

***Great Globes and Brave New Worlds: An Adaptational Analysis of The Tempest and
Forbidden Planet***

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Introductory Chapter

William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, estimated to have been written from 1610-1611, is considered to be the last canonical text of his oeuvre that he had written alone. In spite of being one of Shakespeare's later plays, it remains as one of his more iconic and better known, due in part to having been the opening play in the original 1623 *Folio* collection. It possesses the traits and tropes of his tragedies, his comedies, and his romances, as well as the typical plays-within-plays, evocations of pagan magic, and obviously, a storm at sea. It is this eclectic theming, in addition to its level of acclaim, that has caused it to occupy a position in literary culture that makes it ripe for varied interpretation and analysis across several continents and ideologies.

Scholars have taken Romantic, Darwinian, Freudian, post-colonial, and even autobiographical lenses to the text, and it has been cited by notable artists from Walter Crane, to Mozart, to T.S. Eliot. All of this is without even mentioning the long legacy of colonial fiction works that would follow in *The Tempest*'s footsteps to lost worlds and exotic lands, exhibiting equal quotients of adventure, intrigue, and western imperialism. Whether those works were spawned from the pens of H. Rider Haggard, Edgar Rice Burroughs or Jules Verne, they bore the mark of Shakespeare's island without a name. There is one notable work, however, that stands strangely among spiritual successors to *The Tempest* in that it has gained the cultural understanding of being a direct adaptation, without ever once considering itself to be a direct adaptation.

Directed by Fred Wilcox, 1956's *Forbidden Planet* is a widely revered, and deeply influential, piece of twentieth-century science fiction cinema. In the decades to come, many other assorted pieces of media would bear its thematic and aesthetic marks, from George Lucas to

Gene Roddenberry. Among *Forbidden Planet*'s innovations are its narrative notions of interplanetary federations and faster-than-light travel, its blending of practical and video special effects, and even its fully electronic soundtrack, the first of its kind. But for all the ways in which it was ahead of its time, it shows itself to be a product of its own time just as much, as well as the product of generations of preceding works.

From Asimov it borrows its conceptions of robotic intelligence, its poster, the name of its mechanical co-star, and the various laws he is beholden to, and from Freud it borrows a philosophical construction of the human, and not-so-human, subconscious. But, as mentioned, the film's most curious inspirations, if one could even call them as much, were from *The Tempest*. So much so that, as mentioned, a good deal of ink has been spilled about the many comparisons between the two works, with several scholars and critics retrospectively taking it for granted that the film was created with the intent of being a science fiction interpretation. Intention, however, need not be present in *Forbidden Planet*'s parallels to William Shakespeare for them to be notable. In fact, one would not be amiss in claiming that the comparisons were a wholly unintended consequence on the part of the filmmakers.

One would only need to look at MGM's advertisements of the film as being never before seen on any screen", as well as "[u]nique", and "[d]ifferent", (*Motion Picture Herald*) or the film crediting a story by Irving Block and Allen Adler as inspiration to observe this. Also compounding this is the afore-mentioned lendings from Isaac Asimov and the lack of contemporary critical reception that acknowledges Shakespeare. Intention is, similarly, not needed for these parallels to be valid, and an interesting detail to consider in analyzing either work, as was articulated by Judith Buchanon in her essay *Forbidden Planet and the Retrospective Attribution of Intention*. In it, she interrogates the strange pattern of critical voices

taking for granted the intentionality of *Forbidden Planet*'s Shakespearean qualities, and says: "*Forbidden Planet*'s relationship to *The Tempest*, though strong, need not necessarily be *strategic* on the part of its producers. Stories as fundamental and familiar as the one we know most commonly as *The Tempest* find representation constantly in various transmuted forms" (Buchanon 157). This relationship prompts one to inquire about the nature of adaptation, archetype, and genre. Questions such as 'What is it about certain narratives that invites adaptation, deliberate or accidental?' or 'How do changes in cultural and geopolitical climates impact those narratives?'

The assumption made with this analysis is that *The Tempest* and *Forbidden Planet* are two separate installments in what is, effectively, a generation-spanning story. To quote the introduction of the *Arden Shakespeare* edition, such would be a demonstration of "its multiplicity of interpretive perspectives and [...] its appeal to diverse eras and cultures" (Vaughn, 2). As such, it is imperative, in answering the prior pair of questions, to draw attention to each text's like qualities, and dissect the similarities and differences to analyze the relationship between them. The most pertinent features that bring the two texts together, and best fit this analytical format, are the characters at the heart of each texts' plot, as well as to the ideological, social, and political notions that either plot intends to communicate. On the side of *The Tempest*, the characters in question are those of Caliban, Ariel, Prospero and Miranda, and Dr. Morbius, Altaira, and Robby the Robot on the side of *Forbidden Planet*. Each of these characters serve, in their respective texts, a narrative regarding the ethics of mastery and of power, as well as the ways that mastery and power, out of the view of polite society, empower social disorder. However, in the pages of *The Tempest* this was done to sate the curiosities of an England that was already entrenched in its imperial might, painting a vivid picture of the mystery that lies outside

of the mainland's gaze. Whereas the film reels of *Forbidden Planet* aims to use that mystery to tell an astounding, if haunting, morality fable to comment on contemporary anxieties regarding unchecked technological advancement paired with savagery latent within the hearts of man.

Chapter One: Robby, Caliban and Ariel

At this point, an analytical eye shall be directed towards three monstrous figures who are, in a strange sense, the heart and soul, or the nuts and bolts, in one's case, of their respective franchises: Caliban, son of Sycorax, the fine apparition, Ariel, and Robby the Robot, as played by himself. Caliban and Ariel, bizarre and otherworldly though they be, are more compelling in many ways than either romantic lead, or even their own twisted master. It also would not be an overstatement to claim that Robby is the very embodiment of *Forbidden Planet*. Like Caliban and Ariel, Robby is a bizarre remnant of the remote plane's previous inhabitants, possessing mysterious powers and otherworldly physiology. Also like Caliban and Ariel, he is enslaved by his shipwrecked master, who has discovered a way to weaponize the many wonders the land had to offer, be they Sycorax's alchemical magicks or the Krell's mind-expanding technology. Similarly, they each speak most clearly to the specter of imperial exploitation that persists throughout both works. This analysis aims to interrogate how Caliban, Ariel, and Robby, through the way they are portrayed by race, gender, and exploitation, create a strange depiction of the cultural 'other', in a way that influences interpretations of either character and either literary work. Understanding Robby as a reflection of Caliban and Ariel demonstrates how both *Forbidden Planet* and *The Tempest*'s depict a cultural 'other' by replacing human qualities with inhuman ones. This process of assigning the qualities of a people or culture onto seemingly-neutral signifiers is what is known as 'coding' and it defines the way that Robby Ariel and Caliban, as parahuman slaves, exist within the narrative. This dichotomy embodies, culturally, both works' contributions to a broader discourse regarding the legacy of slavery. *The Tempest*, in using coded inhumanity to accentuate Caliban and Ariel's respective statuses as

enslaved/colonized caricatures, attempts to center them within a colonial discourse. In contrast, *Forbidden Planet* does its best to scratch off any and all remotely human qualities of Robby in an attempt to distance itself from that discourse, ironically putting itself directly within it. In the case of *The Tempest*, Caliban and Ariel are made monstrous in a way that attempts to *accentuate* their coded features, and in the case of *Forbidden Planet* Robby is made monstrous in a way that attempts to *diminish* his coded features.

Appearing first, both culturally and chronologically, are Caliban and Ariel. They mark, among Shakespeare's literary canon, his more poignant depictions of monsterdom. Shakespeare was no stranger to the supernatural, of course, being well accustomed to the invocation of ancient gods, pagan witchcraft, or especially a good, old-fashioned ghost. But Caliban and Ariel have touched the imaginations of generations by sheer scale of otherworldliness. This is a feature that, as mentioned, they share with Robby, even if their otherworldliness is one cut from a far older cloth than the B-movie sensibilities from which Robby was spawned. Pertinently, however, the actual parameters of this otherworldliness, no matter how pronounced, are rather plastic in their description. Only one of the two of these characters, Ariel, is explicitly depicted as being a supernatural creature; and even then, in a sense that is deliberately difficult to define, given his shapeshifting qualities. And, historically, how much of Caliban is man and how much of him is supernatural creature has been a point of contention in scholarship, adaptation, and even the text itself. In a way, the ambiguity of Ariel and Caliban's corporeality takes on something of a character in-and-of-itself; a miasma of liminality that permeates the very fiber of the page. This is a feature not reflected in their mechanical counterpart, who, himself, benefits from having an easily accessed and widely published visual representation.

The nature of origins comes as the primary subject, which is to say both where the characters had come from, and how they got to be the way that they were at the beginning of their respective stories. Caliban's mother, Sycorax, is said to have been "from Algiers,/ [...] was banished" (1.2.265-6) for her practice of ambiguously-evil studies, bringing her son in tow. Additionally, in the case of Ariel, it may be interpreted that, since Ariel was Sycorax's servant, he might have also been brought from Algiers, perhaps as a mirror to the many spirits and apparitions in Prospero's control. As much is never truly stated, however, so it is just as likely that Ariel is some variety of primordial nature sprite who existed on the island for some indeterminate amount of time. As a result of Sycorax and Caliban's North African heritage, it would be valid for one to interpret Caliban's monstrousness as a simple manifestation of Renaissance-era racism. That way, Prospero's choice to refer to his servant as "[a] freckled whelp, hag born" (1.2.283) or "poisonous slave, got by the devil himself" (1.2.320) would be an example of garden-variety prejudice flowered with poetics. In fact, historically, the potential cultures within the colonial sphere of England that Caliban may be meant to represent are numerous. As such, it is possible for Caliban to be literally Algerian, but metaphorically Indigenous American, Indian, Brazilian, Caribbean, Sub-Saharan African, or even Irish, but this will be expounded upon later.

It certainly would not be the first or only time that Shakespeare's quill has been less-than-flattering to a member of a minority group, such as he did with Aaron in *Titus Andronicus*, the titular Othello, or Shylock and the Moroccan Prince in *The Merchant of Venice*, to name a few. But these cases, though extremely flawed depictions at the best of times, and often dubiously sympathetic, acknowledge that the characters they dehumanize are, at least, still human beings. Othello is the emotional centerpiece of his story and is plainly portrayed as a

victim of persecution and conspiracy. Shylock, though a villain, is one who is nevertheless given justification for his resentment, as well as obtaining retroactively tragic status in Shakespeare's body of work. Even Aaron, who is, in many ways, symbolic of cruelty for its own sake, is still but a man; one no more brutal than *Titus Andronicus*' eponymous patriarch. Caliban, on the other hand, is made out to be unambiguously monstrous to the point that many interpretations, in the hopes of removing unpalatable racial subtext, presented him as a literal monster, to mixed effect. And while Ariel gets off much easier in terms of this particular brand of dehumanization, there still persists a litany of characteristics he possesses that spawn from colonialist stereotypes. Fundamentally, this recurring notion of monstrousness as a signifier of racial otherness is one that effectively defined all of the two characters' places within the narrative. However, the extent of it, especially compared to other characters in the text, as well as in the broader Shakespearean canon, makes the two of them, Caliban in particular, interesting to analyze through this lens.

Before that subject is broached, first the conceptions of racial monstrosity must be established for the sake of the argument going forward. As such, framing Caliban and Ariel's enslavement by Prospero as an extension of the legacy of Black and Indigenous exploitation needs to be brought to the forefront of the discussion. Because, yes, the two of them are enslaved, and it is not a detail that Shakespeare was stingy about mentioning. To belabor the point, Caliban is called "slave" five times, Ariel is called it or a variation of "my spirit" four times, and Prospero is called "master", "sir" or "lord" eleven times in Act 1, Scene 2 alone. Caliban is made to collect Prospero's lumber day-in and day-out, an act which Ferdinand describes as "This wooden slavery" (3.1.49), and Ariel is made to harass Prospero's enemies for a year under threat of being trapped inside of a stronger, larger tree, which would also,

technically, be a wooden slavery. In short, Caliban and Ariel's relationship with Prospero can best be understood by considering them through the language of chattel slavery.

