Wordsworth’s Light and Shelley’s Shadow: Revelation in L.M. Montgomery’s Anne and Emily Series

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In the *Anne* and *Emily* series, Anne and Emily are Romantic dreamers who pursue revelation (revealed knowledge about the spiritual world). Both protagonists are Wordsworthian dreamers who experience the light of natural revelation, but Emily also experiences a Shelleyan darkness: the allure of mystery and the despair of anti-revelation.

In L.M. Montgomery's *Anne of Green Gables* (1908), Anne first appears at the Bright River railroad station, dreaming of sleeping in a wild cherry tree and waiting for her new life to begin. In *Emily of New Moon*, published fifteen years later in 1923, Montgomery introduces Emily as she pursues the Wind Woman on a "chilly twilight" before coming home to learn that her beloved father is dying.[1] From the beginning, Anne and Emily have a Romantic awareness of natural beauty experienced through vivid imaginations. Through both these characters, Montgomery conveys a "deep *curiosity* about 'things spiritual and eternal,'"[2] which causes them to pursue revelation—revealed knowledge—about this spiritual world within and beyond the teachings of their Scottish Presbyterian culture. However, the worlds Anne and Emily

discover differ. The *Anne* series, especially *Anne of Green Gables*, *Anne of Avonlea*, and *Anne of the Island*, published from 1908 to 1915, presents Anne as a dreamer who, like Romantic poet William Wordsworth, receives revelation of divine truth through the light of Nature. Anne's experiences read as a freer and more joyful interpretation of Scottish Presbyterianism's perspective of Scripture. The *Emily* series, published from 1923 to 1927, presents Emily as both a Wordsworthian dreamer and a lonely seeker who, like fellow Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, finds no ultimate revelation of the spiritual world but only veiled darkness and mystery. Emily's life ultimately denies the Scottish Presbyterian emphasis on certainty and comfort in knowing the spiritual world through divine revelation (especially Scripture and church teachings). Anne's vision shows her a world of brightness and beauty, comforting and wondrous; Emily's exposes a world of dark uncertainties, danger, and the fascinating unknown.

This investigation will review Montgomery's religious upbringing and the Scottish Presbyterian Church's beliefs about natural as opposed to divine revelation. It will then explore the natural revelation or "light of nature" that connects Anne to Wordsworth. Next, it will explore incomplete or anti-revelation in the *Emily* series: veil imagery, the Romantic sublime, occurrences of spiritual possession, and Emily's connection with Shelley's love for mystery and darkness. In exploring these texts, this investigation will demonstrate how Anne's confidence in natural revelation gives her an enduring hope, while Emily's encounters with mystery and anti-revelation lead her from enthrallment into despair.



Winter golden hour in St. Andrews, Scotland. Photo by Alicia Pollard.

Scottish Presbyterianism and Revelation

Montgomery's birthplace of Cavendish in Prince Edward Island was "a close-knit community, united by kinship, culture, and religion," created by Presbyterians descended from Scottish immigrants.[3] Mary Henley Rubio identifies Montgomery's influences from the Scottish Presbyterian "ethos," including the importance of education, individual conscience, and Biblical knowledge.[4] William Klempa describes the written influences that shaped such communities, including the Bible and the "form of Calvinism embodied in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Short Catechism."[5] One of the doctrines taught in this community through Sunday-school lessons and creeds was "natural theology": the idea that humans receive revelation about the spiritual world through nature. This idea is Scriptural: Montgomery, like Wordsworth, would have read in Psalm 19 that "[t]he heavens declare the glory of God."[6] Both also would have read in Romans 1 that "the invisible things of [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that [men] are without excuse."[7] For centuries, scholars including Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, and William Paley acknowledged God's self-revelation in creation as well as Scripture.[8] By the early 1600s, the western Protestant church acknowledged two types of revelation: "general" or "natural" revelation and "divine," "supernatural," or "special"

revelation.9 Calvin argues that “on each of his works [God’s] glory is engraven in characters so bright” that “none ... can plead ignorance as their excuse.”10 Theologians and scholars loosely termed the study of God’s character through nature “natural theology.”11

In contrast, divine revelation is the supernatural revelation of God’s character through Scripture and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Biblical writers themselves and many church denominations, including the Scottish Presbyterians, believed that divine revelation was essential for salvation.12 After arguing that the natural world proclaims God’s glory, Calvin explains that rebellion blinds humans so that the “lamps” of Creation are “altogether insufficient ... until they are enlightened through faith by internal revelation from God.”13 The Westminster Confession of Faith argues that “the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence” are “not sufficient” in themselves: “Therefore it pleased the Lord ... to commit the same wholly unto writing: which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary.”14 Montgomery’s faith tradition emphasized words as essential to faith—Scripture above all, but below that, creeds, catechisms, confessions, sermons, and lectures.

Anne and Emily live in Montgomery's Scottish Presbyterian world of stories and gossip, sermons and creeds, divine and natural revelation. They quote Psalms or make Shakespearean witticisms as easily as breathing, and these texts shape their perceptions of the world and revelation.

Anne—Revelation through the Light of Nature

Anne of Green Gables conveys Montgomery's reservations about the word-heavy and duty-filled religious traditions she grew up with, especially churchgoing. In a journal entry in 1896, Montgomery describes her "ideal Sunday" as going away "to

the heart of some great solemn wood" and remaining "for hours alone with nature and my own soul" instead of attending church.[15] In a 1910 journal entry, she observes that her childhood Sunday school made her feel that "*religion* and *beauty* were antagonists."[16] This sentiment is reflected in Anne's declaration that instead of kneeling before bed, she would rather go "into a great big field all alone or into the deep, deep, woods, look up into the sky ... And then I'd just *feel* a prayer." Anne repeats this preference for worshipping through nature rather than the church when the Sunday-school superintendent seems to pray as if "God was too far off," and she turns her attention to thanking God for the beauty outside.[17] Gavin White claims that for Montgomery, "Churches and forests were interchangeable."[18] Anne reflects Montgomery's preference for private worship in nature over corporate worship in church.

Montgomery pursued spiritual truth through her own imagination rather than through church teachings; she opposed traditional orthodoxy by disputing several doctrines, including the Bible's divine inspiration,[19] the divinity of Christ,[20] a literal hell, and the landscape of heaven.[21] Heather Thomson argues that in her journals, Montgomery represents herself as "unorthodox, Presbyterian, and a 'seeker of truth'" (with "seeker of truth" as the "most crucial" self-construction).[22] She describes her curiosity about spiritual things in an 1897 journal entry: she engaged in "poking and probing into creeds and religions, dead and alive" for a "spark of immortal truth" which she often experienced outdoors, as when she describes escaping a dull Communion ritual to enjoy "the wine of God's sunshine in his eternal communion that knows no restrictions or creeds."[23] This contrast between the church ritual and a natural world of "the wine of God's sunshine" demonstrates

Montgomery’s belief that natural beauty communicates divine truth better than the church’s “restrictions or creeds.”

Montgomery’s preference for worshipping through nature rather than the church echoes several authors, but especially Wordsworth, whose poems Montgomery frequently quotes in her writing. For example, the reference to “the wine of God’s sunshine in his eternal communion” alludes to the common phrase “communion with Nature,” which, according to Robert M. Ryan, was coined by Wordsworth.[24] Montgomery’s description marries the meanings of the word *communion* as participation and fellowship as well as the bread-and-wine ritual;[25] like Wordsworth, Montgomery enjoys an intimacy and fellowship with the divine in nature.



A sea arch in St. Andrews, Scotland. Photo by Alicia Pollard.

