

Like the lyric by Emily Dickinson which provides both its epigraph and its apt title, *Morning, Midnight* is a gallant salute to the inevitable coming of darkness which nonetheless refuses to deny the joys of daylight. As such, it speaks with an austere gaiety to the essence of our human condition of vulnerability and need.

Born in the last decade of the nineteenth century, Rhys depicts a world whose social terms have largely vanished. The accommodations of the patriarchal order are no longer taken for granted. Women's quest for self-determination, which had seemed so doomed an enterprise in her reading of experience, is now a commonplace. The aches that beset our generation are of a different sort, as we struggle to establish a new basis for an imperative that women's striving for autonomy cannot wish away: the need for intimacy between oneself and others. The armor that both sexes have learned to wear purchases peace at the cost of generosity of spirit. As we follow Jean Rhys's painful explorations of the lessons of her own vulnerability, we may come to understand how great that cost can be.

§ § §

ON BECOMING A BUTTERFLY
ISSUES OF IDENTITY IN JEAN RHY'S *AFTER LEAVING MR MACKENZIE*

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Near the end of the second section of *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*, Julia Martin spends a day by herself in her hotel room, thinking about her childhood. She recalls what it is like to be

really happy - happy about nothing.[...] You ran as if you were flying, without feeling your feet. And all the time you ran, you were thinking, with a tight feeling in your throat: "I'm happy - happy - happy...."¹

She also remembers the time she spent catching butterflies in a sunlit glade, confident that her intentions were benevolent, and secure in the knowledge that her environment was friendly, or at least not hostile (p. 158). She persisted in trying to imprison the butterflies even in the face of criticism: "You're a cruel, horrid child, and I'm surprised at you" (p. 160), although she acknowledged the damage she was causing: "Of course, what always happened was that it broke its wings.[...] Sometimes it was too badly hurt to be able to fly properly" (p. 160). With a child's singleness of mind, she considered that the pain she was causing the butterflies was insignificant compared with the possibility of achieving her goal, a live, captive butterfly:

You knew that what you had hoped had been to keep the butterfly in a comfortable cardboard-box and to give it the things it liked to eat. And if the idiot broke its own wings, that wasn't your fault, and the only thing to do was to chuck it away and try again. If people didn't understand that, you couldn't help it. (p. 160)

But the memory which provokes this sequence is not, in fact, the "real happiness" which she had first recalled; it is instead the recollection that catching butterflies was to be "the first time you were afraid.[...] You were not afraid in the shadow, but you were afraid in the sun" (pp. 159-160). A crucial shift in the child's sense of her own identity has occurred: in the sunlight, associated with the butterflies ("something that a minute before had been flying around in the sun" [pp. 159-160]), the young Julia has suddenly seen herself as a butterfly. She, too, is defenceless in the "glare of the white sunlight" (p. 159), where

you knew that something huge was just behind you. You ran [...] panting, your heart thumping, much too frightened to cry. But when you got home you cried. You cried for a long time; and you never told anybody why. (p. 160)

she is not able to tell anybody why - because there are no words for the huge and irrevocable shift from tyrant to tyrannized - and she cries "for a long time" because there is no going back; the world has changed. The irony is that this is a fear "about nothing" (p. 160), nothing that can be given words, nothing that is not already obvious to the adult world, nothing that she can do anything about. So Julia's life is altered:

When you are a child you are yourself and you know and see everything prophetically. And then suddenly something happens and you stop being yourself; you become what others force you to be. You lose your wisdom and your soul. (p. 158)

As *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* makes clear, you never regain them.

It is sometimes said of Rhys's women characters that they lack a dynamic sense of purpose,² and Julia is, at least superficially, no exception. Her actions are for the most part responses to external stimuli - letters, phone calls, gifts of money - results of leaving a decision to chance: "If a taxi hoots before I count three, I'll go to London. If not, I won't" (p. 57). But what appears to be a desultory existence can have a kind of purpose. It will be the argument of this paper that the novel is specifically concerned with the struggle of the protagonist, equipped with a limited and crippling notion of what it means to be a woman, to formulate a coherent sense of herself, despite the hostile environment in which she lives her adult life. It will assume that Julia's childhood identification of herself as victim, vulnerable in body and soul, is inevitably linked to her perception of her gender, its possibilities and its limitations.

