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JIM, ÁNTONIA, AND THE WOLVES

DISPLACEMENT IN CATHER'S MY ÁNTONIA

ROBIN COHEN

In one of the most frequently noted incidents in Willa Cather's *My Ántonia*, Russian immigrant Pavel reveals on his deathbed that, when driving his friend's wedding party sledge, he saved his own life and companion Peter's by throwing the bride and groom to the attacking wolves. Ántonia and Jim are fascinated by this story, and readers are haunted and intrigued by it. The tale holds the obvious appeal (both for the children and Cather's reader) of the drama of the incident, the color of its remote foreign setting, and the morbid satisfaction of learning the mysterious past of the Russian neighbors. But beyond these appeals, the story

also resonates with important motifs, such as gender politics, marriage, and movement that are woven throughout the novel. It sheds light on Cather's sources and inspirations as well as on the nature of the Great Plains immigrant population. At the same time, it transcends regional concerns, addressing mythic themes that recur across cultural boundaries. Thus, though frequently noted, this incident supports further exploration.

The story of the wedding party and the wolves has sometimes been considered a loosely interpolated tale with little relevance to the novel as a whole. For example, in *Willa Cather: A Critical Introduction*, published in 1951, David Daiches writes that the incident is "a remarkable little inset story, but its relation to the novel as a whole is somewhat uncertain."¹ But more recent critics such as Blanche Gelfant and Judith Fetterley have seen a very strong relationship between the story and the novel as a whole. Gelfant describes the scene as a "grisly acting out of male aversion" to women.² Fetterley credits Gelfant with "first according this scene the attention it deserves," but rightly notes that Gelfant "overlooks the fact that the groom as well as the bride gets eaten."³

Key Words: displacement, folklore, marriage, Russia

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Fetterley says that the content of the story is "a hatred of marriage as pure as the snow onto which the bride and bridegroom are thrown and as intense as the hunger of the wolves who consume them. Pavel and Peter's priorities are ratified by a text whose hostility to marriage would be hard to exceed."⁴

Fetterley further characterizes Russian Peter and Pavel as heroes who, "for daring to act out a powerful though non-conventional truth, have suffered banishment and stigmatization."⁵ Similarly, Joseph Urgo notes that Pavel and Peter must break from the "chivalric code" that would "keep the bride in the sledge at all costs." He continues, "the ones who do the sacrificing, who throw away the baggage—bodies, loyalties, allegiances—are the ones who survive."⁶ Readers might well ask, "What price survival? What price success?" In his breathtaking egocentrism, Pavel initially even seems to expect the groom to agree to throwing the bride to the wolves: "[Pavel] called to the groom that they must lighten—and pointed to the bride."⁷ Although learning the story makes the Russians objects of fascination for Antonia and Jim, Pavel's behavior is nonetheless horrific. Jim recalls Antonia's retelling of the story, noting "[the groom] sprang in beside her [his bride], and Pavel and Peter (our Pavel and Peter!) took the front seat."⁽³⁰⁾ The disbelief indicated by the parenthetical exclamation that this actually involved their friends may be to some extent gleeful, but it is a horrified glee. Russian villagers banished and stigmatized Peter and Pavel, and even moving to America does not enable them to expiate their guilt; they are forever rendered unfit for life in society.

The children, in their naïve egocentricity, feel "as if the wolves of the Ukraine had gathered that night long ago, and the wedding party been sacrificed, to give us a painful and peculiar pleasure" (32). This parallels Jim's egocentric but no longer naïve willingness, later in life, to sacrifice women to serve his own needs, both his willingness to end his relationship with Lena Lingard for the good of his own academic and professional success as well as his thoughtless abandonment of

Antonia. Janis Stout observes that his recurring dreams about the tale confirm that it "is a nightmare version (even to the awakening monastery bell which signals the return to the daylight world) of Jim's preparedness to throw Antonia's friendship overboard," not to save his life but to avoid "the tainting, by association, of Jim's genteel social image, reminders of the possible inadequacy of his masculinity . . . and all manifestations of physicality."⁸ His profession to Antonia that he would "have liked to have [her] for a sweetheart, or a wife, or my mother or my sister—anything that a woman can be to a man" (152) does not ring true. Nothing but his own social biases and ambition could have stopped him. Noel Polk characterizes Jim's comment as a reminder that Jim "manipulates the scene while writing it. . . . Riding the rails instead of a sledge, he has chucked [Antonia] as surely as Pavel and Peter" chucked the wedding party.⁹ I might add that he likewise chucks Mrs. Jim Burden by way of the railroad car.

