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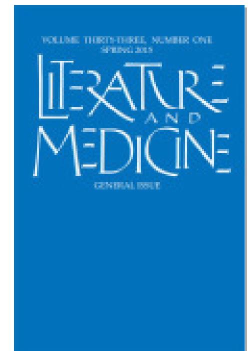

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Shirley Jackson's "The Tooth": Dentistry as Horror, the Imagination as a Shield

Robert Haas

Shirley Jackson is best known for her tales of quiet natural or supernatural horror. She first made her reputation with "The Lottery," which describes the placid ritual by which the residents of one small town annually select one of their number to stone to death. Published in 1948 in *The New Yorker*, this story stirred unprecedented reaction, including over 300 letters from puzzled, shocked, or enraged readers.[1] And Jackson's 1959 novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, made into the popular 1963 film *The Haunting*, has been called "one of the greatest haunted house novels ever written."[2]

But Jackson had a considerably wider creative range than horror, earning a big part of the family income instead from warmly humorous stories about her own household (which included four lively children, her brilliantly helpless husband the literary critic Stanley Hyman, and at least ten cats).[3] Published in women's magazines like *Good Housekeeping*, these stories were numerous enough to collect into her two long books *Life Among the Savages* (1948) and *Raising Demons* (1953).

Critical respect has gradually grown for Jackson's full range and artistry, beginning with Mary Kittredge's suggestion that her family stories showed "the other side of magic," "when the good spells hold."[4] It now includes a full biography; an analysis of her entire short fiction; a bibliography; a book-long reassessment of Jackson as a proto-postmodernist; and the present article as well.[5] But the task has not been made easier by Jackson herself, who early developed an aversion to explaining or publicizing herself. When, to follow up on the success of "The Lottery," her publisher immediately in 1949 issued a collection of her mostly previously published short stories, titled *The Lottery, or The Adventures of James Harris*, she wrote to her parents: "their advertising campaign is so excruciating that I will never show my face out

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of Vermont again. They are playing up *Lottery* as the most terrifying piece of literature ever printed. . . . And except for *Lottery* it's a harmless little book of short stories. I feel like a fool."[6] By 1954 she was refusing to do any personal publicity whatsoever for her work.[7] Her creative urge was so great that, allowing her well-meaning husband, editors, agents, publicists, and magazine or book publishers to manage or mismanage her career, she preferred to keep her head down and write, in her short lifetime (she died at age 48) producing six novels and well over a hundred stories.[8] As her children recalled: "always there was the sound of her typewriter, pounding away into the night."[9]

The subject of my essay, "The Tooth," is one of the stories in that first "harmless little book." [10] Its plot is simple enough: The protagonist, Clara Spencer, who had for years put off having a bad tooth tended to, now has no more choice, but with a raging toothache, low on sleep and high on aspirin, whisky, codeine, and a sleeping pill, must take the midnight bus to get to her New York City dentists. During her anxious ride she meets a solicitous stranger, Jim, who speaks of a fabulous land "farther than Samarkand" and shows her a handful of pearls (270). By the end of the story, leaving her New York dentist's office after having her tooth pulled, she is last seen running off, her hand in Jim's, "barefoot through hot sand" (286).

The story's mysterious stranger and puzzling ending have raised, beside frank incomprehension, such grim interpretations as that Jim is a "demon lover" leading Clara off to perdition, or that he exists entirely in her imagination, suggesting she may have gone insane. I will read it here instead as more "harmless" and realistic, reflecting Jackson's own considerable personal experience with bad teeth. Her biographer reports she "feared and hated" dental work "even more than most people," a trip to the dentist being "her own personal idea of hell."[11] In her twenties she was hospitalized for three weeks with a mysterious illness that may have been what was then called "trench mouth," i.e., necrotizing ulcerative gingivitis or periodontal disease, a painful gum infection of young adults associated with smoking and stress.[12] In her thirties she allocated the advance payment for her first novel *The Road Through the Wall* to having her teeth fixed; and by her forties all her upper teeth had been pulled.[13]

From this biographical context (and from an era that produced such fantasies as Walter Mitty's daydreams, and the benevolent invisible giant rabbit in *Harvey*), I then view Jim as Clara's own imaginary creation—benign, comforting, and therapeutic. Creating imagined characters is what a writer like Jackson does for a living every day—so

why shouldn't she (or Clara) make one up for comfort and distraction from a toothache? I will argue that Jim—Clara's imagination—is the strongest weapon she has against the multiple real-world horrors, including pain, fear, isolation, powerlessness, and depersonalization, that dentistry represents for her (or Jackson). Serious Shirley Jackson stories seldom have happy endings, instead typically leaving the reader awash in ambiguity and a vision of how fragile and perilous the everyday world is that had seemed so secure. Millions of patients have recovered uneventfully from a tooth extraction. Yet "The Tooth" makes a plausible case why Clara could feel after hers that she might run away and never come back.

"The Tooth" thus opens a remarkable window for the reader into the experience of a frightened patient. Objectively, a toothache is a far less grave medical crisis than can occur in many other branches of medicine. But dentists do give more drugs and x-rays than many other practitioners. More importantly, dentistry often inspires inordinate fear in patients: Dental fear or anxiety affects around two-thirds of the U.S. population, an estimated 10–20% of adults actually avoiding regular dental care because their fear is so intense.[14] Why should dentistry be so disquieting? Perhaps because it feels dehumanizing, since sitting in the dentist's chair with the mouth open blocks all the usual functions of the mouth—to eat, or drink, or speak, or kiss—basic and important to being human. A dentist also wildly (though with consent) violates the patient's interpersonal "comfort zone," keeping not just close enough to touch, but working for a sustained period of time out of sight *inside*. And a dentist, by creating discomfort and pain, may make the patient lose autonomy, power, and control. These factors in combination surely help explain why dentistry, beneficial and important as it really is, becomes for some people a nightmare. And as the physician and literary scholar Rita Charon has stated, "Of all the emotional factors that separate the doctor from the patient, the most powerful and important to face is the fear."[15] Thus the story of how Clara experiences, and tries to cope with, her fear can be relevant in medicine far beyond dentistry.

Jackson's story can serve as a reminder, too, that a patient is not just a body, but also a mind and imagination. Writing the next chapter in a medical encounter can be an act of creative imagination bordering on wildest fantasy—"imagine yourself out of that hospital bed and well again!"—and Jackson's story can emphasize how important a role the patient can play if there is to be the hope of a happy ending.

