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Closure and Power in *Salem's Lot*

Joe Sutliff Sanders

Stephen King's vampire novel, *Salem's Lot* has received praise for its adaptation of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, for its unity, and for King's usual mastery of character and setting; but what has struck me as most fascinating was that the novel ends in a manner that seems both appropriate and strange. I began researching methods of closure in an effort to understand how it was King had achieved this effect and discovered a theory of closure that led me to ask even more questions about the narrative. This paper, therefore, asks how exactly it is that King achieves a sense of closure in the novel *Salem's Lot* and, by way of reaching the answer, the paper develops a theory of the horror genre and the method by which the genre deals with the intrusion of the Other.

Salem's Lot tells the story of a moderately successful fiction writer named Ben Mears who returns to a town of his youth, the town of Jerusalem's Lot. There he falls in love with a woman named Susan Norton and begins writing again, confronting fears and psychoses left over from the past. The town, similar to many of those found in King's fiction, is small, comfortable and insular. Like many small towns, it has the ability to overlook certain oddities, such as the old Marsten House, where a man lost his sanity, shot his wife and then himself, leaving behind a sense of mystery which draws daredevils like rats to a junkyard. Soon enough, however, Ben and Susan realize that the house has drawn more than just inquisitive children. Ben is eventually convinced that vampires are abroad, and soon he and his band of hunters begin to hunt the king vampire, Kurt Barlow.

The plot is straightforward and delivered in an illuminating multiplicity of perspectives, but the story of what goes wrong in Jerusalem's Lot is not the only story in the novel. Around the main tale, split in two so it acts as bookends for the main narrative, is a miniature story of what Ben and one other survivor of the vampire infestation do after they leave town. Thus, the first section of the book gives an out-of-chronology description of two survivors, then the bulk of the novel backtracks to tell how the two came to be survivors, and the final section returns to these two characters as they decide they must go back to Jerusalem's Lot. Where *Salem's Lot* differs from many other horror novels is that slaying the king vampire is not the conclusion of the conflict. In fact, the destruction of Barlow is only one stage of the quest for Ben and his young friend, Mark; it is a stage that takes place at the end of

the main narrative, but not the end of the novel. After they have destroyed Barlow, the pair leaves Jerusalem's Lot and a host of Barlow's children behind them, and the central text concludes. In the epilogue, Ben and Mark return to town. They wait until an especially dry day, then start a fire on the outskirts of town. The flames grow, feeding on the parched grass, and though the heroes talk about the coming adventure of hunting down and slaying the vampires who escape the blaze, they get in their car and drive away before the fire has begun in earnest, before the monsters have all been slain.

In a very real sense, the narrative is incomplete. We are not allowed to see the fire descending upon the town. We do not witness some of the vampires burning to death in their hiding places. We are not told the story of those vampires who escape only to be discovered as they range farther from the cinder that was once Jerusalem's Lot. The process of slaying the vampires has not finished, but the narrative ends with a successful sense of closure. To understand why, we may look to the large body of scholarship which has been written on the subject of closure.

Barbara Herrnstein Smith and Frank Kermode are generally recognized as the founders of contemporary studies of closure, and a variety of theories have since supplemented their work. Smith has noted that "The idea of that which is terminated suggests both dread and satisfaction" (1). She identifies "closure" as "The sense of stable conclusiveness, finality, or 'clinch'" (2). Francis M. Dunn is one of many critics who have attempted to apply Smith's term to tragedy, noting particularly the "disruptions" which the choral exit and *deus ex machina* represent in Euripidean drama (42). Marianna Torgovnick's analysis of *Light in August* reveals Faulkner's technique of "ending his novel [with] the investment of the banal, comic or grotesque with positive significance" (166). Even Dorothy L. Sayers has chimed in with opinions on the subject of closure:

The detective story commonly begins with the murder; the middle is occupied with the detection of the crime and the various peripeties or reversals of fortune arising out of this; the end is the discovery and execution of the murderer—than which nothing can very well be more final. ("Aristotle" 225)

However, none of these theories of closure is entirely sufficient to explain that of *Salem's Lot*. What sort of closure is King aiming for? How effective can he expect it to be?

