the concept of time, narrative, and aestheticism in Nabokov’s novels. Articles such as “In Search of Aesthetic Bliss: A Rereading of *Lolita*” published in 1977 by Phyliss A. Roth, “Nabokov and Fictional Artifice” by Robert Merrill published in 1979, and “Time in ‘*Lolita*’” by Christina Tekiner published also in 1979 represent these trends. Ralph A. Ciancio’s article, “Nabokov and the Verbal Mode of the Grotesque,” published in 1977 argues that even though Nabokov’s writing does not stem from anyone within grotesque literature, his writing does incline to the “same verbal grotesquery that extends from Shakespeare to Joyce” (509). Ciancio’s argument is important because it shows how Nabokov’s writing adopts an almost mimicry of Nature that allows for both the real and unreal to abide together, allowing for impossible events to happen in the most possible ways (512). This grotesque quality in Nabokov’s writing, especially in *Lolita*, I would argue also mimics how the conscious and unconscious realms work in the human psyche, and Nabokov’s ability to represent that through his writing illustrates his prowess as an intuitive psychologist.

Moreover, the 80s continued this philosophical and textual focus offering insights into exploring Nabokov's fascination with the imagination, the real, and subversion. Whereas Ciancio's sees the unreal and real as a part of the verbal grotesque, Lance Olsen in his article "A Janus-Text: Realism, Fantasy, and Nabokov's *Lolita*" published in 1986 advances that *Lolita* should be seen through the lens of the fantastic, since Nabokov did not accept an objective reality (Olsen 117). Olsen goes on to illustrate how the authors Nabokov was influenced by and alludes to frequently in his novels all share "a need to decompose "so-called 'realism'" and to do this they utilized the fantastic in the narratives (119). Therefore, Olsen argues that Nabokov also employs the fantastic mode in his writings to disrupt this idea of a shared, consensus reality.<sup>1</sup> Olsen's argument that *Lolita* employs fantastic mode and how this shows up through time and characters in the novel speaks to depth psychology's understanding of conscious and unconscious. As Olsen claims:

Two universes of time exist in this novel. The first is time of *chronos*, communal time that registers chronology, sequence, a change of state, cause and effect. This is the time of prosaism, details, inevitable death: Balzacian mimesis, nineteenth-century realism. Opposed to this is *kairos* or divine time, an intensely autistic time that stands outside of chronology and signals a changeless state, a disruption of sequence and of cause and effect. This is the time of poetry, love, immortality, the fantastic — the time of Medieval romance, fairy tales, legends, myths, surrealist fiction, and so on. Humbert Humbert keenly feels the pain of *chronos* and longs through art to attain the transcendental realm of *kairos* that will allow "a negation of time" (Appel, Interview 32) (Olsen 120).

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<sup>1</sup> As Olsen states, "Nabokov essentially believes that communal "reality" is unknowable, he is also highly suspicious of the literary form that claims to reflect it—that "so-called" 'realism' of old novels" (*Strong Opinions* 118) (115).

Or, from a psychological perspective, one could say Humbert Humbert believes he lives consciously but longs for and projects his unconscious throughout his narrative. Olsen ends his argument by stating that at the heart of *Lolita* one finds the tension between two modes of discourse: the fantastic and the real.

The 80-90s for *Lolita* literary criticism produced research focusing on Dolores' place in the novel, and how she was treated by Humbert Humbert. As Anika Susan Quayle states, this period in *Lolita's* literary criticism "saw a deepening interest in the figure of Lolita and her representation in the text" (1). Now, through this period's thorough research and advocacy for Lolita, it has become well-known in the *Lolita* literary criticism community that "Humbert Humbert is blind to Lolita, replacing her with, or subsuming her within that is the product of his artist's imagination (or as I argue, the narrator's projected unconscious) (Quayle 1).

The 90s also saw the rise in examining Nabokov's use of intertextuality in *Lolita*. The article, by Phillip Schweighauser, "Discursive Killings: Intertextuality, Aestheticization and Death in Nabokov's '*Lolita*,'" published in 1999, prominently represents this scholarship trend, combining the focus of intertextuality with a reclamation of Dolores. In his article, he looks at Lolita through a semantics and rhetoric lens. He claims that Lolita "is suffused with a rhetoric of death" from Humbert Humbert's sinister intertextual references and deathly discourses; from his narrative he is able to conjure up her literal death (255). Schweighauser's statement that "Humbert does realize that he creates a Lolita which has very little in common with the flesh-and-blood daughter of Charlotte Haze" could also reflect that Lolita is actually Humbert Humbert's idealized projection, a place he is trying to reach in order to escape *chronos* and come into *kairos*, the immortal, the Edenic (265). Schweighauser's textual reading of *Lolita* through



the discourse and semantics of Humbert Humbert reiterates his contribution to Dolores' death – both semantic and literal.

With the new century looming, *Lolita* scholarship took a wide turn, focusing on many directions. My focus will mainly be on the psychoanalytical articles that offer a Lacanian viewpoint or another aspect of Freud's theories besides the Oedipus complex. In 2005, Maurice Couturier, a brilliant theorist, student of Roland Barthes, and scholar and translator of Nabokov, published his article "Narcissism and Demand in *Lolita*." The article looks at *Lolita* through a Lacanian lens. He posits that *Lolita* is a novel about a boundless desire that turns into unrequited love. Humbert Humbert begins Part I with this lack, a need that cannot be fulfilled until he spots Dolores and turns her into Lolita. Believing that he can quench his desire through Lolita, he does everything he can to isolate and possess her sexually. Part Two, however, describes the process of Humbert Humbert transmuting "his sexual need into a poetic plea for love ... hoping to prove himself worthy, if not of Lolita's love beyond the grave at least of the reader's aesthetic esteem" (Couturier 21). Unfortunately, his attempts are for naught. Couturier argues that he cannot fill in this ontological lack. Interestingly, Couturier's articles focus on the lack within culminating in the desire for the other to fulfill this absence, and then the sublimation of that desire into love follows a similar outline as the process of projection I outline in Humbert Humbert's narration. Where the Lacanian perspective and the Jungian perspective differ arises in Humbert Humbert's ending, and this difference probably arises from the differences inherent in the two psychological branches. With a Jungian perspective, Humbert Humbert can be seen on a journey of psychological awareness, a kind of transcendence from one psychological stage to another, like a hero's journey, but as I argue below, a tragic hero's journey as shown in figures such as Oedipus. But for Couturier, Humbert Humbert's desire remains unfulfilled and is sublimated into

persuading the reader into seeing the aesthetic beauty of his time with Dolores. However, both of Humbert Humbert's aims go unfulfilled since his desire for Lolita's love goes unfulfilled and, if the reader sees through the narrator's farce, then his sublimation for the aesthetic beauty also fails. Couturier explains that Humbert Humbert ends with venting "not only his death drive but his desire to melt into the Thing, the mother ... [which] is, indeed, at the heart of Humbert's perversion: as he is divesting himself of his desire, he longs for her" (42). Where I see Humbert Humbert's end as a problematically successful integration into the eternal unconscious (death), Couturier shows that Humbert Humbert's ending results in his failed integration, for he still longs for something he cannot have.

Then in 2009, the article "Trauma and Free Will in *Lolita*" by Jacqueline Hamrit examined *Lolita* through Freud's trauma-based lens. Her purpose of using Freud's trauma theory is to see trauma's role in Humbert Humbert's pedophilia. Whereas I argue using a Jungian lens that Humbert Humbert grows beyond his psychological immaturity, Hamrit states that he remains unconscious to his trauma and in turn continues to relive it; as she claims, "Deaf and blind to his traumatic event, he does not reach knowledge and consciousness, since he does not [sic] integrate it, work through it" (Hamrit 142). Again, her conclusion differs from my argument that Humbert Humbert does integrate his unconscious by facing his shadow side (i.e., Clare Quilty). She goes on to argue that Lolita is the true victim and hero of the novel. It is "she [who] has gone through a traumatic event and she exemplifies what, in psychological terms, we call 'resilience'" (Hamrit 144).

The 2010s and 2020s have continued to examine *Lolita* through either new psychological theory based on the latest findings and emerging concepts or revisiting the Nabokov and Freud standoff. Published in 2017, Teckyoung Kwon's scholarly book *Nabokov's Mimicry of Freud:*

*Art as Science* delves in detail how Nabokov's narration mimics Freud's psychoanalytical writings. The author offers a revisionist reading of Nabokov's relationship concerning Freud, along with a bold statement that the "artistic merit of Nabokov's work depends largely on Freud" (Kwon 24). For Kwon, Nabokov and Freud were battling over the mastery and territory of the unconscious in their writings. Through seven chapters, Kwon's goal is to "show how Nabokov mimics Freud in the medium of dialogue" (22). Kwon's work continues the line of scholarship which focuses on Nabokov and Freud and their connection.

Concerning Humbert Humbert's pedophilia, the article "Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*: The Representation and the Reality Re-Examining *Lolita* in the Light of Research into Child Sexual Abuse" by Lawrence Ratna published in 2020 compares Humbert Humbert with recent research studies of abusers to see how much Nabokov's character depiction aligns with reality. In his findings, Ratna states that "Nabokov had a remarkably prescient knowledge of the feelings and cognitions of an abuser, the strategies utilized in grooming, and the diagnostic category of hebephilia long before these issues were discovered by research" (22). Ratna's article illustrates the profound psychological understanding Nabokov possessed, especially during the time *Lolita* was being written because there was very little systemic research conducted on child sexual abuse (Ratna 23). Ratna reviews the different abuses present in *Lolita*: Sexual, Financial, Emotional, Social Abuse and Sexual Reification. In my thesis, I examine the Financial and Physical Abuse Humbert Humbert puts Dolores through. Ratna's conclusion indicates the importance of seeing *Lolita* in the light of real-world implications as he states:

No other novel has depicted the mind and methods of a pedophile which [sic] such clinical accuracy or utilized the beauty of language and the complexities of narration with such power. The failure in some sections of the academic discourse to systematically

address its roots in the real world has contributed to the romanticization of pedophilia and the Lolita effect (28).

Ratna's conclusion reminds its readers of how realistic the novel can be and how close to the psychological reality of human existence in all its glory and horror. I posit the same importance of reading the novel in a psychological perspective, which allows the reader to see both the internal and external implications of projection through Humbert Humbert's narration and its impact on others illustrated in Dolores' death.

### **C.G. Jung and Literature**

Jungian literary theory slowly achieved its own field apart from fairy tale or dream interpretations in 1992 with Professor Richard P. Sugg's anthology *Jungian Literary Criticism*, including essays on history and applications of Jungian's analytical psychology. Sugg's work drew heavily from C.G. Jung's original work applying his analytical theory to the creative arts in two of his essays, "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetry" (1922) and "Psychology and Literature" (1930). A key factor for understanding Jungian literary theory, in contrast to other psychological theories, is the examination of "the role of archetypes and their associated literary images in the individuation process, which involves making the unconscious conscious as one moves toward psychic wholeness" (Rowland 3). Consequently, the focus on the individuation process rather than parental fixations or types of disorders separates Jungian literary theory from Freudian psychoanalytical theory and its descendants. The main focus is not whether the characters have a psychological problem, but rather the journey in healing that psychological problem to become whole and thus an individuated human being (Barrera 4-6).