Previous and Present Interpretations

Many of the eight previous critical analyses that I know of for "The Tooth" have some "Gothic" typecasting. Though S. T. Joshi's broad 2001 survey of post-World War II horror fiction assigns Jackson a very high place, he yet finds "The Tooth" completely baffling: "a queer and meandering story. . . . I confess to being at a loss as to what point this story is trying to make, but the atmosphere of shimmering, dreamlike fantasy that was to become a Jackson trademark finds its first genuine embodiment here."[16] In Lenemaja Friedman's early (1975) four-sentence analysis of the story, Clara's pain-deadening drugs have brought on a temporary delusion;[17] in Mary Kittredge's one-sentence summary (1985) it is complete insanity.[18] The fullest previous analysis, Richard Pascal's article "Farther than Samarkand" (1982), views the tale as Clara's liberation from the constrictions of her small-town life: exciting yet perilous, since "Jim is a fantasy," "she may be insane," and "running away with the daemon lover may mean going to hell."[19]

Joan Wylie Hall's mythological interpretation (1993), based on the presumed equivalence "If Clara is Persephone [the original story title in the Shirley Jackson papers], Jim . . . must be Pluto," has no doubt that Clara is following her demon lover to destruction.[20] These equivalences, though, seem to me problematic. We cannot know for sure that this title reflects Jackson's motivating concept for the story. Her children said she often assigned titles or character names only temporarily, the final decision made only at publication.[21] In the first *published* version of the story Jim was actually named Ray—carrying substantially brighter connotations like hope or sunshine. Jackson's way of then later linking the stories in her collection by erudite quotations and the recurring shadowy demonic figure James Harris of its subtitle in fact brought a complaint by *New York Times* reviewer Donald Barr that these devices acted to "give a false unity to the book and confuse the meaning of the individual stories."[22] Thus "Persephone" could have been just a placeholder; or Jackson's concept could also have changed during the writing. In any case, Persephone carried off, terrified and screaming, in Pluto's chariot seems to me very different emotionally from Clara running off hand-in-hand with Jim.

The closest parallel I see to the Persephone myth occurs instead in Clara's awakening from her dental anesthesia, which includes powerful imagery of rebirth comparable to Persephone's return to the upper earth in spring: "she was running as fast as she could down a long horribly clear hallway . . . and at the end of the hallway was Jim,

holding out his hands and laughing, and calling something" (280). Thus if Clara is Persephone, the dark force Pluto that overpowered and carried her off must be the pain of her toothache, and the joyous spirit Demeter welcoming and bringing her back to the upper world must be Jim. Jackson wisely escaped this muddle of agencies and genders by eliminating the mythological title. Shifting from the flowery classical "Persephone" to the wonderfully prosaic and clinical, but arguably more gruesome "Tooth" instead enhances the story's character of real-world horror.[23]

Some more psychologically based interpretations situate "The Tooth" in the world of fantasy and dreams. In Steven K. Hoffman's comprehensive early (1976) Jungian analysis of Jackson's fiction, Clara, by running off with Jim, a "fairy prince whose existence is, at best, speculative . . . escapes a deadening and unsatisfactory routine." But she "fall[s] victim to illusion and fantasy" by thus entering a "dream world" which is only "a flimsy substitute for the more difficult soul searching necessary to achieve a new psychic center."[24] Darryl Hattenhauer's comprehensive (2003) reinterpretation of Jackson's work views "The Tooth" as a "satiric parody of the quest for romantic love," in which Clara, in a "would-be escape" from her stultifying marriage, simply "returns to the prison of domesticity by way of the vestibule of romantic love."[25] The most optimistic psychological theory, Karen Willingham-Sirmans and Mary Lowe-Evans's psychoanalytic interpretation (1997), views the story as occurring in the land of Clara's dreams, with Jim a fantasy ideal mate, where she "wrest[s] control of a dream world formerly dominated by Freudian patriarchal imperatives and liberate[s] herself."[26]

Indeed, Clara could at the end actually be running crazily, barefoot, hallucinating, and her hair flying, down a New York city street; or Jim might be a demon—or a crack in a stressed mind that earlier times would have called a demon—who wooed her with seductive deception and now carries her off to Hades. Nearly every other story in the collection has an unhappy ending. Clara bought only a one-way bus ticket; the bus "stirred, groaned, and pulled itself forward"; then "Outside, the familiar street slipped past, strange and dark and seen, unexpectedly, from the unique station of a person leaving town, going away" (268). These could well be portents that she will never return. The very multiplicity of these possibilities and previous interpretations indicates how much indefiniteness and ambiguity Jackson has planted in her story.

My interpretation below assumes: (1) Jim exists purely in Clara's mind (this parallels the imaginary companions and multiple personalities Jackson often included in her fiction, and eliminates the otherwise paranormal strangeness of Jim's sudden appearances and disappearances); (2) Jim's talk—Samarkand, etc.—is benevolent distraction, in fact resembling the "Guided Imagery" used clinically today to manage dental fear and anxiety; and (3) the end is possibly just a dream (Clara, now sitting *alone* in a ladies' room, has already dozed off many times before in the story). In this reading, Jim *might* bring Clara safely back home after she has rested in their oasis; or she *may* soon wake up and go home, regardless what they were doing in her dream.

Toothache

In my interpretation, "The Tooth" is a brilliantly *realistic* portrayal of *imaginative* coping behavior. How would a person as creative as Jackson cope? By making up a story. Like nearly all of Jackson's fiction, at its root this story concerns evil: its nature,—here a compound of pain, fear, and helplessness; how it afflicts good people,—here poor, harmless Clara Spencer; and how to combat it,—here by never complaining (so showing grace under pressure, that era's definition of courage), and by imagination.

Jackson often begins a story with the setting alone. (A memorable example is the evil house—"whatever walked there, walked alone"—that opens and dominates *The Haunting of Hill House*.[27]) "The Tooth" makes in its first sentence a hauntingly shivery picture out of the midnight bus to New York: "The bus was waiting, panting heavily at the curb in front of the small bus station, its great blue-and-silver bulk gleaming in the moonlight" (267). In retrospect, this image of a long powerful shiny object looming overhead against a glaring light may well foreshadow the dental instruments that the frightened patient is trying so hard not to think about; and the "heavy soft" bus seat already simply the dental chair, come several hundred miles to carry her irresistibly to her dreaded appointment (268).