FOLKLORIC AND CULTURAL SOURCES

Several sources have been suggested as Cather's inspiration for this episode. One, a painting by Paul Powis, is now housed at the Willa Cather Memorial Collection in Red Cloud, Nebraska (Fig. 1). Painted in 1887, the picture depicts a horse-drawn sleigh pursued by wolves through the snow.¹⁰ Note that the wolves are almost out of the picture, foreshortened and small at the right of the canvas. The single passenger is turned away from the viewer, having just shot one of the wolves; the driver is seen in profile (Fig. 2). The horses in their terror have strayed from the track; galloping toward the viewer, they are the central focal point of the picture. We can easily believe that Cather had this picture in mind when she wrote in her account: "The screams of the horses were more terrible to hear than the cries of the men and women" (30), a sentence that, like the painting, puts the horses front and center.

In his essay "Russian Wolves in Folktales and Literature of the Plains," Paul Schach suggests three possible literary sources: Robert



FIG. 1. Sleigh with Trailing Wolves, oil painting by Paul Powis. Photo courtesy of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Collection, Nebraska State Historic Site.

Browning's *Ivàn Ivànovich* (1878), in which a mother throws all three of her children to the wolves in order to save herself; an anonymous book entitled *The Englishwoman in Russia* (1855), a similar tale and likely Browning's source, of a mother who throws her children to the wolves; and Mela Meisner Lindsay's *Shukar Balan: The White Lamb*, in which a father throws the body of his already-dead child to pursuing wolves, the mother throws herself after the child's body, and the father is pulled from the sled by the wolves.¹¹ (Lest we think that Cather and her predecessors exhausted the theme, we should note that Louise Erdrich used a variation of the child being thrown to the wolves in her recent novel, *The Painted Drum*, in which a surviving brother of the consumed child reasons that the girl must have sacrificed herself in order to save her infant sister.)



FIG. 2. Detail of Sleigh with Trailing Wolves by Paul Powis. Photo courtesy of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Collection, Nebraska State Historic Site.

Lindsay told Schach that her source was a tale that she heard in Kansas told by Russian-German immigrants. Schach himself collected similar stories in the early 1980s from Russian-Germans in rural areas of Nebraska, Kansas, and the Dakotas; he notes a close correlation between an account from a Mennonite informant and the account in *My Ántonia*, as demonstrated by frequent duplication of phrasing from Cather's work. (Since the informant reported recently reading the book and noticing similarities in the stories, his phrasing may well have been unconsciously influenced by Cather's.) The following chart, with excerpts from Schach's informant placed side by side with excerpts from Cather's account, demonstrates the correlation between the two:

German/Russian Folktale	From <i>My Ántonia</i>
There were, I believe, seven sleds. The bride and groom were on one sled, and they had two drivers. They had all had a bit too much to drink.	Peter and Pavel drove in the groom's sledge, and six sledges followed with all his relatives and friends. (56) All the drivers were more or less the worse for merry-making, and the groom was absorbed in his bride. (56)
The other people all said they shouldn't do this because they were being plagued by wolves. Because it was winter and there were too many wolves, they should not leave the village. But they set out nonetheless.	The wolves were bad that winter, and everyone knew it, yet when they heard the first wolf-cry, the drivers were not much alarmed. They had too much good food and drink inside them. (57)
The snow was black with wolves.	A black drove came up over the hill behind the wedding party. (57)
The hindmost sled tipped over . . . Then the horses and people screamed . . .	Something happened to the hindmost sledge . . . (57) The screams of the horses were more terrible to hear than the cries of the men and women. (57)
One of the drivers looked back, and the other one asked, "How many?" "Oh," he said, "plenty." He said, "Enough for all of us—maybe forty, maybe fifty wolves."	"And the wolves?" Pavel asked. "Enough! Enough for all of us." (58) "How many?" "Twenty, thirty—enough." (59)
And then the bride turned around. As soon as she looked backward, the driver seized her feet and threw her out. She screamed. The groom reached out to pull her back in, and the driver pushed him out, too. The wolves devoured them.	He called to the groom that they must lighten—and pointed to the bride. The young man cursed him and held her tighter. Pavel tried to drag her away. In the struggle, the groom rose. Pavel knocked him over the side of the sledge and threw the girl after him. (59)
They drove the horses as fast as they could go. They saved their own lives, but I don't think it was worth it. After that, they had no place to stay and nobody would tolerate them. They had to move from village to village. Nobody would employ them. Grandmother said she did not know what became of them. ¹²	Pavel and Peter drove into the village alone, and they had been alone ever since. They were run out of their village. Pavel's own mother would not look at him. They went away to strange towns, but when people learned where they came from, they were always asked if they knew the two men who had fed the bride to the wolves. Wherever they went, the story followed them. (60)

Schach also notes reports that "Cather claimed that she had heard the wolf story from dancers who were settlers from Russia."¹³ Indeed, Cather may have heard or read variations of the wolf story from a number of sources.

Another possible literary influence not mentioned by Schach is Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. After all, many consider *Crusoe* to have been the inspiration for *Swiss Family Robinson*, the book that inspired the recuperating Jim to romanticize his bout with the elements. And Cather favorably mentions *Robinson Crusoe* in her introduction to the Borzoi Classics edition of Defoe's *Roxanna, or, The Fortunate Mistress*. Although some of her praise of *Crusoe* may seem faint, she treats it far more favorably than

she does the book she is introducing. Cather's introduction reads more like a scathing review. She writes,

Defoe is a writer of ready invention but no imagination—with none of the personal attributes which, fused together somehow, make imagination. His narrative runs smoothly, even convincingly; the best thing about it is his vigorous, unornamented English. There is a strong weave in the sentences as they follow each other that gives pleasure to the eye, as the feel of good hand-woven linen does to the fingertips. But after a while one demands something more. There is never a change of tempo, never a modulation of voice, or a quickening of sympathy. The episodes of Roxanna's narrative never emerge from the level of text and become "scenes."¹⁴

She goes on to define scenes as those moments in life, reproduced in literature, of "vivid experience" that engrave themselves in memory. A writer creates a scene when he "gets a depth of picture, and writes, as it were, in three dimensions instead of two. The absence of these warm and satisfying moments in any work of fiction is final proof of the author's poverty of emotion and lack of imagination."¹⁵

But Cather damns both *Roxanna* and Defoe for a sin worse than lack of imagination. Pointing to Defoe's *The Complete British Tradesman*, in which "every mean device and petty economy appealed to him," she writes, "Defoe seems to have had only one deep interest, and that was in making a living. . . . It is one of the meanest and most sordid books ever written. It makes one ashamed of being human." Although she sees the sordid details of Roxanna's making a living as both dull and distasteful, she says that the single theme was enough in *Crusoe*: "It happened that the way in which Robinson Crusoe made a living was extremely interesting: nearly everyone would like to try it for a month or two."¹⁶ Paradoxically, *Crusoe* is a good book for the same reason that *Roxanna* is a bad one.

