# Limping Lucy's Queer Criptopia: Narrative Sidestepping in *The Moonstone*

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WHEN Lucy Yolland, a Marxist misandrist working-class disabled lesbian, limps into the narrative of *The Moonstone* (1868), boldly asserting her unapologetic disinterest in the mystery and her queer romance with Rosanna Spearman, what are we to make of her? How are we possibly to read her as anything other than a bizarre narrative blip, an eccentricity of Wilkie Collins (1824–1889)? There has been no shortage of scholarship on *The Moonstone*: it is considered one of the first detective novels, has been the subject of myriad psychoanalytic readings (the diamond and the Shivering Sands seem infinitely Freudian), has helped advance ideas about the gothic and sensation fiction, has proved useful for arguments about crime and surveillance, and has been a key text for Victorian postcolonial studies.[1] Most recently, in addition to work on race and class, the queer and disability aspects of the novel have come into focus. Rosanna Spearman, a formerly incarcerated housemaid with scoliosis and cross-class romantic desires, and Ezra Jennings, an ambiguously biracial medical assistant with an opium addiction and past of (homo)sexual scandal, have provided fodder for many critics. For example, Martha Stoddard Holmes uses Rosanna to argue that Collins, more than other authors of the period, explores disabled female characters' sexual subjectivity, and Melissa Free claims that Ezra, despite being queer and disabled, is the character who facilitates Rachel Verinder and Franklin Blake's marriage.[2] Even though there has been a gradual meeting of *The Moonstone,* queer theory, and disability studies, Lucy has yet to be the subject of a sustained reading of the novel.

The clearest potential excuse for the lack of scholarship on Lucy is a logistical one: other than some incidental and indirect mentions, Lucy is only on stage, so to speak, for a mere two scenes, both quite short. In the

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novel's serialization, these scenes were in only two out of thirty-two installments (#13, on March 28, 1868, and #22, on May 30, 1868). In the novel's first edition, Lucy appears only on nine pages (out of 921, only in volume 2 of 3). In the modern Oxford edition, she is only on six pages (out of 466).[3] Because Lucy's presence in the text is so fleeting, she has not occupied much critical attention. Mark Mossman, Kylee-Anne Hingston, and Clare Walker Gore all briefly mention Lucy in their discussions of *The Moonstone,* though only in reference to longer readings of Rosanna and Ezra; all three discuss how Collins stages the difficulty in reading bodies and argue that he sensationalizes bodily difference, though they do not all agree on the degree to which Collins successfully breaks down the disability/ability binary or advances a radical politic. Each of these critics quickly reads Lucy's two passages, noting her complex embodiment, her Marxism and misandry, her bold stare, and her vision of a future with Rosanna.[4] Lucy appears even more briefly in readings of the novel by Lillian Nayder, who writes about Lucy's revolutionary desire for independence, and Alexander Welsh, who notes the significance of Lucy's class, homoeroticism, and critique of Franklin.[5] In all, the sum total of pages of scholarship that discuss Lucy does not surpass the small page count she is afforded in *The Moonstone.* Critics, like Collins, have given her only brief attention and, even then, only as a peripheral or minor part of a larger discussion, a referent to something more important. That said, it is significant that Mossman, Hingston, Walker Gore, Nayder, and Welsh mention her at all. Here I build on their work but make the political choice to allow Lucy to take up space—to be the main subject of focus.

To do so, I offer new ways of reading that accommodate her unruly body, her small amount of text, and her role in the narrative. Building on David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder's theory of narrative prosthesis, I propose the concept of narrative sidestepping—a mode of reading that embraces expansive narrative possibilities for disabled characters. To apply this concept, I draw on models from queer theory throughout, using them to help leverage my arguments about disability and narratology. Like Rachel DuPlessis, I want to theorize "strategies that sever the narrative from formerly conventional structures of fiction."[6] Lennard Davis, in *Enforcing Normalcy*, writes that the discourse of normalcy, which began in the nineteenth century, fundamentally altered the way that people thought about bodies, leading to the greater stigmatization of disability. He argues that Victorian fiction played a role: "the very structures on which the novel rests tend to be normative."[7] While the majority of literary disability studies has focused on the novel form's valorization

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of normalcy and the problematic moments when disability has been appropriated by novelists, I want to think about the novel beyond the confines of normative narratology. Narrative sidestepping can help theorize a new queer-crip narratology, one that accommodates minoritized characters like Lucy, who are usually relegated to the periphery and left out of larger theories.[8] In this essay, I embrace the minimal amount of text and perform a microreading; thus, because Lucy only appears in two short scenes, I will be quoting them at length. Microreading is a fitting strategy to demonstrate narrative sidestepping, which often happens on the margins of narrative. Using these theoretical tools, I will argue that despite the small portion of the novel she appears in, Lucy makes space for herself and for her queer-crip desires, pushing beyond the boundaries of normalcy and narrative.

While traditional theories in narratology by Frank Kermode, David Richter, Marianna Torgovnick, and Peter Brooks emphasize forward plot momentum and closure, I am interested in how Lucy queers and crips accepted systems of narrative movement.[9] In particular, I argue that Lucy, uninterested in the closure of the normative narrative (the solving of the mystery and the resolution of the marriage plot), intentionally delays it, focusing instead on her sidestepped narrative, her plan for a queer-crip utopic future with Rosanna. Borrowing from Essaka Joshua, I call this Lucy's queer *criptopia*.[10] In line with Alison Kafer's proposed *elsewhere* and *elsewhen*, Lucy's queer criptopia is a locality and futurity where those like Lucy and Rosanna, queer and disabled, can live happily.[11] The fundamental goals of this essay are to theorize how queer and crip elsewhere/elsewhen get written into literature in the form of narrative sidestepping and to provide a praxis for how to read those narratives. In doing so, I hope to prove how alternative plot potentialities, forms of narrative movement, and temporalities can reveal a queer-crip narratology that rejects the structures of normalcy. Like Kafer, I "desire crip futures: futures that embrace disabled people, futures that imagine disability differently, futures that support multiple ways of being," and in addition, I desire a narratology that not only accommodates and allows for disability and queerness but also encompasses and embraces them.[12] Beyond the narratology of normalcy, there is a new way of reading.