Gleaming metal recurs later in the story, in the first dentist's "drill bending its smooth chromium head" (275); the surgeon dentist's "metal hidden under a towel, and great machinery being wheeled in almost silently behind her" (280); and even the ladies' room at the end, "a vast room with windows and wicker chairs and glaring white tiles and glittering silver faucets" (282). A bus does not really pant,

of course—but a frightened hyperventilating person does. Thus from the story's first sentence on, its "sound track" carries also the image of dental fear.[28]

Dentists in Jackson's other fiction, whether serious or comic, are people to avoid. In her first novel *The Road Through the Wall*, thirteen-year-old Tod has caused the death of a child. When a policeman comes to interrogate the boy, Jackson summons potent images of terrifying adult authority: "The policeman looked like a doctor, like a dentist, like the man at the movie theatre who wanted to know how old you were . . . . [H]e looked at you in the same way, as though he knew things about you he was not going to tell and yet was going to hurt you anyway, of his own accord, whether you wanted him to or not, like the dentist. . . . Tod shook his head numbly; if he opened his mouth the man might start drilling his teeth" (184).

Next to enter the scene in "The Tooth" is the protagonist, Clara Spencer, who will be riding that gleaming midnight bus. Pressing her handkerchief to her swollen face, she says, "I feel so funny . . . light-headed and sort of dizzy," and clutches her husband's arm (265–66). It is important for the reception of the story in its time that she do so. Though women, as always, possessed their half of the brain power of the human race, in that era before women's liberation, with America and the world still struggling to return to normal after World War II, they were not supposed to make a show of it. Jackson works hard throughout the story to make her heroine fit the ideal of a demure, passive, virtuous Everywoman with whom the reader of her day could identify or sympathize. Clara's parting conversation with her husband reveals that the tooth had bothered her already six or seven times before, including on their honeymoon. This speaks volumes, both of her fear of dentistry and of her uncomplaining nature: she has repeatedly chosen not to interrupt her daily life, or the intended mutual happiness of her honeymoon, just because she herself was in pain.

She seats herself far back in the dark bus, takes the blame that the driver forgot to collect her ticket on herself—"I guess I was a little rushed at the last minute"—and laughs at his joke even though it hurts her swollen face to do so (268–69). Even there in the dark she modestly covers her legs: "She put her head back and her feet up, discreetly covered with her skirt, and fell asleep" (269). (Her exhausted nap later in the terminal waiting room finds her again instinctively a proper lady: "She sat up and saw her pocketbook on her lap, her feet neatly crossed" [273].)

When the New York waitress wakes her—"'You was asleep,' the waitress said accusingly,"—she doesn't snarl back, "I was up half the night with a toothache!" but instead answers, "I'm very sorry. Poached eggs and coffee please" (274). Getting to her dentist she feels a surge of hope that perhaps he can yet fix her tooth: "She went in through the door with a feeling of achievement; she had come successfully from one place to another, and this was the end of her journey and her objective" (275). She sees "sunlight on the headrest of the dentist's chair" and imagines that "perhaps all human ailments were contained in the teeth, and he could fix them if only people would come to him in time" (275). But it is too late: "'They'll take that tooth out,' the dentist said testily, turning away. 'Should have been done years ago'" (276).

Besides revealing Clara's character, Jackson also closely analyzes the nature and psychology of her medical suffering. Most directly it is physical pain: "She put her tongue cautiously on the tooth and was rewarded with a split-second crash of pain" (269). The toothache throbs; the tooth pulses steadily; later the "tooth came alive" (272) and Clara "walked on . . . , her tooth burning her" (275). By the time she reaches her dentist the toll of her ordeal is evident: "The clean white nurse sat at the desk in the office; her eyes took in the swollen cheek, the tired shoulders, and she said, 'You poor thing, you look worn out'" (275).

Dental anatomy explains why a toothache like Clara's can hurt so much.[29] The mouth and teeth are richly supplied with nerve endings, and these communicate with the brain through the fifth (trigeminal) nerve which is actually the largest cranial nerve. The dental nerves, furthermore, are confined inside rigid structures like tooth pulp chambers, root canals, and small channels through the jawbones. So injury or infection that elsewhere might cause, say, a tenderly swollen finger or toe, in the teeth cannot be relieved by swelling out into more space, but rather must cause compression and pain.

Giving Clara's pain its driving force is her fear. This has made her postpone dentistry six or seven times before (267); makes her say "Don't even talk like that," and shiver, when her husband guesses the tooth will have to be pulled (266); and, after the smiling nurse reassures her—"You know it won't hurt, don't you?"—makes her immediately ask the dentist: "Will it hurt?" (279–80).

Compounding Clara's pain and fear is her helplessness: "she had left her bottle of codeine pills sitting on the table in the restaurant and now she was at the mercy of her tooth" (272–73). This situation

then erodes her personhood, reducing her to nothing but one aching tooth—"I just feel as if I were all tooth. Nothing else" (266)—and later:

> Her tooth, which had brought her here unerringly, seemed now the only part of her to have any identity. It seemed to have had its picture taken without her; it was the important creature which must be recorded and examined and gratified; she was only its unwilling vehicle, and only as such was she of interest to the dentist and the nurse, only as the bearer of her tooth was she worth their immediate and practised attention. (276)

Going into the ladies' room after that all-important tooth has been extracted, Clara finds she can recognize neither her own face in the mirror, nor her own name engraved on her silver hair barrette (283–84).

Besides her sense of herself, Clara's toothache also destroys her connection with other people, leaving her to suffer alone. At the bus station she and her husband talk past each other rather than communicating, as, loving but powerless to help one another, each asks over and over, "Are you sure *you'*ll be all right?" (265–68). In the bus, where the people are "isolated together in some strange prison" (269), Jackson gives Clara's separation physical form: the long thin line of ceiling lights seems her sole, tenuous, connection to the driver and other passengers at the front of the bus, who appear as fantastically remote as if seen through the wrong end of a telescope, leaving her "closed in alone" with her toothache (271). In New York her dentist, "testily, turning away," cannot help her (276); nor can the taxi driver, who, when she says she is going to have a tooth pulled, exclaims "Jesus . . . . Good luck" and slams the door (277). At the surgeon dentist's office she is led into "the vault," through "labyrinths and passages . . . into the heart of the . . . building" as if into a tomb (279). Left there alone in a cubicle to suffer the nervous patient's interminable wait (please soon; but please not yet!), she receives only an occasional nurse's smile or untrue message, "Won't have to wait much longer" (279). Even after her tooth is pulled, Clara will still be alone, now isolated by the unbridgeable chasm between her terrified patient's experience—"God has given me blood to drink"—and the banal medical response, "Don't rinse your mouth or it won't clot" (281).[30]

There would be no story, though, if Clara were no more than the pitiful victim of her toothache. Jackson uses the opening also to indicate her heroine's strength and competence. Her parting conversation with her husband demonstrates her housewifely excellence. In her mid-

twentieth-century marriage, her job is the household, her husband's to be a good provider (which he fulfills by repeatedly checking that she has enough money for the trip). Her dental emergency now interrupting her life, she swiftly runs through her mental list of eight arrangements she has made to tide her helpless husband over her expected one day's absence: for instance, Mrs. Lang will make breakfast; Johnny can skip school if things are too mixed up; the cleaner will come at four; and he should leave the milkman a note for eggs (267–68).