The novel is a quest, not merely for the money or patronage necessary for the survival of the body, but also to recover the equilibrium and the secure notion of self which the adult Julia sees as having been present in childhood. Seeking out a succession of significant others to whom to explain herself, Julia hopes to confirm her existence by looking outward. She endeavours to use other people, not only as a source of income,³ but also as "psychic mirrors," to establish the existence of her inner self just as surely as she uses the many literal mirrors which occur in the novel to confirm the existence of her outward appearance (see pp. 19, 20, 58, 59, 66, 92, 119, 158, 171). That we as readers do not entirely despise such parasitic behaviour, that we sympathise with those who exhibit it, is a measure of Jean Rhys's art.

What Julia sees in the "psychic mirrors" is inevitably unsatisfactory, just a shadowy reflection of what she feels is true. No other person can offer the endorsement of self which she craves, because there is no one in the novel, including her mother, who loves her unreservedly. Horsfield comes closest. He imagines telling her: "I'm not one of the others; I'm on your side" (p. 167), but he too pulls away from the enormity of the demands she makes: "He hated the feeling of intimacy. It made something in him shrink back and long to escape" (p. 90).

What is acutely absent in the novel is any notion of how one might, by looking inward for confirmation, develop into an autonomous individual. Carolyn Heilbrun notes in *Reinventing Womanhood* that very few women writers "imagine women characters with even the autonomy that they themselves have achieved," and that, in writing, "woman's most persistent problem has been to discover for herself an identity not limited by custom or defined by attachment to some man."⁴ The first of these statements applies to Rhys; despite the allegedly autobiographical nature of her novels, none of her heroines is an artist like herself. The second could be an account of *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*. This lack, not only of an independent heroine, but also of any secure, confident woman character, except possibly the peripheral and unattractive Miss Wyatt, is a telling

absence. The woman who, in childhood, split the active and passive in herself and identified only with the passive, has carried this wounding alienation of self from into adulthood, with no more sophisticated a sense of how to cope with her life than had had in that blinding moment of childhood revelation. The butterflies passage suggests that Julia cannot succeed in acquiring an autonomous identity unless she sheds her childhood perceptions. - The remainder of the novel, by repeatedly reminding us of how a child she is (see pp. 14, 40-1, 131, 140, 154, 167, 187), suggests she does not, cannot, do this.

We are also, however, offered another explanation for Julia's unhappy life. The one, to which Julia periodically makes reference, attributes to external circumstances her failure to cope. The effects of economic and societal oppression make it impossible for any woman to develop into an autonomous individual. (There are numerous references to failures of female life in the novel. See pp. 12-13, 15, 69-70, 145, 179, 181. Her mother and sister are more detailed examples.) This explanation is not allied to the notion of Julia's arrested personal development; the two explanations exist in separate spheres. It is perfectly possible that Rhys intended both explanations to stand - the truth of a situation is rarely simple. But we know that she found *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* the least satisfying of her novels ("I have often hated *Mackenzie* and wished I'd never written it"⁵), and one cannot but wonder if perhaps it tried to offer too many explanations for Julia's behaviour, or if, in Rhys's concern to "get it right," to expose the "shape" of her novel,⁶ something was omitted which would otherwise have woven the causes of Julia's discontent into a coherent theme.

That Julia is powerless and vulnerable ("too vulnerable to make a success of a career of chance" [p. 14]) is not in doubt. Her strongest defence in a world hostile to aging women is preserving her youthful appearance, so it becomes crucial to have the "right" clothes (see pp. 19, 58, 80, 181-2) and to make up her face "elaborately and carefully [...] a substitute for the mask she would have liked to wear" (p. 14). This obsession with her appearance is not, in the novel's terms, excessive; the men whose favour she courts do not notice what she looks like, and are disinclined to be sympathetic: "Women go phut quite suddenly" (p. 191; see also pp. 33, 41, 91).