In *The Moonstone,* Lucy Yolland is almost exclusively referred to as "Limping Lucy," bringing to mind similarly alliteratively-named disabled characters such as Tiny Tim and Blind Bertha (from Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* [1843] and *The Cricket on the Hearth* [1845], respectively), except in our modern parlance Lucy's name might have an additional

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L-word, since we have the language to articulate her as "Limping Lucy the Lesbian." It with this third L that I start, since lesbian literary criticism can help us unlock why Lucy in particular has gone mostly undiscussed while her counterparts Ezra, and Rosanna in particular, have been the subject of such diverse scholarly arguments. In *The Apparitional Lesbian*, Terry Castle argues that lesbians have always been there, hidden in plain sight; when discussing literature, she takes this to a literal level, writing that lesbians have been consistently figured as ghosts or described in spectral terms.[13] *The Moonstone* proves her point: in her first scene Lucy's presence surprises Gabriel Betteredge: "Turning round, I found myself face to face with the fisherman's daughter, Limping Lucy," and in her second scene, Franklin Blake describes her as "an apparition advanc[ing] toward me" (124, 300). Thus, Castle is correct about Lucy in both aspects of her argument: the text itself may take a spectral stance toward her, but she has always been there, lurking in the background while critics discuss other characters and aspects of the novel. It is time to finally take a good look at this ghost and to include her in discussions about disability and queerness in *The Moonstone*.

Lucy is introduced first indirectly by Betteredge, who describes her as a friend of Rosanna's who is "afflicted with a misshapen foot, and who was known in our parts by the name of Limping Lucy," concluding that "The two deformed girls had, I supposed, a kind of fellow-feeling for each other" (124). Right away, even before Lucy herself enters the story, we are given quite a bit to unpack. Leave it to Wilkie Collins to have not one but *two* disabled women in his story, and to make them friends—not to mention friends who share a "fellow-feeling for each other." We can read this "fellow feeling" as a mutual understanding of the experience of living a disabled life. It is extremely significant that Lucy is only referred to as "Lucy Yolland" twice in *The Moonstone* (302, 326)—both times by Rosanna, who is also disabled—while the able-bodied characters consistently refer to her with the ableist epithet "Limping Lucy." The "fellow-feeling," though, also represents unspeakable forms of desire, here both queer *and* crip, a combination highly unusual in Victorian literature. Disabled romantic pairs were not unheard of in literature, such as Ermine/Colin in Charlotte Yonge's *The Clever Woman of the Family* (1865), Jenny/Sloppy in Charles Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), and Lucilla/Oscar in Collins's *Poor Miss Finch* (1872). That said, a queer disabled pair is exceptionally rare. Emma Donoghue outlines several tropes that literary depictions of lesbians fall into; Lucy and Rosanna perfectly fit the Inseparables

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category. In discussing Inseparables, Donoghue writes that novelists frequently are "interested in the charming scenario of a pair of girls whose bond emerges naturally from their similarity and mutual familiarity. . . . Because of their likeness in age and background, they can act as mirrors to each other, although events will often reveal their characters as contrasting."[14] What Donoghue calls "similarity and mutual familiarity" or "likeness in age and background" Collins calls "fellow-feeling."

Their atypical queer-crip relationship raises the question: Why have scholars written so much more about Rosanna than about Lucy? Lucy has similar attributes to Rosanna; namely, both are working-class and disabled, but Lucy's queerness is far more explicit than Rosanna's, and she also has clearly stated radical political beliefs and attitudes toward the patriarchy. In many ways Rosanna is the more palatable, diluted version of Lucy. This is not to push Rosanna aside but to examine what happens if we put Lucy at the center of a reading instead and think critically about *why* scholars have yet to do so. Rosanna is admittedly easier to write about simply because she is in much more of the novel, but this seems a poor excuse, for Rosanna and Lucy both play important roles in the solving of the mystery, though Lucy's role has gone unrecognized. In *Inconsequence*, Annamarie Jagose argues that the hierarchy of sexual sequencing in Victorian sexology—which prioritizes heterosexuality, only examines deviant sexualities in relation to heterosexuality, and sequences sexualities based on their distance from heterosexuality (with lesbianism last)—has left a haunting legacy on what we pay attention to.[15] This logic might explain why Rosanna's bisexual interest in Franklin has been discussed much more than Lucy's lesbian desire for Rosanna. Rosanna has been a subject of interest because of her proximity to heterosexuality, to the mystery, and to the marriage plot at the heart of the novel. Lucy, though, is purposefully far removed from heterosexuality and marriage. While she is an essential figure in solving the mystery and thus in the progression of the narrative, she does not care about the outcome. Instead, Lucy is interested in an alternative narrative future, a queer criptopia she and Rosanna imagined for themselves—and this is precisely what makes her interesting narratologically.

Put succinctly, Lucy is unsettling both in the bodily sense and the narrative sense. Borrowing from Ato Quayson, she is a figure of textual short-circuiting, stumbling, and aesthetic nervousness.[16] To begin with, her body: right away, the descriptions of her in the text describe her in contradictory, almost uncanny terms. Betteredge writes, "Bating her

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lame foot and her leanness (this last a horrid draw-back to a woman, in my opinion), the girl had some pleasing qualities in the eye of a man. A dark, keen, clever face, and a nice clear voice, and a beautiful brown head of hair counted among her merits. A crutch appeared in the list of her misfortunes. And a temper reckoned high in the sum total of her defects" (183). Later, when Franklin sees her for the first time, he has a similarly conflicting report, describing Lucy as "A wan, wild, haggard girl, with remarkably beautiful hair, and with a fierce keenness in her eyes" (300). Both able-bodied male characters are overwhelmed at the experience of seeing a conventionally attractive and feminine disabled woman; they are unsettled by the fact that Lucy's beautiful face, voice, and hair, her "pleasing qualities in the eyes of a man," do not cohere with her disabled body and aggressive temperament.[17] As Hingston writes, both men are "preoccupied with her bodily difference and . . . with its potential for sexuality" (as opposed to Rosanna's body, which they largely desexualize).[18] Betteredge, keen not to dwell on the uncomfortable beauty of Lucy, pulls focus to her prosthesis, one item on what he deems her "list of misfortunes" or "defects." Lucy herself never articulates her disability as a misfortune or laments that she uses a crutch. In fact, she is quite mobile *because* of her crutch and wields it very adeptly (as we will see in her interaction with Franklin); she uses it both as a crutch and as an extension of her body with which she can point or punctuate her speech.

Betteredge's, and later Franklin's, discomfort around Lucy cannot be overstated, as evidenced in his first conversation with her:

> "Where's the man you call Franklin Blake?" says the girl, fixing me with a fierce look, as she rested herself on her crutch.
>
> "That's not a respectful way to speak of any gentleman," I answered. "If you wish to inquire for my lady's nephew, you will please to mention him as Mr. Franklin Blake."
>
> She limped a step nearer to me, and looked as if she could have eaten me alive. "*Mr.* Franklin Blake?" she repeated after me. "Murderer Franklin Blake would be a fitter name for him." . . .
>
> The girl's temper flamed out directly. She poised herself on her sound foot, and she took her crutch, and beat it furiously three times on the ground. "He's a murderer! he's a murderer! he's a murderer! He has been the death of Rosanna Spearman!" She screamed that answer out at the top of her voice. One or two of the people at work in the grounds near us looked up—saw it was Limping Lucy—knew what to expect from that quarter—and looked away again.
>
> "He has been the death of Rosanna Spearman?" I repeated. "What makes you say that, Lucy?"

