

Month 2 Location: Corryvreckan Maelstrom, Scotland

Description (from <http://list25.com/25-creepiest-places-on-earth/>)

Corryvreckan Maelstrom is very powerful whirlpool just off the coast of Ardfern, Scotland. Complex tidal forces and unique geological formations combine to create an incredibly powerful, perpetually spinning whirlpool of death. A documentary team once equipped a mannequin with a depth gauge and then tossed it into the Corryvreckan. When it was eventually found, the severely damaged depth gauge had a maximum reading of over 650 feet.

Related Film: Ulysses (1954)

Movie Synopsis

Ulysses is a fantasy-adventure film based on Homer's *Odyssey*. The story is about Ulysses's effort to return to his home after the end of the Trojan War and the adventures that befell him.

When the vast domain was divided among Zeus and his siblings following the Titanomachy, a number of territorial disputes arose among the gods. Poseidon vied with Athena to be the patron deity of Athens. The god demonstrated his power by striking the Acropolis with his three-pronged spear, while Athena was ultimately awarded patronage after planting the olive tree.

This sibling rivalry intensified during the Trojan War when the Athena-backed Greeks fought the Trojans. In *The Iliad*, Ulysses conjured the idea of a giant (Trojan) horse to infiltrate the city of Troy that resulted in a Greek victory. As a result, Poseidon, the god of the sea, ensures that Ulysses' effort to return to his kingdom of Ithaka is fraught with peril. Odysseus further infuriates Poseidon when he blind's the god's son, the cyclops, Polyphemos; "Hear me, Poseidon who circle the earth, dark-haired. If truly I am your son, and you acknowledge yourself as my father, grant that Odysseus (Ulysses), sacker of cities, son of Laertes, who makes his home in Ithaka, may never reach that home..."

Among his many peril, Ulysses encounters Scylla and Charybdis. Scylla is a six-headed monster who, when ships pass, swallows one sailor for each head. Charybdis is an enormous whirlpool that threatens to swallow the entire ship.

How it relates to the field of psychiatry

Being "between Scylla and Charybdis" is an idiom derived from Greek mythology meaning having to choose between two evils. In this way, Corryvreckan Maelstrom represents the internal conflict between what "we would like to do" (id) versus society's prosocial warning about what we should do (superego). About 150 miles east of Ardfern is the city of Edinburgh where Robert Louis Stevenson was inspired to write arguably the most sensational case study of the id/superego conflict. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* - Corryvreckan

Maelstrom, embodied – also serves as a fictional case study of the impaired physician, as Dr. Jekyll has been hypothesized to be afflicted with alcohol use disorder (Altschuler, E.L. M.D., PH.D., 2000).

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