In this attitude to clothing and appearance, Rhys stands apart from more avowedly feminist novelists. (She has said of herself: "I'm not, strictly speaking, a feminist at all."⁷) Annette Kolodny, in "Some Notes on Defining a 'Feminist Literary Criticism'" finds that "the most compelling fear in women's fiction today [is] the fear of being fixed in false images or trapped in inauthentic roles" which she illustrates with examples of preoccupation with clothing and appearance, and the attendant disillusionment with such forms of disguise, in a number of modern novels.⁸ There is a similar preoccupation, but not such liberating disillusionment, in Rhys.

The novel offers other indications of Julia's vulnerability besides these obsessions with the physical. She has difficulty concentrating on the moment in hand, is given to slipping into dreams or to seeing her life as a dream (see pp. 14, 19, 67, 88-9, 117, 130, 137) or, at its worst, as a nightmare (p. 188). Her thoughts about herself and her life are often "blurred" (pp. 142, 179) or "vague" (p. 50). She is sometimes likened, or likens herself, to a ghost (see pp. 28, 54, 67-8). She and others even toy with the notion that she is, or is about to become, "mad" (see pp. 11, 42, 53, 54, 143). She once sees herself as quite split in two:

She felt as though her real self had taken cover, as though she had retired somewhere far off and was crouching warily, like an animal, watching her body in the armchair arguing with Uncle Griffiths about the man she had loved.

(p. 82)

Annette Kolodny, in the article mentioned above, notes a similar effect, which she calls "reflexive perception," in the heroines of other twentieth-century fiction by women,

notably that by Margaret Atwood and Sylvia Plath.⁹

Clearly we are meant to believe Julia, having lost "[her] wisdom and [her] soul," is a marginal figure, one of life's strays, "outside the pale" (p. 96) as she herself puts it. She knows that ranged against her are the combined forces of respectability and wealth, and recognizes only too well the outcome of any encounter:

When she thought of the combination of Mr Mackenzie and Maitre Legros, all sense of reality deserted her and it seemed to her that there were no limits at all to their joint powers of defeating and hurting her. Together the two perfectly represented organized society, in which she had no place and against which she had not a dog's chance.

(p. 22)

Society is never very sympathetic. Consider the reaction of a cinema audience to a film Julia is watching:

After the comedy she saw young men running races and some of them collapsing exhausted. And then - strange anti-climax - young women ran races and also collapsed exhausted, at which the audience rocked with laughter.

(pp. 117-8)

Yet it is to just such unsympathetic representatives of organized society, Mackenzie and men like him, that Julia turns to justify and explain herself, partly because they are the men available to love, and partly because their very power and authority make their potential sanctioning of Julia all the more valuable to her. She is not very successful at communicating her point of view. "As far as [Mackenzie] could make out she had a fixed idea that her affair with him and her encounter with Maitre Legros had been the turning-point in her life" (p. 31). Yet at one point Julia almost succeeds in gaining his sympathy: "A helpless, imploring expression came into his eyes." But she oversteps the mark by taking his hand and confessing to having "been pretty unhappy," which provokes his rejection: "He drew his hand away slowly, ostentatiously. [...He] deliberately assumed an expression of disgust" (p. 33).

We see Mackenzie all too well in the novel, his "code of manners and morals" which is "perfectly adapted to the social system" (p. 24) and which protects so effectively his person and property, and we see as well the price he pays for his restraint. His "tight and very tidy mind" (p. 24) will allow him to ask no "intimate questions" (p. 26), and so he too is isolated. But he feels he has too much to lose to risk what identifying with, and perhaps loving, Julia would bring: "There would have been no end to the consequences of wholehearted agreement" (p. 26).

Julia is no luckier with Mr. James, her first lover, who too is a man of substance:

When she looked round the room it seemed to her a very beautiful room, and she felt that she had no right to sit there and intrude her sordid wish somehow to keep alive into that beautiful room.

(p. 111)

She seeks him out, as with Mackenzie, knowing that he can offer her money, hoping he can offer her understanding, a relief from her isolation. She has "prepared" an "explanation" (p. 111) for him of her life since they parted - leaving her husband, the death of her baby - but can bring herself to say none of it. She is intimidated:

So many threads. To try to disentangle them - no use. Because he has money he's a kind of god. Because I have none I'm a kind of worm. A worm because I've failed and I

have no money. A worm because I'm not even sure if I hate you. (pp. 112-113)

The obstacles of class and wealth seem to Julia to be insurmountable barriers to communication - and perhaps she is right. When she returns to trying to explain herself after James has promised her some money, he is brusque: "My dear, don't harrow me. I don't want to hear" (p. 113). Her need to explain herself, important enough to Julia, her to persist with her attempt even after she has been promised money, is dismissed, leaving her feeling bitter and hateful (p. 114).