This is not an uncommon academic interpretation. To quote Duke Pesta's *Acknowledging Things of Darkness: Postcolonial Criticism of The Tempest*: "Once the initial argument evolved that *The Tempest* was primarily and consciously a play about colonialism, the premise was accepted with little or no reservation" (Pesta 274). Furthermore, Matthieu Chapman, in his Afro-pessimist essay *Red, White, and Black: Shakespeare's The Tempest and the Structuring of Racial Antagonisms in Early Modern England and the New World* takes strides to divide Ariel, Prospero, and Caliban into the classifications of...well, Red White and Black. Respectively, these are meant to signify the cultural placements of Indigenous 'savages', White 'master/settlers' and Black 'slaves' drawn by Frank Wilderson III in 2010 to mark the triplicate relationship of racial colonial society, each with varying levels of humanity. Prospero, being White, is a fully human subject, constituting the civil world. Caliban, being Black, is abject to the human, and is wholly at odds with the civil world. And finally Ariel, being Red, occupies a liminal space between them, outside of the realms of civil engagement, but nevertheless subordinate to it.

Construing Ariel as being a surrogate for an exploited Indigenous people and Caliban to be a surrogate for trans-Atlantic enslaved Africans is rather applicable for their relationship with the island. Caliban was exiled from Algiers at the same time Sycorax was, given that she was pregnant with him at the time. This means that Caliban's only true connection to Algiers is through heritage, though given how he and his mother were rejected by that culture about as much as a person could, Caliban shows no sign of considering it an aspect of his identity. Quite the contrary, Caliban deeply identifies with the island he has lived on his entire life. He speaks of

it with both eloquent reverence: “Be not afeard. The isle is full of noises,/ Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not./ Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments/ Will hum about mine ears” (3.2.135-8) and deep familiarity: “I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow,/ And I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts,/ Show thee a jay’s nest, and instruct thee how to snare the nimble marmoset” (2.2.164-7). This makes it all the more tragic that he should be supplanted as its sole custodian, as it makes Caliban’s stature like unto a victim of diaspora, in that he is at once disconnected from his land of origin, and denied mastery of his new home. In fact, as Prospero often threatens to set loose spirits in the shape of the island’s endemic fauna to torment Caliban when he is disobedient, it can be said that Prospero actively makes the island act against him: “But/ For every trifle are they set upon me: Sometimes like apes that mow and chatter at me/ And after bite me, then like hedgehogs which/ Lie tumbling in my barefoot way and mount/ Their pricks at my footfall. Sometimes am I/ All wound with adders, who with cloven tongues/ Do hiss me into madness” (2.2.8-14).

Ariel, as an Indigenous analogue, is similarly made to toil on a land he thought his own, but one to which he has an even greater claim to than even Caliban. For Ariel was on the island long before Prospero, likely long before Sycorax, and will probably remain on the island long after all the play’s characters have died. Because while both he and Caliban are granted qualities that paint them like particular alchemical elements, Ariel effectively IS the elements, or at least represents primordial forces older and stranger than can be comprehended: “You fools! I and my fellows/ Are ministers of fate. The elements/ Of whom your swords are tempered may as well/ Wound the loud winds, or with bemocked-at stabs/ Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish/ One dowl that’s in my plume./ My fellow ministers/ Are like invulnerable” (3.3.60-6). This makes it

all the more ironic that Ariel would be confined “Into a cloven pine, within which rift/
Imprisoned thou didst painfully remain/ A dozen years” (1.2.277-9).

This is because Ariel is, of course, effectively under house arrest, inert and immobile for over a decade, but also because the subsequent enslavement under a different master is framed as being like freedom in comparison. Prospero, in one of his many chastisements, mocks Ariel for complaining about his forced labor: “Thou dost [forget], and think’st it much to tread the ooze/
Of the salt deep,/ To run the sharp wind of the north,/ To do me business in the veins o’th’ earth/
When its is baked with frost” (1.2.252-6). Prospero in this moment is telling Ariel to be grateful that he gets to travel to the far-flung extremities of the island, something Sycorax did not allow him to do once she had grown sick of his protestations. In doing this, Prospero places Ariel in the middle of his rivalry with Sycorax. This notion of colonial and indigenous relations somehow being mutually beneficial because of mutual conflicts with another colonizer reads like many a First Thanksgiving play nationwide. Both Caliban and Ariel differ in this respect to Robby, in that while, as will be articulated, Robby is meant to evoke a particular cultural idea of grunt labor, he does not have the same connections to Altair-4 that his predecessors do to their island.

The respective inhumanity and meta-humanity of Caliban and Ariel is reflected in the way they are each described. Prospero calls Caliban’s monstrosity, as a correlative to his Africanity, rather frequently, and with great gusto. Phrases such as “thy vile race” (1.2.358), and “Hag-seed” (1.2.367) come to mind at present, symbolizing a conception of Black bodies as being more innately wicked than European counterparts. Additionally, Prospero’s other claims that Caliban was “got by the devil himself” (1.2.320) as well as by a “damned witch” (1.2.265) is indicative of the same thought process, and betrays an Early Modern English zeitgeist that triangulated Black bodies with witches as well as with the devil. Ariel, though his more

monstrous qualities are deemed more overtly useful by Prospero, and thus less likely to incur his disdain, is nevertheless portrayed as being more a force of nature or myth than a human subject. Like the products of Prospero's own illusory magic, Ariel is often relegated into the category of 'spirit', possessing powers of shape changing, able to turn into of a "nymph o'th' sea;/ [...] subject to no sight but [his own] and [Prospero's], invisible" (1.2.302-3).

On the subject of the nymph, both Ariel and Caliban are granted a sort of protean quality in their inseparable connection to Aristotelian conceptions of the elements. Caliban, confined to a cell by the tide, and referred to as "Thou earth" (1.2.314) fits well unto the earth and the water. Ariel, with his mastery over storms and his powers of invisibility, is fire and air. This also reflects their hierarchy under Prospero's abuse, as is described in E.M.W Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture*. In it, Tillyard describes the classical notions of alchemical elements that an Early Modern English audience would have a passing knowledge of: "Heaviest and lowest was the cold and dry element, the earth. [...] Outside earth was the region of cold and moist, the water. [...] Outside water was the region of hot and moist, the air. [...] Noblest of all is fire, [...] it was hot and dry invisible to human sight" (Tillyard 69). This has the added narrative utility of acting as shorthand for Prospero's many and layered dominances. His mastery over the 'natural world' by way of his slaves puts him at the top of a magical and social totem pole.

Ariel's nymph shape, in addition to evoking the mythological aspects of Ariel and Caliban's racial archetypes, also is but one layer of insight into the way that both characters are presented in terms of their gender identity. Caliban and Ariel, though both addressed as 'he' throughout the course of the play, are both deeply different constructions of gender, especially relative to one another, and especially through the lens of racial caricature. Caliban, in a variety of ways, fits in accordance with hypermasculine frameworks. This is reflected in his physical

hostility, his sexual aggression, his great strength, and his urge for interpersonal dominance. Ariel, on the other hand, is not merely a greatly softened masculine figure, but overtly hyperfeminine. This is in regard to his extreme moodiness, his literal and metaphorical ‘flightiness’, duplicitous behavior, and his greater propensity for submission. This is a detail that is not lost upon most theater makers, given that Ariel is often contemporarily represented on stage by either women, or young children, who, have classically, tended to play feminine characters. Additionally, it is surely not coincidental that the second most significant singing nymph-like creature named Ariel from art and literature is, herself, a woman.

This dichotomy, of the servile ‘house slave’ and the virile ‘field slave’ is one that has insidiously made itself a facet of Black identity’s representation by White society, and all that would imply. Returning, unpleasantly, to the nature of Caliban’s attempted rape of Miranda. This scene is a veritable minefield when it comes to analysis and interpretation. There is a trend among, to quote Jessica Slights, whereby there is a “considerable reluctance among many critics to acknowledge it” (Slights 272), with ‘it’ being the matter of culpability. According to her, they often make the mistake of either downplaying Caliban’s victimization of Miranda as being justified in some colonial arms race, or completely understate the racism at play in the attack’s entire conception. However, for the sake of argument, as well as a representation of the other perspective yet to come, this time will be spent discussing the colonialist dynamics at play within the attack. In particular, the colonial dynamics that lead to it being depicted within the play in the first place, as well as the colonial dynamics depicted in Prospero and Miranda’s response to it.

In the second scene of the first act, Caliban is introduced as a hated creature, forced from his home and made to perform perpetual manual labor, lest he incur Prospero’s wrath. Caliban makes his qualms known: “For I am all the subjects that you have,/ Which first was mine own

king; and here you sty me/ In this hard rock, whiles you do keep me from The rest o'th' island" (1.2.342-4). Prospero, however, denies the injustice of Caliban's treatment, and cites a justification for it: "Thou most lying slave,/ Whom stripes may move, not kindness; I have used thee/ (Filth as thou art) with human care and lodged thee/ In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate/ The honour of my child" (1.2.345-9). This is not an uncommon narrative throughout colonial history, whereby the presence of Black masculinity in society is interpreted as an implicit sexual threat. The nature of that threat, depending on the circumstance, can range from the despoiling of White, feminine bodies, the emasculation of White, masculine bodies, or of miscegenation, colored as the usurpation and eventual replacement of White bodies. Caliban responds to Prospero's accusations by stating: "O ho, O ho! Would't had been done;/ Thou didst prevent me, I had peopled else/ This isle with Calibans" (1.2.350-2), doing little to dissuade this interpretation.

Miranda's two cents on the subject, as mentioned, is also rather affirmative of this narrative of aggressive Black sexuality, and Caliban's intended contribution to it. Upon hearing Caliban's unrepentant admission to his attempted attack upon her, Miranda rebukes him with exuberance, proclaiming that he is deserving of his treatment, but with notable developments: "I pitied thee,/ Took pains to make thee speak [...] When thou didst not, savage,/ Know thy own meaning, but wouldst gabble like/ A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes/ With words [...] But thy vile race [...] had that in't which good 'natures/ Could not abide to be with" (1.2.354-61). Miranda frames their interaction as being one where Miranda saw Caliban, a lowly savage, and took pains to teach him her language, and a knowledge of western social graces, but Caliban's latent evilness could not be overcome, thus he attacked her. Miranda does not merely feel betrayed by him, or disgusted at him, but actively rationalizes the attack as being indicative of an

innate racial weakness of character. Not to mention, the entire pretense of an indigenous people being taught Western language is somehow ‘civilizing them’, which they should be grateful for, or that their prior way of speaking was “gabble like/ A thing most brutish” (2,1.357-8) is also a colonial construct, meant to shame non-White cultures. At the very least, Caliban is aware of this implication, as can be ascertained by his assertion that the only benefit he has from being able to speak Italian is that now he can insult Prospero and Miranda in a way they understand.

The racialized sexuality of Ariel’s character is far more understated, mostly being the case of Ariel demonstrating a variety of submissive and obedient qualities that are, at once, associated with the behavior of a slave, of a woman, and of a sexual object. Throughout the play, as was mentioned, Prospero speaks to Ariel with a level of fondness, compared to Caliban, at least. Prospero usually refers to Ariel as “my Ariel” (1.2.188), some variation of “My brave spirit” (1.2.207), “my diligence” (5.1.241) or “My Ariel, chick” (5.1.317), and a litany of other terms of endearment. These instances, however, should not be mistaken for full and sincere affection, as Ariel is still an unwilling servant of Prospero. This is a fact that Prospero has been shown to throw directly into Ariel’s face when he gets uppity, as demonstrated when he transitions from referring to Ariel as his spirit to referring to him by “Thou, my slave” (1.2.270). This polarizing treatment is as such to demonstrate the fallacy of this dichotomy between two enslaved subgroups, as even those made to do less menial labor than another are nevertheless subject to mistreatment. To return once more to Ariel’s various shifted shapes, there is much to analyze in their significance. The three primary forms taken by Ariel throughout the play are the aforementioned sea nymph, a harpy, and the Hellenistic goddess, Ceres. Once again, these are all feminine shapes, contributing more to this theme of Ariel’s presentation, but they are all also symbols of various representations of the feminine body. Sea nymphs are lithe, free-spirited

manifestations of the ocean, harpies are female symbols of the destructive power of the winds, and Ceres is the goddess of agriculture, motherhood, and fertility. With these shapes being what they are, it frames Prospero's control over Ariel as also being a control over three distinct corners of the female character, just as his control over Caliban is also over the masculine.

