

## Symbols within the 'Bloody Chamber'

### **Caged Lark:**

- She takes pleasure in caging the lark because she herself is caged
- She cannot free herself from her fatal imprisonment, therefore she enjoys having control over the lark

### **Bicycle:**

- This symbolises human reason, it works on the basis of human laws and has no power beyond this
- When the soldier initially refuses to give the governess his bicycle, he is 'symbolically' denying a belief in the irrational. He refuses to be separated from the bicycle just as he refuses to be separated from reason
- The soldier embodies 'the light of reason' so completely, his face blinds the Countess so that she must wear glasses in his presence

### **Light:**

- In the end light floods the Countess's room, showing it to be false
- Symbolically, reason wins over unreason, showing it to be no more than an illusion
- She confirms this, "I was only an inversion of darkness".

### **Roses:**

- Roses represent femininity, as they almost mock the Countess' sexless existence within the mansion that is her prison
- "And I leave you as a souvenir the dark, fanged rose I plucked from between my thighs, like a flower laid on a grave. One a grave." Vampire Queen
- Carter conveys the idea of vagina dentate by describing the rose's thorns as 'fangs'. A vagina dentate (Latin for toothed vagina) describes a folktale in which a woman's vagina is said to contain teeth, with the problems that sexual intercourse might result in injury, emasculation or castration for the man involved.
- Just as she was able to kill and not kiss with her mouth, the Countess was unable to experience pleasure from her 'thorned' vagina. The rose is dead like the Countess and her chance to experience love and fulfilment.