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“Lilith Shall Be Saved by Her Childbearing:” Gynocentric Consideration on the Female Body and the Relationship between Mother and Daughter in George MacDonald’s *Lilith*

Ayumi Kumabe

Introduction

—even Lilith shall be saved by her childbearing. (148)¹

According to ancient Jewish mythology, Adam had a wife before the creation of Eve, named Lilith. She is very different from Eve, who is created from her husband’s rib: Lilith is created from the dust of the ground like Adam. Hating her subordinate position and demanding equality, Lilith leaves him, and becomes a seductress of sleeping men and a robber/killer of babies. In George MacDonald’s *Lilith* (1895), she is described as a demoniac, femme-fatale like figure: she sucks people’s, especially babies’ blood, kills her own daughter by flinging her against the floor, and seduces Vane. At the same time, she mysteriously attracts us, evoking pity and empathy.

Lilith is so complicated and troubling that many reviews and some of the author’s friends have criticized the book. For example, *The Pall Mall*

Gazette contends that “Mr. George MacDonald’s new romance will not only puzzle but disappoint his admirers,” seeing *Lilith* as “a wild phantasmagoria of nonsense” (9). Even Louisa, MacDonald’s beloved wife and soul mate, “could not be happy over its publication,” considering *Lilith* to be “a terrible book” (Greville MacDonald, *Reminiscences of a Specialist* 321). While Greville, their eldest son, who “MacDonald felt of all his children understood him the best now that Lily was gone,” admired the book and saw it as “the Revelation of St. George the Devine” (Hein 386), he also admitted that it “attracted little notice” (*George MacDonald and His Wife* 547).²

There are mainly three tendencies in examining this enigmatic novel, and each has a controversial point for examining the image of woman. First, previous studies tend to consider *Lilith* to be a story about the protagonist Vane’s growth, that is, a Bildungsroman.³ In this case, “good” women—Eve, Mara, and Lona—are seen as mere supporters for his development. On the contrary, Lilith, a “bad” lady, is an obstruction to him: he needs to reject and overcome her in order to attain maturity. In this way, women are not only dichotomized but also considered to be mere subordinate figures who help Vane to grow spiritually. For instance, Bonnie Gaarden sees women in the novel merely as the indicator of his growth: “The trajectory of Vane’s development, as I see it, runs from Lilith (ego formation) to Lona

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(development of consciousness and social adaptation) to Mara (midwife suffering resulting from increased self-awareness) to Eve (the death of the conflicted personality and birth of the more inclusive, individual self)” (170-71). Moreover, from the view point of Bildungsroman, *Lilith*’s ending is often seen as a failure. Robert Lee Wolff asserts that “*Lilith* ought to end” (365) at the scene where Vane sleeps on the couch next to Lona in Eve’s House of Death because “we have in fact already reached the end of Vane’s education” (365). He continues to state that “[a]s we near the end, the imagery of *Lilith* breaks down completely,” seeing the last six chapters as “bad mythology and bad art” (369).⁴ Such a negative interpretation of the ending leads to the undervaluation of woman: they overlook Mara, the only person who is with Vane in the real world in the final chapter and her importance. Besides, we should consider the possibility that Vane, who is forced to be back home, can help the waking of Lilith, who waits for the redemption like him.

Secondly, some previous studies pay attention to the story’s structure: the interrelation between reality and the parallel world or dream, and the story’s “endless ending.”⁵ Indeed, MacDonald attempts to break down dualism by blurring the boundary between reality and the parallel world/dream.⁶ From this viewpoint, critics refer to the volume that sticks to the door between Vane’s ordinary, real world and Mr. Raven (Adam)’s

alternate, parallel world: this book exists in two worlds simultaneously. For instance, Robert A. Collins mentions this “mutilated ‘half book’” as a symbol of “the intimate relationship between parallel worlds,” “a liminal space” (9). Actually, this mutilated volume describes the interrelation/coexistence of two worlds: “*Ah, the two worlds! So strangely are they one, / And yet so measurelessly wide apart!*” (147).⁷ However, critics should have not limited their discussion merely on its role of blurring two worlds. The content of the volume must be investigated, because, actually, the book, called “the mutilated volume” (17, 143) by Vane, is Lilith’s story narrated in her own words. Except its mediatory role, they emphasize that Adam uses it in order to dominate Lilith. For example, McGillis points out: “Adam reads this book in order to reassume control over his first wife Lilith, to put an end to her protean behaviour” (“Femininity and Freedom” 46). Indeed, we should notice that the volume connects/blurs two worlds and helps Adam to control Lilith, but we must look into its contents more in detail, which can give us a clue for Lilith’s life and identity.

Thirdly, from the Christian viewpoint, many previous studies have focused exceedingly on the importance of the redemption: sleeping in Eve’s “The House of Death” and waking. Indeed, Christianity fills a vital function in almost all of MacDonald’s works, but in this case, only Lilith’s negative

aspects are emphasized—she is a sinful person—bringing about the simplification of the woman-image in this work. Lilith can be a herald of feminism, but in general, she has been negatively regarded as a destroyer of existing order or a destructive femme fatale. For example, David Holbrook unreservedly writes “*Lilith: Loving the Evil Female*” in the chapter title, and considers her to be “the castrating Mother, or Death Mother” (252). David Melville Wingrove also states that “Lilith offers the supreme embodiment of the blood-sucking Romantic femme fatale, a figure that haunted Goethe, Coleridge, Tieck, Gautier, Keats, Poe, Baudelaire, Le Fanu, Stevenson, and Stoker (to name only a few) and survives to this day in the ruthless vampire divas of *True Blood* and *Twilight*” (175).⁸ From this viewpoint, critics emphasize that Lilith, the sinful woman, should be tamed and silenced. For instance, John Pennington, using Bram Dijkstra’s term “therapeutic rape” (83) in *Idols of Perversity*, says that “Adam—a representative of patriarchal, religious power—must therapeutically rape Lilith—representative of monstrous female power—so that Lilith can transform into the passive, angelic, Eve figure” (35). In addition, previous studies of this approach tend to examine Lilith in her relationship with male characters, underlining her devilish, evil attitudes toward them: this “evil” female needs to be overcome for Vane’s proper growth, and must be controlled rightly by her ex-husband Adam for her redemption to make her

wrongs return to right. However, such interpretation leads to the underestimation of female relationships. We should pay more attention to the fact that Eve and Mara help Lilith to see herself and repent of her sins. More importantly, we should note the overlooked fact that Lona, Lilith’s own daughter, plays an essential role in her redemption, and the life succession between them holds the key.

Furthermore, if we see Lilith only as a sinful, bad woman, a stereotyped femme-fatale figure, it can lead to the simplification of the woman image: classifying Eve, Mara, and Lona as “good women” in a directly opposite position to Lilith, “a bad woman.” For instance, Nina Auerbach asserts that MacDonald “dilutes his queen [Lilith] by counterbalancing her ambition against the benevolent wisdom of Eve, Mara, and Lona, three ‘good’ ruling women who preside over the House of Death, soothing its inhabitants into a mesmeric trance to await a vague universal awakening. Lilith’s unalloyed hunger for power is nullified by these contrasting associations of ruling women with the soothing anodynes of maternity, religion, and death” (38).⁹ However, although Eve is described as an ideal mother and Mara seems to be a good lady opposite to Lilith in this work, Eve is generally seen as “the fallen woman,”¹⁰ and Mara, in fact Mary Magdalene,¹¹ is also seen as such. Interestingly, Mara and Lilith are sometimes mixed up in the work, and even Lona, seemingly contradictory

to her mother, has some common points with her as we will examine in later sections. As a consequence, we should not only consider Lilith’s multiple aspects other than negative one, but also investigate other female figures: Eve and Mara, fallen, then repentant women like Lilith, and Lona, whose connection to her mother is inseparable.

In this article, we will not merely look at Lilith’s cruel character but cast light on her overlooked background—why she becomes such a demonic figure—and on her underestimated relationship with her daughter, investigating the image of woman more in detail. Lilith cannot understand the preciousness of life because she is not born from mother, and she even rejects the fact that she is given life/created by God. That is to say, she is created as the starting point of life, but as she clings to the fancy of her self-created origin, she is ignorant of life’s preciousness, living a terrible *dead* life.¹² Therefore, she tries to appropriate life only for herself, showing her demonic aspects like sucking babies’ blood, sterilizing women, and killing her own daughter. While previous studies tend to pay much more attention to the Lilith-Vane relationship than the Lilith-Lona one, we will show that this complicated but special mother-daughter connection serves to end Lilith’s *dead* life and let her life flow. For this purpose, we focus on Adam’s words quoted at the beginning: “even Lilith shall be saved by her childbearing” (148). These words can sound patriarchal and androcentric

that woman should bear a child: Lilith must be tamed to become “the Angel in the House,” a good ideal woman (mother) for her redemption.¹³ However, we will reinterpret his words by reading them more literally—Lilith should be saved by giving birth to Lona—turning them into gynocentric words showing the close mother-daughter relationship.

What holds the key is the life succession/flow described as some water images. Lilith tries to hoard life for herself by depriving the earth of water as well as killing her daughter, “an open channel” (150) to stop her life/immortality flowing away from her. First of all, in section I, we will consider why Lilith becomes such a demonic woman, mentioning *Lilith*’s background and how the figure Lilith is essential for the author. Then, we will look at “another *Lilith*” in this work, that is, “the mutilated volume” (17, 143) about Lilith in Chapter XXIX for her overlooked background. In section II, we will examine the water-life connection by referring to the Little Ones’ need of water for their growth, and consider how Lilith appropriates life/water, turning the world full of life into the dead one. Next, in section III, we will investigate the complicated but inseparable relationship between Lilith and her daughter by mentioning some of their commonalities despite their apparent disparities, and their corporeality. Also, we will pay attention to the scene where Lilith kills her daughter, “an open channel” to stop her life from flowing away, and the ensuing ironic result—

Lilith herself also becomes dead-like—as the testimony of their special bonds. Section IV consists of three parts, which focus on how Lilith can be saved. First, we will consider how Vane helps Lilith to be saved and mediates between Lilith and Lona for their life succession, looking into his role of rewriting “the mutilated volume” about Lilith. The second part will examine how Lilith releases the usurped water: her closed hand becomes like the seed that gives life to the earth and allows the Little Ones to grow. In the third part, we will pay attention to the underestimated female relationships. Eve and Mara, another mother and daughter, help Lilith repent of her sins, and help her go to “home,” where God is, to start her true, new life. The most important figure is Lilith’s daughter, Lona, who receives life from Lilith in a true sense, never deprives her of life but lets the stream of her mother’s own life flow. Lilith’s inseparable relationship to her daughter—they are life giver and receiver with each other—should save her.

I. Lilith, the First Woman, or a Motherless Mother: The Background of *Lilith*

Lilith is not MacDonald’s creation, but a legendary figure. Raeper summarizes Lilith’s origin succinctly:

Originally Lilith was a character in Jewish mythology, probably based on an earlier Babylonian figure. The first account of the

creation in Genesis ‘... in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them’ was adapted in a cabbalistic retelling of the story in which Lilith was Adam’s first wife, and like him created from the dust of the ground. Being created equally with Adam, she demanded equality, and refused to obey him in taking the subordinate position in sexual intercourse. Rebelling, she fled and took to killing babies, over whom she claimed power, and seducing sleeping young men. She herself gave birth to demons and spirits, a hundred of whom were to die each day as a punishment for her refusal to obey Adam. Later she became known as Sammael’s (Satan’s) wife. (365-66)

This powerful, destructive woman is so influential that we can see the legacy of the Lilith legend in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Besides, though she has been regarded as a sinful femme fatale from the male viewpoint, many feminists try to reinterpret this first woman as their forerunner.¹⁵

Lilith seems to be the very image of the woman that MacDonald has sought to delineate in his works during his lifetime. His earnest and struggling effort to grasp this lady is shown in the fact that he worked on *Lilith* almost for five years, revising it many times,¹⁶ while *Phantastes*, sometimes seen as *Lilith*’s counterpart for their similar plot, took MacDonald only “two months to write without any close work” (Greville MacDonald, *George MacDonald and His Wife* (290). Raeper mentions that

“for MacDonald, Lilith is more than just a character in one of his books—she provides a hermetic key to the understanding of all his work, for he was always dogged by this sinister figure” (366). Actually, this disastrous but seductive lady, Lona’s terrible mother, has been related to the expression of MacDonald’s conflicting desire and emotion toward his own mother. David Holbrook, who relates almost of all female characters with MacDonald’s dead mother, asserts that all his life “has been a search for the mother” (242). Moreover, Raeper states that MacDonald “had long grappled with the loss of his own mother, taken from him when he was eight. In his writing there is a long parade of twisted mothers, summed up in Lilith, who is not only Lona’s mother, but Vane’s also” (383). Then, referring to the Freudian theory, he contends that MacDonald, like “a child bereaved of its mother could often construe her death as an abandonment,” may project his “malevolent feelings onto a female figure, creating a destructive and evil mother-image” (383) in *Lilith*.

Indeed, MacDonald may have expressed his complicated emotion toward his dead mother in the figure of destructive, terrible mother Lilith, but we should not limit our examination just to this matter. In fact, the very name Lilith had already appeared twice in MacDonald’s work before the publication of *Lilith* in 1895, and they cannot be merely related to his lost mother. Lilith made her first appearance in his short tale “The Cruel Painter”

included in *Adela Cathcart* (1864). In this work, Lilith is the daughter of the cruel painter Teufelsbüst, who finds delight in drawing the scenes of torture and paints her in his canvases as a heartless indifferent beauty, enhancing the cruelty of his works. Significantly, this daughter Lilith also has no mother in a sense, for her mother has already died a mysterious death. And then, Lilith’s second appearance is not as a woman but as a white mare in *Wilfrid Cumbermede* (1872). As Raeper admits, the horse counter-balances the temptress Clara Coningham, the one who acts like Lilith.¹⁷

In addition to these figures named Lilith, we can catch sight of Lilith’s forerunners in MacDonald’s other works. Struggling to describe his emotions toward Lilith, Vane says that “my frame quiver[s] with conflicting consciousnesses, to analyse which I ha[ve] no power. I [am] simultaneously attracted and repelled: each sensation seem[s] either” (127). MacDonald depicts such women who awake contradictory emotions like love and hate simultaneously. These women do not just provoke conflicting emotions, but have beauty and wickedness mysteriously coexist in them: for example, the Alder-Maiden in *Phantastes* (1858), the were-wolf daughter in “The Gray Wolf” (1871), and Watho in “The History of Photogen and Nycteris” (1879). Perhaps we may include North Wind in *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871) and Queen Irene (the great-great-grandmother) in the *Princess* books (*The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) and *The Princess and Curdie* (1883))

in this list.¹⁸ On the basis of this list, we can perceive how eagerly MacDonald has sought to grasp and delineate this mysterious, conflicting woman-image, which should be considered for the deeper understanding of his view of women.