In 1999, Susan Rowland published a new edition of her book *C.G. Jung and Literary Theory: The Challenge from Fiction*. Rowland divides the book into two main sections: Jungian

literary theory and Jung in a historical context. She gives examples of Jungian literary theory applied to stories she selected and advocates for Jung's theory to be more prominent in academia. This book reflects Rowland's early approach to Jungian literary theory (Barrera 4-6).

Fifteen years later, Matthew A. Fike published his new Jungian literary theory proposal in his book, *The One Mind: C.G. Jung and the Future of Literary Criticism*. In the book, Dr. Fike proposes his theory focusing on Jung's *unus mundus* concept and applies it to literature. Dr. Fike's main argument in the book concentrates on the principle of unity and how this can be seen in three areas of human reality: the physical world, the psyche, and the spiritual realm. Through a series of selected stories, he analyzes them to illustrate his One Mind theory (Barrera 4-6).

The most up-to-date book on Jungian literary theory is Susan Rowland's, *Jungian Literary Criticism: The Essential Guide* published in 2019. Updating her 1999 work, this book provides an in-depth examination of Jungian literary theory. Concerning the following literary analysis, I will use a combination of Jung's theories of the shadow, archetypes, and symbols. These concepts will be seen mostly in Part Three of the thesis. Most of the thesis will focus on James Hollis' conceptualization of the psychological projection process in the context of romantic relationships. James Hollis is a well-known Jungian analyst. His projection theory builds upon Freud, Jung, and Maria-Louise von Franz's projection theories (Barrera 4-6).

## Part I

### Chapter III: The Projected Place: Humbert Humbert's Edenic Search in Dolores

The concept of projection originated with Sigmund Freud and was taken up by C.G. Jung and later expanded upon by Marie-Louise von Franz in her theory that projection has a five-step process, as discussed in her book *Projection and re-collection in Jungian Psychology: Reflections of the Soul*.

James Hollis, a distinguished 21<sup>st</sup> century Jungian analyst and prolific writer, built upon her five-step process in his book *The Eden Project: In Search of the Magical Other*, which will be the main source for my discussion of projection in *Lolita*.

Projection plays a critical role in the formation, solidification, and dissolution of relationships because it generates the process of individuation. Individuation, a term widely used by Jungian psychology, is founded upon the idea that every individual desires to become whole, connecting and accepting both our conscious and unconscious selves (Bobroff 98). Yet, paradoxically, to become whole, one must first recognize the Other, for it is through the Other that we come face-to-face with our own unconscious patterns and complexes. Thus, by uncovering the unconscious, recognizing it, and accepting it, a person is able to integrate their entirety of being.

Consequently, projection and its processes are key to the psychological life of a human being. Hollis examines the critical role projection plays in our relationships and why the search for the Magical Other forms a foundational part of being human. Hollis argues that the human condition is to search for a paradisaical release from Earthly existence, and we do this through the Other. Projection, a depth psychological process, in cognitive psychology known as limerence, generates this search (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 18-20).

Projection overlays with the word paradise as Hollis illustrates because humans desire to return to the embryonic state held in the womb. Yet, as we are born into this world and thus dramatically cut from the embryonic and utopian oneness of the womb, humans are thrown into a world of separated consciousness, isolated and individual. Yet, this harshness of isolated consciousness can be too much to bear; thus, the search for a way out of material, isolated existence begins with a search/desire the Other. It is through the Other that humans believe paradise can be found again. This hidden, primary agenda for any relationship is the yearning to return, “that yearning for the Beloved” (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 17). Therefore, projection begins in infancy when an infant mimics their parent’s face and emotions (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 19). The baby tries to ground itself in some elemental reality through the emotional reality of the Other (at this time this being the baby’s parents: first the mother, second the father); in consequence, a depressive parent can essentially create a depressive baby. Because the infant lacks the capacity “for subject-object dichotomies,” it possesses what is termed as magical thinking, categorized by grandiosity and paranoia (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 19). The baby believes it causes the parents’ emotions, misreading data, and adopts, at times, highly incongruous assumptions. This type of magical thinking can also be seen in a slightly different form in narcissistic thinking, where the narcissist cannot distinguish between the subject-object dichotomies and assumes everyone is like him or her (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 20). Hollis astutely explains that the primary psychological task of the parent is to slowly assist the child with separation from the parent and into a full separation state known as adulthood (*The Eden Project* 17). With this logic, adulthood is therefore when an individual has become truly conscious of the subject-object dichotomies and accepts the Other as truly Other.

This process of coming into consciousness through separation is why Freud first postulated that the most significant threat to psychological growth involves parent-child encounters and the complexes gained from those early childhood encounters. These early parental patterns remain in the individual's unconscious, directing the way they relate to the world around them. As Hollis states, the "deeper question is whether we have the [childhood] wounds or they have us" (*The Eden Project* 21). Or in other words, do we participate in an objective 'reality' or is 'reality' just a mirrored, distorted reflection of our inner reality formed during these formative years? This ontological question is at the heart of Nabokov's writings and his focus on imagination, creation, and the artist, since, as Nabokov writes that all reality is a mask just "accumulated information" (*Strong Opinions* 10). This philosophical viewpoint aligns with Jungian understanding of reality: the mask is our conscious thinking it is experiencing the 'real' thing when it is just our past, unconscious wounds, and patterns on repeat. In a depth psychological perspective, an individual's life, in term their understanding of reality, is a constructed fiction built by layers of both unconscious, unknown material and conscious, recognized material. This life, or our constructed fiction, is energized by series of myths (in the context of Jungian psychology, "affectively charged images (imagos) which serve to activate the psyche and to channel libido in service to some value" (Hollis, *Creating a Life* 44)), symbols, and archetypal patterns and complexes. These energetically charged images fuel the individual's will to act and experience the reality they perceive. Nabokov explores this fabricated reality as well in *Lolita* through Humbert Humbert's carefully constructed narrative. Humbert Humbert's narrative forms his fiction — that of the book he is writing in the psychopathic ward (Nabokov, *Lolita* 308), but his narrative also informs his constructed fiction, his life. It may reveal the



unconscious materials which mindlessly and instinctually drive him to Dolores and project a Lolita.

Therefore, examined from a psychological perspective, Humbert Humbert's fancy prose style (Nabokov, *Lolita* 9) not only may be seen as Nabokov's way of dissembling a murderer and rapist, but also alluding to Humbert Humbert's unconscious material as shown in the form of allusions to Greek myths and gods, numerous symbols and images, and archetypal patterns — the more highly constructed the narration, the higher and more difficult it is to see underneath. Those readers who do not read deeper than what Humbert Humbert is saying are fooled by the narrator just as the narrator is fooled by his unconscious patterns, complexes, and realities. The unconscious does not want to be found nor made conscious, and it will do its utmost to stay hidden and in control. Therefore, it is up to the perceptive reader to look deeper into the 'real' narrative, just as a psychoanalyst reads their patient. Questions must be raised, active reading (or listening) must be enacted, and a conversation between the novel's characters must occur to understand who is in control, and what is their agenda.

Now, these childhood wounds can be so deep and powerful that one is "programmed by one's psychic history that they [these patterns] control the choice and character of all relationships" making a person a "prisoner of their past" (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 26). And as Nabokov illustrates through Humbert Humbert, who lives "in a claustrophobic, cell-like room," "there are no prisons so confining as those of which we are unaware" (Appel xxi) (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 26). Therefore, these inner unconscious "realities," especially if harshly repressed and denied, direct the individual's process of relating and perceiving the world. As explained above, "reality" consists of an individual's subjective perspective shaped by both their conscious and unconscious material. Projection also aids in blurring and distorting even more, the

individual's understanding of what is "real" and who is who. For example, Hollis explains how every relationship, but most importantly our romantic relationships, is enacted and shaped by our unconscious:

... how difficult it is to have any relationship at all. All that I do not know about myself, all of my secret projects for healing myself of the wounds derived from my culture and family of origin, I am now imposing on you. All of the complexes I have acquired in my life on this earth, you will have to suffer from me (*The Eden Project* 30).

Humbert Humbert speaks in a similar vein upon realizing how he used Dolores, as Lolita, as a dumping ground for his own broken emotional and psychological state, and eventually how that dumping of his unconscious material nearly killed her. He claims "She was only the faint violet whiff and dead leaf echo of the nymphet I had rolled myself upon with such cries in the past..." (Nabokov, *Lolita* 277), and, during their conversation, "She groped for words. I supplied them mentally ("He [Quilty] broke my heart. You [Humbert Humbert] merely broke my life") (Nabokov, *Lolita* 279). Unfortunately, through emotional pain of projection, it is these seemingly fated relationships that bring the unconscious into consciousness through the encounter and intimacy with another. In essence, The Other is the path toward self-unity. Through the collapse of the projections that the self (i.e., ego) places onto the Other, one can grow into consciousness and awareness.

Nabokov throughout the novel provides hints on how Dolores was Humbert Humbert's Garden of Eden, his return to the prized past he saw as Paradise. Their first meeting took place in an actual garden, as Charlotte Haze tries to impress Humbert Humbert into staying, takes him to her garden (Nabokov, *Lolita* 38), and in this garden with a "sudden burst of greenery – "the piazza," sang out my leader, and then, without the least warning, a blue sea-wave swelled under

my heart, and, from a mat in a pool of sun, half naked, kneeling, turning about on her knees, there was my Riviera love peering at me over dark glasses” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 39). Here, Nabokov is referring to Humbert Humbert’s childhood past with Annabelle Leigh when Humbert Humbert states “without the least warning, a blue sea-wave swelled under my heart” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 39).

Yet this part also possibly signifies to the reader that Humbert Humbert is being pulled back into an unconscious state, into his past but, also into a primordial past as well, since this time he is in a garden. The garden motif has always been discussed differently by literary scholar Paolo Simonetti in his article, “The Maniac in the Garden: *Lolita* and the Process of American Civilization.” He speaks of the garden scene as a point in the novel that exemplifies Dolores representing America as the New World and, he, Humbert Humbert as the Old World coming to overtake, colonize, and civilize Dolores/America and the violence which ensues. Though Simonetti’s article does not focus on psychology at all, his concluding remark — “He [Humbert Humbert] cannot rescue the pastoral idyll of youth’s uncontaminated garden, because, as Nabokov implies, such an idyll never existed in the first place” (*Lolita* 161) — bears psychological implications, since through his unconscious projection onto Dolores, Humbert Humbert tries to resurrect that uncontaminated garden through a child.

This return to the primordial home forms another important aspect of projection. Projection spills everywhere, consuming all internal and external spaces of one’s supposed objective reality. Most importantly, it seems inevitable, like the fate that Humbert Humbert constantly references, and cloying nicknames such as McFate, that the space between him and Dolores will close with each passing chapter as he claims, “The motion of fate was resumed” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 66). Projection employs multiple strategies such as “splitting (seen in Clare

Quilty), substituting (seen in *Dolores Haze*), and sublimating (seen in Humbert Humbert's scholarly work)" to obtain the object of the projection (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 35), and it can seem like fate, as Humbert Humbert alleges: "my discovery of her was a *fatal* consequence of that 'princedom by the sea' in my tortured past" (Nabokov 40). *Fatal* in this context comes from the Latin *fatalis* meaning "ordained by fate, decreed, destined; of or belonging to fate or destiny; destructive, deadly" and it pulls us towards our divine object (Fatal (Adj.)). Yet, a central law of the psyche is that what is unconscious will be projected; thus, "when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate" (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 35). Interestingly, in the article "Fated Freedoms: Textual Form and Metaphysical Texture in Nabokov" by Stephen H. Blackwell, the author explains how Nabokov "creates models for a newly imagined cosmology: the relationship between fate and narrative structure ... [which] allows him to speculate solutions to the 'riddle of the universe'" ("Fated Freedoms" 63). I would add to Blackwell's argument that this play between fate and narrative structure also aids in Nabokov's use of constructing a fictional unconscious connected to his narrator Humbert Humbert allowing Nabokov not only to parody psychology but also to illustrate his understanding of how the psyche works.

