Jack Schaefer's character Shane and Anne Rice's Lestat are examples of Gothic hero-villains. Both have powers beyond that of the average man. Their dark powers make them the hero to the ones they love but a threat to those whom they do not. They are driven by a need to find love and the good in themselves that will allow them to make ties with others, and they do come close to finding it with the new families they have acquired. Despite their efforts to conceal their dark powers in order to protect their loved ones from the evils that they are all too familiar with, they must eventually reveal their powers to save their loved ones. The tragedy is that it is those powers that ultimately alienate them from their families and make them realize that they cannot escape from their true selves.

Joyce Carol Oates' short story “Naked” is a beautifully written and compelling tale of a woman who is attacked and left naked while hiking in a wildlife preserve. This incident begins a process of rebirth as the woman attempts to return to her home without her nudity being discovered.

The first hint that this is a story of rebirth is that the events occur in the spring, a time of renewal and rebirth. Oates writes that “the earth exuded a sense of quiveringness, of scarcely restrained life” (123). The woman’s nudity is also a symbol of her rebirth. Just as we are all born naked, Oates’ character is naked as she undergoes her rebirth.