Even in praising *Crusoe*, she dismisses parts of the book as "moralizing, which few of us read," and implies that all that is of interest is the account of Crusoe's life on the island.¹⁷ One assumes, then, that Cather would have found little of interest in the concluding twenty-five pages of the book, a rather tedious account of Crusoe's return to Europe. Yet it is here that Crusoe and Friday are set upon by wolves, in an account with at least a few similarities to Cather's wolf attack. Like the slightly drunken wedding party, Crusoe and party proceed into dangerous circumstances, led by an unreliable guide. The wolves are multitudinous (at least 300 in number) and relentless. Unlike the wedding party, however, Crusoe and companions survive, due to Crusoe's ingenuity, of course.¹⁸

The greatest difference in the two accounts, however, is in the telling. As an account of bloodthirsty wolves, Defoe's rendition is amazingly bloodless. The story is told in accountant's terms:

When we had fired our second volley of our fusils, we thought they stopped a little, and I hoped they would have gone off, but it was but a moment, for others came forward again; so we fired two volleys of our pistols, and I believe in these four firings we killed seventeen or eighteen of them, and lamed twice as many; yet they came on again.¹⁹

As in *Roxanna*, Defoe seems more interested in the *business* of the defense (how much shot and powder were used, how many wolves were killed) than in evoking the terror of the experience. As Cather commented about *Roxanna*,²⁰ Defoe again uses little conversation; indeed, in the entire mountain crossing, virtually the only dialogue (or perhaps more properly, monologue) occurs when Friday speaks his pidgin English, presumably for humorous effect. Despite references to the wolves as "devils" and descriptions of wolves eating both people and horses, the account is surprisingly flat.

When we examine Cather's account, the contrast is striking. She builds suspense with foreshadowing by telling us that the wedding

party is a bit drunk and that the wolves had been bad that winter. Her use of six sledges allows her to build terror as first one and then the next is overtaken by the wolves. And terse conversation between Peter and Pavel reveals their terror at their hopeless circumstances. One can almost imagine Cather thinking, "This is the way such a story should be told!" So perhaps we should consider *Crusoe* as an influence *against* which Cather wrote, another reminder of the wolf lore, to be sure, but an example to be improved upon, shown up: an anti-influence of sorts.

All of Cather's various possible oral sources for this story are undoubtedly derived from Russian or Russian-German folklore, whether directly from local immigrants or indirectly through literature. Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson's *The Types of the Folk-tale*, a classic study and catalog of tale-types found in folklore around the world, lists no tale-types that neatly match the throwing of the bride and/or groom to the wolves.²¹ Yet several are close: an old beggar transforms the wedding party into wolves (T155), a man dreams his wife is attacked by wolves and so it happens (T255.7), the bride is wounded fatally by the bridegroom's sword on the way home from the wedding (T152), and the bridegroom is slain on his way to the bride (Child I 142, 386, IV, 179ff). All of these are classified as the tale-type of the Spoiled Wedding, a term that could well describe Antonia's ill-fated relationship with Larry Donovan. Having made all the traditional, legitimate preparations of making a trousseau and receiving gifts such as the silver from Ambrosch, she is at the last minute deceived and used by him only to be sent home in shame.

Russian folklore comes even closer to the specifics of Cather's tale. In Russian folk-belief, demons often assume the form of wolves and other animals.²² Likewise, sorcerers were seen as "wolfish" and able to change shape with wolves.²³ Aside from the obvious association of winter with famine that might drive predators to attack, Russian folklore views nature as dead in the winter; when the sun's strength is at its weakest, the "unclean force" is at its

peak. Predatory animals such as wolves are believed to be most dangerous in the winter, particularly on the feast day of Saint George (November 26), patron saint of wolves.²⁴ Yet wolves in Russian folklore are not uniformly a source of evil or tragedy, as the crafty yet intelligent wolves in the fables of Ivan Krylov demonstrate.

In contrast, wolves in Native American stories are generally figures of strength, folklorist Barry Lopez notes: "The Indian . . . respected the wolf's stamina and stoicism and he encouraged these qualities in himself and others. The wolf, therefore, was incorporated into the ceremonies and symbology of war."²⁵ Perhaps the best known of such incorporation was the Wolf Soldier band of the Cheyenne, who used wolf lore in ceremonials to prepare for battle. Lopez notes that traveling war parties sang "wolf traveling songs" in which "a warrior might . . . call on wolves in song to come and eat the flesh of his enemies after a battle, or, by comparing himself to a wolf, warn young men of the dangers that faced them."²⁶ Tribes of the Pacific Northwest (Nootka, Kwakiutl, and Quillayute) use a wolf ritual in which participants wear wolf masks as their major initiation ceremony.