Additionally, the attraction of the Magical Other is paired with the archetypal experience of Eros. Eros involves the yearning for the Other. Eros' name originates from the word *desire* since Eros is involved in forming attachments, relations, and "fateful" attractions. Eros additionally helps drive the romantic notion of the "One" or the "Magical Other" (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 36-37). This fantasy fuels the popular notion that there is one person out there who will take care of all your needs and heal you. Humbert Humbert wholeheartedly believes this lie when he makes statements, like "Lolita, light of my life" and "My sin, my soul" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 9), "so that above and over everything there is — Lolita" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 45), and "by

the side of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride (Nabokov, *Lolita* 47). Lolita animates him — is him. She forms the place that “the tiny madman [Humbert Humbert] in his padded cell” can exist in all of his delusory and unconscious glory (Nabokov, *Lolita* 47). Moreover, as Humbert Humbert refers to Lolita as his bride, a connection could be made with Jungian psychology’s alchemical bride concept, which represents the inner feminine psychic energies of a man, otherwise known as his Anima. Jung claims that every “man carries within him the eternal image of woman, not the image of this or that particular woman, but a definite feminine image. This image is fundamentally unconscious, an hereditary factor of primordial origin engraved in the living organic system of the man, an imprint or ‘archetype’ of all the ancestral experiences of the female” (Jung, *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung* 428). Most importantly, as Bobroff explains, “Often, especially with love at first sight, we project our Anima or Animus onto the person we love. When the Anima is projected, we are in adoration. Because of this archetype’s timeless quality, the person with whom we fall in love may seem to remain the same age and always seem ‘just as beautiful as the day we met’” (171). This process is illustrated when Humbert Humbert says, “I knew! I had fallen in love with Lolita forever” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 65), “It was love at first sight, at last sight, at ever and ever sight (Nabokov, *Lolita* 270), and “there she was (my Lolita!), hopelessly worn at seventeen ... [but] I loved her more than anything I had ever seen or imagined on earth” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 277). Pop culture’s idea of love aligns perfectly with Humbert Humbert’s perspective that there is one person who will complete you, fulfill you, and is your soulmate (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 37). Yet it is the archetypal image of the parents which forms the basis of one’s Anima, which underlies the desire for the Magical Other, the soulmate who will complete us (Bobroff 168) (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 37).

Once the Magical Other has been identified and seduced, the third step in the process of projection occurs; the projection will begin to fall apart, and power struggles and resentment will begin to emerge. This part of projection begins in Part Two of *Lolita* after Humbert Humbert has possessed Dolores and trapped her, just as he is trapped in his own unconscious psyche (a madman in a padded cell) and trapped as well in Nabokov's constructed fiction which Humbert Humbert as narrator believes he controls. In this stage, the chief fantasy of the Other breaks down, and the Other starts to resent the idealistic role they are expected to fulfill. For instance, Dolores' desire to leave and says, "...you're not going to trap me" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 225). With this breakdown of Humbert's idealism, the power struggle phase ensues when he tries to fit the Other back into his imaginary mold by employing persuasion, sexual withdrawal or pressure, emotional manipulation, bargaining, or other tactics. Flaws, problems, and idiosyncrasies appear that were not beheld before. As Hollis explains, it is in this stage that most relationships end, and separation occurs because the majority of people do not see this stage as a chance to heal and move beyond the illusion of the Magical Other (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 80 – 81). The astute reader is already aware that *Lolita* is just a repeated projection, a created ideal that overwrites Dolores.

Many scholars have touched upon the erasure of Dolores, albeit in different lenses and with different arguments. In the article, "Discursive Killings: Intertextuality, Aestheticization and Death in Nabokov's "Lolita" Philipp Schwieghauser discusses how Humbert Humbert's rhetoric silences Dolores and only allows Lolita to speak. Thus, the reader does not truly know who the little girl he has forced a relationship upon is. As stated above, in the 80s-90s *Lolita* literary criticism faced a shift from reading *Lolita* solely in terms of looking at the character Humbert Humbert to focusing on the missing Dolores. From a Jungian psychological

perspective, projection naturally erases the person in the process and replaces them with an archetypal image of what the unconscious feels is missing (i.e., what the person represses in their psyche, or what a person does not accept about themselves). Every relationship begins with projection, and all projection occurs unconsciously. Once one realizes they have been overwritten through the process of projection, they can begin the process of taking the projection back (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 35). The successful resolution of the process of projection is to endure the struggle and journey of the Other's resistance in order to perceive and accept finally the Other as a separate and whole person, not merely what the projector imagines or desires.

This acceptance of the Other and the responsibility for one's own individuation journey forms the final process of projection. At this stage, the individual learns of the concept of disinterested love, a term proposed by Hollis, where a person accepts another entirely as a separate individual. In Hollis' view, disinterested love is when an individual can accept the separateness of another in that Other's totality; the person allows the Other to exist in their authentic essence. The person does not demand, change, or idealize who the Other is. This type of love deals with a heroic independence. It frees both parties and transforms them rather than destroys them (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 84).

### **Projection Seen in Humbert Humbert's Confessional "Love" Story**

These stages of the process of projection appear in Humbert Humbert's narrative, even when Humbert Humbert struggles to see Lolita as Dolores, not as plain Lo, Lo-Lee-Ta, Lolly, or any other nicknames he devises for his ideal nymphet. Even the novel's structure illustrates the projection process and the subject-object perspective. Laura Rose Byrne in her article "She It Was to Whom Ads Were Dedicated": Materialism, Materiality and The Feminine in Nabokov's *Lolita*" states:

the novel's division into two parts facilitates this dualistic tendency, working to mirror *Lolita's* "twofold nature" [...] While Part One of the novel works to mythologize Lolita-- framing the twelve-year old girl as a wily seductress, possessing an otherworldly quality that marks her as nymphet, Part Two comes crashing down to earth, replacing the magical with the mundane, and revealing our ethereal temptress to be what Humbert calls "a disgustingly conventional little girl" (*Lolita* 148).

However, I argue that the structural form of the novel does not simply mirror Lolita/Dolores. Rather, the two parts illustrate Humbert Humbert's process of projection since the reader can see in Part One the formation of the archetypal ideal in Humbert's search for the Magical Other through Lolita (i.e., the return to the Edenic state), whereas Part Two represents the disintegration of his projection and archetypal image and the emergence of the real Other, Dolores. Nevertheless, Byrne's assessment of the two parts aligns with a Jungian psychological interpretation, and I will analyze Humbert Humbert's projection upon Dolores in two parts. Conversely, I will then discuss the ending of the novel as the summative third part for its Jungian resolution. In Jungian psychology, when two oppositional parts, internally or externally, come together, a whole forms, and thus a new monist reality has been produced.<sup>2</sup> This philosophical theory Nabokov aligned with, stating, in an interview, "Philosophically, I am indivisible monist," and this philosophical view of reality may have shaped his writings (Nabokov, *Strong Opinions* 85).

### **The Mythologization of Dolores, She Who Wasn't**

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<sup>2</sup> Monism explained by Nabokov, in interview in *Strong Opinions*, "Monism, which implies a oneness of basic reality, is seen to be divisible when, say, "mind" sneakily splits away from "matter" in the reasoning of a muddle monist or a half-hearted materialist" (124).



From the very beginning of the novel to the end, the reader is carefully and comfortably trapped in Humbert Humbert's projected perspective. In psychological terms, the reader is lured by Humbert Humbert into the subject-oriented perspective, unable to see any Other objectively. Just as Humbert Humbert mythologizes Dolores, so too does the reader's perspective become engulfed in a world full of symbols, archetypal imagery, and folkloric and mythic stories. I may argue that in Part One, through Nabokov's skills as a writer, the reader enters Humbert Humbert's unconscious. William Anderson argues, in his article "Time and Memory in Nabokov's *Lolita*" that the tension felt in Part One derives from the opposites of the reality of mortal time and the eternal, idealized nymphet youth (363). The opposition of time versus the eternal can also be seen in the projected space, since falling in love (i.e., projection) distorts not only the Other but the understanding, feeling, and conception of time. In a psychological sense, when projection occurs, the unconscious supervenes and the past is being repeated; thus, time circulates, winding its way back to the origin of the unconscious projected and the desired Edenic place. As the popular phrase states, when one falls in love, time stops. Yet, what psychologically occurs is that time has returned — returned to its original starting point in the unconscious. Thus, Part One can be seen as Nabokov's representation of Humbert Humbert's unconscious reality where the reader encounters the carnivalesque, the grotesque, the impossible, and the non-linear conception of time in his description of people, events, and objects. Entering the realm of the unconscious is to enter the realm of dreams, where things are never what they appear to be.

Even *Lolita*'s precursor Annabel Leigh may need to be reevaluated. Previously, literary critics did not question whether Annabel Leigh had existed for Humbert. Readers had accepted Humbert's childhood story that he had been irrevocably transformed by their meeting, causing

his psychological character and pedophilic tendencies to cement justifying his rape of Dolores and love of Lolita. Critics had only wondered if her reference pertained merely to Edgar Allan Poe or if she could be more. However, Daniel Thomieres in his article, “Cherchez la femme: Who Really was Annabel Leigh?” questions Annabel Leigh’s physical existence and Humbert’s purpose for telling the readers this childhood story. Thomieres questions Humbert Humbert’s narrative concerning Annabel Leigh since Humbert Humbert, the narrator, has made up many fictitious facts as well as his own name. He argues that similar to Dolores’ situation where her name was substituted as Lolita, allowing Humbert Humbert to justify his lust for a little girl. Thus, Annabel Leigh could just be a rhetorical device to justify Humbert Humbert’s obsession with control and lust for pubescent bodies (171). As he states, “On the face of it, Lolita is a repetition of Annabel... [a body for him] to complete the sexual act so sadly interrupted, and — in other words and perhaps more nobly — time is regained [...] [in] Humbert Humbert’s logic,” (167). For Thomieres, Humbert Humbert is just a pedophile who did not have love towards the two girls but only lust, and to justify that lust he needed to rhetorical manipulate the names of the two girls; in consequence, Thomieres claims that the “whole novel can be seen as an attempt at seducing readers by means of flattery and wit, as well as selective and ambivalent information, into exonerating H.H. of his rape and violent imprisonment of Dolores” (167).<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the purposes for “Annabel Leigh,” who in the author’s opinion is just an invented name not a real girl, is “an attempt by the narrator at avoiding the morality issue and as an attempt by the author at inducing the narrator to betray himself” (167). In short, Dolores was the real girl who Humbert

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<sup>3</sup> Thomieres’ argument may encounter complications since Humbert Humbert around the end of the novel when Dolores has left him no longer has sexual encounters with nymphets. He claims, “never did my fancy sink its fangs into Lolita’s sisters, far far away, in the coves of evoked islands” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 257). Therefore, Humbert Humbert’s pedophilia does have some connection towards his emotional involvement with Lolita, causing him to abandon his pursuit of nymphets.

