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The grim word: 'home' in fiction by Graham Greene

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THE GRIM WORD:
'HOME' IN FICTION BY GRAHAM GREENE

COWGILL

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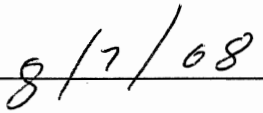
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The Grim Word: 'Home' in Fiction by Graham Greene

(TITLE)

BY

Geoff Cowgill

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Abstract

Graham Greene's treatment of the subject of home in his writings is remarkably negative. Focusing on nine of his major novels (*England Made Me*, *A Gun for Sale*, *Brighton Rock*, *The Heart of the Matter*, *The Quiet American*, *The Comedians*, *Travels with My Aunt*, *The Honorary Consul*, and *The Human Factor*), this study explicates the ways in which home fails his characters. In this thesis, 'home' has been split into three facets: family, domicile and homeland. Each facet seems to promise benefits for the characters that don't materialize. The way in which Greene's writing promotes a betrayal of home reflects his ideological credo, "the virtue of disloyalty." Edward Said's writings on exile and affiliation versus filiation provide a way of viewing Greene's work as favoring affiliative connections and expatriation to filial ties to biological families and national identities.

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Introduction – A Disloyalty to Filiation

Over the course of sixty years, Graham Greene was a prolific writer not only of novels, but short stories, dramas, and a constant stream of published non-fiction, movie reviews to political journalism. And though there is depth and variety in his work, the motif of movement and escape remains remarkably constant. The protagonists of most Graham Greene stories are readily identified by their independence from others. They are often adrift or in flight from the ties of society, from the hunted and haunted Andrews of his first novel, 1929's *The Man Within*, to coldly aloof Victor 'Jim' Baxter, a narrator distanced even from his own story, Greene's 1988 cryptically casual swan song, *The Captain and the Enemy*. Much has been written about the big issues of Greene's fiction, the searching and paradoxical nature of his handling of religious faith, politics, and loyalty. But while these subjects have been explicated rigorously by academics, perhaps the most consistent theme in his work, one inextricably tied to the motif of escape, has gone largely unnoted; it is the rejection of home.

In Greene's writings, 'home' is presented as an idealized concept, a myth perpetuated from a more naïve past that suggests that individuals are rooted to communities, countries and families by natural bonds. Accidents of birth and circumstance are thought to be sufficient motive for individuals to feel a connection to their parents and to the land and buildings in which they reside. A reasonable reaction to society's archaic and stifling demand on an individual to continue to live these superstitions is for the individual simply to flee.

The goal of this study is to trace in several key works what amounts to a hidden narrative running throughout Greene's writings. An exhaustive study could be made of Greene's rejection of home in the totality of his work, fiction, non-fiction, and drama alike, but for the sake of focus, nine of his novels, the genre for which he's most noted, will be analyzed. The novels under review are culled from all periods of his career, and taken together they illustrate that unlike other themes which mutated or evolved over time, Greene's negative presentation of home remained intact and largely unaltered from the beginning of his career to its conclusion.

Three manifestations of the idea of home will be explored: family, domicile, and homeland. The way Greene handles each of these three facets of home will be considered in two to three representative novels each. Issues of family will be examined in *Brighton Rock* (1938) and *The Honorary Consul* (1973), domicile in *A Gun for Sale* (1936) and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), and homeland in *England Made Me* (1935), *The Quiet American* (1955) and *The Human Factor* (1978). The way in which *The Comedians* (1966) and *Travels with My Aunt* (1969) synthesize these facets will be examined in the conclusion. Though most of Greene's major works touch on each of the three aspects of home in revealing and intriguing ways, the novels under discussion are particularly rich in their evocations of the subject, and taken together provide a representative sampling of key motifs that reappear throughout Greene's career concerning home.

The long-established view of the traditional family, with father, mother, and siblings all fulfilling roles that harmoniously benefit the unit and its individuals, finds few representations in Greene's writing. Mary Abbott's socio-historical study, *Family*

Affairs: a History of the Family in 20th Century England (2003), refers to a popular 1953 publication on the roles of parents and its findings that children “needed their mother’s pretty-well-undivided attention. Even a ‘bad mother’ was better than no mother at all. The father was the ‘economic and emotional support for the mother’” (100). An ideal mother is one who nurtures, supports, and provides unconditional love. An ideal father is an economic provider and a behavioral role model. In Greene’s writing, however, we see mothers who are cold and distant and fathers who abandon families and are elusive and ambiguous role models. Not only do the families in Greene’s work fail to adequately fulfill traditional roles, in many cases the very necessity of these functions is rejected. Though many psychologists and sociologists see participation in family groups as a necessity, with F. Ivan Nye claiming that “human beings *must* have group life to survive at all, or at least keep their social orientation, mental health, and feeling of life as worthwhile” (34), Greene’s characters often choose to do without, fleeing their families, or, if they are drawn to “group life,” seeking surrogate families.

Greene’s writing also suggests a rejection of typically comforting associations with domiciles. The value people traditionally place on the sanctity of the home is addressed in the collection *Ideal Homes? Social Change and Domestic Life* (1999), edited by Tony Chapman and Jenny Hockey. They remark that the “adage, ‘an Englishman’s home is his castle,’ suggests that while individuals and families might face a lifelong struggle for survival in the hot-house of public life, the private home is a ‘haven’ or ‘retreat’ where we are free to express our individualism in whatever way we choose” (4-5). Chapman goes on to acknowledge that “the space we call home, its

physical and cultural boundaries and the objects that lie within it are all important signifiers of self" (137). Through design and ornamentation, a home becomes a reflection and manifestation of its owner's sense of self. Yet in Greene's writing, this expression of self in the way a home is adorned typically reveals negative qualities of characters, or the whole premise of home as manifestation of self is undercut by a deliberate rejection of furnishings and décor, an ascetic sparseness that mocks a 'comfortable home.' A home's comforting qualities may reside in emotional and psychological connections and memories as well as interior design. Gaston Bachelard, in *The Poetics of Space* (1958), writes about the primacy of an individual's home(s) in molding his or her inner life. At the heart of Bachelard's theory is the notion of the home as womb. "Life begins well, it begins protected, all warm in the bosom of the house" (7). "We comfort ourselves by reliving memories of protection," he writes, memories of our childhood homes (6). In Greene's writing, however, there is no such comfort afforded by the home or memories of it. Home represents a character's shameful origins or present situation; home is a place of compromised protection, more dangerous than secure.

Homeland will be the final delineation of home. The importance of tradition, culture, and ties to larger communities of country and nation is almost universally assumed. Simone Weil famously and eloquently addressed this in *The Need for Roots*, written during the Vichy years and posthumously published in 1949. She said that "the only form of collectivity existing in the world at the present time" is the nation (99). Her fear of the loss of nation and its cultures and traditions was great: "Loss of the past, whether it be collectively or individually, is the supreme human tragedy"

(119). The loss of national ties is devastating. Edward Said compares exile to “death but without death’s ultimate mercy” in that “it has torn millions of people from the nourishment of tradition, family, and geography” (“Reflections” 174). Greene, however, presents ties to country, whether his own England or foreign characters’ native lands, dismissively. He exposes national traditions and characteristics as lost to the past or fraudulent myths, and patriotism as at best a foolish affectation, at worst dangerous xenophobia. Greene’s characters find being nationless either a natural state of twentieth-century existence or a preferred way of life.

When home is rejected in Greene’s work, his characters often find substitutions that fulfill the needs home has failed to successfully provide. These surrogate homes are especially prevalent when it comes to rejection of family and homeland. This process of discarding a connection that was forced on an individual through accidents of biology or circumstance in order to *choose* a more meaningful connection can be looked at in terms of filiations and affiliations. In *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (1983), Edward Said uses this dichotomy to explain relationships between critics and culture, but the basic terminology is useful in differentiating between associations formed by birth and nationality (filiation) and those chosen based on “social and political conviction, economic and historical circumstances, voluntary effort and willed deliberation” (affiliation) (25). Said quotes Ian Watt in noting the trend among Modernist writers to break from filial traditions and forge their own affiliations instead. Considering that his career hit its stride as Modernism began to wane and his style rarely varied from unambiguous realism, it is not surprising that Greene is infrequently discussed in the context of Modernism. While

Greene rarely explored Modernist techniques, his writing indicates thematic similarities to the likes of Joyce, Lawrence and Pound, such as viewing “the breaking of ties with family, home, class, country, and traditional beliefs as necessary stages in the achievement of spiritual and intellectual freedom” (19). Throughout his published work, Greene seems to advocate the idea that filial forms of home must be transcended in order for an individual to grow.

