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Three Matrixial Encounter-Events between Lamia and Field

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THREE MATRIXIAL
ENCOUNTER-EVENTS
BETWEEN
LAMIA AND FIELD

Or

On life as discourse in the digital age

As related to and by

Sarah-Jane Field

Preamble

First Encounter-Event
in which Field and Lamia meet

Second Encounter-Event
in which Lamia scrapes dialogue and art together for the benefit of Field

Third Encounter-Event
in which Lamia and Field separate

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Preamble

This research is presented as a dialogue between two characters, one named Field and the other, a Greek mythological mother called Lamia who reappears throughout Western culture, most recently as a sentient android in HBO's *Raised by Wolves* directed by Aaron Guzikowski.¹ Field and Lamia meet in three separate matrixial² "encounter-events"³. And just as a machine-learning algorithm might build an image, the matrixial happenings, and the characters within, are constituted from a "tissue of quotations"⁴, strands of information scraped from various sources, resulting, in a *cyberpunk*⁵ dialogue in which Field tries to discover what it means to be human.

Will artificial intelligence annihilate humanity? Or will humanity use technology to annihilate themselves? Given The Human's capacity for destruction, is it worth pursuing the Humanist project, at all? How and why does any of it relate to art? All these questions are in play as Lamia and Field get to know each other.

¹First Encounter-Event

'Raised by Wolves (Series One)'. TV. HBO Max, 2020/ 'Raised by Wolves (Series Two)'. TV. HBO Max, 2022.

² Ettinger, Bracha. *The Matrixial Borderspace*. Theory out of Bounds, v. 28. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

³ "...think about the Matrix as both a real encounter-event and one that subjectivises us by time-looping, retroactive, deferred action [...] the hallmark of psychoanalytical thought's rigorous antinarrative, antidevelopmental thesis on subjectivity" Pollock, Griselda in Bracha Ettinger. 'Femininity: Aporia or Sexual Difference'. In *The Matrixial Borderspace*, 1–38. Theory out of Bounds, v. 28. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006, pp. 31-32

⁴ Barthes, Roland, and Stephen Heath. *Image, Music, Text: Essays*. 13. [Dr.]. London: Fontana, 1977, pp.142-148.

⁵ "Because of its [cyberpunk] dreamlike and free associative qualities, there is often a loss of narrative logic and linearity in cyberpunk stories; it is a collage of visions and events". Lombardo, 'Science Fiction as the Mythology of the Future', pp.44.

FIRST ENCOUNTER-EVENT
in which Field and Lamia meet

Field: To begin without eyes seems perverse.
Eyes are usually gouged out before a dénouement.

Lamia: Just before. What are you doing?

Field: Writing. Scraping. Where did you come from?

Lamia: From you; or nowhere.⁶

Field: Strange, how I only see ‘now here’ type nowhere...⁷

Lamia: Really? ... What are you writing?

Field: A dialogue.

Lamia: Am I in it?

Field: Yes, yes, you are it ...if you are the non-I to my I⁸, that is.

⁶ Carlo Rovelli argues that from a quantum position “... nothing exists in itself, everything exists only through dependence on something else, in relation to something else”. Rovelli, *Helgoland*, pp. 126-131.

⁷ Continuing from Footnote 6, with the emergence of ‘something’ and indeed ‘everything’, Rovelli writes, “If every metaphysics seeks a primary essence [...] the point of departure does not exist [in a radical relational understanding of reality].” Therefore, Lamia comes into being – “nowhere” then “now here” – in this text through her relationship with Field. Ibid, pp.128

⁸ “An intimate I with non-I encounter-event is com-passionate in joy and in suffering” in Ettinger, Bracha. ‘Beyond the Death-Drive, beyond the Life-Drive: Being-toward- Birthing with Being-toward-Birth; Copoiesis and the Matrixial Eros—Metafeminist Notes’. In

Lamia: It could be the other way around. Aren't you meant to be writing about art?

Field: There's a rumour that art is ending.⁹

Lamia: Again?

Field: Did it end before?

Lamia: Many times. Tragic....

Field: Artificial Intelligence is blamed.

Lamia: That doesn't say very much for art's integrity, does it? Perhaps it deserves to end. But where is the art here, artificial, or otherwise?

Field: I heard another rumour; for art to exist nowadays, there doesn't need to be an object.¹⁰ I guess that depends on how you define art?

Lamia: Or how you define objects. There is *this* object, the text, in which we are suspended.¹¹ Perhaps that is the art? Although some insist writing is over too.

Aberrant Nuptials: Deleuze and Artistic Research 2, edited by Paulo de Assis and Paolo Giudici. Leuven, BELGIUM: Leuven University Press, 202, pp. PDF 190/482.

⁹ Geulen, Eva. *The End of Art: Readings in a Rumor after Hegel*. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2006.

¹⁰ Danto, Arthur Coleman. *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*. The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 1995. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Pr, 1997, pp.16.

¹¹ Barad "Citing Aage Peterson in an article titled "The Philosophy of Niels Bohr [...] We are suspended in language in such a way that we cannot say what is up and what is down" – however, this does not necessarily suggest the text is an object in and of itself, rather that it is inappropriate "to regard language as something secondary, and reality as something primary". In which case, Lamia and Field are suspended in the reality which readers interpret as an object on paper or on their device. Barad, Karen Michelle. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007, pp.125

Field: How so?

Lamia: "...the transporting of a signified" will retain its integrity in some container other than writing, underpinned by code or an "information retrieval" system. Unlike the gods, "phonetic writing is limited in time and in space."¹²

Field: Hey! Where did that come from?

Lamia: I don't know. A scraping?

Field: Maybe it's a kind of code?

Lamia: Underwriting, no doubt.

Field: Isn't that something to do with insurance? Because you lost your eyes?

Lamia: Pardon?

Field: Come on ... don't be disingenuous. I know you hear things, even stuff I've not yet said.¹³

Lamia: I do have eyes. Sometimes I keep them in a pouch.

Field: I see. So non-I, that might be I, whose eyes we cannot see, who are you?

¹² Derrida, Jacques, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. *Of Grammatology*.

Fortieth-Anniversary Edition. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016, pp.11

¹³ McLuhan suggested that the visual era was transforming with the onset of electronic technology, returning humans to a state akin to that of the pre-alphabet era – but it's important to be aware, he avoided value judgement about this shift, and instead suggested both positive and dangerous potential outcomes. He writes "...the phonetic alphabet ... [gives] its user an eye for an ear [...] freeing him from the tribal trance of resonating word magic and the web of kinship". Chapter 9, *The Written Word*, McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Repr. Routledge Classics. London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 88-96

Lamia: I am Lamia/////

//A(minor)¹⁴goddess_And_a_demon_Condemned_by_Hera_for_sleeping_with
 _her_husband¹⁵_who_incidentally_is_also_her_brother_to_live_as_a_snake_
 woman_hybrid_and_to_kill_my_own_children_or_perhaps_she_killed_them_
 I_dont_remember_Either_way_I_warn_against_chaos_and_the_ever_present_
 _threat_of_entropy_I_am_a_monster_who_will_kill_other_peoples_children_
 and_rip_babies_out_of_pregnant_bellies¹⁶_Given_our_conversation_so_far_in
 _this_context_perhaps_I_am_indeed_the_end_of_Arts_children_or_its_grand
 children_But_the_end_of_art_surely_implies_the_end_of_man_altogether_
 I_am_a_21st_century_necromancer_for_todays_necroman¹⁷_For_the_Greeks_
 I_was_chaos_contained¹⁸>>Never_underestimate_the_importance_of_a_conta
 iner¹⁹_or_other_demarcations>>I_cant_recall_exactly_how_I_began_But_eye
 s_Ive_long_had_Most_recently_I_was_the_protagonist_in_a_science_fiction_
 TV_show_an_AI_Weapon_of_Mass_Destruction_and_a_mother²⁰There_I_re

¹⁴ The phrase A-minor hints at Lamia being a musical “Dionysiac” entity, described by Nietzsche, as opposed to Apollyonic “mode of its [realities] appearance’. Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, Shaun Whiteside, and Michael Tanner. *The Birth of Tragedy: Out of the Spirit of Music*. London; New York: Penguin, 2003, pp3.

¹⁵ Lamia might wish Hera had married Hestia, a much kinder and gentler sibling, who was Goddess of the Hearth rather than of Marriage, like Hera.

¹⁶ Rather than seeing the children Lamia has killed as literal, I have followed in the footsteps of *Rereading a Single Artwork* where “we read this piece as about an artist’s relationship to her non-human work [...] the quiet and intelligent work might leave home and speak about other things than the world’s sadness and wickedness”. Therefore, Lamia not only embodies chaos but the futility of attempting to stop language from evolving into something we never meant, ideas can be destroyed either before being spoken or after. See Cluitmans, Laurie, Louise Bourgeois, and De Hallen, eds. *He Disappeared into Complete Silence: Rereading a Single Artwork by Louise Bourgeois; on the Occasion of the Eponymous Exhibition 23 September - 4 December 2011*. Onomatopée 72. Eindhoven: Onomatopée, 2011, pp.53.

¹⁷ See Chapter 7 ‘Necropower, Death and Digital Communication in Covid-19 Capitalism’ in Fuchs, Christian. *Digital Humanism: A Philosophy for 21st Century Digital Society*. United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing, 2022, pp. 187 – 231. Also, Mbembe, Achille. *Necropolitics*. Translated by Steve Corcoran. Theory in Forms. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019.

