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Psychoanalytic Theory in Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca*. Therapeutic Insight

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In the previous part of this analysis I have explored the symbolic portrayal of the psychoanalytic theory of personality in the novel Rebecca (1938) by the English novelist Daphne du Maurier (1907 – 1989). In this part, I will illustrate how du Maurier has addressed the therapeutic possibility of the theory through the heroine's transformation, within a very short period, from a vulnerable girl to a confident strong woman. The experience of her ego's recovery and the protagonist's part in it is the story that I am going to tell in the following pages.

The death of the heroine's parents when she was still at a young age resulted in her fixation on the moral standards she had internalized from them as a child. 'The superego incorporates the values and morals of society which are learned from one's parents and others. It develops around the age of 3 – 5' (Mc Leod, 2016). She grew up too faithful to those morals: 'It was my lack of poise of course that made such a bad impression on people like Mrs Danvers. . . . Convention was too strong for me' (13, 17).

Fidelity to her beloved father precluded the development of the ego because it is responsible for re-evaluating these ideals through its contact with the realities of the external world and through its perceptive function. She made her decision to stay loyal to the 'values and morals' of her parents, disposed against change from outside source: 'I can see myself

now . . . with straight, bobbed hair and youthful, unpowdered face, dressed in an ill-fitting coat and skirt and a jumper of my own creation' (13). She constructed barriers to obstruct her ego from knowledge acquisition:

> I wondered how many people there were in the world who suffered, and continued to suffer, because they could not break out from their own web of shyness and reserve, and in their blindness and folly built up a great distorted wall in front of them that hid the truth. This was what I had done. I had built up false pictures in my mind and sat before them. I had never had the courage to demand the truth. Had I made one step forward out of my own shyness, Maxim would have told me these things four months, five months ago. (288–9)

Detachment from reality was a trick necessary to solve the problem that may arise from impairing the reality agent (the ego) by denial of its perceptive function. The heroine either resorted to worlds of her own creation or escaped to some distant past reliving a championed stories of medieval chivalry.

The ego's main function to mediate between the id and the superego having been thus affected, the superego worked in isolation to take control of the id allowing it to express itself only in inevitable vital impulses. "The id is the unconscious reservoir of drives and impulses derived from the genetic background and concerned with the preservation and propagation of life." (Encyclopaedia Britannica) It is "oblivious of the external world and unaware of the passage of time. Devoid of organization" (Encyclopaedia Britannica). The heroine's detachment from reality and chaotic appearance, for instance, are forms of the id that are not likely to violate those revered parental values: 'The superego's function is to control the id's impulses, especially those which society forbids' (Mc Leod, 2016).

The symptoms displayed by the heroine proved her an ideal weak-ego case suffering from a superego monopoly of its management.

[W]eakness of ego is characterized by such traits as impulsive or immediate behaviour, a sense of inferiority or an inferiority complex, a fragile sense of identity, unstable emotionality, and excessive vulnerability. Perception of reality and self can be distorted. In such cases the individual may be less capable of productive work, because energy is drained into the protection of unrealistic self-concepts, or the individual may be burdened by neurotic symptoms. (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

You might see these symptoms dispersed throughout the previous and the present part of this analysis. You might also pity her for being 'anxious . . . tortured by doubt and indecision . . . frightened, tearing at bitten nails, uncertain which way to go, what star to follow.' (105) You might be surprised to see her getting up 'in sudden panic' trying to jump out of the room because she was fearful of meeting Maxim's sister: 'I wondered if it would be possible to hide, to get out of the window, into the garden' (94). You might conceive her fragile sense of identity from her sight while 'trailing in the wake of Mrs Van Hopper like a shy, uneasy colt.' (13) Read this direct diagnosis of her emotional instability and acute sense of inferiority:

> I was wrong of course, morbid, stupid; this was the hypersensitive behaviour of a neurotic, not the normal happy self I knew myself to be. But I could not help it. I did not know what to do. My shyness and gaucherie became worse, too, making me stolid and dumb when people came to the house.' . . . I had been selfish and hypersensitive, a martyr to my own inferiority complex. (128, 141)