James himself confirms the gap between them, not, ironically, in the economic terms Julia recognizes, but in terms of gender. He tells her that the war taught him "a lot" that it gave him a great deal of sympathy for his "mad friends [...] people who've come croppers" (p. 114). He includes women in this category, then immediately excludes them:

Mind you, women are a different thing altogether. Because it's all nonsense; the life of a man and the life of a woman can't be compared. They're up against entirely different things the whole time. What's the use of talking nonsense about it? Look at cocks and hens; it's the same sort of thing. (pp. 114-115)

If women are "a different thing altogether," then perhaps it ought to be to a woman that Julia goes for consolation. She does seek out her sister Norah, looking as before both for physical and emotional support. Julia is "very nervous" (p. 71) in Norah's presence, and begins their interview by trying, as ever, to explain herself. She recalls the arbitrariness of her decision to come to London and thinks: "To know that this was the only reasonable way to live was one thing; to explain and justify it to somebody else, especially to Norah - was quite another" (p. 72). It may be that the sole purpose of this explanation is to strengthen her hand in her bid for Norah's practical assistance, and Julia does recognize a kind of "cunning" in herself when Norah leaves (p. 77), but that seems unlikely to be the whole explanation. "Longing for some show of affection, or at any rate of interest" from Norah, Julia is aware of the "answering indifference" she feels when "Norah kept looking at her as if she were something out of the zoo" (p. 73). Julia even recalls the days of their childhood, carrying Norah because the pebbles hurt her feet, and thinks "I've never forgotten that day" (p. 73). But Norah, in her turn, "only wanted to get away. The first sight of Julia had shocked her, for it seemed to her that in the last three years her sister had indisputably changed for the worse" (p. 73). In this case not only emotional support means no practical assistance either. Norah replies "coldly" to Julia's request for shelter: "There's not a scrap more room in the place" (p. 75).

Despite being of no help to her sister, the reason for Norah's existence in the novel seems clear. Todd K. Bender in "Jean Rhys and the Genius of Impressionism" sees a pattern of *Doppelgänger* figures in other fiction by Jean Rhys, although he does not mention *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*.¹⁰ The sisters are, however, implicitly paired in the novel, each having chosen a different way of life. Norah is "not very soft now" (p. 102), whereas we know Julia is "the soft sort" (p. 25). Norah has been "trained to certain opinions which forbid her even the relief of rebellion against her lot" (p. 74), while Julia "had rebelled. Not intelligently, but violently and instinctively" (p. 55). Norah is "middle class" (p. 74), Julia is "outside the pale" (p. 96). But both sisters have "no money" (see pp. 54 and 74 for reference to Norah's financial state; pp. 26, 47, 77, 112-113 for reference to Julia's); each questions the "fairness of life" (Norah, p. 103; Julia, p. 30). More importantly, Norah seems to need protection and security every bit as vehemently as her sister:

It was a sort of drug, that universal, that unvarying admiration - the feeling that one was doing what one ought to do, the approval of God and man. It made you feel

protected and safe, as if something very powerful were fighting on your side.

(p. 104)

The emphasis on "something very powerful [...] fighting on your side" is important. Norah, as vulnerable as her sister, has found a constant, if somewhat unsatisfactory source of power in social approval to compensate for her lack of money and status, and together with Miss Wyatt has found a dull but workable way of establishing herself in life without depending on men, albeit by accepting one of the traditional roles for a woman: looking after mother.

For Julia, however, as she will reveal, life involves men. In the most detailed and extended "confession" in the novel, she recounts to Horsfield the attempts she once made to articulate a sense of her own identity to Ruth, a sculptor from whom Julia received financial support in Paris. Ruth is, in some ways, an unlikely candidate for such a confession:

I don't know if I liked her. I suppose so. [...] She had something of an artist in her - I mean really. So, of course she was fanatical. And then she was a woman. About thirty-five years old. And so she simply wouldn't believe that anything was true which was outside herself or anything but what she herself thought and felt. She just thought I was stupid because it was outside her scheme of things that anybody like me should not be stupid.