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> "What do you care? What does any man care? Oh! if she had only thought of the men as I think, she might have been living now!" (183)

To be fair, the animosity goes in both directions: Betteredge is uncomfortable and annoyed around Lucy and responds with typical misogyny (not to mention classism and ableism), and Lucy spews hatred not only for Franklin specifically but for all men. As Betteredge later says, "it was my misfortune to be a man—and Limping Lucy enjoyed disappointing me" (185). Note here his ironic echoing of "misfortune," a word he previously used to describe Lucy's limp, her crutch, and her temperament, but here used to describe his gender, which he believes Lucy would consider a similarly tragic quality. Lucy's misandry is unabashed, and it is directly tied to her euphemistic same-sex desire: "What does any man care? Oh! if she had only thought of the men as I think" (183). Taking this a step further, Collins has Lucy declare her hatred of capitalism alongside her hatred of men: first refusing to call Franklin a "gentleman" or use an honorific, and then declaring "the day is not far off when the poor will rise against the rich. I pray Heaven they may begin with *him*" (185). Her anticapitalist politics are particularly trenchant in a novel set in 1848 (the year of European revolution and the year of Marx and Engel's manifesto) where the entire mystery plot is rooted in ownership of a highly valued, extremely expensive diamond.[19] It is tempting, therefore, to anachronistically label Lucy as the stereotypical man-hating Marxist-inclined second-wave feminist lesbian, especially since many of those stereotypes also were applied to Victorian feminists.[20]

But it is not only Lucy's body and beliefs that unsettle; she also disrupts the narrative via delaying. In other words, she slows the narrative momentum. At its core, *The Moonstone* is all about (im)mobility: from the first page we trace the geographic movements of the titular diamond from its static location in a statue in India, to its robbery, its transcontinental journey to England, its second period of stasis in a vault of a hated family member, and then a mail journey ending on Rachel Verinder's dress, to her cabinet, its being stolen by Franklin, given to Godfrey, and deposited in his safe until it is stolen again and returned to India. The movement of the diamond is what catalyzes (and eventually closes) the entire narrative. The mystery plot is defined by the diamond's location and the tracing of its movements.[21] Although it does move a great deal—from India to England and back again—for the majority of the narrative it is actually quite still, sitting in a safe. It thus acts as a

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symbol of (im)mobility—as does the Shivering Sands and its hidden lockbox—at once still and yet causing the rapid movement of the plot. In general the novel moves very quickly, but it also has a major phase with no narrative momentum whatsoever. While the movement of the diamond is what causes the swift movement of the plot, it is not the diamond's immobility in Godfrey's safe that stalls the narrative. Instead, it is something else entirely, some*one* else: Lucy. By redirecting the narratological conversation away from the diamond and detection and on to Lucy, we can move from nonhuman forms of movement (geographic, chain of custody, plot momentum) to deeply human, complex forms (limping, stalling, sidestepping) that allow us to examine how narrative movement can be an embodied practice as well as a form of reading.

Lucy does not delay the narrative out of any sadistic desire. In her conversation with Betteredge about Rosanna's letter, she tells him: "'I am to give it from my hands into his [Franklin's] hands' she said. 'And I am to give it to him in no other way. . . . If he wants the letter, he must come back here, and get it from Me'" (185). Lucy holds steadfast, largely out of duty to Rosanna. This fidelity stalls the novel in its tracks and threatens to capsize the narrative. As Betteredge writes, "This news —by closing up all prospect of my bringing Limping Lucy and Mr. Franklin together—at once stopped any further progress of mine on the way to discovery. . . . A sealed letter it had been placed in Limping Lucy's hands, and a sealed letter it remained" (186). Betteredge comments metanarratively on how it is Lucy's actions that delay the detective work. While Walker Gore claims that it is Rosanna's suicide that "imped[es] the solving of the crime for a large chunk of the novel," concluding that "Rosanna's love for Franklin literally holds up the mystery," it is not Rosanna's suicide that causes delay but Franklin and Lucy's actions afterward: if Franklin had not fled England or Lucy had been willing to give the letter to Betteredge or mail it to Franklin, the delay would not have happened.[22] But with Franklin gone and Lucy refusing to give Rosanna's note to anyone but him, the solving of the mystery screeches to a halt for about a year—a bizarrely long gap in a fast-paced mystery novel. While Lucy only appears in six pages of the novel, her actions cause a narrative delay of 115 pages (which separate her two three-page scenes). The result is the Miss Clack section of *The Moonstone* in which practically nothing happens related to the solving of the mystery. While readers may or may not care, the other characters, especially Betteredge and his "detective fever" (121), are certainly bothered. Lucy, however, is unfazed; she will

give Franklin the note whenever he comes to see her, and if that never were to happen, she likely would not be upset. Lucy is not at all invested in the mystery plot; she is the one character who is not obsessed with the diamond. This in itself is a remarkable fact: to have a character in a mystery novel (other than the villain) who does not care about the mystery being solved is bizarre. Lucy is not only indifferent to the solving of the mystery plot, but she is also apathetic about how the marriage plot gets solved—she has no interest in the novel's narrative closure (through either detection or marriage). It makes no difference to Lucy whether the diamond is found, lost, cut up, sold, or returned to India, nor whether Rachel marries Franklin or Godfrey.

While Lucy's indifference is noteworthy, the "commonsense" explanation for it is that she does not care about the outcome of the plot because she is a minor character who does not have any personal stake in the central conflicts. This, though, is untrue for Lucy; the detection plot is what caused her beloved to kill herself, so Lucy has a very personal stake in this narrative, but instead of one of interest it is one of hatred, especially toward the detective protagonist, Franklin, and all he represents. The narrative closure comes at the cost of Rosanna, a trade-off that is not worth it for Lucy. Alex Woloch's *The One vs. the Many* provides a better explanation for Lucy's antipathy toward the narrative; Woloch, taking a Marxist approach, reads minor characters as the proletariat who do the labor for the narrative, which in no coincidence accurately describes Lucy, a Marxist character. Walker Gore makes a similar point about disabled characters in Victorian fiction, arguing that they perform "an astonishing variety of narrative work" and "play a host of necessary plot roles."[23] Lucy is forced into narrative labor: she is given a task that (stalls but then eventually) propels the narrative forward to its inevitable conclusion. In Woloch's types of minorness, Lucy is a worker/eccentric character, a role she is grudgingly forced into by Rosanna's dying wish that Lucy give a letter to Franklin. Similarly, building on Woloch, Lucy has a very small "character-space," but she plays as an essential role in the "character-system" of the novel, crucially linking Rosanna (albeit postmortem) to Franklin, a connection that without her is impossible.[24] Going purely by the numbers, it is quite clear the amount of narrative work Lucy performs and the impact she has, despite her minorness: though she is in only about 1 percent of the novel, her actions cause a delay that takes up about 25 percent of the narrative.