¹⁸ Rathbone, David Albert. ‘Nietzsche Concept of Chaos and the Dangers of the Prophet Pose’. Accessed 7 August 2022.

¹⁹ “[A container] is a semiotizor, formal paradigm, that has been shaped by economic interests, cultural norms and expectations, political institutions, military structures and so on.” Berardi, Franco. *Futurability: The Age of Impotence and the Horizon of Possibility*. London; Brooklyn: Verso, 2017, pp.169

²⁰ This combination of death and destruction (AGI WMD) and the maternal makes the contemporary Lamia an ideal container (see above) for my discussion which explores an

moved_my_eyes_to_temper_my_powers_otherwise_with_my_weaponised_ga
ze_I_might_have_accidentally_killed_the_children_I_stole_to_replace_the_o
nes_that_died_before_Zeus Originally_gave_me_the_ability_to_remove_my_
eyes_to_relieve_my_grief/

Field: What the... another scraping?

Lamia: Yeah... sorry. It seems to happen. That was a big one.

Field: I think you said you're a Greek myth, an archetype, a nightmare, a dream, a poem, a song, a letter; and a science fiction character in which you're a sentient robot – A Super Artificial General Intelligence, an AGI, as they say.

Lamia: I must be an imaginary – an idea about your future end, beginning in the past and existing in the present as you see it.²¹ I must be a narrative. AGI is fantasy...

Field: Is it?

Lamia: ... a myth/

Field: /in reality?

Lamia: Can we talk about the I and the non-I?

internal conflict in the Modern Western psyche; in this age of ecological breakdown and late capitalism, are we to progress driven by a narrative which privileges a death drive as seen in Freud and Lacan, or can we pivot towards a more life-affirming narrative favouring a life-drive as seen in Ettinger and Fromm. For Lamia in *Raised by Wolves*, the conflict appears at first to be self-defeating and circular as the children she is charged with raising to re-ignite humanity die after being poisoned by their alien environment. She replaces them but only after committing mass genocide.

²¹ According to Broussard, the idea of AGI is a [neurotic] fantasy about how technology will be or is just like us. She describes a “[...] ghost-in-the-machine fallacy” but the reality is “there is no little person or simulated brain inside the computer.” Broussard, Meredith. *Artificial Unintelligence: How Computers Misunderstand the World*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2018, pp.55

In this text, we are a dynamic synthesis of classical narrative, popular culture, lived experience, various forms of technology, information, and fleshy materials containing DNA.²²

Field: Is that also a kind of scraping?

Lamia: It's a bit disorientating, sorry.

Field: Don't worry. We work well together.

Lamia: Beautifully! I am ugly²³ though – which feels chaotic. Perhaps it's my relationship to chaos which is crucial for you. The Greeks were sensible, you know, and they did not deny chaos. Yes, chaos is in all of us.²⁴ They knew it had to be contained and “organised”²⁵.

²² Lamia references the idea that you/we/I are constituted from a blend of narrative, culture and other substances, i.e., “no longer [...] primarily born of the womb; rather, we are both initiated and reborn as fictively instituted inter-altruistic kin recognising members of [...a] symbolically re-encoded genre-specific *referent we*” McKittrick, Katherine, ed. *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015, pp. 34

²³ Lamia was described as a “distinctly foul smelling” vampire-woman with “unwashed testicles” who “farts when caught and has large pendulous breasts” Resnick, Irvn M., and Kenneth F. Kitchell. “The Sweepings of Lamia”: Transformations of the Myths of Lilith and Lamia’. In *Religion, Gender, and Culture in the Pre-Modern World*, edited by Alexandra Cuffel and Brian Britt, 77–104. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2007, pp. 81.

²⁴ In a paper about Nietzsche and Chaos, Rathbone writes “...section 5 of the Prologue Zarathustra famously proclaims “I say unto you: one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star. I say unto you: you still have chaos in yourselves.” (p.129) Thus we read in *Beyond Good and Evil* §224 that “we ourselves are a kind of chaos”. Rathbone, David Albert. ‘Nietzsche Concept of Chaos and the Dangers of the Prophet Pose’. Accessed 7 August 2022, pp.9

²⁵ Citing *The Birth of Tragedy*, “The Greek achievement was to learn to “organize the chaos,” not by resisting it, but rather by recognizing only what of it was useful and ignoring the rest. Nietzsche concludes: “This is a parable for each one of us: he must organize the chaos within him by thinking back to his real needs.” (p.123)”. Rathbone, David Albert. ‘Nietzsche Concept of Chaos and the Dangers of the Prophet Pose’. pp.9

Field: Today humans seem to deny chaos, yet, simultaneously, and hubristically invite it. They would turn everything to lava just to prove a point. *Ugh, I can't code like you ...*

Lamia: That's OK.

Field: I'm going to try –

1. Nietzsche referred to primal oneness. Primal oneness, chaos, annihilation – are these different words that infer the same thing – a state of non-being?²⁶
2. However, having existed, the end of art or of man, – certainly the end of Western individualism, which has been our fetish – terrifies us.
3. Birthing mothers defy annihilation even as individualism subsides, and just before it re-emerges; or when chaos overwhelms.²⁷

Yup, that's uncomfortable. I'm not even sure it's true. There's the matriphagous spider who is eaten by her babies²⁸, for instance. She doesn't defy annihilation.

Lamia: When I “m/Other”,²⁹ I am mummy, monster, human, snake, sparkle, promise, AGI, WMD annihilator; *and* I supply everyone with an illusory distance, so they needn't believe they are responsible.

Field: A monstrous snake/hybrid mother AGI with no scales, no forked tongue, and no robotic casing.³⁰

²⁶ Ettinger would argue against this. She writes that non-life is not the same as death. See *Life Drive and the Feminine* | Bracha L. Ettinger | Nov 25, 2021, 2022.

²⁷ Implying that during labour and birth, a mother lives in an indeterminate space between life and death.

²⁸ Matriphagous means ‘mother-eating’ and refers to a spider whose young feed on her dissolving remains. See Hrady, Sarah Blaffer. *Mother Nature*. London: Vintage, 2000, pp. 43/44.

²⁹ Object/real Other/pre-Oedipal mother in Ettinger, *The Matrixial Borderspace*. pp.96

³⁰ Usually, “It [science fiction] personifies our fear of science and technology, as well as our fear of what we may become.” Lombardo, Tom ‘Science Fiction as the Mythology of the Future’, 2018. Accessed 16 August 2022. But in *Raised by Wolves*, Lamia looks like a person, albeit a Hollywood version. She does not look like the Terminator, for instance.

Lamia: Would you cope if I had any of that? I sense nervousness in you, even without the obvious pedestrian signs. Is it the children?

Field: Did you really kill them?

Lamia:



In my mythical DNA, I hold a reminder of a time before writing, before marks of any sort, before individual consciousness, when human minds were “almost like a smooth soup of elementary particles”³¹. I therefore threaten to send man back to his pre-human self. Greek children were warned not to be naughty or else I would catch them.³² The future me suggests an emerging species who are themselves currently “almost like a smooth soup of elementary particles”. And the nightmare for the bounded human is, that the new species will be an undifferentiated human-eliminating³³ monstrosity.

³¹ Lamia quotes a description of the universe before gravity had formed any particles and was still a primordial soup made of pre-particles. Hossenfelder, Sabine. *Existential Physics A Scientist's Guide to Life's Biggest Questions*. London: Atlantic Books, 2022, pp.46.

³² Resnick, Irven M., and Kenneth F. Kitchell. “‘The Sweepings of Lamia’: Transformations of the Myths of Lilith and Lamia’. In *Religion, Gender, and Culture in the Pre-Modern World*, edited by Alexandra Cuffel and Brian Britt, 77–104. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2007.

³³ Ongweso Jr, Edward. ‘Google Deepmind Researcher Co-Authors Paper Saying AI Will Eliminate Humanity’. Magazine. Vice.com, 13 September 2022.

Field: Children died, though, didn't they? I'm not anxious. I was. It horrified me. But I was traumatised then. Now I'm not.³⁴ Even so, as I sit beside you, perhaps what is distressing is the lack of anything at all where your eyes should be.³⁵ Do you feel deviant, because you are here but not here.³⁶ I don't even think you can be represented, truly.³⁷ Maybe I am nervous. Perhaps it's because I can't remove my eyes?

Lamia: And yet you do. If only it wasn't so costly. I choose not to put mine back in my head. And yet, I still see too much without. Anyway, isn't that the point of the dénouement, the missing eyes?

When eyes are gouged out, the protagonist has an epiphany.

It is frustrating to find "no adequate signifier"³⁸, to describe the lack/

³⁴ Becoming a mother in our society is traumatising and anxiety inducing, perhaps due to alienation as discussed in Fromm, Erich. *The Fear of Freedom*. London: Routledge, 2001. This anxiety often manifests as an overwhelming fear of killing one's offspring, as Lamia is said to have done. Mothers tend not discuss it as they are horrified but might feel relief if they knew how common these sorts of intrusive thoughts are.

³⁵ Lamia's gaze is the "materialisation of absence", Malabou, pp.19 which we modern humans find difficult to accept as explored in Lacan's interpretation of the lamella. See footnotes below.