Clara's ambitiously comprehensive program of self-medication for her pain—aspirin, whisky, a sleeping pill, and codeine (then counteracting its sedative effect with coffee)—also reveals her character, drive, and competence. Her rationale here must be purely from experience (Jackson herself took a lot of medicines).[31] For only recently has neuroscience explained how these modalities are all distinct, hence additive (e.g. aspirin blocks pain in a *different* way than does whisky, hence aspirin *plus* whisky does more than either alone). The effects may not simply add, but be dangerously synergistic: mixing alcohol, sleeping pills, and narcotics can be quite hazardous.[32] Clara is clearly pushing the limits of her treatments, where toxic side effects start to supervene: dizzy, giggling, and her hand shaking, she is probably already a little drunk from the whisky; dozing off constantly, she is probably feeling effects from the whisky and codeine as well as her sleeping pill. If she increases any of these any further she might well not make it to New York. Her decision to use all of them together, while reflecting her brave, or fearful, uncomplaining nature—she does not want to interrupt her life to go to the dentist just because she is in pain—also reveals her imagination and competence: If by willpower one can stop a toothache, Clara will find the way. Pain is a complex phenomenon, though, which also includes a powerful emotional component.[33] (Neurobiology has shown that the brain processes this in its limbic system, quite distinct from the neural circuits that register the purely sensory component.) How can Clara cope with the emotion? The next section examines her brilliant strategy: Jim.

Jim

In this story Jackson portrays Clara undergoing an ordeal she had dreaded and postponed for years—in pain, frightened, alone and cut off from effective outside help. Clara's natural tendency is to take much better care of others than of herself. Yet here, though her hand

is shaking too much to comb her own hair (266), she *must* look after herself enough to get safely to her dentists in New York. Under this dire necessity her mind performs a remarkable feat: it splits off one little sliver that will be calm and strong, and will care for her as tenderly as she would care for someone else, and it calls this sliver "Jim."

Jim has multiple cultural roots. He resembles the "imaginary companions" who occur frequently in real life (mostly in childhood), in Jackson's other fiction, and, perhaps for escape into fantasy from the grimness of the world war and its aftermath, in the popular fiction of the time. Imaginary companions do typically exist for a longer period of time than Jim; but perhaps the constraints of the short story form excuse that he appears, acts, and leaves within just one day. Another source is medical fact: the anesthesia protocol used in Jackson's time (but no longer today) had a known tendency to cause sexual hallucinations, grounds for a different type of anticipation during demure Clara's long night on the bus. Yet I will also demonstrate how effectively Jim may serve her as a therapeutic fantasy.

Psychologists report that imaginary companions are quite common, especially in children; but they can also persist into adulthood, for instance when an adult still finds comfort in confiding her problems to her stuffed animal.[34] Jackson's *Life Among the Savages* describes vivid imaginary companions for her own young children.[35] Her eldest daughter Joanne has seven invisible adopted daughters. Though they make for considerable confusion when they must all be shepherded along on the bus or in a restaurant on a shopping trip, they are obviously very useful for socialization, maturation, deflecting blame, developing managerial skill, coping with ignorant parents, etc. By the end of the book Joanne is outgrowing her invisible family, who have moved to Texas and seldom write, but her younger sister Sally has acquired one of her own, whose members dwell in the middle of the river and live on lollipops and corn on the cob.[36]

A rarer, yet still natural psychological phenomenon is the split personality. These so fascinate Jackson that she makes them the center of two or three of her novels.[37] Probably her most remarkable fictional imaginary companion is Tony in *Hangsaman* (1951). This coming-of-age novel describes the difficult first college semester of Natalie Waite, who is too brilliant and shy to find company among her fellow students. She meets and likes Tony, a girl who "lives in a house on the other side of the campus," and on a later visit Tony reads to her from an erotic/pornographic novel, then slips into bed beside her: "Side by side like two big cats they slept." Yet after fifty pages of companionship

Tony disappears and the book has its happy ending: "The reassuring bulk of the college buildings showed ahead of her [Natalie], and she looked fondly up at them and smiled. As she had never been before, she was now alone, and grown-up, and powerful, and not at all afraid." Tony, to the surprise of quite a few readers, is just a construct of Natalie's imagination, though critical for her maturation.[38] Considering such precedents, it should not be difficult to regard Clara's friend Jim as a similarly imagined and helpful being.

One of the most famous fictional companions in Jackson's time was the six-foot tall imaginary (or at least invisible) white rabbit in Mary Chase's immensely popular play (1944) and movie (1950) "Harvey"; Jackson, who lived in New York city 1940–1945 where her husband wrote Comments for the *New Yorker* 1941–1952, surely saw the play.[39] Chase's rabbit Harvey is a pooka—"From old Celtic mythology. A fairy spirit in animal form . . . . A wise but mischievous creature"—who, by companionship in the bars with genial alcoholic protagonist Elwood P. Dowd, brings good into the world.[40] Clara and Jim might surely cool off after their run through hot sand by having a drink with Elwood and Harvey, for Jim and the pooka are kindred spirits: fantasy in the service of good.

A potent medical source for altered states of consciousness is the gas anesthesia Clara receives during her tooth extraction: "First of all things get so far away . . . . And then the whirling music, the ringing confusedly loud music" (280). Around the beginning of the twentieth century, gas mixing technology was developed for producing precisely metered mixtures of nitrous oxide and pure oxygen, presumably the protocol—"great machinery being wheeled in almost silently behind her" (280)—that Clara receives.[41] Easier, cheaper, and safer local anesthetics like novocain, numbing just the mouth rather than the whole patient, eventually superseded most dental nitrous oxide anesthesia. Nonetheless, Horace Wells, a dentist who had one of his own teeth painlessly extracted after inhaling the gas in 1844, may be credited with inventing anesthesia. Nitrous oxide is used in dentistry today instead mostly for analgesia, relief of anxiety and pain, but at considerably lower concentrations than what Clara would have received, which could in fact produce sexual side-effects.