All of this exaggerated, epithetical construction of Ariel and Caliban stands in contrast to the one other notable point in the play where an African character is mentioned. This is in reference to an altercation between the targets of Prospero's vengeance, his former noblemen fellows. Upon reflecting on their marroning, and the apparent death of Prince Ferdinand, Sebastian chides his brother, the king of Naples for marrying the princess to a Tunisian nobleman: "Sir, you may thank yourself for this great loss,/ That would not bless our Europe with your daughter/ But rather loose her to an African,/ Where she at least is banished from your eye,/ Who hath cause to wet the grief on't" (2.1.124-7). In this instance, Sebastian is not only saying that he thinks the decision to bring Claribel of Naples within sexual proximity to an African was a terrible one, but that it had an explicitly causal relationship to their being shipwrecked, and abandoned to die. This is a case in the text of Prospero and his usurpers being made alike in the text, drawing a comparison between this marriage with the Tunisian King is meant to parallel Caliban's attraction to Miranda. But the difference in terminology makes contrast enough to be notable. Sebastian does not mince words when he refers to Claribel's betrothed as 'an African', whereas Prospero uses epithetic language. As such, it invites a reader or an audience to inquire about the racial features coded as monstrous present in Caliban that are so distinct as to be so emphasized. Both are racist, of course, but in this sense, Caliban is being made more African than African, in a sense, from a racist English perspective by making him an obscene caricature.

There are a variety of features about Caliban that, at first blush, would not appear to be descriptions of any man, even artistically-exaggerated ones, due to the obscurity of the insults. For instance, see how even the addled mind of Trinculo, a seventeenth century Italian, as written by a seventeenth century Englishmen, looks upon the body of an Algerian man, and proclaim: “What have we here, a man or a fish? [...] “Legged like a man and his fins like arms” (2.2.24-33), un-hindered by wine goggles. As such, it gives the impression that Caliban’s beastliness is otherworldly even from the confines of Eurocentric exotification, but this is not necessarily so. Consider how, with the introduction of Stephano, they go on to describe Caliban as a “puppy-headed” (2.2.151-2) “mooncalf” (2.2.105) that they “took [...] to be killed with a thunderstroke” (2.2.106). These are bizarre descriptors, ones that evoke bestial mishapeness, even one perhaps transformed or degenerated from the ‘typical’ human form that would be present in the minds of Stephano and Trinculo. But the *Arden Shakespeare* edition of *The Tempest* cites these terms for the derogatory, if archaic, terminology they were meant to be received as. The term ‘mooncalf’ is defined as a baby born with a significant birth defect thought to be caused by exposure to the full moon, meaning that it was a supernaturally-tinged word often used to describe the disabled, and ‘puppy-headed’ is simply being another word for ‘stupid’. Additionally, another phrase spoken by Trinculo upon initially stumbling upon the prone, shivering body of Caliban was as follows: “Were I in England now (as once I was) and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver. There would this monster make a man; any strange beast there makes a man. When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian” (2.2.27-32). Here, Trinculo directly draws a comparison between the body of Caliban, and those of many exploited people from the Global South who would either be brought back to England for English amusement.

Whether they be brought to the isle alive as enslaved circus freaks, or dead as a medical marvel, both relying on an understanding of non-White bodies as being aberrations of the human form. While these beliefs would be innovated in the times of the Enlightenment with racial sciences such as phrenology, Renaissance England was certainly no stranger to similar constructions.

Three-hundred-forty-five years later, or five-hundred-eighty-nine, in the case of the film's chronological setting, is Robby the Robot. As a prop, Robby is immensely prolific, with twenty-nine television and film credits to his name and a design dripping with personality. It would not be exaggerating to claim that he is as much of a cornerstone of science fiction as the very film he was constructed for. But as a narrative element, there exists layers of tragedy and intrigue among Robby's many blinking lights, pulsing wires, and whirring gears. Unlike his Shakespearean counterparts, however, Robby does not chafe at the commands of Dr. Morbius, nor does he disobey or question them. Not because he is particularly devoted or loyal to the marooned philologist, but because he is simply incapable of doing so. Because Robby, in nearly every possible sense, was created by Morbius and for Morbius. As such, his origins are easily categorized, and as such to not leave room for any pesky free will, resentment, or disobedience. The very first glimpse of Robby that an audience gets upon beginning the film, is him speeding towards the United Planet's ship, and inviting its crew to have lunch with his master, greeting them with a rather charming phrase: "For your convenience, I am monitored to respond to the name 'Robby'" (*Forbidden Planet*, Act 1 Scene 4). This, in addition to a regular use of honorifics, keys one into the notion that Robby's behavior is, in a rather literal sense, programmed to be servile, and he knows it. Upon inviting C-57D's commanding officers over to Morbius' compound for the appropriate introductions and veiled threats, Robby is made a rather off-putting display. Where Prospero was keen to use a number of spirits and parlor tricks to

impress his captive houseguests, Morbius uses Robby as the centerpiece of his technological empire, even if he pretends that he is bored of him. Morbius demonstrates Robby's ability to synthesize any chemical compound with no perceivable source, while being sure to manually input the data on Robby's chassis, (despite Robby later being shown to be capable of doing so unassisted), all the while describing him as showing "absolute selfless obedience" (Act 1, Scene 5). The use of the word "selfless" is rather interesting in this case, seeing as there is a very real possibility that Morbius is being literal, and is not calling Robby unselfish so much as stating that Robby lacks a sense of self. Regardless, Robby has no choice but to demonstrate his unselfishness/lack of self by following such commands as nearly sticking his hand into a molecular disintegrator, or attempting to shoot Commander Adams in the head with a laser pistol, in spite of his pre-programmed incapability to do so, and subsequent cognitive near-meltdown.

This is, fundamentally, what separates Robby from Caliban and Ariel, more-so than even the fact that he is not a living, thinking creature. That not only is he incapable of resisting the mastery of Morbius, but he also came from Morbius. While Prospero's bizarre servants are tragic in how they are creatures with agency which they were then denied by their invader's threats of retribution, Robby was tragic because was never created with agency in mind. He was not built with the capacity to rebel, to think for himself, or to have any personality or identity save what he is afforded by Morbius. For a rather direct, and ironic, contrast, consider the following lines from Caliban and Robby: "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you / For learning me your language" (Shakespeare, 1.2.364-6) and "If you do not speak English, I am at your disposal with 187 other languages along with their various dialects and sub-tongues" (Act 1, Scene 4). One might see the sheer vitriol in Caliban's words

and perceive the writ of Robby's words as being almost enthusiastic. But it cannot be understated that these words have literally been placed into Robby's mouth. He is not a willing subject, nor is he an unwilling subject, nor is he even a subject. Robby is like unto a friendly answering machine, or a talking thermostat.

This relationship, between a tyrannical scientist and his much put-upon robot sidekick, is one with a long and storied history, both in the science fiction literary genre, and in the nonfictional politics of power. For while all that was mentioned thus far covered Robby's origins and interactions within the text itself, the origin of Robby as a character archetype is not so clean-cut, and leans heavier into many of the same uncomfortable crevices as Caliban and Ariel. In fact, the cultural construct, (har har) of the robot in-and-of-itself is rooted, in many ways, in the institution of slavery. This is true, for starters, in an etymological standpoint, as can be observed in the first credited time that the word 'robot' was used to refer to a mechanical person, Karel Čapek's stage play *R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)* from 1920. There, the term is a derivative of the Czech word *robota*, meaning drudgery, hard work, or serf labor. Semiotically, of course, there is potency to the analogy as well, as is discussed at length in the third chapter of Despina Kakoudaki's *Anatomy of a Robot*. There, she discusses the various ways in which the robot exists as, in a sense, the logical next step in the legacy of slavery, and of alienating labor. To quote her: "The fantasy of the robotic servant, worker, or slave promises that if the enslavement of real people can no longer be tolerated in the modern world then mechanical people may be designed to take their place, and their labor will deliver the comforts of a laborless world for the rest of us" (Kakoudaki 116). In that sense, it is an innately rather ironic figure, the robot. As it is the product of a world that considers itself too enlightened to exploit sentient beings, so it invents a menagerie of non-sentient ones to exploit instead. Or, in

Kakoudaki's words: "When connected to the discourse of rights and social justice, robots embody our penchant for technicality" (Kakoudaki 116).

Furthermore there is a sort of exaggeration of the innate dehumanization and difference that enslavement not only inflicts upon its victims, but requires to even exist. Consider the various historical justifications of slavery, be they from the bible, from phrenology, or from economics, each of them are founded upon the conceit that the enslaved population are innately inferior, or otherwise uniquely suited for servitude. Each of these, naturally, fail to hold up to scrutiny, but for a hypothetical robot, a mechanical creature, the argument becomes rather different. Consider Robby again: Robby, unlike Caliban and Ariel, and unlike any human being, was not born, but built. The product of human hands and human motivation, he was built with an explicit set of purposes in mind; to serve each of Morbius' commands, to not willingly cause harm to Morbius or any other human life, and to express enough personality to amuse Morbius, but not enough to possess free will. This ends up painting a sort of cruelty to the various eccentricities of Robby's character that made him a memorable figure in B-cinema history, whereby his witty remarks, paired with his monotone voice take on a new dimension. Consider the way he responds to a question about Altair 4's oxygen rich atmosphere with: "I hardly use it myself, sir. It promotes rust, (Act 1, Scene 4) or justifies his delayed response time with "Sorry, Miss, I was giving myself an oil job" (Act 2, Scene 5). When considered in tandem with the wholly artificial qualities of his existence, what appears to be a dry, competent humor, reminiscent of literary valets of old, such as Jeeves, Planchet, or Mervyn Bunty, is actually just the hollow, algorithmic refrain of Morbius' wind-up toy.

The extent to which Robby is "loyal" to Morbius throughout the story is notable, even amongst earlier depictions of constructed humanoids made before *Forbidden Planet*, and

certainly after. The aforementioned *R.U.R.* featured a prominent mechanical rebellion, as did Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* from 1872, as well as the mother of all science fiction, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* from 1816. Rather, Robby more resembles a different trope found in earlier science fiction depicting a sort of accidental robotic uprising, whereby the limitations that mankind bestowed upon robots to keep themselves safe are interpreted in an existentially-dangerous way. Examples of this can be observed in Jack Williamson's novelette *With Folded Hands* from 1947, wherein "Mechanicals" serve a "Prime Directive" that makes them prevent human harm at all costs. As such, the Mechanicals infiltrate every aspect of human society, rigging it to become overbearingly safe, with such policies as the outlawing of suicide, and mandatory lobotomies for resisting citizens. But no clearer are such examples of the laws of robotics than in Isaac Asimov's famous "Three Laws of Robotics", shock of shocks. In short, these laws are as follows: a robot cannot bring or allow harm to a human, a robot must follow all commands except those that break the first law, and a robot must protect itself, unless doing so would break the first or second law. While these laws are often interpreted in popular culture to be immutable, there were frequent cases in Asimov's works where the holes in the Laws' logic lead to disastrous consequences. Such consequences include instances where conflicts arise over what qualifies as a "robot" and a "human", as in *Bicentennial Man* and "*—That Thou Art Mindful of Him*". But more pertinent to the case of Robby the Robot are the many instances of failures by dilemma scene in the iconic *i, Robot* compendium, such as *Runaround* and *Liar!*, which each depict instances of robots entering a deadlock between two laws, and completely freezing.

This is how *Forbidden Planet*'s climax begins, with Morbius commanding Robby to destroy the monstrous Beast From the Id, unaware that it is an extension of his own subconscious, and therefore human. Robby, in contrast, is well aware, and becomes caught

between his incapability to refuse an order and his incapability to willingly harm a human being. As promised, this leads to an overload of every circuit in Robby's mechanical brain. This, quite deliberately, is a reflection of the aforementioned scene in *Morbius*' kitchen, where this cognitive deadlock is amusingly shown off to the United Planets officers as a demonstration of Morbius' authority and control over Robby. Robby, in his relationship to Morbius, 's authority and control, reflects a sort of dissonance rather well.