Montgomery quotes Wordsworth again in *Anne of Avonlea*, when Marilla reflects that perhaps Anne's poetic vision of life "apparell'd in celestial light" and her possession of "the vision and faculty divine" is better than Marilla's own plainer, prose perspective.[26] The phrase "apparell'd in celestial light," from "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," aligns Anne with Wordsworth, an observer of the transcendent in nature.[27] Margaret Anne Doody and Wendy E. Barry note that the title of Chapter 36 of *Anne of Green Gables*, "The Glory and the Dream," just before the grief of Matthew's death, is also from "Ode: Intimations of Immortality." As Doody and Barry suggest, this chapter title "summons up the theme of the entire poem, that one's childhood harmony with the cosmos and transcendental vision of the world are lost with the advent of adulthood."[28]

Anne's vision of the divine in nature realizes Wordsworth's idea that children and poets have special insight into the transcendent, as expressed in poems such as "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" and "Tintern Abbey." In "Intimations," Wordsworth describes a child's spiritual authority over adults: "thou best philosopher" who "readst / the eternal deep," the "mighty prophet! Seer blest! / On whom those truths

do rest."[29] Anne is Wordsworth's visionary child, to whom nature teaches God's goodness. Anne's sensitivity to natural beauty is Wordsworthian; for example, when she sees "The Avenue," she responds with "the dreamy gaze of a soul that had been wondering afar, star-led," while Matthew is oblivious. She sees a Snow Queen where Marilla sees only an unproductive cherry tree, a fairy glass in the fragments of a hanging lamp, and a loveliness in the night sea far more precious than the wealth of millionaires. She imagines heaven's beauty in dreaming that "the souls of all those little white roses" Matthew loved so many summers are there to meet him in heaven.[30] Her vision captures the glory of the natural world and demonstrates the transforming beauty of the "mind of man" that Wordsworth celebrates in his poetry.[31]

In framing Anne as a Wordsworthian visionary, Montgomery draws in the mystical and prophetic calling Wordsworth describes receiving in *The Prelude* in which his sight allows him to form a relationship with Nature and receive its transcendent truth. He describes growing aware of a personified and almost deified Nature, who would

... frame

A favored Being, from his earliest dawn

Of infancy doth open out the clouds,

As at the touch of lightening ...[32]

The poet describes this Nature as “seeking” this Being with “gentlest visitation” or, if needed, “severer interventions” and then identifies himself as one such “favored Being”: “and so she dealt with me.” This favour sometimes shows itself in Nature’s might and terror: in the famous ravine of Gondo episode in Book 1 of *The Prelude*, the sight of a huge cliff leaves him troubled with “a darkness, call it solitude, / or blank desertion” and images of “huge and mighty Forms.” This haunting scene is one example of Nature’s “severer interventions” or loving discipline. Wordsworth praises the “Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe” with intertwining for him “high objects, with enduring things,” “sanctifying by such discipline / Both pain and fear, until we recognize / A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.” In other words, Nature teaches him to see the transcendence of the realities most humans call ordinary. In Book 4 he emphasizes the sacredness of these moments with Nature: “Gently did my soul / Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood / Naked as in the presence of her God.”[33] These lines allude to Exodus 3:34, in which Moses, after seeing the back of God, comes down from Mt. Sinai with a face so radiant he has to veil it.[34] The inversion of the quotation (Moses put on the veil as he went down the mountain; he removes it as he approaches) describes a delightful intimacy that gives him “hopes

and peace," "glimmering views / how Life pervades the undecaying mind," "love / and innocence, and holiday repose; / And more than pastoral quiet"[35]—descriptions that suggest health, healing, goodness, and contentment in these communications of transcendent truth.

While Wordsworth's Biblical terminology reinforces these moments of revelation, his experience as one of the "Prophets of Nature" differs significantly from Biblical prophecy. Wordsworth's experiences are wordless: his poetic mind's perception of natural beauty gives him "enduring touches of deep joy" that pierce through his senses to his soul, so that "forms and substances are circumfused / By that transparent veil with light divine, / ... and with a glory scarce their own."[36] In contrast, Biblical moments of revelation almost always come with words, specific commandments, promises, warnings, or encouragement: for example, God personally instructs Abraham several times; Mary receives a visit from the angel Gabriel; the apostle John receives visions with words, images, and symbols.[37] Wordsworth's moments of ecstasy do not have the clarity of Biblical revelation because they are exclusively non-verbal and do not leave him direct instructions, such as "move to a foreign country" or "be of good cheer."[38] Ian Balfour notes that the poet's calling at the beginning of *The Prelude* begins similar to "many prophetic books of the Old Testament" with a prophetic call but with significant differences: he hears only his own voice, not God's, and has no audience yet.[39] J.R. Watson argues that Wordsworth's claim "to be a poet-prophet rests upon his awareness of certain shamanic qualities within himself."[40] These manifestations of the sacred are vague enough to appeal to "every segment of the British religious world from Roman Catholic to Unitarian"[41]—and even Scottish Presbyterians across the sea, such as

Montgomery.

Montgomery and Wordsworth both preferred the light of nature (natural revelation) to the light of Scripture or church teaching (divine revelation). In doing so, they disagreed with their church traditions. In his 1798 “Tintern Abbey,” Wordsworth identifies himself as “a worshipper of Nature” and describes “[a] presence that disturbs me with the joy / Of elevated thoughts.”42 This “presence” is not the Christian God. According to Peter Brier, “Tintern Abbey” is a somewhat “pantheistic” poem, if not “explicitly anti-clerical”: it “confirms Wordsworth’s natural religion” as it shows “the propinquity of the great church ruin engulfed by Nature’s power.”43 According to Basil Willey, “the divinization of Nature ... culminates for English literature in Wordsworth.”44 Balfour argues that “[t]he closing lines [of the 1805 version of the *Prelude*] present what one is tempted to call a ‘secularized’ version of the Biblical prophet ... a prophet of Nature is fundamentally different from a prophet of God.”45 In *The Prelude* and “Tintern Abbey,” Wordsworth’s soul-stirring visions of beauty, goodness, peace, and transcendence come from Nature, not from the church or from Scripture. Similarly, Anne expresses a joy in nature that rebels against the church that Montgomery describes as “overgrown with dogma and verbiage.”46 Elizabeth Epperly argues: “No orthodox Christian in her private letters and journals, Montgomery, like the young Wordsworth, was pantheistic in her written descriptions.”47

As mentioned above, Montgomery links Anne with Wordsworth in *Anne of Avonlea* through two quotations: Anne sees the world “apparell’d in celestial light” from “Ode: Intimations of Immortality” and has the “vision and faculty divine” from *The Excursion*.[48] While Montgomery’s letters and journals reject central doctrines and the institutionalized Scottish Presbyterian Church itself (including the divinity of Christ, as indicated above), her fiction aligns more closely with Wordsworth’s ideology in *The Excursion*, in which Biblical knowledge and a love for natural beauty open up someone’s vision to both natural beauty and supernatural reality. Wordsworth describes a character in *The Excursion*, the Wanderer, as being “one of the Poets that are sown / by Nature” and possessing “vision and faculty divine.” The Wanderer’s wisdom grows from divine and natural revelation, his knowledge of Scripture coming alive in Nature:

Early had he learned

To reverence the volume that displays

The mystery, the life which cannot die;

But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.

All things, responsive to the writing, there

Breathed immortality, revolving life,

... and there his spirit shaped

Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.[49]

For the Wanderer, as for the speaker of *The Prelude*, natural beauty stirs his heart and pierces through to his soul. The Wanderer also has “reverential thoughts” for “the Scottish Church” but has escaped religious gloom: “Whate’er ... / He had imbibed of fear or darker thought / Was melted all away.” His spiritual worldview is one of joy and freedom: to *The Excursion’s* speaker, “sometimes his religion seemed to me / Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods.”[50] The Wanderer reconciles church and Biblical teachings with the wildness and beauty of the natural world.

