Gothic Definitions:

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Basic definition: writing, film, art, music, or other cultural object that creates an atmosphere of transgressive and excessive emotions and actions related to nightmares, mysteries, terror, decay, death, and madness.

1. Gothic Hallmarks: extremes, excesses, pushing limits

2. Gothic Emotions: extreme fear, cruelty, passion, violence, lust, degradation, dread, suspense, shock

3. Gothic Actions: acting irrational, acting chaotic, going against prohibitions, being sacrilegious, doing the forbidden, believing in the supernatural, dwelling in negativity, acting violent beyond expectation (especially murder, dismemberment, or bodily violence that results in bleeding)

4. Central Gothic Irony: The conclusion of most gothic narratives is a reinforcement of culturally prescribed codes of morality and propriety. The gothic conclusion is a return to normalcy.

5. Gothic Elements: A partial list

Characters: Heroes and Villians, Thieves and bandits and mysterious people, maidens and old women

Plot Points: the night journey, the trap, the escape, the miraculous survival, death/near death, the dream, the nightmare, the return to normalcy

Settings: castles, crypts, churches, graves, old houses, underground, basements, attics, forests, darkness or dark spaces, bleak or stormy settings—especially windswept, cloudy landscapes