



113 by Leonora Carrington
Avery Institute of Art

"GLANDULAR,
INDEED"

THE HEARING TRUMPET: A CHARACTER LIST

written, with great affection, by Anne Walsh

MARIAN LEATHERBY, our narrator, the 92-year-old bearded, toothless, vegetarian narrator and protagonist, still capable of being pleasant and amusing when the occasion seems fit. She has a death grip on ~~her~~ haggard frame as if it were the limpid body of Venus herself.

GALAHAD, our narrator's son, inferior to her in intelligence, spineless bottom to his wife and her son.

MURIEL, is wife to Galahad, an *officious Nosey Parker*, who is also stingy with chocolates. It is she who convinces Galahad that Lightsome Hall, run by the Well of Light Brotherhood, and financed by a prominent American Cereal Company, is where her mother in law must be confined.

ROBERT, is our narrator's step-grandson. Even as a child he was unkind to cats. After his grandmother drags her *drooling sack of decomposing flesh* through his cocktail party, he insists she be removed from the household.

ROZINA, is the misanthropic, morose maid of the Leatherby home. To Rosina our narrator is an element of the landscape. I had misspelled her name until just now, it is properly: Rosina.

CARMELLA VELASQUEZ, is our narrator's best friend, and one of the story's profane heroes. Psychic, and really very intellectual, Carmella does not trust anyone under seventy and over seven, unless they are cats. She reads books through an elegant lorgnette and hardly ever mumbles to herself.

CARMELLA'S NEICE, the baker, about whom we know little except that she takes care of Carmella, and assists in the digging of the tunnel.

MARIAN'S MOTHER, 110 years old, known only through postcards from her valet. Her spiritual home is the casino of Monte Carlo.

TCHA TCHA, the cat whose fur, collected from combings and held in a jar, will someday be spun into yarn by our narrator, and knitted into a jumper by Carmella..

MARMEEN, the other cat who lives with Marian and Tcha Tcha.

DR. GAMBIT, proprietor of the Well of Light Brotherhood at Lightsome Hall. Pompous teacher of *Inner Christianity* and *Self-Remembering*, possibly a gourmand but surely a portly, venal narcissist, who may or may not be having an affair with one or more of the Institution's residents.

MRS. GAMBIT, wife of Dr. Gambit, is the despotic ruler of the kitchen, household taskmistress, and instructor of *the Movements*, a spiritual fitness program leading to harmonious evolution of the whole organism. *The beastly Gambit female* suffers from migraines, and is nicknamed *Rachel Rictus* by Georgina Sykes.

CLAUDE LA CHECHERELLE, a veteran of WW1's Battle of Ypres, a great storyteller, dresses in French seamen's clothing. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

ANNA WERTZ, who talks incessantly, and with whom Marian agrees that having an eternally interested audience for one's life story would be delightful. She greets our narrator and her family on their first visit to the institution in stylish pajamas, and shows them to our narrator's quarters in a lighthouse with trompe l'oeil furniture. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

MAUDE WILKINS, the transvestite tailor, a shy lady who makes her own clothes. She is accidentally murdered by eating fudge laced with *Last Supper* brand rat poison, and thus discovered to be a biological man. I had misremembered her name as Maude Somers but that is a conflation of Maudie Fowler, the elderly main character of Doris Lessing's *Diary of Jane Somers*, and the eponymous narrator of that book, who is my age and of similar stripe. Upon rereading *The Hearing Trumpet* I discovered that she IS also referred to as Maude Somers, an idiosyncrasy I cannot account for. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

VERONICA ADAMS, a blind watercolorist on toilet paper, the love of Maude Wilkins' life, although they keep their marriage concealed from the other ladies. She lives in a Swiss Chalet which on closer observation by our narrator turns out to be a cuckoo clock. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

VERA VAN TOCHT, whom I did not remember at all until checking the book, shares quarters with Maude Wilkins, and is Natacha Gonzalez's accomplice in poisoned fudge making. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