While the basis of Woloch's claims align with Lucy's characterization, the related arguments from disability theorists largely do not.

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson in *Extraordinary Bodies* rightfully claims that disabled characters are usually marginalized and treated as spectacle, but also that they are frequently overdetermined, oversimplified, and reductive. Lucy is admittedly marginal, and as we saw with Betteredge and will later see with Franklin, she is also a spectacle; while in name she is reduced "to a single attribute" ("*Limping* Lucy"),[25] her characterization is undeniably complex (beautiful hair, Marxist politics, misandry, lesbian, a limp). Garland-Thomson goes on to write that "literary representation sets up static encounters between disabled figures and normate readers,"[26] but the conflicting and confused reactions Betteredge and Franklin have to Lucy contradict this. Other scholars have theorized dyads that disabled characters in literature fall into: Victoria Ann Lewis writes that they are usually either victims or villains; Leslie Fiedler claims that disabled characters usually inspire pity or fear; and, most famously, Mitchell and Snyder argue that disabled characters are always either plot devices or metaphors.[27] Lucy is a clear and succinct challenge to these theories. She is neither victim nor villain. Instead of inspiring pity or fear, she causes confusion and ruffles the feathers of Victorian sensibility. If she is a metaphor, it is unclear for what. As demonstrated by her narrative delaying, she is the character on whom the entire plot of *The Moonstone* turns. While Lucy does not fit into the existing theories, she enables us to explore new, expansive ways to theorize disabled characters in literature. Instead of thinking of her as minor and not worthy of scholarly attention, we can recenter our readings and realize if she had not given Franklin the letter, the mystery would never have been solved and there would be no narrative resolution.

Despite her delay and the narrative labor she puts in—which up until this point has gone unnoticed in scholarship—Franklin eventually returns and gets the letter from Lucy. When speaking with Lucy, Franklin is (like Betteredge) overwhelmed by her, but while Betteredge is mostly annoyed, Franklin is made deeply uncomfortable by her "mercilessly fixed" stare and is confused at her unexpected mobility (301). He writes that Lucy

> came limping up on a crutch to the table at which I was sitting, and looked at me as if I was an object of mingled interest and horror, which it quite fascinated her to see. The girl turned her back on me, and suddenly left the room. . . .
>
> My attention was absorbed in following the sound of the girl's crutch. Thump-thump, up the wooden stairs; thump-thump across the room above our heads; thump-thump down the stairs again—and there stood

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> the apparition at the open door, with a letter in its hand, beckoning me out! . . .
>
> [I] followed this strange creature—limping on before me, faster and faster—down the slope of the beach. She led me behind some boats, out of sight and hearing of the few people in the fishing-village, and then stopped, and faced me for the first time.
>
> "Stand there," she said, "I want to look at you."
>
> There was no mistaking the expression on her face. I inspired her with the strongest emotions of abhorrence and disgust. Let me not be vain enough to say that no woman had ever looked at me in this manner before. I will only venture on the more modest assertion that no woman had ever let me perceive it yet. There is a limit to the length of the inspection which a man can endure, under certain circumstances. I attempted to direct Limping Lucy's attention to some less revolting object than my face. . . .
>
> "I can't find out what she saw in his face. I can't guess what she heard in his voice." She suddenly looked away from me, and rested her head wearily on the top of her crutch. "Oh, my poor dear!" she said, in the first soft tones which had fallen from her, in my hearing. "Oh, my lost darling! what could you see in this man?" She lifted her head again fiercely, and looked at me once more. (300–302)

In *Fictions of Affliction,* Stoddard Holmes offers the concept of "melodramatic bodies," where disabled characters in Victorian novels are centers of "emotional excess"—which we can observe at play here with Lucy, who is full of "the strongest emotions of abhorrence and disgust" and who earlier yelled at Betteredge.[28] Crucially, Stoddard Holmes also adds desire to Fiedler's pity and fear dyad, a useful addition that certainly applies to Lucy and her queer-crip desire for Rosanna.[29] In both scenes, Lucy's excessive emotion, anger, is tied to her desire. Franklin seems equally stunned by Lucy's wrath, her mournful desire, her unwavering stare, and her rapid movements. He notes how she is "limping on before me, faster and faster" and he tracks the "thump-thump" of her crutch. She is far from the demure, immobilized, disabled girl he expected her to be. The encounter is in no way, to use Garland-Thomson's language, "static." Lucy will neither stay still nor bow to a man's will; quite the opposite, she swiftly walks, demands he follow, and then impolitely stares at him for an extended period of time as she expresses her anger, confusion, and thwarted desire.

Lucy inverts Garland-Thomson's concept of "the stare," an able-bodied gaze that assigns stigma, makes meaning, acts as surveillance, and regulates status; the stare "enact[s] social hierarchies through visual dominance displays," thus "conferring subordination on a staree and ascendancy on a starer."[30] Traditionally, in Garland-Thomson's formulation, the starer is able-bodied and the staree is disabled, but Lucy/

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Franklin reverse this; Lucy dares to stare back. Garland-Thomson discusses positive tactics "accomplished starees" use when staring back or in response to stares; Lucy is not only uninterested but actively opposed to "using charm, friendliness, humor, formidability, or perspicacity to reduce interpersonal tension."[31] She does not want to help starers "maintain face by relieving them of anxiety, understanding their motivations, working with them to overcome their limited understanding of human variation, and indulging in their social awkwardness," nor is she looking to "rescue" the starer from embarrassment.[32] Lucy has no desire to deescalate or defuse—she instead wants to radically redirect Franklin's violent looking and to make him uncomfortable. Therefore, Lucy refuses the stare and instead inflicts an inverted one onto Franklin, unabashedly demanding: "Stand there, I want to look at you." Instead of enduring an able-bodied man staring at her and feeling repulsion at her disabled body, she stares at Franklin and feels "the strongest emotions of abhorrence and disgust." Instead of being the object of a sexualizing male gaze, Lucy looks at him and is unable to fathom why Rosanna was attracted to him; even worse, she ignores him and talks about him as if he were not even there ("I can't find out what she saw in his face. I can't guess what she heard in his voice"). Hingston notes, "Lucy briefly forces Blake into the subjective position of the freakish spectacle and the staree"; Franklin contends that no woman has openly stared at him "in this manner," and in response he breaks the uncomfortable moment because "There is a limit to the length of the inspection which *a man* can endure" (emphasis added).[33] Franklin needs to be in the position of power and refuses to admit that in this moment he is not. Although he frequently projects his own sexualizing male gaze and ableist stare, he cannot handle being the subject of similarly obtrusive looks.