While *Anne of Green Gables* displays Anne as a Wordsworthian child, one who prefers the glory of nature to the restrictions of the church, *Anne of Avonlea* and *Anne of the Island* demonstrate how Anne follows the tradition of the Wanderer. Through her imagination, she breathes joy and beauty into the creeds and catechisms, chapters and verses, that she has learned in Sunday school. In *Anne of Avonlea*, she dreams up stories of heaven as a place where one can still smell the souls of dying firs, different places hold the beauty of each season, and everyone wears beautiful raiment. Anne teaches Davy the textual truths of Sunday school with an imaginative, joyful vision.51 In *Anne of the Island*, Anne realizes the truth of Matthew 6:19–21, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth ... But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,” when she observes how terrified Ruby Gillis is of dying.52 Anne comforts Ruby out of her imaginative faith, that special vision of the world into which souls depart in death, to comfort Ruby—but never forgets that “the life of heaven must be begun here on earth.”53 Anne is a female Wanderer, whose wisdom comes from reading the Book of Scripture alongside the Book of Nature.

How do Montgomery's personal beliefs—her rejection of fundamental Scottish Presbyterian doctrines including the inerrancy of the Bible, heaven, hell, and the divinity of Christ—reconcile with Anne's respect for Scripture? Montgomery may have concealed her beliefs from her wider reading audience (if not her literary correspondents and the future audience of her published journals). She could also speak from her genuine enjoyment of the Bible as engaging literature, even if she did not believe it was a channel of divine revelation.[54] Regardless of her opinions of church doctrines, Montgomery's work is infused with assurance of the goodness of God. According to Rosemary Ross Johnston, "Despite her own growing doubts, Montgomery has encoded the Anne books ... on the fundamental tenet of the religious philosophers, that God is the ground of all meaning."[55] While noting Montgomery's rejection of certain doctrines, Monika B. Hilder argues that Montgomery's work recovers "the biblical roots of Puritanism" and affirms "the 'kernel' or intrinsic orthodoxy (rightness) of her own Cavendish Presbyterianism."[56] Johnston, Hilder, and Montgomery herself argue that she created a new spiritual identity that redefines religion as love for nature and beauty. In a 1920 journal entry, Montgomery writes: "I think we are much too narrow in our definition of a religious person." She defines a religious person as "an individual who has a close and deep and abiding sense of contact with and communion with God." Arguing that one of God's aspects is Beauty, she muses that a person like her "whose love of beauty amounts to passionate worship" may be "as truly religious as one who finds God in some other manifestation of His personality." She rejects the narrow view of "Mrs. Grundy" (a personification of over-moralistic respectability) who insists you must "go to church every Sunday and believe, or pretend you believe, in certain man-made dogmas and consign every one to hell who doesn't agree with you and then you'll be religious."[57]

Montgomery’s love for Beauty and desire for communion with God recover some of the “biblical roots” Hilder mentions, particularly the relational, beauty-affirming aspect of Scripture as expressed in passages such as Psalm 27, where the psalmist desires to “dwell in the house of the Lord” to “behold the beauty of the Lord.”58 However, in contrasting her love for beauty with the church’s word-heavy, doctrinal dogmatism, Montgomery creates an unnecessary binary: Scriptural faith involves both head and heart, a love for the Truth—expressed in words—as well as for Beauty. For example, Christ is both the incarnate revelation, the Word of God, and beautiful, “the brightness of [God’s] glory.”59 According to Scripture, Jesus as divine and human is the messenger of ultimate divine revelation, and a person cannot experience the joy of intimacy with God without acknowledging Christ’s divinity.60 In Montgomery’s later fiction, such as in the *Emily* series, the consequences of celebrating beauty without the word-defined truth is clearer: without words, the divine is silent.

Emily—Darkness beyond the Veil

In Montgomery's *Emily* series, Emily imagines and loves nature like Anne, but from the first chilly twilight of *Emily of New Moon*, her imagination reveals to her darkness as well as light. At first, Emily's love for natural beauty and imagination unite in a special vision she calls "the flash": a glimpse of "a world of wonderful beauty" hidden behind a "thin curtain" that sometimes flutters and lets her catch "a glimpse of the enchanting realm beyond." The flash suggests natural theology—God revealing his existence and character through the beauty and intricacy of nature—through experiences that can trigger it, such as hearing "a high, wild note of wind in the night." However, the flash can also come through the beauty of congregational worship, hearing "the singing of 'Holy, holy, holy' in church." The flash is not a fanciful construction but a real power that allows Emily to see the invisible reality beyond the physical world: she pictures her father, in death, lifting a curtain to "slip into that world of which the flash had given her glimpses." Her imagination also grants her access to the divine: when her father assures her that God "is Love itself," she senses love surrounding her, "breathed out from some great, invisible, loving Tenderness."[61] From the first two chapters, it is clear that Emily reads natural revelation as well as Anne and that her reading exposes her to a world of beauty and divine love.



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A sunset on the cliffs in St. Andrews, Scotland. Photo by Alicia Pollard.

The beginning of *Emily of New Moon* establishes that Emily's vision and reason make her a source of truth about the nature of God and the spiritual world equal or superior to the authorities of her community, such as her aunts or church ministers. The callous, blunt Ellen Greene displays a church-taught, societal perspective that ignores beauty, imagination, and genuine love; she represents the source of the "disgust" and "hatred" Montgomery explains in a 1921 journal entry she had for "prayer and religion" after her grandmother forced her to confess a sin in prayer as a child.62 Emily confidently rejects "Ellen's God," whom Emily views as an illustration with "whiskers and a nightgown" in Ellen's "Adam-and-Eve" book, in favour of "Father's God," who is "clear as the moon, fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."63 Emily's interpretation rejects the church tradition of picturing God as a grim old man and chooses a Biblical and more beautiful image from Song of Solomon 6:10, a love song.64 The interpretation demonstrates Emily's (and perhaps, Montgomery's) preference for poetry and mystery over creeds and doctrines in reaching for the divine: it is not a prophet's description of God but the Lover's of the Beloved.65 Emily's brand of natural revelation stands clearly against the church's tradition in this case, although not against Scripture. During a prayer meeting in *Emily Climbs*, she further shows her discomfort with some of the church's teaching as she silently disagrees with a preacher tediously lecturing about God's anger: "You make God ugly—and He's beautiful. I hate you for making God ugly."66 Like Anne, Emily disagrees with church authorities but is fiercer and more accusatory in that disagreement than Anne—more willing to challenge her tradition's rules than peaceably live within them.

Emily begins with a Wordsworthian friendship with Nature and confident reading of natural revelation, but her “flash” also suggests Shelleyan mysticism. As a child, she is as much or more of a Wordsworthian than Anne: Emily’s mentor, Mr. Carpenter, even dismisses one of her poems as “too much like a faint echo of Wordsworth.”67 Elizabeth Epperly suggests that Montgomery borrowed the word “flash” from Wordsworth’s poem “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud,” in which the memory of natural beauty “flash[es] upon” the poet’s “inward eye.”68 Margaret Steffler argues that the windy Book I of Wordsworth’s *Prelude* influenced Emily’s insight and her Wind Woman.69 However, the flash’s description as a kind of unveiling also suggests the poetry of Shelley. Matthew Borushko calls the veil “an image frequently employed by Shelley to ‘mark the line between the phenomenal and the noumenal worlds.’”70 Emily’s flash, which momentarily reveals “a world of wonderful beauty,” similarly lifts the veil between the ordinary and the mystical. The flash corresponds with one of Shelley’s metaphors in “A Defence of Poetry,” in which he argues that poetry “strips the veil of familiarity from the world” to reveal the “beauty” that is “the spirit of its forms.”71 According to Epperly, Montgomery drew the flash from the Romantic poets, “most especially from Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley … She knew Shelley’s poetry and his ‘Defense’ and his support for the Platonic idea of a world beyond our visible one, one that is home for perfect form and beauty.”72 Emily’s early poetic sensibilities, like Montgomery’s, incorporate a Wordsworthian vision as well as the Shelleyan veil.