The ritual is based on the myth that a young man was kidnapped by wolves, but they were unable to overcome his strength to kill him. Instead, they befriended him, taught him their ways, and then

sent him back to his village to teach his tribe the rites of the wolf ceremony. The young man told his people that it was necessary for the strength of the tribe, for their success in war, and everything else they did, that they should be like wolves. They must be as fierce, as brave, and as determined as the one who is the greatest hunter in the woods. In this ceremony people are "stolen" by wolves, go through a terrifying confrontation, and emerge wolflike.²⁷

Nineteenth-century immigrants did not share the Native admiration of the wolf, to say the least. When they heard Native stories

of shape-shifting wolves, they took them for stories of werewolfry.²⁸ Thus, imported superstitions supplanted the Native view.

In the imported Russian folklore, weddings were seen as being particularly susceptible to spoiling by sorcerers, and the bride was particularly vulnerable to harm.²⁹ Frequent methods of spoiling could involve killing the bride or making her infertile, or killing the horses pulling the wedding party.³⁰ In one well-known story, the wedding party was turned into wolves.³¹

Various precautions were recommended to prevent spoiling, particularly the use of substances believed to be repulsive to sorcerers such as amber, incense, garlic, and onions. The most reliable method was to invite a powerful sorcerer to be a guest at the wedding and give him a place of honor, thus invoking his protection.³²

CAUTIONARY TALES

Two important points here are relevant to Cather's tale of Peter and Pavel, whose names apparently are those of stock characters in Russian folktales (see, for example, tale #52 in Ivanits's *Russian Folk Belief*). The first is that supernatural wolves are often linked in one way or another to spoiling a wedding, presumably in order to undermine human society. The second is that the tales of spoiled weddings appear to be cautionary tales. Although would-be spoilers are powerful, couples could render them ineffectual by planning and taking precautions.

Though Cather's wolves are not explicitly supernatural, they bear little resemblance to real wolves. In his book *Of Wolves and Men*, Barry Lopez notes that, although wolves have certainly been known to kill humans, very few verifiable reports exist, and Lopez lists none of the sort of mass slaughter that Pavel's story describes. In recent years, human victims have been primarily those hunting the wolves, and Lopez notes that hunters frequently work from sleighs (or, most recently, snowmobiles). People frequently overestimate the size of individual wolves and of wolf packs. European wolves

average eighty-five pounds and seldom exceed one hundred pounds. No verifiable reports exist of packs larger than thirty animals.³³ Though wolves are noted for their remarkable endurance, one would assume that wolves engaging in such a relentless attack on humans would have been driven by famine and thus somewhat weakened. In fact, the relentless pursuit of wolves by humans has endangered the wolves, not the reverse.

Cather describes the wolves pursuing Pavel's sledge as "a black drove. . . . The wolves ran like streaks of shadow; they looked no bigger than dogs, but there were hundreds of them" (30). The wedding party consists of six sledges, all presumably pulled by at least three horses, as is the bride and groom's (30-31). Cather tells us that, except for the sledge driven by Pavel, each carries six to twelve people (30). Thus, by the time the wolves attack the lead sledge, they have consumed at least fifteen horses and somewhere between thirty and sixty people. Yet they are still not sated. Despite their having run for many miles (possibly weakened by hunger), they are close enough to overcoming the sledge that, even though the text hints that Pavel knows they are within a few miles of their village (31), he believes that he must sacrifice the bride and groom to ensure safety for himself and Peter. These are not the wolves of slightly exaggerated retellings of eyewitness reports; these are the relentless sorcerer- or demon-possessed wolves of the folktale, untiring in their efforts to overcome the good of human society.