The structure of the novel provides us with one answer to these questions: King uses symmetry to achieve a sense of closure. Remember that the bulk of the novel is surrounded by two half-stories, together constituting the story of what Ben and Mark do after they first leave town. Therefore, the opening of the novel posits the question, "What are Ben and Mark going to

do about Jerusalem's Lot?" and the end of the novel answers that question: they are going to burn it down. A question is asked at the beginning of the novel, and it is answered by the actions at the end of the novel. David H. Richter has noted a similar pattern of closure in *To the Lighthouse*, where the narrative answers the question, "How shall Lily Briscoe, Cam, James, and the others manage to live without Mrs. Ramsay?" (8). Indeed, this is the simplest form of closure, for once a question has been answered, there is nothing more to say.

Likewise, Torgovnick reminds us of what she calls "circularity" as a device for effective closure. She uses *Light in August* to demonstrate: "Faulkner extensively revised so as to give the novel an optimistic ending through his use of circular form: *Light in August* begins and ends with Lena Grove, earth-mother figure placidly journeying in search of a father for her child" (157). In a similar way, King opens the novel with the same characters and actions he uses to end it: Ben and Mark dealing with their experiences in Jerusalem's Lot. Though Torgovnick calls such a process "circularity," Smith calls this kind of "repetition" by the name of "symmetry" (27). She notes at length its effectiveness in achieving a sense of closure to poetry, and the same may be adequate for King's novel.

And yet it is not adequate, as there is more at work in the closure of *Salem's Lot* than a witty framing device. The mere asking and answering of a question, the simple mirroring of character and action would account for a sense of closure, but it would not account for that sense of dread, of something strange that so often resonates at the end of King's novels. Therefore, we must look to another theory of closure to explain King's methods.

Salem's Lot not only concludes, it also hints at a story that is yet to come. Torgovnick has pointed out such a pattern of closure in her study of closure in the novel. Her name for it is "linkage," in which "an ending. . . links the novel not to its own beginning and middle, but to the body of another, often as yet unwritten, novel" (14). This is a fascinating technique for achieving closure, as it breaks with traditional conceptions of the novel and necessitates a story which takes place outside the covers of the book. However, as the narrator of tells us, this book is not the place for that story. Indeed, as Richter says of *Crime and Punishment*, "As readers we would react to any continuation of the narrative as though it were a sequel, and we would find any interpolation of material as digressive at best" (vii-viii). Linkage not only allows the author the freedom of referring to a larger text than that present in the current novel, it requires that the author end her tale before it becomes another kind of story.

Whereas the body of *Salem's Lot* tells a tale of horror, in which evil explodes in the heart of Anytown, USA, the story to which the novel links is an adventure story. This is made most clear in the last lines of the narrative. "Tonight they won't be running sheep or visiting farms," Ben says, refer-

ring to the vampires. "Tonight they'll be on the run. And tomorrow—" Mark interrupts him. "You and me," the boy says. "His face was no longer pale," the narrator tells us, "bright color glowed there. His eyes flashed" (451). Though their precise plans are not spelled out, it is clear from Mark's flashing eyes that he has triumphed over his fear and that he intends to avenge his many loved ones whom the vampires slew. To put it simply, the horror story of Ben and Mark fleeing from their past, fleeing from the vampires of Jerusalem's Lot, has come to an end. The reader is made to understand that "tomorrow" Ben and Mark will change the plot and begin chasing the vampires instead.

The implication of the story to come is what Deborah H. Roberts refers to when she says that

it is not unusual for a text that tells a story to go past its ending, that is, to acknowledge in some way an aftermath not part of the narrative (or drama) proper. Such an aftermath may be. . . simply implied by the trajectory of the narrative in light of the reader's prior knowledge. . . . (251)

It is on this concept of a narrative's trajectory which I now intend to focus. The simplest interpretation of the trajectory suggested by *Salem's Lot*, an interpretation which I have thus far traced, is that Ben and Mark will embark on an adventure story. However, there is something more which King invokes in his novel, a cycle common to the horror genre which the final pages of *Salem's Lot* begin but do not finish. It is the complete running of this cycle which the reader expects, the "trajectory of the narrative" which the reader can visualize beyond the formal conclusion of King's novel. This is a pattern which manifests again and again in horror literature, a cycle of fear and power.

