

Unnameable Desires in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*

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In his 1872 vampire novella *Carmilla*, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu encodes forbidden passions through the use of names. Written at a time when same-sex relations were punishable by imprisonment, *Carmilla's* naming and wordplay suggest the Sapphic seductions between a female vampire and her unwitting descendant without being dangerously explicit. In every incarnation over the centuries, Carmilla must adopt an anagrammatical variation of her original name, each of which carries its own host of interpretations hinting at the forbidden same-sex desires in the text. Ultimately, however, Le Fanu had to conform to the conventions of his time and has a posse of men solve the riddle of Carmilla's name and her demonic desires. By the novella's end, Carmilla's derivations are decipherable, her history traceable, and her fate reduced to a patriarchal *paronomasia*.

In his 1872 vampire novella, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's use and suppression of names indicate both his criticism of Victorian patriarchy as well as his ambiguity toward the same sex desires he offers as an alternative to it. Characters in his novella have too many names, or no names, or names that are nearly identical to one another as he plays with the idea of lineage, power, and unnameable desires. The main narrator introduces herself by telling us she bears an English surname, but we never learn it. Instead she merely identifies herself forty pages later as "Laura," and the action of the story centers around her deceased mother's maiden name and ancestry. The story opens with a dream Laura has of a beautiful young woman who embraces her in her bed and then bites her breast. Years later, this young woman reappears as the mysterious stranger Carmilla, left with Laura's family after a carriage accident. By the end of the story, after Carmilla seduces and preys upon the half-willing Laura, we discover that the vampire is her ancestor through her mother's bloodline and that she had earlier vamped another maternal

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bloodline and that she had earlier vamped another maternal descendant, Bertha. We also learn that though Carmilla's identity remains elusive, she has at least four names, all anagrams of one another: Mircalla, Millarca, Marcilla, and Carmilla Karnstein. Carmilla, like her forbidden love for Laura, is at first *non nominandum* in the novella as characters try to make sense of her origins and her unseemly fascination with her hostess. Ultimately, however, the male characters in the text who are threatened by her male-excluding passion discover that the clues to Carmilla's identity as well as her sexuality lie in deciphering the origin and meaning of her original name and her various anagrammatical aliases.

For the men in the novella, in contrast, there are not enough names to go around. We never discover the name of Laura's father, for example, and Doctor Spielsberg and General Spielsdorf have punning names nearly as interchangeable as their bland characters. The suppression of Laura's sire-name in favor of her mother's maiden name suggests an alternative to a patrilineal system in which women have social and economic identity through the name of their fathers or their husbands; Carmilla's passion for Laura not only threatens her life, but also the power structure of Victorian society. In *Carmilla*, Le Fanu uses various onomastic elements to dramatize unnameable desires: suggestive recombinations of names and near namesakes; lost names and unnamed relations; and teasing anagrams whose onomastic etymologies hint at what Wilde's lover later famously called "The love that dare not speak its name." Queen Victoria did not believe lesbianism existed, but the sexually conflicted Le Fanu was well aware of it and used names and their absence in the text to suggest his subversive subject matter without spelling everything out. Yet the various ambiguous meanings of Carmilla's names also perhaps indicate the author's own fears of the unregenerative nature of homosexuality itself. By having Carmilla seduce only her own maternal Karnstein descendants, Le Fanu makes vampirism, incest, and

homosexuality resonate metaphorically as well as onomastically in his text: each involve a longing for one's own kind.

Several critics have noted how *Carmilla* is a rendition of Coleridge's fragment "Christabel," which also features a female vampire, a motherless victim, obscure familial ties, and same-sex desire (Auerbach 1995, 48; Paglia 1986, 222). Le Fanu expands on these elements in his novella, making his lesbian vampire an ancestress of her victim Laura. Vampires in *Carmilla*, like those in Byron's *Giaour*, feed upon their own kin and cognomen:

But first, on earth as Vampire sent,
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent;
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood from all thy race;
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life. (Williams
2003, 17)

Lord Byron takes the idea of the vampire as a specter of the dead that feeds upon its own family from studies such as Dom Augustine Calmet's 1746 treatise on vampires entitled *Traité sur les apparitions des esprits, et sur les vampires*. Le Fanu likewise uses vampire folklore gleaned from French and Latin sources and slyly alludes to his own research by providing a faux bibliography toward the end of his text.