Exhuming Greene’s reactions to home reveals their kinship with what may be the overriding thesis of his career and life. In 1969, accepting a German literary award, Greene delivered a speech that puts into perspective much of his often challenging literary output:

Isn’t it the story-teller’s task to act as the devil’s advocate, to elicit sympathy and a measure of understanding for those who lie outside the boundaries of State approval? The writer is driven by his own vocation to be a Protestant in a Catholic society, a Catholic in a Protestant one, to see the virtues of the Capitalist in a Communist society, of the Communist in a Capitalist state. [. . .] If only writers could maintain that one virtue of disloyalty – so much more important than chastity – unspotted from the world. [. . .] Loyalty confines you to accepted opinions: loyalty forbids you to comprehend sympathetically your dissident fellows; but disloyalty encourages you to roam through any human mind: it gives the novelist an extra dimension of understanding. (“Virtue” 267-8)

Greene identifies the willingness to step away from one's environment in order to best understand the totality of the world, of humanity, as the virtue of disloyalty. There is little to which people are more loyal than their homes: their families, domiciles, and homelands. Greene's adherence to a policy of disloyalty is clearly illustrated by his betrayal of the traditions of home. In *Graham Greene: On the Frontier* (1988), Maria Couto notices that "since the early years of his career as a novelist Graham Greene has practiced in his art the morality of 'not to be at home in one's home' so as to question dogma and orthodoxy as well as received views of culture, history and assumptions that govern human relationships in situations of global relevance" (113). And not only are issues of global import illuminated by Greene's dogged insistence to disavow ties to home; he also has been able to provide insights into the most personal and individual human concerns. Paradoxically and ironically, Greene's marked rejection of what many would consider essential to the welfare of a human life has seemed in part to propel a body of work which so deeply elucidates the nature of the human condition.

Greene equates loyalty with confinement and disloyalty with freedom to roam, and this dichotomy underlies much of his work. In his writing, the three manifestations of home repeatedly suggest confinement. Characters constantly take flight from these confinements throughout Greene's published literary output. All matter of personal evolution and engagement with the world result from these escapes. Greene's work implies that a disloyalty to and escape from filiation to family, domicile and homeland is necessary for individual growth. If individuals don't break loose from home, they face unfulfilling familial relationships based entirely on

biological accident, domiciles that deceive with the fraudulent promise of security and comfort, and homelands that inhibit a broader understanding of humanity while demanding undeserved fealty – a grim fate indeed.

Chapter One – Family in *Brighton Rock* and *The Honorary Consul*

In a majority of his fictions, Greene presents immediate blood relations as unsuited, seemingly accidental, groups whose members fail to provide one another adequate and needed understanding, nurturing or a sense of identity. Parents particularly are shown failing to fulfill their expected roles. Greene doesn't often paint family members of protagonists as villains or monsters. It is rare to see anything so melodramatic in his work as a physically abusive parent, for instance. But over and over again parents are portrayed as inadequate or uninterested. In many of Greene's early novels, the main characters are abandoned by dead or otherwise distant parents, and in his later works, there is an almost obsessively recurring questioning of who a character's parents really are. Family relationships other than that of parent and child make only rare appearances in Greene's stories. As Roger Sharrock points out, "Greene never makes much of the extended family in his fiction: the people are alienated single persons, the relationships are with those separated from them by background" (83).

The most meaningful familial connections in Greene's work tend to be with surrogate families. In other words, affiliation is shown to be a more valid and compelling tie than filiation. Surrogate parental figures are scattered throughout Greene's work. In some cases, the characters' need for a mother or father figure in their lives leads to their deliberately seeking out a substitute who can fulfill traditional functions of protection, nurturing or role modeling. But there are also surrogate parent figures that are imposed upon characters who are not looking for such a figure in their

lives and who reject family altogether. Characters who look for surrogates, on the other hand, imply that there exists a legitimate need for parental figures, but affiliation is preferred to filiation as a way to satisfy that need. In Greene's work the freedom to make a connection is important; if individuals are tied to birth parents, especially those who may be unsuited to fulfilling required roles, their growth and opportunities in life are restricted.

A study of the novels *Brighton Rock* (1938) and *The Honorary Consul* (1973) is useful in understanding the ways in which Greene rejects birth families in his work. In *Brighton Rock*, we see the immediate effects that inadequate parents have on young people and the problematic search for surrogates. In *The Honorary Consul*, the focus is on the legacy for adults of distant and in other ways negative parents. Adult characters still seek surrogate parents, and the subject of family is complicated by protagonists in the role of parent. Both novels suggest that family ties are arbitrary and often damaging.

Brighton Rock tells the story of seventeen year-old sociopath gang leader Pinkie Brown who is pursued by the hedonistic but justice-obsessed Ida Arnold because she (correctly) suspects him of the murder of Fred Hale. Pinkie feigns attraction to the only potential witness against him, the meek waitress Rose Wilson, who quickly develops unshakeable love for and loyalty to him. He realizes that he'll have to marry or murder her to ensure that she can't testify against him. Either way, Rose seems doomed. The novel is saturated in Pinkie and Rose's Catholicism, and the issue of Pinkie's apparently unavoidable damnation looms large. But whether Pinkie

is a symbolic embodiment of pure evil or a product of his terminally bleak upbringing defies conclusive judgment.

Pinkie's origins are fairly vague; the reader is told he's an orphan and grew up in extreme poverty. When Pinkie is asked who his guardian is, he responds "I don't know what you mean" (*Brighton* 126). He has no conception really of what a parent should be. All that is mentioned of his parents, other than that they're dead, is that they used to have sex indiscreetly, "the frightening weekly exercise of his parents which he watched from his single bed" in their hovel of a home (95). The inescapable voyeuristic experience must have scarred Pinkie severely; he routinely refers to the "Saturday night movements from the other bed" and sex in general with absolute revulsion (97).

Pinkie, who rejects just about every notion of family and domesticity possible, has all the same found a surrogate father in the gangster Kite, and Pinkie's avenging of Kite's murder by killing Hale sets the plot in motion, so that for the duration of the novel, even Pinkie's father substitute is absent. "I liked Kite," Pinkie says, a remarkably rare statement of positive affirmation from a character almost always surly or vicious (*Brighton* 142). In a reverie, he looks out at

his territory, the populous foreshore, a few thousand acres of houses, a narrow peninsula of electrified track running to London, two or three railway stations with their buffets and buns. It had been Kite's territory, it had been good enough for Kite, and when Kite had died in the waiting-room of St Pancras, it had been as if a father had died, leaving him an inheritance it was his duty never to leave for

strange acres. (142)

Just as Pinkie has inherited the gang and its territory from Kite, he's also inherited his mannerisms. Habit and choice trump genetics: "Kite had died, but he had prolonged Kite's existence – not touching liquor, biting his nails in the Kite way. . ." (238).

Pinkie is offered a potential new surrogate father in Colleoni, Kite's rival and the man who had him killed. Colleoni is a gangster who has attained a much higher degree of achievement than Kite or Pinkie, and he carries on his operation with the appearance and refinement of a legitimate businessman. Meeting with Pinkie to discuss a non-violent resolution to their burgeoning gang war, Colleoni offers the lad a place in his organization: "You're a promising youngster. That's why I'm talking to you like a father" (*Brighton* 67). In many obvious ways, Colleoni's offer and fatherly solicitude should be considered a golden opportunity for Pinkie who fantasizes about a life like Colleoni's: "the suite at the Cosmopolitan, the gold cigar-lighter, chairs stamped with crowns [. . .] he was at the beginning of a long polished parquet walk, there were bursts of great men and the sound of cheering [. . .] a conqueror" (147).

But Colleoni and that life are impossibly foreign. The shabby world of his parents and his faux-father Kite are inescapable. "I'd feel a stranger if I was away from here," he claimed with a dreamy pride, "I suppose I'm real Brighton" (*Brighton* 238). Though his "territory" includes the lines to London, he'll never board one of those trains and betray his "duty," his ties to his home. Pinkie is torn between ambitions outside of his experience, both in terms of spiritual grace and earthly socio-economic success, and the hellish squalor into which he has been born. Though he considers himself escaped from the poverty that marked his parents, Pinkie fails to

really advance, move forward and grow, because he doesn't choose to betray his prescribed idea of home.