The subject of *Forbidden Planet*'s relationship to gender, the dynamics of gender, and to the theories of Sigmund Freud are yet another fundamental thing to consider when establishing Robby's identity. For the first point on this particular subject, let one consider the specific gender identity of Robby the Robot. Throughout not only the film, the film's pop-cultural legacy, and this very analysis, it has been taken for granted that Robby is male. After all, he has a male voice, is called by a male name, and is referred to with 'he' and 'him' pronouns, (if he is, of course, not referred to as 'it'), one would say that it is a fairly safe assumption to make. However, in spite of this, the matter of Robby's actual gender is repeatedly called into question, both by the words and actions of the United Planets crew, and by a variety of implications surrounding many of Robby's scenes. This is done first within mere moments of meeting Robby, by C57-D's slovenly cook, who asks: "Hey, Doc, is it a male or a female" (Act 1, Scene 4)? One can infer the nature of the cook's inquiry by the lecherous expression on his face, in addition to the recency of his prior complaints regarding "Another one of them new worlds. No beer, no women, no pool parlors" (Act 1, Scene 3). Robby wastes no time answering the cook's question for the good doctor, responding "In my case, sir, the question is totally without meaning" (Act 1, Scene 4). And it is not difficult to see why it is that Robby considers this distinction pointless, as the value of that particular social strata would be ill-imposed on what is, effectively, a walking

toaster. As such, the particular gendered connotations of Robby's name are just as much a product of Morbius' insistence as Robby's name itself, along with the rest of what can be called Robby's "identity". This rather cut-and-dry response does not, however, stop the three principal members of C57-D, Commander Adams, Doctor Ostrow, and Lieutenant Farman, from consistently making jokes at Robby's expense by projecting feminine qualities onto him.

After Morbius describes Robby's synthesizing abilities, Commander Adams glibly responds "That's a housewife's dream" (Act 1, Scene 5), inspiring chuckles and smirks from his officers. While this joke was surely hilarious for an American moviegoing audience in 1956, the absurdity of responding to an act separated from Biblical Multiplication by time and space alone with 'Yeah, like a *woman*, am I right, fellas?' cannot be understated. Furthermore, when inquiring about Morbius' yet-unseen wife, Ostrow makes the observation: "I thought Robby had managed some very...charming feminine touches" and chortling at his own wit. Farman, not to be outdone, has a jab or two of his own, stumbling over his words to call Robby a 'gentleman', and remarking to Altaira that "[he] wouldn't mind being Robby in certain ways...that's only in *certain* ways, of course" (Act 2, Scene 2). This last instance marks the fourth time within half-an-hour of runtime where characters imply that somebody else is, or that they want to be, sexually intimate with Robby the Robot. Ironically, in regards to Farman's comment, Robby is about the only character in the play who does not express a desire to be sexually intimate with Altaira. This, in a way, reinforces Robby's status as an Ariel surrogate, while making him even less of a Caliban surrogate, as Robby is somewhat sexualized despite lacking any sexual qualities, but never attempts to attack Altaira like Caliban did to Miranda.

Morbius lauds his robot's accomplishments frequently, but only so far as to compliment his own brilliance. Morbius bestowed upon his creation the name, the throat, and the shape of

man enough to enjoy mastery over another creature, but not so much that he begins to annoy, threaten, or inspire sympathy. Not even after Morbius' death is Robby freed, as he is brought upon the United Planets starship, watching emotionlessly as Altair 4 is destroyed by the Krell technology that lines its belly. There, he is promptly received as their newest "astro-gator", now responding to commands with "A genuine privilege, Commander" and "Aye-aye, Skipper" (Act 5, Scene 5). Unlike Ariel, who is granted his liberty, or Caliban, who was left to his dominion on the island, Robby remains the unerring tool of human interest. What becomes of him after the film's credits can only be speculated upon. Perhaps he will remain as a possession of the human intergalactic government, working until his metaphorical wheels fall off, or until he is met with another deadlock and meltdown. Perhaps he will be dissected, or reverse-engineered, inspiring the design for a whole line of Robbies, an entire species of robotic slaves, as seen in Asimov or *R.U.R.* Perhaps he will be interrogated for his knowledge of what formerly existed on Altair 4, beginning anew this cycle of technological ascension and hubris. Commander Adams seems to even account for this last possibility, monologuing to Altaira that "About a million years from now the human race would have crawled up to where the Krell stood in their great moment of triumph and tragedy. And your father's name will shine again, like a beacon in the galaxy. It's true that it will remind us that we are, after all, not God" (Act 5, Scene 4). This sentiment, of Morbius' tale serving as a moral fable, rings rather hollow when a very monument to all that pride and audacity sits behind him, now operating his ship, setting a course for Earth. In the end, Robby is ignored.

Chapter Two: Morbius, Miranda and the Id

Of the more compelling non-monstrous characters to be found in *Forbidden Planet* and *The Tempest*, the respective father/daughter duos of Prospero and Miranda and Morbius and Altaira make up the rest of each respective works' characterization. Prospero and Morbius are both exiled masters of their respective crafts, who both claimed dominance over the lands they inhabited, and what resided on them. Miranda and Altaira are both blushing innocents, ignorant to the circumstances of their isolation, and knowing only their own father before the inciting ship's landings, which incite respective romances. But unlike Morbius and Altaira, the nature of Prospero and Miranda's exile impacts both the nature of their relationship and Miranda's courtship with her fellow romantic lead. And unlike Prospero and Miranda, the explicitly Freudian allusions present in Morbius and Altaira's characterization deeply impacts the nature of their relationship, and of Morbius' disapproval of his daughter's courtship. Much like the relationship between Caliban, Ariel, and Robby, the assumption that each pair of characters are corollaries to one another, whether deliberately, accidentally, superficially or significantly, contribute to an enhanced understanding of each text. Understanding Morbius and Altaira as reflections of Prospero and Miranda demonstrates how both texts utilize psychoanalytic themes to tell a story of a father's obsessions embodying and amplifying his most toxic qualities, which alienate those around him, his daughter in particular. In the case of *Forbidden Planet*, the reflection emphasizes and legitimizes those psychoanalytical qualities that were explicitly and directly present. In *The Tempest's* case the reflection calls attention to qualities that would later be recognized as psychoanalytical in nature that were present in the text all along.

To begin before the advent of psychoanalytical theory, there are the disgraced Duke of Milan, Prospero, and the youthful Miranda, who both reign on a desert island of unknown

geographical locale. These two and their relationship are one of the more fundamental pieces of *The Tempest*'s narrative and, as history would tell it, would end up taking something of an archetypal shape. This will be a notable thing to consider later on. Indeed, if one is to analyze Morbious and Altaira as being archetypal reconstructions of Prospero and Miranda, one must isolate features they possess that define their characterization. This is not, to say, merely their shared roles in the story, but shared qualities and behaviors that inform those roles in the story. In the case of Prospero, the qualities of his that were both the most defining and the most clearly adapted into later characters are his antisocialness, his need to maintain control, and his hidden insecurities.

In the first scene and second act of *The Tempest*, Prospero explains to his daughter the circumstances of their present lodgings, and his former life as the Duke of Milan. And one of the first impressions that one gets is that, as Duke of Milan, Prospero was not a terribly involved politician. Though beloved by his people, if he himself is to be believed, Prospero was uninterested in performing his duties as head of state, and far more concerned with his personal affairs. As such, he bequeathed all his tangible responsibilities to his brother Antonio: "And Prospero the prime Duke, being so reputed/ In dignity, and for the liberal arts/ Without a parallel; those being all my study,/ The government I cast upon my brother/ And to my state grew stranger, being transported/ and rapt in secret studies" (1.2.22-7). Prospero, even at the peak of his power and influence, did not wish to interact personally with his stately affiliates or his immediate family, choosing instead to isolate himself. In a sense, he had already exiled himself before Alonso, Sebastian or Antonio had the chance. In fact, there is a direct correlation between his choice to shirk his duties and his political usurpation, making the expository foundation of the entire narrative a consequence of his own antisocial tendencies.

There are several key moments in this discussion with Miranda that Prospero lets slip a number of topics that he is somewhat defensive about, namely his relationship with his mother, and with his wife. Naturally, this is where many of the more Freudian and otherwise psycho-sexual aspects of Prospero's characterization present themselves. Prospero, in first telling Miranda that he was the Duke of Milan, says: "Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and/ She said thou wast my daughter: and thy father was the Duke of Milan;" (1.2.56-8), almost as a response to Miranda's previous question of: "Had I not/ Four or five women once that attended me" (1.2.46-7)? It is rather telling, in this instance, for Prospero to suddenly make the subject of this question about whether or not his wife was faithful to him, or for him to consider a question about whether an infant Miranda had female attendants a challenge of that faithfulness. Furthermore, when referring to Antonio and his betrayal, he refers to him as "a brother [...] so perfidious – he, whom next thyself/ Of all the world I loved" (1.2.67-9). This bodes rather curiously about this non-present, ambiguously-alive wife, whose fidelity he felt the need to compulsively defend. Further descriptions of the usurpation of Prospero evoke, depending on interpretation, either a replacement of motherly affection, or a marital infidelity: "[N]ew created/ The creatures that were mine, I say—or changed 'em/ Or else new-formed 'em—having both the key/ Or officer and office, set all hearts i' th' state/ To what tune pleased his ear, that now he was/ The ivy which hid my princely trunk/ And sucked my verdure out on't" (1.2.81-8). This effect is doubled with later discussions of "open[ing]/ the gates of Milan;" (1.2.129-30) in the dead of night evoking a nighttime tryst. Prospero's characterization of Antonio either usurping him from their mother as the younger child, or usurping him as a husband, adds a layer of dimension to the subconscious way that Prospero interprets his experiences. In addition, it makes the absence of Prospero's wife on the island more poignant as well, leaving the only woman that

Prospero spends his life with on the island his daughter who he intends to morally and intellectually groom, even if his wife's absence was not a choice that he made.

Prospero, in being exiled, left with Miranda, and only Miranda, to accompany him has the unanticipated effect of making usurpation impossible, metaphorically. Not only would there be no one to stop him from dedicating all his time to his magical studies, or challenge his rule, but there would be no other model of behavior for his daughter, leaving him in total control. In fact, remaining on the subject of mothers, Prospero remains the closest approximation of a maternal figure in the play, as strange as that seems. This is borrowing, to a degree, an argument in Janet Adelman's *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays*, where it's said that Prospero, in asserting himself as a masculine authority, usurps feminine bodies. Adelman describes a process throughout many of Shakespeare's plays, whereby a father banishes the maternal body, a maternal body which is framed as dangerous, in a primeval, sylvan sense. Though Sycorax is already dead before Prospero landed on the island, he took steps to assume her status, both as the resident magician, as a parental figure, so to speak. Quoting Adelman, "Except for Caliban, Prospero's Companions on his island are freed from that body through his appropriation of its generative power" (Adelman 237) This can be demonstrated in how Prospero 'made gape/ The pine and let [Ariel] out' (1.2.292-3), effectively birthing Ariel, "his ideal bodiless son" (Adelman 237) and raising Miranda on his own. Reflecting on his behavior in such a matter redefines Prospero's antagonism towards Caliban, his entitlement towards Ariel, and his resentment of Sycorax. Now Caliban is not merely a monster who was sexually predatory towards his daughter, but yet another pretender to his authority, who would have "peopled . . . / This isle with Calibans" (1.2.353-4) as well as a child that is not of his literal or metaphorical brood. Now Ariel is not merely his angst-ridden servant, but another one of his

children, a petulant one who needs reminders of his father's authority and to be made "correspondent to command" (1.2.298). And Sycorax, whose domain he was all too happy to pilfer, stands as a constant threat of relative inadequacy, as she stands as a version of himself who "with age and envy/ Was grown into a hoop" (1.2.259-60). The text establishes each of Prospero's major relationships on the basis of them threatening or reinforcing his sense of control, this sense of control that is fundamentally linked with his sense of paternity.

Prospero's desire for control, and Freudian slips of insecurity, are demonstrated to a rather potent degree in Dr. Edward Morbius, at seemingly every opportunity that is narratively convenient. All of the afore-mentioned gestures mentioned in Robby's portion are withstanding, but it is important to note Morbius is not simply exercising this authority and control over Robby for his own amusement, but also to intimidate the Commander and his lieutenants. Morbius has been presented with an encroaching military outfit on his doorstep, who has likely come to either pilfer him for his interplanetary secrets, send him back to earth, or charge him with the deaths of the rest of the Bellerophon's crew, which, contrary to his suspicious mannerisms, he has yet to learn was his fault. As such, he takes the time to revel in the superiority that the Krell ruins have granted him and the disadvantage the United Planets crew finds itself in. And as the scene displays, there was no better way to exercise this disadvantage than by tormenting the robot butler of his own creation, the one with inhuman strength, unlimited linguistic and scientific knowledge, and the ability to fabricate matter at will. And when the dumbfounded soldiers are in disbelief over his inventing such a machine, with abilities one usually attributes to a god, in but a mere few months, Morbius glibly retorts: "A useful-enough toy, lieutenant, but nowadays I have no time for such things" (Act 1, Scene 5). Morbius must not only look to be in constant control, but in constant *effortless* control.