This cycle, utilized so often in popular horror, is what King builds both his main narrative and his "linked" narrative upon. King himself has alluded to this cycle, though not in direct connection with *Salem's Lot*, in his treatise on the horror genre, *Stephen King's Danse Macabre*. He recalls an exchange he had at the 1979 World Fantasy Convention, telling us, "A UPI reporter asked me the eternal question: 'Why do people read this horror stuff?'" King downplays and then paraphrases his answer, saying "you try to catch the madness in a bell-jar so you can cope with it a little" (379n). King expands on this answer elsewhere, explaining that "[w]hen you've got a lot of free-floating anxieties, the horror story or movie helps to conceptualize them, shrink them down to size, make them concrete so they're manipulable" (qtd. in Lidston 72). If we are to trust King's opinion of horror—and there are few better to trust on the subject than the most popular novelist in the genre's history—then we must recognize within horror a motif of power,

the power the reader craves over her own fears, over the dark and unseen thing under the bed. King has indicated a desire among consumers of horror fiction for the ability to manipulate and conquer the same fears which horror brings to light. It is to this cycle, one by which many horror tales reveal and then trap "the madness in a bell-jar," which we now turn our attention.

The tradition of horror is steeped in the lore of power. No less a detective novelist than Dorothy L. Sayers says, "Let us then see to it that, if we excite evil passions, it is so done as to sublimate them at the same time by the contemplation of emotional or intellectual beauty" ("Aristotle" 225). As Sayers realizes, there is no point in denying the tendency of stories about murder and crime to "excite evil passions," or at least what is defined by the mainstream as "evil," but it is the duty of the storyteller to exercise over those passions an authority that will bury them beneath beauty.

The first step in the cycle of sublimation is evil's infiltration into the world of order. Robert Lidston, in his comparison of *Dracula* and *Salem's Lot*, conjectures that "[b]oth accomplish this feat [of frightening readers] by allowing them to imagine that distant horrors are present in their apparently understandable contemporary real world" (71). King, who readily acknowledges the similarities between his vampire novel and Stoker's, has identified the orderly, rational world of the reader and protagonist by the Nietzschean term of the Apollonian world. The boundaries and conflict between the Apollonian and Dionysian worlds are of keen interest to King. In his analysis of *The Exorcist*, King notes the Georgetown setting ("an Apollonian suburb if ever there was one" *Danse* 396) and the "crashing, roaring sound in the attic" which awakens Ellen Burstyn. "It is the first crack," King asserts, "in the Apollonian world; soon everything else will pour through in a nightmare torrent" (396). Of the horror story, it is inexact to say "all Hell breaks loose"; it is rather more accurate to say that all Hell has, in fact, broken in.

Yet horror—and its sister genre, detective fiction—would never have reached the height of popularity it enjoys in our generation if the boundaries were allowed to remain transgressed, if the Apollonian world did not have its heroes to reestablish the status quo. The horror fan knows that, although many will die and blood will most certainly flow, order will win out. Therein lies the comfort of horror. Dorothy Sayers, in her introduction to *The Omnibus of Crime*, states that

These mysteries made only to be solved, these horrors which [the reader] knows to be mere figments of the creative brain, comfort him by subtly persuading that life is a mystery which death will solve, and whose horrors will pass away as a tale that is told. (9)

Likewise, Anne Williams, in her brilliant feminist reading of the Gothic tradition, notes that "Gothic narratives enabled their audiences to confront and

explore, and simultaneously to deny" (24).

What is it, then, that the horror audience is enabled to confront and deny? This important question is key in understanding the deep power of the horror genre. We have earlier considered that what the horror genre is trying so desperately to deal with is the Dionysian infiltration, the force of chaos and that which, simply put, we do not understand. Once more, King helps us to put a name to this force. In a discussion of human aberration, he dedicates a paragraph to the consideration of monstrosity.

Monstrosity fascinates us because it appeals to the conservative Republican in a three-piece suit who resides within all of us. We love and need the concept of monstrosity because it is a reaffirmation of the order we all crave as human beings. . . . (39)

Monstrosity is the touchstone. Monstrosity reminds us that there are clear lines, and on this side of that line resides normalcy, but on the other side is scrawled, "Here be monsters." King has suggested many rubrics for this intrusive force, but current literary theory provides the most accurate name. The Dionysian force, the monstrous, the world of chaos, these are all euphemisms for the Other.

