

# “MELT INTO THE GREEN”: NATURE AND THE TREATMENT OF EVIL IN *ANTICHRIST*

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Lars von Trier’s film *Antichrist* may be considered a bizarre, even pornographic, film, but why would audiences feel such repulsion when confronted with the bare human body? Rather than focusing on just the presentation of the human, this paper considers the ways these characters—the anonymous He (Willem Dafoe) and She (Charlotte Gainsbourg)—interact with their natural surroundings to understand von Trier’s commentary on evil. *Antichrist* effaces a clear distinction between human nature and environmental nature once the couple goes to their rustic cabin in “Eden” where they must not only to lay bare the vile potentiality of humanity, but also human beings’ primordial link to the natural environment. Such an acquisition of knowledge proves perilous because this linkage takes He and She out of their familiar, upper middle-class lives in a nameless town.

*Antichrist* opens up the connection between human and thing, causing a process of grotesque defamiliarization in which She believes in the supposedly inherent, or “natural,” evil of women, resulting in the characters’ disturbing communion with their nonhuman surroundings.

The film’s acknowledgement of the interconnectedness of human beings and nature results in a recalibration of

interpretation of the natural order as brutal and controlling. She’s interpretation of women as evil is derived from a patriarchal inscription of the homogenized “evil” of Woman after studying the history of misogyny for her graduate-level thesis. He and She can only fully confront the narrative of misogyny while in nature. Once in Eden, they open themselves up to become part of an uninhibited assemblage that interacts with the natural environment, shedding their bland, “civilized” selves. However, the couple can only embrace this “natural” connection by exploring the dialectic of gender roles, echoing back to the academic remove of the thesis even as they engage in increasingly atavistic behavior, which points toward the instability of human nature, a nature steeped in difference, violence, and blame.

Initially, the opening scene does not appear to focus on humanity and its connection to the natural environment: He and She are having sex; there are close-ups of a washing machine, and their son Nic is in his crib. After Nic opens the baby gate, he first sees his parents having sex and then moves toward a window. The scene is propelled toward a literal and figurative climax as Nic climbs up on a chair, knocks away the soldier figurines on the table in front of the window, and gets perilously

close to the window as He and She edge closer toward orgasm. The names of the figurines foreshadow feelings that He and She must explore during the rest of the film: “Grief,” “Pain,” and “Despair” (*Antichrist*). Notably, these feelings are later associated with corresponding animals: a deer (grief), a fox (pain), and a crow (despair); thus, these objects that Nic discards later become ostensibly connected to nature, portending that the elision between nature and civilization may exist in even the most seemingly average of households. Even though Nic attempts to banish grief, pain, and despair, his subsequent action causes his parents’ lives to be overshadowed by those feelings when he falls out of the window and lands in the snow and dies. Nic’s contact with these figurines inscribes the presence of these feelings, possibly even within himself, so that his death is an escape from his abusive mother and into the “natural” end: death.

At the moment that the teddy bear hits the ground outside, She opens her eyes in what appears to be intense pleasure; this juxtaposition suggests her possible consciousness of Nic’s death though her eyes appear to have been closed prior to the impact of his body on the ground. Although She does not make direct contact with the natural environment in this scene, “Pain,” “Grief,” and “Despair” are already inside the home; these soldiers have “infiltrated” the domestic space, and significantly, they transmute into the “Three Beggars,” their animal counterparts, in Eden later in the film. Thus, a manufactured, humanoid replica of nature exists in the civilized domestic space even while He and She are

not yet directly communing with the nature. The scene ends with the banality of the washing machine ending its cycle. Despite the exceptional event—Nic’s fatal plunge to the ground—the everydayness of domestic life can at least provide the fleeting appearance of continuing with human life sealed off from the horrific experience of the death of one’s child.

Although She appears to have her eyes closed, this potential for consciousness of Nic’s disastrous actions becomes more apparent as the film continues, ultimately corresponding to the supposed “evil” of woman. While von Trier entwines physical abuse with the natural environment later in the film, it is worth noting that even though He assures She, “There is nothing atypical about you,” She responds, “It was my fault” (*Antichrist*). Her comment may sound more like the self-blame of a grieving mother rather than actual culpability for her son’s death, but once He and She go to Eden, her behavior intimates that She knew that Nic was in danger. At one point, She confesses that she knew that Nic could open the baby gate, and, more damningly, the part of the opening scene is repeated wherein She *does* have her eyes open as He penetrates her and Nic goes to the window. However, the audience never knows for certain if this is merely a falsely reconstructed memory caused by her maternal grief or if she is correctly recalling the incident. If the latter interpretation is the correct, then the original opening scene is incomplete, indicating that the truth can be revealed only when She is in Eden, an uninhibited place where she can acknowledge her horrifying inaction.