Throughout the scene there is an undercurrent of discomfort and misunderstanding on both sides. Both approach the situation from such dramatically different yet equally unwavering positionalities. Lucy sees Franklin as the enemy; on the individual level he is the reason her beloved committed suicide, but on the larger level he represents men, the patriarchy, the aristocracy, capitalism, and privilege. Franklin sees Lucy only as a means to an end; he barely registers her as a person, dehumanizing her in his narration: "[T]here stood the *apparition* at the open door, with a letter in *its* hand. . . . I followed this *strange creature*" (300–301, emphasis added). In fact, he only sees her as the object she holds, Rosanna's letter. Before handing it over, Lucy interrogates him, asking: "Can you eat and drink?"; "Can you sleep?" (he simply answers "Yes"

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both times); and "'Do you feel no remorse?'" to which he replies, "Certainly not. Why should I?'" (301–2). She does not answer him; he is not worth her time, and she will not let him hurt her anymore. Franklin tells us, "She abruptly thrust the letter . . . into my face. 'Take it!' she exclaimed furiously. 'I never set eyes on you before. God Almighty forbid I should ever set eyes on you again'" (302). Note here her usage of eyes: she is so furious she does not even want to stare at him again—she quite literally never wants to *see* him again. Having done her duty to Rosanna by delivering the letter, she leaves. Lucy exits with her characteristic, unexpected, and surprisingly mobile flair: "With those parting words she limped away from me at the top of her speed" (302). After handing Franklin Rosanna's note, Lucy is gone from the narrative. Franklin, the other characters, and Collins are done with her, but it is just as well, because she is done with them. We can read Lucy's exit from the novel not as a disappearance, a lack of importance, or an end to her supposed narrative (prosthetic) use, but as her refusal to engage with narratives she is no longer interested in.

Upon her leaving, Franklin states: "The one interpretation that I could put on her conduct has, no doubt, been anticipated by everybody. I could only suppose that she was mad" (302). He cannot fathom any other explanation for her unsettling actions. Following this sexist and ableist diagnosis, he moves to "the more interesting object of investigation," the letter, grammatically implying that the antecedent to the comparative is Lucy, that she is the *less* interesting object of investigation. While the contents of the letter are essential to Franklin, the letter itself, its author, its hiding place, and its reader have been the subject of many pages of scholarship already. Like Lucy, who does not at all care for any of those things, I will not dwell on them either. I will, however, explore Lucy's relationship to and attitude toward the letter, and will postulate about a *different* letter. Lucy tells Betteredge that Rosanna gave her a letter that "tells me that she has done with the burden of her life. Her letter comes, and bids me goodbye for ever" (184). This letter contains an envelope with specific instructions for Lucy: "For Franklin Blake, Esq. To be given into his own hands (and not to be trusted to any one else), by Lucy Yolland" (302). This note directs Franklin to a memorandum which includes directions to the lockbox, that contains Rosanna's more famous letter declaring her love to Franklin and describing how she tampered with evidence, which helps solve the mystery. Tracing the way the mystery is solved and the plot concludes is not my goal; when Lucy hands Franklin the letter, she has no interest in what will

happen next, and for the purposes of this essay, neither do I. My narrative interest does not end with her exit, however; rather, as Woloch writes, my interest begins with the feelings of "interest and outrage, painful concern" I am left with upon her exit: "The strange significance of minor characters . . . resides largely in the way that the character disappears, and in the tension or relief that results from this vanishing."[34] Rather than falling into the propulsive forward motion of the narrative, I want to push back against that current and focus elsewhere—to demonstrate a mode of reading and an ethical praxis wherein I follow the footsteps of my subject, even if those footsteps do not travel in the same direction as the plot.

Narrative sidestepping allows us to think through narrative movement in complex, multidirectional ways. Therefore, let us think not about Rosanna's letter to Franklin and all that followed, but about her letter to *Lucy* and all that came *before*. Here I embrace a queer temporality, for in its essence, narrative sidestepping is a form of queer temporality. It is narrative doing queer things, moving in queer, weird, unexpected, and nonforward directions. It is a queer-crip narratology that works beyond forward plot momentum. It is a type of speculative fiction. So from the moment of the handoff, let us think backward and, later, think sideways. After Rosanna's death, Lucy receives a suicide note. In a novel full of letters, evidentiary pieces of paper, and solicited narratives, we as the reader do not get this note. Regardless of the various identities of the narrators in the novel, the collected volumes themselves are solicited, edited, and compiled by Franklin, a white, heterosexual, able-bodied man, and his perspective and political-editorial decisions are forced upon us as readers. Thinking hypothetically and metanarratively, the narrative may not include Rosanna's note to Lucy because she may have refused to give it to Franklin, but more likely, Franklin would never have thought to ask. As previously demonstrated, Franklin only sees Lucy as a less interesting object of investigation, an annoying postwoman, a glorified mailbox; he never thinks about what Rosanna wrote to Lucy. Similarly, Lucy tells Betteredge about Rosanna's letter, yet he does not pursue this further. We as readers are denied this letter precisely because the male characters in the novel who know about it do not care about it and do not deem it worthy to include as part of the narrative. Franklin has no interest in Lucy, her queer desire for Rosanna, or her pain at Rosanna's suicide; our experience of Lucy is limited precisely because Franklin does not care about her and does not let her take up space in the narrative.

Next I propose some purely speculative queer-crip detective work of my own: what might be in that letter, and how different might it be from the letter Rosanna wrote Franklin? It likely would also contain declarations of love as well as frustration and disappointment about Franklin, and we know it contains an announcement that she will commit suicide and instructions for Lucy about delivering the note to Franklin. Sadly, it must have contained quite a few references to Franklin, which would no doubt be deeply upsetting for Lucy to read. In light of this, reading Lucy outside of the animosity of Franklin and Betteredge opens up the possibility of extending sympathy to a character who is put in a painful position that forced unwanted labor upon her.

From here, we can move even further back to the time before the novel, the peaceful period sans Franklin where Lucy and Rosanna were happy and together. We are given no backstory for Lucy, but are told about Rosanna's criminal past, her relationship to Sergeant Cuff, and how she was hired by Lady Verinder. In addition, we are told that she became friends with Lucy soon after beginning her position at the Verinders'. As always, we are given information about Lucy only in relation to Rosanna, and even then only because Rosanna has more direct relevance to the main plot and interacts more with the main characters. Put simply, Rosanna is in the house where everything happens, while Lucy is outside of it. Tragically, we are never given a moment of Lucy and Rosanna alone together; in the novel we never get to directly hear them speak a single word to each other.[35] To make matters even more painful, Lucy only makes appearances in the novel after Rosanna's death. Lucy's first appearance (her conversation with Betteredge) occurs right after Rosanna's suicide, and her confrontation with Franklin is a year later. Although Collins created two disabled women characters for this novel, he lets only one be onstage at a time.