We have established one phase in the cycle of power to which much of the horror genre subscribes: the infiltration of the Other into the Apollonian world. Now the literature of mystery enters a new stage. We see this stage best demonstrated in detective literature, as in that consummate tale of ratiocination, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." When Dupin has made his examination of the evidence and pronounced his condemnation of the traditional police force's best efforts, Dupin reveals that the detective, in his efforts to flush out truth from its hiding place, must not concentrate on "what has occurred," but "what has occurred that has never occurred before" (120). It is elementary to solve a mystery by proposing conventional hypotheses and testing each, Dupin tells us; indeed, it is obligatory. But true detection lies in being willing to propose new questions, hypotheses which poor detectives (such as, we are led to believe, the Parisian investigators) would never dream of considering. The successful detective will ferret the truth out of one hiding place after another, knowing that eventually it will run out of shadows in which it hides.

Horror follows a pattern similar to that of the detective story, and here we may turn to an icon of the popular horror genre for our best example of this stage of the cycle. In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Van Helsing has the unenviable task of teaching a former student that the student's training was incomplete. Van Helsing taught John Seward the uses of logic and method, but never insinuated there was more to learn. Though Van Helsing has long since realized that there is a vampire loose in England and that Lucy

Westenra has become one of his victims, he must lead Seward through hypothesis after hypothesis, prove to Seward that the truth resides in none of them, and then force him to realize that the answer is hidden somewhere conventional logic will not allow them to look. The two steal into Westenra's tomb late at night, and Van Helsing reveals the empty coffin to his former student. When Van Helsing asks Seward, "Are you satisfied now, friend John?" Seward tells the reader that he "felt all the dogged argumentativeness of my nature awake within me." Here Seward refuses to make the abstract leap to Van Helsing's perspective, instead clinging to conventional logic. He therefore claims that the empty coffin proves only that the coffin is empty, nothing more. Van Helsing replies, "That is good logic. . .so far as it goes" (204). He proceeds to confront Seward with a child who has narrowly escaped becoming Westenra's dinner (205), then Westenra's body as it lies during the day, then the elongated fangs that have grown in her short time among the undead. Seward proves to be superbly resistant to evidence, however, and begins to conjecture wildly. "She may have been placed here since last night," he says. Van Helsing responds, "Indeed? That is so, and by whom?" Seward admits that he does not know, and another hiding place for the truth collapses (206). The two doctors follow a similar pattern in convincing their comrades, until there is nowhere left for the truth to secret itself, and the vampire stands revealed.

This stage of the cycle, the process of discovery, taps into one aspect of closure as Barbara Herrnstein Smith identifies it. Horror's process of discovery draws upon the sense of truth. Smith says, in her influential analysis of poetic closure, "we may speak of that sense of truth produced by a poem not as a qualified, inferior or illusory truth, but as a significant response to an experience" (153). For our purposes, that response is effected by the experience of seeing one natural explanation after another disproved, until the only explanation remaining is that of the supernatural. Kermode, in his landmark work on closure in the narrative, likewise explores the origins of veracity in effective closure:

The more daring the peripeteia, the more we may feel that the work respects our sense of reality; and the more certainly we shall feel that the fiction under consideration is one of those which, by upsetting the ordinary balance of our naïve expectations, is finding something out for us, something real. (18, Kermode's emphasis)

Horror's process of discovery is a series of exposures. Though it is so often fantastic in premise, horror conveys a sense of reality by upsetting one naïve expectation after another. As the plot of the horror novel explores and explodes each unsatisfactory explanation, both reader and character are led

through a process of forcing the unknown, the Other, to become visible.

This is the next stage of the cycle of power: rendering the Other visible. Once the Other can be seen, it is doomed. As Michel Foucault, in an uncharacteristic display of pithiness, has said, “Visibility is a trap” (*Discipline* 200). His example of the Panopticon, wherein a prisoner is subjected to the knowledge that he is always visible to his jailer, provides an excellent analysis of this phenomenon. He says, “the major effect of the Panopticon [is] to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (201). Visibility is, according to Foucault, essential to the maintenance of power. Stephen King is a believer in the power of visibility, too, as he reveals in *Danse Macabre*. He relates an example from William F. Nolan:

Nothing is so frightening as what’s behind the closed door, Nolan said. You approach the door in the old, deserted house, and you hear something scratching at it. The audience holds its breath along with the protagonist as she/he (more often she) approaches that door. The protagonist throws it open, and there is a ten-foot tall bug. The audience screams, but this particular scream has an oddly relieved sound to it. “A bug ten feet tall is pretty horrible,” the audience thinks, “but I can deal with a ten-foot-tall bug. I was afraid it might be a hundred feet tall.” (110)

As with King’s bug, once the Other has been rendered visible, the protagonist and, by proxy, the audience gain significant power over the Other. Before, it was nebulous and could exist anywhere, it could have been of any dimensions and limitless power. After the Other has been revealed, it must restrict itself to the confines of its body. . . even if that body is ten feet tall.

