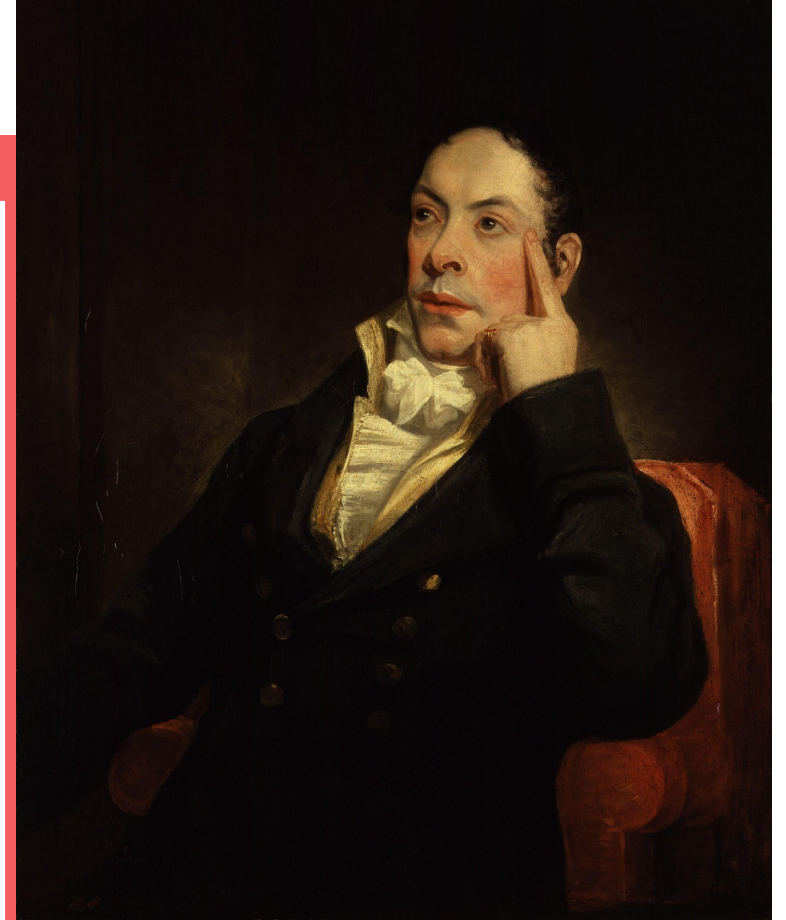


# The Monk (1796)

Matthew Gregory Lewis  
(1717-1797)



Wealthy Family (nouveau riche)

Political and diplomatic career  literary  
career

COLONIAL ESTATES in Jamaica

Wrote or Translated plays from the German

Inspired by German terror-writing?

Wave of Terror Fiction in German in the 1790s

Virulent anti-clericalism

Extraordinarily crude in the description of violence and lust

Idealism about the Feudal Past and the Holy Roman Empire

TERROR FICTION to ADVOCATE  
INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM from SOCIAL  
CONSTRAINTS?