If we want to get the better understanding of the mystic lady Lilith, it is required to think over another *Lilith* in this work, namely, the book about her, “the mutilated volume” (17, 143) that sticks into the masked door between reality and the parallel world.¹⁹ As mentioned in introduction, previous studies have overlooked its content, exceedingly focusing on its role to connect two worlds and control Lilith, but the volume itself is worth examining for appreciating this mysterious, demoniac figure. Moreover, considering its content will also lead to casting a new light on the work’s problematic ending—Vane is forced to come back to his home on his way to the throne of the Ancient of Days with Lona—and presenting a positive interpretation: Vane’s return also helps Lilith to be saved by writing the book about Lilith, that is, the book *Lilith* which we read.²⁰ *Lilith* is Vane’s first-person novel—he looks back to his experience and narrates them after returning home—and therefore, if he had gone to home/God with Lona, we could not read *Lilith*.²¹

In the mutilated volume, Lilith speaks about herself in some unintelligible words before alphabet.²² It can remind us of *écriture féminine*,

proposed by some French feminists like Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, and Luce Irigaray, which deviates from traditional masculine styles of writing and can defy the male order, granting women some power to speak/write.²³

However, contrary to *écriture féminine*, the female writing, this mutilated volume never grants Lilith initiative/power. Instead, Adam appropriates it for dominating her. As this volume narrates how she has remade, “self-created” herself, Adam’s usage of it shows that the self she attests to is her false self, which should be turned into the original, good one that God has intended her to be. Furthermore, we cannot learn enough about her in this volume. Especially, she seems to talk about her (self-)creation, and she never mentions her daughter, who plays a key role for her redemption. Thanks to Vane, the true, suitable volume about Lilith is written: we can see her background, both her attractive and negative characteristics, how she repents of her sins, and most importantly, we can notice the importance of her complicated but inseparable relationship with Lona through reading *Lilith*.

We will examine what Vane writes about and how his narrative helps Lilith to be saved in the last section, but here, first of all, we should consider how she narrates herself in the mutilated volume. Vane, thinking that the volume seems to beckon him, goes “down on [his] knees, and open[s] it as far as its position would permit, but could see nothing” (17), showing the

male desire to see/know. Peter Brooks says that “[m]an as knowing subject postulates woman’s body as the object to be known” and the female body often turns into “the ultimate enigma” (97).²⁴ Also, McGillis states that “[t]he book contains a poem which is apparently a rendering of Lilith’s own words, and these Adam uses against her. Her words, previous to alphabets, are now written on parchment and bound; ... The book which contains her words is used to control her” (“Femininity and Freedom” 46). Although this volume is about herself and is Lilith’s own narrative, it never gives her power and initiative.

Lilith, a strong, independent woman, can be seen as the herald of feminism, but she is also the slave of male desire because she makes herself accord with it. She says about herself in the volume: *“But if I found a man that could believe / In what he saw not, felt not, and yet knew, / From him I should take substance, and receive / Firmness and form relate to touch and view; / Then should I clothe me in the likeness true / Of that idea where his soul did cleave!”* (144). Therefore, although she asserts that “[w]hat I choose to seem to myself makes me what I am. My own thought makes me me; my own thought of myself is me. Another shall not make me!” and considers herself to be “a free woman” (200), she is in fact a slave to a man who she tries to seduce—make him love/admire her—and his desire.

Lilith must have failed to make Adam worship her. The man who

Lilith lies beside can be Adam, and she tries to make him love her “*with a hungering / After he kn[ows] not what—if it [i]s aught / Or but a nameless something that [i]s wrought / By him out of himself*” (145). The love that Lilith hungers for is similar to what the Alder-maiden in *Phantastes* desires from men. A mother living in the second cottage that Anodos visits tells him what makes this disastrous maiden beautiful: “although she loves no man, she loves the love of any man; and when she finds one in her power, her desire to bewitch him and gain his love, (not for the sake of his love either, but that she may be conscious anew of her own beauty, through the admiration he manifests) makes her very lovely” (MacDonald, *Phantastes* 50-51). And the mother continues to see her beauty through such *love* as “self-destructive,” “constantly wearing her away within” (51). Like the Alder-maiden, Lilith loves not a man but the love that he shows for her. It is really narcissistic, self-loving, self-sufficient attitude, which can be connected to her fancy of self-creation. Furthermore, Lilith tries to subjugate Adam by doing “*what no woman ever could, or can*” (144). We cannot exactly know what she means, but one answer could be giving birth to/creating her child alone.²⁵ However, her attempt has failed as Adam says: “puffed with the fancy that she had created her [Lona], *would have me fall down and worship her!* Finding, however, that I would but love and honour, never obey and worship her, she poured out her blood to escape me, fled to

the army of the aliens” (147-48, emphasis added). Then, she has “so ensnared the heart of the great Shadow, that he bec[omes] her slave,” and the Shadow makes “her Queen of Hell” (148). After that, she tries to do the same thing again to Vane.²⁶ Lilith tells him: “When you found me, I found a man! ... But you must satisfy my desire or set me free ... To satisfy the hunger of my love, *you must follow me looking for nothing*, not gratitude, not even pity in return!—follow and find me, and be content with merest presence, with scantest forbearance!” (130, emphasis added).²⁷ Just like she did with Adam before, Lilith tries to make Vane worship her with love for nothing in return from her. She just desires admiration and worship, demanding power over males, returning to them *nothing*. However, her words—they must follow her looking for *nothing*—can also mean that *she* is *nothing*. As we will show, she is a *dead* life, and her desire for males may reveal her way of being. Besides, even though she makes herself young and beautiful in order to seduce or subjugate males, at the same time she is subject to their desire. Lilith continues telling Vane: “What you have made me is yours! ... I will repay you as never yet did woman! My power, my beauty, my love are your own: take them” (131). As a consequence, though she asserts that she is a self-created—“No one ever made me” (200)—free, and independent woman, this belief is in fact just her illusion.

We should look at light/darkness (shadow) in order to consider

Lilith’s altered false self. Light often plays an essential role in MacDonald’s works and belief.²⁸ In this work, Lilith’s close connection with darkness and shadow demonstrates that she turns herself into the evil figure from the good one that God originally has intended her to be. We can see this darkness/light comparison clearly when Adam relates his “evil” ex-wife to darkness, and the present “good” wife to light: “Then God gave me another wife—not an angel, but a woman—who is to this as light is to darkness” (148). Moreover, Vane emphasizes Eve’s whiteness and lightness at their first meeting: “She was all in white—as white as new-fallen snow, and her face was as white as her dress, but not like snow, for at once it suggested warmth. ... The life of her face and her whole person was gathered and concentrated in her eyes, where it became light” (28). On the contrary, Lilith is clearly related to darkness/night, which is especially shown in her companion, the great Shadow and her dark spot that is recurrently mentioned.²⁹

Even though Lilith is now allied with darkness, represented by the Shadow and the wound on her side, in fact, Lilith was the existence of light. In the mutilated volume, she states: “*Fleeing cold whiteness, I would sit alone— / Not in the sun—I fear his bronzing light, / But in his radiance back around me thrown / By fulgent mirrors tempering his might; / Thus bathing in a moon-bath not too bright, / My skin I tinted slow to ivory tone*” (146).

Also, she mentions her original, scar-less state: “*Never had spot me spotted from by birth, / Or mole, or scar of hurt, or fret of death*” (146). Actually, as Adam says, Lilith was at first “an angelic splendour” (147), and she herself narrates: “*That I was a queen I knew right well, / And sometimes wore a spleandour on my head / Whose flashing even dead darkness could not quell*” (145). However, since Lilith “ha[s] so ensnared the heart of the great Shadow, that he became her slave, wrought her will, and made her *queen of Hell*” (148, emphasis added), she comes to be a completely different, evil person.³⁰ Even though we cannot exactly know how Lilith allies with the Shadow in the mutilated volume, during several pages that Adam skips, she must league with the Shadow and remake herself—becomes self-created—in defiance of God and Adam, but she grieves over it in the volume.

*Sudden I woke, nor knew the ghastly fear
That held me—not like serpent coiled about,
But like a vapour moist, corrupt, and drear,
Filling heart, soul, and breast and brain throughout,
My being lay motionless in sickening doubt,
Nor dared to ask how came the horror here* (145).

...

But now, all round was dark, dark all within!

My eyes not even gave out a phantom-flash;

My fingers sank in pulp through pulpy skin;

My body lay death weltered in a mash

Of slimy horrors” (146-47).

Gaarden states that “having taken flesh, she eventually finds herself rotting in a coffin, sovereignty and beauty fled, ... Lilith is the air-fish [in “The Golden Key”] who won’t go into the pot. The alternative is live corruption” (44). It is clearly shown in the scene where Vane sees Lilith for the first time. She is beautiful, but after she falls to the ground suddenly, her body disintegrates: “she began to writhe in such torture ... her legs, hurrying from her body, sped away serpents. From her shoulders fled her arms as in terror, serpents also. Then something flew up from her like a bat, and when I looked again, she was gone” (50). Both serpent and bat remind us of evil and darkness. The instability of her body made up of such dark creatures attests that she has become a different, evil person, allying with the Shadow. However, her current, self-created state is against her nature, and so she must part from the Shadow, stepping down from her false queendom.

We can see the importance of light when Mara helps Lilith to repent of her sins by making her see her evil self and her original, good one: Mara uses “[a] silvery creature like a slowworm” (198) reminiscent of light. Then, she actually refers to light, suggestive of God, for prevailing upon Lilith:

“there is a light that goes deeper than the will, a light that lights up the darkness behind it: that light can change your will, can make it truly yours and not another’s—not the Shadow’s. Into the created can pour itself the creating will, and so redeem it!” (200). However, Lilith says that “[t]hat light shall not enter me,” hating it, and calls out “[b]egone, slave!” (200) to Mara. The great Shadow that Lilith mentions is the existence of self-creation like her, who clings to the fancy about her self-created origin and desires to live eternally only for herself.³¹ However, actually, the shadow cannot exist without light, and so Lilith also cannot be existent without another. She must accept the fact that “another has made [her]” (200). When she can accept this, then she will acknowledge the existence of her daughter who she has rejected and even tried to kill, letting the stream of her life flow.

In a sense, Lilith can be seen as a feminist who objects to a convention that a woman should become an ideal, good mother—she “count[s] it slavery to be one with me [Adam], and bear children for Him who g[ives] her being” (147)—it is problematic that her attempt to dominate Adam is the mere reversion of what the patriarchal society did for women. Besides, her undervaluation of Lona’s existence—the mother-daughter relationship—is really patriarchal attitude.³² Originally, God creates Adam and Lilith equally, but actually, it is Lilith that brings the vertical—the ruler and the ruled—relationship to them. Therefore, Adam needs to control her

in order to restore her to the original state, “an angelic splendour” (147). We can say that Lilith only tries to imitate God and the patriarch by (in her fancy) creating life, desiring control, and hating her daughter. In such a way, she cannot live and be a free woman as she asserts.

Lilith believes that no one creates her and besides, she imagines that she gives birth to—creates—her daughter by herself. This illusion makes her desire to live eternally only for herself, and turns her into an evil person. Also, though Lilith suggests her independent childbirth by referring to her ability to do “*what no woman ever could, or can*” (144) in the mutilated volume, the complete deletion of the account about Lona demonstrates that she has severed her daughter from her. At first, Lilith bears Lona like a tool for asserting that she excels all women and having Adam “fall down and worship her” (147). Nevertheless, then, “almost from her birth,” she begins trying to kill Lona, considering her daughter to be her “vulnerable point” (172), “an open channel” (150), through which her immortality/life is flowing fast away. By taking her daughter’s life, Lilith desires to be free, strong, and eternal, which is also “*what no woman ever could, or can,*” but as we will examine, it only brings Lilith a *dead* life.

Severed from her mother, Lona also becomes an unnatural woman who “outruns” all women. Indeed, she is a very conservative, maternal figure, a notorious “Angel in the House” for her *children*, the Little Ones,

but her way of childbirth is unnatural—finding babies in the wood—so she becomes a mother without sexual intercourse like the Virgin Mary. Vane describes Lona like the virgin-mother: “in Lona the dazzling beauty of Lilith was softened by childlikeness, and deepened by the sense of motherhood” (165). It is true that the virgin-mother goddess, whose prominent example is Athena in Greek myth, can be seen as a strong woman image. However, this goddess image that has contradictory roles of virgin and mother is actually a male production. Kazuo Matsumura, referring to Athena, states that “this myth seems to have been a production of the image-building strategy created by Athenian male citizens who held women under their control as different existence but needed women as ‘mothers’” (my trans.; 57). Matsumura continues to explain why supreme goddesses created in different regions and periods—Athena, the Virgin Mary, and Amaterasu in Japanese myth—are all virgin-mother goddesses: “it is the males who created this type of goddess, and one of their ideals is ‘the supreme woman (goddess)’” (my trans.; 58) whose femininity is excluded from her. Therefore, Lona is only the embodiment of the male desire, who is forced to play conflicting (but ideal for males) roles, becoming an unnatural woman like her mother. Besides, as we will reveal later, Lona also lives a stagnate, *dead* life. The mother and daughter should be reconnected for both of their lives.