(p. 51)

But Julia persists, explaining the "active" part of her story, the decision to leave London, in male terms, while at the same time acknowledging how impenetrable the "otherness" of masculinity is:

I wanted to go away with just the same feeling a boy has when he wants to run away to sea - at least, that I imagine a boy has. Only, in my adventure, men were mixed up, because of course they had to be.

(p. 51)

She says she succeeded: "I wasn't frightened of anything. So I did get away" (p. 40), but her success has a price: "I married to get away" (p. 52).

Julia then relates that, as she was telling her story, she stared at the painting of a woman by Modigliani on Ruth's wall. She describes the picture:

This picture is of a woman lying on a couch, a woman with a lovely, lovely body. [...] Anyhow, I thought so. A sort of proud body, like an utterly lovely proud animal. And a face like a mask, a long, dark face, and very big eyes. The eyes were bland, like a mask, but when you had looked at it a bit it was as if you were looking at a real woman, a live woman. At least, that's how it was with me.

Well, all the time I was talking I had the feeling I was explaining things not only to Ruth [...] but I was explaining them to myself too, and to the woman in the picture. It was as if I were before a judge, and I were explaining that everything I had done had always been the only possible thing to do. [...]

I wanted her to understand. I felt that it was awfully important that some human being should know what I had done and why I had done it. I told everything.

(p. 52)

But Ruth doesn't understand: "I knew when she spoke that she didn't believe a word" (p. 53). Julia says she "might have known she would be like that" (p. 53), but that it

gave her a "beastly feeling," because

I didn't quite believe myself, either. I thought: "After all, is this true? Did I ever do this?" I felt as if the woman in the picture were laughing at me and saying: "I am more real than you. But at the same time I am you. I'm all that matters of you." (p. 53)

The failure to make herself understood has resulted in a complete negation of the picture of a woman, created by a man, becomes more real than Julia herself, seem to contain "all that matters" of Julia. The woman in the picture is all body, no soul, has blank eyes, a face "like a mask." It is no wonder Julia refers to this experience "like looking over the edge of the world. It was more frightening than I can tell" (p. 53). The loss of her identity is palpable: "I felt as if all my life and all my hopes were floating away from me like smoke and there was nothing to lay hold of - nothing" (p. 53). Julia has disappeared, and even an attempt to use the physical documentation of her existence to shore up her sense of herself fails:

When I got home I pulled out all the photographs I had, and letters and things. And my marriage-book and my passport. And the papers about my baby who had died and was buried in Hamburg.

But it had all gone, as if it had never been. And I was there, like a ghost. And then I was frightened, and yet I knew that if I could get to the end of what I was feeling it would be the truth about myself and about the world and about everything that one puzzles and pains about all the time.

(p. 54)

The story succeeds, however, at least in part: "Mr Horsfield was filled with a glow of warm humanity" (p. 54). He thinks that he cannot possibly leave Julia alone, and suggests that she return to London, where he lives. But her "large, unwinking eyes" (p. 54, the same unwinking eyes earlier described as being "like a baby['s]," p. 40) unsettle him - perhaps they fail to confirm in him his generous impulse - and he immediately retreats, thinking: "Good God, why in the world have I suggested that?" (p. 54). It is not the first and it will not be the last time that Julia, by not reacting as he anticipates, alienates him (see pp. 44, 47, 93, 147, 174).

That same intense speculation about "the truth about myself and about the world" (p. 54) which characterizes the encounter with Ruth occurs at a later point in the novel, provoked by Julia's mother's death. Judith Kegan Gardiner, in two articles on the importance of mothers to twentieth-century women's "autobiographical or confessional" writing, cites *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* as an example of a novel in which the mother's death "dramatize[s] the heroine['s] central struggle for [...] identity,"¹¹ and says that the "central incident" in *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* is Julia's mother's death, "even though the daughter does not understand its significance to her."¹² Whether or not her mother's death could fairly be termed the "central incident" of a novel in which no single event precipitates conclusive action on Julia's part is debatable. But that her mother appears in the novel at all, and that she does so, as it were, in order to die, is remarkable. Rhys has thought it necessary, in this novel which takes as its theme the search for a woman's identity, to include among those to whom Julia turns for understanding this helpless, inarticulate mother. That her mother does not help Julia can be no accident. Whether she cannot help because no woman can - there are no effective role models offered - or whether she cannot help because, given Julia's arrested development, no one can reach her, is not clear. Gardiner prefers the former, feminist explanation.