Le Fanu, however, also turns folklore on its head in *Carmilla* when he invents an odd onomastic convention for vampires. We discover that *Carmilla* was originally known as *Mircalla* and attacked another one of her maternal Karnstein descendents under the name *Millarca*:

Mircalla seemed to be limited to a name which, if not her real one, should at least reproduce, without the omission or addition of a single letter, those, as we say, anagrammatically, which compose it. *Carmilla* did this; so did *Millarca*. (146)

In *Carmilla*, grammar retains its ancient meaning of "glamour" and spell casting; though *Carmilla* spellbinds with her

uncanny beauty, she is herself bound by the spelling of her name. Each anagrammatical permutation she adopts carries its own host of meanings that hint at her true identity. She is identified in the novella as a *revenant*, from the French *revenir*, 'to return,' and is doomed to repeat her own fatal seduction through the ages, both an alternative to the patrilineal power system and a monstrous result of a passion that cannot rename itself but must remain confined to a mere a theme and variations of her mother's bloodline. Carmilla's various names do not lack meanings, but drown in them. Her aliases, like the amulets used to fend her off, are composed of parts different languages and not to be found in onomasticons. Like Laura's multilingual household and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's own name, the "consequence [is] a Babel" (89) of cognates from a variety of languages.¹ Her original name morphs into several other names the way her body transforms from human to cat to vague oppressive shadow. Le Fanu plays upon the positive and negative etymological interpretations of each of his vampire's names, perhaps underlining his own ambivalence about same-sex desires and female power. Though the men in the novel use the clues of Carmilla's names to track and stake her in the end, the novella ends on an ambiguous note, with Laura still yearning for her vanquished friend and the suggestion that the reign of female vampires is not yet over.

Carmilla Karnstein

Carmilla. The appellation Mircalla carries when Laura first meets her, *Carmilla*, is a phonetic rendering of the Italian name *Carmila* (Dunkling and Gosling 1985, 63) or *Carmella*, deriving from the Hebrew word for 'garden' (Kolatch 1990, 51). Initially, Carmilla seems to bring life and fruitfulness into Laura's barren existence, though the fruit of the garden of earthly delights she brings her soon turns bitter. At the beginning of Le Fanu's story, however, Carmilla seems the *car*, or 'vehicle,' for bringing *melli*, 'honey,' into Laura's lonely cloister and seems a meliorative addition to the household.

The Hebrew *Carmella* became the name of the White Friars of Mount Carmel, or *Carmelites*, from the late Latin word (*OED* I 340). Le Fanu was obviously taken with this name and used it in other stories as well, such as with the characters *Carmel Sherlock* and *Mr. Carmel*. Carmilla's name ironically suggests the nuns who inhabited the region as well as a pagan "paradisiacal garden" befitting her role in the novella as a mysterious seductress. To explain her reticence about the meaning of her name and her origins, Carmilla tells Laura, "I am under vows, no nun half so awfully, and I dare not tell my story yet" (114). She is under the compulsion of supernatural and linguistic limitations. Yet Laura learns all she needs to know about her strange guest from the three meager facts she does manage to extract from her:

First.-Her name was Carmilla.

Second.-Her family was very ancient and noble.

Third.-Her home lay in the direction of the west. (103)

It is the General, not Laura, who uses these clues to identify Carmilla as a vampire, deciphering the anagram of her name, tracing her ancestral history, and tracking her to her ancient and once illustrious Karnstein home in the west, the haunting grounds of "the great and titled dead."

Carmilla also connotes "age-old carnage" from the Latin *carn-*, 'flesh,' and the French *mille*, 'thousand,' a meaning that is underscored by her last name, *Karnstein*. "Her complexion [is] rich and brilliant" (103), undoubtedly from sleeping in a coffin filled with the blood of her victims; perhaps her name also derives from the word *carmin*, 'crimson,' and carries a faint and ironic suggestions of *carminare*, 'to heal by incantation or charm' (*OED* I 340). In several points in the novella, Laura describes Carmilla's *unheimlich* fascination over her-the return of the repressed in the form of an uncannily familiar stranger who shares a familial past with both of her favored victims, Laura and the General's niece, Bertha. Were Laura able to decipher her

friend's name, she would discover Carmilla's carnal kinship to her.