NATACHA GONZALEZ, smoker, self-proclaimed visionary, leader of the Wednesday night seances, rival of Georgina Sykes, for whom the poison that kills Maude Wilkins is intended. A duplicitous exaggerator. According to Vera Van Tocht, *Natacha is the Pure Vessel through which unseen powers are made manifest to us*. According to Georgina Sykes, *It is a jolly good thing for humanity that she is shut up in a home for senile females*. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

GEORGINA SYKES, is Natacha Gonzalez's *vipress*, not least because she claims Dr. Gambit is *always making excuses to get me into his boudoir for cosy talks*. Georgina is kept in the Institution by her nephew, who pays double for extras: morning Bovril, clean sheets twice a week, massage, and ovaltine at bedtime. A *dangerous, immoral, and malignant woman*, according to Natacha Gonzalez. She is also a smoker and a Resident of Lightsome Hall.

CHRISTABEL BURNS, the true leader of the cult of Venus and the keeper of the secret of Dona Rosalinda Alvarez della Cueva, the spiritual guide to the ladies at the Well. I had to look her name up to remember it. She is the oldest of the residents, and a *negress*, which also makes her exotic and remarkable to our narrator. Resident of Lightsome Hall.

DONA ROSALINDA ALVAREZ DE LA CUEVA, *the leering abbess*, subject of a portrait hanging in Well of Light dining hall, and of a biography read secretly by our narrator. The 17th c. Spanish abbess is an unholy imposter seeking to overthrow worship of the Angry Father God. I had been writing her name as Dona Rosalinda Alvarez.de la Cruz for a year until I realized I was conflating her with Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz, Mexico's first great poet and feminist.

BISHOP OF TREVE LES TRELES is the spiritual supervisor of the nuns at Santa Barbara of Tartarus, where Rosalinda is Abbess. Also an impious monastic, lover of choirboys, and the *rampant wildpig* of Dona Rosalinda, with whom he conspires the overthrow of Judeo-Christian patriarchy and restitution of great Mother Venus power .

RAVISHING BRITISH CHOIRBOY, lover of the Bishop, who provides him crucial information: the location of the Holy Grail.

MAJONG, silent chauffeur of the lavender limousine belonging to the now-wealthy Carmella Velasquez. They arrive at the Well of Light heavily provisioned with sardines, biscuits, port, and furs to nourish and warm the ladies after their hunger strike, and the shifting of the planetary poles.

TALIESSSEN, the courier who carries news of far flung family and friends after the nuclear winter, across a new ice age, to the snow-bound ladies in their underground commune. Taliessen's messages make him unpopular with the authorities.

MARLBOROUGH is Marian's old friend and a great poet. His voice carries well, always further than anybody else's, and even in her deafest days our narrator can always hear him talking several rooms away.

ANUBETH, is the sister of Marlborough, an elegant, were-wolfess who dresses in glittering gold. She is pregnant with werewolf puppies. Our narrator attributes her "peculiarity" to aristocratic breeding but wonders, "Can cows be aristocrats?"

GOATS, companions of and milk-providers for the ladies in their post-apocalyptic encampment.

¹ Bovril is the trademarked name of a thick, salty meat extract, developed in the 1870s by John Lawson Johnston and sold in a distinctive, bulbous jar. It is made in Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire, owned and distributed by Unilever UK ♦ Bovril can be made into a drink by diluting with hot water, or less commonly with milk. It can also be used as a flavouring for soups, stews or porridge, or spread on bread, especially toast, rather like Marmite. ♦ The first part of the product's name comes from Latin *bos* meaning "ox" or "cow." Johnston took the -vril suffix from Bulwer-Lytton's then-popular "lost race" novel *The Coming Race* (1870), whose plot revolves around a superior race of people, the Vril-ya, who derive their powers from an electromagnetic substance named "Vril."

THE HEARING TRUMPET

"Reading *The Hearing Trumpet*

liberates us from the miserable

reality of our days."

—LUIS BUÑUEL

 <p>EXACT CHANGE \$15.95 USA \$22.95 CANADA</p>	 <p>9 781878 972194</p>
---	--

"SANDWICH"
"DEPT"