He, a therapist, decides to treat his own wife and demands that she not take pills in an effort to control her; this role invokes conflict and suggests relational inequality. Although her flushing the pills down the toilet seems to signify compliance with her husband's prescribed treatment, She retaliates by telling him, "I never interested you until now—that I'm your patient" (*Antichrist*). This comment does more than exhibit her resistance to her therapy because here She also questions their relationship. By taking on the dual role of husband and therapist, He displays more power than if he just ascribed himself to only one of these roles. As both husband and therapist, He can control She by acting as simultaneous sexual/domestic partner and professional curer, despite his later claim, "Never screw your therapist" (*Antichrist*). Yet She questions his power repeatedly, expressing frustration that He has not paid attention to his family prior to his commitment to treat her, as evinced later when he realizes too late that She has abused Nic. His attention thus becomes part of his inability to help his wife grieve because his role as therapist overshadows his role as husband, and he does "screw" his patient, not just his wife, for He also assigns her a dual role, which reinscribes her submission to the patriarchal order as he controls the parameters of their relationship.

Although he has a questionable ethical position in his dual role, He does attempt to care for his wife/patient, as when he helps her through an anxiety attack; however, his motives are suspect once She notes that He only cares for her as a patient, not as a partner.

The next stage of their therapy evinces this viewpoint. He decides to help She to create a "fear list," which He writes for her. His composing a list of her fears becomes a motif in the film because He returns to this list once they are in Eden and uses it to provoke She to deal with her fears. Even though She is the one who has been writing a thesis, He is the only one we ever see actively writing. His visible inscription of She's deepest fears focalizes the power of the written word in the patriarchal realm: He chooses both to do the writing and the hierarchalization of her fears on the pyramid. At first, She does not know how to express her fear but ultimately claims that what scares her the most is "the woods, everything about it," specifically Eden, the place where she (along with Nic) went to write her thesis the previous year (*Antichrist*). Her fear stems from more than just exposure to the environment itself; rather, She fears the cataclysmic knowledge She has gained in Eden, namely, that woman is evil, as suggested by her repeatedly putting the wrong boots on Nic and the fact that She has left her thesis *Gynocide* in Eden, far away from her safe, civilized life with her husband, which he finds only once the sense of his horror toward both the natural environment and his wife has increased.

The thesis functions as part of the natural assemblage, and its quiddity—its power to show him the villainous history of misogyny and his wife's own villainous response to it—can only be fully accessed when He reads it while in Eden. When She tells him that She has stopped writing her thesis, She explains that She thinks He

would have considered it a “glib” project or “worse, a lie” (*Antichrist*). Instead of continuing with her academic work, She lets her husband’s potential thoughts control her actions. In *The Face of Things*, Silvia Benso asserts, “A thing can always be turned into another” and that things are “[s]tabilized only as a linguistic act” (51-52, 54). Things, such as the physical copy of *Gynocide*, are mutable when they come into contact with various forces, whether it is the claim of the thing’s uselessness or wrongness, because She believes that He can transform her work through utterance; hence, her academic work and its “evil” connection to abuse remain physically distant from him so that his judgment cannot be fully informed while they are in the domestic space.

But even before they actually enter Eden together, He asks She to do a visualization exercise as if She is already there, which can enact a link between both her previous and upcoming interactions with nature. The train they use for travel functions as a liminal part of their journey: They leave the domestic space/civilization so that they can enter the natural environment. Yet in order for them to reach the woods, they must travel on a manmade machine, so this transition from civilization to nature is mediated through modern technology. Once she closes her eyes, she imagines walking across the bridge, and then, at her husband’s suggestion, She visualizes lying down on the grass. He tells her, “I want you to melt into the green. Don’t fight it. Just melt into the green” (*Antichrist*). Although she only “melts into the green,” or communes with nature at her husband/therapist’s insistence, this scene