The Wordsworthian and Shelleyan aspects of Emily's imagination also include an interest in paganism. During a night of extraordinary beauty that she spends outdoors, Emily prays that God make her worthy to "carry some of the loveliness of that 'dialogue divine' ... High priestess of beauty—yes, she would serve at no other shrine!"[73] This experience resembles a saint's vision but not a divine revelation such as Paul's on the road to Damascus.[74] Later, Emily appreciates a beautiful day by saying that she "could be a sun worshipper this very moment."[75] While spoken in jest, this remark has a pagan aftertaste.

Emily's paganist reading of nature sometimes transgresses Scottish Presbyterian orthodoxy. One night in the pine woods, which she calls "The Land of Uprightness," she returns from a beautiful sunset to find the atmosphere "eerie—almost sinister": "I felt as if I were escaping from some fascinating but not altogether hallowed locality—a place given over to Paganism and the revels of satyrs. I don't believe the woods are ever wholly Christian in the darkness. There is always a lurking life in them that dares not show itself to the sun but regains its own with the night." This imagery of darkness and night suggests that orthodox, Sunday-school Christianity, experienced in the light of day, is tame and boring compared to the wildness of paganism. Emily feels the daytime beauty she enjoyed just before the walk is now flavourless ("tasteless") and is drawn to the night world and "that little fascinating whisper of something unholy" which she fears—but also loves.[76] This fascination aligns with Montgomery's childhood feeling (discussed above) that religion and

beauty are hostile to each other.77 Emily's use of the word "unholy" suggests that she thinks "holy" means "pure" in a clean but boring, Sunday-school sense. The Biblical meaning of "holy," however, is separated, sacred, consecrated; it is often frightening and mystical, like the burning bush of Exodus 3.78 This passage in "The Land of Uprightness," a rewording of a 1907 entry from Montgomery's journal, demonstrates Montgomery's own fascination with the darkness.79 In 1926, Montgomery describes the same fascination in portraying bonfires as "full of magic and engaging devilry. Bonfires in the dark are always pagan and belong to the old charming gods."80 "Devilry" is another word charged with spiritual meaning, and its presence in this passage is explicitly unorthodox—in the Christian worldview, devils are the enemy.81 This passage playfully defies the Scottish Presbyterian Church's serious stance against devilry.

The unorthodoxy of Emily's experience in the Land of Uprightness becomes clearer when she writes a poem about it that she claims "exorcised something out of my soul," implying her release from demonic possession. When she shows the poem to her mentor, Mr. Carpenter, he tears it up, calling the "soul" of the poem "sheer Paganism." He warns: "Emily, there was a streak of diabolism in that poem. It's enough to make me believe that poets are inspired—by some spirits outside themselves. Didn't you feel possessed when you wrote it?"82 Mr. Carpenter's invocation of "possession," "diabolism," and the "unholy" hint at an enthralling darkness outside of ordinary, orthodox Scottish Presbyterianism. In the Bible, "possession," a supernatural invasion of the human mind and body, is anti-revelation, a violence to free will which harms and oppresses human beings.83 The true nature of the presence Emily felt "possessed" by (real or imagined, natural or

supernatural, friendly or dangerous) remains unknown.

Emily’s curiosity about the “unholy” and unsolved mystery aligns more with Shelley than with Wordsworth. Although her pagan musings match early Wordsworthian poems such as “The World Is Too Much with Us,” in which Wordsworth would “rather be / A Pagan” than blind to beauty,[84] Emily’s experience in the woods corresponds more with Shelley’s “Mont Blanc: Lines Written in the Vale of Chamouni.” Shelley describes “the everlasting universe of things,” which “Flows through the mind ... Now dark—now glittering—now reflecting gloom—.” Shelley calls this reality a “Power” which “comes down / From the ice-gulfs that gird his secret throne”—an atmosphere echoed in Emily’s sense of the woods: “eerie—almost sinister.”[85] Shelley’s “giant brood” of pine trees in the valley resembles Emily’s pines: “Children of elder time, in whose devotion / The chainless winds still come and ever came.”[86] Emily’s night in the woods is full of similar spiritual darkness and strangeness.

Emily's experience in the Land of Uprightness emphasizes the mystery of darkness in her spiritual life when contrasted with Anne's experience in another evergreen wood—the Haunted Wood. Terrified of being grabbed by a "white thing," Anne goes "shuddering up the horrible dim path," past imagined "goblins" and "unearthly creatures." Anne's journey, however, is comically overdramatic: her ridiculously lurid phantoms are named as foolish fancies and teach her to set healthy boundaries for her imagination. "[T]he Haunted Wood mistake cured me of letting my imagination run away with me," Anne reflects later.87 In contrast, the "lurking life" Emily senses is not explicitly imaginary and does not teach her a useful life lesson. This presence turns the trees, her "old well-known friends," into something "strange and aloof" and fills the woods with sounds that are "creeping and weird," "almost hostile."88 It is never revealed as a phantom or a dream but tantalizes her with its intrigue.

Because Shelley's Power of "Mont Blanc" and Emily's nocturnal experience of the Land of Uprightness embrace an unsolvable mystery, they are both anti-revelation. This type of mystery, compelling in that it cannot be resolved, is evident in both Wordsworth and Shelley. Discussing the juxtaposition of confidence and uncertainty in Wordsworth and Keats, Susan J. Wolfson contrasts the Christian and Romantic definitions of mystery: Christian mysteries are "divine truths to be known only through revelation," the crux being "faith that there is something to be known." However, Romantic poets "find mystery more a condition of the mind than a truth awaiting revelation."89 John Rieder's examination of "Mont Blanc" finds a similar ambiguity: "the poet's revelation concerns, not a divine manifestation, but the very absence of such a presence; the experience is anti-epiphany … He sees the veil but not what it conceals."90 While Wordsworth's revelation or epiphany may not have

always been as assured as it seemed,[91] his relationship with Nature gave him a confidence in knowing and being known. Anne finds her own truth about love, death, and the supernatural world through natural revelation. But Emily, in her adulthood, finds unsolved mystery, which sometimes intrigues her and sometimes terrifies her.

The darkness of Emily's power distinguishes the Shelleyan aspect of her gift. Emily, like Shelley, describes a veil covering a world of beauty, but this veil also obscures a darker realm. In Shelley's 1818 sonnet "Lift not the painted veil," this veil is a bright illusion over a dark spiritual realm. He warns: "Lift not the painted veil which those who live / Call Life."[92] The veil mimics "all we would believe," and behind it, "lurk Fear / and Hope, twin Destinies." The sonnet describes "one who had lifted it" seeking "things to love, / But found them not." The seeker becomes "a Spirit that strove / for truth, and like the Preacher found it not."[93] "The Preacher" alludes to the Biblical book of Ecclesiastes, especially the first few chapters, in which the Preacher who addresses the audience declares that the toil, struggle, wisdom, and pleasure-seeking of life are meaningless.[94] The Spirit's quest for "things to love" and "truth" is a failed search for the kind of relationship with the divine described in Scripture, one mediated by beauty (such as the starry sky God showed Abraham) and words (such as the conversations between God and people such as Rebekah or Solomon).[95]

Emily finds similar confusion behind the veil in her frightening psychic episodes, in which she experiences a kind of supernatural revelation but not the clarity of divine revelation. Critical theories about these episodes abound. Kathleen Miller connects them to the flash, which "allows her to see the beauty in a traumatized world."[96] Kate Lawson notes that Emily's visions may be her creativity's Faustian price, as Mr. Carpenter warns, when "Emily comes into contact with a dark world beyond ordinary reality where she is 'possessed' by influences and events she cannot control."[97] Montgomery leaves these episodes a mystery unrevealed even by nature.