Humbert substituted as Lolita, so he could have sexual relations with a young girl while Annabel was just a “(re)creation” to justify that act (167). Consequently, doubt of Annabel Leigh’s existence emerges from Thomieres’ argument, and the reader should not trust Humbert Humbert’s past or present reality, because if Lolita (a name created to hide the girl Dolores) is not real but just a projected concept, neither could Annabel Leigh be as well. Though Thomieres’ argument casts Humbert Humbert strictly as a static character who was from the beginning to the end of the novel a monstrous pedophile, his argument concerning Annabel Leigh offers up some interesting psychological considerations. If Annabel Leigh never existed but was rather a creation, could his descriptions of her originate from his unconscious archetypal parent imago; or in other words, could Annabel Leigh’s image and her near likeness of him arise from his repressed Anima figure? As he claims, “Annabel was, *like the writer*, of mixed parentage: half-English, half-Dutch [italics mine]” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 11). Moreover, when he tries to remember her features, they are blurry and less distinct before he knew Lolita; she is like a little ghost, an outline of something that once existed (Nabokov, *Lolita* 11). Interestingly, as he discusses their last escapade the only witness was somebody’s lost pair of sunglasses reflecting their image back upon them but only recognized by Humbert Humbert himself (Nabokov, *Lolita* 13). Therefore, Thomieres’ interpretation of Annabel Leigh could align with a Jungian perspective. For instance, Humbert Humbert’s projection has colored both his and the reader’s perspective so vividly and entirely that we are tricked into believing that a little girl (Annabel Leigh) could have been exactly like him (Nabokov, *Lolita* 11-13).

Additionally, this blurred vision of Annabel could represent many things. It could represent essence as Thomieres argues, or as I claim, it could represent an archetypal imago of the unconscious — traits and characteristics that Humbert Humbert unconsciously seeks out in

the Other that he represses in himself. Even toward the end, Humbert Humbert dreams of the mixture of the two: Annabel becomes “Annabel Haze” and Dolores becomes “Dolores Lee” and the two together create “..., alias Loleeta” (Thomieres 171). It seems to Humbert Humbert, that language is just there for his projections: women become his words and “reality” becomes his archetypal illusions. In this aspect, we can be reminded of Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” where reality is the shadowed forms of archetypal reality illuminating it from behind, and so reality is a mask of something greater underneath.

Unfortunately, in Humbert Humbert’s case and in ours, the unconscious represented through Nabokov’s incisive authorial ability is the one in control; the unconscious, if we are not aware of it, directs our lives with the illusion that we are consciously living it, creating our “reality.” Or, in the words of Humbert Humbert “I am convinced, however, that in a certain magic and fateful way Lolita began with Annabel” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 14), and as the reader knows Annabel can refer to his unconscious, archetypal image of that Magical Other. Alas, the problem in having the unconscious control our lives is the severe consequences it can have on us and others since “what we do not know can and does hurt us, and others too” (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 53). Humbert Humbert clearly shows his reader this consequence when he emotionally, mentally, and physically destroys Dolores, the little girl and teenager, in his quest for his Edenic paradise, represented in his projected image of Lolita.

The key part of projection is the inability to differentiate between subject and object, the reader’s reading of the text, and the text itself. The object or the Other is always consumed by the subject. Humbert Humbert portrays this in consistently referring to Dolores as his by renaming her as “my Lolita,” displayed in the infamous lines of “Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 9). Lolita is physically and psychically a part of him — she

animates him. On one level this can be true. The projected image of Lolita is a part of him since she is his repressed feminine. But, the little girl Dolores is not a part of him and not his but a separate individual, an Other, and it is the little girl that he wants for himself, and for the reader to believe in him, so he can possess her without having to deal with the repercussions of his actions. In psychic reality, as James Hollis explains, what is occurring is *participation mystique* — the search to recover the lost paradise of childhood which found life with the primary caregiver(s). When someone “falls into love” or becomes fascinated with the Other, there arises an almost desperation for survival. Just as the infant demands and needs the mother’s milk, so too, the lover needs the Other to feel alive (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 12). Humbert Humbert laments numerous times how Lolita is the love of his life, yet this ploy is to convince himself and the reader that this love justifies his kidnapping and rape.

This type of fascination and identification can turn dangerous. As Hollis points out, fascination stems from the Latin word *fascinare*, meaning to charm. Charm in this context focuses on possessing or usurping another’s consciousness. When one desires to charm someone, the goal is to overtake them. Projection can be a dangerous game of survival, and Humbert Humbert is quite conscious of it. He sees Lolita, his projected archetypal imago, as his prey, and he is the predator needing to capture her (Nabokov, *Lolita* 48-49). Unfortunately, who he captures is the American girl Dolores, whom he ends up ruining. The projection stage of fascination can become the most rabid of all stages, since one is “caught in the projective identification with the heart’s desire, the boundaries between self and Other” dissolve just as they did for infant and mother (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 40). This rabid stage can be seen most clearly in the Enchanted Hunters Hotel scene.

Leading up to and during the Enchanted Hunters hotel scene, several clues indicate Humbert Humbert's fall into projection. The first clues are Humbert Humbert's repeated references to himself and others in animalistic, sexual terms, ways, or symbols. Susan Rowland, the author of *Jungian Literary Criticism: The Essential Guide*, claims that "Jung, far more than Lacan, adopts the notion of animals and natural forces such as rivers as productive mirrors to psyche" (163). The appearance of animals or reference to animalistic characteristics and the subtle settings of nature, like the hourglass lake that could indicate textually Humbert Humbert's unconscious.

Every male boy appears lusting after Dolores. When Dolores is served ice cream, Humbert Humbert notes "It was erected and brought her by a pimply brute of a boy in a greasy bowtie who eyed my fragile child in her thin cotton frock with carnal deliberation" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 115). Upon checking into the hotel, he is suspicious of almost everyone he meets, from the "pink old fellow" whose last name is Mr. Swine and his fellow Mr. Potts, resembling the image a pot-bellied pig, who Humbert Humbert assumed had obscene thoughts about him and Dolores (Nabokov, *Lolita* 118), but really, these two "pink pigs" were projections of Humbert Humbert's own obscene, luscious, and carnal desire manifested externally, a manifestation which will significantly recur later when he also claims that Clare Quilty is a hog, which Dolores refutes (Nabokov, *Lolita* 273).

The second clue is Humbert Humbert's static and inauthentic responses and actions towards Dolores. Dolores instinctively catches this (children are usually more attuned and aware of unconscious projections and lies by adults than adults realize), and states, "You talk like a book, Dad" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 114). Though this metafictional parody is not lost on the reader, since technically Humbert Humbert is the narrator of the book that he is a character in, this quote

suggests that Humbert Humbert is not in control as he thinks he is. He is not running the show — the unconscious/author is.

Even Dolores' simple comment to Humbert Humbert, "You are crazy," contains heightened meaning (Nabokov, *Lolita* 114). Looking back at the etymology of the word crazy, there are two possible origins for the word in English, one from the Germanic word *crasen*, *craisen*, meaning to shatter, crush, break to pieces, but it also could have entered English through the Old French term *crasir* (Crazy (Adj.)). The more modern sense of the word dealing with one's mentality originated in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century and may have transferred from the sense of being "diseased or deformed" or carrying forward the image of broken things (Crazy (Adj.)). From this image and connotation, Dolores has essentially and symbolically stated that Humbert Humbert is broken internally.

This brokenness or splitting of Humbert Humbert is reflected in many areas of the book, first in the doubling of his name, secondly with his nemesis Clare Quilty, and thirdly with the reader and their doubling of the text. Additionally, looking at Humbert Humbert psychoanalytically, his brokenness also appears in the severe repression of his unconscious, causing him to have a split personality. Humbert Humbert boastfully jokes to the reader how he gains pleasure from duping his psychotherapists (Nabokov, *Lolita* 34). Yet, at the end of the novel, he realizes how he has duped himself, by not realizing the pain he had caused unconsciously onto the one he supposedly loved (Nabokov, *Lolita* 232). When Humbert Humbert checks himself in at the hotel, he is so caught up in his projection and proximity of his sexual fulfillment that he messes up his own created name from "Humberg" to "Humbug" to "Herbert," and finally to Humbert (Nabokov, *Lolita* 118). At this point, he does not care who he is

just so long as he can reach his perceived Eden, the possession of Lolita and penetration of Dolores.

Lastly, the third clue demonstrating Humbert Humbert's projected fantasies and his unconscious (with a nod to the reader as a doubling participant) is the amount of doubling and mirrors in this singular motel room. Entering the hotel room:

There was a double bed, a mirror, a double bed in the mirror, a closet door with mirror, a bathroom door ditto, a blue-dark window, a reflected bed there, the same in the closet mirror, two chairs, a glass-topped table, two bedtables, a double bed: a big pane; bed, to be exact, with a Tuscan rose chenille spread, and two frilled, pink-shaded nightlamps, left and right (Nabokov, *Lolita* 119).

Analyzing this scene from a Jungian perspective, the doubles represent the duality of nature and existence. Doubles form a vital part of Jungian psychology, representing Jung's foundational tenant of the union of opposites (the masculine and the feminine discussed below), and the process of integrating these opposites.

The proliferation of mirrors in the room is highly symbolic as well. Ever since their invention, mirrors have held a special place in humanity's psyche. In ancient times, it was believed to be a portal for divination, predication, and transportation into another world, as shown in the Dionysian testimonies (Caputo 7). During the Renaissance with the appreciation of the esoteric arts, magic mirrors were used to conjure spirits and evoke angels (Caputo 7). A way to read the above symbolism is that it can reflect Humbert Humbert's characteristics as a charlatan, magic man, and shapeshifter, described by Barbara Wyllie, in the article "Shape-shifters, Charlatans, and Frauds: Vladimir Nabokov's Confidence Men."



What occurs before Humbert Humbert visits the room is even more revealing. The Enchanted Hunters hotel scene exemplifies a carnivalesque space where the real mixes and colludes with the fantastical. This mixture of the real and fantastical could hint at what Alfred Appel Jr. terms Nabokov's way of illustrating how his protagonists live in claustrophobic, cell-like rooms, isolated from the supposedly objective world, stuck in the world of the author's making (xxii). But it can also be interpreted as Humbert Humbert's unconscious, projected inner reality. An inner reality that is just as monstrous, fantastical, and cruel as the people he encounters and passes judgments on and the room he has rented to commit his crime.

Recent research shows that mirrors, especially viewed in low-illuminated places, can produce altered states of consciousness and trance, as discussed in the article "Archetypal-Imaging and Mirror-Gazing" by Giovanni R. Caputo. This altered state of consciousness can induce a phenomenon known as strange-face illusions, which Caputo states, "may be the psychodynamic projection of the subject's unconscious archetypal contents into the mirror image" (Caputo 1). These strange-face illusions can appear as "monstrous beings, prototypical faces, faces of relatives and deceased, and faces of animals" (3). Even though there is not a specific scene where Humbert Humbert looks into the mirror and sees this, the whole scene of the Enchanted Hunters Hotel depicts humans as monstrous and animalistic beings who reflect the unconscious contents of Humbert Humbert himself, and as shown earlier through Rowland's quote, animals are productive mirrors of one's psychic contents in Jungian psychology. It is as if Nabokov composed the scene as an act of mirroring, producing these strange-face illusions.