Nitrous oxide was first systematically investigated around 1798 by the young Humphry Davy (1778–1829), who eventually became famous for discovering several chemical elements (including sodium, potassium, calcium, and, in part, chlorine), for his contribution to public safety (wire gauze around the Davy lamp's candle, by block-

ing gas ignition, prevented devastating coal mine explosions), and for popularizing science (through his celebrated Royal Institution lectures). In his systematic 1798 investigation of the drug, Davy's subjects attempted to describe nitrous oxide ecstasy: "I felt like the sound of a harp"; "highest sensations of pleasure . . . superior to any thing I ever before experienced"; "extraordinary degree of pleasure"; "sensations so delightful, that I can compare them to no others, except . . . some of the grand chorusses in the Messiah, from . . . 700 instruments."[42] Inevitably, some patients experienced sexual feelings or hallucinations, with some young female patients alleging they had been taken advantage of while unconscious. In one early case, the female patient's father was a judge, who promptly jailed the dentist.[43] An article published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association* collected nine cases (one patient "described the sensation of being naked," and others alleged the dentist attempted to see or fondle their breast or pelvic area) where complaints were filed with the state dental boards (only one of which went to trial, and the dentist was acquitted).[44] Hallucinations and mistaken accusations were possible: comparable reports were made when the patient's relatives were in the room throughout and saw that nothing happened.[45]

Still, nine out of fifty female dental hygiene students receiving nitrous oxide in a 1980 survey experienced increased sexuality or arousal; the study's authors therefore advised to keep nitrous oxide levels below 50%, and to always have an assistant present as a witness in the room.[46] A follow-up article warned that nitrous oxide also increases a patient's susceptibility to unintentional hypnosis and enhanced suggestibility. The dentist should therefore be sure, for example, to tell patients to think about "relaxing at the seaside," not just to "think about or imagine something pleasant."[47]

Clara indeed does see Jim while coming to after her extraction, and her first worry is whether under the anesthetic she might have babbled some indiscretion: "Did I talk? . . . Did I *say* anything? Did I say where he is?" But her dentist, observing the guidelines, had a nurse present throughout the extraction who can reassure her that nothing untoward happened, that she didn't say *anything*, and that the doctor was only teasing (281).

Clara (and Jackson) came from a time more reticent about sex than today, but not necessarily therefore more ignorant.[48] In her many emotionally charged years of procrastinating over her tooth repair, might not Clara have heard about the anesthetic's possible lurid side effects, planting the notion that became Jim? Might she not feel that suffering her toothache entitled her to some pleasant dreams?

From this cultural and medical background information one may then contemplate Jim as Clara first meets him on the bus. Very little detail goes into specifying him: "He was wearing a blue suit and he looked tall; she could not focus her eyes to see any more" (270). One never does learn the color of his hair or eyes, where he came from, or why or where he is traveling to in New York. For such details aren't needed. "You want coffee? . . . Drink it quickly" he says (270). "Go and wash your face . . . Come back here afterward"; "he pointed to another cup of coffee and a sandwich. 'Go ahead'" (272). He exists to direct and care for Clara, and he fulfills his purpose.

Jim does not actually perceive more than Clara does: When she leaves her precious bottle of codeine pills on the table in the restaurant he doesn't notice it either. But what he does do makes up for it, because he gives her comfort. "Put your head on my shoulder now, and go to sleep," he says (272). Exhausted Clara's *physical* sensation is surely indistinguishable from resting her head on the padded corner of the bus seat. But the *thought* that a strong kind person who cares for her is sitting beside her brings enough comfort that she can rest.

"I'm going to the dentist," she tells Jim when they arrive in New York. "I know," he replies (though she had never told him), and promises "I'll watch out for you" (273). And then he disappears: "He went away, although she did not see him go. She thought to watch for his blue suit going through the door, but there was nothing" (273). A woman who, sitting in the dark at the back of a bus, still primly covers her feet with her skirt would never rest her head on a real stranger's shoulder anyhow. Clearly, Jim is a creation of Clara's own imagination.

But what, then, should one make of Jim's fantastic romantic talk of Samarkand and the like? It has strong similarity to a technique, called "Guided Imagery," used in modern behavioral management of the dental fear and anxiety that, as mentioned at the beginning of this essay, is a common problem. A form of "relaxation therapy," this lets the patient focus the mind on feelings other than tenseness by taking a mental vacation. Here is the outline of its script:

> Picture in your mind's eye your favorite beach, what you're wearing, what you are sitting or lying on, and what the sand looks like.
>
> Now look at the water. Notice what color it is and what the waves look like: their height, where they break, how far they roll up the beach toward you.

> Now feel the ocean breeze blow across your skin. Is it cool or warm, harsh or soft? Notice the sand now. Is it hot, warm, or cool? Is the sand powdery, coarse, or pebbly?
>
> Try to pick up the scents of the ocean. . . .
>
> Now look at the horizon and sky. Pick out a cloud if there are any present, and allow yourself to float as it is. Allow the breeze to carry you softly and safely until you feel like you're floating.
>
> Now . . . as you continue relaxing, I will begin my treatment. You may find your jaw slackens and your mouth opens while you stay just as deeply relaxed as you are now.[49]

And here for comparison are Jim's words to Clara:

> "Traveling far? . . ."
>
> "Even farther than Samarkand . . . and the waves ringing on the shore like bells."
>
> . . .
>
> "The flutes play all night . . . and the stars are as big as the moon and the moon is as big as a lake."
>
> . . .
>
> "Nothing to do all day but lie under the trees."
>
> . . .
>
> "And while we were sailing past the island we heard a voice calling us. . . ."
>
> . . .
>
> "The sand is so white it looks like snow, but it's hot, even at night it's hot under your feet."
>
> . . .
>
> "The grass is so green and so soft . . . and the water of the river is so cool."
>
> . . .
>
> "The sky is bluer than anything you've ever seen, and the songs. . . ."
>
> . . .
>
> "Look," he said as he passed, and he held out a handful of pearls. (270–74)

A writer like Shirley Jackson will craft a richer description than the one in a dental hygiene textbook. But clearly the principle is the same: to distract the worried patient by filling the mind with concretely beautiful multisensory images. A frightened mind can circle in endless, and

terribly exhausting, fearful imaginings, until it is simply gibbering "oh my oh my oh my oh my . . . ." Thinking Jim's script instead, Clara can find enough restful repose to face her appointment in the morning.