Emily's first psychic episode, a fever dream, is her first peek "beyond the veil," behind which is not "wonderful beauty" but confusion, an incomplete revelation. While Aunt Elizabeth guesses Emily may have the second sight, and Dr. Burnley thanks Emily for having restored his faith in God, no confident authority explains this power—but after the incident, Emily has "great grey shadowy eyes that looked into death ... and henceforth would hold in them some haunting, elusive remembrance of the world beyond the veil."[98] Emily's vision is an incomplete revelation: it uncovers one truth, Elizabeth Burnley's death, but leaves the agent who revealed that truth a mystery.

The second book's psychic episode, in which Emily finds that she has drawn a picture in her sleep that shows where a lost boy is trapped, further explores the darkness beyond the Shelleyan veil. The boy's uncle suggests the Scottish superstition of the second sight, but when Emily rejects this idea, his second suggestion is more mysterious: "Something used you as an instrument then."[99] Again, Montgomery provides no authority who can name that "Something." Although this "Something" seems benign, having saved a woman's reputation and a boy's life, Emily fears it: "It seems to me a terrible thing ... I don't feel human. When Dr. McIntyre spoke about something using me as an instrument, I went cold all over. It seemed to me that while I was asleep some other intelligence must have taken possession of my body."[100] Critics such as Elizabeth Epperly discuss the wrong that Dean Priest does to Emily later in the series in desiring to "possess" her in a human way (lying to her, telling her what to do, and absorbing her attention),[101] but this experience may be worse: to literally take over a person's body and mind is the action of a vampire or demon. Emily's reaction clearly shows that this "*other* intelligence" is not her own; an unnameable force has reached through her consciousness without her permission.

Emily's last psychic episode in *Emily's Quest* is a metaphysical journey that she takes while unhappily engaged to Dean Priest and contemplating a gazing-ball. "Emily herself never knew" if this was a dream or delirium: "Twice before in her life—once in delirium—once in sleep she had drawn aside the veil of sense and time and seen beyond." Emily's spiritual journey saves Teddy's life and brings her a personal heart-revelation: she cannot marry Dean because she loves Teddy. When she tells Dean, he bitterly postulates the theory of the "second sight," and Teddy suggests witchcraft,[102] but this power remains a lingering enigma like the "awful Power" of Shelley's "Mont Blanc." No angel, demon, doctor, psychologist, or wise woman explains this power: it remains an unknown that terrifies Emily.

Emily's mystery of the veiled "Something" resembles the power in Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty" more than the God of the Bible. Shelley describes "the awful shadow of some unseen Power." This Spirit's awe-inspiring power, invisibility, and namelessness connect it both to "Mont Blanc's" Power and Emily's "Something":

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever

To sage or poet these responses given:

Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,

Remain the records of their vain endeavor ...[103]

While Emily tries to forget her psychic episodes, Shelley describes seeking ghosts as a boy and hoping for “high talk with the departed dead.”[104] Shelley pledges himself, similar to Emily’s calling herself a “high Priestess” of beauty and Montgomery’s worshipping “The God of Beauty”: “I vow’d that I would dedicate my powers / To thee and thine.”[105] Shelley and the *Emily* books replace the knowable Christian God with an impersonal Power that lives in the beauty of darkness and draws fascination and fear.

Emily's psychic episodes and her relationship with nature have a literary antecedent apart from Scripture: the Romantic sublime, or "the mind's transcendence of a natural and/or social world that cannot fulfill its desire," invited by encounters with "the lonely grandeur of lakes and mountains, or the solemn interior of a cathedral."[106] Emily's response to grand and majestic beauty matches the Romantic poets' experiences of the sublime in works such as Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" or Shelley's "Mont Blanc." The unsolved mystery in the *Emily* series may be an echo of the Romantic sublime, in which the terrifying grandeur of nature silently overwhelms the subject. The sublime is a spiritually uplifting experience with ambiguous meaning: Thomas Weiskel argues that the sublime claims that man can "transcend the human," but "[w]hat, if anything, lies beyond the human—God or the gods, the daemon or Nature—is matter for great disagreement."[107] Andrew Chignell and Matthew C. Halteman explore how different people can interpret their sublime epiphanies differently based on pre-existing beliefs: a subject can read the sublime theologically or non-theologically.[108] Emily reads her sublime experiences theologically, but while she thanks God for the glory of the starry sky, she finds a possessive Pagan presence in the Land of Uprightness.[109] In some ways, Emily's love for the beauty of Scripture and of Paganism could be simply a broader, more welcoming and inclusive interpretation of the spiritual life in general in its wonder and mystery, one not restricted to the creeds and catechisms of the Scottish Presbyterian Church.

However, Emily's darker experiences with the sublime and the spiritual world are missing one crucial piece of Scriptural experiences: they are not relational. In discussing the religious sublime, Chignell and Halteman quote 1 Kings 19, in which God comes to the discouraged and despairing prophet Elijah not in a mighty wind, not in an earthquake, not in a fire—three sublime experiences—but in a "gentle whisper." God converses with Elijah and strengthens him to continue his prophetic work.110 In Scripture, revelation is relational: epiphanies and visions are the transcendent God forming unique and personal relationships with specific people. 111 Emily is awed or frightened by the sublime and cheered by beauty, but none of her experiences enables her to have that knowing, trusting relationship of divine revelation.

In *Emily's Quest*, Emily's inability to access ultimate revelation about the spiritual world or her own heart darkens her inner life. Anne's story includes moments of revelation that lead her to joy: she has a flash of understanding that protects her from a wrong engagement to Roy Gardner, and the night she believes Gilbert is dying is a "book of Revelation" because she realizes she loves him.112 Emily receives no heart-revelation until the end of the third book, is temporarily dazzled by five men, and is briefly engaged to the wrong man, Dean Priest—a figure who represents the mystery, fascination, and dangers of the pagan world that intrigue her. Dean enchants Emily with his "magnetic green eyes" and talk of "strange old tales of forgotten gods" and dead Egyptian princesses.113 His talk of Emily's life "belonging" to him and rumoured involvement in the Black Mass link him to the fascination and fear of paganism and the occult.114 However, Dean's mystery and fascination are counterbalanced by his desire to control Emily. His description of

her book, *A Seller of Dreams*, as “cobwebs—only cobwebs” is a bitter lie that causes her confusion and pain. She burns the book in her grief but immediately regrets it, feeling like the “mothers of old” who burned their children for Moloch—the darkest and most chilling allusion to pagan practices Montgomery has made so far. In her confusion, Emily claims that Dean’s presence has shown God’s love to her after a winter of sickness and despair: “There have been times this past winter when I felt God hated me. But now again I feel sure He loves me ... He ... brought me *you*,” she tells Dean.115 However, later events and scholarly criticism on their relationship make this statement suspect; most critics view Dean as a predator,116 and it was his lie about *A Seller of Dreams* that caused her to burn her manuscript.117 A God who would send Dean as comforter—a man who fascinates and engages Emily but ultimately desires to possess and control her—is not the loving, protective God of Scripture who promises freedom.118