Even though we only meet Lucy in person after Rosanna has died, Lucy's most significant portion of dialogue is spent talking about plans she made with Rosanna when she was alive. These plans take us back in time, a queer temporal jump to a queerer time, and discuss a speculative queer-crip future:

> "I loved her," the girl said softly. "She had lived a miserable life, Mr. Betteredge—vile people had ill-treated her and led her wrong—and it hadn't spoiled her sweet temper. She was an angel. She might have been happy with me. I had a plan for our going to London together like sisters, and living by our needles. That man came here, and spoilt

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> it all. He bewitched her. Don't tell me he didn't mean it, and didn't know it. He ought to have known it. He ought to have taken pity on her. 'I can't live without him—and, oh, Lucy, he never even looks at me.' That's what she said. Cruel, cruel, cruel. I said, 'No man is worth fretting for in that way.' And she said, 'There are men worth dying for, Lucy, and he is one of them.' I had saved up a little money. I had settled things with father and mother. I meant to take her away from the mortification she was suffering here. We should have had a little lodging in London, and lived together like sisters. She had a good education, sir, as you know, and she wrote a good hand. She was quick at her needle. I have a good education, and I write a good hand. I am not as quick at my needle as she was —but I could have done. We might have got our living nicely." (184)

This heartbreaking moment full of queer temporal jumps brings us in the past in order to narrate Lucy's vision of a queer criptopic future. In describing her plan that she and Rosanna would live together in London "like sisters" (a euphemism repeated here twice and once otherwise by Mrs. Yolland),[36] Lucy imagines a sidestepped narrative future for herself and Rosanna. Lucy's plan is significant for a litany of reasons. First, as Walker Gore writes, it is an articulation of queer-crip desire, since Lucy is "able to imagine a space in which her desire need not have been tragic; she articulates the possibility of female solidarity and lesbian desire. Above all, she is able, and enables us, to imagine a disabled woman as an agent *and* object of love."[37] Second, Lucy imagines a queer-crip marriage plot while actively stalling the novel's actual (normative, heterosexual, able-bodied) marriage plot. Third, the idea is deemed possible because of Lucy's and Rosanna's list of *abilities* (good education, nice handwriting, sewing skills), which directly contrasts with their more obvious disabilities. Fourth, it is a working-class fantasy: they do not dream about randomly inheriting wealth or property,[38] but working together plying their needles for their honest living.[39] Fifth, it is a plan for employment that purposefully avoids the world of men and male supervisors, operating instead within the female realm of freelance sewing. Sixth, it is an instance of a queer disabled female character getting to talk about a future *at all,* in defiance of the mainstream ableist notion that "disability is seen as the sign of no future, or at least of no good future."[40] Seventh and finally, it is noteworthy because this future is unrelated to the narrative trajectory or closure of the novel. Lucy imagines a sidestepped narrative for her and Rosanna, a future that is completely independent of the futures that the novel and its main characters care about. Lucy and Rosanna living together has nothing to do with the mystery of the diamond or Rachel's marriage, which is

exactly why this imagined future, this sidestepped narrative, is so extraordinary.

As Lucy laments, there is a major obstacle to achieving this utopic future: Franklin. Castle, in writing about lesbians in literature, reformulates Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's erotic triangles, theorizing that a lesbian text not only depicts desire between women but also breaks up a male–female–male triangle by creating a male–female–female one.[41] The novel is rife with such triangulations: it starts with a marriage-plot triangle (Godfrey–Rachel–Franklin), which Rosanna inserts herself into, forming the dramatic triangle (Rachel–Franklin–Rosanna), which Lucy is dragged into, forming the queer triangle (Franklin–Rosanna–Lucy). Donoghue writes that "love between two inseparables rarely moves into the spotlight until the moment someone tries to pry them apart," continuing that "often what threatens inseparables is not literal parting but alienation from each other" in the form of marriage.[42] So while Lucy begins the novel as half an Inseparable pair, when Franklin enters the scene, she becomes one of two Rivals, another of Donoghue's tropes.

In the queer triangle, there is a great deal at stake. As Donoghue writes, competition between a male and a female character works differently than two men competing for a woman: "The two roads are not evenly matched, nor do they wield the same weapons. The woman in the middle stands at a crossroads, and in a sense it is not just an individual, but a whole sex, that will win her."[43] Here we come to a crucial bisexual climax: while Lucy's same-sex desire leads her to "No man is worth fretting for," Rosanna's more polyvalent desire can love Lucy but also Franklin, can think in contradictory terms, leading her to retort that "There are men worth dying for, Lucy, and he is one of them." The novel portrays Rosanna's bidirectional desire as a problem; Rosanna's ability to choose either Lucy or Franklin is represented as what causes her to make the wrong decision. However, it need not have been a choice at all; Collins seems unable to imagine a scenario in which Rosanna is rejected by Franklin but then is happy with Lucy or some nonmonogamous option (something he flirts with in the ending of *The Woman in White* [1859]).[44] Here he refuses to explore simultaneous, multidirectional desire: Rosanna cannot have both Lucy *and* Franklin. The bisexual conflict of this dramatic triangle is allowed to be solved only via a singular, exclusionary choice. Rosanna chooses Franklin, who does not return or even acknowledge her desire; this leads her to kill herself, which in turn destroys the queer triangle. Franklin, who causes this, ends up not only unscathed but with his first choice, Rachel. Collins sets up a

biphobic, four-character zero-sum game, which the able-bodied heterosexual couple unsurprisingly win and the disabled queer women lose. Left alone, Lucy is a prototype for Olive Chancellor in *The Bostonians* (1886), a character whom Donoghue calls "the archetypal lesbian loser,"[45] a title that applies to Lucy here in more ways than one. The zero-sum nature of this game could have been avoided and everyone could have "won" if Rosanna had just chosen Lucy, which would not have impacted Franklin choosing Rachel, but Collins does not allow this to happen. Lucy's sidestepped narrative of living in London with Rosanna outlines what might have happened if the game/the novel had gone differently, if Rosanna had picked her.