One could wonder why Jim becomes so scarce—just a presence walking for a moment beside her, or a hand waving from the crowd across the street (275, 277)—once Clara has launched into her morning activities in the big city of eating breakfast and finding her dentists' offices. But that seems psychologically realistic, because Jim's primary function was to calm her fear during her dark night alone. Another patient might similarly hug her stuffed animal for comfort at home, yet have no need to take it along to the doctor's office in the morning. For then it is daylight, and there are people to talk to, and practical details to attend to in getting treatment.

Recovery?

Jim returns bringing Clara emotional support twice more in the story, first when she awakens after her extraction, then after all her medical treatment is done. Objectively, Clara receives excellent care: she is seen by two dentists and has her tooth painlessly extracted in one morning. But from her frightened, pain-filled, patient's perspective there is a series of blows and indignities: nightmarish nighttime bus ride; being shaken awake at the terminal; scolding waitress; getting lost going downtown; maliciously probing x-rays; angry dentist turning away; slamming taxi door; interminable wait with untruths "Won't have to wait much longer." Then there is the surgeon dentist looming overhead, never saying her name but joking about her secrets while keeping his own instruments hidden under a towel; himself bored with it all, double-checking with the nurse which tooth to extract (doesn't he know?); and his fearsome anesthesia machine wheeled in "almost silently" behind her. Clara's body, having betrayed her in the form of the aching tooth that took over her life, to the experts now also betrays her worried mind: "Relax your hands, dear," says the nurse, and only with difficulty—"after a long time she felt her fingers relaxing"—can Clara obey (280). The anesthesia blots out her remaining hold on life—her mind—and her last conscious thoughts show her resentment and struggle: "First of all things get so far away, she thought, remember this. And remember the metallic sound and taste of all of it. And the outrage" (280).

So her first thoughts on reawakening are quite appropriately of running away, and of Jim, her mind's creation and support: "and she

was running as fast as she could down a long horribly clear hallway . . . and at the end of the hallway was Jim, holding out his hands and laughing, and calling something" (280).

After a very long nap to recuperate from the anesthesia, Clara sits up dizzy, walks leaning on the nurse's arm, "strong enough to guide any wavering footstep," receives instructions from the parodically robotic discharge nurse, and leaves the dental office "still almost asleep" (281-282). Her *treatment* is done; but her *recovery*, which will again involve Jim and running, still lies ahead. Jackson clearly portrays the gulf between the emotional, almost mythic, dimensions of Clara's experience as a patient—"God has given me blood to drink"—and the banal practicality that even fine medical care can give her—the nurse's "Don't rinse your mouth or it won't clot" (281).

As her terrifying story "The Lottery" had demonstrated, Jackson was quite capable, between her college folklore course, her husband's expertise on myth and ritual, and her own powerful imagination, of making up quasi-mythical ritual scenes in her fiction.[50] Clara, having endured her ordeal—days of pain and fear from her toothache, then symbolic, Persephone-like death and rebirth from the anesthesia—would seem to deserve some reward, some welcome into the company of initiates, a robe or other token, or a new name, as in tribal coming-of-age ceremonies. Clara's recovery may be viewed as an abortive initiation scene, for after medical suffering there comes no such ceremony, wisdom, token, or reward. "Where's my tooth?" Clara cries after the extraction. But the dentist keeps it—"All gone. Never bother you again," replies the nurse (281)—and it would be grotesque for Clara to keep it to wear as a necklace or lapel pin, to celebrate her victory, or remember her pain, or mourn the loss of a part of her body.

Instead, for her recovery Clara enters a ladies' room, described with Jackson's characteristic piercing attentiveness to physical setting: "a vast room with windows and wicker chairs and glaring white tiles and glittering silver faucets" (282). Clara washes her face. She settles down in a wicker chair and empties her pocketbook into her lap, seeking clues to her identity. She removes the silver barrette marked "Clara" that had held her hair pulled back like "a schoolgirl," and the blue plastic letter "C" from her lapel, and discards them to fall with a "satisfactory clang" into the tall ashstand that, perhaps trailing smoke and fumes, might stand in for a portal to the underworld (284–85). She strips off the stockings that had bothered her with their imperfection from the beginning of the story.

But she receives no welcome: it is a hectic bright world that has been going on quite busily without her. She gets no choice for a new face:

> She was the pale anxious one with the hair pulled back and when she realized it she was indignant and moved hurriedly back through the crowd of women, thinking, It isn't fair, why don't I have any color in my face? There were some pretty faces there, why didn't I take one of those? I didn't have time, she told herself sullenly, they didn't give me time to think, I could have had one of the nice faces . . . . It's mean, she was thinking. (283–84)

And the other women are no welcoming fellowship, just a modern anonymous crowd and, chattering like a flock of birds, they soon go off for their half hour of lunch, leaving Clara to sit there in the ladies' room alone. To complete her recovery, she must instead bring Jim back for his final, most fantastic appearance.

Jim has an important function here that, in Jackson's implicit critique of the medical procedures she herself underwent, was not addressed in "discharging" a patient, namely to mediate the transition back to a healthy non-patient. Becoming a patient is a strange, profound, and terrifying change for Clara, the pain and fear sweeping away most ordinary human concerns, and her personhood being lost as she became "all tooth," subject to the arcane procedures and absolute control of medical personnel focused exclusively upon it. It is a form of hell, without evident terminus—"it seemed that she had been in the cubicle all her life" (281)—and to return from it needs more than the discharge nurse's bright "All through?" (282). The change coming back is so great that Clara would not find it at all strange also to receive a new name and face in the process. She must recover *herself* before she can return to her ordinary roles of wife, mother, etc. Perhaps it would all have been easier if her husband had come along to New York with her—but in suffering a person is in some ways alone no matter who is sitting beside her. So Jim, her creation, must now be her companion in running away from that dark world of pain and fear.

For a naturalistic interpretation of the story, I believe Clara may, while sitting there in the ladies' room, simply doze off for another nap. It wouldn't be unusual—in the course of the story she already fell asleep a dozen times: twice on the ride out of town, at the restaurant counter, after each of the three rest stops, for over an hour in the terminal waiting room, in the restaurant, on the bus, in the taxi,

in the cubicle for over an hour, and after the extraction for a long time because the nurse didn't want to wake her. Why not one more nap here? I don't believe she has the energy to stride "purposefully to the elevator" and then go running hand in hand with Jim through hot sand (286)—I think those are reverie—fantasy—dream.