Adam’s words: “even Lilith shall be saved by her childbearing” (148) may sound very patriarchal, but if we read them more literally and pay attention to the mother-daughter relationship, they become gynocentric. In order to gain/flaunt power against the patriarchal order, Lilith desires the singularity, doing “*what no woman ever could, or can*” (144)—(in her fancy) having created Lona for herself—and disidentifies from her daughter to go against the male order. However, her attitude is really patriarchal—wanting power, domination—and actually it has made her life a stagnant, *dead* one. Also, seeing Lona as her “hated daughter” (148), “an open channel” (150) or her “one vulnerable point, her doom” (172) is in fact only the male viewpoint: Adam and Vane describe Lona in this way, and actually Lilith feels much more fear about her daughter than hatred as a robber of her immortality/life.³³ The Victorian patriarchal order that undervalued women separated the mother and daughter, often making them hate each other. Marianne Hirsh argues that “in conventional nineteenth-century plots of the European and American tradition the fantasy that controls the female family romance is *the desire for the heroine’s singularity based on a disidentification from the fate of other women, especially mothers*” (10, emphasis added). Then, as we will examine minutely in the final section, when Lilith acknowledges Lona and lets her daughter receive life, she can make the stream of her *own* life flow. To wit, “Lilith shall be saved by her

childbearing” of Lona, and it never means that she aligns herself with the patriarchy and the male desire. On the contrary, it will lead to the recognition of the mother-daughter relationship undervalued in the Victorian society. In *Of Woman Born*, Adrienne Rich states:

This cathexis between mother and daughter—essential, distorted, misused—is the great unwritten story. *Probably there is nothing in human nature more resonant with charges than the flow of energy between two biologically alike bodies, one of which has lain in amniotic bliss inside the other, one of which has labored to give birth to the other. The materials are there for the deepest mutuality and the most painful estrangement. ... Yet this relationship has been minimized and trivialized in the annals of patriarchy.* (225-26, emphasis and underline added)

Lilith-Lona’s close but complicated relationship will show us not only the violence of life—a scramble for possession of life between mother and her child—but also the inseparable, precious connection of life. We must look into this overlooked relationship between mother and daughter, or, in Rich’s words, their great unwritten story must be written.

II. Lilith’s Closed Hand: The Improper Attempt to Hoard Life for Herself

In this section, we examine how Lilith tries to live eternally only for herself. Lilith, the first woman cannot understand the preciousness of life. Gaarden sees her as “the ultimate devourer—as queen of hell, she is the cosmic power of death and destruction” (43). Concerning this point, we must look at Lilith’s tightly closed hand. The hand symbolizes her improper attempt to hoard Life or deprive it from others, to keep for herself what God intends us to share with all. That is because MacDonald closely connects water to life in some of his works.³⁴ By usurping water, Lilith changes the fertile/lively world into an infertile/dead one. Mara explains that “the wicked princess [Lilith] gather[s] up in her lap what she c[an] of the water over the whole country, close[s] it in an egg, and Carrie[s] it away” (75). That Lilith gathers up water, the symbol of life in her lap can be regarded as the rewinding of childbirth, that is, not giving life, but taking life. She desires to hoard life only for herself and live eternally.

i) The Necessity of Water for the Little One’s Growth: The Water as Life

Before examining how Lilith appropriates life improperly by depriving the earth of water, we should pay attention to the Little Ones, the children who do not grow. Their need of water for their growth attests the water-life relation. Indeed, they can become bigger, but actually, it is not

growth but degeneration.³⁵ When the Little Ones come to be greedy, they turn into stupid, violent, bad giants called “the Bags,” who cannot speak human language any more.³⁶ Therefore, these children fear so greatly to “be bigger” and “grow [into] bad giants” (70)—as Vane ponders, “[t]heir fear of growth as a possible start for gianthood might be instinctive!” (71)—that they want to remain as they are.³⁷

It is notable that the Bags do not live in a true sense. Lona explains: “not that killing would do them much harm; they are so little alive! If one were killed, his giantess would not remember him beyond three days!” (170). Furthermore, Vane describes the Bags as “a sort of fungoid people,” and states that he “hardly learn[s] to distinguish the women from the men” (58). They seem to lack sexual differentiation and do not reproduce as normal human beings. Besides, unlike the Little Ones, who find babies in the forest—it is their way of childbirth—the Bags can never find their babies. Moreover, they try to hurt and destroy the Little Ones. It means that they kill themselves—it is a kind of parricide—because they come from the Little Ones: these children are “*their* firsters” (64). The Bags are degenerated species, and they neither live a life in a true meaning nor give birth to/raise a new life, and instead, they try to stop the life flow.

It is true that the Little Ones are described as lovable, good people, and since they show “childlikeness” that MacDonald attaches great

importance to, these children can be considered to be “father of the Man” as William Wordsworth describes in “My Heart Leaps Up,” or “The Rainbow” (1802).³⁸ However, the Little Ones are immature and incomplete, needing to grow properly. First, they cannot understand serious feelings such as sorrow and fear. They remind us of the Princess in “The Light Princess” (1864), who shows extraordinary liveliness and never understands any serious feeling, demonstrating her deprivation of gravity both physically and spiritually. Like her, the Little Ones are always merry and laugh too much, and since they lack water, they also can neither shed tears nor understand sorrow. For instance, at their parting scene, before Vane leaves them, they are greatly concerned about him and “the air [i]s full of little sobs” (69), but no sooner has he left them than they become merry again as if they forgot him: “Soon the laughter of the Little Ones overtook me, ... they went gamboling along, with never a care in their sweet souls” (71). If they do not understand sorrow,³⁹ they cannot love in a true sense: they cannot be “the Lovers,” their right name.⁴⁰

Secondly, the Little Ones do not know the transmission of life from mother to her child,⁴¹ which is connected with their ignorance about blood. Although they vaguely apprehend that blood is a liquid which oozes or flows when one gets hurt, they do not understand it sufficiently. They call blood “red juice” and describe Vane, who gets injured as “broken” (70) as

if he were some object. As Peter Camporesi and Mineke Shipper point out,⁴² blood has the strongest connection with life, and so these children’s ignorance demonstrates their being cast out of the life flow. Besides, they cannot understand about *being born* because they, “the careless little Lovers forget almost everything” (74) before the arrival at their present residence, the orchard valley. They say that “[w]e d[o] not come from anywhere, ... we are here!” (176). They neither know their mothers nor comprehend that a baby is born from and belongs to its mother. As a consequence, they regard all babies whom they find in the wood “as their property” (167). In Chapter XII of *Phantastes*, women in the strange planet go to nature—a rocky tract, bushes, hills, and forests—in order to find babies in the same way the Little Ones do in the forest. This is their way of childbirth,⁴³ and in both cases, nature becomes a surrogate mother. However, the Little Ones actually have their mothers who have given birth to them; these children are just separated from their mothers for their safety—Lilith, disguised as a leopardess, “sucks the blood of any child she can lay hold of” (120)—and cannot remember them. In a way, the Little Ones experience the second birth in the wood, which has no connection to the flow of life. Their unusual way of birth, their ignorance about blood and the giving and receiving life between mother and her child emphasize that they are incomplete, cast out of the life flow.

These adorable but immature/incomplete Little Ones should grow

properly, which requires water. Mara says to Vane that “when *they are thirsty enough*, they will have water, and when they have water, they will grow. To grow, they must have water” (76, emphasis added). Her words imply not only the close connection between life and water but the necessity of their will for growth. Besides, Adam remarks that the Little Ones must grow by having water.

“[...] but you [Vane] saw they [the Little Ones] were not growing — or growing so slowly that they had not yet developed the idea of growing! they were even afraid of growing! — You had never seen children remain children!”

“But surely I had no power to make them grow!”

“You might have removed some of the hindrances to their growing!”

“What are they? I do not know them. *I did think perhaps it was the want of water!*”

“*Of course it is! they have none to cry with!*” (141, emphases added)

Adam connects the necessity of water for the Little Ones’ growth with the importance of their shedding tears. The first thing that a newborn baby does is to cry. Therefore, they who neither know/understand sorrow nor have tears to cry with are not born in a true sense, and as their growth is hampered,

they do not live truly. Without water, they have two choices, both of which are not *life*: to remain children, living a stagnant, incomplete life—stopping their life flow—or to become big and turn into the Bags, living a *dead* life. When the earth recovers water and becomes fertile, filled with life again, the Little Ones can also have water for their growth because the outer water is related to the inner water, tears.⁴⁴ It can let them recognize not only sorrow but love, and they become their right name “the Lovers,” starting their true, real life.

ii) *Lilith Deprives the Earth of Water: The Desire to Live Eternally*

We stated that water is the symbol of life by referring to the Little Ones’ hampered growth, and the necessity of water for their proper growth, more precisely, their true life. Therefore, it can be said that Lilith appropriates water in her closed hand in order to deprive people and the earth of life. We have three grounds for saying that Lilith holds the usurped water in her closed fist. First, while attending Lilith, Vane notices that “[o]ne of her hands [i]s clenched hard, apparently inclosing something small” (97). This “something small” can be the aforementioned egg that contains water. Second, when Lilith becomes enraged with Vane after reviving and strikes at him, he gets mysteriously wet. After she finds that Vane has bathed her in the hot river every morning in order to make her alive again, she flares

up: “She raised her left hand, and flung it out as if repelling me. Something ice-cold struck me on the forehead. When I came to myself, I was on the ground, wet and shivering” (108). Lilith must hit Vane with her closed fist, and therefore the water splashes onto him. Third, when Lilith, disguised as a spotted leopardess injures her paw, a rivulet of water runs from it. A mother in Bulika pounds the leopardess’ foot with a stone with all her might so as to protect her baby from the Lilith-leopardess. Then, Vane sees “something streaming from the lifted paw” (113) and thinks that it must be her blood. However, surprised by its unceasing torrent, he realizes that it cannot be blood and finds it “a softly murmuring rivulet of water that r[uns], without channel, over the grass” (116). We can say that the mother hurts Lilith’s clenched hand, making her usurped water gush from it. Soon after this episode, when Vane meets Lilith at her palace, he notes on “her left hand a large clumsy glove,” thinking that “it [i]s a hand shut hard—perhaps badly bruised” (131). These three episodes demonstrate that Lilith holds water in her closed hand.

As well as attempting to deprive the earth of life, Lilith tries to stop the life succession of one generation to the next. She rules over the city called Bulika, where she grips its citizens with fear by making women sterile and killing babies. Mara says that Lilith does “what she can to keep them from multiplying” (75), and according to a woman in Bulika, the

spotted leopardess, the metamorphosed Lilith, “suck[s] its [a baby’s] blood, and then it either dies or grows up an idiot” (114). Her bloodsucking reverses the mother-child relationship because the baby normally sucks breast milk, to wit, its mother’s blood.⁴⁵ In this way, the mother gives her baby life, but Lilith is not a life-giver but a life-devourer. Wingrove points out that “[t]his subversion of the maternal role—whereby woman becomes the taker and devourer of a child’s life, not its nurturer and provider—is perhaps the central horror in the myth of Lilith as vampire” (188). Furthermore, before robbing a baby of its mother, Lilith also kills her to stop the stream of life. She kills mothers in a cruel, grotesque way: “A bulky object fell with a heavy squelch in the middle of the street, ... a pulpy mass, with just form enough left to show it the body of a woman” (123), “a body, frightfully blackened and crushed, but still recognisable as that of the woman” (135). These instances show Lilith’s utter hatred toward the mother that she does not have and rejects becoming.⁴⁶

Lilith’s enmity toward a mother and her baby springs from an old prophecy: “a child will be the death of her” (115). By killing babies at random and appropriating water, the symbol of life, she tries to avoid the realization of the prophecy, desiring to live eternally. However, Lilith must have noticed who the child is: her own daughter Lona. That is why she greatly fears Lona, seeing her as “an open channel through which her

immortality—which yet she counts self-inherent—is flowing fast away” (150). In various myths, we can see goddesses/women give birth to life by themselves so as to oppose the male’s oppressive power.⁴⁷ Similarly, Lilith gives birth to Lona by herself to subjugate Adam: “One child, indeed, she bore; then, puffed with *the fancy* that she had created her, would have me fall down and worship her!” (147, emphasis added). While previous studies have not put their fingers on this issue, we consider that Lilith’s dark spot (a wound) in her side, her distinctive feature, has a relation to her daughter. Indeed, Adam is not thoroughly unrelated to the birth of Lona: he considers Lona to be his daughter and Lilith also admits her to be as such.⁴⁸ Besides, her independent childbirth is her delusion because Adam says that it is her “fancy” and that she “consumes and slays, but is powerless to destroy as to create” (148). However, as the wound in her side is suggestive of the fact that God creates Eve from Adam’s rib, we can say that Lilith, imitating God, gives birth to Lona in an unusual, independent way for asserting an utter right over “[t]he one child of her body” (148) and subjugating Adam. At first, Lilith “[n]ever ha[s] spot me spotted from by birth” (146), but this unordinary childbirth and her delusion, along with her alliance with the evil great Shadow—she has turned herself into an evil person on the dark side from the original angelic splendour—can leave a dark spot reminiscent of Eve’s creation in her side.

Then, desiring to live eternally, Lilith tries to kill her daughter, “an open channel” through which her immortality/life is flowing away, so as to fill it up. MacDonald writes about the mother’s death at or just after her childbirth in several of his works,⁴⁹ revealing the giving and receiving of life, or the scrambling for life between mother and her child. For Lilith, who despises the transmission of life, the birth of children is “the death of their parents, and every new generation the enemy of the last” (150), and the aforementioned prophecy about her death doubles her dread of her daughter. However, despite Lilith’s desperate attempt of hoarding water/life for herself and filling up “an open channel,” she cannot live a life truly only for herself. Her relationship with Lona is inseparable, and her attempt only yields ironic results: instead of living eternally, the stream of her life stops, so that she falls into a death-like state as soon as she kills her daughter.

III. The Special but Complicated Relationship between Mother and Daughter

In this section, we examine a special but complicated relationship between Lilith and Lona, from which the former tries to separate herself, only to see the bond as inseparable, showing the importance of the succession of mother to daughter. Hirsh, who examines female authors’ works in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, points out the absence of

the mother-daughter relationship in nineteenth century literature. Hirsh states that the mother-daughter bonds must be cut off so that the daughter can become “woman” in the patriarchal society. As a consequence, the absence or silence of the mother is closely connected with the plot’s foundation and conditions of the heroine’s growth.⁵⁰ We can say that *Lilith* corresponds to this tradition as well as differentiating from it. Lilith has no mother, and Lona is seen as an orphan, or a motherless mother, more precisely, a virgin mother all the time. However, at the same time, *Lilith* is the book in which MacDonald most clearly depicts the relationship between mother and daughter, and grapples with its complicatedness and uniqueness.⁵¹ Consequently, we should consider what he tries to describe through this complex relationship in his “masterpiece.”