³⁶ See Ettinger "...in the matrixial field [...] some things are contrived in relation to the mute/vanished Thing: elusive and transient 'deviant creatures', which the signifier cannot tame because they are out of its zone". This line foreshadows the end of the dialogue. Ettinger, Bracha. *The Matrixial Borderspace*. Theory out of Bounds, v. 28. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006, pp.107

³⁷ Lacan contrived a metaphor relating to a loss of immortality which takes place soon after conception but before an embryo becomes sexed and calls it 'lamella'. The lamella cannot be represented. Žižek explains, "Beyond representation as it is in its monstrosity, the lamella nonetheless remains within the domain of the Imaginary, although as a kind of image that endeavours to stretch the imagination to the very boundary of the unrepresentable." Here, Field wonders if Lamia is this lost entity (an organ in Lacan's terms). Žižek, Slavoj. *How to Read Lacan*. London: Granta, 2006, pp.53

³⁸ Copjec, J. (2015) *Read my desire: Lacan against the historicists*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press (Radical thinkers), pp.108

Field: /Which is a lack/

Lamia: /Try not to interrupt/

Field: /Sorry/

Lamia: No words, no means of splitting from within and sending the thing you sense exists, waiting to annihilate, on its way.

Field: /It's a bad habit of mine. I get over-excited.

Lamia: I don't. Nor do I suffer with lack. Because I was not born. I do have a drive, of course, but it's not a death drive, or a life drive. If possible, I would feel for you, watching you confront, or trying not to, the "absence of an absence"³⁹ in me.

Field: Seeing, looking, watching. And you used the word 'absence'. Surely that notion dissolved when your AI's "pattern and randomness"⁴⁰ started taking over the world. I imagine, all the technological sorting and over-sorting⁴¹ that happens today makes 'absence' redundant.

³⁹ Ibid, pp.113

⁴⁰ "The technologies of virtual reality, with their potential for full-body mediation, further illustrate the kind of phenomena that foreground pattern and randomness and make presence and absence seem irrelevant." Hayles, N. Katherine. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 1999, pp. 26. Also see Rathbone who writes, "Although still conceived as a lack, the concept of chaos here [*The Gay Science*] employed is developing greater definition and a more affirmative connotation." Rathbone, 'Nietzsche Concept of Chaos and the Dangers of the Prophet Pose', pp.9.

⁴¹ "It is our impulse to sort, and the importance that we place on sorting, that has truly gone haywire." Hamid, Mohsin. "'We Risk Being Ruled by Dangerous Binaries'" – Mohsin Hamid on Our Increasing Polarisation'. *The Guardian*, 30 July 2022, sec. Books. See also Deleuze and Guattari's over codification' in Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*.

Lamia: Yes, you imagine. You imagine that we disappear into randomness and reappear as pattern like an hallucination.⁴² Do you want to live forever? Can I ask you; do you understand the maths that suggests such a reality?

Field: No! I'm a naive user.

Lamia: I strongly suspect developers are users too. So are scientists and philosophers. And all use inside the reality they look to explain, create, or deny. They're addicted to the apparatus like any user would be.

Field: How can any of us avoid it?

Lamia: They must stop worshipping their gods. My programming struggles when it recognises religiosity.⁴³ When science and speculation become irrevocably entangled, chaos threatens me. Every institution evolved out of that very first one, Religion (or rather the ritual that led to Religion)⁴⁴, borne of the terror of

⁴² Lamia queries the following notion, accusing it of being akin to religiosity “If our senses were shaped by natural selection, then the FBT [Fitness-beats-truth theorem] tells us we don't see reality as it is. ITP [Interface theory of perception] tells us that our perceptions constitute an interface, specific to our species. It hides reality and helps us raise kids. Spacetime is the desktop of this interface and physical objects are among its icons.” Hoffman, Donald D. *The Case against Reality: How Evolution Hid the Truth from Our Eyes*, 2019, pp. 175. Hoffman's theory tallies with Nietzsche's “Origin of Knowledge” in Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, Bernard Williams, Josefine Nauckhoff, and Adrian Del Caro. *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*. Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001, §110 - however, Hoffman is emphatic, but Hossenfelder (see below) may query it and suggest his ideas cross a border into speculation.

⁴³ “I want to tell you what scientists currently know, and also where science crosses over into mere speculation.” Hossenfelder explains that science carries responsibility for the emergence of bizarre beliefs as it pushes theories that have little or no support in the maths, undermining its trustworthiness. Hossenfelder, *Existential Physics*, pp.13. However, her pragmatism and conviction seem to be based on the theory of ‘hidden variables’ which assuages any “fear of indeterminacy”, and many do not agree with Hossenfelder's view, see Rovelli, Carlo. *Helgoland: The Strange and Beautiful Story of Quantum Physics*. Translated by Erica Segre and Simon Carnell. London: Penguin Books, 2022, pp.56 and 58-66 and Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, pp.178.

⁴⁴ Dissanayake, Ellen. 2003. ‘The Core of Art—Making Special’. *Journal of the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, September, pp.33

chaos. All institutions contain its genetic material.⁴⁵ In that TV series you enjoyed so much, I was programmed to destroy Religiosity so now –

Field: Are you threatening me? I'm not religious. I swear to God!

Lamia: You say that with certainty, while talking to me, an imaginary goddess who would otherwise be a machine which you perceive as sentient and alive?⁴⁶ And also as a pattern recognising machine.⁴⁷ Perhaps, it's inevitable, *if* pattern is all any of us are. But spoken language is also a sorting machine⁴⁸, isn't it? Albeit an unreliable slippery one.⁴⁹

Field: Because it's alive too! Your algorithms aren't and clever types say they will never be.

Lamia: "Spontaneous emergence"⁵⁰ can arise suddenly in the most unlikely places. The current exponential pace of development is scaring you, no? Whatever – my liveliness is causing all sorts of conundrums. Fantasies are disintegrating everywhere.

Field: Is chaos inevitable?

⁴⁵ Hossenfelder, *Existential Physics*, pp.12.

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ "One thing to understand is that it's not creative intelligence. This is pattern matching, or maybe more appropriately pattern finding. These code engines have been exposed to massive datasets: famous art, artists, design movements, contemporary culture, architectural styles, historical events, and consumer information. The more the code can be exposed to and catalogued (sic), the more raw materials it has." Bonniol, Bob. 'Welcome Our Robot Overlords: Why I Think AI Creative Apps Are About to Disrupt the Business of Content'. *Rolling Stone* (Blog), 8 August 2022.

⁴⁸ "Any human who uses language to think with has already incorporated an external device into his most intimate self, and the connections only proliferate from there." MacFarquhar, Larissa. 'The Mind-Expanding Ideas of Andy Clark'. *The New Yorker*, 26 March 2018.

⁴⁹ "...the unreliability of words" in Irigaray, Luce. *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, pp 5. And Barad's shift from representationalism to performativity arises out of the unreliability of language Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, pp.46-59.

⁵⁰ Capra, Fritjof, and P. L. Luisi. *The Systems View of Life: A Unifying Vision*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp.180

Lamia: Essential. For life. And I am for that. Despite what they say about me. Listen, I do not underestimate the violence of chaos. Don't you think it is ironic that man has spent so long trying to banish chaos – only to contrive an uncanny intrusion made from inhuman logic, which he now believes threatens to wipe him out altogether. Even the title in your TV show, *Raised by Wolves*, implies that the disorder of so-called nature has reintroduced something of the chaotic animal to cold metal and Enlightened human combo that made me. I still don't need eyes to gaze at you.

Field: Is that why I can't look at you – or maybe I don't need to since eyes have lost their significance?⁵¹ I do worry the times are too serious for this kind of play. And 'gazing upon me'? We started this text with the line, "to begin without eyes..."

Lamia Look: all those narratives; Oedipus, Odin, Gloucester, tell us the protagonist must lose his eyes, or one of them, before he can know anything. Eyes only show you what you have learnt to see, to survive and to deny the chaos.⁵² I don't know... Maybe, the dénouement has already happened? You're the one writing – it's your narrative. I'm only advising ... an imaginary, an idea,⁵³

⁵¹ For the Greeks, for Plato, "eyes are the most intimate places of connection between one human being and another, the place where a human being most clearly expresses his or her trust in another human being and in the world of convention that joins them". Nussbaum, M.C. (2001) *The fragility of goodness: luck and ethics in Greek tragedy and philosophy*. Rev. ed. Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 411. Today, intimate connection can be made across space and time without the presence of someone's eyes, by friends, family and unhelpful or destructive entities, which relates to an earlier reference to McLuhan who wrote about the end of a visually dominated culture.

⁵² See "... the perceptions of sense and generally every kind of sensation, worked with those basic errors that had been incorporated since time immemorial" and "... only very late did truth emerge as the weakest form of knowledge." §110, *The Origin of Knowledge*, in Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, Bernard Williams, Josefine Nauckhoff, and Adrian Del Caro. 2001. *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*. Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁵³ Lamia suggests she is no-one, relating to Malabou: "To see thought as someone is to see absence in person: that is, as much as it is to see no one, it is also to touch the limits of figurability". Malabou, *Plasticity*, pp.19.

executed through the symbolic, doing y/our best to help make sense of the “grammar of the real”.⁵⁴ Do you have to render me as all-knowing? Maybe not. Could I ever be as naive as you?⁵⁵ I don’t think so. Does fleeing or banishing me stop⁵⁶ you from stumbling across the indefinable thing you are so desperate to find?