The fascination Carmilla holds over Laura is a mixed one, however, partaking of both pleasant and horrific connotations of her name. "Sometimes," Laura recalls,

My strange and beautiful companion would take hold of my hand and hold it with a fond pressure, renewed again and again; blushing softly, gazing into my face with languid and burning eyes, and breathing so fast her dress rose and fell with the tumultuous respiration. It was like the ardour of a lover; it embarrassed me; it was hateful yet overpowering; and with gloating eyes she drew me to her, and her hot lips traveled along my cheek in kisses; and she would whisper, almost in sobs, "You are mine, you shall be mine, and you and I are one forever." (104-105)

At such moments, Laura feels "a strange tumultuous excitement that was pleasurable...mingled with a vague sense of fear and distrust" (104), experiencing a carnal attraction and an instinctual repulsion at the carnage that keeps Carmilla alive. The fear and longing in Laura also mirrors that of many who experienced same-sex desires at a time when admitting homosexuality was tantamount to imprisonment and had not long before been punishable by death. For Victorian readers, Carmilla's name would have sounded both familiar and strange, like homosexuality itself—something they could almost name but not quite define with any certainty. Her anagrammatical names enact her "inverted" sexuality: she is both an onomastic and sexual deviant.

Millarca. Despite her bosom friendship with Laura, Carmilla remains steadfastly silent about her identity and meaning of her name. Later Laura learns that before she was Carmilla, the vampire assumed "the odd name Millarca," suggesting "a bridge across the ages" from the French *Mille*, 'thousand,' and *Arcus*, Latin for 'arch.' Early each morning, she must "pass over the steep Gothic bridge, westward, to reach the ruined castle of Karnstein" (126) and sleep by her

ancestral home. Had the General not stopped her, Millarca would have gone on indefinitely feeding upon the living, unable to assume a new name or a new life, bound by the laws of her deathless state and the letters of *Mircalla*.

For the motherless Laura, *Millarca* provides a bridge to the past and her dead mother, who was also a Karnstein and whose name and identity ironically become far more important to the story than the patronymic of Laura's father. Significantly, Carmilla feeds on peasant girls but dismisses them haughtily and does not seek to form a lasting bond with them. They are merely there for consumption, like peasants in a feudal system, and she sees only those of her own titled family as equals. "She?" Carmilla says when she beholds the funeral of a local girl. "I don't trouble my head about peasants" (106). In the nineteenth century, the aristocracy might have been on the decline, but in Le Fanu's novella, bloodlines still run true-though they are traced through the mother, suggesting an alternative power structure to the typical Victorian patrilineal one.

When General Spielsdorf arrives to track the vampire that claimed his young ward, he expresses his desire to visit the "many tombs of that extinct family" of Laura's mother (128). Laura's father, delighted with the older general's interest, says, "I hope you are thinking of claiming the title and estates" and marrying his daughter. The defunct estates of Laura's dead mother, under the law of coverture, passed to her father, and he imagines that his daughter will marry the general or other appropriate substitute-such as his near-namesake Baron Spielsberg-and thereby fulfill her destiny as a dutiful daughter. Yet instead of exchanging her sire-name (never identified in the novella) for that of a husband and eventually procreating to further her husband's line, Laura instead revives the lost bloodline of her dead mother when she becomes intimate with Millarca.

Millarca is also reminiscent of the vampire's ancestral home that was already old in her seventeenth century lifetime,

the Gothic arches of her family's churches and grounds in which she still sleeps during the day. At the moment the General finally identifies her as the fiend who has dispatched his beloved niece under the name *Millarca*, she stands beneath a narrow, arched doorway" of her ancestral home (142).

In addition, *Millarca* also seems to pun on the words *Arcadia* and *Arcanum*, a play on the idea of 'ancient pastoral pleasure' and "ancient mysteries" whose secret has been hidden in the depths of time. The history of *Millarca* and the whereabouts of her tomb have long been lost by the beginning of Le Fanu's story, and it is only through finding an ancient confession that her slayers manage to decipher her name and locate her resting place. With unconscious irony, Laura's father says to his strange guest before he discovers her true identity, "I wish all mysteries were as easily and innocently explained as yours, Carmilla" (123). The "Prologue" that frames the story also seems to pun on the *arcana* hidden in *Millarca*'s name. In it, we learn of a suppressed statement interpreting Laura's story by a Doctor Hesselius (perhaps the precursor to *Dracula*'s Van Helsing) explaining that the manuscript "involv[es], not improbably, some of the profoundest *arcana* of our dual existence, and its intermediates" (87).