prepares both She and the viewer for the dissolution of the barrier between nature and the human body once He and She actually arrive in Eden. Jane Bennett discusses this breakdown between the human and the nonhuman, claiming that they work together as actants, or “a source for action; an actant can be human or not, or, most likely, a combination of both” (9). This erasure of the strict boundary between human and nonhuman becomes more significant once they arrive in Eden, but She’s psychic preparation allows her to be ready to blend in with both the environment and the misogynistic ideas she has realized in this environment: “[A]n actant never really acts alone. Its efficacy or agency always depends on the collaboration, cooperation, or interactive interference of many bodies and forces” (21). The grass is a thing that blends with her body until the two are indistinguishable. While this therapeutic technique appears to relax She, her husband’s treatment is often met with resistance. Even though she mentally aligns herself with nature apparently at his behest, she is the one who has been to Eden before, so her “cooperation” with bodies of nature does not necessarily depend on what He tells her to do.

By becoming an ecologically influenced actant, She has psychically opened herself up to nature and has reintroduced the mental state she seems to have experienced during her previous trip to Eden. This openness helps her to develop a sense of agency that she does not feel when under treatment while in civilization, for she has become part of a natural assemblage, which allows her to acknowledge the unrestrained experiences of

nature, both human and natural. Consequently, She develops what Bennett refers to as “thing-power,” which allows for the interaction of matter and energy, the assimilation of her body and mind to the environment (20). The communication between She and nature is exemplified but not encompassed by “melting into the green”; even this visually arresting scene is only a part of her thoughts. Rather, She creates a connection between her body and the environment by discovering the agency she can acquire by being in nature and divesting herself of her inhibitions, consequently becoming the “evil” woman that patriarchal history (which she misreads as nature) seems to intend. In *Volatile Bodies*, Elizabeth Grosz illustrates the agency of the individual body to assemble among things, stating that the body is “a series of linkages (or possibly activities) which form superficial or provisional connections with other objects and processes...always in conjunction and through linkages with other surfaces and planes” (116). By participating in the assemblage, She links herself to various objects and planes, such as the grass and her thesis, and destabilizes the boundary between idea and action, between human thought and environmental manifestation, as She acts on her “natural” evil, becoming increasingly open to violence and resistant to her husband’s treatment.

The “Grief” chapter ends with the arrival of the first of the Three Beggars, the deer; this scene shows the beggars appear to privilege the male gaze and inscribe patriarchal visuality because He can see and develop direct attachments to these creatures

that seem to separate the human from the nonhuman. However, von Trier suggests that the natural assemblage confers something deeper than the visual realm; instead, Eden becomes a place that requires an assimilation between the nonhuman and the human in all senses, even beyond what can be immediately seen. She already knows about the Three Beggars without having seen them, and she knows their purpose, as she divulges in the final scene: “When the Three Beggars appear, someone must die” (*Antichrist*). Her knowledge appears to have been absorbed naturally by communing with the assemblage whereas He learns through grotesque glimpses of the creatures.

In the case of the deer, it is a doe with a fetus hanging halfway outside of it, suggesting liminality between life and death. The doe is holding on to something that is simultaneously inside and outside, appearing to defy natural spatiality. Human beings may consider their bodies autonomous, so seeing this baby deer shatters more than the boundary between life and death; it also disrupts agency—the baby has no control over what happens to its body. Rather, the mother controls how she and her infant’s bodies interact with each other and their environment, much as She has done with Nic. At this point, He still does not really know about his wife’s abusive tendencies, so this scene provokes him to question the nature into which he has taken himself and his wife/patient. The kind of healing available in such a place is so foreign when it usurps his expectations of nature as calm, which he asserts during the visualization exercise.