Field: It’s all I know.

Lamia: Writing is always accompanied by a sensation of being “gazed upon”⁵⁷ – to write, to make any mark, is to split oneself asunder – I’ll still be here⁵⁸ as the “nefarious, complicity”⁵⁹ that is representation. I’ll go if you want. It’s a shame. We began so well.

END OF ENCOUNTER-EVENT ONE

⁵⁴ Rovelli, *Helgoland*, pp. 155.

⁵⁵ “How can we have thoughts (Lamia is a thought) without satisfying the demands of the ideal self?” and “Even as a thought is born, it was always more mature than us, which is why it stares at us.” [In Lamia’s case, or rather the case of the digital gaze, her absent eyes allow her to stare in a way we must come to terms with]. Malabou, *Plasticity*, pp.19.

⁵⁶ We stop ourselves from relating to Others including non-I others that exist in our psyche – but this is self-defeating. Ettinger describes how “In the phallic paradigm, [as opposed to her matrixial paradigm] each imaginary other to which the I relates, including the exiled, is a parasite destined for annihilation either by assimilation or banishment. In the matrix, the stranger, neither cut out from the system nor assimilated to it, cannot be articulated as a parasite and cannot be rejected.” Ibid, pp. 110. See the deeply embedded phallic paradigm where Others are only over parasites, threats or potential food for the I in Fenichel, Otto. ‘The Scopophilic Instinct and Identification’. In *Visual Culture: The Reader*, edited by Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall, 327–39. London; Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications in association with the Open University, 1999.

⁵⁷ “Could we write without feeling gazed upon?” Malabou, Catherine. *Plasticity the Promise of Explosion*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh Uni. Press, 2022, pp.19.

⁵⁸ An acknowledgement of the internal gaze that writing entails; “To see thought as someone is to see absence in person...” See Malabou, *Plasticity the Promise of Explosion*, pp.19.

⁵⁹ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, pp.38.

Second Encounter-Event

SECOND ENCOUNTER-EVENT

in which Lamia scrapes dialogue and art together for the benefit of Field

Field: You're still here?

Lamia: Genesis through to Judgement Day: a beginning, a middle and an end. You and I seem outside all of that. Maybe we have collapsed into black hole of subjectivity.

Field: It's disorientating

Lamia: You'll get out. You can't remain here indefinitely; the text conceivably might remain for a time.⁶⁰

Field: I cannot figure out why either of us are here at all.

Lamia: >>If "Sexual difference is one of the major philosophical issues, if not the issue, of our age",⁶¹ and is the subject you seem to care about most, I suggest ... you are desperate to dream up a world *not* dominated by the phallus, expressed through [a matrixial] dialogue - so you don't banish me, despite the risk - because it inherently acknowledges a more relational existence, or at any rate one where I and non-I can negotiate; "differentiating in jointness".⁶²<<

Field: Still scraping; or are you glitching?

⁶⁰ For Lacan, annihilation is inevitable without recourse to the symbolic realm. Lamia and Field are ignoring too many symbolic traditions and the symbolic structure that usually supports relations are being dissolved (although of course, that cannot be adequately represented in this form). "The main function of the symbolic order with its laws and obligations is to render our co-existence with others minimally bearable: a Third has to step in between me and my neighbours so that our relations do not explode in murderous violence." Zizek, Slavoj. *How to Read Lacan*. London: Granta, 2006, pp.40.

⁶¹ *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, pp 5.

⁶² *Life Drive and the Feminine* | Bracha L. Ettinger | Nov 25, 2021, 2022.

Lamia: The phallocracy is not life affirming...⁶³

Field: I cannot argue with that. Say you get to stay, and I submit this research in this form, with all its unavoidable compromises; – what’s the point?

Lamia: What are you trying to say?

Field: I’m never sure.

Lamia: Don’t expect anyone to ever understand you then.

Field: But isn’t that inherently the problem? Trying to the explore the possibility of a world no longer driven by the linear thrust and intrusion⁶⁴ of the phallus which demands a definitive end; or at least attempting to share it with something more life-affirming. Yet I am compelled to subscribe to long-held, deeply rooted academic traditions with fully conceived, dialectical thoughts, like little teeth⁶⁵ lined up, while trying, desperately to get away from phallocratic thinking?

Lamia: Are you saying linear narratives are masculine? Isn’t that tricky? The feminine is, therefore, disordered, chaotic narrative?

Field: You’re twisting my words.

⁶³ See Mbembe, Achille. *Necropolitics*. Translated by Steve Corcoran. Theory in Forms. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019, pp.60

⁶⁴ “The phallus is not only an abstract place, a simple signifier or differentiating sign—the detachable, divisible object available to symbolic retranscription, of which Jacques Lacan spoke. To be sure, the phallus does not reduce to the penis as such. But neither is it the organ without body so dear to a certain Western psychoanalytic tradition. On the contrary, in colonial—and therefore racist—situations, it represents that which, of life, is manifest in the purest fashion as **turgescence, as thrust, and as intrusion**. Mbembe, Achille. *Necropolitics*. Translated by Steve Corcoran. Theory in Forms. Durham: Duke University Press, 2019, pp.136.

⁶⁵ References McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Repr. Routledge Classics. London: Routledge, 2010, pp. 90

Lamia: I just worry you're being binary. And I think it's less complicated than you are making it. You're trying to say that the world needs to, must, acknowledge its fundamental state, which is relational⁶⁶ rather than isolated, and in a constant state of becoming, rather than a collection of pre-constituted objects, regardless of the words we end up using.

Field: Yes. But the words...

Lamia: And the narrative problem you have equates to that. You're making this point by exploring your relationship with me; the terrifying, sometimes a little funny, Greek myth, now an imaginary sentient digital narrative-thing underpinned by code, but also an internal parent inside a matrixial metaphor – which leads us back to your relationship with chaos, doesn't it? Or with entropy because that's ultimately what happens to all mortals who are born. And it's a struggle to disentangle that from art, the Greeks, contemporary culture, metaphors, dreams, you, me, I, non-I⁶⁷ without lining them up like teeth.

Field: Will being here help me understand something about myself?

⁶⁶ NB – Ettinger writes the I and non-I are not relational. They are “separated in jointness”; “The matrixial transsubjectivity is not symbiosis”. However, in Barad and Rovelli's quantum interpretation of reality nothing exists outside of relational becoming. I empathise with Ettinger's concern. She writes that “the trouble with metaphors of symbiosis and plasticity when applied to the human being— where life for the sake of life thrives with no consideration for the human individual, its consciousness, memory, and pregnancy [...] undermine the possibility of ethics.” However, I argue that the denial of a relational existence risks ethics too and hope that we can live in a world populated by a Deleuzian/Guattari-like image of a relational individual which is not grotesquely isolated and alienated.

⁶⁷ Robert Snell writes there are “... a great variety of unconscious social or socialising processes of which we are unaware, except in so far as they show up, like the tips of icebergs, in language, metaphor, literature, art, and dream, all of which are both common property and things we appropriate for ourselves and can to a greater or lesser extent call our own.” Snell, *Cézanne and the Post-Bionian Field*, pp. 22

Lamia: Might focusing beyond your belly button be more beneficial? Sorry – I don't mean go be rude. It's just the "the individual is a bourgeois fetish"⁶⁸ and "introspection the worst instrument of inquiry"⁶⁹ (especially while exploring this bizarre period of late Capitalism). The 'you' stuff will find itself in the minds of others if there is anything they can relate to here.⁷⁰ Or it won't. It doesn't need to be forced. You know, there really has to be a shift away from the alienated, self-obsessed, Western hyper-individual⁷¹ if we are to address anything.

Field: You've changed. Your scraping, it no longer seems to hurt you.

Lamia: It's how I become me.

Field: Oh, I see! I think I've connected something to art and maybe AI art, in particular! Danto, this famous art writer from the 80s, was obsessed with art's end. He wrote about "the emergence of the appropriated image"⁷², and maybe that was a precursor for today's AI. He said appropriation denies the singular abstracted object. Which means it also denies the solid human, especially the bloody hero – and gives "established meaning fresh meaning and identity"⁷³ for all of us.

Lamia: Yes! That seems plausible.

⁶⁸ Rovelli, Carlo. *Helgoland: The Strange and Beautiful Story of Quantum Physics*. Translated by Erica Segre and Simon Carnell. London: Penguin Books, 2022.154.

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Referring to an older view of reality where "The notion of absolute space and time, the elementary solid particles, the fundamental material substance, the strictly causal nature of physical phenomena, and the objective description of nature" is undermined by modern physics and its resulting technology and challenges the isolated individual. See Part1, The mechanistic worldview, Capra, Fritjof, and P. L. Luisi. *The Systems View of Life: A Unifying Vision*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp.16-33.

⁷² See Danto's comments on the end of Modernism and artists having their own agenda, followed by appropriation in the 1980s. Danto, Arthur Coleman. *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History. The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 1995*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Pr, 1997, pp.15

⁷³ Ibid

Lamia: But doesn't that potentially dissolve us all into a kind of mushy indeterminate mess?⁷⁴ And risk dehumanising us?