While the reader never learns many specifics about Pinkie's parents, Rose's are present in the novel, and the extent of their inadequacy is palpably felt as they show little concern for the emotional and physical well-being of their child. The Wilsons are introduced as "a small thin elderly man, his face marked deeply with the hieroglyphics of pain and patience and suspicion: the woman middle-aged, stupid, vindictive. The dishes had not been washed and the stove hadn't been lit" (*Brighton* 154). In the Wilsons' house, located in the same deeply impoverished part of Brighton where Pinkie grew up, he feels he's in the home of his youth again. "He looked with horror round the room: nobody could say he hadn't done right to get away from this, to commit any crime . . . When the man opened his mouth he heard his father speaking, that figure in the corner was his mother" (156). Rose is in the process of getting away from this stultifying environment, having gotten a job at Snow's, a restaurant near the seafront, and lodging there. Rose worries that if the manager finds out that she's only sixteen she'll lose her job. "'They'd send me -' she hesitated a long while at the grim word, 'home'" (78).

Despite an initial adamant refusal, her parents grant permission for Rose to marry Pinkie only after the latter suggests, "I've come to do business" (*Brighton* 155). Pinkie offers a kind of reverse dowry, and the Wilsons' acquiescence seems tantamount to procurement or slavery. They bargain from ten pounds to fifteen guineas. Mr. Wilson's expressions of concern for his daughter ring remarkably hollow. "I like the look of you. We wouldn't want to stand in the way of Rose

bettering herself," he says just minutes after commanding Pinkie to get out of the house, that they "don't want any truck with you [. . .] never, never, never" (155). With such unpleasant parents, it's no wonder Rose attempts to escape.

Rose is presented with a potential surrogate parent, Ida Arnold, but Rose rejects her more forcibly than Pinkie rejects Colleoni. Ida's maternal nature is established early on in the book when Hale, vainly attempting to evade Pinkie's gang, sees her as a beacon of tenderness and protection. "You thought of sucking babies when you looked at her" (*Brighton* 5), and Hale focuses repeatedly on "the big breasts; she was like darkness to him, shelter, knowledge, common sense; his heart ached at the sight; but, in his little inky cynical framework of bone, pride bobbed again, taunting him, 'Back to the womb. . .be a mother to you. . .no more standing on your own feet'" (8). He acknowledges that this instinct is a weakness, but he gives in to the infantile desire for the nursing caress, the "comfort and peace and a slow sleepy physical enjoyment, a touch of the nursery and the mother" (14). Despite initial appearances, however, Ida's motherliness is inadequate protection. Lucio P. Ruotolo goes so far to say that Ida's maternal beacon is in reality a siren song: "Ida (known also as Lily, the flower of funerals) offers men such as Hale a kind of death" (426).

Ida is the most deceptive in a sizable line of mother surrogates in Greene's work, most of which, like her, prove to be unnecessary or unwanted. Not only does Ida fail to save Hale, but her role as mother manqué also fails to hold any sway over Rose. Ida successfully uses her maternal charms to get crucial information out of low-level gang stooge Johnnie, alluding to her methods by mentioning to Pinkie's comrade Dallow that Johnnie's "mother treated him shameful when he was a kid"

(*Brighton* 254), confronting the intimidating Dallow “completely at her ease, her big breasts ready for any secret” (255). But Rose, inured to familial coaxing by her harshly indifferent parents, is a harder mark.

Ida sees Rose as an innocent who needs protection, a not unjustified premise. “I’ve never had a child of my own and somehow I’ve taken to you,” Ida tells her (*Brighton* 131). But when this warm appeal fails to convince Rose to trust her and renounce the dangerous Pinkie, Ida quickly becomes a different kind of mother. “If I was your mother I’d give you a good hiding. What’d your father and mother say if they knew?” But of course, as Rose says, “*They* wouldn’t care” (131). Ida’s pretense of motherhood is, in the harsh world of Pinkie and Rose, a foolish fantasy. Rose simply has no need for parents, believing she’s found affiliation with Pinkie.

Later Ida claims to be Rose’s mother in order to infiltrate her new home, Frank’s, where Pinkie and his gang hole up. The ironies of this situation are many. Ida invades Rose’s home, which has none of the qualities typically associated with a secure, comforting, warm sanctum, by posing as a figure meant to have tender and loved connotations. Told that her mother is waiting for her, Rose relishes the idea, “the biggest triumph you could ever expect,” of the near-revenge of being on equal footing with her unloving parent (*Brighton* 214). Rose had hoped to claim a clear victory of independence by confronting Mrs. Wilson with her own success as a housewife, no longer merely a daughter, and living conditions more impressively autonomous than her boarding with other girls at Snow’s. Rose is disappointed by the missed opportunity, and Ida’s ruse again leads to an angry and resentful reception. Faced with Rose’s truculence, Ida’s only recourse is again to claim, “[if] I was your

mother. . . a good hiding” (217). By the end of the story, Rose has never renounced Pinkie even after his death, and Ida shows her ignorance of what a parent is in Greene’s *romanwelt* by stating “I’ve done my best. I took her home. What a girl needs at a time like that is her mother and dad” (265).

Filiation in families is a matter of blood relations, and affiliation is arrived at through marriage or similarly close chosen bonds. Both Rose and Pinkie seem to seek affiliation as a means for familial ties, but Pinkie, notwithstanding his hard-edged demeanor, is actually less bold in moving beyond filiation than the deceptively timid Rose. Pinkie fears what marriage means and equates a potential future with Rose to torture. Contemplating his success at covering up a murder, Pinkie considers the sixty-some years of ease and safety he could look forward to: “His thoughts came to pieces in his hand: Saturday nights: and then the birth, the child, habit and hate” (*Brighton* 245). He cannot imagine married life as anything other than what he saw of his parents’ relationship. Incapable of trusting close affiliation with Rose, Pinkie reverts to his affiliation with the milieu of his life, the Brighton of his father-figure Kite, a state that is in many ways closer to filiation. Pinkie lives without the hope of something better, symbolized by his absolute conviction that Hell exists and his indifferent attitude towards Heaven, relegating his belief in it to “Oh, maybe, [. . .] maybe” (55). When Pinkie records what Rose assumes is a tender message to her on a wax disc, he lets his real feelings out: “God damn you, you little bitch, why can’t you go back home for ever and let me be?” (193). The vehemence and profanity of the first half of the message seems undercut by what initially appears to be childish

pleading for her to go home. But to Pinkie, telling her to go home is tantamount to telling her to go to Hell. He has damned her to home.

Pinkie's bleak view of a promiseless world extends to his attitude towards children. Hearing a neighboring baby cry, he thinks of "the ugly birth" of children as "the rivet of another life pinning him down" (*Brighton* 233). To Pinkie, life is Hell and birth is damnation. Being in sin begins on day one; "innocence was a slobbering mouth, a toothless gum pulling at the teats; perhaps not even that; innocence was the ugly cry of birth" (154). Rose, hearing the child, responds with "a look of responsibility and maturity. 'Somebody ought to see what it wants,' she said" (233). Where Pinkie's reaction to adversity is to obliterate, Rose attempts to rise above what seems her lot in life. Pinkie's sense of autonomy and adulthood, independence and growth, is to be free of most connections. Rose, however, craves responsibility, much more a sign of adulthood than Pinkie's nihilism. She has an instinct towards life.

Rose contemplates the possibility that she could be pregnant and imagines "an army of friends for Pinkie. If They damned him and her, They'd have to deal with them, too" (*Brighton* 218). After Pinkie's death she becomes convinced, primarily through force of will it seems, that she is carrying his child. In spite of everything, including Pinkie's attempt to get her to commit suicide, Rose remains optimistic at the end that he loved her, that he's not damned, that their child will be born. Ruotolo suggests that "only Rose displays the courage and freedom to thrust herself beyond adversity into the future" (425). Part of that courage is in rejecting the prescribed conditions of her home, those related to her parents and their misery, and tenaciously holding on to an affiliation with Pinkie.

Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan identifies Rose as an early prototype of Greene's later more positive parental figures. With her "unconditional love for Pinkie and her willingness to sacrifice her life and soul for his daemonic child," she is hardly typical of Greene's other mothers, but there are some protagonists in Greene's work that strive to provide for and protect their children (25). For those characters, the struggle to watch over their children is made almost quixotic by forces outside their control. In many works, children are in danger or have even already died before the events in the stories take place. The chances of Rose being able to safely bring up a child in the Brighton that is described in the novel seem very slim. Greene further paints a pessimistic view of the future by closing the book with Rose confidently striding toward Frank's to retrieve the recording Pinkie made for her unaware of its real content, what Greene refers to as "the worst horror of all" (*Brighton* 269) and R.W.B. Lewis labels "as disagreeable as anything in modern fiction" (12).

In *Brighton Rock*, the view of both natural and surrogate family relationships is unremittingly bleak. A quarter of a century later, Greene published *The Honorary Consul* which still depicts birth families negatively but offers a more optimistic view of familial substitutes. In the novel Greene offers his most profound and extensive examination of the complexity of family dynamics and the mutability of parentage. In addition to featuring one of the most prominent examples of a recurrent Greene character type, the remote and irrelevant mother, the novel focuses a great deal of attention on the nature of fatherhood. Absent fathers, idealized and loathed, haunt the novel. Potential surrogate father figures abound, and paternal roles are made a matter of affiliation.

