"You weren't acting like you": Holden as Caliban in *Caliban's War*

Judith Lanzendorfer
College of Liberal Arts, English Department
University of Findlay
1000 N. Main St. Findlay, 45840, Ohio, USA
e-mail: lanzendorfer@findlay.edu

Abstract:

"'You weren't acting like you': Holden as Caliban in *Caliban's War*" focuses on the connection between Caliban in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and James Holden in Corey's *Caliban's War*. Both characters may be viewed as highlighting issues of monstrousness in the texts through the lens of loss and the Other, as framed by Jacques Lacan's Mirror Stage. By grappling with difficult issues of morality, the characters may be seen as coming to a sense of self and reclamation of identity and humanity at the end of the texts.

Keywords: William Shakespeare, James S.A. Corey, Caliban, Mirror Stage, Monstrousness.

When students write papers, poet's their poems, and scholars their articles, one of the main "hooks" that is used to get the audience interested is the title of the work. Titles have meaning — titles matter. This is especially true when one considers the power of the title in question, *Caliban's War*, in which one of the most famous monsters in Shakespeare's *oeuvre* is mentioned. The purpose of this study is to consider how one's knowledge of characters in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* shapes interpretation and reception of characters in Daniel Abraham's and Ty Franck's *Caliban's War*. It should be noted that though the books are written by the duo, they use the pen name James S.A. Corey, which will be used hereafter in this article. When one considers the characters in Corey's *Caliban's War* through the lens of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, one can draw parallels between the two that highlight the important discussion of metaphorical monstrousness and morality in the Early Modern Period and in (Post-) Modern world today.

In 2014, Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck answered reader questions on their blog, *Lizard Brain*. To the question "I'm sure it's something obscure that I've missed... But for the second book. Who the hell is Caliban? And why is it his war?" Abraham answered "Ah! Caliban is the half-human slave of the wizard Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, who rebels against being controlled. It's his war because there are half-human things driving the war that are rebelling against being controlled" (Abraham 2014). With this answer in mind, it is clear that Abraham would like a reader to keep Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, particularly the character Caliban, in mind when reading

Caliban's War. What is less clear in Abraham's answer is who Caliban is in the novel; he notes that "It's his war", but who is the "his" that is referred to in the answer? It is my assertion that the "his" in Abraham's answer is James Holden. The link that exists between specific characters in Shakespeare's play, like Caliban, and Corey's novels, like James Holden, highlights how an understanding the complexities of Shakespeare's work helps a reader of the modern science fiction novel gain a better insight into issues of monstrousness and morality in our world today.

Although one may go through *Caliban's War* and map out connections between each character therein and their counterparts in *The Tempest*, in this study I have focused my attention on only two characters. The titular character, Caliban, is of course included, and connected with him is Prospero, the self-named ruler of the island. As Karen Flagstad rightly points out, there is a "consimilarity between Prospero and Caliban that works almost subliminally" so it is problematic to discuss Caliban in isolation, without the main character who describes and defines him also being analyzed (Flagstad 1986, 206). Just as there is the connection between the two characters in Shakespeare's text, I posit that one may see the same sort of connections made between the protomolecule (Prospero) and James Holden (Caliban) in *Caliban's War*. Just as Caliban is defined by Prospero, so Holden is defined by the protomolecule, changing his outlook/personality so that, as Naomi Nagata notes, "You weren't acting like you." (Corey 2012, 120). Although a reader may be able to detect Holden's downward spiral without knowledge of Shakespeare's Caliban, when one does have this background, then there is a richer understanding of the layers of monstrousness Holden displays in the text.