Mircalla. Carmilla's first incarnation as *Mircalla* denotes 'the beautiful' (or *Calla*) 'miracle' (*Mira*). *Mircalla* itself is a near anagram for *miracle*, and she is indeed miraculous in her ability to slip through locked doors and sealed rooms. Her beauty is universally admired, and Laura describes her likeness to an ancient Karnstein portrait as a "miracle." Such punning, Craft argues, "becomes homoerotic because homophobic. Aurally enacting a drive toward the same, the pun's sound cunningly erases, or momentarily suspends, the semantic differences by which the hetero is both made to appear and made to appear natural, lucid, self-evident" (quoted in Sedgwick 1993, 54). Throughout his text, Le Fanu plays on the doubleness of Carmilla's existence—a seemingly

sweet and innocent young woman who hides her identity during each incarnation by changing her name into something almost familiar and nearly decodable.

Marcia Karnstein. When Laura first sees the begrimed portrait of Mircalla that bears such a “miraculous” resemblance to her young friend, she misreads the name as *Marcia Karnstein*, suggesting yet another possible interpretation of the vampire’s name. *Marcia* is short for *Marcella*, or “martial,” and is a feminized version of *Marcellus* (Kolatch 1990, 418), an onomastic cross-dressing: Laura at one point wonders if her guest could possibly be a male lover in disguise. “Was there here a disguise and a romance?” she wonders (105). “What if a boyish lover had found his way into the house, and sought to prosecute his suit in masquerade?”

As with *Carmella* and *Miracle*, however, *Marcella* is a tantalizing near-anagram of *Carmilla* that ultimately refuses definite identification. Her various names, like her various attributes, flow into one another metaphorically. Like homosexuality itself, famously described by Oscar Wilde’s lover as a love “that dare not speak its name,” the variations of the vampire’s name (both *Millarca* and *Mircalla* are neologisms) hint at identities and relationships that Le Fanu cannot directly discuss in his text. Subversive anagrams hint at inverted passions, and vampirism becomes parallel to lesbianism and incest: each involve lusting for one’s own kind. “Are we related?” Laura wonders when Carmilla becomes overzealous in her embraces (105).²

Karnstein. All of these given, but hardly Christian, names are bounded by Carmilla’s family name even as her carnivorous body is bounded by the stone crypt where she must sleep. There are no sire-names in *Carmilla*, only the female line of the Karnsteins, a name that has ostensibly died out long ago but lives on secretly in its female descendents. *Karnstein* apparently derives from the Latin *carnis*, ‘flesh,’ and *Stein*, the German term for ‘stone.’ Carmilla is *steinalt*, ‘ancient,’ and embodies an ancient carnality threatening the

roots of society, a rampant female sexuality that menaces the patriarchy. Elizabeth Signorotti points out that "Laura's and Carmilla's lesbian relationship defies the traditional structures of kinship by which men regulate the exchange of women to promote male bondings" (1996 607). Like the unframed and uncanny portrait out of which Laura's ancestor seems to step preternaturally, Carmilla refuses to be fixed or defined by male authority until her final staking in her coffin.

Doctor Spielsberg and General Spielsdorf.

In contrast to Carmilla's bewildering and tantalizing array of names and possible interpretations, the names of the men involved with bringing Laura (temporarily) back to health, *Doctor Spielsberg* and *General Spielsdorf*, are nearly as interchangeable as their identities. They are "reduplications" of one another, a *Spiel*, 'mirror,' and *berg* or *dorf*, 'village,' mirroring the conventions of society and abhorring the secret knowledge and passions of the vampire matriarchy. W. J. McCormack points out how Le Fanu recycled names in his novels, where "a combination of names from one fiction breaks down and resurfaces in its separate elements in other stories and novels" (72) such as *Sylvester Yelland* in "The Watcher" and *Yelland Mace* in *Checkmate* or the various *Martsons*, *Merstons*, and *Meryns* one encounters in his novels. He was also fascinated by the meanings of names, missing names, and false identities, even calling one of his novels *A Lost Name*. We find all of these onomastic tendencies in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*: the general and doctor have nearly identical names, they cite invented treatises, and they aid Laura's unnamed father in tracking down the vampire by figuring out her true lineage and identity.