Dr. Eduardo Plarr, the protagonist of the novel, is the son of an Argentine mother and an English father. His father abandoned his family for a political crusade when Eduardo was young, and as an adult Eduardo has chosen to live near the Paraguayan border over which his father vanished. Plarr is engaged in a purely sexual affair with Clara, a very young ex-prostitute who is married to Charley Fortnum, the frequently drunk sixty year-old English honorary consul of the title. When Fortnum, mistaken for a more important diplomat, is kidnapped by revolutionaries led by one of Plarr's old friends and brother-in-arms of Plarr's father, the doctor is faced with one of Greene's trademark character-defining dilemmas. The kidnappers must follow through with their ultimatum – the release of political prisoners or Fortnum will be killed – or lose power and political clout, despite their growing awareness that Fortnum is a much less valuable bargaining chip than they assumed. If Fortnum is killed, Plarr's access to Clara, who is pregnant with his child, will be unfettered. If the demands are met, the cause of Plarr's father will be advanced. Complicating matters considerably is the growing bond between Eduardo and Charley, his patient during captivity, a bond that begins to resemble that of a father and son.

While Plarr finds himself inactively waiting for his father's return and developing an unexpected attachment to a surrogate father, his mother is very much present. After his father's departure, Plarr's mother took up residence in the south, in Buenos Aires. A once beautiful and alive woman who has retreated into triviality, Senora Plarr is a simple-minded sensualist, gossiping and gratifying her palate with rich deserts. Her son wonders if his father would even recognize her now (*Honorary* 169). She is superficially affectionate with Eduardo, but he feels it's all pretended

warmth, an affectation. "Had she ever felt any love for his father or himself, or had she just played the comedy of love," Eduardo wonders (170-1). Plarr grew to associate the expression "I love you" and the emotion itself with performance, comedy, because of the way "his mother had used the word when he was a child; it was like the threat of an armed robber, 'Put up your hands or else. . .'. Something was always asked in return: obedience, an apology, a kiss which one had no desire to give" (204). Paired with his father's emotional reserve, his mother's clumsy attempts at emotional manipulation drive Eduardo to be a very cold person, unable or unwilling to love.

Plarr's ties with his mother, his bond of filiation, have become a nuisance, an unwanted obligation. When Plarr sees his mother on their regular meetings, she prefers that they meet in public, not in her home. He gets the sense that she keeps petty guilty secrets from him. When they do meet, they talk at cross purposes and fail to connect with each other. These routine visits are "wasted time" during which he doesn't feel it worthwhile to share anything personal and she "complained of headaches and loneliness while she sat before a plate heaped up with *éclairs* in the best tea shop in Buenos Aires. She always implied that she had been deserted by her husband – because a husband's first duty was to his wife and child and he should have fled with them" (*Honorary* 65). Eduardo has more admiration for his father and doesn't doubt the legitimacy of his political affiliation over his familial filiation. "He was an idealist," he tells his mother in defense (170). But his mother revels in her perceived martyrdom, and Plarr has given up on her. She is irrelevant to him. His conscience won't let him abandon her completely, so he pays his visits, but "every

minute he lost before meeting his mother was pure gain" (168). She is a waste of his time, and Plarr "hadn't enough time available to waste any of it on the incurable" (65). Plarr holds out hope that his missing father is still alive, but his mother, though right in front of him, already seems dead, embalmed with sugar and cream: "When he bent to kiss her cheek he could smell the hot chocolate in her cup like a sweet breath from a tomb" (168). Senora Plarr is typical of mothers in Greene's work; she fails to be legitimately nurturing (though most of Greene's other fictional mothers don't even put up the charade that Senora Plarr does), she's physically and emotionally distant from her child's life, and she is ultimately of little positive importance or relevancy to the protagonist.

For the most part, fathers and father-figures factor more importantly than mothers in the lives of Greene's protagonists. *The Honorary Consul* gives examples of both positive and negative paternal influences, but in all cases, the father is physically absent. This novel, more than any other by Greene, is concerned with fathers: who they are, what they are, who and what they should be, and who and what they can be. Unsurprisingly in Greene, most of the fathers in the novel fail at being what they should. Just as the traditional maternal ideal is subverted by mothers who are *not* warm and nurturing and involved in their children's lives, in Greene's fiction the majority of fathers do not protect, provide for, or represent positive role models for their children. The poet/revolutionary Aquino in *The Honorary Consul* describes the first poem he wrote in a Paraguayan prison. "My poem had a refrain, 'I see my father only through the bars.' I was thinking, you see, of the pens in which they put children in bourgeois houses. In my poem the father went on following the child all

through his life – he was the schoolmaster, and then he was the priest, the police officer, the prison warder, and last he was General Stroessner himself” (147). In Aquino’s poem, fathers are abusive authority figures, threatening and emotionally distant. They are often physically distant as well, failing to provide for their children and hobbling their growth. As a result, protagonists often either reject their fathers, the very need for a father, or seek substitutes or surrogates.

In Charley Fortnum’s memories of his father, we see an example of a father destructively pushing a son. Charley is a kind soul, which is made abundantly clear by his selfless acts late in novel, but his father’s hostility, apathy and disappointment in him has created in Charley a host of weaknesses, primarily alcohol abuse. As he thinks of his wife being left alone if he’s killed by his captors, he cries only to recall his father’s voice. “Be a man, Charley, not a coward. You cry too easily. I can’t bear self-pity. You should be ashamed. Ashamed. Ashamed” (*Honorary* 152). Fortnum’s empathy, though, is a weakness only in the eyes of his father.

A photograph of this abusive father, “a man with a heavy moustache in riding kit hung above the bed like a substitute for the Queen” in Charley’s Consulate chamber (*Honorary* 61). That picture represents everything Charley feels he must live up to, but none of his own instinctive virtues. It is a symbol of certain traditions and ideals of filiation. Charley feels he must glorify England as an official representative of his nation and as the progeny of his hale and hearty English father. Fortnum immediately takes to Plarr during their first meeting, happy to “speak occasionally the native tongue – gets rusty from unuse – the tongue that Shakespeare spoke” (58). He says Argentines are “proud people but they have no sentiment. Not as we English

know it. No sense of Home. Soft slippers, the feet on the table, the friendly glass, the ever-open door" (56). But Charley's national pride conflicts with his resentment of his abusive father, a man whose very Englishness haunts Charley's home. His father's hunting prints, hanging throughout Charley's home, reappear throughout the novel, almost as an extension of his father's photograph, a motif of the presumed grandeur of the past, a bittersweet nostalgia. "One of his father's hunting prints hung on the wall [...] He looked at the picture with disgust and turned his face away – he had never killed anything in his life, not even a rat" (306).

Charley alternates between an impulse to reject his father and his influence and the desire to understand or empathize with the flawed man. Despite feelings of shame and repulsion associated with his father, Charley feels himself turning into him. "I'm like the old man," Charley says before recounting to Plarr how his father didn't even recognize him when he was drunk (63). He refers to alcohol as an "old family friend," and it is the primary legacy he has inherited from his hated father (82). Charley says about his awful father, he "didn't understand me, I thought, or care a nickel about me. I hated him. All the same I was bloody lonely when he died" (139). And this brings up another way in which fathers are frequently ineffective, by their absence.

Eduardo consciously considers his father's influence, just as Charley does. Plarr, because of his father, identifies himself primarily as an Englishman despite never having been to the country, his awareness of England acquired largely through his father's Victorian-era photography book and literature. He uses the English half of his national identity as an explanation for his resolve, his emotionlessness. Doctor

Plarr feels distanced from his countrymen in Argentina, their passions, their machismo that “had little to do with English courage or a stiff upper lip” (17). When Colonel Perez, considering Plarr a possible suspect, questions him about Fortnum’s disappearance, he says “‘I have to think of all the possibilities, doctor. Even a crime of passion is possible.’ ‘Passion?’ the doctor smiled. ‘I am an Englishman’” (109). The dispassionate, stiff-upper-lip quality he admiringly remembers in his father is an antidote to his mother’s phony emotionality. “Perhaps he had loved his father all the more because he had never used the word [love] or asked for anything [. . .] The English phrase “Old fellow” was the nearest that he ever came to an endearment” (204).