We have seen the Other rendered visible and the power that phase in the cycle gives to the audience, but the process of sublimating the Other continues through the technique of forcing the Other to dwell within a defined body. Foucault has sketched out the discovery of “the body as object and target of power” (*Discipline* 136), and from this vantage point we can make out the next leg in the horror genre’s quest for power. It is a small step from being observed to being controlled, as Foucault implies when he discusses “the notion of ‘docility,’ which joins the analysable body to the manipulable body. A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved” (*Discipline* 136). The parallels between the treatment—as Foucault presents it—of the body and the treatment—as horror renders it—of the Other are many. The readiest example is that of the vampire, who must remain invisible lest the vampire hunter “subject” and “transform” his undead body with a stake and hammer. However, there are countless other examples. After all, it is Frankenstein’s continual failures to find his monster that

lead to his downfall, and even Freddy of the endless *Nightmare on Elm Street* films is invincible until he is dragged into the physical world. There, the dream monster must suffer the vulnerabilities that come with having a body. King has cited an unnamed critic who "has suggested that if pro football has become the voyeur's version of combat, then the horror film has become the modern version of the public lynching" (*Danse* 175). As with the lynching, the aspects of both visibility and corporeality are essential. Likewise, the attempt to render the Other physical, or at least to encompass it within a certain space, is a major motif of horror fiction.

Once the Other is trapped in corporeality—or the "bell-jar" to which King refers—another stage in the cycle of power becomes possible. In *Orientalism*, Edward W. Said looks at how the West has identified a space and forced the Orient to dwell within it. Speaking of Aeschylus's *The Persians*, Said says, "What matters here is that Asia speaks through and by virtue of the European imagination, which is depicted as victorious over Asia, that hostile 'other' world beyond the seas" (56). As we have seen, this is similar to horror's methodology of power, in which the plot and characters work to push the Other into an arena where it may be seen and then forced to inhabit a definite space. But there is more. Said goes on to say,

In such efforts as d'Herbelot's, Europe discovered its capacities for encompassing and Orientalizing the Orient. . . . But what becomes evident is not only the advantage of a Western perspective: there is also the triumphant technique for taking the immense fecundity of the Orient and making it systematically, even alphabetically, knowable by Western laymen. (65)

This process is the next step in the horror genre's method of power. Once the truth/Other has been revealed, once the monstrosity has been forced into the light, it may be made "knowable." This is what Foucault refers to when he says that "The fundamental task of Classical 'discourse' is to *ascribe a name to things, and in that name to name their being*" (*Order* 120, Foucault's emphasis). Whether that name be "monster," "vampire," or simply "Dr. Jekyll," it is the naming of the Other that is essential to the exercise of power in horror literature.

After naming the Other, what Foucault calls "the sovereign act of nomination" (*Order* 117), the popular horror story then proceeds to dominate the Other. This is again demonstrated by Said's theories on the subjugation of the Orient.

Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching

it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (3)

It is the naming of the Other which makes such domination possible. In fact, Said calls nomination “an act of possession” (18). This is certainly the case in horror, wherein the successful vampire hunter must be able to name his prey as “vampire” in order to be able to study it, reference it, have authority over it, and finally possess it so that he may destroy it. Specifically, naming the monster in horror allows the hero to access the body of knowledge on the creature which will allow him to destroy it. This is because, as with Kermode’s definition of myth, horror “operates within the diagrams of ritual”; it is one of “the agents of stability” (39). Williams has analyzed the rituals of horror at great length in *Art of Darkness*, arguing that “the superstitions concerning the vampire are grafted onto the most deep-rooted and powerful principles of cultural order” (22). In fact, granted that the rituals and tools of vampire slaying are so well-defined, we can begin to realize that the vampire’s greatest fear, after being made visible, is that of being named. As Foucault comments in *The Order of Things*, “we cannot think of a word—however abstract, general, and empty it may be—without affirming the possibility of what it represents” (117). And if we may think the name “vampire,” if we can allow that such a thing might exist, then we may, to paraphrase Said, describe it, teach it, settle it, and rule over it.