What is clear is that Julia knows all too well the strength of her mother's emotional power:

Supposing that her mother knew her or recognized her and with one word or glance put her outside the pale, as everybody else had done.

She felt a sort of superstitious and irrational certainty that if that happened it would finish her; it would be an ultimate and final judgement. (p. 96)

It is crucial that she gain her mother's understanding, especially as this is all that her mother, unlike the others to whom Julia turns, has to give. Julia "began to whisper soundlessly: 'Oh darling, there's something I want to explain to you. You must listen'" (p. 98). She is looking to go, not only beyond the "inert mass" (p. 99) in front of her, but beyond, in memory, the "dark, austere, rather plump woman, who, because she was worried, slapped you for no reason that you knew" (pp. 106-7), to recover "the sweet, warm centre of the world" (p. 107) which her mother had once been, with all the unconditional love and acceptance that that implies, the "real happiness" of childhood.

But instead the dying woman is at first unresponsive (p. 98), and then, so Julia imagines, reproachful:

Then she saw her mother's black eyes open again and stare back into hers with recognition and surprise and anger. They said: "Is this why you have come back? Have you come back to laugh at me?"

Julia's heart gave a horrible leap into her throat. [...]

The whimpering began again. Now it was louder. It was almost like a dog howling. (p. 100)

But in fact this confirmation of Julia's worst fears is interpolation on her part. Her mother doesn't speak. And the whimpering, "almost like a dog howling" is Julia's interpretation of the sound, of the pain and isolation her mother is suffering. It is like the "bellow [...] not fierce or threatening [...] it was complaining and mindless, like an animal in pain" (p. 85) which Julia hears when she has been turned away by her Uncle Griffiths, and which is, in fact, only a person singing in the street. The situations have another parallel. Leaving her Uncle's, Julia thinks:

It was the darkness that got you. It was heavy darkness, greasy and compelling. It made walls round you, and shut you in so that you felt you could not breathe. You wanted to beat at the darkness and shriek to be let out. And after a while you got used to it. Of course. And then you stopped believing that there was anything else anywhere. (p. 85)

On leaving her mother whimpering, we are told: "It was getting dark ..." (p. 100) as truly, we presume, for the daughter as for the mother.

Gardiner makes the point that "although Julia does not consciously realize it, her paralyzed mother is a frightening parody of the female condition. She is completely passive, immobile and dependent."¹³ If it is also true that "the women can give each other nothing because they are the same, the mother's dying mirrors Julia's living,"¹⁴ it is not surprising that her mother's funeral provokes an outburst of what Julia tells her sister was "rage" (p. 134):

Julia had abandoned herself. She was kneeling and sobbing and wishing she had brought another handkerchief. She was crying now because she remembered that her life had been a long succession of humiliations and mistakes and pains and ridiculous efforts. Everybody's life was like that. At the same time, in a miraculous manner, some essence of her was shooting upwards like a flame. She was great. She was a

defiant flame shooting upwards not to plead but to threaten.
Then the flame sank down again, useless, having reached nothing.
(p. 131)

The recovery of some great "essence of her," even with "miraculous" assistance, is an unexpected moment of anger and power. Like her retort to Mr. James: "My dear, I would harrow you for the world. 'No harrowing' is my motto" (p. 113), and the exultation she feels in sending away a strange man who has accosted her (p. 59), it gives us a clue to potential selfhood of Julia Martin. But these moments are brief and unsubstantiated, useless in the larger context of Julia's life.