See how vulnerable she was: 'She took hold of my arm, and walked me towards the bed. I could not resist her, I was like a dumb thing. The touch of her hand made me shudder.' (176) Since she was the mistress of the house, you might recognize her behaviour as another symptom: distorted perception of reality and self. She often depreciated her talent: 'I told him as much, a little shyly perhaps, like all untalented persons with a pet hobby.' (29) She believed herself to be incapable of

productive work: 'I saw myself, useless sketch-book in hand, without qualifications of any kind, stammering replies to stern employment agents.' (31) She had the same belief even after being the mistress of Manderley: 'I was a lay-figure, no use to man or beast. I used to stand about doing nothing except get in the way.' (213) Because energy was drained into the protection of unrealistic self-concepts, she was really burdened by neurotic disturbances reflected in psychosomatic symptoms:

> I had a pain in the pit of my stomach as I followed her into the room. . . . I was seized with a sudden desire to laugh, to cry, to do both, and I had a pain, too, at the pit of my stomach. . . . It was foolish to go on having that pain in the pit of my stomach when I was so happy. (52, 60, 61)

The ego became weak enough to yield to the demands of the other regulating agency; the superego 'has the function of persuading the ego to turn to moralistic goals rather than simply realistic ones and to strive for perfection.' (Mc Leod, 2016). The augmented standard of the heroine's ideals is denoted by the way she was wrapped up in 'a shapeless mackintosh, far too big for me and dragging to my ankles . . . and the length added inches to my height.' (66) The ever self-conscious heroine was tortured by her over commitment to these ideals. "Behavior which falls short of the ideal self may be punished by the superego through guilt. . . . If a person's ideal self is too high a standard, then whatever the person does will represent failure." (Mc Leod, 2016) Shyness and sense of guilt are characteristic qualities of the heroine that I am going to put into focus by the following excerpts from the novel.

> I have lost my diffidence, my timidity, my shyness with strangers. I am very different from that self who drove to Manderley for the first time, hopeful and eager, handicapped by a rather desperate gaucherie and filled with an intense desire to please. (13)
>
> I . . . would feel the guilty flush form patches on my neck. (38)

> I felt guilty at the sound, as one does in church, self-conscious, aware of the same constraint. (75–6)
> I sprang . . . feeling guilty, and apologised for sitting there so late . . . I wondered if I had said the wrong thing. (86)
> I put it back . . . feeling guilty suddenly, and deceitful (90).
> I felt guilty and ashamed, as though I had been caught trespassing (96).
> I glanced hurriedly at the door, like a guilty child. (146)
> I was still aware of my guilty flush. (148)

Fortunately, there is a chance of recovery. "The ego, once developed, is capable of change throughout life, particularly under conditions of threat, illness, and significant changes in life circumstances." (Encyclopædia Britannica) Maxim's appearance marked a significant change in her life. Primarily, his unaffected courtesy took her unaware because she was unaccustomed to such behaviour from people of his kind. 'It was a surprise, therefore, to find that this newcomer remained standing on his feet, and it was he who made a signal to the waiter.' (17) She was so captured by his graceful conduct, that she tried to fit him up to her private world of idealized remote times.

> He belonged to a walled city of the fifteenth century . . . His face was arresting, sensitive, medieval in some strange inexplicable way, and I was reminded of a portrait seen in a gallery, I had forgotten where, of a certain Gentleman Unknown. Could one but rob him of his English tweeds, and put him in black, with lace at his throat and wrists, he would stare down at us in our new world from a long-distant past –a past . . . of silent, exquisite courtesy. (18)

