

Dear Sir,

In your Thought for the Week, you write: “At present I think there is only one tragic English novel, one true-bred but monstrous unlicked whelp, and one amazing work which incorporates a tragic novel in a larger whole.” Are you willing to reveal the titles of the two unnamed books? My instinct tells me that *Women in Love* or *Lord Jim* might be one of them (for some reason, “monstrous unlicked whelp” makes me think of Jim, probably because of the scene involving the mistake with the dog).

yours truly
Michael DiSanto

Yes, *Women in Love* is the one-and-only, a judgement that entails a revision of Leavis’s reading. “Whelp” should have been “cub” and I meant *Clarissa*. Dr DiSanto can testify to my admiration for Conrad as he was the publisher, in *The New Compass*, of my essay on *Victory*—which is part of my argument that Conrad is not a tragic novelist. If anywhere, the Winne Verloc strand of *The Secret Agent*.

I.R.

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