Prospero/Protomolecule

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare writes of an island ruled by the master magician Prospero. He uses magic to, among other things, create the tempest that is the impetus to the action at the beginning of the play. He does this as a means of controlling the "world", the island which he rules and all of the inhabitants on it. Prospero's status as a Magus has been discussed by various scholars. Arguments include Barbara Mowat's discussion that Prospero's "linked magic to intellectual study", changes into "godlike control over the natural and supernatural worlds", to finally "the pagan/enchanter brought into the Christian world" (Mowat 1981, 284, 287, and 289). The second stage in Prospero's development as a magic user is taken up by Flagstad, who focuses on the interplay of identity and magic in *The Tempest*. Flagstad comments upon Renaissance views of the occult as a form of creation, noting that, as a Magus who controls the island, "there is a sense in which Prospero 'creates' Caliban, who returns to wreak vengeance on the visionary scheme of things which depend on his exclusion" (Flagstad 1986, 213). This interplay between magic, identity and control is one that parallels the presentation of the protomolecule and its creation/distortion of reality *Caliban's War*.

One of the most obvious parallels that can be made between Prospero and the protomolecule is that both may be seen as using "magic". Just as Prospero is able to call up a tempest and engage in

other fantastic acts, so the protomolecule is able to do amazing things as well. For instance, in *Leviathan Wakes*, the first book in the series, the protomolecule defies gravity and causes Eros Station to "jump" in order to avoid the projectile which is meant to push it toward the Sun and destroy it. In the conversation between Holden and Alex, it is confirmed that "radar and scopes are both sayin' Eros jumped two hundred klicks spinward in a little less than a minute" (Corey 2011, 490). This causes Holden later to meditate on comments that Naomi makes after the station's jump: "She had just spoken directly to the half-articulated fear he'd been harboring since Eros had jumped sideways: that this [the protomolecule] was magic, that the protomolecule didn't have to obey the laws of physics. Because, if that was true, then humans didn't stand a chance." (Corey 2011, 492). This view of the protomolecule as something all-powerful, controlling and frightening is reiterated by Naomi later when she says that it is "an alien God-thing" (Corey 2011, 533).

The protomolecule is, essentially, an entity that works to recreate life to fit its own ends. One might note that, in the process of doing so, it damages life as it currently exists, with the horrors of Eros Sation being a prime example of this damage. Far from simply damaging without thought, though, the protomolecule does seem to be sentient, linking the biomass on Eros together into a hive mind centered upon Julie Mao, disassembling the Aborghast with dispassionate efficiency, creating a ring system of mysterious purpose, among other activities. Because of this, one might posit that the protomolecule is more than just a machine fulfilling a long-ago directive to remap human genetics. It has an ultimate plan, one that by *Caliban's War* is not known, but is generally described by UN Undersecretary Chrisjen Avasarala as like "seeing the face of God and finding no compassion there" (Corey 2012, 253).

It should be noted that in the *Expanse* series the thread of discussion of the role that God and morality play in the Universe can be seen as a main narrative link among the books. *Caliban's War*, as the second book in the series, is no exception. It is the (im)morality of the protomolecule in *Leviathan Wakes*, what it does on Eros Station in using the humans as biomass rather than singular entities with souls, which links to the moral deterioration of one of the main characters, James Holden, in *Caliban's War*.

Caliban/James Holden

It should be noted that a reader might be tempted to view the Caliban figure in *Caliban's War* as the creature which Protogen creates when it manipulates children with auto-immune disorders with the protomolecule. In many ways, the connection between what Mars Marine Bobby Draper calls "the monster" and the "monster" that is Caliban in *The Tempest* does make sense (Corey 2011, 523). The protomolecule creature is literally is a monster, a chimera between a human and "something else" from outer space. Likewise, Prospero calls Caliban "A devil, a born devil" who was "got by the devil himself / Upon thy wicked dam" (Shakespeare 1973, IV.i.188-9 and I.ii.321-2). This description of Caliban might cause one to gravitate toward reading him as a literal monster, a demon that is "other than human" and analogous to the chimera monsters in *Caliban's War,*

