

25 February 2020

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress
Motif and Symbol Analysis

Motif	Associations	Occurrences in the text	Analysis
Dreams	Foreshadowing Mind Renewal Hopes + Desires Fears Truth Freud + Psychology Love Blue Vulnerability Subconscious	Poetess knits and watches Luo and the narrator break in (92) Seamstress wears a tight white T-Shirt with her hair down (116)	Seamstress gains a false sense of freedom Dichotomy between dreams and reality → Four Eyes expects a certain tale from the Miller but in reality receives something else
Clothing	Disguise Identity Wealth + Position in society Condition of clothes = Experiences	<u>The Little Seamstress</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> White shirt + hair down in Narrator's dream Pink canvas shoes Ribbons → Wealth? <u>Four Eyes</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glasses/broken glasses <u>Tailor</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates sailor-like clothes after the Narrator reads <i>The Count of Monte Cristo</i> (127) Speaks of women's obsession with clothing (122) 	The Little Seamstress's changing clothes → The Little Seamstress changing The villagers' clothing changing to resemble Western clothing → Changing values and morals of the village people

		<u>Miller</u> • Does not wear shirt	
Blood	Danger Death Red → Passion Courage Pain Life Fertility Romance Seduction Open wound = vulnerability	Narrator dreams the Little Seamstress is covered in blood (117) Blood on leaf → Virginity The narrator wants to sign his name with blood (111) Four Eyes drinks the buffalo blood	Vulnerability/passion → The narrator has feelings for the Little Seamstress Passion Blood = DNA, life, identity, brotherhood → The narrator's allegiance to the books and to Luo
Birds/Flying/Heights	Freedom Birdsong “Bird's eye view” — All seeing/spying Perspective	“Read-beaked raven” (109) “As she ran, her hair floated out over her shoulders like wings” Luo is afraid of heights The raven waits for Luo and the narrator to fall off of a cliff	Communism — The re-education sites are under constant surveillance by Chairman Mao Little Seamstress letting her hair down → Gaining a sense of freedom (?) Height of the mountain gives them a new perspective