Dean is not the only dark or troubling figure in *Emily’s Quest*: gloom pervades the book like heavy fog, occasionally illuminated by humour or joy. One motif is that of hidden wounds and secret pain: Emily is constantly hiding her own desires and griefs from her family and friends. For example, when Old Kelly warns Emily against marrying Dean, she reflects that “[h]e had found the one joint in her armour and the thrust had struck home.” Teddy, Emily, and Ilse’s attempt to reclaim childhood one summer leaves Emily with “burning shame and deep, mute hurt.” When Emily learns that Teddy and Ilse are engaged, she feels neither hurt nor surprise: “one does not feel either, I am told, when a bullet strikes the heart,” the narrator comments. A second motif is that of the unknown heart: Emily cannot read her own heart or others’ feelings: for example, she thinks she is in love with Aylmer Vincent for a few

brief weeks and that Teddy loves Ilse instead of her. For lack of a better explanation, Emily's confused clan finally designates her "temperamental." A third motif is weariness and disappointment: the many times Emily longs for Teddy to declare his love and he does not, as well as Emily's hardships in publishing her work, are not cancelled out or forgotten by their marriage or her eventual authorial success. "Life never seems the same to me as it used to," she reflects once. "Something is gone. I am not unhappy ... I have success ... But underneath it all is the haunting sense of emptiness."[119] Secret pain, uncertainty, and fatigue haunt *Emily's Quest*.

This third motif of weariness returns Emily to a Wordsworthian mode of thinking: while Shelley seems to delight in darkness, Wordsworth's lingering yearning for what he had in childhood emerges again. Emily wonders if she will lose her "flash" as she ages: "Will nothing but 'the light of common day' be mine then? But at least it came to me this morning and I felt my immortality ... 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.'"[120] While Emily continues to remind herself of life's goodness, her struggle to do so is painfully clear: she must bear the secret pain of wounds unspoken, her confusion about her own and others' hearts, and exhaustion to keep going. Darkness pervades *Emily's Quest* so deeply that it almost drags itself to its "happy ending."

The darkness in the *Emily* trilogy culminates with a hollow, contrived happy ending: Emily and Teddy's reconciliation and marriage is not emotionally heavy enough to balance out the weight of despair. Kate Lawson contrasts Montgomery's *The Blue Castle* with *Emily's Quest* using the lens of the Victorian sickroom, in which sickness becomes a positive transformation. She discusses the book's "embattled image of one warring with failure and overwhelmed by sickness of the heart" and argues that "*Emily's Quest* seems beset by a deadening heartsickness and painful sense of failure."[121] Elizabeth Epperly also comments on the failure of this happy ending: while she discusses the positive aspects of Emily and Teddy's marriage, she acknowledges that "Emily's eventual marriage to Teddy is a relief rather than a positive joy."[122] Not all scholars agree that this happy ending is a false one: for example, Lesley D. Clement argues that Teddy will be a true partner and friend who "gives Emily the opportunity to travel with him on the Today Road into tomorrow."[123] However, after the long struggle of *Emily's Quest* and the pain, uncertainty, and weariness discussed above, this ending does not feel like a climax, but an exhausted finish to a hard struggle. Teddy and Emily finally come together, but while Anne and Gilbert go to live together in a House of Dreams, Emily and Teddy make their home in a Disappointed House that, at least in the book, is never renamed.[124]

Etymology and Biblical knowledge give some insight into why the absence of divine revelation creates such darkness for Emily. The last book of the Bible, the Apostle John's vision of the world's end, is Revelation or *apokalupsis*—an "uncovering" or "unveiling."[125] Though Montgomery did not study ancient Greek, she certainly knew about the Holy of Holies in the Jewish temple, where God's presence dwelt, veiled from the outer room. In Matthew 27, this veil tore from top to bottom at Jesus Christ's death, tearing the separation between God and man.[126] The tearing of the veil demonstrates one of the core themes of Scripture, as explained previously: revelation is relational, a loving God tearing apart the separation between himself and humankind. The apocalypse or unveiling ends with the Church entering heaven, where God "will dwell with them, and they shall be his people."[127] Emily's flash may flutter the curtain between her and the supernatural world, but the veil never tears completely; she never forms a trusting relationship with the Something that possesses her, and her art, love for beauty, and eventual marriage feel more like flickering street lamps in the darkness than a sun that conquers night.



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A spring dawn in St. Andrews, Scotland. Photo by Alicia Pollard.

A Debt to the Gods and the Gift of Wings

Montgomery's letters and journals give some insight into her own view of her relationship with the divine. In a journal entry from 1907 she muses that her "blues" are the price for her temperament: "'The gods don't allow us to be in their debt.' They give us sensitiveness to beauty ... but the shadow of the gift goes with it."[128] This view portrays divine gifts as contractual, more Faustian than Promethean: God or the gods demand a price for gifts—an obligation which makes them wares, not true "gifts"—instead of giving them freely. In a 1920 journal entry, Montgomery muses that this price is one she is willing to pay: "One cannot have imagination and the gift of wings, along with the placidity and contentment" of non-dreamers, "[b]ut the gift of wings is better than placidity and contentment after all."[129] A few journal entries later, however, Montgomery contradicts this image of a God who gives gifts with a price by describing her belief that God is "good and beautiful and just—but *not* omnipotent" and describes "a Principle of Evil, equal to God in power—at least, at present" who are locked in "an infinite ceaseless struggle."[130] In turning away from the word-defined world of divine revelation in Scripture and in Scottish Presbyterian creeds (rigid, stale, and lifeless as they seemed to her) and preferring the beauty and vitality of natural revelation, Montgomery also turned away from the clarity and specificity that words can offer. Her "gift of wings" and love for natural revelation empowered her to reach the heights of imagination and beauty, but in the "white nights" and dark periods when natural beauty was not enough, she did not turn to the intimacy and comfort offered in divine revelation.[131]

Like Montgomery, Anne and Emily both possess the “gift of wings.” Like Wordsworth, both treasure the revelation of divine goodness in natural beauty. However, Emily’s connection to Shelley shows her a darkness of anti-revelation which can appear as a thrilling unknown or a confusing terror. Without the certainty of divine revelation, which uses words to build relationships between God and humans, the nature of this darkness remains veiled for Emily. The *Anne* and *Emily* books portray what the spiritual life can be with natural revelation or a lack of revelation: the spring-morning life, bright with the knowledge of a God who reveals himself in natural beauty, and the autumn-dusk seasons of enthralling mystery or despairing unknown under an unnamed, veiled Power.

About the Author: Alicia Pollard is an independent scholar and creative writer based in New England. She earned a B.A. in English from Grove City College and is studying for an M.Litt. in Theology in the Arts at the University of St. Andrews. Alicia's interests include the intersection of academic, artistic, and business knowledge, the theological implications of fantasy and mystery, wisdom and wonder in children's stories, and virtue ethics in literature. Her creative work has been published in *Peacock Journal*, *An Unexpected Journal*, *Story Warren*, and *Transpositions*.

Banner Image: Sunrise through a cherry tree in St. Andrews, Scotland. Photo by Alicia Pollard. Pollard writes of the photographs accompanying this article, “These were all taken in St. Andrews, Scotland. I've been surprised by the similarity of this landscape to my memories of Prince Edward Island.”

- 1 Montgomery, *ENM* 1.
- 2 Montgomery, *CJ* 1 (7 Oct. 1897): 380.
- 3 Rubio, *Lucy Maud Montgomery* 35, 16.
- 4 Rubio, “Scottish-Presbyterian Agency” 89–93.
- 5 Klempa, “Scottish Presbyterianism Transplanted” 8.