Throughout the novel, Eduardo Plarr has been in a sense inactively looking for his father, and it is in the seemingly pathetic Charley Fortnum, British like his father, that Plarr inadvertently finds the father-figure for whom he has been waiting. Returning to his home after discussing with a friend the plight of the abducted Fortnum, Plarr apostrophizes his father whom he’s not seen for decades. “Strangely the face he conjured up when he spoke was not his father’s but Charley Fortnum’s [. . .] When he tried to substitute Henry Plarr’s face for Charley Fortnum’s he found his father’s features had been almost eliminated by the years” (*Honorary* 199-200). When Plarr learns that his father has been dead for years, his concern shifts fully towards making sure Charley is freed. He visualizes Charley raising his son (actually Plarr’s biological child) in images drawn from his own childhood.

Charley would call the boy ‘old fellow’ and pat his cheek and turn over the pages of *London Panorama* before tucking him firmly in

bed. Doctor Plarr suddenly saw the boy sitting up in his bunk, as he had done, listening to the distant locking of doors, to the low voices downstairs, the stealthy footsteps. There was one night he remembered when he had crept for reassurance to his father's room, and he was looking down now at the bearded face of his father stretched on the coffin [the bed Charley's captors have provided him] – four days' stubble had begun to resemble a beard. (256-7)

Plarr's tender memories of his father are grafted onto Fortnum, and he can feel vicarious comfort in knowing that his own biological child will have a compassionate father like the one he had lost. Plarr has no real intentions of starting a family with Clara, and besides "Fortnum would make a better father for the child than he would – a child needed love" (190). Plarr easily imagines Fortnum raising the child with a tenderness that would have been foreign to him: "Charley would be a very kind father" (256).

The difference between the child's conception and its potential rearing gets tangled when Plarr thinks of the child's two grandfathers whom it will never know. This leads Plarr to think that he and Fortnum should have switched fathers themselves, as Fortnum's father was cold and unfeeling, just as Plarr considers himself, and Henry Plarr was a committed and passionate man like Charley Fortnum (*Honorary* 252). Eduardo looks for and expects a symmetry and inherited correspondence between father and son that is simply not there.

Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan makes the claim that in Greene's work fatherhood is "not a biological fact but a state of mind" (3). Her study, *Graham Greene's Childless*

Fathers, identifies the ways in which some of Greene's protagonists find themselves in parental roles once they take responsibility for others. She makes much of the idea of 'the priest as father' and generally views the term 'father' so that it encompasses a great deal. But by re-focusing the concept of 'father,' and indeed any kind of parent, to a more traditional family-centered perspective while retaining Erdinast-Vulcan's contention that the role is a state of mind, it becomes apparent that the preponderance of these faux-fathers points to a systematic replacement in Greene's fiction of biological family members with surrogates. Paternity and maternity become shiftable, mutable, and a world of potentiality opens up as to who can be considered a parent.

In the end of *The Honorary Consul*, there is a stand-off between the military and the rebels. Eduardo attempts to negotiate with the soldiers for the benefit of both Fortnum and the revolutionaries, but is mistaken for a kidnapper and is shot and killed. After Plarr's death Charley wants to name the child, if he's a boy, after his biological father. "You see I loved Eduardo in a way. He was young enough to be my son," he tells Clara (315). It's a gesture that conveys the humility and magnanimity of Charley Fortnum, but it is no guarantee that the child will be any more like Eduardo Plarr than if the Fortnums had never acknowledged to each other the truth of the child's conception. Eduardo Plarr is only going to be a kind of father to the child because Charley Fortnum *chooses* to let him be in memoriam. In this most intense treatment of the nature of familial bonds, even a biological father is only a father through a deliberate choice.

Brighton Rock and *The Honorary Consul* are typical of Greene's work in their presentation of the limitations and arbitrariness of birth families. Parents are

frequently revealed to be failures at essential duties such as protecting and nurturing. Rose Wilson's parents show a flagrant disregard for their daughter's welfare, more or less selling her to a boy about whom they know nothing. Charley Fortnum's father bullies his son. Parents also fail by their absence, disappeared or remote, with characters such as Eduardo Plarr's father abandoning his son at the age of fourteen, and his mother providing only superficial affection and transforming herself into a ridiculous figure irrelevant to her son's life. With their birth parents so unsuited to their roles, characters seek affiliation in surrogate families. In many cases poor choices are made, such as Pinkie becoming attached to Kite and Rose to Pinkie. Eduardo Plarr finds unexpected value in Charley Fortnum as a man to admire and regard as a father, but unfortunately too late for it to enrich his life beyond a few days. But Greene does seem to suggest that it is only through surrogate affiliation that his characters even stand a chance of enjoying a positive familial relationship. Maintaining ties to a birth family is stultifying, it restricts choice and freedom, and ultimately, much like Plarr's visits with his mother, it is a waste of time.

Chapter Two- The Domiciles of *A Gun for Sale* and *The Heart of the Matter*

Graham Greene's treatment of living spaces is no more congenial than his repudiation of the legitimacy of the family. In his works, homes do not adequately fulfill traditional functions of sanctuary and shelter. His characters' attempts to make a room or a home their own, extensions of their personality, often result in manifestations of their frailties and faults rather than declarations of their strengths and virtues. For those protagonists most akin to their creator, a practical sparseness is preferred. Homes for many characters are unpleasant reminders of their class status or origins and carry negative connotations. When characters idealize a nice home, it often turns out to be a cruel chimera or a mocking temporary substitute. And lastly, the idea of home as haven proves all too often illusory, as homes become venues for threats and a false sense of security.

These negative presentations of the domicile are particularly prominent in *A Gun for Sale* (1936) and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948). The two works are remarkably different in tone and plot, the first one a suspense thriller set in Metroland England between the wars and the second a somber drama of moral responsibility, some would say a tragedy, set in colonial Sierra Leone in the early forties. But between the two, Greene's recurrent motifs of the nature of the home are well represented. The novels show attempts to find the desired qualities a home promises – comfort, security, and pride – to be illusory.

In *A Gun for Sale*, streetwise struggling actress Anne Crowder is looking forward to settling down with her fiancé, staid and dependable police sergeant James

Mather, but she becomes entangled alternately as a hostage to and accomplice of James Raven, a hired killer who has been set up by a powerful industrialist and war profiteer. The improbable plot twists and melodrama mask an intriguing meditation on the quest for domestic comfort. Over the course of the book, Greene shows the false promise of a protective domicile and keeps the ideal home out of the grasp of both Raven and Anne.

Raven has never known home to be a comfort. In the beginning of the book, as he returns from his contracted killing in Germany, flush with his blood money, he's ground back into the dirt when he finds that his room "hadn't been seen to: there was still dirty water in the basin and the ewer was empty." "It's a pigsty in there," he tells the landlady. "You can't treat me like that" (15). Shortly after, he has to flee his flat when his landlady informs on him. Even his pigsty is taken away from him. From this point on, Raven is on the run, entirely homeless.

The teasing promise of a different life first strikes Raven as he waits in Dr. Yogel's run-down office, waiting for plastic surgery that will repair his instantly recognizable hare-lip, the signifier that identifies him to the police as a wanted man and to society as an outcast. The only magazine in the waiting room is an 18-month old *Good Housekeeping* which offers the tip that "Bare walls are very popular today, perhaps one picture to give the necessary point of colour" (*Gun* 26-7). This little detail is wonderfully ironic; the advice mocks Raven, who wouldn't be able to afford anything but a fashionably bare wall anyway. The classy asceticism advocated by the magazine article is meaningless to someone of Raven's socio-economic background. Bare walls to him are likely to signify nothing so much as a prison cell.

Raven's father's execution was followed shortly by his mother's suicide. Finding her gory corpse on the kitchen table is one of his earliest memories (*Gun* 101). The orphaned Raven grew up in an institution redolent of a prison. Assuming that he'll end up like his father, in prison, Raven seems to associate all of life with imprisonment (19). He ridicules Anne for her optimistic view of domesticity, giving a solid definition of his idea of home, a premise derived from his brutal life in the orphanage:

What do you think a home means? [...] You are wrong. You think it means a husband in work, a nice gas cooker and a double-bed, carpet slippers and cradles and the rest. That's not a home. A home's solitary confinement for a kid that's caught talking in the chapel and a birch for almost anything you do. Bread and water. A sergeant knocking you around if you try to lark a bit. That's a home. (121)

But as Raven spends more time with Anne, he begins to open up, finding for the first time in his life someone with whom he can talk candidly. What emerges is Raven's longing for the comforts of home. Anne and Raven, both searching for a peaceful and safe habitat, are ironically thrown together in increasingly abstracted simulacra of home.