Yet, this is just one example of illustrating Nabokov's writings as intuitively psychological. More important is the mirror's relation with the concept of the self, and how the multiple mirrors in the room reflect the recent understanding of this fictitious and multifaceted

concept of the self. Mirrors have represented many things psychologically, culturally, and socially. In Jungian psychology mirrors may act as reflections of one's psychic contents, like the self and the Self in contrast to Lacan's view that mirrors help construct the identity/ego of a person creating their false self. Instead, in a Jungian perspective mirrors may reveal one's unconscious, archetypal contents like the self and Self. For in Jungian psychology the self contains the ego-bound represented in the lowercase self and then there is the Higher Self, shown in the Self that is capitalized. As Hollis explains:

The Self is relatedness; the Self doesn't exist without relationship. only when the Self mirrors itself in so many mirrors does it really exist — then it has roots. You can never come to your self by building a meditation hut on top of Mount Everest; you will only be visited by your own ghosts and that is not individuation: you are all alone with yourself and the Self doesn't exist...Not that you are, but that you do is the Self. The Self appears in your deeds, and deeds always mean relationship (Hollis, *Creating a Life* 31).

This quote aligns closely with Nabokov's depiction of the hotel room in two ways. First, the hotel room is where Humbert Humbert enters into a sexual relationship with Dolores, beginning the downward process of projection but also the journey into understanding himself and finding his Self (i.e., the Higher Self) through his confrontation with his shadow self in the form of Quilty. Additionally, with each act of rape that Humbert Humbert inflicts and unleashes upon Dolores, Humbert Humbert not only reveals his shadow self, but also who Lolita actually is a lone and orphaned American child. The projection begins to wane, consequences begin to swell, and the subject-object dichotomy becomes more defined. The hotel room may represent not only the climaxing of the projection process, but also the beginning of Humbert encountering himself through a relational contact with Dolores rather than Lolita.

Secondly, the mirrors in the hotel scene may represent an aspect of Jungian psychology that other depth psychologies may not agree with which is the immortality and multiplicity of the Self. The mirrors can also express the Self in relation to Time and the construction of ourselves and the infinitude that this concept of the Self delves into. Just as mirrors can reflect *ad infinitum*, so too the “Self selves ... and disappears into mirrors which reflect mirrors which further reflect in infinite regression to eternity” (Hollis, *Creating a Life* 32). The Self in this context represents the Higher Self. In Jungian psychology the Higher Self “comprehends the totality of the archetypal field ... [and] the collective unconscious, and so it must be carefully distinguished from the individual, conscious ego” (MacLennan). The concept of the Higher Self transcends time and is not bound by individuals as the conscious ego is. Therefore, one differentiation between self (the ego) and the Self (the Higher Self) is the infinite aspect of the psyche that continues to live on even after the conscious self’s death. This connection to mirrors, the Self, and eternity also mirrors Humbert Humbert’s projection onto Dolores and his unconscious self’s desire to return to the Eternal (the Edenic, embryonic paradise) of the womb, represented in Lolita as his forever; he states, “The word ‘forever’ referred only to my own passion, to the eternal Lolita as reflected in my blood” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 65). Moreover, Nabokov may have also touched upon this aspect of the infinitude and immortality of the human Self in relation to the novel’s ending with Humbert Humbert immortalizing himself and Lolita through the readers. The action of the readers immortalizing Humbert Humbert and Lolita by reading the novel from beginning to end parallels the active process of the Self as Hollis explained above. The Self selves thus granting itself immortality through infinite regression, but this can only be down through a relational process of selving just as Humbert Humbert and Lolita’s immortality can only come about through the readers reading of the text. The psychological perspective may

align with a metafictional understanding of the text with both showcasing how immortality could work.

Therefore, the Enchanted Hunters Hotel scene and Humbert Humbert's hotel room not only could depict the most intense stage of projection but also begins to sharpen those blurred lines of subject and object of the projection process and reveals a key aspect of the psychological process to the Self.<sup>4</sup> The scene marks the culmination of Humbert Humbert's projection, the attainment of his perceived desire, and it precipitates the rapid decline in Part Two while indicated a part of Jungian psychology which is shown in Part Three of immortality of the human soul symbolized in Humbert Humbert's ending.

With his paradise and pleasure obtained, they leave the hotel and begin their cross-country journey, Humbert Humbert's Edenic utopia slips away, and reality of responsibility come spilling in:

Leaving Briceland. Loquacious Lo was silent. Cold spiders of panic crawled down my back. This was an orphan. This was a lone child, an absolute waif, with whom a heavy-limbed, foul-smelling adult had had strenuous intercourse three-times that very morning” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 140).

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<sup>4</sup> The hotel room scene with all the mirrors and doubling could drastically differ if read through a Lacanian lens. Mirrors instead of mirroring the infinitude of one's Higher Self instead in a Lacanian view “has to do with the first time the child thinks of itself as “I” in relationship with an image that it starts to understand as representing itself” (Bailly 32). Consequently, once an infant recognizes itself in the mirror a split occurs. No longer is the infant in wholeness with its surroundings. Instead, the infant builds an ego or a conscious self, identified with its “identity”, that it will identify with it. This ego is the false self, and it is the false self seen in the mirror which stares back at the person. Therefore, if reading the hotel room scene through a Lacanian lens, one could suggest Humbert Humbert false persona, the conscious ego is associate himself with may be being revealed. His false attentions and intentions of being a stepfather towards Dolores shows itself, representing the inauthenticity of their relationship. The mirrors reveal his inauthenticity, but which could lead him to understanding his true unconscious self.

In this realization, Nabokov briefly lifts the curtain from the unconscious to the conscious, and the reader hopefully sees the travesty and enormity of the crime that has been committed — incestuous rape.

Though the reader may become increasingly aware of Humbert Humbert's narrative discrepancies, he remains trapped in projection's power. As he bluntly comes clean to the reader soon after, he divulges "somewhere at the bottom of that dark turmoil I felt the writhing of desire again, so monstrous was my appetite for the that miserable nymphet" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 140). Even though he sees Dolores grief-stricken and in pain, to justify his lust, he must reimagine and mold her once again to his projected ideal, his archetypal imago, Lolita.

Nabokov intuitively touches upon another key aspect that forms an unconscious part of the modern man, which Humbert Humbert exposes in his constant juxtaposition between himself as a "monstrous" beast and a respected, educated man of society. In the earlier part of the novel once he has achieved his climax, he indirectly identifies himself as a "man or monster" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 61). Though Nabokov may have been toying with Freud's concept of civilization and society concealing the primitive aspects of humans, a Jungian lens exhumes a much deeper and more relevant aspect of struggle within men: the concept of the chthonic phallos and solar phallos archetypes, detailed by Jungian analyst Eugene Monick. An archetype in Jungian psychology as Jung states, "is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear" (*The Basic Writings of C.G. Jung* 361). There exists a plethora of archetypes since archetypes could be understood as images of "the way psyche functions" (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 77). One archetype that was touched upon by Jung but explored more in depth by Monick is the Phallos archetype. Eugene

Monick's scholarly work has been the first in-depth investigation, understanding, and exploration of the Phallos archetype within Jungian studies. Monick explains that before he wrote his book, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine*, that there was "a lack of contemporary Jungian writing about masculine issues in general, and almost nothing, since Erich Neumann's *Origins and History of Consciousness*, on archetypal basis of masculinity" (*Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 9). The importance of exploring archetypal masculinity beyond the parameters of patriarchy's understanding of the masculine is that it helps redefine and reshape the psychological process of men and the problems modern men encounter living in a patriarchal system. Therefore, exploring archetypal masculinity must originate from the phallos, the erect penis argued by Monick (*Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 9).

Penis represents the "phallos *in potentia*," (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 9) and for Humbert Humbert a source of his manhood and monstrosity (Nabokov 59, 61). In classical Freudian psychology understanding of the penis and the masculine, women possess penis-envy, a desire to be like a man whereas men struggle "against his passive or feminine attitude toward another male" (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 43). Comparing Humbert Humbert and his relation to Clare Quilty, an argument could be made that Humbert Humbert fears Quilty since he is so repulsed by Quilty's feminine nature discussed in Part Three of my thesis, following along the lines of a Freudian reading. Yet, what complicates Humbert and Quilty's relationship is that Humbert Humbert is not just projected his fear of his love for the masculine onto Quilty, who is a completely separate human being, but rather Quilty forms a deeper part of Humbert Humbert. I would suggest the revulsion and fear Humbert Humbert has for Quilty is because Quilty is Humbert Humbert's shadow side manifested externally. Quilty represents the chthonic aspect of the Phallos archetype. The Phallos archetype

can be split into two representing two modes of experiences: the psychical, earthy, sensual, sexual, and tactile experience represented in the feminine modality, represented as the chthonic phallos. This phallos because of its more feminine characteristics is usually repressed in men. This repression has come about because of patriarchy's insistence that all feminine characteristics are unacceptable in men.

The polarity of chthonic phallos is the solar phallos archetype that contains a more philosophical outlook in contrast to a more material-focused existence, meaning its *modus operandi* focuses on the abstract level of existence. As Monick explains, "Solar phallos is in fact word, *logos* ..., which in Jung's thinking is the substance of masculinity ... For solar masculinity, nothing is of decided value unless it can be established (*Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 102). Additionally, "solar men love institutionalization" as Monick explains since it gratifies their narcissism, since institutions externally help depict their standing in society. For instance, this solar phallos can be seen in Humbert Humbert's love and mastery for words, as states in the beginning to his reader, "You can always count on a murderer for a fancy prose style" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 9). In this statement alone, one can see both Humbert Humbert's chthonic phallos (unconscious) and solar phallos (conscious). The solar phallos, Humbert Humbert's outward, external persona of a scholarly man of words and a creative poet, is illustrated in the "fancy prose style" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 9). Yet, the murderer can be representative of the chthonic phallos whose shadow side is shown in destruction, rape, and death. Both sides of Humbert Humbert's psyche in one line.

Both the solar phallos and the chthonic phallos possess a shadow side, which Monick heavily emphasizes. For the solar phallos patronizing attitude and tyranny represent its shadow side. This can be seen in Humbert Humbert's tyrannical and patronizing attitude of his first wife

Valeria (Nabokov, *Lolita* 27-28). Additionally, solar consciously identified men desire facts because it appeals to their experience of the world through words. Humbert Humbert not only manipulates his readers through the seemingly “real” facts he gives but he tries to manipulate Dolores through appealing to facts (Nabokov, *Lolita* 150-51). Outwardly, Humbert Humbert tries to present himself as a solar phallic man – established, credible, logical, and in-charge. However, Nabokov, I would argue, inserts in Humbert’s narration his unconscious, repressed double – the chthonic archetypal phallos, which is externally seen in the character Quilty and whenever he refers to himself as beastly, ape-like, and monstrous. The shadow side of the chthonic is destructive rage and rampage and without acknowledgement can lead to murder (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 98). However, the chthonic phallos accepted and recognized is “the numinous source of his being as a male... [it is] prompting his creative action, standing behind his erectile strength, facilitating the explosion of his fertilizing seed” (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 95). The chthonic phallos energy is the creative energy for men and when denied becomes destructive energy.