Lilith tries to reject her daughter but her relationship with Lona is inseparable. First, we look at their close connection through the protagonist Vane’s eyes. First of all, Lona is exactly alike her mother, even though she never seems aware of her striking likeness to Lilith. Vane states: “I had been struck, the moment I saw her again, with her resemblance to the princess, and could not doubt her the daughter of whom Adam had told me” (164-65). Then, he refers to Lona’s long hair,⁵² and since Lilith has abundant, beautiful black hair, one of her eminent characteristics,⁵³ we can conjecture that Lona’s is also black. Therefore, significantly, these contrastive

women—Lilith, the femme fatale like woman and Lona, the Angel in the House—have beautiful black hair, which is one characteristic of “the dark lady.” Generally, women are polarized into the good woman image like “the Angel in the House” and the bad one like destructive femme fatale. They are sometimes called “fair lady” and “dark lady”: the former, with golden hair and blue eyes is an ideal woman who is submissive to males, and the latter is a black-haired and black-eyed woman, who is resistant to or seduces males, often bringing ruin on them.⁵⁴ We should remember here that both Vesper and Nycteris, who are far from “dark lady,” in “The History of Photogen and Nycteris” also have abundant black hair. Although Lilith can be allied to the dark lady, closely connected with darkness/shadow, and other three women—Eve, Mara, and Lona—are far from that seductive, destructive image of woman, these two mother-daughter common features suggest that MacDonald does not just dichotomize women into “good” and “bad.”⁵⁵ Moreover, physical likeness can demonstrate the closeness of the bodily relationship between mother and daughter.⁵⁶

Secondly, Vane observes that Lona grows after she decides to go to her mother: “Lona had herself grown a good deal, but did not seem aware of it: ... Her hair was much longer, and she was become almost a woman, but not one beauty of childhood had she outgrown” (173). Originally, she greatly fears to grow. Her one anxiety is “that her Little Ones should not

grow, and change into bad giants” (68), and the consciousness that she is the biggest among them “frightens [her] sometimes” (63). Besides, she has no concept of age: asked “how old are you?” by Vane, she answers that “I do not know what you mean. We are all just that” (63). Her fear and ignorance about growth show her incompleteness like her *children*, the Little Ones, and so it is significant that she begins to grow as she comes closer to Lilith. Besides, her growth makes her resemble her mother all the more, though “in Lona the dazzling beauty of Lilith [i]s softened by childlikeness, and deepened by the sense of motherhood” (165).

Thirdly, Vane is attracted to both Lilith and Lona, making their identities ambiguous through his relationship with them. As we mentioned, Vane remarks that Lona bears a close resemblance to her mother Lilith to a surprising degree: he “has been struck, the moment I s[ee] her again, with her resemblance to the princess [Lilith]” (164). Interestingly, soon after this statement, he becomes aware that he loves Lona: “I knew now that I loved her when I left her, and that the hope of seeing her again had been my main comfort” (165). Vane notices that he loves Lona after he knows she is Lilith’s daughter, which may cause a conjecture that he comes to love her as Lilith’s daughter rather than as Lona herself. Eliacheff and Heinich mention that in the period from 1800 to 1900, many French novels described a mother and her daughter becoming rivals in love, and they call this

situation “an enigma in a literary history” (my trans.; 107). As a prominent example of this trend, they introduce *Ce qui ne meurt pas* written by Jules Barbey d’Aureville in 1883. In this work, a daughter Camille finds out that her boyfriend Alain has been her mother’s lover in the past. Then, Camille begins to suspect that who Alain loves truly is not her but her mother, and that he loves her just because she resembles her mother closely.⁵⁷ In a similar way, in *Lilith* Lona’s identity is confused with her mother’s because it is ambiguous who Vane really loves.

It is true that Vane confesses his deep love for Lona to himself: he seems “to have known her for ages—for always—from before time began! ... My every imagination fl[ows] to her; she [i]s my heart wife!” (173), but his love for her is like reverence and it is not so intense as his strong emotion toward her mother Lilith. When he takes care of the dead-like Lilith, his desire to revive her is desperate, and like Cosmo’s love for Princess Hohenweiss in *Phantastes*—“the more he d[oes] for her, the more he love[s] her” (101)—Vane’s devotion must double his attachment to Lilith. Then, thanks to his care—especially by his blood, in fact—Lilith becomes alive again, and despite her rejection, he “follow[s] her like a child whose mother pretends to abandon him” and calls out to her: “Have pity upon me! ... I will be your slave!” (110), laying his hand on her arm. Even after he realizes that she is evil, he is intensely attracted by her against his conscience:

meeting her at her palace, his frame “quiver[s] with conflicting consciousnesses,” being “simultaneously attracted and repelled, each sensation seem[s] either” (127). From the above, we can notice that Vane, against his will and conscience, is strongly magnetized by Lilith, with much more intense emotion than he feels toward Lona. Indeed, unlike Camille, Lona is unrelated to the ugly but humanlike feelings like jealousy and anger toward her mother, just receiving Vane’s love for her, but whether consciously or not, Vane, like Alain, seems to have an intention of substituting Lona for Lilith. Through his attitude towards them, their identities are mixed up.

Lastly, we should note that Vane brings Lilith and Lona together at the mother’s palace. He asserts to himself that “Lona should take her seat on the throne that had been her mother’s” (172), and more importantly, that “[m]other and daughter must meet: it might be that Lona’s loveliness would take Lilith’s heart by storm!” (182). Then, even though he “never t[ells] her anything about her mother” (174), Lona perceives Lilith to be her mother instinctively. Besides, his conjecture is absolutely right and their meeting brings about the result beyond his expectation: as well as Lilith’s heart, Lona’s is taken by storm at the sight of her mother, and she, the virgin-mother, becomes like a child, just crying “mother! mother!” to Lilith. The reunion of mother and daughter which should be heartwarming turns into

the killing scene, but, as we will examine minutely in the next section, their meeting organized by Vane carves their inseparable relationship—the stream of life between them—into relief.

Even though Lilith fears/refuses Lona and they are separated for the daughter’s safety,⁵⁸ they actually stay connected. At first glance, Lona seems to be like “the Angel in the House,” the ideal woman image in the Victorian period,⁵⁹ while Lilith seems to be the disastrous femme fatale or “the New Woman” who came to the fore at that time.⁶⁰ Lona looks after her *children* with great care, but on the contrary, Lilith counts “it slavery to be one with me [Adam] and bear children for Him who g[ives] her being” (147). However, these two women resemble in some respects, showing their close, inseparable connection. First, both Lilith and Lona are *motherless mothers*. Needless to say, Lilith is motherless since the male God *creates* her from the dust like Adam. Indeed, Lona has her mother, Lilith, but she has never known her existence before their reunion at her palace. Besides, Lilith rejects her daughter’s succession to life from her, desiring her death, which is equal to being motherless. Secondly, they have power and authority over people. As Adam says, Lilith’s “first thought [i]s *power*” (147): she desires to subordinate him and rule over people with power and fear. Indeed, Lona does not use force, but she has unconditional authority over the Little Ones, her *children*—Vane regards Lona as “at once their Love and their Law”

(68)—like her mother does over the citizens in Bulika.

Furthermore, both Lilith and Lona exceed the concept of woman. For one thing, they become mothers in an unnatural way. Lilith, although it is her “fancy” (147), believes that she gives birth to—*creates*—Lona for herself, and besides, she refuses to let her daughter receive life from her. This unusual childbirth is one cause that leaves the dark spot on her side. Lona is also an unnatural mother. She becomes a mother without sexual intercourse—finding babies in the wood is her way of childbirth—so she is a miraculous virgin mother like the Blessed Virgin Mary. For another, although they can be divided into opposing woman images, interestingly, both of them have various kinds of woman in them. Lilith states in the mutilated volume that “[i]n me was every woman, I had power / Over the soul of every living man” (144). Lona never mentions such a thing, but Vane, who takes notice of his deep love for her, sees every woman in her. As well as thinking of her as “a tender grandmother,” he ponders: “I hardly remembered *my mother*, but in my mind’s eye she now looked like Lona; and if I imagined *sister* or *child*, invariably she had the face of Lona! My every imagination flew to her; she was *my heart’s wife!*” (173, emphases added). These commonalities between Lilith and Lona—being motherless, having power and authority, and exceeding the concept of woman—can show that they are bound by rigid ties.

We can see their inseparable relationship most clearly at their reunion long after being separated. Although no one has told Lona about the existence of her mother, she instinctively realizes that Lilith is her mother. In comparison, even though Vane has caught sight of his parents sleeping in Eve’s house several times, he can never recognize them until Adam finally tells him the truth. Their opposing reactions demonstrate how strong the Lilith-Lona relationship is.

“Mother! mother!” she cried, and her clear, lovely voice echoed in the dome.

The princess shivered; her face grew almost black with hate; her eyebrows met on her forehead. She rose to her feet, and stood.

“Mother! mother!” cried Lona again, as she leaped on the daïs, and flung her arms around the princess. ... —in that instant I [Vane] saw Lona lifted high, and dashed on the marble floor. ... At my feet she fell, and lay still. The princess sat down with the smile of a demoness. (184)

Lona, who is always a mother, behaves as if she were a little child, only calling out “mother!” in the presence of Lilith. Lona’s bountiful maternity is converted into her instinctive affection for her mother. Moreover, since the way Lilith kills Lona means rejection after first embracing her, it could be regarded as acceptance in a sense. Even though her subsequent hurling

of Lona really horrifies us, Lilith’s gesture is at first suggestive of the image of cradling her baby in her arms. Despite Lilith’s desperate attempts to sever her relationship with her daughter, this violent reunion throws their inseparable connection into relief.

This killing scene is worth noting because of its emphasis on Lona’s corporeality: she seems really spiritual and beyond physical existence, but her corporeality comes to light with her mother. Vane’s relationship to Lona is platonic. He describes her as “a tender grandmother,” his “heart’s wife” (173), and sees her love as “the devotion of a divine animal” (174). Indeed, after he becomes aware of his love for Lona and she responds to it, they come to touch the other’s body like grabbing each other’s hands or stroking their faces and hands mutually. Still, as we will examine more in detail later, while there are many depictions of Lilith’s body and her physical contacts with Vane, in contrast to her mother, Lona’s can hardly be seen: Lilith is depicted as physical and sexual, typical of a femme fatale, and Lona as pure and spiritual, worthy of the ideal Angel in the House. However, in the first place, Adam describes Lona as “the one child of her [Lilith’s] body” (148), emphasizing their physical relation. Then, at their reunion, Lilith makes Lona’s blood trickle out, giving a powerful impression on readers of her corporeality. When Lona flings “her arms around the princess” while calling out “mother!,” Lilith lifts her daughter high, “dash[ing] on the marble floor”

(184). Vane holds Lona in his arms, and finds: “Her arms hung helpless; her blood tricked over my hands, and fell on the floor with soft, little splashes” (184). We should remember here that Adam says that Lilith “pour[s] out her blood to escape me” (148). Since Adam mentions this just after referring to her attempt to “have [him] fall down and worship her” (147) by *creating* Lona alone, we can conjecture that this blood can be what she sheds during her childbirth.⁶¹ As Camporesi clearly calls the blood “the liquid of life” in the title of his work, it is the blood that most clearly shows life, the vital force in our body. However, as Helena Michie points out, in the nineteenth-century, heroines are deprived of their corporeality because of the frequent use of metaphorical words, and therefore, we cannot often see woman shed the blood—the symbol of the living body—in literature at that time, including MacDonald’s works.⁶² However, in *Lilith*, Lona bleeds profusely at the killing scene, and it is her mother that makes her do so. Lona’s blood at their reunion, along with the blood that Lilith must have shed during her childbirth, emphasizes Lona’s corporeality as well as her mother’s in a rather violent way.

It is notable for their strong relationship that Lilith herself almost dies when she kills (or tries to kill) Lona in order to stop the effluence of her immortality/life. This near death is deeply connected with the wound in Lilith’s side and a mysterious hot stream, which have the key for

understanding her inseparable connection with her daughter. First of all, Lilith considers Lona to be her “open channel” (150) reminiscent of both a wound and a stream of water. The hot stream, the only river on the ground still running in defiance of Lilith’s despoilment of water, separates Lilith from Lona for her safety, and Lilith, as we will cite in the next paragraph, becomes like a corpse after the attempt to cross it for killing her daughter. This stream that is “hot, and ha[s] a strange metallic taste” (99), issues from the cave, a symbol of the womb. It represents both blood and amniotic fluid, or menstrual blood. Therefore, this stream symbolizes the strength of the life stream, suggesting the importance of human succession, and actually it prevents Lilith from stopping the stream of her life. Then, speaking of a wound in one’s side, we may think of the wound that Adam must have from God taking one of his ribs to create Eve. However, his wound can leave no scar because God closes up it with his flesh.⁶³ On the contrary, as Lilith tries to imitate God and gives life by herself to subjugate Adam, “the open wound” (149) consequently remains on her side as if it shows her inseparable relation to Lona.

Lilith becomes like a corpse twice, and both cases are closely related to her daughter. Firstly, she falls into such a horrible state after she bounds across the hot stream so as to go to Lona for killing her (i). The second time is when Lilith kills her daughter by throwing her down to the marble floor

(ii). Remarkably, before these attempts, Lilith presses her side as if the dark spot, her wound, hurts her, and immediately after the two attempts, her wound appears darker than before, suggesting its relation to Lona.

Before two attempts to kill Lona

(i) “Thou also,” they [dancing skeletons] seemed to say, “wilt soon become weak as we! thou wilt soon become like unto us!” I [Vane] turns mine again to the woman [Lilith]—and saw *upon her side a small dark shadow. ... she pressed both her lovely hands on the shadow*, gave a smothered cry, and fled. (87, emphases added)⁶⁴

(ii) She pressed her hand to her side, and gasped. (184)

After the attempts

(i) [Vane is trying to revitalize Lilith.] Once as I did so, *a shadow of discoloration on her left side* gave me a terrible shock, but the next morning it had vanished, and I continued the treatment—every morning, after her bath, putting a fresh grape in her mouth. (101-02, emphasis added)

(ii) ... the princess lay back in her seat, her face that of a corpse, her eyes alone alive, wickedly flaming. She was again withered and wasted to what I found in the wood, and *her side was as if a great branding hand had been laid upon it*. (185, emphasis added)

Desiring to live eternally, Lilith kills Lona, “an open channel,” so as to stop the effluence of her immortality. Nevertheless, it bears an ironic result: when she kills Lona, she also stops the stream of her *own* life.

Lilith becomes like a corpse, and experiences the most horrible plight: “a live death” (206). In Mara’s House of Bitterness, Vane thinks that

she had killed her life [Lona?], and was dead—and knew it. She must *death it* for ever and ever! She had tried her hardest to unmake herself, and could not! she was a dead life! she could not cease! She must *be!* (206, underline added)

Lilith lives not an eternal life but a *dead* life. She can neither live a life nor stop it: she must *be* as a *dead* life. Lilith needs to repent of her sins and bring an end to her false, *dead* life before starting a new, true life.