In the second chapter, “Pain,” She finally goes into detail about her previous visit to Eden, exploring the power with which this natural environment has pierced her psyche. While earlier She merely attributes the abandonment of her thesis to her husband’s potential judgment, she now reveals, “I became afraid and stopped writing” (*Antichrist*). Then, the film goes into a flashback: the only sound is incessant crying as She frenetically searches for Nic. The sound penetrates all of Eden, but once She finds Nic apparently safe and quiet in the woodshed (a dangerous location in this natural assemblage, as we later see), the crying has become part of nature itself. Even though He tries to assure her that the sound is not real, the cries have disrupted a boundary in a similar way that the doe’s fetus has—the cries are everywhere and nowhere, located in the woods that she fears and in her mind, which has joined this assemblage of humans and nonhumans. Wade Sikorski acknowledges the ability of unfamiliar environments to enable a recalibration of oneself: “In going into the wilderness, which is as easily found in the city as the rain forest, we are going home because wilderness is the place where we recover the things that are most ourselves, but that we have denied, repressed, forgotten” (28). While the idea of making otherwise impossible discoveries about oneself in an urban or domestic space may work in some cases, it cannot in *Antichrist* because this particular environment is too familiar and too sealed off from the world and unfettered emotional expression. Further, the domestic space isolates the characters from themselves, each other, and

the world so that they are rendered nameless. Still, Sikorski has a point; what has been manipulated in one’s mind can be opened up when someone enters “wilderness,” in this case, Eden, even if the “recovery” of She proves violent and atavistic.

What has been repressed is not simply her supposed evil but rather acknowledgement of the treatment of women throughout history. Now that She is open to knowing this horror, she maintains her belief that this skewed patriarchal history must be correct because the alternative is that countless women have been murdered as a result of their “natural” lower social position, not because of some otherworldly, flagitious feminine power. The exposure of her personal repression is her treatment of Nic; even though She has continually abused him, the viewer is unaware of this abuse when confronted with the grieving mother at the beginning of the film. Her putting the boots on the wrong feet appears to have begun in Eden—at least, according to the photographic evidence—and its continuation has been repressed under the guise of She’s reaction to Nic’s death and her husband’s negligence. After divulging to her husband the apparently disembodied cries of the previous summer, She ultimately concludes that nature has a significant connection to life, even human life: “I can hear what I couldn’t hear before: the cry of all the things that are to die” (*Antichrist*). Even when he endeavors to dissuade her from this line of thinking, her understanding of the end of life encompasses the whole ecological assemblage, placing her family, herself, and

the rest of humanity within the space of organisms that must die.

The acorns, which bother He so much, hold a special significance, linking plant, animal and human lives in this natural assemblage. Lorenzo Chiesa specifically contemplates the acorns that fall on the roof, claiming, “[R]ather than communicating with man, the noisy falling of the acorns on the cabin’s tin roof immanently mark...the inextricability of reproduction and death” (202). Lorenzo Chiesa’s assertion links bodies and things between those bodies to articulate the emotional and physical reactions of the characters, namely the memories of past violence and the impending promise of future violence, particularly portending the sexual violence in the rest of the film. The acorns disrupt the calm, “therapeutic” atmosphere He wishes to achieve in Eden. Further, the connection between nature and death is repeatedly opened to potential assemblages of signification: the parents having sex as Nic dies; the dead (or perhaps live) fetus hanging from the doe; and the acorns, which separate from the tree and die but then become physically closer to the characters.

The appearance of the fox in the last scene of the “Pain” chapter solidifies the link between the human bodies and the eerie environment even as it commits the unnatural act of self-cannibalization. As with the deer, He finds the fox, which is hidden in the bushes. The fox utters the only phrase we hear from any of the animals, “Chaos reigns.” The fox, which cannibalizes itself, may foreshadow the level of horror the human characters will soon experience. Further, self-cannibalization is anathema to

“civilized” human beings, but in exceptional circumstances, one may have to cause oneself pain in order to escape danger, as a fox from a trap and (later) as He from his grindstone.

Chapter three focuses on despair and is most infamous for the first scene of genital torture, yet this chapter signifies so much more than violence done to the human body. In this part of the film, von Trier aligns humanity and the natural environment side by side in a dangerous reinscription of a patriarchal endorsement of violence against women. This revelation occurs during the role-play scene in which He says he plays Nature (She’s source of fear) while She plays herself. He as Nature claims that He wants to kill her. Not only does he assume that She fears death, but also he can express a wish for her death under the guise of Nature. He even posits a riddle that shows the “melting” of boundaries: “I’m outside but also within,” but she does not understand until he explains that he means “human nature” (*Antichrist*). Consequently, she responds, “The kind of nature that causes people to do evil things against women” (*Antichrist*). He erases the boundary in his role as Nature and as Man, a figure that can encompass death from within and outside a given body. Here, the couple’s exchange suggests a gender-based conflict beyond themselves as they speak of men and women in general and type of nature that promotes “evil,” in this case misogyny.