however, this is likely not what Shakespeare meant by naming Caliban as "devil". There are various demons and devils in Renaissance drama, perhaps most famously in *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Dr. Faustus* by Shakespeare's contemporary, Christopher Marlowe. More often than not, if a Renaissance playwright chooses to present the literally demonic in a text, they would use well-known and recognizable names to cue the audience to the fact that a literal demon is on the stage. Such is the case in *Dr. Faustus*, in which Lucifer and Mephistophilis make an appearance. If Shakespeare wanted Caliban to be a literal devil, then it would not be a problem within the frame of Renaissance drama to make him one. He did not, though, so one might consider that the monstrousness of Caliban is something that is more metaphorical than literal. This reading of Caliban is supported by Kristen Wright, who notes that "Renaissance authors and scholars are increasingly interested in...how behavior can be monstrous, thus blurring the line between monsters and humans." (Wright 2018, 172) When one views both Caliban and Holden in this way, then a richer discussion of what makes a monster might ensue with the equation of the monstrous connecting the behavior of Caliban and that of James Holden.

James Holden is self-reflective concerning his behavior, noting that one of his good qualities/faults, depending upon perspective, is "this righteous indignation you wield like a club at everyone around you" (Corey 2011, 399). The problem with Holden through much of *Caliban's War*, though, is that he has been so psychologically damaged by his experiences on Eros Station with the protomolecule that he has lost who he is and what righteousness means. At this point, it is useful to introduce Jacques Lacan's concept of the Mirror Stage to frame a discussion of who Holden is in *Caliban's War*. Although most often applied to children, I believe that it is appropriate to use Lacan's theories to highlight the Holden's psychological distress in the novel, for although a physical adult in the book, he is psychologically reverted to a child-like state. With the revelation of the protomolecule to the Solar System, the entire foundation upon which humans based their understanding of existence is displaced. All become, once again, as children who try to understand the world/Universe around them under new and very different physical, moral and theological parameters. This is underscored in the third volume, *Abaddon's Gate*, when Reverend Doctor Anna Volovodov discusses the relationship between humans and protomolecule and casts humans as "children" who react against it with the base instincts of fear and violence (Corey 2013, 339 and 404).

In trying to understand the world that can often be confusing and scary, Lacan posits that a child creates an Other, a mirror image of himself, to help grapple with difficult issues. As nicely distilled by Dany Nobus, "in the mirror stage, the human being is alienated from his or her nature, inasmuch as he or she grasps his or her uncoordinated amalgam of sensory or motor processes via an *unreal, inverted image with which he or she will never coincide*" (Nobus 2016, 117, emphasis added). What is disturbing to Holden in the realization of this inversion is that, since Eros Station, he is less and less like himself and more and more like a version of Josephus Miller, who becomes in *Caliban's War,* Holden's Mirror Stage Other. It is the Other "which constructs and controls a human being's

external world, and which regulates his or her assumption of a 'self-image'" (Nobus 2016, 120). This is problematic because Miller, the "thin, gray, broken man…[who] had walked away from his official job to obsessively follow a missing persons case", at one point deeply concerned Holden (Corey 2012, 21). For instance, in *Leviathan Wakes*, they encounter Dresden, the man directly responsible for the manipulation of the protomolecule. Miller, disgusted with the twisted logic that Dresden uses to justify his experiments, summarily executes him; Holden is horrified at Miller's actions, throwing him off the ship because he is "a psychopath and a killer" (Corey 2011, 533). Foreshadowing, though, just how similar Holden and Miller are, and how Holden will morph into a version of Miller in *Caliban's War*, Naomi says to Holden:

> "You might be the best person I know. But you're totally uncompromising on what you think is right and that's what you hate about Miller."
> "I do?"
> "Yes", she said. "He's totally uncompromising too, but he has different ideas on how things work. You hate that. To Miller, Dresden was an active threat to the ship. Every second he stayed alive endangered everyone else around him. To Miller, it was self-defense." (Corey 2011, 479)

Although Holden and Miller initially seem to have inverted views on morality, this changes in the second installment of the series. The protomolecule didn't change Holden's physical form and make him into a literal monster, but it does modify his personality, twisting his view of the world and making him a metaphorical monster. Much of this change centers upon the ideas of loss and fear, which are so important to Lacan's views about identity and individuation. In *Leviathan Wakes*, Miller's identity is centered upon him being a man marked by loss — loss of his status, his job, his dignity, and Holden might argue because of Miller's violent recklessness, his soul. This sense of loss shifts to embody the character of Holden in much of *Caliban's War*. One of the most profound examples of Holden's modified personality may be found when Naomi, though the executive officer and not the captain, negotiates with criminals on Ganymede so that their ship can leave safely. Naomi says:

> "You were acting like that asshole Detective Miller, so I just acted *like you used to*. What I said was the kind of thing that you say when you are not in a hurry to wave your gun around".
> "I wasn't acting like Miller," he said, the accusation stinging because it was true.
> "You weren't acting like you."
> Holden shrugged, noticing only afterward that it was another imitation of Miller (Corey 2012, 120, italics added).

Key lines in this passage are that Naomi, striving to do the good and righteous thing, acts "like you [Holden] used to" (Corey 2012, 120). By saying this, she verbally acknowledges the change in Holden's character; he has faded away in favor of a person who is "in a hurry to wave your gun

around", a man like Miller (Corey 2012, 120). In short, she succinctly notes, "You weren't acting like you." (Corey 2012, 120) Why Holden has changed is not surprising. In his escape from Eros Station, he was forced to confront human after human being used as biomass, as "things" rather than humans. Seeing such horrors may very well have seemed like "seeing the face of God and finding no compassion there" (Corey 2012, 253). A reader might consider the various reactions that result from seeing such horrors; for Holden, his reaction becomes "monstrous" with him becoming suspicious of others and prone to violence as an initial reaction to threat. This is a modern illustration of the observation by Thomas Brown in his 1642 book, *Religio Medici,* that we may "naturally know what is good, but naturally pursue what is evil... In brief, we are all monsters." (Brown 1964, 55)

Constance Jordan's work on *Shakespeare's Monarchies: Ruler and Subject in the Romances* is important to underscore at this point as it helps to illuminate the idea of the monstrousness that Holden displays in the text. Jordan focuses on how Renaissance perspectives of Aristotelian texts impacted views on class and behavior in Shakespeare's society. The focal idea is that society is a civilizing force and that, outside of it, a person must be seen as a "bestial" man. John Kunat does a fine job of distilling Jordan's larger argument when he notes that characters outside of "civilized society" may be seen as "'purely sensuous' and driven by instinct, this pre-political creature was incapable of rational deliberative choice and was incapable of action definable in moral terms" (Kunat 2014, 308). This may be applied to Holden, who, working outside of the Earth, Mars, and often even OPA parameters, is a man on his own and outside of "civilized society"; in this position as outsider, one might say that he has regressed into the "purely sensuous" bestial man, ruled more by his emotions of loss, violence, and fear than of logic, order and compassion.

One might equate this to Caliban in *The Tempest*, who also is defined in the text through the sense of loss, violence, and position as an outsider. He notes that "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother / Which thou tak'st from me" (Shakespeare 1973, I.ii.133-4) and "I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant, / A sorcerer, that is by this cunning hath / Cheated me of the island" (Shakespeare 1973, III.ii.44-6). This loss of the island frames the psychological perspective of Caliban, who once controlled the island but now is reduced to being a servant to a cruel master. This reduced status is often the focus of attention for post-colonial critics. Critics, most notably Stephen Greenblatt, in his seminal "Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century", centers upon the oppression — linguistic, cultural and physical — of native peoples by a colonizing force. This stance is taken up by Kristen Wright, who addresses both the physical "otherness" of Caliban, as a descendant of an Algerian parent, and his linguistic use/misuse of language. From these perspectives, Caliban is an innocent whose birthright is stolen from him and, as a result, he is not culpable for his actions. Wright even notes that "Caliban is not particularly physically threatening" (Wright 2018, 185). Such perspectives often overlook points of tension in the text, such as Prospero's reasoning for framing Caliban as a monster, because he tried to rape Miranda and, of his own admission, "Thou dist prevent me; I had peopled else/ This isle with Calibans" (Shakespeare 1973, I.ii.350-1). Such a comment presents Caliban's intention, one that runs counter to Miranda's wishes,