IV. The Stream of Lilith’s Life Comes to Flow

Lilith, the agonized first woman, must make the stream of her life flow in order to stop her *dead* life. To achieve that end, she must do two things for penitence: release the usurped water and let Lona succeed to life in a true sense.

i) *Vane Writes Another, “Real” Volume for Lilith*

Before examining Lilith repenting of her sins and her daughter

letting the stream of her life flow, we should consider what Vane does for Lilith’s redemption after his return to the real world. Many critics argue that he is forced back home because of his immaturity—he must wait for his true waking—and as mentioned in introduction, this problematic ending is often criticized as the failure of this work. It is true that Vane is not entitled to go to *home*, where God is yet, but we want to offer an additional explanation to the ending: his return helps Lilith’s redemption. We should note that Mara is with Vane in the real world at the end of the story,⁶⁵ and the white leopardess, her messenger, incarnation, or alter ego, lies beside Lilith in Eve’s House of Death as if they watch over Vane and Lilith for their true waking.⁶⁶ *Lilith* is the story of Vane’s first-person narrative, and it is noteworthy that in the last chapter, he begins to narrate in the present tense. This means that he is narrating his experience, and his life continues while we are reading this work. That is to say, this work connects our life to his world: *Lilith* exists in both worlds just like the mutilated volume exists in Vane’s real world and the parallel world simultaneously, connecting them.

Before examining what Vane writes, we should look at Mara, who is with Vane after his return, because previous studies have not examined her enough despite her uniqueness and importance. In the first place, Mara is closely connected to both Lilith and Lona because Mara is Lilith’s ex-husband’s daughter and Lona’s half-sister. Besides, it is remarkable that

after returning home, although Vane has “not found Lona,” his beloved, “Mara is much with me. She has taught me many things, and is teaching me more” (250). As for the relationship between man and woman, the mother (man’s first object of his sexual love) or the lover (the object of his love) is generally focused on, but significantly, Mara is neither for Vane. In fact, he describes her as not only “the Lady of Sorrow” (223) but also as “sister Mara” (226, 228). Therefore, we should note that this sister figure stays with Vane to the end, and besides, it is Mara whom Vane “long[s] to see” (224) once more before going to sleep in Eve’s house. The sufficient consideration of Mara will lead us to the deeper understanding of this work, especially of its various woman images.

First of all, we should note that Mara connects Lilith to Lona by saving babies from the mother and taking them to her daughter. The white leopardess, Mara’s disguised figure or her messenger, saves babies from the spotted leopardess (Lilith), bringing them to the forest where Lona lives. The survivors are children called “the Little Ones” or “the Lovers,” and Lona plays the role of their parent, assuming “at once their Love and their Law” (68). She brings up babies whom her mother has intended to kill: Lona keeps the stream of life flowing that her mother tries to stop, showing their inseparable bonds.

Mara has the key for demonstrating the complicated woman

images—females cannot be just divided into two stereotyped categories—in this work because she, a “good” woman has something in common with Lilith. First, both women have leopardesses, or, they can metamorphose into them (at least, we can see Lilith turn into a leopardess. In Mara’s case, it is ambiguous). Lilith is a spotted leopardess, and Mara has a pure white leopardess named “Astarte” (79). When Vane refers to just “leopardess,” we are required to read carefully for distinguishing one from the other, and actually, the Little Ones and Bulikan people seem to mix them up. Secondly, Lilith and Mara are linked with cats. Lilith actually turns into a Persian cat in Chapter XXIX, while Mara has many cats and she is called “the Cat-woman” (71, 73) though it is not her real name. Lastly, it is noteworthy that only Lilith and Mara have water. We can understand that Lilith has water because it is she who appropriates it from the earth. Mysteriously, Mara has water too: only these two women can serve water to visitors.⁶⁷

Most importantly, Mara attests the reality of Vane’s experience which is liable to be seen as his mere dream. After Vane returns to his home in the real world by being gently pushed by a “warm and strong” (250) hand through the door, he says that “[a]s yet I have not found Lona, but Mara is much with me. She has taught me many things, and is teaching me more” (250). Though overlooked by previous studies, it is noteworthy that in the final chapter, Vane comes to narrate in the present tense. He plays a similar

role of the narrator in *At the Back of the North Wind*, who backs up the reality of Diamond’s mysterious experience with his precious North Wind by writing about the boy’s story. Vane writes about his experience in the parallel world, including that with Lilith and Lona, but if we see only him at the final scene, we would conjecture that what he does and sees in the parallel world may be his dream. Then, by being with him to the end, Mara, who belongs to that world like Adam and Eve, attests that Vane’s experience there is real, and by extension, that Lilith and Lona are real beings.

Next, we move to our discussion about what Vane narrates, which helps Lilith to be saved for some reasons. First, it restores her corporeality. In the mutilated volume, we can see that she lacks corporeality, or she is ambiguous as a bodily being. Lilith speaks about her bodiless-ness: “*For by his side I lay, a bodiless thing; / I breathed not, saw not, felt not, only thought*” (144). However, through Vane’s contacts with Lilith, we can see her corporeality very clearly. In the first place, unlike Anodos, who just sings erotic songs using many metaphors for his White Lady in *Phantastes*,⁶⁸ Vane touches Lilith’s body for making her alive, and describes it directly without using metaphors. While she is nearly dead state, he even sees her naked body.⁶⁹ Besides, although the White Lady never touches Anodos for herself and instead, she rebukes Anodos for holding her body against the Fairy Queen’s order at her palace,⁷⁰ Lilith touches his body for sucking his

blood and seducing him.⁷¹ Besides, Vane witnesses blood oozing from her body. Her hand/paw is greatly injured by a Bulikan woman when Lilith, disguised as a leopardess, tries to snatch her baby: Vane sees “something streaming from the lifted paw” (113). Indeed, as we mentioned before, Vane finally finds it the stream of water that Lilith hoards, but at first, he must have seen her blood mingled with the torrent of water. Also, after her battle with the white leopardess, Vane sees the Lilith-leopardess get injured terribly: “adown the white column of her throat, a thread of blood still trickled from every wound of her adversary’s terrible teeth” (136). After Lilith turns into a woman again, Vane notices the wound in her neck and sees her suffering pain: “the way she put her hand to her wounded neck went to my heart” (138). As blood is the principal symbol of life, it emphasizes her corporeality like Lona, who bleeds at her palace. Through their physical contacts and descriptions of her body including blood, Vane can let Lilith restore her corporeality.

It should also be noted that Lilith is depicted as if she were a baby in relation to Vane because this implies her possibility of starting a new, true life. In the first place, Vane regards himself as her parent while tending her: “As a father his motherless child, I had borne and tended her!” (109). Secondly, Vane bathes Lilith in the hot stream, the symbol of life, in a cave so as to revitalize her. In this scene, the stream represents amniotic fluid

because the cave is usually considered to be the womb. Lilith, who has no mother, can experience the pseudo-return to the mother’s body for returning to a pre-existence and starting a true life. In addition, Vane gives Lilith grape juice in order to revive her, which is, noticeably, much the same as what Lona, the mother of the Little Ones, does for babies.⁷² She gives them fruit juice as a substitute for the breast milk, and Vane’s behavior toward Lilith can be regarded in the same way. Moreover, Lilith, who drinks Vane’s blood is like a baby sucking its mother’s breast milk.⁷³ She is not an ordinary vampire who infects his/her victims, turning them into vampires, and whose bloodsucking is seen as the metaphor of the sexual act.⁷⁴ As Neumann says, the mother’s breast milk is the product of the woman’s third blood-transformation: “After childbirth the woman’s third blood mystery occurs: the transformation of blood into milk, which is the foundation for the primordial mysteries of food transformation” (32). Also, Lilith’s purpose of sucking blood is simply to obtain nutrition and acquire life. Vane sees himself as “a human fountain for a thirst demoniac” (133) and Adam says that “she lives by the blood and lives and souls of men” (148). Therefore, Lilith’s deed can be equated with that of a baby sucking its mother’s milk for nutrition/life.

Most importantly, as well as his experience with Lilith, Vane writes about Lona, who is completely deleted from the mutilated volume. He

confesses his earnest love for her, and even after returning home, he continues to desire reunion with her. Besides, he even includes Lona’s narrative while he is away from her. Significantly, her story is about what she and her *children*, the Little Ones experience during Vane’s stay with Lilith and so he can narrate them concurrently.⁷⁵ Then, it is Vane who brings the mother and her daughter back together after a long separation, and witnesses their complicated, inseparable relationship. In the next two parts, we will look at what he describes about the relationship between women, especially that between Lilith and her daughter, leading to Lilith’s redemption in detail.

ii) *Lilith’s Closed Hand Becomes the Seed of Life*

After Lilith deprives the earth of water, she encloses it in an egg and keeps it in her clenched hand. We can say that she usurps life undeservedly, and Mara’s statement about her hand proves this: “it is shut upon something that is not hers” (210). Besides, Mara says to Lilith: “you will not sleep, if you lie there a thousand years, until you have opened your hand, and yielded that which is not yours to give or to withhold” (218). Since those who sleep in Eve’s house are allowed to live a new, true life, Lilith must renounce the appropriated life to sleep there.

Entreated by Adam, Eve, and Mara to open her hand and renounce

the thing that she grasps tightly, Lilith, the fallen woman, finally consents to repent of her sins. Although Lilith cannot open her hand despite her “agonised effort” (218), with the help of Adam, her ex-husband, who severs her closed hand by using the sword, she can at last release the usurped water/life:

The sword gleamed once, there was one little gush of blood, and he laid the severed hand in Mara’s lap. Lilith had given one moan, and was already fast asleep. Mara covered the arm with the sheet, and the three turned away. (219)

As mentioned before, to appropriate water, the symbol of life, in her lap, closing it in an egg reminiscent of the womb, and to grasp it in her hand, can be seen as the rewinding of childbirth. Therefore, Adam’s behavior of cutting off Lilith’s hand that contains life can correspond to the severance of the umbilical cord. When Adam cuts her hand, there is “one little gush of blood” (219). We should remember here that she has “poured out her blood to escape [him]” (148), asserting power over him, and begun her *dead* life allied with the great Shadow. That blood can be related to her childbirth of Lona, but her fancy of creating Lona alone and refusal to let her daughter succeed to life have led them to their *dead* life. However, this time, Lilith bleeds for giving birth to life in a true sense. Therefore, as soon as releasing/giving birth to water/life, she “give[s] one moan, and [i]s already

fast sleep” (219) for starting a new, true life. Then, Mara holds Lilith’s severed hand tenderly, reminiscent of a midwife who carries a new-born baby in her arms. Consequently, this scene reminds us of childbirth.

After that, Adam orders Vane to take Lilith’s hand to the level of the desert and bury it deeply in the ground. Digging a large hole with the spade, he buries her hand in it like a seed. Surprisingly, the moment he puts her hand in the hole, “[a] little water [i]s already oozing from under its fingers” (224). Subsequently, the wasteland regains water and becomes fertile earth full of life again. This can also let the Little Ones grow. Lilith, who has been a life-robber, comes to be a life-giver. Her behaviour of filling the earth with life is the same as the mother goddesses such as Demeter, Isis, and Cybele. By renouncing the usurped water, Lilith can sleep to start her new, true life, and besides, her closed hand at last becomes the seed of life, giving life to the earth abundantly.

iii) The Mutuality of Life between Mother and Daughter

Lilith, who gives birth to life on the earth by returning water to it, must let her own daughter succeed to life for stopping her *dead* life. Some may suggest that Adam and Eve suffer from being the first like Lilith, but these two and Lilith are different. Adam and Eve, despite having no mother, are so convinced that they have received life from God that they can

understand the preciousness of life. On the contrary, Lilith, the first woman, even denies the fact that God has given her life. She feels confident of her self-creation, and with the fancy of her self-created origin and the independent childbirth of her daughter, has done evil things in order to live eternally only for herself.⁷⁶ She is the lone existence that refuses to give and receive life. As she clings to herself too much and cannot appreciate life, she becomes evil and agonizes. Lilith must accept the fact that she herself has received life as well as giving life to her own daughter. In this part, we look at how Lilith and Lona give/receive life with each other which leads to the mother’s saving, and how another mother and daughter—Eve and Mara—help them to do.

Lilith has killed Lona by throwing her down on the marble floor, but in fact this turns out to be a pseudo-death. Eve says to Lilith:

Nor have you either hurt a child. Your own daughter you have but sent into the loveliest sleep, for she was already a long time dead when you slew her. And now Death shall be the atone-maker; you shall sleep together. (215)⁷⁷

Eve mentions that Lona has been dead, and this may be related to what Adam says about Lilith’s ignorance and inability to create:

Of creating, she knows no more than the crystal that takes its allotted shape, or the worm that makes two worms when it is cloven asunder.

Vilest of God’s creatures, she lives by the blood and lives and souls of men. She consumes and slays, but is powerless to destroy as to create. (148)

Lilith fancies that she has *created* Lona, but actually she is ignorant and powerless to create. Therefore Lona, who has been given birth to, or been *created* by Lilith like that, lives a *dead* life like her mother. Besides, the daughter whose death her own mother, her life-giver desires, can be considered to be *dead*. By giving the pseudo-death to Lona, Lilith returns her daughter to a state before birth: her behavior is indispensable for Lona’s true birth.

In order to end her *dead* life, in the first place, Lilith must be aware that she is not a free woman but a slave of the Shadow, turning herself into the evil, ugly person from the good, beautiful “angel of God” (149). Although she sees herself as “a free woman” (200), as examined before, she is a slave to male desire, and therefore she does not do “as my Self pleases—my Self desires” but “will do as the Shadow” (199). We should notice that the shining creature—Vane describes it as “the worm-thing,” “the shining thing,” and “serpent” (201)—creeps into Lilith’s body through her dark spot which is closely connected with her childbirth: “the creature had passed in by the centre of the black spot, and was piercing through joints and marrow to the thoughts and intents of the heart” (201). Indeed, this scene looks

violent and grotesque, but this shining creature illuminates Lilith, who has been originally the existence of light, from the inside, for having her see herself. The dark spot becomes an entrance, and so in a sense, Lona helps her mother to repent of her sins in this scene, too.