On the second point, Cather's telling of the tale itself signals her reader of its cautionary nature. She tells us as the wedding party embarks that "all the drivers were more or less the worse for merrymaking, and the groom was absorbed in his bride" (30). They know that the winter has been a bad one for wolves, "yet when they heard the first wolf-cry, the drivers were not much alarmed. They had too much good food and drink inside them" (30). When the driver of the sledge in the rear, described as "probably very drunk," loses control, the wolves are already in position to take advantage of the situation and attack (30). Implied is the idea that a more

prudent wedding party might not have set off for the next village at all under such circumstances, or at least might have been able to evade attack had they heeded the warning of the wolf-cries. Failure to take precautions against the malignant forces of the untamed wilderness when leaving the safety of civilization and entering the realm of nature can prove fatal.

Indeed, the Shimerdas are living proof of the consequences of failing to prepare. Jim's grandmother bemoans the stupidity of their attempt to pass the winter without hens and other proper supplies, and she softens her opinion only somewhat when she learns that they found the costs of the crossing to be far greater than they had planned. After all, bad planning is not much better than no planning.

Another "cautionary tale" occurs immediately after the account of Pavel's confession. Otto Fuchs has made a crude sleigh (an obvious link to Pavel's story) for Jim, who takes the Shimerda girls for a ride—straight for Russian Peter's house. The girls wear only shawls over their cotton dresses, so when the wind grows stronger, Jim lends Yulka his "comfort," a scarf-like garment. When he drops them at their house, he neglects to retrieve his comfort, and catches such a chill on the way home that he must stay in with the "quinsy" for two weeks (34). When reading *The Swiss Family Robinson* in his sickbed, he believes that his life on the prairie is every bit as adventurous: "I was convinced that man's strongest antagonist is the cold" (34). Nature's punishing cold is personified as an enemy, and his family's efforts to defend themselves are heroic. His failure to be prepared during his sleigh expedition serves as a warning.

Perhaps the most glaring failure to heed cautionary tales is Antonia's. Ostensibly, her weeks of sewing with Widow Stevens provided the trousseau required for her to get married. But even though she was able to outsmart Wick Cutter in his plan to "seduce" (or rape) her, she is unable to avert deception by the fiancé she trusts. Consequently, she returns home still unmarried but pregnant. Thus, her failure to be cautious spoils her wedding.

For the children thrilled by the story of Pavel and Russian Peter, the tale's cautionary implications may not be clear. But for adult readers, this tale encompasses some of Cather's recurring themes. It adds a dark note to Cather's recurring critique of marriage, both as a cautionary tale for Antonia and as commentary on the institution itself as suggested by Fetterley. And the mythic, supernatural nature of the wolves and the dangers of the wilderness echo Cather's repeated presentation of nature as a force that must be subdued and civilized, land no more than something to be used.

PLACE AND DISPLACEMENT

In another way, as well, the story relates to Cather's sense of the land, her sense of place—and of displacement. We recall that as Jim's dreams replay the horrifying story told by Pavel, the country of his imagination looks "something like Nebraska and something like Virginia" (32), transplanting the Russian tale to American landscapes. It is a curiously pointed detail. His dreamscape is surprisingly specific. Why? Perhaps sometimes the unforgiving Nebraska landscape seems as foreign and dangerous as Russia's. Perhaps as an orphan he imagines his early loss of family as a form of being "thrown to the wolves," displaced both from his family and from the family home in Virginia.

The two landscapes differ radically; the verdant verticality of Cather's Virginia mountains could hardly be seen as interchangeable with the starkly open horizontality of the Nebraska landscape that Jim describes on first sight as "not a country at all, but the material out of which countries are made" (7). Yet only three pages after the account of the wolves, Jim's consciousness of landscape again reflects duality. Describing the winter evenings spent close to the stove with Otto and Jake, Jim says, "we could hear the coyotes howling down by the corrals, and their hungry, wintry cry used to remind the boys of wonderful animal stories; about gray wolves and bears in the Rockies, wildcats and panthers in the Virginia mountains" (35).