Later, when they are having sex in bed, She begs her husband to hit her, but He refuses, even when she claims that his refusal symbolizes a lack of love; they must fully integrate into the natural assemblage to

achieve sexual satisfaction now that they have been exposed to the disturbing knowledge about humans and nonhumans in Eden. She leaves the quasi-domestic space of the cabin and masturbates while lying against a tree, and soon He joins her where they consummate their openness to all of the grief, pain, and despair that Eden has to offer. This scene culminates with his finally hitting her as they continue to have sex and the exposure of the disembodied hands and arms hanging from the roots of the tree. Chiesa finds an ironic agency when the characters expose their bodies and their drives in the wilderness: “[F]or a fleeting moment, she does become green, rendering her most intimate ‘within’—pure absence—undistinguishable from the ‘whole greenery outside.’ This is why he can finally hit her, penetrate her violently against his conscious will” (205). Recalling He’s command that She “melt into the green,” She willingly accepts her status as naturally evil though He, in contrast, participates in this assemblage despite himself. This scene, therefore, actively reverses the evil of misogyny and foreshadows She’s brutal acceptance of human nature.

By opening themselves to the energy of Eden, He and She perform increasingly violent acts against one another as if they have shed their civilized skins and become primordial beings. Their anonymity now does not reflect the isolation of their original domestic space but rather identification with the primal, natural self. She attempts to rape him in the woodshed, but only after accusing him of wanting to abandon her, a not too irrational fear considering her earlier claim that his interest in her only sparked when

she became his patient. Subsequently, she crushes his testicles with a log, rendering him unconscious as she masturbates him until he ejaculates blood. Afterward, She drills a hole in his leg while he is still unconscious and places a grindstone through it, ensuring both pain and—more significantly—limited mobility so that He cannot leave her. Thus, He becomes subject to a full participation in this assemblage or what Bruno Latour refers to as the “dynamic trajectory” of the body in which the body is not merely a sealed off entity but rather constantly in motion with other actants (206). What she does to her husband is not an isolated incident but instead part of the expression of becoming a primordial Woman, engaging in acceptance of her supposedly “evil” nature. This trajectory originally begins the previous summer when She attempts to control Nic’s movement by placing his shoes on the wrong feet. Ironically, the only way for her to imagine the ideal family is to injure and subdue her son and husband so that they must depend on her. However, this violence suggests that she is perpetuating her own lie; perhaps *Gynocide* is not simply a lie but rather a marker of the atavistic assemblage so that she can justify acting on the ruthless, even fatal expression of her human nature.

The “Despair” chapter culminates in the man hiding in a foxhole. Despite the difficulty of movement, He is able to hide but only to be confronted with the crow, the last of the Three Beggars, which initially appears dead but comes cawing to life, filling Eden with its cries, like the despairing screams of Nic the previous summer. Futilely resisting despair, He struggles to

crush the bird with his bare hands, a primal movement that reveals a violence unthinkable in his previous life; however, the crow has signaled the horror that must be played out as She discovers He and begins unburying him, almost in parody of his unfortunate unearthing of the crow, for his “resurrection,” or returned propinquity to She, will irrevocably enter a deadly assemblage mediated by the natural, uncivilized environment.

In the fourth chapter “The Three Beggars,” He must confront the history of his body as an extension of patriarchal history, which he can only do once he views a horror beyond despair: his wife’s self-mutilation. He becomes more aware that his body is not merely his own; it is representation of Man and Nature, forces that She considers antithetical to her status as Woman. While He previously criticizes her for unquestioningly accepting her historical, misogynistic sources as fact, He now realizes that he is not simply a husband and therapist but also a re-inscriptor of a sexist history. Grosz asserts that because the body interacts with flows and matter, it “creat[es] out of the body text a palimpsest, a historical chronicle of prior and later traces, some of which have been effaced, other of which have been emphasized” (117). The history of every single woman has not been told; instead, many of these individual histories have been subsumed under the banner of “Woman,” as if a narrative of thousands could be homogenized. Their bodies are lost in the ground, but parts peek out in Eden when He and She open their bodies to the assemblage, whether through sex or mutilation.