This impulse Morbius possesses grafts well onto many of his other more antisocial qualities, such as his shameless contempt for his fellow human beings. He is relentlessly condescending to the crew of the starship C57-D, he admires the Krell for the way they dwarf mankind in intellect and achievement, and he raised his daughter, Altaira, to share the same innate dislike, even if perhaps not so fervently. This shared sentiment can be observed when Altaira responds to Lieutenant Farmer's statement that Morbius was initially not happy to receive visitors from Earth with "Naturally not. After all, you're from Earth" (Act 2, Scene 2). Most blatantly of all, however, does Morbius demonstrate his disdain when he inadvertently sics the Creature From the Id onto his fellow crewmates of the Bellerophon. There, it is quite plainly stated that Morbius felt the subconscious desire to rip limb-from-limb a group of people he lived with for years, and who even attended his wedding, if it meant remaining on Altair 4. This is even excessive in comparison to Morbius' intertextual predecessor in Prospero. It is true, yes that Prospero was similarly keen to vilify his political enemies to the impressionable Miranda, and even admitted himself: "Me, poor man, my library / Was Dukedom large enough" (1.2.109-110) and described his studies as "volumes that I prize above my dukedom" (1.2.166-7). Not to mention that he was briefly comfortable on his island, as it meant enjoying unquestioned sovereignty that would not distract from his secret arts. But, nevertheless, only one man out of Prospero and Morbius was left to their respective hermitages by *choice*, and it was not Prospero, who incited the play's very events in an effort to escape it.

Contrarily, Morbius was part of a scientific exploration expedition, a job which necessitated living as far from Earth as possible. This was an end that Morbius was outspoken enough in that he and his wife were the sole dissenting votes, even amongst a crew of presumably-like minded people. It is also very telling that unlike in *The Tempest*, *Forbidden*

Planet has no...well, tempest. Morbius does not concoct some scheme to attract the United Planets into his midst, nor does he even appear to have been expecting them in the first place. When he learns that a military outfit had been sent on a twenty-year voyage to rescue him and the rest of the *Bellerophon*, he tells them: "I, of course, appreciate your concern, but absolutely no assistance of any sort is required. [...] Let me repeat, I am in no sort of difficulty here, your best procedure would be to turn back at once without landing" before empathetically finishing his thought with "Commander, if you set down on this planet I warn you that I cannot be answerable for the safety of your ship or your crew" (Act 1, Scene 2). It cannot be understated just how much he does not want these people here, and how little he misses mankind.

So if Morbius is so insistent in his tremendous disdain for humanoids that are not extensions of himself, even to a literal extent, as will be elaborated on later, then it invites one to ponder why, exactly, Robby has the qualities of personhood that he does. Robby is, by no means, handsome by human standards, with his oblong shape, his visible mechanical entrails, and his lack of anything overtly resembling a face. But, nevertheless, he possesses the general makeup of a human being: he is upright, he has one pair of arms, one pair of legs, a torso in the middle, and a head on the top. Additionally, he has an endearing nickname that he is called, as well as conversational speech, with dialects, colloquialisms, and an understanding of idioms. And the level of pop-cultural acclaim that the Robby prop received outside of the world of the narrative speaks volumes to Robby's capacity to be charmingly human.

Again, this prompts the question: "Why did Morbius design Robby in such a shape?" Surely, he could have been integrated into the house itself, perhaps an artificial intelligence that can control an army of satellite machines to do all of Morbius's busywork. Potentially, a fully-automated Robby would have been a more efficient tool, in addition to not resembling the

human beings that Morbius traveled light years away to avoid. But alas, Morbius made Robby to be a bipedal domestic servant that can even be embraced by his daughter, something Prospero never let Caliban get away with trying more than once in *The Tempest*. For inklings of an answer to these questions, Kakoudaki yet again provides. On the psychology of the dissonance, as alluded to in the prior chapter, present within a robotic servant class, she says: “In robotic storylines, there is a tension between the ideal of disembodied automation, [...] and the discursive desire to actually see the laborers in some form without acknowledging their presence. The fantasy of robotic masses expresses a complex desire, to embody and de-personate at the same time” (Kakoudaki 132). Furthermore: “The pathos of the inanimate – its silence and stillness, its inability to act – become evocative for unspoken forms of submission and helplessness in the human world” (Kakoudaki 133).

This reflection of his relationship with Robby, as being just human enough to give him the satisfaction of having authority over a near-human creature, without it overstaying its welcome or threatening him, is an appropriate one. It would certainly complement Prospero’s relationship with Ariel, after all. But this is not an interpretation to rest on definitively, nor a point to belabor too much. This is both given the previous discussion of the subject, and because it likely goes further than that. In specific, Morbius, whether he acknowledges, likes, or even knows it, designed Robby with human qualities in mind to perceive Robby as an extension of himself. The jokes that Adams, Ostrow, and Forman had made that implied Morbius was romantically or sexually intimate with his robot slave were crass, but perhaps not entirely off base. This is not to imply that Morbius actually does wish to be intimate with Robby, but that Robby filled a domestic space that was left behind by his wife, if even. More than anything,

Robby *is* Morbius, effectively. He executes Morbius' will without question, he is not obtrusive, and he stands as a testament to Morbius' own accomplishments.

This is apropos, and even ironic, when paired with *Forbidden Planet's* next most otherworldly and impressive creature, second only to Robby himself: The Beast From the Id. With that rather on-the-nose naming convention, the Freudian aspects of this character should be similarly straightforward to observe. In the film, it is described that the Beast From the Id was a direct consequence of Dr. Morbius' sampling of the ancient Krell people's brain-expanding technology. The logic is that in the same way that the technology expanded his higher-minded abilities, it also gave a tangible shape to his baser impulses. But in this particular instance, it fills out the Freudian construct of the subconscious, as represented thus far by Dr. Morbius and Robby the Robot. Dr. Morbius, the self-impressed, overly-ambitious patriarch, fits rather neatly as the Ego. Robby, with all his subservience, selflessness, and strict adherence to established terms of behavior makes a particularly put-upon interpretation of the Superego. Finally, the Id is...itself. In all seriousness, it is a very striking visage. As a grotesque parody of a human being, it stands as an invisible, bipedal creature with a roaring maw and great stomping feet, evoking the "insidious and irresistible force" (insert citation) thought to lay dormant within the mind.

This projects rather easily, onto Prospero's relationship with Ariel and Caliban, as an application of then-contemporary psychoanalysis onto a well-circulated cultural artifact. Freud's Ego was observed in Prospero's deeply-held self-interest and his overbearing demeanor. Ariel's persistent nagging of his master, reminding him to live up to his more gentle qualities, made him an apt Superego. And the aggression and libidinousness with which Caliban, and in fact most caricatures of African and Indigenous bodies, was portrayed, give him a narrative position of the Id. And while, as mentioned, Shakespeare would have been a good deal too early to be able to

quote Freud directly, the *Tempest*'s text does reflect a level of parallels between its characters that lend credence to this manner of interpretation. After all, as influential as Sigmund Freud was, he did not invent poetic metaphor. There are a litany of characters in *The Tempest*, even apart from Caliban and Ariel, that bear with them a piece of Prospero. Sycorax, as has been discussed, is a rather clear-cut predecessor to Prospero's own situation, and perhaps one that Prospero resents thinking about due to his own illusions of superiority. Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio, though reviled by Prospero for their misdoings towards him specifically, are no less usurpers than he was, when he staked his claim upon the island, and enslaved the inhabitants thereupon.

On that very subject, Prospero, by the end of the play, seems to reflect on his poor treatment of Caliban, and sees in him a reflection of Prospero's own plights, to a degree: "[T]his demi devil/ (For he's a bastard one) had plotted with them/ To take my life. Two of these fellows you/ Must know and own; this thing of darkness I/ Acknowledge mine" (5.1.572-6). For, truthfully, much like Prospero, Caliban was but a soul in a place of authority he thought he was entitled to, content to be absorbed in his own passions. He welcomed others to share in his sovereignty, and was usurped by them, before being banished from his own home. Even within those parameters, Caliban was done far worse by Prospero than even Prospero was done by his fellows in Italy. At least Prospero had his studies to be engrossed in, his magic to give him security and convenience, and his daughter to keep him company, with all that implies. Caliban was thrown to the elements, forced to perform manual labor for his usurper, and was made the target of literally and figuratively ritualistic abuse by spirits when he did not fall in line. As such, Prospero, in seeing both Caliban's humanity, as well as a reflection of his own misdeeds and persecutions, makes a connection that links them symbolically in a way that Morbius was linked to his own Id literally.

There is, however, a rather notable factor in Caliban and Prospero's animosity that this description leaves out, one that was alluded to prior: Caliban's attempted assault of Miranda. This was described earlier, through Prospero's perspective, as yet another usurpation, for he perceives Miranda as an extension of not only himself, but as the subject of his influence, and thus an extension of his authority and his property. Additionally, it was implied that Prospero sees in Miranda a feminine force that he can groom into what he perceives as an untouched specimen of female nobility, like the kind he assures his absent wife was, with dubious citation. Just as Freud did not invent metaphor, he also did not invent incest. In fact, both he and William Shakespeare would have been borrowing from the same cultural baseline. After all, the same Greek myths that lent names to Freud's infamous Oedipus and Jung's infamous Electra Syndromes were the basis of the ancient plays that a student of classics such as Shakespeare would have been intimately familiar with. With that being the case, the incestual dimensions to the familial dynamics of Prospero and Miranda would have been no more lost on an audience in James' England as an audience in Eisenhower's America. Naturally, this is not to say that Prospero is not apt to be perceived as Freudian in that he explicitly wants to be sexually intimate with his daughter, but rather to say that his desire to control her sexual destiny is figuratively incestuous. It gives him yet another parallel with his own usurper, as Alonso was implied to have married away his daughter to politically benefit him. Only in the case of Alonso, this would have been an attempt to expand his power, whereas for Prospero it would be a means of maintaining it.

Morbius' relationship with his daughter is similarly laden with these pseudo-sexual qualities, in many ways to a more active extent than *The Tempest*; surely due, in no small part to the more explicit links to the dynamics of Freudian psychoanalysis. Naturally, there is the matter

of how the Creature From the Id is a literal reflection of Morbius' own violent, insecure, and possessive qualities of Morbius' personality, rather than a metaphorical one such as Caliban. As such, when the Creature of the Id killed the Bellarophan's crew, many of Commander Adams' men, and very nearly Altaira, it was done by Morbius himself. By now, this is an incredibly obvious and belabored point, but it is worthy of such emphasis due to the severity of implication at play. The film states that the reason that the Id had for attempting to attack Altaira was because Morbius did not approve of her going against his wishes and becoming intimate with Commander Adams, or in fact, any of the men from Earth. This is an important consideration to make when compared to Prospero, who similarly did not think very much at first of Ferdinand, his daughter's suitor, and made a big show of forbidding her from associating with him. For, in spite of this, it was not Prospero's goal to stop Miranda and Ferdinand from being wed. On the contrary, he had accounted for it, and took steps to realize it, as it was a part of his plan to embarrass those who betrayed him, and re-acquire his seat in the duchy of Milan: "[To Ferdinand] If I have too austere punished you,/ Your compensation makes amends, for I/ Have given you here a third of mine own life,/ Or that for which I live, who once again/ I tender to thy hand. All thy vexations/ Were but my trials of they love, and thou/ Hast strangely stood the test" (4.1.1-7).

This perspective of his would be challenged somewhat, as will be discussed at length later, but it stands as it does in this particular juncture. Morbius, on the other hand, has no such secret machinations. As mentioned, he has no great plan of vengeance, no significant enemies, no aspirations to return to the planet Earth, nothing of the sort. Every death that ever occurred at his hands was an accident, and the most he ever did to scare away those that threatened him was to act condescendingly to them, and show off his cool cyberhouse. This means that his rejection

of Altaira's courtship with John Adams is an adamant and sincerely-felt jealousy towards another man who loved his daughter; a jealousy that caused his literal Id to lash out at her in spite of the protestations of his Ego and Superego. In the words of the film: "“And now this too? Harm my own daughter?” ‘But now she’s defying you, Morbius. Even in you, the loving father, there still exists the mindless primitive’” (Act 5, Scene 3).