Now, these two archetypal images and patterns of masculinity exist within the psyche of all men. As stated before, most men repress the existence of the chthonic phallos because of the feminine attributes associated with it. This repression in *Lolita* in Humbert Humbert can be seen in his confrontation with Quilty, which will be discussed in greater detail below. In Jungian psychology, especially, the goal is to bring the repressed contents of one’s unconscious into consciousness and acceptance. This process (i.e., individuation) is primarily played out in the process of projection. Considering Humbert Humbert’s narration, which we can see as a symbolic and textual representation of his psyche, just as in Jungian analysis of dream where all characters in the dreams are representations of oneself. Therefore, not only is Humbert Humbert



dealing with oppositional feminine energies in his projection on Dolores, but he is also unconsciously battling with oppositional masculine forces within himself that come to head in his encounter with Quilty, marking a crucial part in Humbert Humbert's projection process and psychological journey.

## Part II

### Chapter VI: The Projected Place Uprooted: Dolores leaves Humbert Humbert

When projection begins to wane, the presence of the Other's reality begins to intrude, smashing the Edenic state of projected bliss bit by bit. Additionally, if the projector (the one who enacted the projection) refuses to do the work that the psyche developmentally demands for individuation, then the Other will begin to grow resentful (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 80). They will no longer desire to stay in the projector's mold. This resentment infects the entire relationship causing the projector to grow angry at the Other for not fulfilling the projected ideal. Tension, discomfort, and agitation begin to arise, forcing the projected ideal to rebalance into the real. In this stage of projection, the Other is now becoming "maliciously unlovable," which causes the projector to retaliate (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 80-81). Hollis explains:

When couples fall into the problem of power it becomes very easy to be critical of the Other. We suddenly see all their flaws of character and annoying behaviors. We are prone to have an affair, actually or fantasized, because the archaic need for the Magical Other stirs and the libido looks elsewhere. [...] The violent partner is the least capable of conscious reflection and is profoundly terrified at the loss of control over the Other. [In turn] That Other might hurt them as they have been hurt before, engulfing them or abandoning them. [...] the abusive partner uses violence because he or she cannot consciously approach the experience of primal wounding which could lead to intrapsychic healing (*The Eden Project* 81).

Once the power dynamic arises, the relationship breaks apart. As Jung states, "Where love rules, there is no will to power, and where power predominates, love is lacking. The one is the shadow of the other" (Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious* 134). Power and love are polarities of each

other. Thus, where there is power, there is projection. Projection pushes the projector's past on the Other, causing a distorted and deceptive reality. This part in the process of projection can be seen in Part Two of *Lolita*.

### **Lolita Becomes Just Another American Girl: Seeing the Critical**

As stated before, a key aspect in the process of projection is when one's perfect, otherworldly beloved becomes an imperfect, worldly being, shown in Humbert Humbert's mild complaint, "Although I do love that intoxicating brown fragrance of hers, I really think she should wash her hair once in a while" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 43). In the stage of seeing, his critical reality begins to creep in by turning his wildest fantasies into the ugly facts, causing not just mild complaints, but also terrifying conflicts. One of the foremost fantasies that humans have is our fantasy that one day we will meet someone who will save us from the psychic responsibility of becoming ourselves, or in Jungian terms, individuating (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 79). In *Lolita*, Dolores became this chief fantasy for Humbert Humbert; she became his Edenic place of refuge from reality, an escape from the pressures of consuming time. Yet, no person can be a *place* for our projected fantasies, desires, and unconscious patterns or traumas, because they are a person, an Other. This subtle and slow realization and process of place to person begins when criticisms and resentments appear. As Hollis clarifies:

Such strategies constitute the usual second phase of a relationship, when the truly otherness of the Other begins to emerge and the projections that made the relationship possible in the first place slowly dissolve ... we [then] resent the formerly loved one for having now, maliciously, become unlovable ... [in turn] retaliat[ing] by using power (*The Eden Project* 81).

Once the problem of power appears, being critical of the Other comes naturally, since the projector begins to see all their flaws and annoying behaviors (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 81). Once this occurs, the possibilities of having affairs, fantasizing about others, or looking at those who can be replacements creep into the relationship. The magic in the Magical Other has disappeared and the need for this enchantment stirs libido elsewhere (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 81). Lolita slowly begins to turn into a lovable but also loathsome “brat” soon after they begin their touristic cross-country journey, visiting hotel after hotel, diner after diner, and gift shop after gift shop—pilgrims worshiping modern America. Humbert Humbert complains to the reader about the travails of being a parent: “I was not really prepared for her fits of disorganized boredom, intense and vehement griping, her sprawling, droopy, dopey-eyed style ... Mentally, I found her to be a disgustingly conventional little girl” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 148). Humbert Humbert goes so far as to say that he now agrees with Charlotte, sees her perspective, and understands her place (Nabokov, *Lolita* 149). But the projection process and its burden to sustain an illusion can also be reversed; the projected can expect too much from the projector. This aspect of projection reveals itself in Dolores’ unquenched desire for newness to keep her alive in the role of a “pubescent concubine” that Humbert Humbert forces upon her. As Humbert Humbert bemoans, “Every morning during our yearlong travels I had to devise some expectation, some special point in space and time for her to look forward to, for her to survive till bedtime. Otherwise, deprived of a shaping and sustaining purpose, the skeleton of her day sagged and collapsed” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 151). The projection and roles assigned to each person begin to weigh upon them, and the burden to sustain a fantasy amidst reality slowly crushes Humbert Humbert and Dolores, but until the final snap of the relationship, the projections are lastly propped up by power.

### **Resorting to Power Tactics: Manipulation, Money, and Other Magical Nymphets**

Where power is, love cannot be, and where love is, power is not present, according to Jung. Throughout Humbert Humbert and Dolores' entire relationship power play, hierarchies and narratives are present. And though Humbert Humbert, repetitively confesses his love for his dear daughter, Lolita, repetition does not equal fact. In a patriarchal society, love and true connection are replaced "with complex, covert layers of dominance and submission, collusion and manipulation" (hooks 36). Humbert Humbert could represent the average cis-straight, white Western man, and his privilege becomes Dolores' punishment.

He uses all these means of manipulation and coercion to possess her, and once she has been punished, he terrorizes her mentally, emotionally, and physically. He tries to use "facts" to explain how a "normal" daughter should act toward her father, and he devalues her voice and power by tricking her into believing no one would believe her truth, her story, and her experience (Nabokov, *Lolita* 150-151). Unfortunately, in a patriarchal society, this terrorizing is an all-too-common experience for the female gender, since

Patriarchy is a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence" (hooks 31).

Most regrettably, as bell hooks continues, "the most common forms of patriarchal violence are those that take place in the home between patriarchal parents and children" (31). A hint of the domestic abuse that Dolores endured is depicted in Humbert Humbert's poem written to grieve Dolores' escape and absence: "Dying, dying, Lolita Haze, / Of hate and remorse, I'm dying. /And again my hairy fist I raise, /And again I hear you crying" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 256). The dominance of power and the assertion of who is in charge and who must obey comes in many

violent forms. With resentment growing within the relationship, the projector usually retaliates by using power and in turn driving away love. As Hollis states, “fueled by frustrated need, we turn on the Other to bring about their compliance. The violent partner is the least capable of conscious reflection and is profoundly terrified at the loss of control over the Other” (*The Eden Project* 81). Humbert Humbert, whose heart turns to ice at the thought of Lolita abandoning him and who becomes enraged with jealousy at the mere thought of Lolita being attracted to and wanting to be with other men. His violence toward Dolores is depicted in many ways, not just physically, but also through manipulation, using the power of money, giving, withholding, and taking it away.

Using money to hold power over a woman has been common throughout the centuries in patriarchal societies. It is a power tactic men use to create co-dependency and helplessness in women, while at the same time resisting them for it. In the case of Humbert Humbert, we can see this play out not only in the allowances he sets up for Dolores, but also in his stealing to get the money back from her (Nabokov, *Lolita* 184). This system of giving and taking money for “arrangements” to take place is a power tactic that is utilized within patriarchal and capitalist societies to keep women in their co-dependent place. Humbert Humbert honestly explains, “what I feared most was not that she might ruin me, but that she might accumulate sufficient cash to run away” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 185). This fear of abandonment enacted through power play causes a rift in the relationship: resentment builds, distrust grows, and any conscious objectivity dissipates. As Hollis explains, “Only those who can face their fears, live with the ambiguity and ambivalence, can find that personal empowerment which then makes possible love of the Other” (*The Eden Project* 73). If the other does not feel free to be, love is not present, but rather fear, and with fear, projection.

This fear and power dynamic becomes the main problem and “whether consciously or not, we deny their individuality, violate their souls, and push them further and further away” (Hollis, *The Eden Project* 82). By forcing one’s projection upon a person, they become dehumanized, simplified, and meant to serve only one purpose – our needs. Humbert Humbert’s projection upon Dolores erases her humanity, again making her become a place, not a person.

### **The Other Leaves: Dolores Abandons Humbert Humbert, Marking the Beginning of the End**

Dolores’ escape from Humbert Humbert marks the beginning of Humbert Humbert’s end. Rarely do relationships use the pain of subject-object separation to learn to grow and accept the Other as is rather than what they want the Other to be. Thus, the inevitable result is either the ending of that relationship or a regression of individuation where the two become co-dependent upon each other. In the case of Humbert Humbert, I conclude that his separation from Dolores and reunification dissolves the projection, giving him the impetus to begin his own individuation journey through the confrontation and murder of Quilty, ending finally in his own death.

From a Jungian standpoint, Humbert Humbert’s narrative closely aligns with the process of projection and the emotions and demons that arise in the search for that Magical Other. Some readers argue that Humbert Humbert’s character cannot be redeemed. Tom Bisell, a prolific writer, stated, “Humbert has no redemptive qualities. ... True, Nabokov succeeds in making us empathize with a monster, and his portrait of Lolita’s growth and maturity is exceptionally well drawn ... however, you realize ... the ending of *Lolita* — a novel I love, written by an author I revere — is an ethical oil spill even when viewed through the cleansing filter of Nabokov’s prose” (258-259). Nabokov’s novel is ethically messy; it blurs many boundaries and crosses many contexts, which has caused it to be one of America’s most shocking novels of the twentieth century. Yet, it is this ethical oil spill that makes it so close to the lived experience of being

human. The hardest way to perceive a person like Humbert Humbert is in the terms that he is just like us: both a man and a monster. This position may be too hard for some readers to bear because that means they would need to admit the monster in themselves, too. Nevertheless, through Humbert Humbert's "fateful" encounter with Dolores, projected into and imagined as Lolita, he comes to be able to marginally shift out of his ego-bound position.

Dolores' first but false departure from Humbert Humbert oddly returns the reader to Humbert Humbert's projected space and foreshadows Dolores' real departure. This scene illustrates him operating out of his ego wound, the fear of her abandonment (i.e., the loss of his Edenic paradise), and the violence that ensues when one's projected Other begins to separate. While Humbert Humbert reads a letter meant for Dolores from her friend, he believes Lolita has left him forever. Though it is not directly stated, the reader can presume that Dolores, during this time span of leaving Humbert Humbert in a grocery store, has meet up with Clare Quilty somewhere nearby for a timespan of twenty-three minutes. Upon his frantic search for her, he asks a hunchback where she could have been. The hunchback, reminiscent of the hunchback in the Enchanted Hunters Hotel Scene, marks a point of highly charged unconscious projection occurring in Humbert Humbert's narrative. This claim can be deduced because Humbert Humbert sees abnormal, freakish people when he begins to display the shadow qualities within himself. He even calls him an "old lecherer," which the reader knows could be Humbert Humbert (Nabokov, *Lolita* 223). Even though only twenty-three minutes had passed since she was gone, he believed his worst fear had come true: Lolita was gone forever (Nabokov, *Lolita* 223-224). Once Dolores returns, he begins overpowering her with questions and accusations, and pressures her to reveal the "truth."