and therefore must be considered to be violent in nature. This violent nature is compounded with Caliban's desire to get Stephano and Trinculo to kill Prospero. As such, I do not believe that we can view Caliban as an innocent, but rather, his actions are disturbing and reflective of a base nature. Caliban "remains in a state of war with Prospero and Miranda, but since the state of war is always also a state of nature, he has simply returned to the natural world from which he never departed" (Kunat 2014, 322). Just as Caliban is representative of the "bestial man", so Holden is as well. One might hear echoes of Caliban's violence in Holden's desire to engage in violence with no remorse for doing so: in a firefight, he "brought up his gun and across them into a full auto sweep. Three of the five men dropped, their armor blooming red. The new Holden rejoiced; the old was quiet" (Corey 2012, 209).

Although I do dispute some of the characterizations by post-colonial critics of the innocence of Caliban, I do agree with their emphasis on the impact of his language. One of the most overlooked of Caliban's lines, and one that most closely aligns him to Holden, is Caliban's exasperated outburst that "I do not lie" (Shakespeare 1973, II.ii.48). One might question when Caliban says this if he is a reliable source or not; does he or does he not lie? Taking up this question of truthfulness and sincerity, Joshua Held discusses Caliban's last few lines of the play — "I'll be wise hereafter/ and seek for grace" (Shakespeare 1973, V.i.194-5). From Held's perspective, one must question the (in)sincerity of Caliban's language in judging his character: "Given Caliban's history of evolving, mutable logic and rhetoric audiences simply cannot know his final purposes (Held 2017, 83). Although I would agree with Held that there is ambiguity in Caliban's character, as evidenced in previously mentioned associations with Miranda, Stephano, and Trinculo, I think that it is important to consider Caliban's language in comparison with other "truth challenged" characters in Shakespeare's *oeuvre*. When one does, it is clear that the slippages of language to outright lies that characterize Iago or Richard III, for instance, are not present in Caliban. Driven by a sense of loss and lashing out verbally in a violent way with his curses, Caliban does not restrain his emotions or his words. He does not mask meaning, but lays bare both emotion *and* meaning; he does not lie.
Likewise, Holden does not equivocate; Avasarala notes to Bobbie that "I think Holden has a long history of babbling whatever he knows or thinks he knows all over creation. True or not, he believes it." (Corey 2012, 384) In much of *Caliban's War*, though, this moral compass of righteousness and "truth at all costs" has been lost because of fear and its resulting sense of loss and isolation. In a conversation with Holden, Naomi says:

> "Fear doesn't make you a coward."
> "No," he said. "Of course it doesn't. But refusing to face up to it. To not admit how you felt. To not let you and Alex and Amos help me. That was cowardice. And it may have cost me you, the crew's loyalty, everything I really care about. It made me keep a bad job a lot longer than I should have because the job was safe." (Corey 2012, 374-5)

The job that Holden references is the one that he takes from Fred Johnson, the former Butcher of Anderson Station and now de facto leader of the OPA. For 359 pages of *Caliban's War* Holden has held a job that he hates, but he keeps it only because he is too immobilized by fear to do anything else. For Holden, loss led to fear, which then led to violence, inaction, and anger; these combined help to get Holden fired from Fred Johnson's employ and in doing so, he is forced to confront his fear. It is only when Holden faces this fear, as evidenced in the passage above, that he can begin to stop his descent into metaphorical monstrousness and begin to regain his identity. For Holden, it is the turning point from a Miller/Holden identity to the beginning of being just "James Holden" again.