The bulk of the novel can be demarcated by the series of false homes in which Anne and Raven find themselves. Even before they are on the run together, their established milieus are already identified as artifice. Raven's flat, as has been noted, offers no real security and its lack of upkeep destroys any sense of comfort. Anne's own flat seems divorced from her; in the one brief scene with her in her room Anne is

shown pacing it in an overcoat, ready to leave, and she can't differentiate between the telephone and the doorbell (*Gun* 20). Being an actress, Anne is used to being in mock homes on the stage, and her flat seems to belong to her no more than a set would. In fact, Anne and Raven's adventure together almost reads like a three-act play. In Act One, Raven leads her to a cheaply manufactured model home. In Act Two they are separated, and Raven squats temporarily in someone's garage, given an external glimpse of family life, while Anne finds herself in a dangerously deceptive rented room in a knocking shop. Act Three finds them in their longest residence together, in a shack in a railroad yard, the cold earth for carpet and rough sacks for furniture. Each sequence takes them further and further from goals that seem more and more absurd.

Raven and Anne meet at a train station when he, eager to get quickly out of town, attempts to finagle her ticket from her. After a struggle, he feels he must take her somewhere to kill her so she won't be able to identify him. He walks her to a new speculative housing development on the outskirts of town. "Bright-red bricks and tudor gables and half timbering, doors with stained glass, names like Restholme" decorate the houses on the new street, Shakespeare Avenue, all details adding up to a cutesy wonderland based on the nostalgia of national identity (*Gun* 44). He stops at one of the houses, a prefabricated "Cozyholme" named 'Sleepy Nuik,' and breaks through the "little doll's house lock" attached to the "cheap rotten wood" at the back door (45).

The houses are shams, cheap and ineffectual promises of peace, protection and pride. But Raven is weary from being chased, angry and baffled at being set-up by his employers who paid him with easily traceable counterfeit notes, and finds

himself surrendering to the pathetic power of suggestion in the marketing of the homes. As Anne, aware that she's in danger but keeping her cool, chats with him calmly and friendlily, Raven begins to let his defenses down. Taking in his surroundings, he says "I'm tired of living in hotels. I'd like to fix up this kitchen. I learned to be an electrician once. I'm educated." He said: "'Sleepy Nuik.'" It's a good name when you are tired" (46). There's an unexpected sentimentality and wistfulness in what he says, not previously suggested in his character. His acknowledged fatigue and the strangely deserted dainty new neighborhood lend a dreamlike quality to the scene and create a sense that Raven's subconscious is rising to the surface.

Anne manages to escape when a real estate agent comes in through the front door with a prospective buyer. With Raven hidden in the bathroom, Anne emerges to tell the agent that she's ready, equipped with some of Raven's counterfeit notes, to put the required ten pounds down to buy the house, having been sent by her husband. She brusquely escorts the agent off the premises to his office, leaving Raven alone in Sleepy Nuik (*Gun* 50-1). The whole experience opens Raven, however fleetingly, to a domestic fantasy. He's under no illusion that Anne could be his wife, growing even more suspicious of her when she claims his harelip doesn't bother her, but his usually sharp senses are dulled by both his fatigue and the façade of domestic comfort. Anne, on the other hand, controls the fantasy. The actress uses her wits and talents, taking on an impromptu role of a wife setting up house to elude Raven's desperation. The role she's playing is one that she's perhaps preparing for in real life, as Mather's wife-to-be.

Anne gets the opportunity to act again which leads her to another perversely false home. In one of the book's several contrived coincidences, Davis, the man who set up Raven with the counterfeit payment, is also a financial backer of the revue in which Anne has a part in the chorus. Davis's interest in theatricals extends just far enough to be interested in chorus girls, and Anne takes advantage of his dinner invitation to indulge her curiosity about what Raven had told her about Davis's involvement in the assassination in Germany. They go to a fancy restaurant, where Davis maintains a table: "This was his chosen home: the huge stuffy palace of food [. . .]" (*Gun* 57). The reference to the restaurant as Davis' home serves as prelude to the next extended sequence to take place in a simulated living space. After dinner Davis hires a taxi to take them to what he tells Anne is his place, but as they head up the stairs of the building a voice reminds him that he needs to pay before they go up. It's apparent that the house is maintained to rent out rooms for assignations and is little more than a bordello: "There was nothing to show the place was ever lived in: there was dust on the wardrobe mirror and the ewer beside the [wireless] loud speaker was dry" (62). Realizing what type of dwelling Davis has lured her to, Anne gets nervous and reckless, questioning him too bluntly and mentioning Raven. Davis fears she knows too much incriminating information, and the chapter ends with him apparently suffocating her with the bed pillow (65). The cramped little room, with space for little but the bed, becomes a nightmarish place, threatening and deadly.

While Anne's life is in danger, Raven remains on the run and takes temporary refuge in a stranger's open garage which "was obviously not used for a car, but only to house a pram, a child's playground and a few dusty dolls and bricks" (*Gun* 66).

Surrounded by the detritus of a surely happier and more comfortable childhood than his own, Raven hears two family radios through the garage wall. One is being restlessly tuned, a squelching chaos of music and speech, while the other radio plays a reading of Tennyson's *Maude*, a section that laments the dead and expresses an outsider's lonely anger (66-7). Raven is faced with an aural commentary on his position, the two radios soundtracking his psychological discomfort while the contents of the garage mock Raven with the refuse of a family life he's never known.

A complicated series of events eventually leads Raven to the house where Anne was attacked. Davis, ultimately a very squeamish villain, has bound and gagged her and propped her up in the fireplace of the little rented room (*Gun* 98). It's a rather absurd touch, but again potentially an ironic inversion of home comforts. The hearth, the cozy center of a home, becomes for Anne a vault. In the garage Raven had been surrounded by the dusty remains of a childhood, the lack of which haunts him through his life, while Anne had been buried in a symbol of what she longs for, the coziness of family life.

The most dismal false home and the final shared living space is an abandoned shed in the goods yard that Raven has found as shelter. He assures Anne, weak from near suffocation in the chimney, that "I got it all fixed up for myself early this morning. Why, there's even sacks, lots of sacks. It's going to be like home" (*Gun* 101). Raven's desperate desire for domestic comfort approaches the tragic. "He was like somebody describing with pride some place he lived in, that he'd bought with his own money or built with his own labour stone by stone" (102). Raven's pride mirrors his comments about fixing up Sleepy Nuik; both fantasies are delusional, almost

tragically so. “‘It *is* sort of – good in here,’ Raven said, ‘out of the way of the whole damned world of them. In the dark’” (117). Raven’s comfort in the shed is largely a result of its darkness and seclusion. The garage and the fireplace both subtly suggested a grave, but the shed really feels like a tomb, Raven seemingly taking solace and finding home in the promise of eternal rest.

Anne suggests they pass the time by telling each other stories, mentioning that “‘The three bears might be suitable’” (*Gun* 120). In a way, Anne has been like Goldilocks, trying out three different ideas of domestic comfort, but finding no ‘just right.’ The shed has come through for Raven though, and he grows increasingly close to Anne, finding for the first time someone he feels he can trust with all of his shame, guilt, and misery. All the while he is unaware that the officer in charge of the manhunt to bring him down is Anne’s fiancé. Raven, no longer keeping Anne against her will, lets her leave the shack to create a diversion that allows him to slip away. As Raven surrenders his tightly guarded sense of trust to Anne, she loses Mather’s. She’s apprehended and faces Mather, who coldly treats her like any other suspected criminal accomplice. He dismisses her factual account of her adventures as “a fairy tale,” a charge that harkens back to Anne’s three bears comment and further invites the reader to think of the allegorical nature of the preceding incidents (138). The three little *pigs* may have been as apt a reference for Anne to make, with its series of ineffective pretenses of home security. Without the security of Mather’s trust, Anne is further away than ever from her goal of domestic comfort. However, facts prove the truth of Anne’s story, and the book seems on track for a happy ending with Mather and Anne reconciled and on their way back home to London.

Brian Diemert has noted that Greene's early works, specifically those like *A Gun for Sale* that the author labeled 'Entertainments,' appear to have pleasant resolutions, with lovers brought together in the end, but that "the elements of a happy ending are provided in a context that renders them ironic" (131). In this case, an obvious damper on the happy ending is the death of Raven, ultimately just as much a protagonist as Anne, who is shot after exacting revenge on Davis and his industrialist boss. What Diemert doesn't mention, though, is that almost all of the ironic happy endings of the 'Entertainments' are also homecomings. Raven's death is described in terms of returning to a state of peace that preceded his unpleasant life, a kind of homecoming prefigured by his sense of comfort in the grave-like shed. "The only problem when you were once born was to get out of life more neatly and expeditiously than you had entered it," Greene writes. "Death came to him in the form of unbearable pain. It was as if he had to deliver this pain as a woman delivers a child, and he sobbed and moaned in the effort. At last it came out of him and he followed his only child into a vast desolation" (170). The description is a fascinating treatment of the common tomb-womb dichotomy.