The real-world program for the remainder of Clara's day seems clear: In half an hour the other women will come chattering back from lunch and probably wake her, and she will make her way, a little unsteadily, down for her afternoon errands in the big city: lunch, new stockings, buy the laxative the dental office prescribed, then to the train station to buy a ticket and make the trip home. Perhaps she will phone ahead to find out what a muddle her husband has made of the household without her; perhaps she will have another nap in the station before the train leaves. And then she will go home and take up again the threads of her mundane life.

But that is all anticlimax, and Jackson knows to stop her tale long before. For the entire story Clara has been trapped—under her pain, in the bus seat, in the dental chair, waiting in the cubicle, held down under the irresistible force of the anesthesia, by the nurse holding her arm when she awoke, by her body's total exhaustion afterwards. Now at last she can tell herself "It's over!" and one part of her terrified, exhausted, and euphoric patient's consciousness must simply want to break away and run, and keep on running. (As she comes out of the anesthesia, she asks the nurse, "Why did you pull me back? . . . I wanted to go on" [281]). This, then, is the point where the artist of Gothic terror chooses to stop her story.

There are grounds for optimism. The instant Clara frees her hair from her barrette brings a shift away from the emotional constriction and pain in the story: "Her hair fell softly around her face; it was warm and reached to her shoulders" (284). Clara called Jim into being out of direst need; he came to help from the land of imagination where he lives, "beyond Samarkand"; and with him beside her she made it through this terrible day. Even another tooth extraction should never frighten her so much again, because she now knows what it's like, and won't have to ask anxiously "What will they do?" and "Will it hurt?" Jim will always be there if she should need him; but with any luck in her life she will never see him again. Her poor *body*, groggy and perhaps still spitting blood, is likely for a day or two to stay planted in the chair for a little nap whenever she sits down. But this finely crafted story ends with the truer final view of Clara: her euphoric *mind*, as, hand in hand with her creation Jim, "her hair down

on her shoulders," she runs "barefoot through hot sand"—powerful, competent, imaginative, and free. Surely they'll come back soon (the reader thinks, with a little shiver), won't they?

NOTES

This essay is dedicated to my dentists, Drs. Edwin Horowitz, Martin Krasny, and David Newmarker, and their staffs, through whose care I myself have never known a toothache.

I thank the editors and two anonymous reviewers for their numerous thoughtful comments, which led to material improvement in both form and content of this article.

1. Kittredge, 10; see also Oppenheimer, 127–32, for a fuller account.
2. Joshi, 48, reprinting 196.
3. "'*Shirley!*' he would bellow from his study. 'I have *no ink* in my *pen!*' And if someone else was there, she might raise an eyebrow or give a ladylike snort, but nevertheless, in under a minute Stanley would have a working pen" (Oppenheimer, 121). Hyman also could not drive; Jackson had to learn so she could be his, and the family's, chauffeur (Oppenheimer, 152; *Life Among the Savages*, 99–110). For the cats, see Oppenheimer, 116, 179.
4. Kittredge, 3, 6.
5. Oppenheimer; Hall; Reinsch; Hattenhauer.
6. Oppenheimer, 136.
7. Hall, 99.
8. Hall, 191–95, gives a bibliography as of 1993; *Just an Ordinary Day* includes 31 more previously unpublished stories from the total of over 130 stories in Jackson's papers (see v–viii).
9. Jackson, *Just an Ordinary Day*, ix.
10. Jackson, "The Tooth" (cited hereafter in the text by page numbers). The 1948–1949 version has only two significant changes from the *Hudson Review* original: (1) The sentence: "'Good-bye,' he said, waving violently" is added to the end of Clara's first scene when she says goodbye to her husband at the bus station (268); (2) The name of Clara's mysterious friend is changed throughout from Ray to Jim.
11. Oppenheimer, 147, 251.
12. Oppenheimer, 80; Söder 571–73; Schluger et al., 265–72. The three weeks came at a peak of personal stress for Jackson, for they had been planned as a vacation that was a last-ditch effort by her parents to persuade her not to marry her intended husband Stanley Hyman. Both sets of parents opposed the marriage because of religious incompatibility; Hyman's father refused to speak to his son for six years afterwards (Oppenheimer, 87–88, 117–18, 6th plate of photographs).
13. Oppenheimer, 125; Hattenhauer, 164.
14. Walsh and Darby.
15. Charon, 32.
16. Joshi, 49, reprinting, 196; Joshi 22, reprinting, 193.
17. Friedman, 49.
18. Kittredge, 9–10.
19. Reprinted 1993 in Hall, 169.
20. Hall, 45; see 45–47.
21. Jackson, *Just an Ordinary Day*, viii.
22. Barr.
23. My thanks to Catherine Belling for this insight.

24. Hoffman, 201, 205–6.
25. Hattenhauer, 42–44.
26. Willingham-Sirmans and Lowe-Evans, 97.
27. Jackson, *Haunting*, 3.
28. "The Tooth" contains many elements of Jackson's regular gothic style but, in her family stories, Jackson was also a leading humorist. "The Tooth" shows glimpses of her sharp wit: the waiting room decorated like a bank with potted palms, and a nurse receptionist acting "as though you had overdrawn your account with the dentist and were two teeth in arrears" (278); the doorman acting as though he invented the taxi he summons (277); the nurse patronizing her patient with her royal we: "'Now we're not going to worry'" (278). An episode of Jackson's *Raising Demons* contains a fully comic version of "The Tooth," in which a chaotic family visit to New York follows from Mom's need (and eventual, Freudian, failure) to see the dentist. Humor is another weapon that Jackson, if not Clara, could use to cope with a toothache.
29. Smith and Beirne, 281.
30. "Don't rinse your mouth" is good medical advice: "Frequent mouth rinsings should be avoided as this tends to dislodge blood clots, thereby favoring the formation of 'dry sockets' with delayed healing" (Clement, 265–66).

Clara's "God has given me blood to drink" is so striking a phrase, so brilliantly revealing the difference between the doctor's and the patient's worlds, that both Pascal, in 1982, (in Hall, 168) and Hall (46), in 1993, remarked on it, concluding it signified some sacrificial ceremony or act of expiation for sin. But only Hattenhauer (44), in 2003, who viewed it as parodic endless entrapment in romantic love, identified the literary source of the phrase as "Maule's curse" from Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (247). Hawthorne's Colonel Pyncheon had erected his gabled house on land he obtained by having Matthew Maule convicted and executed for witchcraft. Maule had levied a dying curse: "God will give him blood to drink!" The curse (which one might interpret naturalistically enough as a hereditary susceptibility to hemorrhagic attacks) cuts down both the Colonel, and a descendant Judge Pyncheon two centuries later.

