

paradoxically, by deception. In the case of 'The Unexpected Must Happen', it is Judith's deception: she has given Cecil, her paramour, the key to her flat. In that of *Bliss*, it is Harry's: he is having an affair with Pearl Fulton.

Judith Gaythorn's surname embodies the oppositions in her nature. Guy claims she is 'half witch . . . half pussy cat'; she looks at him 'half laughing, half angry'. She is an early version of Bertha Young. They are both self-deluded, Judith by her power to allure, and Bertha by her vision of a perfect life. Judith is depicted as an attractive woman whose extramarital escapades stem from boredom within a precipitous marriage. Whatever her protestations, she uses other men to attract her husband's attention. Similarly, Bertha in *Bliss*, only far more subtly and with greater emotional complexity, desires her husband when contemplated alongside Pearl, the fascinating 'other' woman. At the moment of their renewed interest in their respective spouses, Judith and Bertha are thwarted by the evidence that they are not essential to them. Bertha realizes that her husband Harry is involved with Pearl, the woman she herself has been drawn to, and Guy goes off congenially with Cecil, leaving Judith alone. In effect, Judith becomes the 'forgotten melody' throbbing in her brain. Where they once appeared to orchestrate events, Judith and Bertha are rendered victims of 'the unexpected'.

Despite the brevity of Mansfield's early text, it reveals elements that become full-blown virtues in *Bliss*: imagery, irony, and wordplay. Moonlight, fire, mirrors, and gardens appear in both stories, though *Bliss* manifests a more scrupulous mobilization of them. In particular, the pear tree in the garden unifies the story by serving as a projection of Bertha's psyche. Her changing perceptions of it track an inner drama whose ending ironically contrasts the untouched, insensitive quality of the tree itself. Imagery in 'The Unexpected Must Happen', on the other hand, functions not as an essential structuring principle so much as an illustrative gesture toward the illusion and reality theme. To this end, the table has a 'polished surface', and the feather that Judith blows across it is likened to a 'tiny swan on a dark miniature lake'. These images suggest that things are not what they seem.

The irony of events in 'The Unexpected Must Happen' is heightened as it is in *Bliss* through wordplay involving characters' names, such as the punning of 'gaythorn' on 'gay blade', and various textual repetitions and variations. For example, Judith imagines Cecil entering the flat 'eager—loving—excitable', only to hear him leave with her husband 'talking excitedly'. Fearing his untimely arrival, she thinks, 'how could she make Guy go . . . it was strongly evident that her husband would not leave . . . she must . . . go with him. This must be done.' The repetition of 'must', the implied necessity, plays off against the title, which by the end of the story reveals its irony. Can it be