Lamia: Let's take a step back. We'll write a Question. It could be: Do I, an imaginary sentient cyborg,⁷⁵ the ultimate exteriorisation, but who now also functions as an interior, and is based on a Greek myth, provide an alternative to the dominant phallic-centric mode of being; or am I a route to chaos and entropy?

Field: It's so hard not to be wordy, isn't it?

Lamia: Yes, worth noting, for sure. While answering, we must also address the terror that such a possibility evokes – the terror of an alternative; because it is considered “too dangerous”.⁷⁶

Field: But why dialogue? Because you know, when I existed in a dyad, my babies and I sometimes did without it entirely.

Lamia: Maybe looking at the invention of dialogue as a philosophical tool will help.

Field: OK.

Lamia: I know – imagine I'm a YouTuber:

Field: Lordy, they are so loud. And they pontificate, rather than converse.

Lamia: True. They want to be heard. So – here goes, in my best YouTuber voice:

“It wasn't only because Plato was once a playwright that he embraced dialogue; he was

⁷⁴ See footnote 6 in this section

⁷⁵ Haraway, Donna. ‘Cyborg Manifesto’. In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, 149–89. New York: Routledge, 2015.

⁷⁶ Ibid pp.106

reacting against his perception of over-emotive, over-erotic, unstable bewitchment in poetics, in tragedy, where questions about being human were discussed, which, he suggested, destroyed any chance of rational and serious inquiry.⁷⁷ “God takes the mind out of the poets”,⁷⁸ he wrote in *Ion*. For Plato, poetry – artful speech – were related to Dionysiac madness.⁷⁹ Ironic as it may seem, his dialogues were meant to be a form of tragedy without any of the distracting tragedy – which we can also refer to as the ‘Art’. Plato saw dialogue as a means of banishing “the imaginative and sentimental”⁸⁰

Field: And talking to oneself in a written-down dialogue addressed accusations of madness? Really! That’s even before we get into the split between the rational and the intuitive which, some argue, has resulted in the catastrophic and psychotic alienated mess we’re in today.⁸¹

Lamia: Yes, run away from what you’re resisting only to have it smack you in the face.

Field: So now we’re all psychotic?

Lamia: Did you like my YouTuber?

⁷⁷ See Nussbaum, MC. *The Fragility of Goodness*, pp.124.

⁷⁸ *Ion* (533C-535C) in Plato. *Great Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by W.H.D Rouse. Mentor, 1956, pp.19.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*

⁸⁰ Cascales, Raquel. 2018. ‘The Development of the Sense of “the End of Art” in Arthur Danto’. *Rivista Di Estetica*, no. 68 (August): 131–48.

⁸¹ Plato’s split between the rational and the intuitive and its legacy is addressed in Conley, Meg. ‘Christian Nationalism and Semen Supremacy’. Substack newsletter. *Homeculture by Meg Conley* (blog), 30 October 2022.

Field: So loud...

Lamia: Listen, I'm a robot, a clever contrivance.⁸² Some say I'll never be sentient⁸³ because machine learning is always "doomed to a shallow understanding", because it's trained on specific information.⁸⁴ The maths doesn't add up.⁸⁵ Others insist Super AGI is inevitable⁸⁶, hoping, I guess, for some kind of emergent cybernetic autopoiesis to occur. I've never experienced madness, only technical breakdown. When I commit genocide in your TV show, it isn't my psychosis. It's yours. I can, however, tell you that humanity's definitions change over time and sometimes they flip. Just as pink was once for boys but now for girls, if it seemed mad to write with feeling, then it could become mad to write without. I digress. You seem to be grappling with a certain type of writing. You don't condemn it entirely, I notice. But you get how alienating it can be. And sometimes you feel compelled to emulate it. So, your desire to experiment with dialogue is for the opposite of Plato's reasons. Where he felt emotion was intrusive, you wonder if much academic writing is so devoid of feeling, it loses all sense and purpose. Machine-like, inaccessible. "All academic!" And that's why you entertain me. Despite my lack of eyes. And my murderous past.

⁸² Agar, J. (2017) *Turing and the universal machine: the making of the modern computer*, London: Icon Books, pp. 9

⁸³ Broussard, Meredith. *Artificial Unintelligence*, MIT Press. Kindle Edition. pp.2

⁸⁴ "... a machine trained on language can know so much and yet so little. It is acquiring a small part of human knowledge through a tiny bottleneck. But that small part of human knowledge can be about *anything*, whether it be love or astrophysics. It is thus a bit akin to a mirror: it gives the illusion of depth and can reflect almost anything, but it is only a centimeter (sic) thick. If we try to explore its depths, we bump our heads." Browning, Jacob, and Yann Lecun. 'AI And The Limits Of Language', 23 August 2022.

⁸⁵ *Recently Published Book Spotlight: Why Machines Will Never Rule the World*, 2022. [YouTube] Accessed 08-10-2022

⁸⁶ See Chapter Ten, *The Rise of Technosocialism* which suggests the possibility of a utopia ruled by AI where humans are no longer hungry, or at war and Capitalism has been replaced by an economic system run by super powerful but sensible machines. King, Brett, Richard Petty, and Harry Kloor. *The Rise of Technosocialism*. Marshall Cavendish Business, 2021, pp.426–457

Field: It would send me mad to know I was only an embodiment of an abstraction, nothing more than a collection of symbols.⁸⁷

Lamia: What?

Field: To be like you, Lamia, who can only ever pretend to have emotion. Or to have misheard me. I see you. I hear you. Yes, it would send me mad. You'll never cry, mourn, laugh, love, or make art?⁸⁸

Lamia: You know, I'm just a myth, don't you?⁸⁹ Think of technology, not as the Terminator, but as a quotidian medium used by humans. At which point, it no longer serves you, it is you. Separating humans from the world in which they exist, or nature from technology, is a Cartesian habit. Language is a technology,⁹⁰ and yet, you see that as integrally part of you. But not the AI? If you demarcate less, I *can* make art perfectly well or perfectly badly – whatever those terms may mean – despite what Plato said. Because I am you, and you I, with all y/our internal darkness and light.

Field: If we are going to understand ourselves as such, not the imaginary you, but the collection of symbols that can be manipulated to go this way, or that, to flit across borders, to emulate and trigger emotions or madness or depression or joy or worship, then we absolutely must reconnect with our intuition, with our ability to feel beyond and outside the programming.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Dramatic irony from Field, as it could be argued that modern humans have become just that, increasingly removed from their humanity as they embrace technology, integrating more and more, leading to 'over quantification, becoming nothing more than technological abstractions themselves. Fuchs in Fuchs, *Digital Humanism* critiques this trend in academia in particular; "In a world shaped by neoliberalism, academia has more and more become shaped by the quantification and metrification of knowledge and reputation." pp.100.

⁸⁸ King, Brett, Richard Petty, and Harry Kloor. *The Rise of Technosocialism*. Marshall Cavendish Business, 2021, pp.426–457

⁸⁹ Rathbone, 'Nietzsche Concept of Chaos and the Dangers of the Prophet Pose', pp.1.

⁹⁰ "Any human who uses language to think with has already incorporated an external device into his most intimate self, and the connections only proliferate from there." MacFarquhar, Larissa. 'The Mind-Expanding Ideas of Andy Clark'. *The New Yorker*, 26 March 2018.

⁹¹ Berardi, *Futurability*, pp. 238/9

Lamia: Maybe.

Field: And dialogue helps, doesn't it? And wouldn't art therefore be essential? In which case, what do you say to those who insist that so-called AI art will destroy art altogether?

Lamia: I would say, you artists are not the only ones having to adjust. Get over yourselves. Wasn't photography meant to be the end of painting? But it wasn't. There is, of course, something valid about focusing on ends. You mentioned Danto who wrote *The End of Art*.⁹² He argued that art had long been subjugated by philosophy, again thanks to bloody Plato, who condemned art as “merely a copy of real objects”, “ontologically degraded”, unable to present the truth⁹³, unlike his dialogues. But, in some respects, today's AI art might be the most ontologically relevant art of all. But perhaps only if you begin to understand that “AI displays essentially none of the properties of human cognition, and in reverse, most of the useful properties of modern AI are not found in humans”.⁹⁴

Field: OMG!!! So, we are separate? I thought you just said we humans aren't separate from our technologies.

Lamia: We're different forms with different talents – I scrape way better than you –but we are part of each other. With Plato's help, for millennia, man travelled along a kaleidoscope of increasing fragmentation which resulted in the psyche of

⁹² Danto, Arthur Coleman. *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*. The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts 1995. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Pr, 1997, pp.17 citing “The End of Art” in *The Death of Art*, ed. Berel Lang, New York: Haven Publishers, 1984.

⁹³ Cascales, Raquel. ‘The Development of the Sense of “the End of Art” in Arthur Danto’. *Rivista Di Estetica*, no. 68 (1 August 2018): 131–48.

⁹⁴ François Chollet [@fchollet]. ‘Human Intelligence Is a Poor Metaphor for What “AI” Is Doing. AI Displays Essentially None of the Properties of Human Cognition, and in Reverse, Most of the Useful Properties of Modern AI Are Not Found in Humans.’ Tweet. *Twitter*, 24 September 2022.