Her hope of affiliating him into her unrealistic world was disappointed by catching a glimpse of a sound personality, the balance between the id and the superego managed by a strong ego figuratively expressed by 'the line between his brows.' (19) He, mutually attracted, and noticing her 'stricken into shame and endur[ing] one of the frequent agonies of youth', (20) tried

to assist her. His attempt to involve her into his conversation with Mrs Van Hopper revealed his immediate understanding of her detachment from reality: "'What do you think of Monte Carlo, or don't you think of it at all?'" (20) Once alone in her room, the long dormant ego started to wake up. A new awareness of a positive reality started to form: 'I knelt on the window-seat and looked out upon the afternoon. The sun shone very brightly still, and there was a gay high wind.' (22) The ego started to exercise one of its functions, "objectivity in one's apprehension of the external world and in self-knowledge (insight)" (Encyclopædia Britannica). It alleviated the repulsiveness of the present circumstances not only by focusing on a favourable aspect of the same reality but also by emphasizing its bright potentiality: 'The sun was so full of promise, and the sea was whipped white with a merry wind.' (23) Then back to her superego-guarded existence, she dared to discover some flaws there. The high sacred mores were now appearing to stand on a ramshackle construct: (emphasis mine)
I thought of that corner of Monaco which I had passed a day or two ago, and where a crooked house leant to a cobbled square. High up in the tumbled roof there was a window, narrow as a slit. It might have held a presence medieval (23).

However, she made another substantial endeavor to affiliate him to her ideal aspirations:

> I sketched in fancy with an absent mind a profile, pale and aquiline. A sombre eye, a high-bridged nose, a scornful upper lip. And I added a pointed beard and lace at the throat, as the painter had done, long ago in a different time. (23)

His note arrived in time to abort her attempt. It convinced her of the high perceptive power of his ego because her usually misspelt name was written correctly, and looking again into the sketch she felt the wrongness of having him so fossilized in such an ancient frame, and became conscious of the unrealistic artificiality of the medieval qualities she had added:

> I put the note away in my pocket, and turned once more to my pencil drawing, but for no known reason it did not please me any more; the face was stiff and lifeless, and the lace collar and the beard were like props in a charade. (23)

The following day he witnessed her confusion as she knocked the vase, and asked her to lunch at his table. In an attempt to ward off the anxiety aroused by this new confrontation with reality, the heroine's ego, now alert to its weakness, employed one defense mechanism, projection, which occurs when a certain psychical phenomenon "is ejected from internal perception into the external world, and thus detached from them and pushed on to someone else." (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice, 2016) She tended to believe him suffering, like herself, from detachment. 'His quality of detachment was peculiar to himself,' (25) she pondered. 'I wondered why it was that this home of his . . . should so inevitably silence him, making as it were a barrier between him and others.' (26) 'Perhaps it was the memory of this postcard, lost long ago in some forgotten book,' she went on, 'that made me sympathize with his defensive attitude.' (26) She thought him exhibiting signs of phobia related to his attachment to Manderley, 'something held him back, some phobia that struggled to the surface of his mind and won supremacy' (28).

He knew that her parents were dead and, according to her assessment, her 'father was a lovely and unusual person.' (27) He then suspected her as a superego-ridden personality, and, trying to (help her) reach the unconscious cause, he employed free association technique. He invited her to talk about her father and listened without any interference. The psychological response caused by his presence added to the air of relaxation afforded by the empty room assisted her to resist the usually overpowering interference of "the inner critic" (a phrase used in Wikipedia, to mean the super ego). 'It was not easy to explain my father and usually I never talked about him.

He was my secret property. Preserved for me alone,' she thought, resuming the process of projection, 'much as Manderley was preserved for my neighbour. I had no wish to introduce him casually over a table in a Monte Carlo restaurant.' (27) At the moment, she responded with absolute transparency despite her self-declared usual reserve:

> There was a strange air of unreality about that luncheon, and looking back upon it now it is invested for me with a curious glamour. There was I, so much of a schoolgirl still, who only the day before had sat with Mrs Van Hopper, prim, silent, and subdued, and twenty-four hours afterwards my family history was mine no longer, I shared it with a man I did not know. For some reason I felt impelled to speak, because his eyes followed me in sympathy like the Gentleman Unknown.
>
> My shyness fell away from me, loosening as it did so my reluctant tongue, and out they all came, the little secrets of childhood, the pleasures and the pains. (27)

Only by Freud's definition of transference (a defense mechanism that is unavoidable in psychoanalysis) can her sudden change of attitude be interpreted or conceived.