By cutting off her clitoris, She decides the “true/natural” history of women as inherently evil. Her removal of her clitoris, though, crosses the spatio-temporal gap between herself and all of the women who have died violently, creating a palimpsestic linkage that adds another contribution to the history *Gynocide* proposes. She can only become part of the collective of women by aligning herself with what she considers evil behavior. Yet this scene is intensely personal; it is her own body she injures whereas the pain of the other women spurned by history remains symbolic within the film. The symbolic connotations of her injurious act evince her last claim of upturning patriarchy, though. As Emma Rees describes in *The Vagina: A Literary and Cultural History*, the self-mutilation appears “as though she wants to feel what it's like to be the penetrator and not the penetrated” (184). According to She, Woman is violent and evil, and these qualities reflect a connection to nature; however, she must work within the man/woman binary with only a sexist interpretation history as her guide, which includes a history that favors penetration as conquest. She penetrates her husband with the grindstone and mimics penetration of her own body; thus, she has made her mark on this history, a mark that reinscribes the fears that underlay human nature: grief, pain, and despair.

While *Antichrist* ostensibly includes the destruction of male bodies, She herself complicates what an “evil” woman is “supposed” to do. Prior to self-mutilation, She pleads to He, “Hold me” (*Antichrist*). Immediately, after the blood gushes from

her, the camera cuts to the deer, which reasserts the grief that overwhelms She following her son's death. Rather than focusing on the despair of an evil world, the chapter ponders this suggestively maternal position, as if the couple—and therefore all human beings— could return to the horror that does not extend beyond the civilized domestic space where Nic has died.

Because the Three Beggars have appeared, “someone must die”; von Trier suggests that nature has favored patriarchy when He smashes the floorboards and finds the crow beside the wrench She has thrown away. This chapter culminates in a death scene in which He kills She but only after She has literally and figuratively stabbed him in the back with the scissors she has used to cut off her clitoris. His strangulation of her functions as a reminder of the brutality committed against women, a brutality that a contemporary viewer would likely prefer to consider distant (or at least repressed). After the scene shows a burning funeral pyre, implying a medieval sendoff, He walks through Eden among the silent, white bodies everywhere: a collective of the dead drained of their individual selves and rendered as unknowable things, who act as witness to the cruelty of human history. Rees explains that this “procession” of women may be walking toward Eden, but this is “the hellish earthly garden which is a place not of delights, but of mutilation, atrocious cruelty, and death” (184). In von Trier's filmic landscape, no prelapsarian world can exist; the return to human nature instead embraces the most primal expression: territoriality of the material self,

fear of losing that territory, and violence to defend that territory.

*Antichrist* does not end with the death of the supposed villain or the horrific destruction of a woman deluded by the dominant history of the treatment of gender; rather, there is an “Epilogue” that shows the need for an active acknowledgment of history and a communion with nature and humanity beyond an insular family unit. The epilogue bookends the film in a similar way that the prologue does—they are in black and white, and there is no dialogue. Beyond these stylistic similarities, however, we are confronted by a different kind of haunting image when countless faceless women appear. This erasure of individual identity aligns these women with the disembodied limbs, the immobile white figures, and the dead women She has pondered over in *Gynocide*. In an interview with Peter Schepelern, von Trier focuses on their ambiguity:

Schepelern: “[A]re they witches that are going to be burned, or are they sisters of the unnamed woman?”

von Trier: “Something like that.”

Schepelern: “Or, are they berry pickers in the forest.”

von Trier: “They could be that too.”

(6)

We do not have to subscribe to a single interpretation when considering what the women signify; von Trier even jokingly acknowledges that they may symbolize *nothing* (as “berry pickers”). Yet they have no faces. They do not have to be witches to be united as active witnesses to patriarchal

violence, averring that it does continue to exist. They are the ultimate truth of humanity exposed, a humanity that can only be found in the natural environment once human nature becomes exposed to the nonhuman life around it. Here, He learns his role beyond himself and as part of an assemblage, eerie, unrestrained, and possibly malicious. Further, he gains sustenance by eating the berries, thus consuming nature at its source.

By not premising their existence on each individual history and identity, these women reject assumptions of the self as an autonomous entity, showing He an alternative world wherein they can move between the interstices of ecological and human natures. Whether or not He remains part of this assemblage, the natural environment has irrevocably altered him. Nature's imprint has entered him, and he cannot forget his own or the historical brutality committed against women now that his wife has tried to open him up only to the horror of a falsely homogenized "Woman."

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