- 6 *Bible*, Psalm 11:1.
- 7 *Bible*, Romans 1:20.
- 8 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 1.2; Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion* 53, 61; Paley, *Natural Theology*.
- 9 The Canons of Dort (1618–1619) distinguish between the "light of nature" and "operation of [God's] Holy Spirit" as two kinds of revelation. Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* 588; see Milne, *The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Cessation of Special Revelation* 68–71.
- 10 Calvin 61.
- 11 Eddy, "Nineteen-Century Natural Theology" 100.
- 12 Rowland, "Natural Theology and the Christian Bible" 23–25; Hall, *Natural Theology in the Middle Ages* 57.
- 13 Calvin 71–72.
- 14 Schaff 600.
- 15 Montgomery, *CJ* 1 (26 July 1896): 324.
- 16 Montgomery, *CJ* 2 (7 Jan. 1910): 263. Montgomery records another childhood memory that illustrates her love for beauty and sense that "*religion* and *beauty* were antagonists." In 1921, she recounts her horror as a young girl when a homely Bible Society colporteur visited the house, warmed himself by the kitchen stove, and asked her, "Little girl, isn't it nice to be a Christian?" She describes how her disgust at his appearance shaped her view of what being a Christian meant: "I looked at him—his shivering form, his pinched blue face, his claw-like hand spread over the stove, and I thought that *he* was a Christian and that I certainly didn't want to be one! ... I can't separate myself from the deeply-rooted idea of repugnance to the *name* 'Christian.'" Montgomery, *CJ* 4 (21 Oct. 1921): 343.
- 17 Montgomery, *AGG* 51, 81.
- 18 White, "Religious Thought" 86.
- 19 "You know to be frank, I do not look upon the Bible as a book inspired by God. I look upon it as a book much of which is inspired with God—a collection of the myths, history, poetry, ethics and philosophy of a singularly spiritual (taking into account the period in which they lived) people whose superior conception of the Great Intelligence fitted them to be the mouth-pieces of that Intelligence" (Montgomery, *Green Gables Letters* 113).
- 20 "Like you, I cannot accept the divinity of Christ. I regard him as immeasurably the greatest of all great teachers and as the son of God in the same sense that any man inspired of God is a son of God ... I believe that He

was truly sent from and of God, as are all great teachers" (Montgomery, *Green Gables Letters* 184).

- 21 Montgomery, *CJ* 1 (7 Oct. 1897): 380. Montgomery's reflections on death and an afterlife in her journals are contradictory; she glories in the natural beauty that she can see but is uncertain about the unseen world beyond death. During a period of depression in the winter of 1904, she longs to call her deceased childhood friend Will Pritchard "out of that black outer void," but "if he is living somewhere he doesn't care for these things now" (Montgomery, *CJ* 2 [16 Mar. 1904]: 98). In 1920, she writes that she believes in neither heaven nor hell, but that life continues "in incarnation after incarnation, co-existent with God, and Anti-god, rejoicing, suffering, as good or evil wins the upper hand" (Montgomery, *CJ* 4 [3 Feb. 1920]: 245). Later, however, on the anniversary of her friend Frede's death in 1923, she reflects: "Oh, surely the jests of heaven have had more spice since she has shared in them" (Montgomery, *CJ* 5 [25 Jan. 1923]: 112).
- 22 Thomson, "I Think It Well" iii.
- 23 Montgomery, *CJ* 1 (7 Oct. 1897): 380; *CJ* 1 (24 July 1892): 440.
- 24 Ryan, *Darwin* 5.
- 25 Vine, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary* 115.
- 26 This passage is free indirect discourse; Montgomery's literary authorial voice interprets and translates Marilla's thoughts (Montgomery, *AA* 376).
- 27 Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immorality" 4, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 434.
- 28 Doody Jones and Barry, "Literary Allusion" 459.
- 29 Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" 109–16, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 437.
- 30 Montgomery, *AGG* 19, 36, 92, 276, 296.
- 31 Wordsworth, *Prelude* 13.445–52, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 377
- 32 Wordsworth, *Prelude* 1.365–69, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 176. The Norton edition has Americanized spellings and misspelled "lightning."
- 33 Wordsworth, *Prelude* 1.365–74, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 176; 1.424–25, 428, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 177; 1.431, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 177; 439–40, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 178; 442–44, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 178; 4.140–42, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 214.
- 34 *Bible*, Exodus 3:34.

- 35 Wordsworth, *Prelude* 4.153, 4.156, 4.163–64, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 214–15.
- 36 Wordsworth, *Prelude* 13.442, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 377; 5.617, 625–26, 629, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 238.
- 37 *Bible*, Genesis 12:1–3, 13:1–18, 15:1–10, 17:1–21, 18:1–33, 21:12–13, 22:1–2, 22:10–18; Luke 1:26–38; Revelation 1–22.
- 38 *Bible*, Genesis 12:1–3; Acts 23:11.
- 39 Balfour, *Rhetoric of Romantic Prophecy* 20–21.
- 40 Watson, *Wordsworth's Vital Soul* 133, 147.
- 41 Ryan 7.
- 42 Wordsworth, "Tintern Abbey" 95–96, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 68.
- 43 Brier, "Reflections on Tintern Abbey" 6.
- 44 Willey, *The Eighteenth-Century Background* 253.
- 45 Balfour 22.
- 46 Montgomery, *CJ* 1 (10 July 1898): 414.
- 47 Epperly, *Through Lover's Lane* 85.
- 48 Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" 4, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 434.
- 49 Wordsworth, *Wordsworth's Excursion* 1.77–78; 1.88; 1.223–28, 231–32. According to Robert M. Ryan, "The Bible's apparent inability to make the youth 'feel' his faith diminishes its authority. The passage seems to endorse the proposition that natural theology, if not a substitute for biblical faith, is an indispensable foundation for it and may actually be sufficient in itself. Those who accused Wordsworth of making the religion of nature a substitute for Christianity could point to these verses as evidence" (Ryan 164).
- 50 Wordsworth, *Wordsworth's Excursion* 1.406, 407–08; 1.409–10.
- 51 Montgomery, *AA* 55, 150, 151, 164, 111, 164, 189.
- 52 *Bible*, Matthew 6:19–21.
- 53 Montgomery, *AIs* 182–83, 187.
- 54 In 1920, Montgomery wrote: "I like reading the Bible—most of it. (I like the folk-lore of Genesis and the drama of the Exodus and the gorgeous furnishings of the tabernacle and the doings of the kings and the good maledictions of the Psalms and the warm imagery of the Song of Solomon and the cynicism of Ecclesiastes and the worldly wisdom of the Proverbs and the idyll of Ruth and the blazing fire of the prophets and the wonders of Jesus' teaching and the poetry of Revelations)" (Montgomery, *CJ* 4 [31 Jan. 1920]: 242).
- 55 Johnston, "Reaching Beyond the Word" 18.