Lucy outlines her plans in detail, describing not only where they were going to live and how they were going to support themselves, but also describing how she saved up money and talked it over with her parents. Perhaps most depressing is that the main goal of the plan was for Lucy to save Rosanna from suffering—at the hands not only of Franklin but of the Verinder estate and all it stood for: the world of wealthy aristocratic capitalist ableist sexist homophobic men. As Mossman writes, Lucy offers "a vision of independence and freedom."[46] She wanted to take Rosanna away from her current unhappy existence, which Lucy describes as miserable, full of ill-treatment and vile people. She had hopeful, optimistic plans for the future, speaking in *might*s —"She *might* have been happy with me"; "We *might* have got our living nicely." Lucy speaks subjunctively in future conditionals that did not occur, relying on a queer temporal grammar that draws equally from the past and the future: "might have been." Robyn Warhol terms this grammatical construction a "narrative refusal"—a type of upward counterfactual that imagines a better version of events.[47] Lucy's speech also represents Gerald Prince's concept of "disnarration"—the narration of events that do not occur—which, he argues, includes "purely imagined worlds, desired worlds, or intended worlds, unfulfilled expectations, unwarranted beliefs, failed attempts, crushed hopes, suppositions and false calculations."[48] Lucy did all she could to make their plan happen, but even more than logistical planning, she had clearly done her share of daydreaming, of imagining a queer criptopia for them, an alternative future where they sustained themselves, did not have to deal with rude or cruel people, and lived in their own little house, happily ever after.

The domestic bliss that Lucy imagines is rooted in, but critically different from, the standard Victorian ideas about domesticity—since, at the time, domesticity was so strongly tied to femininity, heterosexuality,

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marriage, and procreation. In *Extreme Domesticity,* Susan Fraiman writes about characters like Lucy: "unorthodox (though not unusual) homemakers who, whether by choice or circumstance, fall outside the domestic ideal. Some rebut traditional 'family values' by reinventing home in ways that are feminist, queer, or otherwise 'improper'"; she refers to characters like this as "the bad girls of good housekeeping."[49] This is an appropriate moniker for Lucy, who unquestionably does not fit the Angel of the House model but nevertheless specifically discusses sewing as part of her queer criptopic domestic vision. Particularly useful here is the notion that the household Lucy imagines is "unorthodox (though not unusual)." Donoghue argues that the type of domesticity Lucy desires is actually a lesbian literary trope: "the irony is that in many plays and novels the female couple is fervently domestic; they may not possess a home, but they long for one."[50] She calls this the "setting-up-house-together plot" and notes how it is almost always followed by destruction.[51] As in *The Odd Women* (1893) and *The Bostonians,* Lucy's domestic dreams end in tragedy, perhaps even worse —unlike the others, who have households that get broken up, Lucy is not even allowed to form hers; she only gets to imagine and plan it. However, a happy ending is not the only way to judge or read a queer romance plot between women; Donoghue writes that when dealing with stories like this, it is not "particularly helpful to sort these stories according to whether love between two women is granted a happy ending. Endings are overrated; they are often the point when the writer bows to convention, and there is a lot more to a story than who gets the girl, or who dies."[52] Similar to DuPlessis's "writing beyond the ending," Levine and Ortiz-Robles in *Narrative Middles* suggest focusing on the "radical middle" that is "liberatory, expansive, ethical . . . filled with significance, energy, vitality, power."[53] So instead of closing with Lucy and Rosanna's tragic novelistic ending—namely, Rosanna's suicide, Lucy's dashed plans, her delivery of the note to Franklin, and her limping off into the sunset—I will instead linger for a final moment on Lucy's sidestepped narrative future.

While the pessimism of Lee Edelman's *No Future* seems rather apt here, since after all Lucy and Rosanna (unlike Rachel and Franklin, the heterosexual couple) are given no future—there are more productive and optimistic queer theory routes we can use to explore Lucy's utopic vision.[54] Lucy's plan may fail, but perhaps it must, and perhaps its failing is part of its queerness; Jack Halberstam's *Queer Art of Failure* proves that queers are set up to fail at major life milestones (like marriage

or setting up a house), and that failure is an inherent part of the queer experience.[55] So we can take Lucy's lesbian failure and domestic failure as just part of the queerness of the utopic plan, and instead of fixating on the unsuccessful result, we can focus on the significance of the attempt. Even though it does not come to fruition, Lucy's planning and imagining a queer criptopia at all is a radical act in itself. By proposing a sidestepped narrative, Lucy opens up the door of possibility to a queer criptopia, even if she and Rosanna do not successfully make the journey there.

In *Cruising Utopia,* José Esteban Muñoz begins his theorizing with a similar sentiment, arguing that queerness is a utopia that we, like Lucy and Rosanna, have not yet reached yet:

> Queerness is not here yet here. Queerness is an ideality. Put another way, we are not yet queer. We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality. We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future. The future is queerness's domain. Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present. The here and now is a prison house. We must strive, in the face of the here and now's totalizing rendering of reality, to think and feel a *then* and *there*. Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for that minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present. Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing. . . . Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world.[56]

Every sentiment articulated by Muñoz maps perfectly on to Lucy: quite literally, queerness for her is "not here yet," not theorized by sexologists, not existent linguistically.[57] Lucy and Rosanna are stuck in a quagmire, a prison of the present. Lucy plans, constructs, and dreams of a future, one that is both queer and crip; one where she will not have to deal with stigma, stares, inaccessible infrastructures, marriage markets, men, patriarchy, heterosexuality, sexism, ableism, or classism. In short, she imagines an antinormative world: a *then* and *there*, an elsewhen and elsewhere, a new way of being. While Collins does not let Lucy and Rosanna make it to London and live together "like sisters," he nevertheless narrates their plan. Their queer-crip desire and imagined utopia are therefore not completely unnarratable, unrepresentable, or unwritable but perhaps just incompatible with the demands of plot (especially for a

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serialized mystery novel).[58] Despite this, there still is a sidestepped narrative within the pages of *The Moonstone* that lets us imagine the might have been, the not here yet. Lucy asserts that the present is not enough and insists on the possibility of another world. In doing so, she proposes a different future for herself and her beloved than the one the novel has planned, theorizing a sidestepped narrative just beyond the horizon.

