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### Lovely Death

As Marvel's Vision once beautifully mused in the 2021 show *WandaVision*, "'What is grief, if not love preserving?'" Certainly, death often evokes natural responses like pain, anger, and, most commonly, grief. If left unaddressed, grief can sometimes grow into a state of bereavement. Virginia Woolf challenges this perception of death in her 1921 "A Haunted House", exhibiting it not as an end to a life, but the continuation of one. The short story follows the lives of a ghostly and living couple within the same "haunted" house, interactive to both the phenomenon of their situations. Based on the title and foundational content of the story, the reader can assume this house is undergoing some paranormal activity; however, the narrator of the story feels neither conflicted nor discomforted by their presence. In fact, the narrator seems more intent on finding their "hidden treasure" than riding of them altogether. While the ghostly couple traverses through the house, gently reminiscing their memories together and searching for their buried treasure, the narrator follows closely by in hopes of discovering it as well. This shared curiosity between the narrator and the ghostly couple presents an interconnectedness between life and death, lifting that imperceptible veil that is commonly placed between the two. Therein lies the irony of the title "A Haunted House" for it indicates a haunting that does not actually occur in the story. To constitute the counterproductivity of the title, Woolf uses words like "gently" to describe the ghosts' presence, "joy" for their past lives and memories, and "safe" for the house, further insinuating that death is not the traditional concept of cessation on existence, but a welcoming truth to the

next life. Evident to Woolf's perception of death, the narrator discovers that the buried treasure is actually their love and memories that the ghost views in the living themselves. This further alludes to the connection of "death" and "life", branding love as the connection between the two. The ghost seeing their "buried treasure" upon the living narrator is representational of a love that grounds them as any human emotion. As such, Woolf approaches the notion of death as not a mournful division between the living and the dead, but a place of unity, an afterlife that connects the two and a continuation of life altogether.