After seeing her evil, current state, Lilith laments: “Why did he make me such? ... I would have made myself—oh, so different! I am glad it was he that made me and not I myself! He alone is to blame for what I am! Never would I have made such a worthless thing! He meant me such that I might know it and be miserable! I will not be made any longer!” (202). This *he* that makes Lilith like that must be the great Shadow that turns her into “queen of Hell” (148) from originally beautiful, good, “angelic splendour” (147), and from whom Lilith may have taken “*substance, and receive[d] / Firmness and form relate to touch and view*” (144) to remake herself for asserting her self-creation. Now she understands that her self-created origin is merely her fancy, and that she has done a wrong thing for herself: making herself a *dead* life. Besides, Lilith sees “a form of splendid beauty” and “the reflection of herself” (204), at last realizing that the former is what “God ha[s] intended her to be” and the latter is what “she ha[s] made herself” (204). In addition, Vane describes her face as “a live death” and “she ha[s] killed her life, and [i]s dead!” (206). The *life* that she kills can imply both her own life and Lona, and he continues: “She was what God

could not have created. She had usurped beyond her share in self-creation, and her part had undone His! She saw now what she had made, and behold it was not good! She was as a conscious corpse, whose coffin would never come to pieces, never set her free!” (206). Through the stays of Mara’s “House of Bitterness,” Lilith realizes that she has turned herself into an evil person and it is against her nature, and that she lives a *dead* life: she is “*Life in Death*—life dead, yet existent” (205). She must cut off her illusion of self-creation—that she makes herself and her daughter alone—to break from her false Self.

Lilith must admit that she herself has received life from another/God so that she can let Lona receive life from her. It is significant that when Lilith contends that “I am not another’s; I am my own, and my daughter is mine,” Mara says that “[t]hen, alas, your hour is come!” (199), making Lilith see her real, evil state as mentioned before. Then, Lilith comes to understand that she is not self-created but another has given her life by seeing her original state that God has intended her to be: she is created—given life—by Him. It is an essential preparation for letting her daughter succeed to life from her. After that, Mara refers to the possibility of Lilith’s new, true life. When Lilith acknowledges her false self, she, who has desired eternal life, hopes for death instead: “I am a slave! ... Let me die” (207). However, Mara corrects her statement: “A slave thou art that shall one day

be a child! ... Verily, thou shalt die, but not as thou thinkest. Thou shalt die out of death into life. Now is the Life for, that never was against thee!” (207). Though having lived a *dead* life, now Lilith is allowed to start a new, true life.

We should notice that Lilith, who is a motherless mother, comes in contact with motherly kindness: “Like her mother [Eve], in whom lay the motherhood of all the world, Mara put her arms around Lilith, and kissed her on the forehead” (207). Then, Lilith’s “fiery-cold misery [goes] out of her eyes, and their fountains filled” (207). It should be also noted that before Mara makes Lilith see her current false state for her redemption, “[g]reat tears [a]re running down her cheeks” (199). Lilith suffers, with sweat pouring from her, and giving “writhing, contorted shudder” (201), and during her agony, Mara goes to her and “[l]arge tears f[a]ll from her eyes on the woman who ha[s] never wept, and would not weep” (202). Mara experiences vicarious agony and sympathizes with Lilith,⁷⁸ unlike patriarchal Adam, who just orders her to repent of her sins and finally cries out to her “[d]own! ... or by the power given me I will melt thy very bones” (150).⁷⁹ Caressed by Mara, Lilith weeps for the first time, and at the same time, it begins to rain—the inner and outer water is connected—and this reminds us of the scene where the Princess weeps greatly after rescuing the self-sacrificial prince in “The Light Princess.” The Princess now comes to

understand the deep feeling like sorrow and love, and shedding tears, she recovers her gravity both physically and spiritually. Like her, Lilith, who has been living a *dead* life, now becomes a physically and spiritually living existence. Also, we should remember here that the Little Ones need water and their inner water, the tear for their growth/life. Similarly, Lilith’s tear—Odu, a Little One calls it “river”—can show that she also gains life. Mara’s deep motherly love relieves Lilith’s spiritual thirst, letting her shed tears, in other words, flow the water, the symbol of life, for herself.

For starting a true life, then Lilith must go to Eve—Mara’s mother—and sleep in her House of Death. Although Lilith fears the great Shadow when hearing a wild blast roar on the roof of Eve’s house, Adam assures her that “[h]ere he cannot enter, ... Here he can hurt no one” (215). Hearing her ex-husband’s words, Lilith asks him “[a]re the children in the house?”, which demonstrates that her original, good nature comes to reemerge, and at this word, “the heart of Eve beg[ins] to love her” (215). Still, Lilith, taking notice of her evil doing up to now, laments that “I am so weary I can live no longer. I must go to the Shadow—yet I would not!” (215). Then, Eve says to her that “[y]ou shall not go to the Shadow” (216) and lets her sleep in her house for a true life. Eve holds Lilith in her arms and carries her into the room filled with couches tenderly as if Lilith were her baby.⁸⁰ Gaarden states that Eve is the Great Mother figure, and as “Mother of all living,” she

“represents the life-death-life cycle” (32). Similarly, Karen Schaafsma notes that Eve’s “House of Death,” namely, the tomb is “Eve’s womb,” and she is life-death-life.⁸¹ Consequently, Eve’s house can also be seen as “the House of Life,” and then, by sleeping in the house, Lilith can finish her *dead* life, and dies into life.

The mutual recognition between Lilith and Lona that they are mother and daughter is essential for the succession from mother to daughter. At her first meeting with Lilith, Lona acknowledges her mother instinctively. Her calling “mother!” can be a bridge between them. She becomes pleased with recognizing that Lilith is her mother even if she is killed by her: “the sun shone upon a white face, and the pitiful shadow of a ghostly smile” (185). Then, they are appointed to sleep next to each other on two couches in Eve’s house, and finally, Lilith consents to sleep there. This shows that she acknowledges her daughter and makes preparations for giving life to Lona. Though Lilith, who has feared and refused her daughter as “an open channel” from which her life/immortality flows away, still dreads Lona: “I fear that child, ... She will rise and terrify me!” (217). However, Eve soothes her by assuring that “[s]he is dreaming love to you” (217) and that they “shall sleep together” (215) for a true life. Then, Lilith and Lona sleep side by side for quite a while, reminding us of the scene that a mother and her baby sleep together after childbirth. After a period of time, Lona awakes

from her sleep. Vane thinks that she falls “asleep a girl; she aw[akes] a woman, ripe with the loveliness of the life essential” (238). This is her true birth. Killed by Lilith, Lona can finish her *dead* life, and by sleeping with Lilith in the house of Eve, the Great Mother, she truly receives life from her mother.

Those who have slept in Eve’s house go “home” where the Father who gives us life is. Adam explains: “home, as you may or may not know, is the only place where you can go out and into” (15). That is to say, “home” is where one has come from and at last goes back: the place is both before birth and after death. MacDonald believes in a truer and fuller life after death, and this view is seen throughout his works.⁸² Death and life are intermingled in his view, and “home” in *Lilith* can be the culmination of his thanatopsis. This “home” is the place that makes rebirth possible. Lilith, now obtaining the possibility of rebirth, must awake and go “home” in order to realize it. However, as Lilith has made herself an evil person from the good one that God primarily intended her to be, her awakening takes an overwhelmingly long time. In this occasion, it is Lona that helps her mother to awake for starting a new life.

Lilith and Lona are appointed to sleep side by side like a mother and her baby after childbirth, implying that Lilith truly gives life to Lona. Then, after waking up from her sleep, Lona goes “to the couch of the mother who

ha[s] slain her, and kisse[s] her tenderly,” and Adam says that “[t]hat kiss will draw her homeward, my Lona!” (240). Lilith’s evilest deed must be refusing Lona as her life-robber, “an open channel” and withholding life from her—even trying to kill her—and then, her kiss can mean forgiveness. Besides, Lona’s kiss is significant in three ways. Firstly, it is their second physical contact. The first time is when Lona flings her arms around her mother, and then, Lilith lifts her high, dashing her on the marble floor. Lilith has given her daughter death, but this time, Lona gives life to her mother in a way, because her kiss will take Lilith closer to home, where the God is. Besides, we should note that before going to Lilith’s palace, Lona says that “I would give my life ... to *have my mother!* She might kill me if she liked! *I should just kiss her and die!*” (177, emphases added). Therefore, it is the kiss that she could not give her mother at their violent reunion. This time, Lona is not killed by Lilith, and instead, now she can *have* her mother, and even help her to receive life. Secondly, Lona’s kiss reverses her mother’s kiss of death, her blood-sucking act. For instance, Lilith throws her arms around Vane’s neck and draws down his face “to hers, and her lips cl[i]ng to my cheek” (110). Her attitude is suggestive of the romantic kiss scene, but is actually far from it because she sucks his blood/life: “A sting of pain shot somewhere through me, and pulsed” (110). When Lilith presses her lips to someone, she takes away the person’s life. In contrast, Lona’s kiss

can draw her mother home, where she receives life from God. That is to say, Lona’s kiss gives her mother life. Thirdly, Lilith is saved not by the kiss of any man but that of her own daughter. Adam’s word “[t]hat kiss will draw her homeward” (240) means that Lona’s kiss can let Lilith wake up earlier for going home. Traditionally, the prince rescues the sleeping princess from the dead-like state by kissing her, and then she awakes, making her life-throbs beat again. The prominent example is Sleeping Beauty, and this woman image is a highly stereotyped, passive one: the woman must just wait to be saved by the man. MacDonald makes fun of and advances this conventional image, letting the daughter save her mother by kissing.⁸³ Lilith, who has been pardoned by Lona, can approach her awakening. Lona, who receives life from her, gives a helping hand for her to be reborn or start a true life. She is Lilith’s salvation. Certainly, Adam’s statement is true: “even Lilith shall be saved by her childbearing” (148).

Conclusion

In this article, we focused on Lilith’s overlooked background and her underestimated relationship with her daughter. We revealed that Lilith’s devilish and destructive character results from the fact that she cannot appreciate the preciousness of life as a first, motherless woman.⁸⁴ Therefore, she stops the stream of life in order to live eternally for herself by usurping

water, the symbol of life, and refusing/killing her own daughter. However, it only brings her the ironic result—a *dead* life. First, we considered Lilith’s background and the necessity of writing her story, *Lilith*, for helping her to be saved in section I. Then, we examined how she appropriates life for herself by depriving the earth of water and by killing her daughter to stop the effluence of her life in section II and III respectively. Then, focusing on the close but complicated relationship between mother and daughter, we showed that Lilith must renounce the usurped water, the symbol of life, and let Lona receive life from her in order to start a new, true life in section IV. Also, we considered how another mother and daughter—Eve and Mara—help Lilith and Lona to give/receive life mutually for the mother’s saving. This reveals the weight of female relationship and various woman images. By giving life, Lilith, the anguished first woman, can receive life in a true sense. Namely, Lona not only receives life from Lilith, but also gives life to her mother.⁸⁵ Lona, “an open channel” for Lilith, actually allows the stream of *her* life to flow: they give and receive life mutually. As if it attested to their relationship, the stream of life is flowing on the way toward home: “Over and under and between those steps issued, plenteously, unceasingly new-born, the river of the water of life” (250). Yes, the stream of life must keep flowing. Lilith will no more fear/refuse Lona as “an open channel” and stop the stream of life between them. Instead, she will love her daughter as

both her life-receiver and life-giver. Lilith shall be saved—rather, must be saved by her childbearing of Lona.

Endnotes

1. We use Wm. B. Eerdmans’ *Lilith* in this article.
2. As for how Louisa and Greville MacDonald responded to *Lilith*, see also Raeper, 364. Moreover, Roderick McGillis aptly summarizes how (negatively) critics and readers responded to *Lilith* in “Femininity and Freedom” 47-48.
3. There are many studies that pay attention to Vane’s growth. For example, McGillis sees *Lilith* as a story of Vane’s spiritual development, primarily relying on Freudian and Lacanian psychology for his interpretation in “Liminality as Psychic Stage in *Lilith*.” Also, Gaarden focuses on Vane’s growth from more strictly Jungian viewpoint, saying that “[l]ike *Phantastes*, *Lilith* is a story of the psychological development of the main character from radical emotional immaturity to what Jung would call individuation” (31).
4. Robert A. Collins, whose article focusing on “liminality” has had great influence on later critics and they respond to it, also regards *Lilith*’s ending as a failure because Vane’s forced return to his home “fits none of the categories in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*” (8-9) written by Joseph Campbell. Collins continues that “[u]nlike the archetypal hero, who brings

back a great prize, a magical talisman or an epiphany of great value to himself and his fellows, Mr. Vane perceives all of his more or less involuntary return to his ‘dreary old house’ as misfortunes, interrupting his quest for divine perfection. As a quest story, then, the narrative fails” (9).

5. As for MacDonald’s attempt to break down dualism, some critics focus on *Lilith*’s endless ending: it negates the beginning/ending. See Manlove, Miller, Sears Smith, and McGillis “Femininity and Freedom.”
6. *Phantastes* (1858) and *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871) are the prominent examples of MacDonald’s works blurring two worlds—reality and dream—and eradicating dualism like *Lilith*.
7. This volume about Lilith’s narrative is written all in italics.
8. As other examples that only emphasize Lilith’s negative aspects, for instance, Wolff sees *Lilith* as MacDonald’s “final full-length picture of the evil female,” and states that “from the Alder-maiden of *Phantastes* through the various proud and vicious children-hating mothers of the novels to *Lilith* there is a natural and inevitable progression” (361). Gaarden, who examines female figures from the Christian and Jungian viewpoints, regards Lilith as “the terrible mother,” one of negative Jungian archetypes, and accepts Eve and Lona positively as “the great mother” and “Kore,” rather simplifying (or, polarizing) the woman-image in *Lilith*. See Gaarden 41-52 (*Lilith*), 31-33 (Eve), and 170-76 (Lona) respectively.
9. Mentioning Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert’s dichotomous definition for

the feminine images in *The Mad Woman in the Attic*—the angel and the monster—Pennington also dichotomizes female characters. He states that Lilith “is trapped by her divided self—the pull towards angelic figures (represented by Eve, Mara, and Lona) and Lilith’s demand to remain her own monstrous Self (represented by shadow, worm and vampire)” (28). Then, considering Eve, Mara, and Lona to be “all angels, all Great Mothers,” Pennington continues that “Lilith has continually rejected these roles; thematically and aesthetically she should remain a monster” (33). Similarly, William Gray asserts that “*Lilith* is above all about two competing images or constructions of ‘woman’: Lilith versus Eve” (28), seeing these women as “binary opposites” (29). Gray finally states that “Eve has triumphed over Lilith. The Angel in the House has not been killed but is as alive and as well as a woman can be in the House of Death” (33). We neither dichotomize women nor make them compete with each other, but instead, we will focus on each woman’s character and close female relationship.