Wolves can be exchanged for wildcats; Rockies can be exchanged for Appalachians. Once uprooted, Jim remains rootless. The story, then, relates to Jim's—Cather's—sense of geographic displacement, one of the most pervasive themes in her work as well as in her life. Bennet and Rosowski note that

one of the most basic ideas in Cather's writing [is] that place and movement are complementary. . . . Cather was fond of quoting Michelet, "The end is nothing, the road is all." "In fact," she wrote in an essay on Thomas Mann, "the road and the end are literally one."³⁴

Like Jim, the story itself is displaced. It is the story of two men displaced from the Old World, out of place in the New World. And Jim, out of place in the language community of the deathbed confession, must hear it secondhand as translated by Ántonia. In sharp contrast to indigenous American wolf stories, Peter and Pavel's story imposes an eastern European sensibility onto American landscapes. And the story itself is not only immigrant; it continues to migrate in Jim's dreams from Virginia to Nebraska.

On those striking dream images, Joseph Urgo quotes Salman Rushdie:

Given the gift of self-consciousness, we can dream versions of ourselves, new selves for old. Waking as well as sleeping, our response to the world is essentially *imaginative*: that is, picture making. We live in our pictures, our ideas. I mean this literally. We first construct pictures of the world and then we step inside the frames. We come to equate the picture with the world, so that, in certain circumstances, we will even go to war because we find someone else's picture less pleasing than our own. Dreaming is our gift; it may also be our tragic flaw.³⁵

For Jim Burden, lawyer, the gift of such dreaming leads to success. For Jim Burden, human, the tragic flaw of such dreaming leads

to isolation. Jim embraces the migrating story of his dream and ultimately lives out his own story of ongoing migration.

NOTES

1. David Daiches, *Willa Cather: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1951), 46.

2. Blanche Gelfant, "The Forgotten Reaping Hook: Sex in *My Ántonia*," *American Literature* 43 (1971): 74.

3. Judith Fetterley, "My Ántonia, Jim Burden, and the Dilemma of the Lesbian Writer," in *Gender Studies: New Directions in Feminist Criticism*, ed. Judith Spector (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Press, 1986), 59.

4. *Ibid.*, 48.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Joseph Urgo, *Willa Cather and the Myth of American Migration* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 70.

7. Willa Cather, *My Ántonia* (New York: Dover, 1994), 59. Further citations to *My Ántonia* are given in parentheses in the text.

8. Janis Stout, *Strategies of Reticence: Silence and Meaning in the Works of Jane Austen, Willa Cather, Katherine Anne Porter, and Joan Didion* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1990), 76-77.

9. Noel Polk, "Of Plows and Such" (paper presented at the Seventh International Willa Cather Seminar, Shenandoah University, Winchester, VA, June 21-28, 1997).

10. Paul Schach, "Russian Wolves in Folktales and Literature of the Plains: A Question of Origins," *Great Plains Quarterly* 3 (Spring 1983): 75.

11. *Ibid.*, 71-75.

12. *Ibid.*, 68-69.

13. *Ibid.*, 75.

14. Willa Cather, *On Writing: Critical Studies on Writing as an Art* (New York: Knopf, 1949), 81.

15. *Ibid.*, 80.

16. *Ibid.*, 85-86.

17. *Ibid.*, 86.

18. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, Signet Classic Edition (New York: Penguin, 1961), 288-92.

19. *Ibid.*, 291.

20. Cather, *On Writing*, 81.

21. Antii Arne, *The Types of the Folk-tale*, trans. and enl. by Stith Thompson (New York: B. Franklin, 1971).

22. Linda J. Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1989), 40.

23. *Ibid.*, 98, 101.

24. *Ibid.*, 45.

25. Barry Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men* (New York: Scribner's, 1978), 114.

26. Ibid., 116.

27. Ibid., 129.

28. Ibid., 269.

29. Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief*, 105-6.

30. Ibid., 105.

31. Ibid., 198.

32. Ibid., 105-6.

33. Lopez, *Of Wolves and Men*, 70-71.

34. Mildred Bennet and Susan J. Rosowski, "Willa Cather Today: An Introduction," *Great Plains Quarterly* 4 (Fall 1984): 211.

35. Urgo, *Willa Cather and the Myth of American Migration*, 25.