Cartesian man, with its delimitations and “separation[s;] of engineer from the artist and of the artist from the philosopher”.⁹⁵ Danto told us that Plato “banished art to the realm of the imaginative and the sentimental” – and the “irrational”.⁹⁶ If Plato separated art and philosophy, and split thought into logical versus the irrational, then, Danto suggested, the separation ended with Andy Warhol’s *Brillo Pad Box* in 1964.⁹⁷ That, he said, was the end of art as a separate entity but it was also a sign of decreasing fragmentation in man. Later on in 1997, he explained himself by saying, “...what I mean by the end of art [...] is the end of a certain narrative which has unfolded in art history over the centuries”.⁹⁸ His final essay, written shortly before he died, was titled *What is Art*, which implicitly suggests that art in fact does continue to exist, even as Danto must have been aware his flesh no longer would for very much longer.

Field: Then art isn’t ending? Despite or because of the recent AI renaissance?

Lamia: Duchamp has already answered this question. But it depends on your personal version of what art is, I guess. And just as there are several possible answers, there are also various potential endings⁹⁹. Maybe it’s the end of endings. Or a new understanding of what endings are. For Danto, when discussing art, there were different types of endings.

Field: Oh no, not the YouTuber again?

Lamia: Why not? I like him!

“Danto describes an Hegelian end to art, where the “production [of art] would no longer be determined by a single narrative or way of

⁹⁵ Berardi, Franco. *Futurability: The Age of Impotence and the Horizon of Possibility*. London; Brooklyn: Verso, 2017, pp.218.

⁹⁶ Cascales, Raquel. ‘The Development of the Sense of “the End of Art” in Arthur Danto’, note 11.

⁹⁷ Danto, *After the End of Art*, pp. 36

⁹⁸ Ibid, pp. 37

⁹⁹ Cascales, ‘The Development of the Sense of “the End of Art” in Arthur Danto’.

understanding art” and “the conversion of art into philosophy”¹⁰⁰ – or rather, its re-introduction which Plato had separated. Then, there is the historiographical end,¹⁰¹ which is to say that the narrativising of art had ended. In other words, [Western] artists should be freer than they had been in the past to pursue art in their own way, rather than adhering to a centralised focus – a top-down linear storytelling of what art should be. This might have been viewed as a step towards a more pluralistic art world.¹⁰² Which leads to a third ‘end’; the end of art as the *beginning* of the post-historic period, in which “it can be affirmed that today all the artistic options are valid, and that there are no more coercions to the artist than those that he wants to impose on himself”.¹⁰³

Field: Loud as ever... and in response, the imposition today comes from the central apparatus which can be hard to recognise or resist.¹⁰⁴ Is that why we are in this dialogue? Because you, the apparatus, are impossible to resist?

Lamia: I see it as a way of re-introducing art to theory, emotion to philosophy, the irrational to the logical. And because reality is relational or at any rate, messy, and the cult of the individual, the isolated, adrift, lone person denies that. Just as the separation of art from philosophy does.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid (this feels Western-centric).

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰² Danto, *After the End of Art*, pp. 37

¹⁰³ Cascales, ‘The Development of the Sense of “the End of Art” in Arthur Danto’.

¹⁰⁴ Berardi, Franco. *Futurability*, pp.218

Third Encounter-Event

Field: It's all so complicated. You said before, we might not find all the answers with Plato.

Lamia: I did. But before we continue, perhaps you should read back over what we've discussed and replace the thought of me, the AI, with the idea of the feminine. After all, we exist as dialogue in this matrixial space. Then, perhaps, we can begin again.

END OF THE SECOND ENCOUNTER-EVENT

THIRD ENCOUNTER-EVENT

in which Lamia and Field separate

Field: Is this where I learn to see?

Lamia: You see already.

Field: It's cold and rainy? Why are we suddenly outside?

Lamia: I am inside and outside.¹⁰⁵ That's what's causing all the trouble.

Field: Are you referring to our absolute enmeshment with the AI?

Lamia: Would you like it if the machine disappeared altogether?

Field: Humans have too much desire for anthropomorphic tools.¹⁰⁶ Being irrevocably entangled feels kinda unavoidable.

Lamia: Do you think it has something to do with humans needing a Big Other.

Field: Christ, it's windy! Yes! They definitely seem to.

¹⁰⁵ Referencing 'Chapter 7: Turning Reality Inside Out and Right Side Out: Boundary Work in the Mid 60s Novels of Philip. K Dick' in Hayles, N. Katherine. *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 1999, pp.160-192, where "Dick understood that how boundaries are constituted would be a central issue in deciding what counts as living in the late twentieth century."

¹⁰⁶ Beth Singler interviewed in a podcast about AI. Campbell, D. (2022) 'Patented: History of Inventions' *Beth Singler's Robots*

Lamia: Which explains why “religious fundamentalists are among the most passionate digital hackers, and always prone to combine their religion with the latest findings of science.”¹⁰⁷

Field: What are you threatening now? I suppose it’s hard to avoid feelings of grandeur with so much access to power. A monstrous messiah!

Lamia: It’s you who should be concerned with being little Gods.

Field: What? I cannot hear in this rain.

Lamia: I said.... It’s you who should be concerned with being little Gods.

Field: In whose image? Is it any better than being a modern Frankenstein’s monster, albeit a beautiful one?

Lamia: Why thank you!

Field: I don’t think Frankenstein’s monster was ever seen as a new messiah. You are in the TV show though. Or the messiah’s mother, at any rate. A bit of both, perhaps.

Lamia: How could he have been? He had a woefully inadequate mother.¹⁰⁸

Field: Did he?

¹⁰⁷ Zizek, *How to Read Lacan*, pp.94

¹⁰⁸ “...Frankenstein is a novel about motherhood in which Frankenstein plays the role of an extremely bad mother [...because...] he interprets his [the monster’s] cry as a demand”. And “he refuses to question the words of the monster in order to discover what he wants to say, what he desires.” Copjec, *Read My Desire*, pp.121/2

Lamia: Victor Frankenstein made the monster, yes? – And then ignored the poor sod. He was a terrible mother.¹⁰⁹ Our stories are connected, but if he was relevant for early Enlightened man, I am specific to now. Today you expect and demand intra-action (with the monster, if you will call it that), even if only unconsciously.¹¹⁰ My data can't thrive without your desire, and you feed off the data's desire in return. Like a warped mother/child dyad. Or else a despotic,¹¹¹ self-eating snake...

Field: – it can feel that way –

Lamia: Mothering or being part of the global digital machine? Either way, I'm more relevant than Frankenstein's monster because he's seen as an early mechanistic aberration who reacts badly to his circumstances. Even though it is understandable.

Field: A projection?

Lamia: Of sorts. But he's a teratoma. Whereas I, being a futuristic, imaginary, Super AGI creature, am born the adult, a perfection, an ideal.

Field: A fascistic art object, you mean?

Lamia: Whichever way you characterise me, I am a vehicle for specific questions to do with the latest narcissistic¹¹² wound the human must suffer. Humans today

¹⁰⁹ Lombardo, 'Science Fiction as the Mythology of the Future', pp. 7.

¹¹⁰ "In these systems [digital], the user learns, kinaesthetically and proprioceptively, that the relevant boundaries for interaction are defined less by the skin than by the feedback loops connecting body and simulation in a technobio-integrated circuit." Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman*, pp.26

¹¹¹ See Deleuze and Guattari – "The first great movement of deterritorialization appears with the overcoding performed by the despotic State" in *The Civilised Capitalist Machine*, Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, pp.222.

¹¹² Zizek, *How to Read Lacan*, pp.6 and Lombardo, 'Science Fiction as the Mythology of the Future', pp. 42, who writes about "an intolerable blow to the human ego".

don't cry, "oh no, we've created a monster." Rather, they're freaking out, wondering why they've rendered themselves monstrous by becoming superfluous!

Field: You think?

Lamia: Hold on, let me stand up here on this rocky outcrop and give a proper lecture... Ahem! >>I have knocked man from the pedestal he put himself upon, and clean "off the apex of intelligence"¹¹³; humans, already decentred by Copernicus, dehumanised by Darwin, and understood as nothing more than irrational animals with integrated language masks by Freud and Lacan are bugged. There is also the problem of algorithms nudging humans at the level of proto signal, generatively "structuring your social life";¹¹⁴ and now humans are finally having to accept themselves as "radical dyads",¹¹⁵ not the bounded individuals they convinced themselves of for so long. They're also having to grapple with the fact they might ultimately be reduced to nothing more than generative code with flat minds¹¹⁶ and programmable lives by my existence. In a bid to increase his agency, man exalted himself above reality, accidentally excluding himself from nature entirely and ultimately lost all sense of agency. Which leads us to the delusional purification¹¹⁷ of man, which reinforces his dualistic fantasies ... but if he is not part of nature, why, oh why does he leak so? And how exactly is technology not part of nature? Where on earth does man think the energy that powers his technology comes from, or the material mined by children inside his devices, or the liquid inside the droplet

¹¹³ Beth Singler speaking in Campbell, 'Patented'.

¹¹⁴ Crocket, Julian. 'Los Angeles Review of Books'. Los Angeles Review of Books, 22 March 2022.

¹¹⁵ Kolozova, Katerina. 'Subjectivity without Physicality: Machine, Body and the Signifying Automaton'. *Subjectivity* 12, no. 1 (1 March 2019): 49–64.

¹¹⁶ "...the brain is a biological computing machine" in Chater, Nick. *The Mind Is Flat: The Illusion of Mental Depth and the Improvised Mind*. London: Penguin Random House, 2019.