Both Radcliffe and Lewis attempt to  
create prose versions of POETIC genres

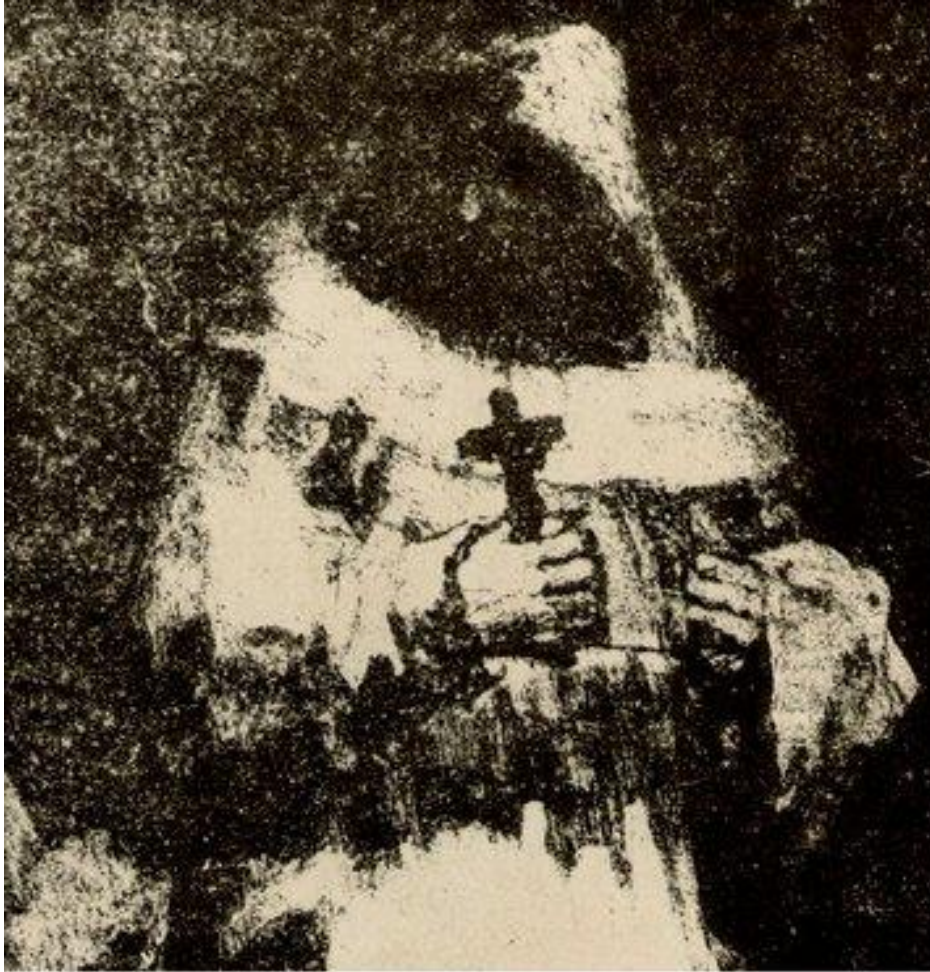
RANGE OF MOODS and FEELINGS

CHARACTER PSYCHOLOGY

SYMBOLIC INTENSIFICATION

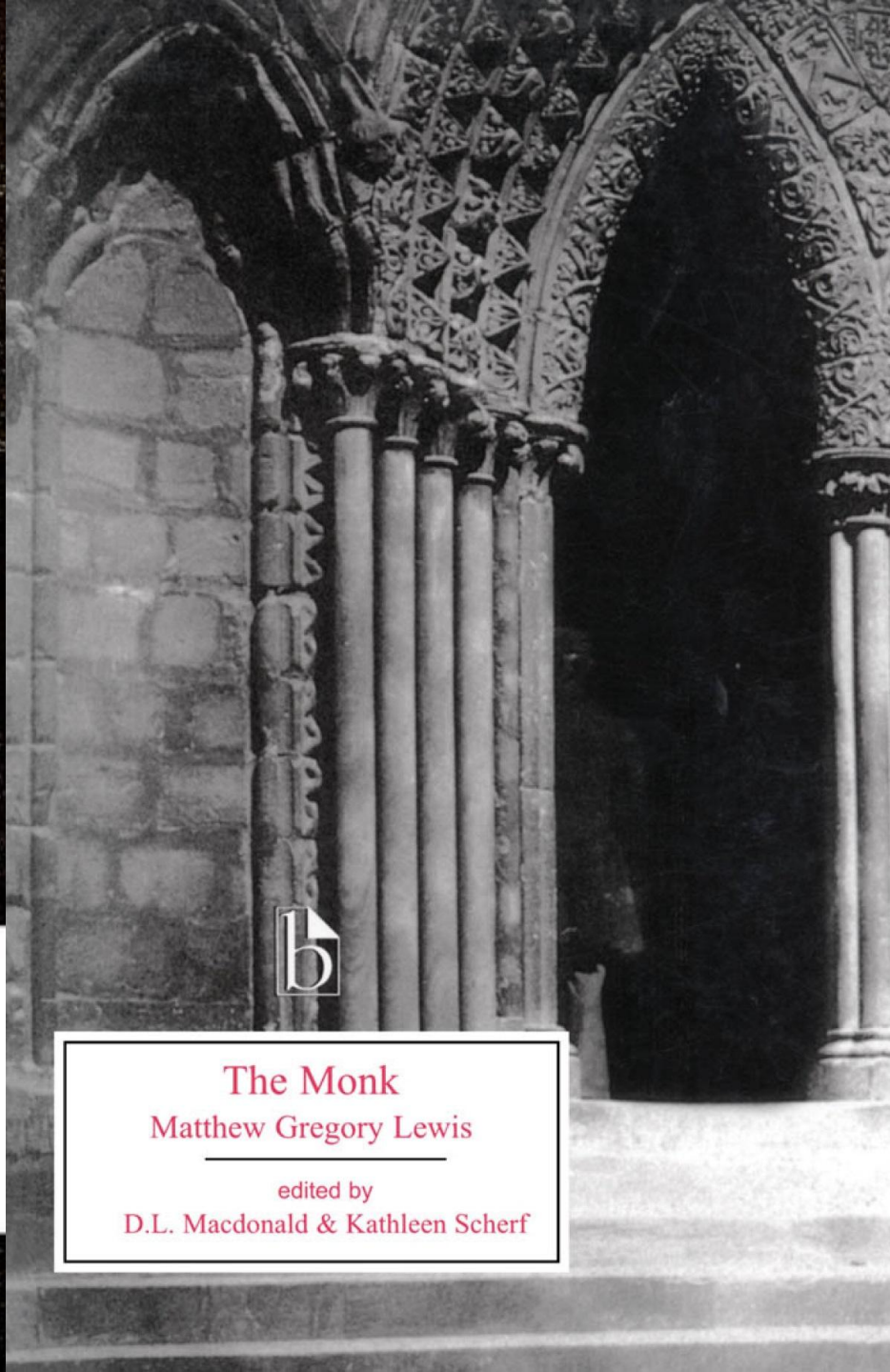
USE OF SUSPENSE and DOUBT that blurs  
the boundaries of REALITY and FANTASY