His paranoia, generated by his fear, grows. He then begins to see symbolic messages everywhere he looks. For example, when looking inside a window that Dolly claimed her made-up friend, Dolly named just like her (Nabokov, *Lolita* 225) was looking at, he sees, “On the floor, at the feet of these damsels, where the man crawled about laboriously with his cleaner, . . . a cluster of three slender arms and a blond wig. Two of the arms happened to be twisted and seemed to suggest a clasping gesture of horror and supplication” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 226). These externalized emotions of horror and supplication are what Humbert Humbert feels inwardly; instead of admitting his feelings, he pushes this imagery on Dolores, trying to make her see it and sympathize with him (Nabokov, *Lolita* 226).

In the end, when Dolores does not act nor feel the way he wants her to, he slaps her; “Lo looked up with a semi-smile and surprise and without a word I delivered a tremendous backhand cut that caught her smack on her hot hard little cheekbone” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 227). Humbert Humbert’s fear of losing his Magical Other, instead of accepting her as Dolores, his stepdaughter, culminates in domestic abuse and the actual departure of Dolores. As Humbert Humbert rightly surmised, “doomed we were” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 227). When two people are unable to let go of their projections to see the individuals behind those projections, the relationship will always be doomed, or “fated” to fail, for the perfect ideal cannot keep existing in the moribund realm.

Now, an aspect of projection, which classical literature recognized as hubris, aligns with James Hollis’ term “wounded vision.” Wounded vision is a feature of classical protagonist figures and is seen in Humbert Humbert as he connects to the unconscious. Hollis explains:

In addition, the classical imagination identified a condition they called *hamartia*, which has been translated as “the tragic flaw,” but which I prefer to define as “wounded vision.”

Each protagonist believed that he or she understood enough to make proper choices, yet their vision was distorted by personal, familial and cultural history, dynamically at work in what we called the unconscious (*Creating a Life* 14).

Throughout Part One, Humbert Humbert believes his fate aligns with his desires, bringing him to this little girl called Dolores, whom he supplants as Lolita. Yet projection, according to Jung as restated by Giovanni B. Caputo, can involve and be a form of synchronicity “between the subject’s unconscious and the other’s body and mind” (7). And though Nabokov has set up his protagonist in this way to believe in anything that justifies his desire for a child, Nabokov’s construction aligns with depth psychology’s present theory: that fate, even McFate, is just the unconscious directing our movements and decisions. Jung claimed that “what is denied inwardly, will come to us as Fate” (Hollis 35), and explained more poetically by Hollis the power of the projected unconscious: “We know that one can create an entire kingdom out of a complex and a world view out of an unconscious hunger” (*The Eden Project* 28). In the case of Humbert Humbert, he created a kingdom by the sea which first held, a possibly imagined, Annabel Leigh and later a projected Lolita. Even though such scholars as Hafid Bouazza in his article “Lolita” argue that Humbert Humbert is simply a pedophile and nothing else, that argument about Humbert Humbert’s moral and ethical status does not pertain here, since I focus on how Humbert Humbert’s narrative (and ultimately Nabokov’s writing) reveals Jungian concepts such as the unconscious, individuation, archetypes, etc. rather than whether Humbert Humbert was or was not merely a pedophile.

Consequently, the power of the unconscious makes us believe in our righteousness. It justifies our actions. Yet, the person who is directed by the unconscious, or the wounded vision, “exults in delusory inflation, suffers humiliation, and comes to wisdom through the restoration of

the cosmic mystery of which he will never be the master” (Hollis, *Creating a Life* 15). This journey of the tragic hero parallels the process of projection where one believes wholeheartedly in the reality occurring, but then a tragic or traumatic separation occurs, after which, wisdom may come. This wisdom in the classical form is humility extracted from previous hubris. In the context of *Lolita*, it is Humbert Humbert’s acknowledgment of Dolores as the Other, a separate entity, or in other words, an actual human being. He has gained an awareness of the subject-object dichotomies, but at the ultimate cost of not only his life, but also Dolores’. Yet, for the last stage of the projection process, the acceptance of the Other within the projector must take place; Humbert Humbert must confront his shadow self and accept both sides of himself, the masculine and the feminine, as the doubling of his name symbolizes.

### Part III

#### Chapter V: Humbert Humbert's Death and Return to the Eternal

##### Humbert Humbert's Underworld Journey: Humbert Humbert Kills Quilty

In Jungian psychology a key aspect of individuation is integration of the shadow, the union of opposites. This process should unify both conscious and unconscious gender elements, for individuation to become complete. Even though the process of individuation and descent can be applied equally to both genders, it is still experienced differently by them (Perera 50).

Women, as Sylvia Brinton Perera, a Jungian analyst and scholar, explains make “descents or introversions in the service of life, to scoop up more of what has been held unconscious by the Self in the underworld, until we are strong enough for the journey and willing to sacrifice libido for its release” (50). For example, if one psychoanalyzes Dolores and her relation to Humbert Humbert, one could assert that she suffers from a father abandonment wound (construed negatively by patriarchy as daddy issues) but also archetypally she showcases the Persephone-Hades myth. The article, “Lolita as Goddess between Life and Death: From Persephone to the Poplars,” by Zsuzsa Hetenyi, illustrates how this mythic framework reveals itself in *Lolita*.

Humbert Humbert is for Dolores her underworld journey — a journey of shadow recognition and integration.<sup>5</sup>

The underworld journey is where the ego goes to die and be reborn in Jungian psychology. During the process of the journey, the ego meets its shadow, and through this meeting one can accept the dark side of one's personality, and thus, the integration of it (Mihailescu 84). In some ways, the journey rips away what a person has expected, hoped for,

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<sup>5</sup> Even though Hetenyi's article primarily focuses on Dolores/Lolita and her connection to the goddess Persephone, the possibility of Dolores being a psychopomp for Humbert Humbert could be plausible if the focus was on Humbert Humbert's underworld journey as it is here. Moreover, the reference to Lolita being similar to Beatrice, Dante's muse and psychopomp could lead some credence to this connection.

believed, or idealized (basically what the person has projected) and restores to them some basis of consciousness, recognition, or “truth.” After one’s underworld journey, the ego has died, been renewed, and fundamentally transformed, allowing a person to perceive life differently. The underworld journey also forms a key part of Joseph Campbell’s mythic theory of a hero’s journey. Now, to claim Humbert Humbert as a hero would be too much; yet one could draw connections to him as a tragic hero, as discussed above. Additionally, the archetypal journey of the underworld is not unique to Nabokov’s text. Professor Evans Lansing Smith has uncovered underworld themes in at least one of Nabokov’s works, *Pale Fire*, detailed in his article “Amazing Underworlds: Yourcenar’s *Fires* and Nabokov’s *Pale Fire*.” Dr. Smith states that Nabokov’s *Pale Fire* “is entirely structured by a carefully timed sequence of passages through labyrinthine underworlds, which function (as in Yourcenar’s *Fires*) as metaphors of the mysteries of love and politics, and of writing (*poesis*) and reading (*hermeneusis*)” (14). As a result, viewing Humbert Humbert’s fatalistic duel with Quilty as a part of his underworld journey to face and integrate his shadow, Quilty, possesses some critical validity.

Accordingly, Humbert Humbert’s underworld journey begins when he drives up to Pavor Manor to kill Quilty. Upon Humbert Humbert’s arrival, the reader knows that Humbert Humbert is inebriated (Nabokov, *Lolita* 293). Out-of-consciousness states allow a person to not only tap into their emotions more easily, but also allow a liminal space to open through which the person can access unconscious content in deeper depth. Considered from a mythic-symbolic perspective, Humbert Humbert’s situation and stance are illustrative of readying himself to encounter the Greek god Dionysus. This will become more apparent when he encounters Quilty, who could be argued is a Dionysian figure who functions as part of Humbert Humbert’s psychic content. In Ancient Greece, those who desired to meet the Greek god Dionysus first had to

become drunk to open themselves up to his influence and power, and the Greek god's orgies (which Quilty is known for) are infamous for in-between states of animalistic behavior, destruction, and death. Humbert Humbert is drunk to the point that the ground feels springy and insecure, another indication, according to Jungian dream analysis, of the preparation for an underworld journey to meet Dionysus, who some claim can also be referencing Hades, the god of the underworld (Nabokov, *Lolita* 293) (Hillman 45). Whenever one feels the ground beneath becoming insecure, an underworld encounter is sure to occur, such as Persephone's experience when she was swallowed by the ground beneath her during Hades' abduction.

From a Jungian perspective, the underworld and those images connected to it, such as Dionysus, contain chthonic qualities and attributes. The chthonic differs depending on one's gender, especially in terms of repression. Humbert Humbert's confrontation with Quilty is a confrontation with his chthonic qualities (i.e., his chthonic phallos) and Quilty's murder is an integration process of those qualities. In other words, by killing his double, Humbert Humbert is no longer divided. This integration of one's shadow (or chthonic phallos for men) aids in the interpersonal relation with the opposite gender, in Humbert Humbert's case the feminine. The underworld and the chthonic qualities it contains have usually been related to the feminine, that of chaotic, receptive energies, where linear time ceases and circulates and order fails. Though the underworld is a dark place, that does not mean it is necessarily bad. As Monick explains, "Underworld is dark, ... but not all of the underworld is shadow... [; moreover,] Darkness is chthonic. Darkness itself is not evil. Darkness is the home of the spark" (*Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 95). This spark represents the hidden source of masculine power, with its capacity for both "catastrophic rage," but also "tender love and keen attention" (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 95). This differentiation between darkness and shadow is

something that needs to be noted; shadow and darkness differ, and in Humbert Humbert's case, though he goes into the underworld (Pavor Manor) to meet his shadow self, Clare Quilty, Quilty sheds some light or "spark" onto the reality of his projection process with Dolores. Throughout the novel, Humbert Humbert has denied accepting that he is a monster, too, that his "grossness, brutality, carelessness, . . . , insatiable desire, and possessiveness" towards Dolores, is obfuscated through his projection upon her as the Edenic Lolita (Nabokov, *Lolita* 297, 301) (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 94).

These attributes are characteristics of the shadow chthonic phallos whose mad drive to possess what he desires costs the lives of others. As Monick explains, "Phallos is a primitive jealous god who will tolerate no serious challenge to his authority. Rare is the man who has never felt the urge to destroy whomever or whatever threatened the center of his identity" (*Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 94). In the case of Humbert Humbert, Quilty challenged his authority, but also his identity: "Mr. Humbert, you were not an ideal stepfather, and I did not force your little protégée to join me. It was she made me remove her to a happier home" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 301). Since Humbert Humbert and Clare Quilty are the same, this second happy home was not at all happy for Dolores.