The extent of this jealousy is not explicitly said to be sexual, but several key details in the narrative bring with them an array of connotation and implication. The first instance comes with the introduction of Altaira, when she very directly states that she finds the Commander, Doctor, and Lieutenant to be very attractive, and he immediately apologizes on her behalf: “Of course, you must make allowances for my daughter, gentlemen, she has never known any human being except for father” (Act 2, Scene 2). The phrasing and the content of this line stands out as somewhat idiosyncratic. For one, Morbius’ choice to refer to himself in the third person as ‘father’ is unusual in its own right, but for him to blame himself for Altaira’s apparent directness in expressions of sexual attraction is doubly so. Triply so with the aforementioned jokes at the expense of Morbius’ theoretical sexual proclivities. In the same scene, Morbius does some mild hand-wringing about how he should probably bring Altaira to Earth, and then calls her over to assure the men that she is safe and happy on this planet. And as she lovingly holds his hand, and hangs off of his arm, Morbius asks: “Then my little girl never feels lonely, or confined?” to which she responds “Well, I don’t know! I have you, and Robby, and all my friends...” with the friends in question being a bunch of exotic animals (Act 2, Scene 2). Given that the discussion at hand was about whether Altaira should go to Earth to learn about intimate relationships, for her to respond ‘Well, I have my father, don’t I?’ is rather disconcerting. On the subject of what

Altaira does and does not know about appropriate social interactions, the array of gaps do tell a story in and of themselves. Take, for instance, the matter of her clothing.

Much is made throughout the movie regarding Altaira's choice of apparel, in particular Commander Adams' chastisement of her for wearing a dress that fails to pass her knees, like some sort of interstellar hall monitor. Altaira is offended by this, but not because Commander Adams had blamed her for his own lieutenant's attempt to take advantage, but because she herself had made that dress, and her handiwork was insulted. Altaira proves this by humoring him, for some reason, getting Robby to synthesize materials for her to make a new dress that was more in-keeping with the distant future's dress code. It is here where one begins to inquire about where, exactly, Morbius' education of Altaira begins and ends. Because *somebody* had to have taught her how to do that, and it was probably Morbius, if, for no other reason, because of the dearth of other options of who it possibly could have been. The fact that she immediately knew what manner of dress would appease Commander Adams indicates that she had been taught as much, but was not taught that modesty was the default. In fact, Morbius had not even questioned her fashion decisions as he forbade her from fraternizing with the Earthlings, leaving Adams the responsibility to ask 'You aren't going out like *that* are you, young lady?'

For whatever reason, her father did not seem to mind too terribly much that his daughter would walk around their family home in revealing clothing. This particular interpretation may seem a stretch. After all, Morbius cared not for many of the conventions of mankind, it is not impossible that he simply did not see much of the point of scrutinizing women's attire. There is, however, another scene that leaves less room for such charitable interpretation. After Altaira's dress was made, she met up again with Commander Adams while she swam in a small pond directly outside her home. Adams learns at her, ever so slightly, and she invites him in. He suavely

responds with “I haven’t brought my bathing suit” which is met by Altaira with the phrase “What’s a bathing suit” (Act 3, Scene 2)? Now, perhaps Morbius had better things to do than teach his daughter the finer points of swimwear. But it seems remarkably convenient that he, a philologist, would neglect to explain the meaning of that particular phrase, or that she, a hobbyist tailor, would not have been taught about that common article of clothing. Regardless of the reason, the result is Morbius’ sexually burgeoning daughter skinny dipping in the family pool, within eyeshot of the living room, upon the couch where Morbius had sat the previous night. This certainly adds a more sinister angle to the ‘loving father’ and his ‘mindless primitive’.

On the subject, it is with this that attention is now drawn towards Miranda, deposed Lady of Milan, and Altaira Morbius, the only child to be born of Altair 4. Of the characters in the play, there are three with whom Miranda chiefly interacts throughout the play: her father Prospero, her attacker Caliban, and her eventual husband Ferdinand. Each of them represent a masculine force in her life, in addition to being the three first masculine people she recalls ever meeting. By right of Miranda’s prime actions and interactions in the text exclusively pertaining to her relationship to men, it would not be remiss to assume that Miranda will be argued as a static character, or at least one that fails a Bechdel Test. Similarly, that this very portion of the chapter had began with allusions towards the attempted rape of Miranda and towards Freudian undertones in her familial relationship likely gives the impression that Miranda is a vector to analyze Caliban and Prospero. While those elements are present, and were analyzed, reflection upon Miranda as a character reveals her to possess a shocking amount of agency within those relationships, in spite of the relationships of patriarchal power projected upon her.

To best emphasize this point, much shall be drawn from Jessica Slight’s essay *Rape and the Romanticization of Shakespeare’s Miranda*, a work which means to challenge the narratives

found in past and present interpretations of the character. And while it is not the first point that she discusses in the essay, the immediacy of the segue and the microcosmic nature of Miranda's near-rape makes it as apt a place as any to turn. A notable point that she discusses in reference to Caliban's attempted attack on Miranda is that much recent literature that discussed it did its best to tiptoe around it, for its inconvenience to many arguments. Earlier it was mentioned that, if one is making a post-colonial interpretation of *The Tempest* and looking to frame Caliban as a sympathetic character, the fact that he is an unrepentant attempted rapist is rather difficult to parse. As such, a common rhetorical technique that is described is to either not mention it at all, to imply that it was Miranda or Prospero's fault, or to make it, in Slight's words: "an issue of colonialist interpolation and interpretation" (Slight, pg. 353). The issue with this last interpretation was that it often served to defang the crime nearly committed upon Miranda's personhood and her bodily autonomy by making it an act of retribution or reclamation on the part of a colonized person. There is, however, not necessarily a need to compromise to either of these, as it is possible to interpret this attack as being both a political and a personal attack, without making Miranda's agency an afterthought. Because, effectively, Caliban's attack *was* a political one, from his own perspective, at least retroactively, as he justified the practice as something that would have "peopled . . . / This isle with Calibans" (1.2.353-4). This can also be said of Prospero's understanding of the event, to a degree, no matter how sincerely paternal his protectiveness of her was. The afore-mentioned psycho-sexual underpinnings to his relationships, coupled with his demonstrated willingness to marry her off for political gain, support this notion. This leaves Miranda in the middle of this, a pawn in both men's respective gambits for power, triumphantly ambivalent to all of it.

This is the core of Miranda's place in the narrative, as a woman put upon by a myriad of patriarchal expectations and projections, and effortlessly thwarts them. And it can be seen most clearly in her pursuit of Ferdinand, her defiance of Prospero, and her resentment of Caliban. In regards to Caliban's failed assault on her body, she is quick to rebuke him, shifting from sympathy to disdain, and was keen to leave it at that, clearly and definitively saying her peace: "Abhorred slave,/ Which any print of goodness wilt not take,/ Being capable of all ill; I pitied thee,/ [...] But thy vile race/ (Though thou didst learn) had that in't which good/ 'natures/ Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou/ Deservedly confined into this rock/ Who hadst deserved more than a prison" (1.2. 351-63). Granted, the racially-motivated aspects of this particular talking-to are rather disparaging, but seeing as they have been discussed at length already, they can be glossed over at this particular moment. The key takeaways here are that Miranda took a personal investment in teaching Caliban, but became outspoken in her offense to Caliban's misdoings against her, with seemingly little thought or regard for him from then on. What is being argued here is that Miranda, unlike the other characters with whom she shares her island with, does not occupy some role as an allegorical cipher within *The Tempest*. Instead, she occupies a space far more material, where her physical and sexual identity makes her a more nuanced character than the more archetypal figures such as her father or Caliban. Consider how Prospero and Caliban, throughout the entire play, engage in a colonial, Freudian power struggle, latent with metaphors and symbolism, about a masculine force attempting to usurp feminine bodies. Miranda, however, in her actions, defies the projection of such narratives, neither conforming to "nineteenth-century tradition that understood [her] merely as a trope for a feminized conception of nature" or to "more recent materialist tradition that conceives of her

merely as an unwitting object of exchange in a matrix of colonial and nuptial economies” (Slights, pg. 359).

On the subject of nuptial economies, there is also the courtship of Miranda and Ferdinand. As mentioned earlier, this is an outcome that Prospero actively attempts to fashion, by way of his magic and his servant Ariel. Like Alonso with his own daughter, Claribel, Prospero would have his daughter married off as a means of re-buying himself noble connections, and undoing his own exile. In fact, Alonso’s having done so at all made him more likely to strike such a deal with Prospero, as could have been ascertained by his expressed regret for Claribel’s marriage upon learning of Ferdinand’s ‘death’. But in spite of this instance of rather blatant paternal manipulation, Miranda nevertheless perpetrates acts of domestic defiance. Perhaps not so cutting as her defiance of Caliban, as Miranda obviously bears affection for her father, but nevertheless distinct and notable. The first is, rather appropriately, the nature of Ferdinand and Miranda’s initial meeting, in particular how pointedly sexually-tinged it is. Miranda, upon first glancing upon her love-to-be, inquires to her father: “What, is’t a spirit?/ Lord, how it looks about! Believe me, sir/ It carries a brave form. But ‘tis a spirit/ [...] A thing divine, for nothing natural/ I ever saw so noble” (1.2.410-20). And though Prospero is quick to gruffly inform her that Ferdinand is, in fact, one that “eats, and sleeps, and hath such/ senses” (1.2.413-4) Miranda is unwavering in her captivation and her enthusiasm. There is, fundamentally, something almost supernatural about Ferdinand and Miranda’s attraction, as Ferdinand reciprocates in superlatives, referring to “the goddess/ On whom these airs attend” (1.2.422-3). Even Prospero, the architect of their meeting, is caught off guard by the immediate and present magnetism between the two of them, proclaiming to his servant Ariel that this might be *too* easy: “At the first sight/ They have chang’d eyes. [...] They are both in either’s pow’rs; but this swift business/ I must uneasy make,

lest too light winning/ Make the prize light” (1.2.441-53). That Miranda, without trying, triggers Prospero’s paternal authority is significant. And when Prospero goes on to forbid Miranda from seeing Ferdinand, for the sake of making their matrimony more easy to control, she sneaks out without hesitation to woo Ferdinand.

That Miranda is the one doing the wooing is also important, because she is the one who takes the bulk of the initiative. For one thing, she is the one who approaches him, straightforwardly pledging “I would not wish/ Any companion in the world but you;/ nor can imagination form a shape,/ besides yourself, to like of. But I prattle/ Something too wildly, and my father’s precepts/ I therein do forget” (3.1.54-9). This sentiment demonstrates the intensity of her feelings, and her disregard for the risks that disobeying her wizard father presents. This, in addition to other lines from Miranda referring to “[her] modesty/ (the jewel of [her] dowry” (3.1.53) and so forth shows a sort-of awareness on her part of the marriage of convenience she is a part in. But she avoids the chance of capitulating to her patriarchal expectations by resisting the influence of her father, and engaging in the relationship out of sincere desire, making her father’s wishes wholly circumstantial to the equation. It is hardly a revolutionary act of deviance, as she technically does not oppose his wishes, but it does reaffirm her agency, and make it so her marriage is not the transactional relationship that her father wanted it to be.

Once again, the disproportionate statuses between Ferdinand and Miranda’s approaches to the relationship also accentuate Miranda’s own agency in the courtship. Ferdinand, forced by Prospero to take up the timber-man job for the sake of testing his resolve, was content to do as he was told, albeit not without some complaining on his part: “O most dear mistress,/ The sun will set before I shall discharge/ What I must strive to do” (3.1.21-3). To his credit, upon Miranda offering to bear his burden does he acquiesce to his expected Petrarchan superlatives. Moved by

him, Miranda cuts through the poetics and proceeds to spill her metaphorical guts: “At my unworthiness that dare not offer/ What I desire to give; and much less take/ What I shall die to want. But this is trifling,/ [...] Hence, bashful cunning,/ I am your wife, if you will marry me;/ If not, I’ll die your maid. To be your fellow/ You may deny me, but I’ll be your servant,/ Whether you will or no” (3.1.76-86). Bizarrely enough, she gives Ferdinand no choice in the matter, telling him that whether she’s his wife, his lover, or some other baser companion may be debated, but she will not. She cuts through the red tape that was Ferdinand’s classical trepidation, and makes it clear that she is enthusiastically and insistently sexually available. By now, Ferdinand gets the point, and appreciates the domestic disadvantage on Miranda’s part in this relationship, and breaches the gap by proposing: “My mistress, dearest,/ And I thus humble ever” (3.1.86-7). In two ways here Miranda maintains her agency in spite of traditional allegorical hierarchy, once in pursuing a romantic connection irrespective to her father’s machinations, and once by disregarding the domestic servitude latent to heterosexual marriage.