10. In the theory of original sin, Eve, the first woman, is considered to be the root of evil: Eve causes her and her husband Adam’s exile from Eden by God. Lee Myeong ok, who studies various femme fatale figures in tradition and painting, actually includes Eve in her work named *Femme Fatale*. She states that “in the Christian theory of original sin, Eve becomes

a model of an evil enchantress who falls into the hole of sin, seducing pure, innocent men” (my trans.; 57). As for more information about Eve as a femme fatale, see Myeong ok 56-65.

11. MacDonald, *Lilith* 240. Mary Magdalene has long been associated with the repentant prostitute who anoints Christ’s feet, and she is traditionally identified with the sinner of Luke 7:37. See also *The Encyclopedia of the Goddess* 512-13. Then, the name “Mara” reminds us of Evil Mara, the Buddhist Lord of the Senses, who repeatedly tempted the Buddha Gautama, and disturbs people’s Buddhist trainings. Moreover, in Slavic myth, marena, the incarnation of death is also called “mara,” and “mara” means both “death” and “an evil spirit.” See *The Encyclopedia of the Goddess* 429-30. Therefore, Mara’s ambivalent name itself, along with her and Lilith’s commonality, suggests that we should not simplify the woman image: divide it into “good” and “bad.”

12. While walking alone in the wood, Vane thinks over the sadness of solitariness: “What a hell of horror, I thought, to wander alone, a bare existence never going out of itself, never widening its life in another life, but, bound with the cords of its poor peculiarities, lying an eternal prisoner in the dungeon of its own being!” (83). It exactly describes Lilith’s way of being. She is trapped in the dungeon of her own being, stagnating her life. She has to widen her life in Lona—let her daughter succeed to life from

her—for making the stream of her life flow.

13. Pennington, quoting Adam’s words: “but my Eve repented, and is now beautiful as never was woman or angel, while her groaning travailing world is the nursery of our Father’s children” (MacDonald, *Lilith* 148), states that “Eve is reduced to a beautiful object—an angel—whose primary function is as child bearer” (32). He continues to bring Adam’s two statements about his wife and ex-wife—the aforementioned quotation and “even Lilith shall be saved by her childbearing” (148)—into connection. That is to say, Pennington sees what Adam says about Lilith’s saving as highly patriarchal. Indeed, there is some truth in his interpretation, but we will reread and turn the patriarchal Adam’s statement into non-patriarchal, gynocentric one as that expresses the strong connection between Lilith and her daughter.

14. As for Lilith’s origin, see also *The Encyclopedia of the Goddess* 508-09. In addition, McGillis explains in great detail the Lilith legend and its reception in the nineteenth century in “George MacDonald and the Lilith Legend in the XIXth Century.”

15. About Lilith’s origin more in detail and feminist approaches to her, see *Which Lilith?: Feminist Writers Re-Create the World’s First Woman* edited by Enid Dame, Lily Rivlin, and Henny Wenkart.

16. The manuscript of the first version of *Lilith* was dated March 29, 1890,

and MacDonald published the final version in 1895. According to Rolland Hein, the first version “was extensively and painstakingly reworked over a period of five years. Eight different manuscripts of *Lilith* exist in the British Library, where Greville and Winifred, the last two of the children to survive, agreed before Greville’s death in 1944 to reposit them” (384). McGillis minutely examines and compares *Lilith*’s various manuscripts in “The *Lilith* Manuscripts.”

17. Raeper, 366.

18. It is true that these two ladies have much more benevolent characteristics than Lilith, but they have something in common with Lilith: North Wind and Queen Irene are both powerful and independent, and beauty/youth and unbelievable old age coexist in them like Lilith. Besides, they change their appearance and identity reflecting the inside of those who see them. Their protean feature is similar to Lilith’s, though her metamorphosis does not relate to her observer: she can turn into a leopardess or Persian cat at will. Also, people sometimes think of them negatively. People call North Wind terrible names like Bad Fortune, Evil Chance, Ruin, and most dreadfully, Death. Vulgar people name Queen Irene “Old Mother Wotherwop,” seeing her as an evil witch. Therefore, we can say that their identity is also ambiguous—attractive and repulsive at the same time—similar to Lilith.

19. Indeed, when Adam tries to control his ex-wife Lilith disguised as a

Persian cat, he takes out the whole volume from the masked door between the real world and parallel one and reads aloud. However, as a matter of convenience, we refer to this old book about Lilith as “the mutilated” volume as Vane sometimes mentions (17, 143, 236).

20. Pennington, who sees Lilith’s self as dividual—angel and monster—asserts that “[h]er self is still postponed. And MacDonald balances this postponement with Vane’s postponement into Heaven, for he is returned back into his library, the fantasy-world narrative never closed, the final chapter entitled ‘The Endless Ending’” (35). We will advance Pennington’s discussion, seeing Vane’s return as one aid to Lilith’s saving.
21. We should note a kind of overlooked fact that Vane narrates his experience in the past tense, but only the final chapter is spoken of in the present tense. This can emphasize that his journey goes on, and (of course, we admit that the author is MacDonald, but at literary level) Vane writes his experience now.
22. While Vane hears Adam read the mutilated volume, he says to himself: “The poem seemed in a language I had never before heard, which yet I understood perfectly, although I could not write the words, or give their meaning save in poor approximation” (144). Therefore, what he reproduces is “only the impression” it makes upon him and the shapes “have finally taken in passing again through [his] brain” (144). It is reminiscent of the angels’ songs that Diamond earnestly tries to remember and reproduce but fails in *At the Back of the North Wind*. He feels “as if the effort to keep from forgetting that one verse of the vanishing song nearly kill[s] him” and what he reproduces is so near sense that the boy thinks that “it could not be really what they did sing” (MacDonald, *At the*

Back of the North Wind 209). These angels can be considered to be humans before being born to their parents, and similarly, Lilith in that mutilated volume is pre-existence, or that is becoming existent. She narrates how she is born, or more precisely, created, and how she (in her fancy) self-creates/remakes herself. This is unspeakable/unspoken tale like the song of angels, the pre-existence.

23. As for *écriture féminine* and some representative works by these French feminists, see *Sexual/Textual Politics* edited by Toril Moi.

24. Since this volume contains Lilith’s mystery, Vane’s forcible attitude can be a metaphor of intruding into her body like rape. However, he fails, and she remains “the ultimate enigma” for him at this scene.

25. Adam says that Lilith’s “first thought [i]s power” (147), and actually she mentions it: “*In me was every woman, I had power / Over the soul of every living man*” (144). Then, she asserts that she excels all other women: she “[c]ould what no woman ever could, or can; / All women, I, the woman, still outran, / Outsoared, outsank, outreigned, in hall or bower” (144). We cannot exactly know how she exceeds every woman, but considering Adam’s words, we can attribute one reason of her assertion to her fancy that she has created her daughter alone.

26. Some previous studies admit Vane to be “new Adam” and in his dream, he actually thinks as if he were “Adam, waiting for God to breathe into my nostrils the breath of life” (230).

27. We should notice here that Lilith says to Vane in a similar way to the

mutilated volume: “*But if I found a man that could believe / In what he saw not, felt not, and yet knew, / From him I should take substance, and receive / Firmness and form relate to touch and view*” (144).

28. MacDonald often connects God with the light in many of his sermons and novels including *Lilith*. In “Light,” he clearly states that “God is light far beyond what we can see, but what we mean by light, God means by light; and what is light to God is light to us, or would be light to us if we saw it, and will be light to us when we do see it. God means us to be jubilant in the fact that he is light—that he is what his children, made in his image, mean when they say light” (*Unspoken Sermons* 286, underlines added). As we will examine later, MacDonald’s view of God as light is shown in Mara’s words: “a light that goes deeper than the will, a light that lights up the darkness behind it” (200). Then, MacDonald sometimes feminizes God in order to demonstrate his belief, and the prominent example of such a goddess, the great-great-grandmother in the *Princess Books*, is closely connected with light, called “the Mistress of the Silver Moon” and “the Mother of Light.” As for the minute examination of the goddess-like characters in MacDonald’s works from the viewpoint of Christianity and Jungian psychology, see Gaarden, *The Christian Goddess*.
29. As we will minutely examine in the next section, Lilith’s dark spot is closely related to her fancy that she creates Lona for herself.

30. MacDonald deliberately distinguishes “the queen” and “the princess” in his works. We can see his careful usage in the *Princess* Books. In *The Princess and Curdie*, Curdie and his father see the great-great-grandmother as “the old princess,” while in fact “Queen Irene—that [i]s the right name of the old princess” (340). In *Lilith*, MacDonald more carefully uses the words “princess” and “queen” differently. Although Lilith regards herself as a queen and the great Shadow makes her “queen of Hell” (148), people around her including Vane never call her queen, seeing her as “princess.” Moreover, Vane contrasts Lilith with her daughter Lona by regarding her as “the bad princess,” and Lona as “our all-beloved queen” and “their [the Little Ones’] mother-queen” (186). Hiroshi Aramata confuses the princess and queen when translating *Lilith* into Japanese, and he only uses “Jo-ou (queen)” even when the original text uses “princess” instead. See *Lilith* translated by Aramata, especially chapter XXV “The Princess” (258-72). He translates even this chapter title into “Jo-ou (The Queen).” The usage of “princess” and “queen” can demonstrate the discrepancy of Lilith’s state: she turns into an evil “queen of Hell,” but she is not the queen anymore, being only called “the princess.”

31. We can see the connection between darkness and eternity in what the ogress reads in *Phantastes*: “So, then, as darkness had no beginning, neither will it ever have an end. So, then, is it eternal. . . . The light doth but

hollow a mine out of the infinite extension of the darkness” (57-58). Then, she describes man as “but a passing flame, moving unquietly amid the surrounding rest of night” (58). Darkness and light/flame are related to eternity and limited life respectively. However, as the annotators admit, the ancient little volume that the ogress reads is the inverse of MacDonald’s belief, “the antithesis to the Bible” (58) and this eternity/darkness is false. Therefore, Lilith should deny darkness/shadow and stop clinging to the desire to live eternally. As for the contrast between light and darkness, and the importance of life/light, along with the girl’s growth, see Kumabe.

32. In the Victorian era, the daughter’s existence and the mother-daughter relationship tended to be undervalued because the father monopolized his estate, which was succeeded by his son. His wife was even seen as his possession. See Perkin 118-19, 122. Until Married Women Property Act was established in 1882, the wife and daughter had no right of inheritance. Therefore, if the father did not have the son, after his death a distant male relative succeeded to his property. His wife and daughter were often deprived of their property, even their residence. See Mizuo 56, and Tajima 70, 80, 94, 100.

33. Though in fact Lilith does not state her hatred toward Lona definitely, she declares her daughter fearsome. In *Eve’s House of Death*, Lilith, glancing at Lona lying on the couch, says that “I fear that child, ... she will

rise and terrify me!” (217). Fear and hate are generally involved with each other, and Lilith feels much fear about her daughter like a robber of her immortality/life, bringing enmity in her.

34. In “The Light Princess” (1864), the Princess’ vitality is closely related with the lake, and in *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872), Princess Irene’s bathing in her great-great-grandmother’s mystical bath symbolizes her rebirth or true birth. Moreover, Mossy and Tangle’s bathing scenes in “The Golden Key” (1867) suggest their rebirth. Also, in *Phantastes*, there appear water images like the sea, river, and fountain, and they give Anodos some consolation, reminiscent of amniotic fluid.

35. We can see the theme of progress and degeneration in the *Princess Books*. The malicious goblins in *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) are regarded as the degenerated humans, and greedy, spiteful courtiers and citizens in *The Princess and Curdie* (1883) are similar to the Bags. About this theme, see Reiter.

36. The Bags only growl “like a beast” (57) and answer “with a howl of rage” (58), and instead of speaking, they use violence like kicking. Indeed, later, one bigger boy of the Little Ones reports to Vane that he has heard a Bag say to his wife that “you [a]re wizard, and they must knock you, or they would have no peace” (69), but only they can understand what they seem to say because they are originally the Little Ones. As Vane never

hears the Bags say the intelligible words, we can safely say that they, the degenerated folk, cannot speak any more.

37. Although, according to Mara, their true name is “Lovers,” they do not know it and instead, call themselves “the Little Ones,” showing their desire to be “the little ones” forever like Peter Pan.

38. Vane says to himself that “[i]f only she [Lona] would teach me to grow the other way, and become a Little One!—Shall I ever be able to laugh like them?” (67).

39. We can recognize the importance of sorrow in the fact that Mara, who plays an important role in this work as we will show in the final section, is called “Mother of Sorrow” or “the Lady of Sorrow,” always shedding tears. She ordinarily hides her face by wrapping some clothes (she is sometimes mentioned as “the veiled” or “the muffled” woman). When Vane, leaving her home, catches the glimpse of her face, he realizes that “tears [a]re flowing down her pale cheeks” (80). Besides, when she unwinds “the long swathes that hid[e] her face” (198) before Lilith, who is resistant to her, Vane describes her face: “It was lovely beyond speech—white and sad, heart-and-soul sad, but not unhappy, and I knew it never could be unhappy. Great tears were running down her cheeks” (198-99). Also, Mara’s residence is called “the House of Bitterness.”

40. Mara tells Vane the true names of the stupid giants and the Little Ones

are the Bags and the Lovers, and states that “[n]either people knows its own name!” (74). Then, she asks Vane his own name, but he cannot answer. The ignorance of their own name is related to “the true name” that God gives us and intends us to be. See MacDonald, “The New Name” in *Unspoken Sermons* 45-48.

41. Also, the Little Ones’ immaturity may be shown in their misunderstanding of Mara: they consider Mara, a good woman, to be “the Cat-woman” who is “awfully ugly—and scratches” (71). Only Lona perceives the truth and whispers to Vane that “[t]he Cat-woman will not hurt *you*” (71).

42. See Camporesi, and Schipper, chapter IX “Blood” (270-87).

43. In *Phantastes*, when a maiden finds a baby in nature, she calls out to her mother with joy: “I have got a baby—I have found a child!” (84). This is the way of their childbirth. Also, we should note that the maiden reports her childbirth to her mother first, which shows the strong mother-daughter relationship, the focus of this article.