Anne and Mather's homecoming is less abstract, of course, and it neatly bookends the characters' introduction in the beginning. The couple is first seen riding together on the train after a date and in a charmingly awkward manner sketching their plans for the future. Anne doesn't want the day to end, and the closer the train gets to her stop, to her home, "the more miserable she became" (*Gun* 10). To Anne, flush with love, home at this point means separation from Mather. At the end of the book, however, the two are riding back into London, towards marriage, and the final words

of the book are hers as she says “with a sigh of unshadowed happiness, ‘we’re home’” (186). There are enough warning signs, however, to indicate that Anne’s unshadowed happiness is not built on a very solid foundation. Their reconciliation begins with Mather suggesting they could get married now, though he doubts she wants to anymore. Anne, eager to put behind her all of the disillusionment about life she’s accumulated through her acquaintance with Raven, can’t wait to speed towards her perfect little domestic future: “Only a shade of disquiet remained, a fading spectre of Raven” (184). Though she was touched by him and feels partly responsible for his death, Raven is briskly forgotten. The gulf between Mather and Anne, already suggested by his readiness to distrust her and the contrast between his bland directness and her *joie de vivre*, is further highlighted in Mather’s love of the countryside and villages that are glimpsed out the window of the speeding train while Anne is heartened to see urban London emerging before them (185). The reader gets a clear impression that these two people don’t really know each other very well and are not likely to be very compatible mates. But Anne doesn’t seem to see past her nesting instinct, a maternal nature suggested by her concern that babies can’t wear gasmasks in case of an attack (99) and noticed by Raven when he wishes she could look after his cat (118). As the train pulls into London she thinks “this is safe, and wiping the glass free from steam, she pressed her face against the pane and happily and avidly and tenderly watched, like a child whose mother has died watches the family *she* must rear without being aware at all that the responsibility is too great” (185). She’s not ready for the ‘safe’ home she’s approaching with Mather. By rejecting the knowledge of the deceptive danger of home her experiences with Raven

and the three false homes have illustrated for her, Anne is not preparing herself for the potential corruption of her idealization of domesticity.

In *A Gun for Sale*, Greene unremittingly exposes the ideal of a comfortable, safe home as an idyllic but treacherous fantasy. Raven's experiences of home as a prison should have protected him against this fantasy, but even he is susceptible to it. Anne Crowder has failed to learn the lesson of her fairy tale adventures: the third bed is not just right, the third house is not made of bricks. Judging from their marked differences, Anne's life with Mather is not likely to continue happily ever after.

It's not difficult to imagine Anne and Mather's relationship in fifteen or so years coming to resemble Henry and Louise Scobie's in *The Heart of the Matter*. In Scobie it's possible to see a once eager and hardworking police officer like Mather ground down by the corruption and compromise of a long tenure in a colonial outpost. In Louise, there is the possible vestige of a lively young woman like Anne who has been transformed by personal tragedy and a husband who doesn't share her pursuits into a pitiable, at times grotesque, figure. The Scobies, an English couple living in Africa, have drifted apart, especially after the death of their only child several years before the book begins. There seems little love in the marriage, only habit and a generalized sense of concern for each other.

The disconnect between Henry and Louise is clearly shown through an inventory of their house, which almost schizophrenically manifests their disparate personalities. The majority of the house is Louise's province, veritably stuffed with possessions. In the bedroom the

dressing-table was crammed with pots and photographs – himself [Henry] as a young man in the curiously dated officer's uniform of the last war: the Chief Justice's wife, whom for the moment she counted as her friend: their only child, who had died at school in England three years ago – a little pious nine-year-old girl's face in the white muslin of first communion: innumerable photographs of Louise herself, in groups with nursing sisters, with the Admiral's party at Medley Beach, on a Yorkshire moor with Teddy Bromley and his wife. It was as if she were accumulating evidence that she had friends like other people. (13)

In addition, she has imprinted her personality on the rest of the house: "In the living-room there was a bookcase full of her books, rugs on the floor, a native mask from Nigeria, more photographs" (13). There is little particularly unusual about Louise's decorating, but the emphasis placed on it is rare for Greene. The text conveys the desperation in Louise's need to show her personal and cultural affiliations in her domain. Rather than proving her intellect and friendships (of the moment), the display makes her look weak, an impression compounded by her frail physical condition. The reader quickly realizes that Louise doesn't belong in Freetown. Her cultural pursuits, particularly her interest in poetry, make her a figure of ridicule to most in the Scobies' competitive social circle of fellow colonials. In addition to the cultural environment, the natural environment of the place is inhospitable so that her "books had to be wiped daily to remove the damp, and she had not succeeded very well in disguising with flowery curtains the food safe which stood with each foot in a little enamel basin

of water to keep the ants out" (13). Louise has tried to make her home comfortable and an expression of her personality, but the attempt has largely been a failure.

Louise's presence has so taken over the house that that when Scobie comes home he feels like an infiltrator, "like a spy in foreign territory, and indeed he was in foreign territory now" (*Heart* 13). One evening he comes into the house via the back door while Louise is chastely entertaining Wilson, a new Englishman in town. Scobie, not wanting to interrupt, doesn't turn his flashlight on and ends up gashing his hand on a splinter in the door (29). Not only does he not feel particularly at home in his home, it is an actual physical danger to him as well, the very opposite of the security a home typically represents. Wilson shares many cultural interests with Louise and soon falls in love with her, and though she rejects him, there is a sense that he belongs in that house, adorned with Louise's character, much more than does Scobie.

If the majority of the house features Louise's stamp, one room is resolutely Scobie's, his private space and sanctuary: the bathroom.

Louise's ingenuity had been able to do little with this room: the bath of scratched enamel with a single tap which always ceased to work before the end of the dry season: the tin bucket under the lavatory seat emptied once a day: the fixed basin with another useless tap: bare floorboards: drab green black-out curtains. The only improvements Louise had been able to impose were the cork mat by the bath, the bright white medicine cabinet. (*Heart* 29-30)

This rundown, dysfunctional room would likely strike most people as a place to avoid, but Scobie finds here "the sense of home" (29). "It was like a relic of his youth

carried from house to house. It had been like this years ago in his first house before he married. This was the room in which he had always been alone" (30). Scobie prizes the solitude of his sanctuary in contrast to Louise who needs to populate her environment with the companionship of the faces and places of memory.

Scobie's real home is his office in the seedy police station. Scobie's asceticism seems Greene's definitive representation of the disavowal of domestic comfort, and as such deserves to be quoted at length:

Scobie climbed the great steps and turned to his right along the shaded outside corridor to his room: a table, two kitchen chairs, a cupboard, some rusty handcuffs hanging on a nail like an old hat, a filing cabinet: to a stranger it would have appeared a bare uncomfortable room but to Scobie it was home. Other men slowly build up the sense of home by accumulation – a new picture, more and more books, an odd-shaped paper-weight, the ash-tray bought for a forgotten reason on a forgotten holiday; Scobie built his home by a process of reduction. He had started out fifteen years ago with far more than this. There had been a photograph of his wife, bright leather cushions from the market, an easy-chair, a large coloured map of the port on the wall. The map had been borrowed by younger men: it was of no more use to him; he carried the whole coastline of the colony in his mind's eye [...] As for the cushions and the easy-chair, he had soon discovered how comfort of that kind down in the airless room meant heat. Where the body was touched or enclosed it sweated. Last of all his wife's photograph had

been made unnecessary by her presence. (*Heart* 7)

In Scobie's perception of home, personal touches become little more than impractical detritus. Maps are made redundant by experience and memory, photographs by the real thing. Furniture meant to be luxurious turns into discomfort. Scobie's sense of domestic ease is a perversion of the expected, a renunciation of tradition.

When Louise plans to leave Freetown where she's been made an object of ridicule to set up a retirement home in South Africa, Scobie recoils. "He thought of a home, a permanent home: the gay artistic curtains, the bookshelves full of Louise's books, a pretty tiled bathroom, no office anywhere – a home for two until death, no change any more before eternity settled in" (32). To Scobie, the trappings of a well-appointed home represent the worst kind of stasis. Comfort dulls. There are already signs that their house in Freetown is a grave. Rats run about in it; one of them perched on the bath tub is described as "like a cat on a gravestone" (29). Vultures clatter on their tin roof as if waiting for the heart of the house to fully stop beating (16). But Scobie lets Louise have her way, her comfort seemingly his primary concern, and scrapes together the money to send her to South Africa.