Eventually the plot, as episodic and fragmentary as Julia's sense of herself, comes full circle and Julia is seen to be leaving Mr. Mackenzie as surely at the end of the book as she had been at the beginning. She has made no progress in resolving her predicament; she is still seeking understanding (p. 184) and financial support (p. 191), although, perhaps significant that she no longer feels the impulse to explain herself to her financial benefactor. But to make no progress is, if we are to believe Julia's account, becoming a woman, literally in the nature of things. Nature has her victims, like the butterflies, and whilst they flutter (and can "make such a row," p. 159), whilst they are in tiny triumphs and rare moments of peace, they have no means powerful enough to alter established order. They have, at the same time, on the evidence of this novel, suffered tragic crippling of the imagination. It is the ultimate irony, in a novel which delights in ironies, that in the one glimpse we have of Julia acting autonomously, as a child catching butterflies, she is behaving with exactly the same tyrannical ruthlessness from which she is later to suffer so poignantly. It would seem that the oppressor and the oppressed are the only two choices this "rum" life has to offer; and for the oppressed, at least, what sustains the body impoverishes the soul. It will take nothing less than a miracle to make a cripple walk, let alone fly:

You ran as if you were flying, without feeling your feet.
And all the time you ran, you were thinking, with a tight
feeling in your throat: "I'm happy - happy - happy..."

NOTES

- ¹Jean Rhys, *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie*, London: Deutsch, 1969, pp. 158-59. Page numbers will hereafter be included in the text.
- ²See, for example, Thomas F. Staley, *Jean Rhys: A Critical Study* (London: Macmillan, 1977) especially chapters 3 and 4; P.A. Packer, "The Four Early Novels Of Jean Rhys," *Durham University Journal*, NS 15 (1978-79), pp. 252-65; Mary-Kay Wilmers, "Narcissism and its Discontents," review of *Smile Please: An Unfinished Autobiography*, by Jean Rhys, and *Jean Rhys: A Critical Study*, by Thomas F. Staley, *London Review of Books*, 21 February 1980, pp. 10-11; V.S. Pritchett, "Displaced Person," review of *Smile Please*, by Jean Rhys, *New York Review of Books*, 14 August 1980, pp. 8-9; A. Alvarez, "The Best Living English Novelist," *New York Times Book Review*, 17 March 1974, pp. 6-7; Frank Baldanza, "Jean Rhys on Insult and Injury," *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 11, no. 2 (Fall 1978), pp. 55-65.
- ³Packer, p. 256. Packer notes that notions of class restrict the possible sources of income for Rhys heroines; none, for example, contemplates manual work.
- ⁴Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Reinventing Womanhood* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1979), pp. 71, 72.
- ⁵Letter from Diana Athill to Helen Nebeker, 1 September 1978, in which Athill quotes Jean Rhys. In Helen Nebeker, *Jean Rhys: Woman in Passage* (St. Albans, Vt.: Eden Press Women's Publications, 1981), p. 203, footnote 16.
- ⁶Diana Athill, Foreword to *Smile Please: An Unfinished Autobiography*, by Jean Rhys (London: Deutsch, 1979), p. 10.

⁷Letter from Jean Rhys to Helen Nebeker, "written in the last month of [Rhys's] life." In Nebeker, pp. vi-vii.

⁸Annette Kolodny, "Some Notes on Defining a 'Feminist Literary Criticism,'" *Critical Inquiry*, 2 (Autumn 1975), p. 83.

⁹Kolodny, 80.

¹⁰Todd K. Bender, "Jean Rhys and the Genius of Impressionism," *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 11, no. 2 (Fall 1978), p. 51.

¹¹Judith Kegan Gardiner, "A Wake for Mother: the Maternal Deathbed in Women's Fiction," *Feminist Studies*, 4 (June 1978), p. 146.

¹²Gardiner, "A Wake for Mother," p. 151.

¹³Gardiner, "A Wake for Mother," p. 151.

¹⁴Judith Kegan Gardiner, "The Heroine as Her Author's Daughter," in *Feminist Criticism*, ed. Cheryl L. Brown and Karen Olson (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1978), p. 245.

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Nora Gaines

As noted in the first issue of the *Jean Rhys Review*, this bibliography will provide a continuing list of material concerning Jean Rhys and her work. An update will appear each fall, and readers are encouraged to send relevant material and information. Although emphasis is on the period from 1979 to the present, material which has not previously appeared in earlier Rhys bibliographies will also be included. (See the Fall, 1986 "Bibliography," as well as the updated "Bibliographies" section below).

With thanks to all readers who have sent bibliographical information.

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