Another advantage of transference, too, is that in it the patient produces before us with plastic clarity an important part of his life-story, of which he would otherwise have probably given us only an insufficient account. He acts it before us, as it were, instead of reporting it to us. (Sigmund Freud: An Outline of Psychoanalysis - 1940.)" (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice).

The heroine's performance further proves to be interpretable by Freud's theories. "When anything in the complexive material (in the subject-matter of the complex) is suitable for being transferred on to the figure of the doctor," the theory explains, "that transference is carried out" (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice). The spiritual love of her parents was indeed the subject-matter of the complex.

> It seemed to me as though he understood, from my poor description, something of the vibrant personality that had been my father's, and something too of the love my mother had for him, making it a vital, living force, with a spark of divinity about it, so much that when he died that desperate winter, struck down by pneumonia, she lingered behind him for five short weeks and stayed no more. (27–8)

Transference "produces the next association, and announces itself by indications of a resistance - by a stoppage, for instance. We infer from this experience that the transference-idea has penetrated into consciousness". (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice) The stoppage and penetration into consciousness occurred just after the mention of her parents:

> I remember pausing, a little breathless, a little dazed. The restaurant was filled now with people who chatted and laughed to an orchestral background and a clatter of plates, and glancing at the clock above the door I saw that it was two o'clock. We had been sitting there an hour and a half, and the conversation had been mine alone.
>
> I tumbled down into reality, hot-handed and self-conscious, with my face aflame, and began to stammer my apologies. (28)

The session proved highly effective. In the light of Freudian theories, the heroine's positive collaboration can be attributed to some sort of an unconscious substitution technique. The theory maintains that "the patient sees in him [the analyst] the return, the reincarnation, of some important figure out of his childhood or past, and consequently transfers on to him feelings and reactions which undoubtedly applied to this prototype." (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice) That explains why she was not hurt by his criticism concerning her choice of career: 'It seemed natural for him to question me, nor did I mind. It was as though we had known one another for a long time, and had met again after a lapse of years.' (30) She withdrew her opinion of him: 'I had ill-judged him, he was

neither hard nor sardonic, he was already my friend of many years, the brother I had never possessed.' (31)

In continuation of his treatment techniques, he subjected her to another kind of experimentation: "to enhance ego functioning and help the client test reality through assisting the client to think through their options." (McLeod, 2016) He took her to the house with the medieval associations that she wanted to sketch. The experiment again proved successful. She felt no longer desirous of sketching the house and had very different sentiments:

> It was not the Monte Carlo I had known, or perhaps the truth was that it pleased me better. There was a glamour about it that had not been before. I must have looked upon it before with dull eyes. The harbour was a dancing thing, with fluttering paper boats, and the sailors on the quay were jovial, smiling fellows, merry as the wind. (31)

Moreover, her ego now came to detect flaws in her appearance:
I can remember as though I wore it still my comfortable, ill-fitting flannel suit, and how the skirt was lighter than the coat through harder wear. My shabby hat, too broad about the brim, and my low-heeled shoes, fastened with a single strap. (31)

There is more sophistication, more suggestiveness in these lines than in any mine of Freudian symbology. The passage presents an anatomical assessment of the heroine's inner psychical structure surfacing to her conscious mind as it had never done before (that accounts for the fact it was engraved in her memory). First, the passage demonstrates that hers was an ill-grounded satisfaction: 'my comfortable, ill-fitting flannel suit'. Second, it highlights her split up id; the skirt corresponds to its dark lower part. The coat, the upper part, refers to its brighter components (those allowed by society or other higher authorities for example). The lower part, becoming even lighter than the upper part, suggests the excess of the dominion of the superego over her psychic apparatus symbolized by the 'shabby hat, too broad about the brim'. Third,

there is the unfair exclusion of the ego forming another layer of symbolism: the analogy between her id controlled by the superego alone and the low-heeled shoes fastened with a single strap. Prompted by the new spirit, she was now ready to discard those symptoms:

> The bridge and the cocktail parties were forgotten, and with them my own humble status.
> I was a person of importance, I was grown up at last. That girl who, tortured by shyness, would stand outside the sitting-room door twisting a handkerchief in her hands . . . had gone with the wind that afternoon. She was a poor creature, and I thought of her with scorn if I considered her at all. (31–2)

The liberation was complete but, as we may expect, not permanent. The problem was too deep-rooted to end so soon. Let us see Freud's explanation of such a case:

> It [transference] pushes to one side the patient's rational aim of becoming healthy and free from his ailments. Instead of it there emerges the aim of pleasing the analyst and of winning his applause and love. It becomes the true motive force of the patient's collaboration; his weak ego becomes strong; under its influence he achieves things that would ordinarily be beyond his power; he leaves off his symptoms and seems apparently to have recovered - merely for the sake of the analyst. (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice)

Therefore, relapses were sure to happen: 'I became silent, overwhelmed suddenly by the great gulf between us, and how his very kindness to me widened it.' (41) Her sense of inferiority returned with even greater intensity. Nonetheless, a hopeless attempt to narrow the gulf followed: 'I wish I was a woman of about thirty-six dressed in black satin with a string of pearls.' (41) It did not work. He rebelled against that: '"You would not be in this car with me if you were," he said (41) Plagued by the futility of their situation, the ego had to employ a defense mechanism, affiliation. She resorted to her original schemes to involve him in her idealized world of fantasy:

> He sat motionless, looking without his hat and with his white scarf round his neck, more than ever like someone medieval who lived within a frame. He did not belong to the bright landscape, he should be standing on the steps of a gaunt cathedral, his cloak flung back, while a beggar at his feet scrambled for gold coins. (42)

He firmly stood against this regression, rejected her idea about storing up the memory to relive it later, and warned her against any attempt to resurrect his past. "The analyst typically is a 'blank screen', disclosing very little about themselves in order that the client can use the space in the relationship to work on their unconscious without interference from outside." (McLeod, 2007) He reprimanded her in a fatherly manner, and levelled a direct and harsh attack on her ideals:

> Damn your puritanical little tight-lipped speech to me. Damn your idea of my kindness and my charity. I ask you to come with me because I want you and your company, and if you don't believe me you can leave the car now and find your own way home. Go on, open the door, and get out. (43)

The shock treatment proved extremely fruitful. It enabled her to verify with unequivocal clarity the wretchedness of her state under the too wide-ranging power of the superego: 'catching a sudden glimpse of myself in the glass above the windscreen [I] saw in full the sorry spectacle that I made, with troubled eyes and scarlet cheeks, lank hair flopping under broad felt hat.' (43–4) He was sufficiently intelligent to choose this moment to dispose of the 'broad felt' hat: 'He felt for the brim of my hat, and took hold of it, throwing it over his shoulder to the back seat, and then bent down and kissed the top of my head.' (46) The change was spectacular, and 'the morning was gay again, the morning was a shining thing.'

> I was cocksure, jubilant; at that moment I almost had the courage to claim equality. . . . The morning, for all its shadowed moments, had promoted me to a new level of

friendship, I did not lag so far behind as I had thought. . . . The gulf between us had been bridged after all. (46)

Alas, another front opened, foreseeing, it appears, the challenges that lay ahead— the deep state and the counter-revolution working for Rebecca's regime at Manderley. It was triggered by Mrs Van Hopper's talk about Mr de Winter's adoration of Rebecca and the extraordinary beauty of the latter.