Nonetheless, Nabokov depicts the Pavor Manor scene as an archetypal demonstration of masculinity being upfronted, upset, and upended. Throughout the novel and his narration, Humbert Humbert tries to persuade the reader to accept his respectable visage and persona. This desire and sensitivity for respectability in front of others is a solar phallos at work in a man, which Quilty tries to use against Humbert Humbert as a bid to not kill him: "We are men of the world, in everything—sex, free verse, marksmanship" (Nabokov, *Lolita* 391). The aspect of the social mask is also touched upon in Clementina Mihailescu's article, "Transnational Vladimir

Nabokov's *Lolita* Approached Via Kelly's Personal Construct Theory, Jung's Psycho-Analytical Theory and Nemoianu's Theory of the Secondary," when she explains that "Humbert seems to have identified himself with a social mask (that of the well-off and well-meant step-father), ... in turn, [he is] being entirely deprived of his [whole] individuality" (84). When Quilty states that they are "men of the world" he is alluding to this solar phallos archetype, since the solar phallos is "how a man speaks, what he speaks about, how he follows words with action," in short it is "the pride a man takes in his social reputation, his ability to stand tall in public review, the attainments he would like noted in his obituary" (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 102). In the case of Humbert Humbert, he has outwardly identified as Dolores' stepfather to engage in sexual acts with her, whereas Quilty (as Humbert's shadow), on the other hand, does not need this outward façade to be Dolores' sexual partner.

To be sure, the solar phallos is not the light side to the chthonic's dark side; both phalloses contain their own shadow and light. Humbert Humbert who accuses Quilty of being a *subhuman* trickster (chthonic phallos) is a trickster (solar phallos) himself as well. In his case, his tricks deal with turning lies into facts, since factuality and technical effectuality "gives solar masculine consciousness the illusion of strength and solidarity that seems impregnable, standing on the base for rational order" (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 104). What was the main lie that Humbert Humbert tried throughout his whole narrative to turn into a fact? It could be that his love for a little girl, Dolores, justified him in kidnapping, raping, and holding her hostage, as he tries to rationalize to Quilty that he was a father to Dolores, and he was only protecting her (Nabokov, *Lolita* 296). Our unconscious tries to justify our wrongdoings. Nevertheless, it is only by integration of this unconscious and the shadow side that there can be any hope for transformation. Monick explains this specifically in the case for men that



integration “of the shadow side of chthonic phallos for a male means accepting the rapist in himself, with all the ugliness and brutality that implies. A man must be aware that chthonic phallos can lead to both rapture and murder,” and thus it is through the “inbreaking of chthonic phallos, including shadow aspects” that “transformation and rebirth” can occur (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 98, 100). Humbert Humbert’s confession of his desire for fatalistic revenge of Quilty reveals Humbert Humbert’s shadow side:

To have him trapped after those years of repentance and rage...To look at the black hairs on the back of his pudgy hands...To wander with a hundred eyes over his purple silks and hirsute chest fore glimpsing the punctures, and mess, and music of pain... To know that this semi-animated, subhuman trickster who had sodomized my darling — oh, my darling, this was intolerable bliss! (Nabokov, *Lolita* 295).

This killing desire stems when one has been possessed by their shadow. In Jungian psychology the concept of the shadow refers to “aspects of the personality that have predominantly negative characteristics” that we repress, don’t recognize in ourselves, and have not yet accepted as part of us; these shadowy aspects are coupled together “with the insufficiently developed functions and the contents of the personal unconscious” (Monick, *Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 93). Quilty represents the shadowy aspects that Humbert Humbert has not yet accepted within himself, like drunkenness, the rape of a little girl, and even the subhuman trickster (Nabokov 295). Nabokov represents the two as one in various aspects. Quilty is wearing a “similar” purple robe, just as Humbert Humbert had (*Lolita* 294), and the two of them sit across each other in two easy chairs matching in the same blackness. Humbert Humbert “was wearing a black suit, a black shirt” while Quilty is covered in “black hairs,” which could reference an earlier description of Humbert Humbert (Nabokov, *Lolita* 295). When first residing in the Haze’s household,

Humbert describes himself as a “lanky, big-boned, wooly-chested Humbert Humbert, with thick black eyebrows and a queer accent, and a cesspoolful of rotting monsters behind his slow boyish smile” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 44). The black hairs covering Quilty connect to the black eyebrows of Humbert Humbert.

Additionally, Quilty’s smoke addiction parallels Humbert Humbert’s addiction to his ideal, *Lolita* (Nabokov 296). Quilty knows French just as Humbert Humbert does and begins to get better at it the closer, he is to death (Nabokov, *Lolita* 298). Both believe that they were essential in either rescuing Dolores or protecting her, but both damned her (Nabokov, *Lolita* 298). And where Humbert Humbert is a poet, Quilty is a playwright, both artists making the real fictitious or the fictitious real (Nabokov, *Lolita* 298). Lastly, Nabokov through the mixing of pronouns may show that Humbert Humbert and Quilty are both the same when they begin to roll on one another; “He was naked and *goatish* under his robe, and I felt suffocated as he rolled over me. I rolled over him. We rolled over me. They rolled over him. We rolled over us” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 299 [italics mine]). The adjective *goatish* adds more connection to Quilty as a Dionysian figure, since goats were sacrificed to this god (Kerenyi 80, 115).

Moreover, one could even add that this mixing of pronouns represents Jung’s theory of the multiplicity of self, and that Quilty is only one aspect of Humbert Humbert, who contains many: other textual indications such as his constant mixing up his name in the Enchanted Hunter Hotel scene (Nabokov, *Lolita* 118) and during the ending on deciding what pseudonym to use support this multiplicity (Nabokov, *Lolita* 308). Hence, whether Humbert Humbert’s narrative is real or not is not the point, especially when looking at it from a Jungian psychological perspective. More can be gained from seeing Humbert Humbert’s psychological journey, his coming to awareness through the projection process and disillusion, confronting and integrating

his shadow aspects, and then emerging into acceptance of his own fiction, which is his art (Nabokov, *Lolita* 309). Contrary to Professor Christina Tekiner's argument, in her article "Time in "Lolita,"" that the last main events are the fictitious ramblings of an insane man (468), I argue that Humbert Humbert begins as mad and ends as a sane man perceived as insane if viewed through a Jungian psychological interpretation, since creating "fictions consciously is sanity and pragmatism; making fictions unconsciously, and being captivated by them, is madness. Such madness is common to literalism, scientism, fundamentalism and most ego psychologies" (Hollis, *Creating a Life* 33).

Regarding the Quilty scene, I would argue Humbert Humbert, can also be considered in a psychic *topos*, an unconscious, out-of-conscious state, especially in my connection to this scene being about the underworld, for the underworld flips the natural into sub-natural, and the "Underworld is converse to the day world, and so its behavior will be obverse, perverse" (Hillman 39). This day into the night world coincides with the brotherhood of Hades and Zeus (Hillman 30), a linking of two masculine figures, much like Humbert Humbert and Clare Quilty; as he explains, "The brotherhood of Zeus and Hades says that upper and lower worlds are the same; only the perspectives differ. There is only the same universe, coexistent and synchronous, but one brother's view sees it from above and through the light, the other from below and into its darkness" (Hillman 30). Therefore, the underworld and the upper world, the chthonic and the solar are one and real and unreal are one, just as Humbert Humbert and Clare Quilty are one.

Consequently, the murder of Quilty symbolizes Humbert Humbert's integration of all of himself, the artist and the rapist, the creator and the destroyer. This potentiality lies not just in Humbert Humbert himself but in all men.

### **Humbert Humbert Dies: The Return to the Unconscious**

Humbert Humbert's death signifies the final step towards individuation, especially regarding men, since death is the return to the unconscious. As Monick explains “the unconscious is a man’s place of origin. In the evolution of an individual, it is essential to return to “the place” whence one came” (*Phallos Sacred Image of the Masculine* 62). The attribution of death as the goal is not welcomed by our modern society. Yet, in depth psychology, death and the acceptance of one’s mortality confirms the psychological maturation of an individual. The psychological importance of death, may be seen in Humbert Humbert’s death may symbolically relate to the aim of the psychological process of an individual where one is born and begins with the unconscious, becomes conscious through the process of projection, and ends in awareness through death.

Humbert Humbert began his narrative speaking of his desires for *Lolita*, but what Lolita was, the idea and projection of Dolores, in fact was his unconscious desire for the Eternal, Edenic return. By awakening to Dolores as an Other, rather than Lolita, he awakens his capacity to what true love is, a disinterested love, where two individuals are connected through equal existences as human beings. Nabokov provides this psychological truth concerning death’s role in the psychological maturation of an individual through his main character, which correlates to James Hillman’s paradoxical phrase that if life is only through death, then you are only really living when you are dying. Only by Humbert Humbert’s death by heart attack does his narration paradoxically begin to live (Nabokov, *Lolita* 3). In a way, his narration could be seen as its own entity from the words of Humbert Humbert, whom he speaks of like a corpse with “bits of marrow sticking to it, and blood, and beautiful bright-green flies” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 308).

Even his ending place of seclusion hints at death’s coming, stating he wrote his story in “tombal seclusion,” which is necessary for the refinement and relinquishment of one’s ego.

Humbert Humbert not only ventures into death but back to the unconscious as he explains “At this or that twist of it I feel my slippery self eluding me, gliding into deeper and darker waters than I care to probe” (Nabokov, *Lolita* 308). Nabokov not only was jesting with Freud’s psychological theories in Humbert Humbert’s usage of “slippery self” and “deeper and darker waters,” reflecting terms which in dream interpretation symbolize the unconscious, but also by utilizing these terms in a wider archetypal context of death that developed after Freud and Jung. Interestingly, one could even argue that Humbert Humbert’s ending statement, “And this is the only immortality you and I may share, my Lolita” could be referring to Lolita, not as Dolores, but to the Edenic paradise Humbert Humbert and all humans can only find within themselves and within death, which in turn, truly would be ever immortal (Nabokov, *Lolita* 309). This immortality reflects also a metafictional sense, as the last word is Lolita which connects to the very beginning of the novel, its title. This circularity cements Lolita and Humbert Humbert into the reader’s mind, producing a type of immortality. It may also textually symbolize the Ouroboros image of the circular snake, that represents the Eternal Return, and connects with Humbert Humbert’s psychological return to the unconscious.

## Chapter VI: Conclusion

Nabokov's *Lolita* parodies the psychoanalytical theories of Freud's while at the same time illustrating Nabokov's own understanding of human psychology. In *Lolita*, Nabokov details precisely the psychological process of projection, its relevance of individual psychological maturation, and projection's "falling-in-love" stage's ethical ambiguity. Overall, I hope to have successfully argued for why analyzing *Lolita* in a Jungian literary context is needed, but I also want to suggest other potential avenues for this specific literary theory. Jungian literary theory informs a rich array of interpretations alongside other theories, such as feminist theory and environmental literary theory. By examining the metaphorical and psychological Garden of Eden and its place in projection, we can connect it with the idea of the Garden of Eden ending with the Holocene and the relevance of the Anthropocene in *Lolita*. As David Attenborough stated, "The Holocene has ended; the Garden of Eden is no more" (Wearden). The impact of this statement affects not only the scientific, but also the psychological. And *Lolita* is a prime novel to examine and analyze this issue of: "How does our projection for an Edenic time and place allow us to destroy the physical one in America?" and "How does Humbert Humbert's narration provide a linkage into the connection between one's internal and external worlds?" Then with this in mind, we must ask where does the feminine lie in *Lolita*? How is she conjoined with nature? What is her connection to the narrator's inner and outer reality? Therefore, *Lolita* is much more than a once-banned novel depicting a pedophilic relationship; it is a novel that speaks to key issues of our present time, especially since it is a novel all about transgressing time.

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