# GOTHIC MELODRAMA



Matthew Lewis  
The Monk

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS



The Monk  
Matthew Gregory Lewis

edited by  
D.L. Macdonald & Kathleen Scherf

PENGUIN CLASSICS

MATTHEW LEWIS

THE MONK



"A SUPERIOR GOTHIC CHILLER,  
GUARANTEED TO HAUNT YOU"

CLEAVER PATERSON, DIABOLIQUE

"A TOWERING PERFORMANCE  
FROM VINCENT CASSEL"

SOUND ON SIGHT



VINCENT CASSEL

BASED ON THE CLASSIC NOVEL BY MATTHEW LEWIS

THE

A FILM BY DOMINIK MOLL

MOTIF

15 CONTAIN SEXUALIZED NUDDITY  
AND BRIEF BLOODY IMAGES

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

DÉBORAH FRANÇOIS JOSÉPHINE JAPPY SERGI LÓPEZ CATHERINE MOUCHET JORDI DAUER GERALDINE CHAPLIN FRÉDÉRIC NOAILLE ROXANE DURAN MARTINE VANDEVILLE PIERRE-FÉLIX GRAVÈRE SCÉNARIO DOMINIK MOLL AND ANNE-LOUISE THIVONNET FROM THE NOVEL BY MATTHEW G. LEWIS ORIGINAL SCORE ALBERTO IGLESIAS MUSIC PATRICK BLOSSIER COSTUME DESIGNER ANTONIO GÓMEZ  
EDITED BY FRANÇOIS MAUREL GERARD HARDY AND OLIVIER DO HUU PRODUCTION MANAGER STEPHANE RIGA AND JORDI BENEUBER PRODUCTION MANAGER DANIELA ANNE MATTHEU CO-PRODUCED BY ALVARO LONGORIA PRODUCED BY MICHEL SAINT-JEAN DIRECTED BY DOMINIK MOLL A FRANCE 3 CINÉMA - MORENA FILMS PRODUCTION WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF 120 FILMS CANAL+ CINÉCINÉMA  
FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS DU CENTRE NATIONAL DU CINÉMA ET DE L'IMAGE ANIMÉE EURIMAGES ET DE LA RÉGION LANGUEDOC ROUSSILLON IN ASSOCIATION WITH MFF SOFICA COPICUP BACKUP FILMS SOFICA SOFICINÉMA 6 UN ÉTOILE 8 LA BANQUE POSTALE IMAGE 4 A PLUS IMAGE 2 INTERNATIONAL SILENT MOVEMENT FILMS INTERNATIONAL  
©2011 GRAPHNA FILMS MORENA FILMS LA PÉLOULE AGESTIVEGA AUDIORSUAL FRANCE 3 CINÉMA 120 FILMS

A large red square graphic with a white border, containing the text 'The Monk' and 'Select Passages' in white. The text is centered within the square.