With this, attention must be returned for a moment back to *Forbidden Planet* to consider the characterization of Miranda as a means of considering how the Altaira compares. There are a number of similarities regarding some of her behavior, and certainly regarding the overbearing relationship between her and her father. There are, however, a number of notable differences in the presentation of Altaira, in her interactions with the other characters, and the way she engages narratively. Unlike Miranda, Altaira does fit more neatly into allegorical dynamics, and does possess a greatly diminished agency. This can best be demonstrated by interactions she has throughout the film with Prospero, with Prospero’s inventions, with Commander John Adams, and with the rest of the United Planets crew. Much of this particular ground has already been covered in terms of what these relationship dynamics mean relative to Prospero, but is

nevertheless pertinent from the opposite perspective. Like Miranda before her, Altaira lives a pastoral life on the planet her father claimed dominance over, somehow to an even greater extent than Miranda. For instance, while Miranda surely enjoys herself cheating at chess with her father and taking strolls along the beaches, the edenic qualities of Altaira's upbringing are striking. She bathes naked in nearby pools, frolics barefoot with pacified non-endemic animals, both prey and predator, and Robby's miraculous make it so she never goes hungry, and can adorn herself in precious jewels. And wrapping this portrait of a science fiction Book of Genesis is Altaira's innocence, temptation, and retribution from her omnipotent patriarch, which is to not even mention the detail that her suitor is named 'Adams'. That she fits so neatly into this allegorical shell is not an innate criticism of the character, but it is interesting to observe when contrasted with the bizarre nuance with which Miranda is presented.

The innocence, even naivety, of Altaira, is brought into plain view upon her introduction, morbidly paired with her physical sensuality. She introduces herself to her father and her guests, the camera capturing the cherubic visage of Altaira before snap-cutting to catch the reactions of Adams, Ostrow, and Farman, and to see their eyes widen and postures improve. Morbius chastises her, lightly, reminding her that he requested that she not join them for lunch, to which Altaira coyly responds: "But father, Lunch is over. I'm sure you never said a word about not coming in for coffee. Well, did you or didn't you" (Act 2, Scene 2) At a glance, one might consider this to be a rather tongue-in-cheek question on the part of Altaira, sarcastically taking advantage of a technicality in her father's instructions to meet these newcomers. However, this is an inclination that is downplayed both by the sheer credulity with which the line is delivered, in addition to several succeeding statements on Altaira's part. Barely missing a beat, Altaira enthusiastically chirps: "I've always so terribly wanted to meet a young man, and now three of

them at once! [...] You're lovely, Doctor! [...] Of course, the two end ones are unbelievable" (Act 2, Scene 2)! This can be observed a second time when Altaira visits the crew's landing sight to observe them closer. Lieutenant Farman, neglecting his duties to further proposition Altaira, asks her if her father knows that she came there, to which Altaira notes: "He did tell me not to go near the ship. After all, this isn't very near" (Act 2, Scene 3). Given the effervescent bluntness of this series of proclamations, it leads one to consider that Altaira's getting around her father's wishes to meet the crew was more out of some childlike curiosity than out of some sense of defiance.

In fact, though Altaira's having defied Morbius throughout the course of the story is something referred to directly in the film's dialogue, precious little of her defiant qualities are the product of her own choices. On the contrary, they are the product of the men in the story taking advantage of her lack of social experiences, or projecting their own insecurities onto her. There is something of a sordid love triangle that occurs between Adams and Farman, the two 'end ones' that Miranda found herself the most attracted to. It is this relationship that drives the wedge between father and daughter, which is strange when considering the actual content of it. In fact, if anything, it began with Altaira mirroring her father's teachings, having casually let it slip that she takes it for granted that most people from Earth are not to be trusted. Farman wastes no time in misleading a teenager, and slandering his coworkers for the sake of sexual gratification: "Well, that is, I am [an exception], anyway. [...] Of course the Doc can be trusted too, in the daytime [...] but [the Commander] is infamous throughout seven planetary systems [...] any girl or woman who lets them get her alone anywhere..." (Act 2, Scene 2). This pursuit continues, and involves Commander Adams more directly, in a nearby thicket, after Farman led Altaira away from the landing sight, when he interrupts the two of them kissing.

That interaction was already discussed at length for Adams' extended brow-beating about Altaira's modesty, which, itself, is Edenic in its own way. For one, Altaira is tempted under a tree with the knowledge of something "all the really high civilizations" (Act 2, Scene 4) are buzzing about, before being immediately chided for how little clothing she wears. However, it is Altaira's place in all of this that is notable, as she shows very little actual regard for the significance of her apparent downfall. It is in this that Altaira, at least in demeanor, most mirrors Miranda's paradoxical liberty amongst her many gendered expectations and exploitations, by being seemingly oblivious of them. This can be most potently observed after she accepts a kiss from Farman, who immediately springs into action, coils his arms around her midsection, and nearly swallows her whole face. When he withdraws for breath, Miranda's face underneath is plain, and puzzled as she explains to him: "Is that all there is to it? [...] I dunno, Lieutenant, there must be something seriously the matter with me, because, honestly, I haven't noticed the least bit of stimulation" without an ounce of sarcasm. This is a rather charming exchange, one that stops a scene with a rather blatant power imbalance from being wholly unpleasant to view, as it takes some of that power away from Farman in his mistreatment. However, unlike Miranda's ambivalence, Altaira does not circumvent, nor persist unaware of the masculine powers that would control her, she simply does not appreciate those powers for what they are. As mentioned, she does not even transgress against those powers. This is accentuated by the fact that Adams immediately undermined Altaira, potentially out of jealousy. Not only was she taken advantage of by Farman, and not only was Adams taking his aggression out on Altaira, but from that point forward, everything that is to come from her father is also unfounded.

The first tangible signifier of Altaira receiving any amount of retribution from her father occurred after she debuted her new dress to Adams, and it did not come from Morbius

himself, or even the Id monster, but a pet tiger. But moments after Altaira kissed the Commander for the first time, the two of them are beset upon by a creature one could only presume is named ‘Whiskers’. Altaira feels no fear, naturally, as she has probably known this creature either all her life or all of its, in addition to owning a universal dog whistle said to make it docile. As such, is terrified when one of her cuddle forest friends tries to pounce on her, causing Commander Adams to atomize it with his laser gun. Now, in hindsight, this was likely caused by Morbius lashing out after Altaira became intimate with the Commander, just as the later attack from his Id was. But this is a suspect claim for a variety of reasons. For one, that tiger was, by all accounts, just an ordinary tiger, if one that was spawned by some horrific science fiction cloning technology or, humorously, another one of Robby’s synthetics.

Perhaps, one might then inquire, the whistle is connected to the same Krell mind palace as everything else, and it stopped working when Morbius learned of Altaira’s ‘betrayal’. That would be a very strange way for a whistle to work, but not out of the realm of suspended disbelief. However, this does not align with the way that Morbius’ Id rampages before and since were shown to have worked, since Morbius had yet no way of knowing what had even happened. Because, at that time, Morbius was deep within the bowels of his laboratory, and the last interaction that Morbius would have had with Altaira on the subject of Commander Adams included her saying the words “I don’t like him, I just don’t like him. [...] I hope I don’t see him again if I live to be four-hundred-million” and ended with him grimly implying that he was going to get revenge on the men themselves. This means that he would have had to have heard about Altaira kissing the men the night before, immediately did not believe what she had to say, and unconsciously decided that his daughter was too far gone. In which case, this is a rather poignant example of Altaira’s acts of defiance being more imagined and projected by the insecure men in

her life than actual extensions of Altaira's agency. In fact, there is but only one true moment in the film where Altaira actively goes against Morbius, and it is already well after his subconscious mind had made up its...mind. Altaira was willing to stay behind on the planet with her father, and refused to bring him along by force, but quickly changed her mind when she heard her father mocking the still-warm corpse of Doctor Ostrow. But by then, the Id monster was already active that night, it was already on its way, and Morbius' mind had already attempted to kill her with her own pet tiger.

Generally, this marks a rather distinct difference between the ways that *The Tempest* uses Prospero's magic to represent his most toxic tendencies and the ways that *Forbidden Planet* uses Morbius' alien technology to represent his own most toxic tendencies. Both of them, as mentioned, act as an extension of each man's need to maintain an overbearing level of control over everything in their life as a result of their insecurities about being denied that control. However, the consequence of Prospero giving into these unhealthy tendencies is that they, ironically, make him even more aware of how little control he actually has, causing him to drown his books, and begin anew in Italy. This is best exemplified by the conclusion of Miranda and Ferdinand's courtship, whereby he realizes how their romance progressed in spite of him. He embraces this by celebrating their union with a spiritual masque. All throughout this encounter are pieces of cryptic advice, warning his daughter and his future son-in-law to be wary of forces they cannot control.

To Ferdinand, he proclaims: "Look thou be true. Do not give dalliance/ Too much the rein. The strongest oaths are straw/ To th' fire i'th' blood" (4.1.52-4). He is deeply affected by Miranda's transition into womanhood, and the intensity with which she has propelled herself into love. As his whimsical masque makes merry, itself an inkling to how his magic may, perhaps,

have its utilities outside of intrigue and trickery, goddesses Juno, Iris, and Ceres speak of the comfort of the hearth and home. His own play gives Prospero pause. As he leaves to confront Caliban's drunken rebellion, he leaves his children with the following words: "These our actors,/ As I foretold you, were all spirits and/ Are melted into air, into thin air;/ [...] The solemn temples, the great globe itself/ Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,/ And like this insubstantial pageant faded, Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff/ As dreams are made on" (4.1.148-157).

Prospero, at this moment, is reflecting on the temporariness of his life, and of the illusory nature of his own phantoms. These magics, effectively, are what damned him in the first place. His plan succeeds not because of his magic, but because he underestimated the personal determination of his daughter. Were he to return to Italy, still yet obsessed with these tricks, he would surely regress back into his worst habits, alienating his family once again. He felt that he would be able to be a better politician, a better father, and a better man without his cruel magicks. He communicates as much when he does the aforementioned drowning, exclaiming: "Now my charms are all o'erthrown,/ And what strength I have's my own,/ Which is most faint" (E.1-3). Prospero, in acknowledging the humanity of Caliban, freeing Ariel, forgiving his enemies, and returning to Italy as a normal man, are all embodied by him rebuking his books, as they embodied all of his worst qualities, and did not even solve the problems he wanted them to.

In contrast, Morbius and how his story concluded, is far less hopeful on the subject of his redemption. For one thing, consider the level of danger present in either man's superhuman powers. Prospero's spirits, though menacing, and certainly enough to intimidate Caliban, are used more for their ability to mystify over their raw destructive power. The Tempest, for all its phantasmagorical imagery, is a completely bloodless play. On the other hand, the Krell technology had claimed an innumerable number of lives, even before Morbius had touched down

on the planet. An entire civilization of supernaturally-advanced aliens wiped off the face of history. And Morbius, who at his own admission could barely expand his mind to that of a Krell pre-pubescent, was able to manifest an invisible behemoth that could melt through layers of radioactive isotopes, butchered nearly the entire crew of the Bellerophon overnight, and survived sustained laser fire unharmed. The Krell technology, as a metaphor for Morbius' most toxic traits, is incredibly and existentially dangerous. This is reflected in what those toxic traits manifest as. When Prospero exercises his unhealthy levels of control, he manipulates his daughter as a political tool, but when Morbius exercises his unhealthy levels of control, the manifestation of his Freudian subconscious attacks his daughter in a jealous rage. Attacks her in a way that is quite-significantly reminiscent of incestuous sexual violence. Morbius is denied his control not because his daughter was a more dynamic force than he predicted, but rather because his own violent impulses had become too strong for him to resist, and his crimes too great to ignore.

As such, the metaphorical drowning of Morbius' books goes a very different direction than it did in *The Tempest*. First and foremost, Morbius dies in the process of giving up his powers. He does not get to return from whence he came, humbled by his experiences. Instead, like Dr. Frankenstein before him, he is destroyed by the monster of his own creation. He gave up his powers not after a play's worth of contemplation, but in a moment of desperation to save his daughter's life. In doing so, causing a chain reaction that obliterated the only home that daughter had ever known, one which bore her name. And while Morbius, in doing so, has redeemed himself in the eyes of the narrative and the audience, he still gets what he had wanted before such redemption was achieved. In no uncertain terms, Morbius made it known that he would rather have died before he left his new home, and so he did, it simply had to die with him.