After he has been fired and comes back to the ship, Holden is described by Prax as somehow different: "Prax couldn't see at first what was different about him, but that something had happened… had changed…was unmistakable. The face was the same; the clothes hadn't changed. Prax had the uncanny memory of sitting through a lecture on metamorphosis… the captain turned to leave and then stopped in the doorway. He looked like someone still half in a dream." (Corey 2012, 363) It is directly after this observation that Prax tells the crew that he doesn't have enough money to pay for a rescue mission for Mei. Holden's response to the question of who Prax might ask for money is "How about everyone?" and suggests that Prax make a wide-band broadcast to the whole Sol System, telling everyone his and Mei's story (Corey 2012, 364). This broadcast that Holden encourages lays bare all information — the Protogen experiments, the bombing of Ganymede Station, the horrors of the protomolecule. It is a return to the perspective that egalitarian access to information is truth; anything else is a lie.

In addition to the concept of truth, the above passage is remarkable in its connection to *The Tempest* through its reference to Holden being "still half in a dream" (Corey 2012, 363). Flagstad argues that one of the qualities of the island that readers often forget is that for as much as Prospero is a dream maker, so Caliban is as well (Flagstad 1986, 205). It is this quality of the dream making/state is of importance in one of the most celebrated speeches that Caliban makes, and arguably one of the most beautiful in all of Shakespeare:

> Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
> Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices
> That, if I then waked after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again; and then, in dreaming
> The clouds methought would open and show riches
> Ready to drop upon me, that, when I waked,
> I cried to dream again. (Shakespeare 1973, III.ii.140-8)

It is in a dream state that we have Caliban say these lines, which critics like Greenblatt, Flagstad, and Wilkes would underscore as important in a reading of the text from the perspective of dominance/repression, and by extension, I would argue, of Caliban's potential versus his stereotyped monstrousness. He may be described by Prospero as "a born devil, on whose nature/ Nurture can never stick", but it seems like the contrary is true (Shakespeare 1973, IV.i.188-9). When Miranda and Prospero "teach me [Caliban] how/ To name the bigger light, and how the less/ That burn by day and night" (Shakespeare 1973, I.ii.336-8) they give Caliban the gift of their language and through it a way to understand and order the natural world. Like Holden uses his righteous indignation in both positive and negative ways, so Caliban uses his language in both ways as well. He misuses language through his boasts that "You [Prospero and Miranda] taught me language, and my profit on't/ Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you/ For learning me your language!" (Shakespeare 1973, I.ii.365-367), but as can be seen in Caliban's soliloquy, he also uses language to craft beautiful descriptions of the island that he loves. It is through this dichotomy that we see Shakespeare problematizing the limitation of Caliban as the bestial devil; he shows through the language of this dream state that Caliban has the potential to be more than Prospero's limiting stereotype suggests.

Furthermore, in Caliban's description that "the isle is full of noises,/ Sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not./ Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments/ Will hum about mine ears," he highlights the importance of sound/music as a defining quality of the natural environment (Shakespeare 1973, III.ii.140-3). There have been many articles written about the use and quality of music in *The Tempest*, but perhaps the best for the purposes of this study is Joshua Cohen's aptly named "The Music of *The Tempest*". In it, Cohen underscores the importance of the Music of the Spheres. He notes that "from antiquity to early modern times, the Music of the Spheres was regarded as the quintessential expression of divine order governing all of creation at every level of the Chain of Being" (Cohen 2013, 71). If this is the case, and if Caliban can hear the music, then he, perhaps, has more potential than Prospero and the others on the island recognize; he is a being with a soul, capable of connecting to the divine and of redemption.

There is a natural connection between the setting of *Caliban's War* and the realm of the Spheres. It makes sense that Holden, immersed in the environment where the Music of the Spheres music is made, connects with this force in his journey from the depths of monstrousness to regain his righteousness and identity. Perhaps it is this music that Holden hears after he enters the ship "transformed." Prax notes that "Holden tilted his head like he was listening to something that only he could hear" and, after this, finalizes the deal that Holden and his crew will find and save Mei (Corey 2012, 364). Like the music on the isle that seems to sooth and bring out the best in Caliban, so here Holden reconnects with a bit of who he used to be by "listening to something that only he could hear". Holden, in resolving the Mirror Stage, underscores the idea that "a human being is not determined by the past, but determines both the future and the past through the expression of his or her desire" (Nobus 2016, 122). At this point in Holden's character, there is a shift from the

monstrous — the loss of self, fear, and selfishness — to a more mature, external, altruistic desire to help others. Avasarla later says to Holden that his desire to save Mei is "not some personal crusade" where the focus is on Holden, but rather on Mei and them, as a group, "trying to save a little girl from some very bad people" (Corey 2012, 464).