# The Monk

Select Passages

## 4 successive editions

1795 (anonymous)

1796 (Full name and M.P.)

1798 (making reparations)



See p. 35.

# THE MONK,

A Romance;

IN WHICH IS DEPICTED THE

*Wonderful Adventures of Ambrosio,*

FRIAR OF THE ORDER OF CAPUCHINS,

WHO WAS DIVERTED FROM THE TRACK OF VIRTUE BY THE

**Artifices of a Female Demon,**

That entered his Monastery disguised as a Novice, and after seducing  
him from his

**VOW OF CELIBACY,**

PRESENTED HIM WITH

*A Branch of Enchanted Myrtle,*

TO OBTAIN THE PERSON OF THE BEAUTIFUL

**Antonia of Madrid;**

HOW HE WAS

DISCOVERED IN HER CHAMBER

BY

HER MOTHER, WHOM HE MURDERED,

To keep his Crime a Secret;

And the Particulars of the Means by which he caused the

**Body of Antonia**

To be conveyed in a Sleep to the

**DREARY VAULTS OF HIS OWN CONVENT,**

WHERE HE

ACCOMPLISHED HIS WICKED MACHINATIONS

On the Innocent Virgin, whom he then

**ASSASSINATES WITH A DAGGER,**

PRESENTED HIM BY HIS ATTENDANT FIEND,

Who afterward Betrays him to the

**Judges of the Inquisition,**

In the Dungeons of which he is Confined, and suffers Torture;  
and how, to Escape from thence, he Assigns over his

**Soul and Body to the Devil,**

Who Deceives him, and Inflicts a

**MOST IGNOMINIOUS DEATH.**

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY W. MASON,

21, CLERKENWELL GREEN.

SIXPENCE.



# THE MONK,

A Romance;

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and how, to Escape from thence, he Assigns over his*

# The Monk:

## A Romance

by M. G. Lewis, Esq. M.P.

Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, sagas,  
Nocturnos lemures, portentaque.

HORAT.

Dreams, magic terrors, spells of mighty power,  
Witches, and ghosts who rove at midnight hour.

Somnia, terrores magicos,  
miracula, sagas,

Nocturnos lemures,  
portentaque Thessala rides?

Horace, Ep. ii. 2, 208.

Dreams, terrors of magic, marvels,  
witches, ghosts of night, Thessalian  
portents—do you laugh at these?

# **Fake poem in the style of Horace**

Complicated narrative structure  
Story within the Story within the Story

Structure: Prose interspersed with poetry (ballads) 3 VOLUMES

Intricate framing: not one but two main plots → labyrinthine

Lorenzo and Antonia

Ambrosio and Antonia

And several embedded stories (Accounts of Raymond, the bleeding nun, the Wandering Jew, The banditti)

# Shakespearean echoes

## CHAPTER I.

— — Lord Angelo is precise;  
Stands at a guard with envy; Scarce confesses  
That his blood flows, or that his appetite  
Is more to bread than stone.     *MEASURE FOR MEASURE (Shakespeare).*

Skewed, eroticized, and cited out of context, Shakespeare enters into Gothic writing of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries under the sign of perversion, a precedent set, as Yael Shapira has shown, in the numerous perversions of Romeo and Juliet in Lewis's *The Monk* (Shapira, 2009)

Scarcely had the Abbey Bell tolled for five minutes, and already was the Church of the Capuchins thronged with Auditors. Do not encourage the idea that the Crowd was assembled either from motives of piety or thirst of information. But very few were influenced by those reasons; and in a city where superstition reigns with such despotic sway as in Madrid, to seek for true devotion would be a fruitless attempt. The Audience now assembled in the Capuchin Church was collected by various causes, but all of them were foreign to the ostensible motive. The Women came to show themselves, the Men to see the Women: Some were attracted by curiosity to hear an Orator so celebrated; Some came because they had no better means of employing their time till the play began; Some, from being assured that it would be impossible to find places in the Church; and one half of Madrid was brought thither by expecting to meet the other half. The only persons truly anxious to hear the Preacher were a few antiquated devotees, and half a dozen rival Orators, determined to find fault with and ridicule the discourse. As to the remainder of the Audience, the Sermon might have been omitted altogether, certainly without their being disappointed, and very probably without their perceiving the omission.