She had two rehearsals for the struggle at Manderley. The one against the writing in the book stands for the deep state, the other, against Mrs Van Hopper, for the counter-revolution. She won them both although they cost her some difficult moments. She cleansed the book he had given her of Rebecca's handwriting by cutting out its title page. 'I cut the page right out of the book. I left no jagged edges, and the book looked white and clean when the page was gone. A new book, that had not been touched.' (62) She 'tore the page up in many little fragments and threw them into the waste-paper basket.' (62) She continued her struggle as the letters on 'the torn scraps in the basket' remained intelligible. 'Even now the ink stood up on the fragments thick and black, the writing was not destroyed.' She 'took a box of matches and set fire to the fragments. The flame had a lovely light . . . making the slanting writing impossible to distinguish. The fragments fluttered to grey ashes.' (62) She 'felt better, much better', and was ready to confront Mrs Van Hopper to whom he had broken the news about their marriage.

She did not either give in to Mrs Van Hopper's warnings when she levelled her attacks: 'Well, I would not care, I would forget her and her barbed words. A new confidence had been born in me when I burnt that page and scattered the fragments.' (65) Playing the harsh and cruel critic in this tentative performance, Mrs Van Hopper was representing Mrs Danvers and fore-acting her role: 'She went on looking at me in a way she had never done before. Appraising me, running her eyes over my points like a judge at a cattle show. There was

something inquisitive about her eyes, something unpleasant.'(63–4) Mrs Van Hopper voluntarily told the heroine she would fail 'as mistress of Manderley.' She was purposefully cruel and frustrating: 'To be perfectly frank, my dear, I simply can't see you doing it. . . . and personally I think you are making a big mistake – one you will bitterly regret.' (64) To thwart her more, she concluded with a lie:

> You haven't flattered yourself he's in love with you? The fact is that empty house got on his nerves to such an extent he nearly went off his head. He admitted as much before you came into the room. He just can't go on living there alone. (65)

There, at Manderley, she had to start all over again. She was almost left alone to wrestle with these two powers. On one hand, the deep state, that is, Rebecca's traces and persisting influence in the entire estate intensified her sense of inferiority. On the other hand, Mrs Danvers fostered, with all due malice, what is defined by the Encyclopædia Britannica as the "superego's criticisms, prohibitions, and inhibitions". She represents a distorted picture of what Freud calls "'the general character of harshness and cruelty exhibited by the [ego] ideal – its dictatorial 'thou shalt.' (Wikipedia,) Her critical attitude aggravated the heroine's sense of failure, anxiety, and worthlessness via escalating the conflict between the powers working in and upon the ego. "If the ego is obliged to admit its weakness, it breaks out in anxiety regarding the outside world, moral anxiety regarding the superego, and neurotic anxiety regarding the strength of the passions in the id. (Freud 1933, p. 78)." (McLeod, 2009) The two powers acted to nurture the heroine's belief that her husband loved Rebecca. (The amoral Rebecca represents the darker, aggressive, and destructive aspects of the id.) The heroine grew very inquisitive about Rebecca and her past life with her husband.

Sometimes I would glean little snatches of information to add to my secret store. A word dropped here at random, a

question, a passing phrase. And, if Maxim was not with me, the hearing of them would be a furtive, rather painful pleasure, guilty knowledge learnt in the dark. (129)

Mrs Danvers who was truly jubilant to see her in Rebecca's room advanced her curiosity. 'I shall never forget the expression on her face. Triumphant, gloating, excited in a strange unhealthy way.' (175) She allured the heroine to 'feel' Rebecca's clothes and things and was intent to invest them with certain air of glamour. (176) Those motivations provoked the heroine into a regression to the region of the id through introjecting Rebecca's behavioural patterns. Sitting 'down to dinner in the dining-room in [her] accustomed place, with Maxim at the head of the table,' (209) the heroine relived an imagined event assuming Rebecca's role: 'I had so identified myself with Rebecca that my own dull self did not exist, had never come to Manderley. I had gone back in thought and in person to the days that were gone.' (209) As things threatened to go wrong, however, he appropriately proceeded with his support and follow-up. Telling her that she looked 'like little criminal,' (209) he went on to explain the unpleasantness of her behaviour:

> 'Do you know, you did not look a bit like yourself just now? You had quite a different expression on your face. . . . You looked older suddenly, deceitful. It was rather unpleasant. . . . I don't want you to look like you did just now. You had a twist to your mouth and a flash of knowledge in your eyes. Not the right sort of knowledge.' (210)

He also reinforced her self-esteem by asserting his admiration of her own qualities:

> 'When I met you first you had a certain expression on your face,' he said slowly, 'and you have it still. I'm not going to define it, I don't know how to. But it was one of the reasons why I married you. A moment ago, when you were going through that curious little performance, the expression had gone. Something else had taken its place.' (211)

She became very desirous and enthusiastic about his instructions: "'What sort of thing? Explain to me, Maxim," I said eagerly.' (211) Realizing her behaviour as a sort of rebellion for his sake against the values instilled by her beloved and esteemed parents, he overtly presented himself as the alternative father figure so that these values could be tempered instead of going to the other extreme. Her old tendency to identify with them could be swapped for a tendency to identify with him. "If the patient puts the analyst in the place of his father (or mother)," the theory maintains, "he is also giving him the power which his super-ego exercises over his ego, since his parents were, as we know, the origin of his super-ego." (Psychoanalysis - Techniques and Practice) He chose the right moment to give his proposal, in just the right manner:

> He considered me a moment, his eyebrows raised, whistling softly. 'Listen, my sweet. When you were a little girl, were you ever forbidden to read certain books, and did your father put those books under lock and key?'
> 'Yes,' I said.
> 'Well, then. A husband is not so very different from a father after all. There is a certain type of knowledge I prefer you not to have. It's better kept under lock and key. So that's that. And now eat up your peaches, and don't ask me any more questions, or I shall put you in the corner.' (211)

A second trial of identification with Rebecca occurred when the heroine unknowingly followed Mrs Danvers' spiteful suggestion to dress up like Rebecca at the last fancy dress ball. 'I felt different already, no longer hampered by my appearance. My own dull personality was submerged at last. "Give me the wig," I said excitedly, "careful, don't crush it, the curls mustn't be flat.' (220) His response was tougher this time. He mechanically reacted with all the anger of a father whose warnings and orders were intentionally overlooked and disobeyed. Eventually, he enriched the cognitive power of her ego by telling her the whole truth. It may be hard to believe how

instantly she outgrew her mental and psychological infancy as expressed by her husband, in a sorrowful tone though:

> 'I was looking at you, thinking of nothing else all through lunch. It's gone forever, that funny, young, lost look that I loved. It won't come back again. I killed that too, when I told you about Rebecca. . . . It's gone, in twenty-four hours. You are so much older . . . (313)

No sooner had she known the truth than she was able to act with due poise and equilibrium; the following day the clumsy 'raw ex-schoolgirl, red-elbowed and lanky-haired,' (20) was 'putting things methodically in [her] suit-case.' (373) She soon acquired the stable mentality of her husband; her psyche was adjusted to the rhythm of his car: 'The motion of the car was rhythmic, steady, and the pulse of my mind beat with it.' (393) She became able to travel the same road and keep up with him: 'I know we are together, we march in unison, no clash of thought or of opinion makes a barrier between us.' (9) Ultimately, she became a mature confident woman: 'confidence is a quality I prize, although it has come to me a little late in the day. I suppose it is his dependence upon me that has made me bold at last.' (13) The entire transformation process substantiates Freud's theory concerning women: "for Freud, 'their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men ... they are often more influenced in their judgements by feelings of affection or hostility.'" (Wikipedia) It was by feelings of affection that her ego regained its full strength to impose the perfect balance between the id and superego.

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