However, in both the case of *The Tempest* and *Forbidden Planet* each fable about the dangers of giving in to tyrannical control at your loved ones' expense is bolstered by themes of psychoanalysis, both romantic and modern conceptions of it. *The Tempest* tells a tale of a father who's antisocial tendencies cost him his title and his home, and could only ever return home by rejecting them, as well as a daughter who showed those tendencies' weakness. *Forbidden Planet* tells a similar tale of a man who grew bitter in his antisocialness, lashing out at a daughter who was nothing but loyal to him, but that comes to the conclusion that he had gone too far to ever go home again.

Concluding Chapter

To conclude this critical appraisal of *The Tempest* and *Forbidden Planet* as having an adaptational relationship, it is pertinent to consider what each text contributes to their shared narrative. More specifically, it needs to be asked what the intended message that the play and film communicated, and how those messages were received by their respective times or by future generations. The two works are certainly very similar in terms of the types of works that they are. Both of them were written to be pieces of vast, fantastical fluff, meant to tickle the imagination of the populist masses, but possessing erudite mythological allusions and bolstered by impressive production, as paid for by their wealthy patrons. However, as was established, the two distinct points in cultural and historical time impact the various influences on these two works, as different adaptations of the same story.

To begin, there are two primary instances, and primary texts, to keep in mind that are foundational to *The Tempest*'s artistic conception: William Strachey's *A True Reportory*, telling his tale of the Sea Venture shipwreck in Bermuda, and Montaigne's *Of the Caniballes*, an essay on his interpretation of the time his servant had spent among the Tupinambas people of Brazil. The former of these two was likely fresh on Shakespeare's mind, as it was during the summer of 1609, the approximate year that *The Tempest* would have been written, that an English ship had crashed in the Bermuda islands. Two years later, after several accounts of the event circulated, Shakespeare's acting company performed before the king in Whitehall as a part of a wedding celebration. It was a time of great contemporary reinvigoration in the subject of Tudor and Stuart imperial exploits, and Shakespeare did well to capitalize on it, and dramatize it.

Quoting the introduction of the *Arden Shakespeare's Tempest*: "Shakespeare's and his audiences' familiarity with American colonization was not restricted to England's toeholds on

the North American coasts. For more than a century, reports of discoveries and settlements to the west by Spanish, Portuguese, French, Dutch and eventually English chroniclers produced a growing flood of fact and myth” (Vaughn 40). The actual account of Strachey, itself, bears many superficial similarities to the play, or other assorted details that evoke it. The most blatant of which is, obviously, his description of “A most dreadful Tempest” (Strachey 1734), but the presence of a fantastical tropical island, miraculously surviving crew, attempted mutiny by drunkards, and so on also contribute to the play’s setting. The majority of the play’s contributions, however, are majorly that of tone and of conceit alone, as the bulk of the information to be found within Strachey’s account does not have a direct corollary to *The Tempest* as a text. Nevertheless, direct citations are not, in and of themselves, necessary for the inspiration to be present, as a contribution to the zeitgeist that *The Tempest* aimed to emulate was enough to be novel, and warrant consideration.

Montaigne’s contributions to *The Tempest*, by way of his *Of the Cannibals* essay, have a far more direct impact upon the content of the play, in the shape of Caliban and Ariel; including by way of the fact that Caliban is an anagram of the Spanish “canibal”. From the jump, the play’s status as a work that is, due to cultural recency, inspired by colonization into the New World, comparisons between the play’s natives and American Natives are straightforward. This can be seen most directly in Stephano and Trinculo’s evocations of such in his initial descriptions of Caliban of “an islander that hath lately suffered by a thunderbolt” (2.2.35-6) or “savages and men of Ind” (2.2.57). Montaigne’s descriptions of the Indigenous Brazilians are demonstrable of this, given how they fit well onto Caliban and Ariel’s general behavior and relationship to the island. Montaigne’s description of Brazilians as a people who “are yet neere their originall naturalitie. The lawes of nature do yet commaund them, which are but little bastardized by ours”

informs the monstrous depictions of Ariel and Caliban, as well as their relationships to Prospero as one who bastardizes. However, there is a notable difference in the depictions of Ariel and especially Caliban in *The Tempest* and that of the natives in *Of the Cannibales*, that being the level of relevance that either text has for either's Indigenous subjects. Montaigne speaks of the Brazilian natives with a level of superlative awe that, while perpetually exotifying and often infantilizing, belies idealizing. Consider such lines as "they never saw any man there, either shaking with the palsie, toothless, with eyes dropping, or crooked and stooping through age" (Montaigne 327) or "I finde (as farre as I have beene informed) there is nothing in that nation, that is either barbarous or savage, unlesse men call that barbarisme, which is not common to them" (Montaigne 325). In contrast, much about the play appears to oppose, or at least represent an opposing argument, for this very perspective.

This can be seen rather poignantly in the exchange held between Gonzalo, Sebastian and Antonio after the titular shipwreck, as they each reflect on their new surroundings. Gonzalo is, in many ways, Montaigne's spokesperson in *The Tempest*, as he proclaims the various wonders of the island, mirroring many sentiments, whereas, in contrast, Antonio and Sebastian refute him. One of the more direct examples that comes to mind is the following exchange, whereby Montaigne is quoted near-directly, with Gonzalo stating his ideal commonwealth on this island being one "for no kind of traffic/ [...] no name of magistrate;/ Letters should not be known; riches, poverty/ And use of service, none; contract, succession/, Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard – none;/ No use of metal, corn, or wine or oil" (2.1.149-54). Therefore, Sebastian's contradiction of Gonzalo's call for "No sovereignty –" with "Yet he would be king on't" (2.1.157-8) is *The Tempest* presenting a more pessimistic point of view of potential life in the New World.

This was a common contemporary perspective on the matter held by Europeans, one bolstered by various geopolitical contexts, including England's suppression of Ireland, Europe's colonization of Africa, and the centuries of less favorable accounts of Indigenous Americans.

The Tempest does not so much pick a side in this debate so much as it simply presents it.

Gonzalo may be dimwitted and, in this case, hypocritical, but he is certainly more trustworthy and less exploitative than the usurpers, Antonio, Alonso and Sebastian. Similarly, though Caliban and Ariel are painted with incredibly bigoted brushes, the play does free them of their bonds, and leave them the island, concluding that European men often meet their worst selves on colonial ventures. All in all, the implementation of these philosophical constructs of colonization are present in *The Tempest* insofar as they can represent the European colonial spirit, aesthetically and tonally.

Forbidden Planet's inspirations, on the contrary, from cultural, philosophical and geopolitical contexts are used in a far more pointed way. This is, in many ways, an essential quality to any science fiction story, but it, in many ways, is exemplary of its particular time and place. To quote Greg Grewell in his essay *Colonizing the Universe: Science Fictions Then, Now, and in the (Imagined) Future* describes *Forbidden Planet* as being a film "grounded on a combination of the explorative and domesticated" (Grewell 34), which is true both of the narrative itself, as well as the present socio-political status of the United States at the time of the film's release. In 1956 the Second World War had been won for eleven years, with America comfortably enjoying its status as one of the foremost global superpowers with economic prosperity. It would do this by making significant technological developments, and by elevating the domestic sphere, creating a hyper-consumptive middle class, while still meddling in the affairs of the Global South, and struggling for dominance against perceived Communist threats.

But there lied at the heart of this imperialist utopia a consistent anxiety, a paranoia regarding a new Atomic Age that it had ushered into being, and consistently threatened to unravel civilization as anyone knew it. It was within this anxiety that *Forbidden Planet* resides.

The galaxy of *Forbidden Planet* is simultaneously very ambitious in its view of human expansion, with a wide multi-planetary-system-wide United Planets empire, but also very limited, seeing as the film predicted that man would leave earth by the 21st century, rather than the twelve years it would take in reality. Little is articulated about the specifics of it, but much can be ascertained through dialogue, and through context. Take for instance how the planets that are inhabited are likely densely populated, Earth especially, but this empire is yet-expanding, as the starship Bellerophon was a scientific and colonial vessel sent out to explore even more. The lack of expository dialogue, apart from a monologue at the very beginning of the movie, is motivated by the fact that the setting of *Forbidden Planet* is, part and parcel, simply 1950s America wearing science fiction skin. The United Planets crew are send-ups of cinematic caricatures of the U.S. Navy, complete with swarthy, sexually-charged demeanor; Prospero and Miranda are one part 50's nuclear family and one part new-age subversive family, what with the state-of-the-art house, robotic domestic servant, intellectual father and barefoot daughter. All in all, the point of this is to present a relatable setting to subvert with its dark, primordial secrets and its atomic threat.

The lost Krell civilization, lost to time and eventually re-discovered by Prospero, is more of a science-fantasy future than even the United Planets is, filled with near-impossible technological feats and an incredible scale, almost to a mythological extent. Their tragic obliteration is similarly mythologized, like an Atlantis or Mu in space, struck down from on high for their hubris like many in America thought it inevitably would for its own sins, which,

according to Cyndy Hendershot in her essay *From Trauma to Paranoia: Nuclear Weapons, Science Fiction, and History* is the only way that contemporary America could rationalize the scale of their creation: “[A] reason behind the mythologizing of nuclear technology in the 1940s and 1950s was that ignorance about the new scientific discovery caused people to search for a frame of reference that could make sense of the unrepresentable content of nuclear physics” (Hendershot 75).

Atomic energy, and its destructive potential, was still yet to have been unraveled to its full capacity, a feat that has yet to be accomplished even nearly a century later. So the form of the Beast From the Id, a colossal, invisible force that could annihilate an advanced society overnight, melt through adamantine metals, and even obliterate the firmament of the planet itself, was as good a way to depict the dangers of the atom as any. The film is never outright dismissive of the notions of an expansive imperial empire, as the United Planets are nevertheless depicted as heroic. But it does, at least, posit the story of Morbius as a cautionary fable, whereby men should never have control over such things unilaterally, as the various neuroses present within the human spirit will inevitably corrupt it, and lead to disaster. In this way, contrary to *The Tempest* which used contemporary and historical discourse to inform a very mythologized story, *Forbidden* frames a mythologized conception of historical discourse to make a contemporary story.

Ultimately, in spite of this particular contrast, this is what unifies *The Tempest* and *Forbidden Planet* as works of fiction, regardless of how deliberate or incidental their actual relationship as texts may or may not be. Both of them are works made in response to the same fundamental curiosity, and the same need to communicate stories of hubris and redemption through the lens of colonial exploration. Additionally, they were each, at the time of their

creation, made from the perspective of superpowers and their particular colonizing cultures. For *The Tempest* it was made in service of an English public that, while already deeply entrenched within its empire, had only glimpses of what went on abroad, whether it be by written accounts, stolen people and goods, artists' renditions, and even word of mouth. This was a society to whom a bulk of its populace would perceive the phalanges of the imperial nation in which they reside to be as alien and whimsical as another planet. Meanwhile the United States of America that received *Forbidden Planet* had, through several means, come to understand the extent of the world that they inhabited. And after a second century-defining war had left them simultaneously traumatized and incredibly prosperous, it gave them the ability to conjure what may be dwelling beyond the barriers of Earth, on a literal other planet. They are, fundamentally, a similar story told in a different way to suit the needs of similar audiences from different times.

These are not, however, the only ways that each story can be interpreted. As mentioned, "Stories as fundamental and familiar as the one we know most commonly as *The Tempest* find representation constantly in various transmuted forms" (Buchanon 157) and the nature of adaptation need only be spurred on by that same cultural impulse. *Forbidden Planet* was not the first or the last interpretation of whatever narrative framework it inherited from *The Tempest*, which was not itself the first story of its own kind. As civilization marches onward, and the political mores of a given society change accordingly, it will need more artistic avenues with which to parse with the legacy of colonialism it surely remains in the shadow of. Perhaps new voices, new perspectives, and new conclusions may be built upon this foundation, weaving an even grander stretch of this narrative tapestry nearly five hundred years long. In the end, only time will tell what "brave new world/ That has such people in't" (5.1.184-5) will be manifested, and what lessons it will take from those that came before it.

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