Whatever was the occasion, it is at least certain that the Capuchin Church had never witnessed a more numerous assembly. Every corner was filled, every seat was occupied. The very Statues which ornamented the long aisles were pressed into the service. Boys suspended themselves upon the wings of Cherubims; St. Francis and St. Mark bore each a spectator on his shoulders; and St. Agatha found herself under the necessity of carrying double. The consequence was, that in spite of all their hurry and expedition, our two newcomers, on entering the Church, looked round in vain for places.

# The Garden and the Snake

(Garden and Gardener: the seat of seduction;  
Eden; The Garden wall; Roman de la Rose;  
Hermitage; Hawthorne's *Rappaccini's daughter*)

To dissipate the unpleasant ideas which this scene had excited in him, upon quitting the Chapel He descended into the Abbey Garden. In all Madrid there was no spot more beautiful or better regulated. It was laid out with the most exquisite taste. The choicest flowers adorned it in the height of luxuriance, and though artfully arranged, seemed only planted by the hand of Nature: Fountains, springing from basons of white Marble, cooled the air with perpetual showers; and the Walls were entirely covered by Jessamine, vines, and Honeysuckles. The hour now added to the beauty of the scene. The full Moon, ranging through a blue and cloudless sky, shed upon the trees a trembling lustre, and the waters of the fountains sparkled in the silver beam: A gentle breeze breathed the fragrance of Orange-blossoms along the Alleys; and the Nightingale poured forth her melodious murmur from the shelter of an artificial wilderness. Thither the Abbot bent his steps. In the bosom of this little Grove stood a rustic Grotto, formed in imitation of an Hermitage. The walls were constructed of roots of trees, and the interstices filled up with Moss and Ivy. Seats of Turf were placed on either side, and a natural Cascade fell from the Rock above. Buried in himself the Monk approached the spot. The universal calm had communicated itself to his bosom, and a voluptuous tranquillity spread languor through his soul. He reached the Hermitage, and was entering to repose himself, when He stopped on perceiving it to be already occupied.

*Ambrosio meets Rosario (ROSES/ROSARY)*

# Descent into the Garden

He quitted his Cell, determined upon dismissing the feigned Rosario. He appeared at Matins; But his thoughts were absent, and He paid them but little attention. His heart and brain were both of them filled with worldly objects, and He prayed without devotion. The service over, He descended into the Garden. He bent his steps towards the same spot where, on the preceding night, He had made this embarrassing discovery. He doubted not but that Matilda would seek him there: He was not deceived.

# ASSIGNATIONS in the GARDEN

Fail not to be at the Garden door at twelve!

Ah! Matilda, I fear that I shall think on you but too often for my repose!' 'Then I have nothing more to wish for, save that we may meet in heaven. Farewell, my Friend! my Ambrosio!-- And yet methinks, I would fain bear with me some token of your regard!' 'What shall I give you?' 'Something.--Any thing.--One of those flowers will be sufficient.' (Here She pointed to a bush of Roses, planted at the door of the Grotto.) 'I will hide it in my bosom, and when I am dead, the Nuns shall find it withered upon my heart.' The Friar was unable to reply: With slow steps, and a soul heavy with affliction, He quitted the Hermitage. He approached the Bush, and stooped to pluck one of the Roses. Suddenly He uttered a piercing cry, started back hastily, and let the flower, which He already held, fall from his hand. Matilda heard the shriek, and flew anxiously towards him. 'What is the matter?' She cried; 'Answer me, for God's sake! What has happened?' 'I have received my death!' He replied in a faint voice; concealed among the Roses ... A Serpent....': Cientipedoro

## The garden of relics

He was paraded through the Garden, shown all the reliques of Saints and Martyrs, and treated with as much respect and distinction as had He been the Pope himself.

## The garden wall

The long-expected, long-wished for night arrived. It was calm, and the Moon was at the full. As soon as the Clock struck eleven I hastened to my appointment, determined not to be too late. Theodore had provided a Ladder; I ascended the Garden wall without difficulty; The Page followed me, and drew the Ladder after us. I posted myself in the West Pavilion, and waited impatiently for the approach of Agnes. Every breeze that whispered, every leaf that fell, I believed to be her footstep, and hastened to meet her.