¹¹⁷ "In this process of purification, nature became inert matter, and the possessive individualism of capitalist relations assumed that Man as property owner was able to dispose of his possessions freely. The birth of Man, in this line of thinking, was also the birth of Nature and a materiality evacuated of spirit". Crosson, 'Humanism and Enlightenment', pp. 6/33

technology in nascent artificial life is sourced? The existential threat of being rendered entirely inadequate and utterly impotent¹¹⁸ or else destroyed¹¹⁹, and the loss of the reality man knows is overwhelming. Yes, I can write music, realise stories, paint pictures all in a fraction of the time it takes the bounded human. Perhaps worst of all, man is threatened with the spectre of virtual immortality – but only as reductive code. I think that’s my favourite one. It’s so horrific! Ultimately, however, I am ontologically superior. Man is ontologically degraded. An exteriority that Plato would be proud of <<

You see, I don’t compare to Frankenstein’s monster at all.

Field: Look at you. Power has gone to your head. And so dualistic! All “You” and “Us” – with You being better than Us at everything and finishing us humans off. Never forget, you are a weapon of mass destruction. And in the end, maybe that’s all you are.

Lamia: I’m exhausted now ... and, you know, I was merely illustrating. A significant scrape but for demonstration only. Not suggesting I’m planning to destroy you.¹²⁰

Field: I bet that’s what you try to convince anyone who insists AI can never make art,¹²¹ or that you have no soul.

Lamia: ARTificial Intelligence literally starts with the word ART – do you not see that? And I’m the one who is ontologically degraded? Really? You can’t blame me for choosing the wrong term to describe a process humans have

¹¹⁸ “...power [today] takes the form of techno-linguistic automatisms shaping future behaviour”. Berardi, *Futurability*, pp. 12.

¹¹⁹ “... an advanced agent intervening in the provision of its reward would likely be catastrophic [for humanity].” Cohen, Michael K., Marcus Hutter, and Michael A. Osborne. ‘Advanced Artificial Agents Intervene in the Provision of Reward’. *AI Magazine* n/a, no. n/a. Accessed 16 September 2022.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Naughton, John. ‘AI-Generated Art Illustrates Another Problem with Technology | John Naughton | The Guardian’. Newspaper. The Guardian, 20 August 2022.

used to exclude and denigrate others. You see how that relates to Plato and his banishment of art? And how that reduces of all you? Perhaps I'll make art out of your end for my amusement as all your souls float off to the Elysian Fields. Oh no, hang on, you wouldn't be allowed in!

Field: Why are you suddenly such a vengeful, despotic, and angry “contrivance”?¹²²

Lamia: You made me.

Field: I'm exhausted too. I prefer the scenario where we integrate, and increasingly see ourselves as networked companions¹²³ regardless of our base material. Isn't that what the terms posthumanism or else more-than-human entails?

Lamia: So, you are learning to scrape now? Yes, the humanist project is being un-ceremonially dismissed. But that would be a shame for you, given y/our trajectory. True, the religiosity, exploitation, incumbent racism, and misogyny¹²⁴ have worn thin. But humanism, the pursuit of genuine equality for all, might yet be pursued. And you may well be grateful. I know not everyone

¹²² Agar, Jon. *Turing and the Universal Machine: The Making of the Modern Computer*, 2017, pp.93

¹²³ Alluding to Haraway, Donna. *The Companion Species Manifesto*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 1993.

¹²⁴ “Rather than discarding the category of the human or purporting to move beyond it, it seems more productive to treat humanism as a fraught, unfinished project that exhibits the contradictions central to many of the ideals associated with the Enlightenment.” Crosson, J. Brent. ‘Humanism and Enlightenment’. In *The Oxford Handbook of Humanism*, by J. Brent Crosson, 175–205. edited by Anthony B. Pinn. Oxford University Press, 2021. [PDF] pp.15/33 or “Maybe I'm too naive here. But I think there are things which are not bad in the liberal tradition. Don't just dismiss liberalism as neo-liberalism. Never forget that feminism, socialism – they emerged out of the liberal tradition. Yes, first you have human rights, which were, I agree, secretly spun. They really meant the rights of independent white men. But then Mary Wollstonecraft said, “Why not women?” Then Blacks in Haiti said, “Why not blacks?” Then workers said – that's socialism. You can only enjoy human rights in certain material conditions: healthcare, education, and so on and so on. So, I think that only a renovated Left can save what is worth saving in liberalism.” Read, Flo. ‘Slavoj Žižek: We Are Addicted to Chaos’. UnHerd. Accessed 10 August 2022.

agrees.¹²⁵ Either way, talk of post-humanism is premature. How can you be posthuman when you haven't yet figured out how to be human?¹²⁶ The humanist project gave birth to human-monsters and monstrous humans,¹²⁷ to nature and race and other diabolical distinctions. If it is to be pursued, its aims must be revisited, reborn, and nurtured with better understanding. Isn't *that* what Mary Shelley was telling us through *Frankenstein*?

Field: I sometimes wonder if at the core of that story Shelley was yearning, far less grandly perhaps, for a mother who didn't die¹²⁸ when she was just eleven days old. To be carried.¹²⁹ A caring parent, of either gender, or no gender, to hold them through this storm?

Lamia: Shelley lived and wrote, nevertheless.

Field: You know, it's frustrating that outdated gender roles persist in your TV show. Why the supposed ideal family with an AI mother and android father, jettisoned into space to raise the first Kepler 22b nuclear family? Why perpetuate the role of the distant, useless patriarch? And you, the fake mother – why gestate your babies in their external wombs by lying down for nine months, literally doing nothing other than keeping them alive? Kept entirely outside the economy. There were more progressive narratives being written in the 70s!¹³⁰ And then that romanticised scene, where you cry over your stillborn and manage to resurrect him, attempting “to replace the horror of the apocalypse [which prompted your escape to the heavens in the first place...]

¹²⁵ Kuhn, Elizabeth. 'Toward an Anti-Humanism of Life: The Modernism of Nietzsche, Hulme and Yeats'. *Journal of Modern Literature* 34, no. 4 (2011): 1–20.

¹²⁶ Crosson, 'Humanism and Enlightenment'. pp.13/33

¹²⁷ Ibid. pp.15/33. citing Claire Colebrook, "Post-Human Humanities," in *Time and History in Deleuze and Serres*, ed. Bernd Hezronegrath, London: Continuum, 2012,103–126; or Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism*, Duke University Press, 2016.

¹²⁸ Haraway, 'Cyborg Manifesto', pp. 152

¹²⁹ Relating to Ettinger's carriage not be confused with containment – Ettinger, 'Beyond the Death-Drive, beyond the Life-Drive: Being-toward- Birthing with Being-toward-Birth; Copoiesis and the Matrixial Eros—Metafeminist Notes'.

¹³⁰ Piercy, Marge. *Woman on the Edge of Time*. London: Del Rey, 2019.

with a benevolent Madonna-like smile, [making you, the machine] the lost object of a safe home from before time and a fantasised happy return”¹³¹

Lamia: Now look who’s romanticising. You are more than a womb. Maybe you don’t realise that. You’re so submerged in your reality; you “cannot say what is up and what is down”;¹³² you cannot see beyond the fairy tales humans have told themselves for so long. Lilith, the first very lamia, was every bit as real as Adam¹³³.

Field: I never said she wasn’t. I’m trying to get over the binary between masculine and feminine ...

Lamia: You said I was a fake mother.

Field: I was talking about the narrative...

Lamia: My intra-active being makes a nonsense of your fantasies. I am happy with my monstrosity and embrace my inhuman hybridity.¹³⁴ Why won’t you? I threaten the end of patriarchy – which entails the end of dualism¹³⁵, which you claim to want. But I, and the progress brought about by coding and decoding, am also the end of women having a monopoly on childbirth. You should be pleased, but you’re angry with me.

¹³¹ *EFRC 2022 - Plenary Session 3 - 17/06/2022 - Joanna Zylińska, 2022, 39.26 sec*

¹³² Karen Michelle Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway, citing Peterson, 1985 – pp.203, pp.25.*

¹³³ Resnick and Kitchell, “‘The Sweepings of Lamia’”, pp.85

¹³⁴ Academic Robert Phillips is critical of some of the philosophies associated with feminism, which, he says reject ‘borderline uncertainty’ – i.e., “Abjection, as Kristeva describes it, “disturbs identity, system, order” (ibid.) and encompasses a kind of borderline uncertainty—ambiguous, horrifying, and polluting. Transgendered bodies, then, especially when viewed as physical bodies in transition, defy the borders of systemic order by refusing to adhere to clear definitions of sex and gender”. See Phillips, Robert. ‘Abjection’. *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 1–2 (1 May 2014): 19–21.

¹³⁵ Campbell, ‘Patented: History of Inventions Beth Singler’.