Although Holden's journey back to himself begins at this point, it does not mean that there is no backsliding. For instance, in the final battle at Io, Holden shoots Nguyen in the throat and after doing so, "Somewhere in his brain stem, Detective Miller nodded in approval" (Corey 2012, 543). This may, initially, seem like the Miller/Holden identity still exists, but because of the next few lines, we know that it does not, or at least not entirely. Holden apologizes for his actions to Naomi saying "Sorry... I know I sort of agreed not to do that anymore", to which Naomi forgives him saying, "I know you'll feel like shit about it later. That's good enough for me." (Corey 2012, 543) Even though he may still have vestiges of "Miller-like actions", Holden has regained enough of his identity that he can problematize these actions and feel remorse, something that Miller in his monstrous actions, like executing Dresden, never had.

It is this sense of remorse and a change in perspective that Held wishes to emphasize in Caliban's "I'll be wise hereafter/ and seek for grace" (Shakespeare 1973, V.i.295-6). Whether Caliban truly has learned to forgive the loss of the island and accept Prospero or not, we as readers will never know. Shakespeare's play ends with ambiguity in Caliban's character and the audience is left with the task of grappling with his sincerity. For a reader of *Caliban's War*, we end with ambiguity as well. At the very end of the book, Holden is sitting alone in the galley of the *Rocinante*. He turns and sees Miller who "stood next to the galley refrigerator as if he'd always been there, rumpled gray suit and dented porkpie hat... His expression was one of discomfort and apology. 'Hey,' Detective Miller said. 'We gotta talk.'" (Corey 2012, 594-5). Just as there is ambiguity in Caliban's final lines, so there is ambiguity in this final scene with Holden as well. The recurrence of Miller at the end of the novel may be seen as a reminder to the reader of the Miller/Holden identity and how it is still part of who Holden is; the connection, though tenuous, is still there.

Holden/Volovodov

With the continuation of the series in *Abaddon's Gate*, we see a Holden who is much more like the righteous man in *Leviathan Wakes* than the monstrous man in *Caliban's War*. Even though he has returned to be more "like himself", Holden has seen too much and, as a result, has been touched by the monstrous; he can never again be the wholly righteous moral compass of the text. The role of morality in our world, that thread which weaves the books together, shifts from Holden's character and is transferred to Reverend Doctor Annushka (Anna) Volovodov. She acts as the moral compass of the narrative, problematizing humans' understanding and characterization of the protomolecule and our place in the Universe. She asks questions that others wish to ignore. For instance, in a conversation with Tilly she notes that "theological anthropology is a lot simpler when humans are the only ones with souls," and continues with a series of questions:

> But how does the protomolecule fit into that? Is it alive? It murders us, but it also builds amazing structures that are astonishingly advanced. Is it a tool used by someone more like us, only smarter? And if so, are the creatures with a sense of the divine? Do they have faith? What does that look like?... It calls into question the entire concept of Grace. Well, not entirely, but it complicates it at the very least. The things that made the protomolecule are intelligent. Does that mean they have souls? They invade our solar system, kill us indiscriminately, steal our resources. All things we could consider sins, if we were doing them. Does that mean they're fallen? Did Christ die for them too? Or are they intelligent but soulless, and everything the protomolecule's done is just like a virus doing what it's programmed for?" (Corey 2013, 129-30)

As such, we have a continuation of profound questions regarding identity, morality, and the place of man and God in our Universe. I believe that we may equate these questions to the drowning of Prospero's book, likely a book of the occult, and exit from the island at the end of *The Tempest*. The small island of experimentation which Prospero tightly controls through magic is abandoned in favor of returning to Milan, a place of decidedly more uncertainty. Likewise, in *Abaddon's Gate*, the certainty of what the protomolecule is and its place in the Universe is revised/rewritten. The "alien God-like thing" that Naomi so fears in *Leviathan Wakes* changes to be a symbol of the potential for life and exploration outside of the Sol System. At the end of the book, Reverend Hector Cortez is concerned about the implications of this, noting that "God gave man the Earth. He never promised him the stars. I wonder if He'll follow us out there", to which Anna replies "The God I believe in is bigger than all of this. Nothing we ever learn can be an attack on Him as long as that's true" (Corey 2013, 539).