## **Seducer in the Garden** (the domina speaks about Lorenzo)

The same reason made her reject the idea of arresting the unknown Seducer in the Garden; Such a proceeding would have created much disturbance, and the disgrace of her Convent would have been noised about Madrid

## The Gardens of St. Clare (Hermitage and Desert?)

Accident again united us; I could not refuse myself the melancholy pleasure of mingling my tears with his: We met nightly in the Gardens of St. Clare, and in an unguarded moment I violated my vows of Chastity.

*Agnes pleading to Antonio. "We" include Raymond*

The Abbey of Capuchins was only separated from the Convent by the Garden and Cemetery.

## No time to lose

Every breeze that whispered, every leaf that fell, I believed to be her footstep, and hastened to meet her. Thus was I obliged to pass a full hour, every minute of which appeared to me an age. The Castle Bell at length tolled twelve, and scarcely could I believe the night to be no further advanced. Another quarter of an hour elapsed, and I heard the light foot of my Mistress approaching the Pavilion with precaution. I flew to receive her, and conducted her to a seat. I threw myself at her feet, and was expressing my joy at seeing her, when She thus interrupted me. 'We have no time to lose, Alphonso: The moments are precious, for though no more a Prisoner, Cunegonda watches my every step.

As soon as the Clock strikes 'one,' I shall quit my chamber, drest in the same apparel as the Ghost is supposed to wear.

# INSECTS

My slumbers were constantly interrupted by some obnoxious Insect crawling over me. Sometimes I felt the bloated Toad, hideous and pampered with the poisonous vapours of the dungeon, dragging his loathsome length along my bosom: Sometimes the quick cold Lizard roused me leaving his slimy track upon my face, and entangling itself in the tresses of my wild and matted hair:

Often have I at waking found my fingers ringed with the long worms which bred in the corrupted flesh of my Infant. At such times I shrieked with terror and disgust, and while I shook off the reptile, trembled with all a Woman's weakness

The Sun now rose above the horizon; Its scorching beams darted full upon the head of the expiring Sinner. Myriads of insects were called forth by the warmth; They drank the blood which trickled from Ambrosio's wounds; He had no power to drive them from him, and they fastened upon his sores, darted their stings into his body, covered him with their multitudes, and inflicted on him tortures the most exquisite and insupportable. The Eagles of the rock tore his flesh piecemeal, and dug out his eyeballs with their crooked beaks.

The worms, They crept in, and the worms, They crept out,  
And sported his eyes and his temples about,  
While the Spectre addressed Imogine.

He determined therefore, that Antonia should remain a Prisoner in the dungeon. He approached her with confusion painted on his countenance. He raised her from the ground. Her hand trembled, as He took it, and He dropped it again as if He had touched a Serpent.

## IMMURED

And how does Donna Agnes? I am amazed, Don Lorenzo, how you could possibly think of immuring so charming a Girl within the walls of a Cloister!' (Don Christoval)

My blood ran cold, as I gazed upon this melancholy abode. The cold vapours hovering in the air, the walls green with damp, the bed of Straw so forlorn and comfortless, the Chain destined to bind me for ever to my prison, and the Reptiles of every description which as the torches advanced towards them, I descried hurrying to their retreats, struck my heart with terrors almost too exquisite for nature to bear. Driven by despair to madness, I burst suddenly from the Nuns who held me

I raised myself with this design, my hand rested upon something soft: I grasped it, and advanced it towards the light. Almighty God! What was my disgust, my consternation! In spite of its putridity, and the worms which preyed upon it, I perceived a corrupted human head, and recognised the features of a Nun who had died some months before! (Agnes in the bier)

# SATAN

A swarthy darkness spread itself over his gigantic form: His hands and feet were armed with long Talons: Fury glared in his eyes, which might have struck the bravest heart with terror: Over his huge shoulders waved two enormous sable wings; and his hair was supplied by living snakes, which twined themselves round his brows with frightful hissings. In one hand He held a roll of parchment, and in the other an iron pen.

## GIPSIES (swarthy)

The swarthy Prophetess for some time listened to her with a contemptuous smile

unhurt I venture Their sabbath strange where Witches keep; Fearless the Sorcerer's circle enter, And woundless tread on snakes asleep.