- 56 Hilder, “That Unholy Tendency to Laughter” 52.
- 57 Montgomery, *CJ* 4 (31 Jan. 1920): 239. See the editorial footnote for this entry on the character of “Mrs. Grundy.”
- 58 *Bible*, Psalm 27:4.
- 59 *Bible*, Hebrews 1:3.
- 60 *Bible*, John 14:6.
- 61 Montgomery, *ENM* 12–13, 23.
- 62 Montgomery, *CJ* 4 (21 Oct. 1921): 342.
- 63 Montgomery, *ENM* 28.
- 64 *Bible*, Songs of Songs 6:10.
- 65 *Bible*, Song of Solomon 6:9–10.
- 66 Montgomery, *EC* 40.
- 67 Montgomery, *ENM* 331.
- 68 Epperly, *Through Lover’s Lane* 15; Wordsworth, “I Wandered Lonely as Cloud” 15, *Wordsworth’s Poetry and Prose* 418.
- 69 Steffler, “Gentle Breeze” 89-93.
- 70 Borushko, “The Politics of Subreption” 244.
- 71 Shelley, *Shelley’s Poetry and Prose* 517. The Norton edition uses Americanized spellings but retains “Defence.”
- 72 Epperly, *Through Lover’s Lane* 16. Epperly uses Americanized spellings.
- 73 Montgomery, *EC* 171.
- 74 *Bible*, Acts 9:1–19.
- 75 Montgomery, *EC* 172.
- 76 Montgomery, *EC* 238.
- 77 Montgomery, *CJ* 2 (7 Jan. 1910): 263.
- 78 Vine 306, 651.
- 79 Montgomery, *CJ* 2 (18 Nov. 1907): 177.
- 80 Montgomery, *My Dear Mr. M* 126. Montgomery often connected natural beauty with religion, Christian and pagan. For example, in a 1923 journal entry, she quotes Luke 17:21 while describing an evening’s drive. She enjoyed the drive for its moonlit beauty despite the dull company: she felt as if there was “a ‘fountain sealed’ somewhere deep in my soul where no drop of poison from the outward universe could distill. ‘The kingdom of God is within you’” (Montgomery, *CJ* 5 [24 Jan. 1923]: 110). In contrast, when she visited the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky in 1924, she described having “sensed” the Cave and its “devilry. For it isn’t altogether holy. No, it is a very Pagan place. The old gods of the underworld rule it” (Montgomery, *CJ* 5 [17 Aug. 1924]: 276).

- 81 *Bible*, John 8:44.
- 82 Montgomery, *EC* 238, 243. Mr. Carpenter's musings about "possession" are even more significant in the context of Montgomery's biography. During the summer of the "hellish" year of 1919 (four years before publishing *Emily of New Moon*), she discovered that her husband Ewan believed he was "*eternally lost*—that there was no hope for him in the next life" (Montgomery, *CJ* 4 [1 Sept. 1919]: 148–49). Montgomery felt "turn[ed] against" her husband when he felt "haunted by conviction of eternal damnation"; his melancholy made her feel "as if he were possessed by or transformed into a demoniacal creature of evil" (Montgomery, *CJ* 4 [31 Aug. 1919]: 178). Episodes of this fear and its accompanying depression hounded Ewan for the rest of both of their lives (Rubio, *Lucy Maud Montgomery* 210–19, 506–12).
- 83 *Bible*, Mark 4:24, Matthew 8:28, Matthew 9:32–33, Matthew 12:22, Matthew 15:22, Luke 8:2; Vine 157–58.
- 84 Wordsworth, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose* 10.
- 85 Shelley 1–3, 16–17; *Bible*, Exodus 3:1–22; Montgomery, *EC* 247.
- 86 Shelley 20–24.
- 87 Montgomery, *AGG* 228.
- 88 Montgomery, *EC* 238.
- 89 Wolfson, *Questioning Presence* 25.
- 90 Rieder, "Shelley's 'Mont Blanc'" 794.
- 91 "Expressions of joyful trust are crossed from the very start by contrary intuitions and contrary evidence. Far from a simple credo, 'Tintern Abbey' is a peculiarly strained utterance; its impassioned testimonies are limited and sometimes subverted by interrogative tendencies of syntax, and these in turn are suppressed or contained by the urgencies of declaration" (Wolfson 61).
- 92 Shelley 1–2.
- 93 Shelley 2, 3–4, 7–8, 312, 13–14.
- 94 *Bible*, Ecclesiastes 1–2.
- 95 *Bible*, Genesis 15:1-6; Genesis 25: 21–23; 1 Kings 3:3–14.
- 96 Miller, "Haunted Heroines" 138.
- 97 Lawson, "The 'Disappointed' House" 73.
- 98 Montgomery, *ENM* 323, 322, 327.
- 99 Montgomery, *EC* 199. Emily is probably correct in rejecting the second sight as an explanation. According to Pawel Rutkowski, the second sight exclusively reveals the future (Rutkowski, "Scotland as the Land of Seers" 186); Emily's visions show her a secret of the past, a present danger, and a future danger in

a faraway present. Scottish visions contained visual symbols such as shrouds or bloodstains that required interpretation (Rutkowski 188–89); Emily's visions are comparatively clear. Traditionally, people with the second sight, like Cassandra, could not change the futures they glimpsed (Rutkowski 188); each of Emily's visions enables her to save a reputation or a life. Scottish seers usually remained aware during their visions; Emily's second vision is more possession than sight. Several Scottish scholars of the second sight believed that it was not witchcraft or demonology, but part of the Biblical tradition of prophecy (Rutkowski 192–93; Brochard, "Scottish Witchcraft" 67); Emily does not credit the Biblical God with her visions. Montgomery makes Emily's psychic visions too ambiguous to be the second sight alone.

- 100 Montgomery, *EQ* 225.
- 101 Epperly, *Fragrance* 186–88.
- 102 Montgomery, *EQ* 225, 88, 95, 94.
- 103 Shelley 25–28.
- 104 Shelley 49, 51–52. Montgomery, too, sought "high talk of the departed dead," if only as a game. In April 1919, she participated in a séance in which she described receiving a message claiming to be from Frede, a dear friend who had died in January, through a Ouija board. Montgomery was skeptical but reflected that "evidently some demons have a sense of humor" (Montgomery, *4 [13 Apr. 1919]: 136–38).*
- 105 Shelley 49, 61–62; Montgomery, *CJ* 6 (14 July 1929): 268; Montgomery, *My Dear Mr. M* 148; Montgomery *EC* 171.
- 106 Potkay, "The British Romantic Sublime" 203.
- 107 Weiskel, *The Romantic Sublime* 3.
- 108 Chignell and Halteman, "Religion and the Sublime" 188.
- 109 Montgomery, *EC* 171, 238.
- 110 Chignell and Halteman 183; see *Bible*, 1 Kings 19:11–13.
- 111 *Bible*, Isaiah 41:8–10.
- 112 Montgomery, *AIs* 404.
- 113 Montgomery, *EC* 266, 273, 127.
- 114 Montgomery, *ENM* 270; EQ 68.
- 115 Montgomery, *EQ* 51, 53, 58.
- 116 See, for examples, Epperly, *Fragrance* 166; Gammel, "Eros" 108–111; Rubio, *Lucy Maud Montgomery* 292.
- 117 Montgomery, *EQ* 51.
- 118 *Bible*, Galatians 5:13.

- 119 Montgomery, *EQ* 60, 163, 173, 38, 121, 99, 161.
- 120 Montgomery, *EQ* 160; *Wordsworth, Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose*, 77, 125–26.
- 121 Lawson, "The Victorian Sickroom" 245.
- 122 Epperly, *Fragrance* 190.
- 123 Clement, "Visual Culture."
- 124 Montgomery, *EQ* 226.
- 125 Vine 532.
- 126 *Bible*, Exodus 40:1–35 154–55; Hebrews 9:1–9 1647; Matthew 27:51.
- 127 *Bible*, Revelation 21:3–4.
- 128 Montgomery, *CJ* 2 (17 Dec. 1907): 179; Montgomery quotes this passage in a letter from 1908; see *My Dear Mr. M* 36–37; Saxe, *Poems* 11.
- 129 Montgomery, *CJ* 4 (31 Jan. 1920): 240.
- 130 Montgomery, *CJ* 4 (3 Feb. 1920): 244.
- 131 For examples of the relational intimacy of divine revelation, see the *Bible*, Genesis 15:1–6 (God comforting Abraham about Abraham's childlessness) or Zephaniah 3:17 (a prophecy about the restoration of Israel).

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