## Notes

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1. To name just a few, see Miller, *The Novel and the Police*, 33–57; Taylor, *In the Secret Theatre of Home*; Heller, *Dead Secrets*, 142–63; Milbank, *Daughters of the House*, 57–63; Mangham, *Violent Women and Sensation Fiction*, 79–86; Goodlad, *The Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic*, 132–60.
2. Stoddard Holmes, "'Bolder with Her Lover in the Dark,'" 59–93; Free, "Freaks That Matter," 259–82.
3. Collins, *The Moonstone*, in *All the Year Round*, installment 13, March 28, 1868, and installment 22, May 30, 1868; Collins, *The Moonstone*, 2:51–56, 284–86; Collins, *The Moonstone* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 183–85, 300–302. All subsequent references will be to the Oxford edition and are noted parenthetically in the text.
4. Mossman, "Representations of the Abnormal Body," 489–92; Hingston, *Articulating Bodies*, 102–3; Gore, *Plotting Disability*, 86–87, 90–92.
5. Nayder, *Unequal Partners*, 181; Welsh, *Strong Representations*, 234–35.
6. DuPlessis, *Writing beyond the Ending*, x.
7. Davis, *Enforcing Normalcy*, 41.
8. Throughout this piece, I use the terms *queer* and *crip*; like many, I use these terms in an act of reclamation and in considering these as radical identities, positionalities, ways of being, ways of questioning, and ways of reading. *Crip* operates, both grammatically and theoretically, similarly to *queer*, but in reference to disability. I almost always think about *queer* and *crip* together, continuing a legacy begun by Robert

McRuer, who in *Crip Theory* argues for "compulsory able-bodiedness"; drawing on Adrienne Rich's "compulsory heterosexuality," McRuer argues that able-bodiedness is always accepted as the default position and is inherently tied to heterosexuality in the cultural imagination, thus making queer and crip aligned.

9. Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending*; Richter, *Fable's End*; Torgovnick, *Closure in the Novel*; Brooks, *Reading for the Plot.*
10. Joshua, *Physical Disability in Romantic Literature*, 153, 255n118.
11. Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, 3.
12. Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip,* 45.
13. Castle, *The Apparitional Lesbian.*
14. Donoghue, *Inseparables*, 63.
15. Jagose, *Inconsequence*, 1–36.
16. Quayson, *Aesthetic Nervousness*, 15, 25.
17. Jenny Wren in Charles Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* and Madeline Neroni in Anthony Trollope's *Barchester Towers* (1857) also are disabled and similarly described as having beautiful hair and negative views of men.
18. Hingston, *Articulating Bodies,* 103.
19. John Plotz theorizes the moonstone as a "thing" with sentimental, economic, and cultural significance and value. See Plotz, *Portable Property*, 24–29, 40–44.
20. For Victorian feminists being "antiman" and "antimarriage," see Stacy, "A Century of Women's Rights," 89–90.
21. Stefanie Markovits argues "the Moonstone helps *form* the story surrounding it" (605), relating the diamond's form to the novel's narrative structure and pacing; "the geographical movements of the Moonstone dictate the arc of plot," she writes, and "the plot of *The Moonstone* can only be unraveled in time—and over the course of the novel's own serialized installments—depending as it does on the jewel's redemption from the bank after its year-long internment there" ("Form Things," 606).
22. Gore, *Plotting Disability*, 84.
23. Gore, *Plotting Disability*, 3.
24. Woloch, *The One vs. the Many*, 12–42.
25. Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*, 12.
26. Garland-Thomson, *Extraordinary Bodies*, 11.
27. Lewis, introduction to *Beyond Victims or Villains*, xiii–xlv; Fiedler, "Pity and Fear," 57–69; Mitchell and Snyder, *Narrative Prosthesis.*
28. Stoddard Holmes, *Fictions of Affliction,* 16–33.

29. Stoddard Holmes, *Fictions of Affliction,* 72.
30. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 9, 43–44, 17, 40.
31. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 84.
32. Garland-Thomson, *Staring*, 87.
33. Hingston, *Articulating Bodies,* 103.
34. Woloch, *The One vs. the Many,* 41.
35. The only time Lucy and Rosanna are ever together in the novel is narrated indirectly. Mrs. Yolland states, "[Rosanna] came in here, as I told you, this evening; and, after sitting and talking a little with my girl Lucy and me, she asked to go up-stairs by herself, into Lucy's room" (126), where she writes her suicide notes. While talking with Mrs. Yolland, Betteredge notes: "Limping Lucy, always weak and weary, was resting on her bed up-stairs" (124). Lucy is alone in her room not because she is "weak and weary" but more likely because she had just had an upsetting conversation with Rosanna about Franklin. This conversation may be the very conversation mentioned in Rosanna's speech to Betteredge (184), and it may also be Lucy and Rosanna's final conversation before Rosanna commits suicide.
36. Collins, *The Moonstone,* 128. For more on queer romances being coded as sororal in Victorian fiction, see Schaffer, "Maiden Pairs"; and Preston, "Esther Summerton's Estate."
37. Gore, *Plotting Disability,* 87.
38. Cf. Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762), a very different conceptualization of a female utopic community where the separatist (antimarriage) community are wealthy enough to buy a property and perform large acts of charity, including aiding disabled people.
39. Jenny and Lizzie in *Our Mutual Friend* have a similar, though temporary, domestic arrangement.
40. Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, 3.
41. Castle, *The Apparitional Lesbian,* 72–73. For more on theorizations of desire between women, see Marcus, *Between Women*; and Prizel, "Beside Women," 267–89.
42. Donoghue, *Inseparables,* 64, 71.
43. Donoghue, *Inseparables*, 82.
44. The major difference between the ménage à trois at the end of *The Woman in White* and the biphobic zero-sum game of *The Moonstone* is, namely, the gender of the character at the center. While Collins does not allow the possibility that Rosanna could be sexually/romantically involved with both Lucy and Franklin, Walter is potentially romantically/sexually involved with both Laura and Marian. Of course,

Collins's own dual households and polyamory play into the ease with which he writes Walter's simultaneous relationships. The issue here is not that Collins did not understand how a person could be romantically/sexually involved with two people at once (since he was), but that he could not imagine a *woman* doing it, let alone a disabled bisexual woman doing it.

45. Donoghue, *Inseparables,* 97. For more on Olive Chancellor and *The Bostonians*, see Jagose, *Inconsequence,* 57–76.
46. Mossman, "Representations of the Abnormal Body," 490.
47. Warhol, "'What Might Have Been Is Not What Is,'" 227–30.
48. Prince, "The Disnarrated," 2–4.
49. Fraiman, *Extreme Domesticity*, 19.
50. Donoghue, *Inseparables*, 99–100.
51. Donoghue, *Inseparables*, 100.
52. Donoghue, *Inseparables*, 14.
53. DuPlessis, *Writing beyond the Ending*; Levine and Ortiz-Robles, *Narrative Middles*, 3.
54. Edelman, *No Future*.
55. Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure*.
56. Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 1.
57. The term "lesbian" denoting a homosexual woman dates to 1890 at the earliest. This of course, though, does not mean that lesbians were nonexistent but that they had not been theorized or recognized officially/legally. Unlike male homosexuals, lesbians were "not [t]here yet." See Castle, *The Apparitional Lesbian,* 6–10; and Jagose, *Inconsequence,* 1–36.
58. Robyn Warhol has theorized categories of the unnarratable, and within her framework, Lucy's queer criptopia might be described as antinarratable (describing that which goes against social convention) and potentially paranarratable (describing that which goes against literary convention). See Warhol, "Neonarrative," 224–27.

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