This then is the cycle of power which repeats in many aspects of the horror genre. The Dionysian world violates the stability of the Apollonian world. The detective/hero must attempt to explain the force which has intruded using natural hypotheses, but the successful detective will not fear to try supernatural hypotheses once the natural ones have collapsed. Once this process of discovery is complete, the monster is rendered both visible and corporeal. The monster is named, studied, and dominated, and the heroes may go about reconstructing their Apollonian world.

Finally we return to the direct study of *Salem’s Lot*. If it is true that many horror narratives invoke this cycle of power, we can assume that a reader familiar with the cycle will anticipate its prescribed conclusion once the cycle has begun. Further, if it is true that King’s novel is intentionally similar to Stoker’s, and if it is true that Stoker’s novel invokes the cycle of power outlined above, we can expect to see the same cycle at work in *Salem’s Lot*. Now we are narrowing in on the story to which the end of King’s novel links. Therefore, we must see how well King adheres to the cycle in the main body of his text before we can begin to apply it to his conclusion.

In King’s novel, we witness the cycle first in the process of determining that a vampire has been at work at the house of Ben’s friend, the high school teacher Matt Burke. Matt calls Ben over to his house because he is certain

that he has heard a vampire draining the life of a man Matt invited to stay in his guest room. The Other has infiltrated Matt's orderly world, and the hero must begin to form hypotheses to explain it. Ben therefore determines that Matt had no motive for killing the man, that Matt would have had access to no weaponry which could have killed the man without leaving a mark, that Matt is not crazy despite his story about the sucking sounds that came from the guest room just after a whispered invitation to enter (191), and so on until the only hypothesis remaining is that Matt is telling the truth, as unlikely as that may be. Ben is reluctant but able to accept this strange explanation, granted more testing. As the novel progresses, Ben becomes more convinced that his improbable explanation is the truth, and before long the king vampire is identified, named, and the technology of vampire slaying is invoked climactically in the destruction of Barlow. All of this takes place in the story which King has written. The pattern is followed faithfully, consolidating in the reader an awareness of the cycle of power expounded above. And then, just before the last page is turned, the reader follows Ben and Mark out to the edges of town to watch them light a fire.

"The old-timers say this is where it started," Ben said. "Back in 1951. The wind was blowing from the west. They think maybe a guy got careless with a cigarette. One little cigarette. It took off across the Marshes and no one could stop it. . . . [The vampires are] not very bright. If they lose their hiding places, they'll hide badly the second time. A couple of people just looking in obvious places could do well." (450)

What Ben and Mark are planning is a new invocation of the same power cycle.

Though they have effectively utilized the cycle against Barlow himself, they have found that Barlow's children are not content to remain in Jerusalem's Lot. With the intrusion of the vampires into the surrounding community as they broaden their search for blood, the Dionysian force again infiltrates the Apollonian world. The characters, having seen the cycle of power work against Barlow, now invoke it again, in fact hastening the first stage. The heroes regard the fire as "something. . . to drive them out, to upset them," and, as the passage above demonstrates, Ben expects the process of subjugation to continue from there.

We do not see the vampires discovered, we do not hear the hypotheses ventured to explain them, we do not join in the process of naming, referencing and destroying. However, the reader is aware of the cycle of power which has begun at the end of the novel, both because of similar cycles throughout the genre of horror and because the reader has experienced its exercise within the main narrative. King therefore conveys a sense of the tra-

jectory of the narrative beyond the novel's final pages, linking the tale he has written to one he will never write. The vampires will be driven out of hiding—like a secret chased to its ultimate explication—they will be rendered visible and recognized for what they are, and, once they have been named and referenced, they will be destroyed. This is the way horror deals with the Other, and without it, as Ben says, "there would be no chance at all" (450). The method of closure Torgovnick has labeled as "linkage" and the cycle of power, which so much of horror utilizes so well, provides King with the perfect tool to leave the reader with his trademark touch of satisfaction served bone-chillingly cold.

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