44. It reminds us of the final chapter “Look at the Rain!” of “The Light Princess.” When the Princess “burst[s] into a passion of tears” and restores her gravity, “a rain c[omes] on, such as ha[s] never been seen in that country” (MacDonald, “The Light Princess” 51). The Princess also needs water for her proper growth—restoring her gravity both physically and

spiritually—and this scene demonstrates that the inner and outer water are closely connected.

45. According to Erich Neumann, a woman can experience “blood-transformations” three times: menstruation, pregnancy (primitive people thought that the embryo was built up from the blood), and the transformation of blood into milk after childbirth. See Neumann 31-32.

46. Previous studies have not referred to these hideous dead bodies. However, considering a Bulikan woman’s words—the leopardess “would have torn her mother to pieces for carrying her off!” (114)—and the fact that shortly after the quoted scenes, the spotted leopardess (Lilith) appears, we can say that she kills mothers in order to abduct their babies.

47. See Schipper 39-44, 205-10, 288-94.

48. Lilith says to Adam, who beseeches her to repent, that “I will not repent. I will drink the blood of *thy* child” (149, emphasis added).

49. The most significant example is Vesper’s death at her childbirth in “The History of Photogen and Nycteris” (1879). She goes out just after she gives birth to her daughter Nycteris. In *The Princess and the Goblin*, Irene is sent to a large house to be brought up by country people because of her mother’s fragile health, suggesting that her birth is one cause of it. In *Phantastes*, Anodos’ mother dies when he is a baby.

50. See Hirsh 43-67.

51. Recently, some studies point out the close but complicated relationship between mother and daughter. For example, Tamaki Saito states that the mother-daughter relationship is strikingly peculiar in comparison with father-son, father-daughter, and mother-son connections. He says that in this relationship, “there is a complication that protection and dependence involve the problem of the ruler and the ruled simultaneously” (*The Mother Rules over Her Daughter’s Life*, my trans.; 16), and so if the relation gets difficult once, it becomes a hotbed of love-hate complications. According to Saito, mother and daughter can adhere to each other too closely and the existence of mother permeates inside her daughter because these things can be attributable to the fact that they are the same sex and have the same female body. About this relationship’s complexity, see also *Why Mother and Daughter Get Complicated* edited by Saito. Besides, we can see their strong love and hatred in Greek myth: the former is described in Demeter-Persephone, and the latter in Clytemnestra-Electra. Though Demeter-Persephone’s love-filled relationship seems to be in a directly opposite position to hatred between Clytemnestra and Electra, both of them suggest that it is almost impossible to cut the interrelated mother-daughter relationship. As for the complicatedness of this relation, see also *Mères-Filles: Une relation à trois* written by Caroline Eliacheff and Nathalie Heinich. In this work, they discuss the peculiarity and problems

of the mother-daughter relationship through referring to many novels and movies.

52. MacDonald, *Lilith* 173.

53. Even when Lilith is in a dead-like state just after she tries to cross the hot river for killing her daughter, only her beautiful black hair remains the same. Vane says that her hair is “longer than [her]self, thick and very fine to the touch, and black as night” (96).

54. Indeed, we can apply this division of the woman image to some of MacDonald’s works. For instance, heroines like Princess Irene in the *Princess* Books, the Princess in “The Light Princess” and Princess Daylight in “Little Daylight” have golden hair reminiscent of the sunlight, and on the contrary, Lilith and North Wind in *At the Back of the North Wind*, who have a femme fatale like character more or less, have abundant black hair. However, considering that Nycteris and Lona, the brave, attractive heroines, are black-haired, we cannot just divide women in MacDonald’s works into fair lady and dark lady. Previous studies tend to limit their interpretation about the description of woman’s hair just to MacDonald’s yearning for his dead mother, referring to the lock of her golden hair that he treasured in his desk drawer throughout his life (cf. Greville MacDonald, *George MacDonald and His Wife* 32-33). Indeed, the impressive descriptions of the female hair attest the author’s deep feeling

toward his mother, but they also show that female characters in his works should not be polarized.

55. The similarity between Lilith, a “bad” woman and Mara, a “good” woman also attests that MacDonald does not just dichotomize female characters in his work unlike his contemporary male authors. We will discuss their similarity—they are even mixed up at times—in the first part of the final section.

56. MacDonald sometimes depicts the resemblance between the mother and her daughter. For instance, like Lona’s striking similarity to her mother, in “The History of Photogen and Nycteris,” the girl Nycteris “gr[ows] as like Vesper as possible” (307). On the contrary, as for the father and son like Peter and Curdie in the *Princess Books* and Joseph and Diamond in *At the Back of the North Wind*, such physical likeness is not mentioned.

57. Camille grieves over her status as a substitution and when Alain says that her eyes bear a striking resemblance to her mother’s, she impulsively tries to pierce her own eye with an awl. Camille suffers from the confusion of identity with her mother, and so she attempts to hurt a part of her body which resembles her mother in order to regain her own identity. Eliacheff and Heinich state that “this scene touches the core of the peculiarity of the mother-daughter relationship” (my trans.; 110). The daughter must be independent from her mother for establishing her own identity. However,

in Lona’s case, she is *forced* to be set apart from her mother. Therefore, first of all, she needs to connect to her mother, and then, she can become herself.

58. According to Adam, Lona is carried into the wilderness by someone (may be God) for her safety, and she is “divinely fostered, and ha[s] young angels for her playmates” (150). Therefore, Lona has never known her mother’s existence until she sees Lilith at her castle.

59. Bram Dijkstra calls such a passive and self-sacrificial woman “the Household Nun,” who indicates the male’s desire that a woman should be “a perfect jewel box for the safekeeping of the male soul, nestled in the walled garden of a family home” (13). Lona is similar to such ideal woman-image created by the male desire. She is passive and obedient to Vane—she mostly replies to his questions and she hardly questions him by herself, just following his decisions—and she is the affectionate mother all the time. Lona says that “I do not remember ever being without a child to take care of” (175). She is exactly the personification of the male ideal, “the Angel in the House,” or “the Household Nun.”

60. Generally, previous studies see Lilith and Lona as antithetical. For instance, Raeper regards Lona as “an image of womanly perfection, a child-bride and mother,” while he considers Lilith to be “a symbol of a revolt, appearing at a time when women were asserting themselves against

the patriarchal order and demanding independence, careers, and the vote. ... a threat therefore to the male identity” (377). Moreover, Patrick Maiwald asserts that Lona is “in many ways the antithesis of her mother, or that which the latter ought to be, respectively” (123).

61. Referring to what Adam says, Gaarden asserts that “[t]aking the credit for having ‘created’ their first child, she demanded Adam’s worship. When he refused, she committed suicide and became the consort of ‘the great Shadow’” (42-43). However, considering Lilith’s fervent desire to live eternally, we cannot think that she kills herself. Instead, she remakes herself for living an eternal life allied with the Shadow. Moreover, the blood shows life rather than death, and the blood that Lilith pours out to Adam must be related to her childbirth (*creation*) of Lona, asserting her power over him.

62. Michie 79-123. An exception of the heroine shedding blood can be Princess Irene. When the princess goes underground in order to rescue Curdie, who is locked up by malicious goblins, her fingers and hands become bloodstained while removing stones out of her way. See MacDonald, *The Princess and the Goblin* 110-11. This scene not only emphasizes Irene’s corporeality, but attests that she is not a stereotyped passive princess but an active, brave girl.

63. Gen. 2:18-25.

64. We can say that Lilith tries to cross the hot stream to go to Lona to kill her just after this scene for two reasons. First, just after Vane leaves the Evil Wood where the skeletons (those who cannot/reject to sleep in Eve’s house) dance, he finds Lilith lying almost dead near the hot stream. Interestingly, Vane at first mistakes her for another skeleton in the Evil Wood (96). Second, the horrible figure of skeletons (memento mori) and their suggestion of her mortality (she “wilt become weak as [them]”) increase Lilith’s fear about an old prophecy: “a child will be the death of her” (115). As she must recognize that the child is Lona, her “open channel” (150) through which her immortality/life is flowing fast away, these skeletons can make her in haste stop the effluence by filling the open channel—killing her own daughter.

65. MacDonald, *Lilith* 250.

66. MacDonald, *Lilith* 220, 242.

67. Eve offers wine for visitors to drink along with bread. Indeed, her hospitality reminds us of the Holy Communion, and it shows that she helps people to be saved and go to heaven by offering the Eucharistic meal and letting people sleep in her House of Death. However, we should note that she never brings water to people in contrast to Lilith and Mara, which draws attention to these two women’s commonality. At Lilith’s palace, Vane soaks in “the great white bath” filled with the water “[c]lear as

crystal,” asking to himself: “how was there water in the palace, and not a drop in the city?” (128). When Vane comes to Mara’s house for the first time, she offers him a cup of water, and in the morning, “bread and water [wait]” (79) him. While sent on a mission to bury Lilith’s severed hand by Adam, Vane sees the door of Mara’s cottage stand wide open and there are “a loaf of bread and a pitcher of water” (223). She also brings the Little Ones bread and water. As these children need water for their growth, Mara promotes it by offering water, which they have never seen before but “dr[i]nk without demur, one after the other looking up from the draught with a face of glad astonishment” (196-97). From the above, it is a significant common point that only Lilith and Mara can offer water to their visitors.

68. MacDonald, *Phantastes* 119-23.

69. About the process that he tends and revives Lilith, see 95-105. As Michie points out, using metaphorical words can deprive women of their corporeality. Therefore, Vane’s narrative—direct descriptions of Lilith’s body—can retain her corporeality.

70. The White Lady escapes Anodos’ embrace, rebuking his violation: “You should not have touched me!” and instead, “you should have sung to me” (MacDonald, *Phantastes* 125).

71. Especially, see MacDonald, *Lilith* 110, 131, 133.

72. MacDonald, *Lilith* 62.

73. Besides, we should also note that her bloodsucking emphasizes her corporeality. Lilith kisses/bites Vane’s body for drinking his blood, and Vane suffers “a shoot of mortal pain ... a sickening sting” and he sees her mouth wear “a look of satisfied passion” and her wipe “from it a streak of red” (133). The transmission of blood/life and their pain/satisfaction demonstrate their physicality.

74. The prominent examples written by MacDonald’s contemporaries are Sheridan Le Fanu’s “Carmilla” (1872) and Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897). As for an example of studies interpreting bloodsucking as a sexual act, see Hosokawa.

75. MacDonald, *Lilith*, Chapter XXXIII “Lona’s Narrative” 164-72.

76. MacDonald, *Lilith* 199-200, 213-14. Especially, we should note Lilith’s two words below. First, when Mara says to Lilith that “[b]ut another has made you, and can compel you to see what you have made yourself,” she answers indignantly: “No one ever made me. I defy that Power to unmake me from a free woman! You are his slave, and I defy you!” (200). Moreover, after Lilith consents to open her hand and restore water/life to the earth, hearing Mara ask her mother Eve “will not the great Father restore her to inheritance with His other children?”, Lilith murmurs “I do not know Him!” (214) in a voice of fear and doubt.

77. Strangely and interestingly, Vane says the similar thing: “... surely she [Lona] died long ago!” (189).

78. Mara’s vicarious attitude toward Lilith reminds us of Queen Irene, the great-great-grandmother in *The Princess and Curdie*. She demands Curdie thrust his hands into her flaming rose fire for making them have the ability to discern people’s true nature. During the trial, he suffers terrible pain, and after that, he sees “to his surprise, that her face look[s] as if she had been weeping” (219). To wit, Grandmother Irene shares his agony, which may help him to undergo his trial. Like the Grandmother, Mara, instead of merely giving orders, suffers with Lilith in repenting of her sins. We can say that precisely for the aid of sympathetic, maternal Mara, Lilith can endure her ordeal in her house and accept the sleep in Eve’s house for starting a new, true life.

79. Vane sees Adam “furtively wip[e] tears from his eyes” (150), and so he also sympathizes with Lilith, hoping for her redemption earnestly. However, significantly, it is not patriarchal, demanding Adam but maternal, loving Eve and Mara that succeed in reclaiming Lilith and help her to repent of her sins. Besides, her lovable daughter Lona allows her to be saved.

80. Lilith, the motherless mother can receive maternal love from Eve as well as Mara. It is noticeable that those who show maternal kindness to her are

her ex-husband’s wife and his daughter. We should also note that Lilith is helped to repent of her sins by the repentant women, Eve (Adam mentions: “my Eve repented, ... I too have repented, and am blessed” (148)) and Mara, “the Magdalene” (240). Besides, although Lilith rejects Mara’s proposal that her father Adam take Lilith in his arms and carries her and instead, she walks by herself (213-14), she accepts being lifted and carried by Mara (207) and Eve (215), and takes consolation from these affectionate women. These facts can show various images of woman and the importance of female relationships in this work.

81. Schaafsma 54.

82. For instance, we can clearly see MacDonald’s view of a truer, fuller life after death in *Phantastes*, “The Golden Key,” and “The History of Photogen and Nycteris.”

83. This scene reminds us of Disney movie *Maleficent* (2014). This movie is rather gynocentric adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty*. The protagonist is an evil fairy who curses Princess Aurora of the original story, named Maleficent in the movie. It depicts why and how Maleficent becomes evil, and we can see her agony, and her love and hate for her goddaughter, Princess Aurora. Then, significantly, the person who wakes up and saves Aurora is not Prince Philip but Maleficent, whom the Princess adores as her fairy godmother. We can see some similarities between *Maleficent* and

Lilith: both depict the evil females of the tradition or legend, and their background; the (god)mother-(god)daughter relationship has a key role. To our surprise, *Lilith* was written 119 years before the release of *Maleficent*. Moreover, *Lilith* goes further than *Maleficent* by letting the daughter kiss/save her mother. Indeed, we can perceive the patriarchal, conservative order in *Lilith*, but still, considering its similarity to the current movie, this work is in fact more advanced and gynocentric for that time.

84. Asked who Lilith’s parents are by Lona, Adam answers that his father “is her father also” (240). His incomplete answer can indicate that Lilith is an existence that has been created, not one that has received life/been born from her mother.

85. Before setting off to Lilith’s residence, Lona says that she would give her life “to have my mother! She might kill me if she liked! I should just kiss her and die!” (177). Her words show her determined resolution to sacrifice herself for having her mother, and at the same time, literally Lona can be considered to be a life-giver to her mother.

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