Jackson may have been reminded of the curse through her husband's first book *The Armed Vision*, published just the year before "The Tooth" and dedicated to her. He aimed to make his mark on literary criticism by vigorously critiquing twelve prominent critics. In chapter 2 on Yvor Winters ("an excessively irritating and bad critic of some importance" [72]) he considers Winters's best book to be his *Maule's Curse*, and explains Winters's reading of it: that American writers, being isolated from Europe, were overly susceptible to European romanticism and so figuratively drank their own blood (56). Thus a glance at her husband's page proofs would have reminded Jackson about Maule's curse, without having to reread Hawthorne, and she might well have enjoyed a little literary one-upmanship in crafting her character Clara who drank not analogies, but real blood.

31. Besides smoking and drinking, Jackson took large prescription doses of codeine and amphetamine diet pills, and also Thorazine, Miltown, and phenobarbital. As Oppenheimer points out, the medications Jackson's physicians prescribed for her, in an era not yet aware of the dangers, are in retrospect quite sufficient to explain the breakdown she experienced near the end of her life (Oppenheimer, 147–48, 210, 238, 248, 253).
32. See Thomson, 483 and 2162; Hansten, 305, 391. Aspirin inhibits the synthesis of prostaglandins which sensitize peripheral pain receptors (Basbaum and Jessell, 478); alcohol and barbiturates act on distinct sites (in ion channels opened by the neurotransmitter γ-aminobutyric acid [GABA]) to enhance the inhibitory effect of inhibitory neurons (Kandel and Siegelbaum, 219); while opioids act at the upper part of the brain stem (periaqueductal gray matter) to inhibit pain signals (Basbaum and Jessell, 482–89; Saper, 880).

The pain-suppressive effects of factors like distraction and reassurance, such as Jim provides Clara, may be more complex, involving higher regions of the cerebral cortex; however, the brain does have its own endogenous system of pain-suppressing peptides—endorphins and enkephalins—that appear to be the "natural" counterparts that the opioids mimic (Basbaum and Jessell, 481–82, 485–86).

33. See Basbaum and Jessell, 472–73 and 481–90.

34. See Taylor, *Imaginary Companions*, 3–7 and 141–55.

35. Jackson, *Life Among the Savages*, 111–33.

36. Ibid., 174.

37. *The Bird's Nest* is a clinically accurate and detailed account of uncovering, and eventually reintegrating, a four-fold split of Elizabeth, Beth, Betsy, and Bess. And *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* ends with the two protagonists, bold fierce Merricat and nurturing homebody Constance, huddled together contentedly in their ruined house in such perfect complementarity they might well be just two aspects of one being.

38. *Hangsaman*, 192, 232, 280. On readers' surprise see Friedman, 89–90, and Oppenheimer, 155–56. Jackson was enraged to hear that one writer had interpreted her book as being about lesbians, having intended to show ambivalence and relations within parts of the mind, not of sex (Oppenheimer, 232–34). Jackson's fiction is in fact nearly totally reticent about sex. But a Google search for the passages Tony is reading reveals, interestingly, that Jackson has excerpted these directly from *The Way of a Man with a Maid* (vol. 2, chapter 3), an anonymous sadomasochistic erotic novel published around 1908. Oppenheimer also hypothesizes sexual abuse by an uncle in Jackson's childhood as the source for her burning awareness of human evil, and her rare shadowy scenes of abuse and repression, such as *Hangsaman*, 54–55 and *The Bird's Nest*, 168 (Oppenheimer, 26–27).

39. This play appeared at the height of World War II—Chase wrote it thinking how to solace a neighbor whose son had been killed in the fighting—when many people needed fantasy for comfort and distraction from pain far worse than a toothache. The play won the Pulitzer prize for drama and ran for 1,775 performances over five years on Broadway; the movie, script rights bought for an unprecedented one million dollars, won an Academy Award for best supporting actress for Josephine Hull, and a nomination for best actor for James Stewart. Reviews and background: Fernandez; Gibbs (1944); Gibbs (1947); Gladish; Gough; McCarten.

40. Chase, 33, 54.

41. Nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, discovered in the 1770s by Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), was first systematically investigated around 1798 by the young Humphry Davy (1778–1829). Davy numbered distinguished writers among his friends who volunteered to test the nitrous oxide gas: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who had just published his "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," reported "great extacy"; future poet laureate Robert Southey, a "thrill all through me" and "a tingling in my toes and fingers, a sensation perfectly new and delightful"; but future inventor of the thesaurus Peter Roget, in his long, minutely detailed report of vertigo, tingling, delirium, violently agitated, panted, singing in ears, thoughts like a torrent, could not recall the least pleasure from any of it (Davy, 307; 301; 302–3). Davy actually even proposed using nitrous oxide for anesthesia, but his suggestion was not taken up (329).

For comprehensive reviews of nitrous oxide, see Eger, which includes history (Frost) and use in dentistry (Smith and Beirne); on the present practice of sedation, see Clark and Brunick, and also Walsh; on historical use, see Guilford; Hewitt; and Goodman and Gilman, 81–86; Clement (for dental anesthesia and analgesia see 237–73). On Humphry Davy, see Fullmer; Williams; and Davy. About the sexual side effects of nitrous oxide, see Barber, 39–40; Jastak and Malamed; Lambert. Clara's uncontrollable weeping after her extraction (281) is a known possible aftereffect of nitrous oxide anesthesia (Walsh, 797), underscoring the medical authenticity of Jackson's story.

42. Davy, 294, 296–97, 304, 311.
43. Barber, 39–40.
44. Jastak and Malamed, 39.
45. Guilford, 89–91.
46. See Jastak and Malamed.
47. Lambert, 991.
48. Jackson's husband Hyman was an expert on Freud (witness his book *The Tangled Bank: Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud as Imaginative Writers*), and he diligently cultivated his reputation as a great lover; Jackson cherished her story of a tryst with Dylan Thomas; offered (and was politely refused) to "cure" a homosexual friend of his problem by going to bed with him; and had some acquaintance with pornographic literature (Oppenheimer, 106–7, 173; 150–52; 107–8; and see note 38 above).
49. Walsh and Darby, 719–20.
50. See Oppenheimer, 131, 171.

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