In one of her more philosophical moments, Anna posits the questions "Do you believe in the concept of forgiveness? In the possibility of redemption? In the value of every human life, no matter how tainted or corrupted?" (Corey 2013, 364). I think that these are good questions as one comes to a final analysis of Caliban in *The Tempest* and Holden in *Caliban's War*. In both texts, we have characters who may be described as monstrous. Though beyond literal monsters, the play and novel take on the difficult questions of what makes a metaphorical monster, what is (im)moral, and actions that one may or may not take under trying circumstances. Such profound points of contemplation help to make these texts more than a play and novel that are read once and then forgotten. Through these issues, they underscore complex ideas that ask the audience to define what it means to be human, a question that one may return to time and time again.

For Caliban in Shakespeare's text, the defining moment of redemption may be those final lines "I'll be wise hereafter / and seek for grace" (Shakespeare 1973, V.i.295-6). If so, then Caliban's potential, as indicated by the elevated language in his soliloquy and his capability to hear the Music of the Spheres, finally may be realized. For Holden, the journey to regain his identity is also a painful and chaotic one. From the horrors of what he sees on Eros Station causing a sense of loss of self, to the fear that immobilizes him throughout much of the novel, to his final transformative turning

point, Holden is a dynamic character who changes significantly throughout the text. In the end, he is able to subdue the Miller/Holden persona and reassert his own identity. In doing so, he regains his humanity allowing Naomi, the girlfriend who watched the man she loves descend into monstrousness and struggle to be redeemed, to be able to finally say to him, "I feel like I got you back" (Corey 2013, 431).

References:

Abraham, Daniel. "Hi. First off..." *Lizard Brain Blog*, March 13, 2014.
http://www.danielabraham.com/2014/03/03/oh-hey-i-have-a-blog/ (accessed 10.06.2018)

Brown, Thomas. *Religio Medici*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Cohen, Joshua. "The Music of *The Tempest*". *Raritan* 33, No.1 (2013): 70-82.

Corey, James S.A. *Leviathan Wakes*. New York: Orbit, 2011.

Corey, James S.A. *Caliban's War*. New York: Orbit, 2012.

Corey, James S.A. *Abaddon's Gate*. New York: Orbit, 2013.

Flagstad, Karen. "Making this Place Paradise": Prospero and the Problem of Caliban in *The Tempest*." *Shakespeare Studies* 18 (1986): 205-233.

Greenblatt, Stephen. "Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century." *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*. New York: Routledge (1992): 22-51.

Held, Joshua. "Caliban and the Rhetoric of Sincerity: Postcolonialism, Performance, and the Self." *Christianity and Literature* 67, no. 1 (2017): 69-88.

Kunat, John. "'Play Me False': Rape, Race, and Conquest in The Tempest." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 65, No. 3 (2014): 307-327.

Mowat, Barbara. "Prospero, Agrippa, and Hocus Pocus." *English Literary Renaissance* 11, No. 3 (1981): 281-303.

Nobus, Dany. "Life and Death in the Glass: A New Look at the Mirror Stage." *Key Concepts of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, Dany Nobus (Ed.). New York: Routledge, 2016: 101-138.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1973.

Wilkes, G.A. "*The Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism." *Sydney Studies* 29, No. 2 (1989): 277-89.

Wright, Kristen. "'This Thing of Darkness I Acknowledge Mine': Man's Monstrous Potential in *The Tempest* and *Titus Andronicus*." *At the Interface/Probing the Boundaries* 91 (2018): 171-96.