Like Laura's aged Papa, Baron Vordenburg, and the stock figures of the woodsman and the "two medical men" (all of whom help to slay Carmilla), General Spielsdorf and Doctor Spielsberg lack the vitality and interest of the female vampire—but they do, nevertheless, manage to kill her, bringing into

question whether or not Le Fanu ultimately sides with his lesbian vampire or the clone-like figures who triumph over her. Metaphorically, Le Fanu uses the figure of the vampire to express the frightening specter of homosexuality, a creature feeding on its own gender and family. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen argues, “a monster’s body is a cultural body” (quoted in Williams 2003, 9) that incarnates a culture’s worst fears, fantasies, and taboos. In the novella, Baron Vordenberg describes Carmilla’s relationship with Laura as a monstrosity in terms that would equally express Victorian fears of same-sex relations: “The vampire,” he tells us,

is prone to be fascinated with an engrossing vehemence, resembling the passion of love, by particular persons....It will in these cases, husband and protract its murderous enjoyment with the refinement of an epicure, and heighten it by the gradual approaches of an artful courtship. In these cases it seems to yearn for something like sympathy and consent. (146)

Le Fanu’s narrative, however, suggests that Carmilla’s connection with Laura does not simply “[resemble] the passion of love,” but is indeed love—“a cruel love—strange love” that baffles the men around them (115). Carmilla does “husband” her enjoyment with Laura, feeding on her breast while she sleeps and thereby supping on her own bloodline as well as enacting an unholy suckling. Laura’s reaction to these nightly feedings, like her response to Carmilla’s diurnal caresses, is ambiguous—both pleasant and terrifying. “Certain vague and strange sensations visited me in my sleep,” Laura says, including “that pleasant, peculiar cold thrill which we feel in bathing when we move against the current of a river....Sometimes it was as if warm lips kissed me...My heart beat faster, my breathing rose and fell rapidly and full drawn; a sobbing, that rose into a sense of strangulation, supervened, and turned into a dreadful convulsion, in which my senses left me, and I became unconscious” (118-119) in a *petite morte* before her final death.

Carmilla's unholy appetites are cruel indeed, however, and perhaps suggest the author's own fears of sexuality. Though Le Fanu had four children, several biographers have suggested that he was himself tormented by same-sex desires; while he revered his sister, mother, and wife, his marriage was apparently not a happy one. He could never quite assure his wife that he wanted her, and after her death, he was tormented by guilt. "Was she ever confident of your love?" he wrote in his diary. "She was always doubting and sometimes actually disbelieving my love," he confessed, though he tried to show it "Day & night."³ He kept reverting back to a vision she had seen of her dead father touching her bedcovers and calling her to the grave—a gender reversal of Laura's visions of Carmilla at her bedside beckoning her to the tomb.

Critics have been divided about whether to read *Carmilla* as a retort to or an affirmation of a patrilineal power structure and its strictures on female desire. Though Carmilla is stronger than every male she encounters, a horde of them eventually stake, decapitate, incinerate, and drown her, and the excessiveness of this violence against her reads like a ritual rape. One of the original illustrations that accompanied the text when it was first published in *The Dark Blue* magazine in 1871 shows Millarca reading out to the scantily clad sleeping form of Bertha while the General, sword raised, peers through the door at the bedroom scene. By framing the illustration with two drawn draperies, D. M. Frison puts the reader in the position of General Spielsdorf, a peeping-Tom into the vampire's intimate relationships. The story would have titillated male readers with its lesbian relationships even as its ending would have reassured them, apparently restoring the schloss in Styria to its normative heterosexual power system by the novella's end.

Le Fanu could not, however, have acceptably ended his story any other way than by suppressing the lesbian vampire who defiled male authority; to support homosexuality openly in Victorian England was to risk

imprisonment and moral outrage.⁴ Despite the slaying of Carmilla in the end, the text seems to lose some of its demonic intensity towards its denouement as a group of men band together to stake Carmilla. Along the way, they offer ample facts and reasons for their deeds in the form of learned monologues that are playfully sprinkled with references to “all the great and little works upon the subject” (146) as though spoofing the Gothic convention to document and gloss and provide vampiric etymologies. The folkloric power of undead females and their unholy alliance to the moon gives way to enlightenment thought and scientific reasoning. Nina Auerbach notes, “Laura’s point of view shrivels under this invasion of experts and official language, as does the vitality of Le Fanu’s story” (1995, 46). Yet for all their extensive knowledge, the men nonetheless never quite make out the true nature of Carmilla’s love for Laura any more than they can clearly delineate a definitive meaning of any of her names. The significance of *Carmilla* / *Millarca* / *Marcilla Karnstein* remain as elusive as the creature itself, spinning a web of fascination through association and suggested meanings without giving everything away.