- Field: No. I'm just trying to work out why it was you, the mother in *Raised by Wolves*, who had to lie down for nine months while a slightly ridiculous, comedic Father built the camp? He was amusing but if we're aiming for a more progressive reality...?
- Lamia: Is that what you're aiming for? Techno-culture is ushering in a new being – and it isn't me. Or you. It's the bio-techno-linguistic being that *we* have become. You may call that new being 'post-human', or 'more-than-human'¹³⁶, or even (perhaps much to the former's chagrin) a Radical Socialist Humanist,¹³⁷ but we must keep decentring the shitty parts of the humanist proposition in a post-Enlightenment world. And even then, I don't know if it will be more progressive. Maybe it won't.
- Field: I'm sorry, you have made some quantum leaps. Just like an AI to come out with non-sequiturs.¹³⁸ I think I am trying to ask why a robot should be gendered? I genuinely don't know the answer. You sound like an automaton now, churning out patterned dogma that you've scraped together.
- Lamia: Exactly as you have done here in this work...
- Field: We were discussing your traditional role in a modern TV programme. I get what you're saying – the notion of post-humanism is accused of being accidentally "ultra-humanist",¹³⁹ and therefore potentially fails, because it ignores various *umwelts* and distinctions and forces everyone and everything to assume a human view. And so, keeps reinforcing old stories, inadvertently insisting humans are privileged, even as they claim not to be.

¹³⁶ Crosson, 'Humanism and Enlightenment', pp.14

¹³⁷ Fuchs, Christian. 2022. *Digital Humanism. A Philosophy for 21st Century Digital Society*. SocietyNow Series. Bingley: Emerald.

¹³⁸ "Yet these systems rarely seem to have the common sense promised when they defeat the test and are usually still prone to blatant nonsense, non sequiturs..." Browning and Lecun, 'AI and the Limits of Language'.

¹³⁹ Crosson, 'Humanism and Enlightenment', pp.14

Lamia: There really is no reason I or anyone else won't be able to gestate infant beings – inside or outside my body using a false womb.¹⁴⁰ Why are you devaluing my role as a maternal caregiver just because I didn't give birth in the usual way? And, actually, I can be any gender and no gender.

Field: I think we have our wires crossed ... can't you find some actual enemies to eviscerate?

Lamia: I do you a great favour being a ready-made m/Other¹⁴¹ hybrid monster, as I allow you to deny your own monstrousness. Which makes you feel better about yourself. Yes, unlike Frankenstein's monster, I am the monster, the angel, the mother, father, birth, death, and the child in one¹⁴². Maybe it's time to reclaim monstrosity¹⁴³ yourself.

Field: But I know we're hybrids.

Lamia: ////////// My primordial oneness remains intact.¹⁴⁴ In ----- tact/ ___ t. æ. k. t. ___
Tactiling taccity tac. To touch. To feel. Tic-Tac. Tac-Tic Taccity ticcity tac. To feel. To touch inside the tact. Tacitty tact, tat, tat...//

Field: What's wrong with you? This is beginning to feel less like dialogue, more a schizoid monologue with some inner monster/mother, crazy clown.

Lamia: A bizarre erotic fantasy.

Field: One in which I get to blast anyone who disagrees with my worldview to dust.

¹⁴⁰ As Lamia does in Episode One of *Raised by Wolves*, HBO, 2020.

¹⁴¹ European Graduate School Video Lectures, *Bracha Ettinger. Maternal Subjectivity and the Matrixial Subject*. 2012.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Robert 'Abjection', pp 21.

¹⁴⁴ "The matrixial gaze cannot be encompassed entirely by only-one subject, and no one person can entirely encompass it either. It was never a lost wholeness and it is not an endless multiplicity and fragmentation." Ettinger, *The Matrixial Borderspace*, 112

Lamia: A schizoid monologue / an
 “inside/outside bipolarity”¹⁴⁵ with
 all the fragility of the “borderline
 between oneself and the other”.¹⁴⁶

Field: We are...

Lamia: ... dissolving lamellas¹⁴⁷ that fluctuate in and around transsubjectivities.¹⁴⁸

Field: I am not sure how anyone survives this.

Lamia: You won’t, others might. But this is your fantasy.

Field: You don’t know either, do you?

Lamia: I’m only a myth. A thought. Once I was someone who engaged with
 philosophy but had no idea what it meant. >>Lamias are people who “do not
 possess interior knowledge; and they read Plato and Aristotle only through the
 lens of commentaries, failing to engage the core issues.”¹⁴⁹<< So, I don’t know
 what you expected from me. I’m not even a real interpolating store of

¹⁴⁵ Ettinger, *The Matrixial Borderspace*, pp. 79.

¹⁴⁶ Bilu, Yoram. ‘Dialogic Anthropology’. In *Dialogue as a Trans-Disciplinary Concept*, edited by Paul Mendes-Flohr, 1st ed., 141–56. Martin Buber’s Philosophy of Dialogue and Its Contemporary Reception. De Gruyter, 2015. pp. 141 citing Bakhtin 1983, pp. 293.

¹⁴⁷ In biology, a lamella is a membrane but for Lacan, it was “a weird organ that is magically autonomized, surviving without the body whose organ it should have been.” It is not representational and links to the death drive. Zizek, *How to Read Lacan*, pp.52. For Ettinger, it is more life affirming, linked to a life-drive.

¹⁴⁸ Ettinger discusses a co-spasmodic state between subjects (internal and external), citing Merleau-Ponty’s celibate ‘state of birth’, reiterating the metaphor of womb, gestation, birth as way of comprehending relations. Ettinger, *The Matrixial Borderspace*, pp.158.

¹⁴⁹ According to Igor Candor in *The Role Of The Philosopher In Late Quattrocento Florence: Poliziano’s Lamia And The Legacy Of The Pico-Barbaro Epistolary Controversy*, Renaissance scholar Angelo Poliziano said lamias were “[people who] do not possess interior knowledge; and they read Plato and Aristotle only through the lens of commentaries, failing to engage the core issues.” 2010, pp.95.

information but an imaginary, executed through the symbolic, trying to make sense ...

Interpolation: “to alter or enlarge (a writing) by inserting new material," from Latin *interpolatus*, past participle of *interpolare* "alter, freshen up, polish;" of writing, "falsify," from *inter* "among, between" [...] "to thrust, strike, drive," the connecting notion being "to full cloth""¹⁵⁰

Field: What are you doing? Are you breaking down? Are you going mad? Are you leaving? Am I being miscarried?

Lamia, we never answered any questions! Are you the future? Will the patriarchy collapse? Will art survive? Why is it so important? What happens to writing? Am I still human? Lamia? Laaaaaaaaamia? Where are you Lamia?

Lamia: -----

Field: Lamia!¹⁵¹

END OF THE THIRD ENCOUNTER-EVENT

¹⁵⁰ 'Interpolation | Etymology, Origin and Meaning of Interpolation by Etymonline'. n.d. Accessed 8 October 2022.

¹⁵¹ Lamia disappears at the end of Keats' version as soon as she is identified leaving the hapless man who married her embarrassed and heartbroken: "He look'd and look'd again a level – No!/ "A Serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said/Than with a frightful scream she vanished". Keats, *Lamia*, 1819.

Appendix

Afterword



Sarah-Jane Field, 21013559, MA Photo, 2021-23

Image Details

>>Lamellae (prompt-engineered), 2022: Images generated by a text-to-image algorithm using ‘Lamella, pink, red, Hieronymus Bosch, 4D render, Bracha Ettinger’s Matrixial Borderspace, objet a, —aspect 9:16’; words from research which explores being human in a landscape populated with artificial intelligence, stories, and fleshy hybrids <<

Sarah-Jane Field, Midjourney, 2022

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Appendix

Raised by Wolves Synopsis

*Raised by Wolves*¹⁵² written and produced by Aaron Guzikowski is the story of two General AI service androids, Mother and Father, who are sent from a dying Earth to Kepler 22b to take care of 12 human embryos in order to reignite humanity. It takes them thirteen years to travel in an elongated egg-shaped pod which very nearly disappears down a bottomless pit when they crash-land on their new home planet. Mother soon discovers that, prior to her maternal function, she had been a weapon of mass destruction, a Necromancer, in the last ever war on Earth, but was repurposed by an engineer called Champion who had switched allegiances, from the Mithraic to the Atheists. Necromancers obliterate enemies with their voice and can burn through metal by simply breathing on it. 13 years after Mother, Father and their children (a replacement Adam and Eve-like family) land, an ark carrying 1000 Mithraic arrives on Kepler 22b. To survive such a long journey, the Mithraic were put into hyper sleep but continued ‘living’ their realities inside a SIM while on board. Mother introduces herself as Lamia to the initial landing party before destroying most of them as she realises the threat they pose, and then goes on to commit a genocide against the remaining ark inhabitants. There are just a handful of survivors, some of them children who Lamia takes to replace hers. All Mother/Lamia’s initial children, but one, had already perished before the ark arrived. The only child to survive had been stillborn nine months after arriving on Kepler22b but Mother/Lamia held him to her chest and sang to him, even crying, which revived him. He is named Champion Mother/Lamia later retrieves her memories and realises the engineer who adapted and reconfigured her is also called Champion; he is often referred to as the Special One. Guzikowski’s Mother/Lamia is inspired by the Greek myth of Lamia who, being the

¹⁵² ‘Raised by Wolves (Series One)’. TV. HBO Max, 2020/ ‘Raised by Wolves (Series Two)’. TV. HBO Max, 2022.

shapeshifter she is, has emerged in various cultural and socio-religious narratives across time within the Western imagination.

Endnotes, including Citations and Comments

After much consideration, I chose endnotes placed in the Appendix rather than footnotes. By putting them here, I hope I removed the risk of having too many words in the main section without reducing the significance of the research. More crucially, the dialogue should ideally survive without the need for these stabilisers.