The irresolution of the novella’s ending and its allusion to *Carmilla*’s various onomastic permutations throughout the text also suggest that to make sense of the subversive intentions of Le Fanu’s *jeu d’esprit*, one must read between the lines. After Carmilla’s death, the reader learns that the destroyed vampire “is projected into a far more horrible life”—but a form of life nonetheless. In addition, the older vampire she calls her mother and her mysterious female companion are still at large by the novella’s end. We also learn that the victims of vampires “almost invariably” become vampires themselves, and Laura dies after writing her narrative. Carmilla falls, but two more vampires spring up in her place. Laura and her distant cousin Bertha, we presume, are busy vampiring other nubile Karnsteins, thereby leaving the ground open for sequels.⁵

Laura addresses her narrative to an unidentified young woman and seems haunted by Carmilla's death at the end, making one wonder how much of a triumph the slaying really is. The last paragraph conjures up all of the vampire's various guises and names: the "beautiful miracle" *Mircalla*, the archfiend *Millarca*, and the ambiguous *Carmilla*—crimson mouthed and carnal, charming and ancient, a bringer of honeyed sweets and carnage. Laura's final words in the novella underline this irresolution and lingering desire: "to this hour the image of Carmilla returns to memory with ambiguous alterations," she writes (148); "sometimes the playful, languid, beautiful girl; sometimes the writhing fiend I saw in the ruined church; and often from a reverie I have started, fancying I heard the light step of Carmilla at the drawing-room door."

Notes

1 Likewise, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's own name is a polyglot one; perhaps *Carmilla's* Babel of names is a sly allusion to his own sense of outsiderhood. He was born in Dublin into a wealthy family with Huguenot ancestry and related to the playwright Richard Brinsley. Both Bram Stoker and Sheridan Le Fanu were Irish and influenced by Irish folktales and ballads as well as English literature. Culturally, then, they could be said to have occupied the position of vampires, living on the fringes of English society but not wholly a part of it, much as Dracula himself is an outsider trying to assimilate. (Cartoons in *Punch* from 1885 depicted the Irish National League as a Parnell-faced vampire; *The Irish Pilot*, in turn, depicted England as a vampire preying on Ireland.) Although Le Fanu published his stories anonymously, it is also perhaps worth noting that authors frequently used anagrams as aliases.

2 Though Le Fanu's tale turns on Carmilla Karnstein's name, that of her victim Laura—mentioned incidentally forty pages into the novella—is scarcely discussed at all, and we do not know her last name. Laura comes from *Laurus*, 'laurel,' but for someone "renowned," Laura lives a relatively obscure life amid the mountains of Styria. Yet she becomes famous for her experiences with Carmilla, and Dr. Hesselius publishes her account of it in his anthology of preternatural events.

3 See, for example, the excellent recent biographies of Le Fanu: Gary William J. Crawford's *Sheridan Le Fanu: A Bio-Bibliography* (1995), Ivan Melada's *Sheridan Le Fanu* (1987) as well as W. J. McCormack's

Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History Through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats, and Bowen (1993), *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland* (1980), and *Sheridan Le Fanu* (1997).

4 Le Fanu apparently based his tale of lesbian vampirism on Samuel Taylor Coleridge's unfinished "Christabel" that ends before the vampire likewise succumbs to male authority. Camille Paglia has suggested that Coleridge left it unfinished because he did not want to kill of his preternaturally intense Geraldine.

5 The multiplication of names for Le Fanu's vampire continued long after he published his tale. The novella has spawned at least fifteen movies with forty-five titles—some have as many as nine alternative names. Among them, in addition to *Carmilla* and Carl Dreyer's well-known *Vampyr*, are *Innocents from Hell*, *Mark of the Innocent 3*, *Sisters of Satan*, *Blood and Roses*, *Lust for a Vampire*, *The Vampire Lovers*, *To Die with Pleasure*, *Twins of Evil*, *Vampires vs. Zombies*, *The Vampire's Crypt*, *Crypt of Horror*, *Terror in the Crypt*, *Till Death Do Us Part*, *The Blood-Splattered Bride*, and *Bloody Fiancée*.

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