Despite the unpleasantness of the Scobie house (which, in addition to the previously mentioned drawbacks is built on a swamp and lies adjacent to a noisy trucking dock station), it seems a palace compared to the other abodes described in the novel. At no point in *The Heart of the Matter* does Greene present a home as anything but a compromise. No living space succeeds at providing security, comfort, or an opportunity for proud self-expression. The closest the novel comes to presenting satisfaction in a home is the comic glee of Harris, a cable censor, who has been

rooming with Wilson in a hotel and becomes unjustifiably elated at the prospect of the new home they are going to share. Their hotel room had been notable primarily because it allowed them to stage cockroach squashing tournaments. Harris tells Scobie "I've got a house at last [. . .] At least it's not a house: it's one of the huts up your way. But it's a home [. . .] I'll have to share it, but it's a home" (127). Harris beams with pride when he shows the place to Wilson for the first time, the little hut split with curtains into three rooms. To Harris, desperately eager to please and be pleased, the only drawback is that there aren't any cockroaches for sport or company, "but you couldn't have everything" (145). Pride in a home exists in this book only for the purpose of ridicule.

As a colonial police officer, one of Scobie's frequent duties is to deal with the locals' property disputes brought about because

a lodger would take a one-roomed shack for five shillings a week, stick up a few thin partitions and let the so-called rooms for half a crown apiece – a horizontal tenement. Each room would be furnished with a box containing a little china and glass "dashed" by an employer or stolen from an employer, a bed made out of old packing-cases, and a hurricane-lamp. The glass of these lamps did not long survive, and the little open flames were always ready to catch some spilt paraffin; they licked at the plywood partitions and caused innumerable fires. Sometimes a landlady would thrust her way into her house and pull down the dangerous partitions, sometimes she would steal the lamps of her tenants, and the ripple of her theft would go out in

widening rings of lamp thefts [. . .] (10)

These living conditions are no more hospitable than Raven's homey little railway yard shack in *A Gun for Sale*. The cubicled shacks offer only indignity, unease, and very real danger, the opposite of a home's expected qualities. Of course poverty is the primary cause of these living conditions, but Greene's emphasis in the early pages of this novel on the unpleasantness of characters' homes is important. Whether it's the native Africans trying to generate a profit from their shelter or Louise or Harris pridefully displaying their homes as showcases, attempts at improvement or betterment through manipulation of a domicile are invariably failures.

Only Scobie seems justified in his philosophy of home, with his ascetic rejection of comfort, artifice, and ego in his surroundings. Scobie is briefly arrested by the possibility of having found a kindred spirit in the ship-wreck survivor and nineteen year-old widow Helen Rolt when he sees that in her room "there was nothing personal anywhere: no photographs, no books, no trinkets of any kind" before he realizes that someone in her position wouldn't likely have any of that stuff anyway (*Heart* 118). It is apparent that his attraction to her is largely motivated by his most noble trait, a profound sense of pity, but he pities many people, and seeing her in austere surroundings may provoke an additional interest.

Scobie's relationship with Helen while Louise is in South Africa and his resulting moral dilemma is the crux of the story. A crisis is reached when Louise comes back, and Scobie is compelled to make a choice between two women who have become dependent on him. Things would perhaps be easy if Helen were to simply return to England; her presence in Sierra Leone is due exclusively to being

unintentionally stranded there. But she has no intention of going to England. Helen's preferred idea of home is the Spartan hut in Freetown where she says, "I can shut the door and not answer when they knock" (137). If she were to return to England, she would face wartime conscription, "flung into some grim dormitory, to find her own way. After the Atlantic, the A.T.S. or the W.A.A.F., [. . .] the cook-house and the potato peelings, [. . .] and the men waiting on the Common outside the camp, among the gorse bushes . . . compared to that surely even the Atlantic [ie. the grave of her husband] was more a home" (138). Helen's life in England would be little better than Raven's life in the orphanage.

The idea of home becomes an adversary, an enemy, to both Scobie and Helen when he announces that Louise is "on the way home. [. . . Helen's] lips repeated bitterly the word 'home' as if that were the only word she had grasped. He said quickly [. . .] 'Her home. It will never be my home again'" (*Heart* 172). It can certainly be argued that it never was his home, but a detail from the novel's denouement suggests otherwise.

Scobie is unable to determine which woman needs him more (his motive in sustaining either relationship), and determines that the only thing to do is kill himself, making the death seem the result of a health condition so that neither woman is burdened with guilt. A few days after he dies, Louise and Wilson are alone in her house, Louise in a state of curious equanimity that Scobie "seems so very very gone":

It was as if he had left nothing behind him in the house but a few suits of clothes and a Mende grammar: at the police station a drawer full of odds and ends and a pair of rusting handcuffs. And yet the

house was no different: the shelves were as full of books; it seemed to Wilson that it must have been *her* house, not his. Was it just imagination then that made their voices ring a little hollowly, as though the house were empty? (238)

As Wilson tells Louise he loves her, “they sat in the hollow room, holding hands, listening to the vultures clambering on the iron roof” (238). Despite appearances being unchanged in the house, Scobie having made little physical mark on it, it ultimately was his house as well as Louise’s. What makes the house seem hollow, though it is no less densely filled with adornment, is the absence of Scobie’s presence, his heart, soul, the intangible essence that creates a sense of comfort and security in a house through personal communion that no physical aspect of the house can replace.

In Graham Greene’s fictions, the most consistent trait of the domicile is deceptiveness. Characters expect certain qualities from their homes, but expectations are dashed, promises, cruel illusions. Between these two novels, *A Gun for Sale* and *The Heart of the Matter*, examples of most of the variations on the inadequacy of the home prevalent throughout Greene’s writing are represented. When Raven, Louise Scobie, or Harris display any pride in their homes, they are exposed as sad and foolish for doing so. For Raven and Helen Rolt, ‘home’ represents imprisonment and terror. Surface charm and comfort in a house invariably mask significant flaws, whether it be the flimsy Sleepy Nuik or Louise’s infested and mouldy home venerated by culture and memories. All homes save the grave are temporary and violable.

Chapter Three – The Homelands of

England Made Me, The Quiet American, and The Human Factor

Over the long course of his career, Greene frequently placed his English characters outside England, and in doing so he questioned national identity and the necessity of it from less complacent, more urgent perspectives. Of his twenty-six novels, only eight are set largely or exclusively in England. Of the eighteen set primarily abroad, only two – *The Power and the Glory* (1940) and *Monsignor Quixote* (1982) – do not feature Englishmen as major characters. *England Made Me*, *The Quiet American* and *The Human Factor*, novels published about twenty years apart and representing respectively, the early, middle and late stages of Greene's career, show a questioning or rejection of national ties which is not significantly altered by the varied milieus and socio-historical conditions that inform the texts. Each novel deals with different aspects of the lure of national identity, but taken together they make plain Greene's attitude towards it.

Ties to homeland are tenuous, and nations are hostile to individuals. Very rarely do the countries to which Greene's characters belong successfully provide them with a sense of pride, heritage, or rootedness. When Greene's characters seek these qualities out, they either are made to look foolish for doing so or are sorely disappointed by the results of their quests. When national identity is questioned, it is no surprise that patriotism is viewed critically as well. Patriots are portrayed as zealots, loyal to an unworthy abstraction. Many of Greene's characters operate as exiles. They are nationless, sometimes from circumstance, sometimes from choice,

but their preponderance suggests that the very idea of belonging to a country is a false or disappearing distinction.

In *England Made Me*, diligent and ambitious Kate Farrant gets her happy-go-lucky twin Anthony a job working for her boss and lover, Erik Krogh, a successful Swedish industrialist. Also on the scene is the hapless English journalist, Minty, who latches on to fellow countryman Anthony in Stockholm. The plot involves shady business practices, and when Anthony sides with a union activist rather than Krogh, it leads to Anthony's murder. But the storyline is secondary and relatively minimalist by Greene's standards; more interesting is the interaction of character and setting, how three English citizens exist as exiles in the sleek modern Stockholm of the early thirties. To what extent England made these three characters is worth considering.

For Kate, Anthony, and Minty the importance and meaning of Englishness is different. Despite their different outlooks, they share a cultural heritage. They are of the first post-Victorian generation, and the English character that emerged from the Victorian era was identified by the cronyism of the public schools, the stoic stiff upper lip, and an uncritical loyalty to monarchy and the state. The influence of elements such as these causes confusion for the Farrant twins and Minty. Maria Couto points out that even though "set in Stockholm the novel is really about England in relation to the new world: Dickens, Scott, Shakespeare, a stiff upper lip, and implicit faith in human nature as insufficient defenses with which to face a postwar world" (94).

Kate Farrant, living an international existence in a modern country, rejects the land of her father. Thinking of him as a "little bit of England," she wonders "Why did

I dislike him so?" (*England* 63). In answer she conjures up a litany of traits that make her father an Englishman and repellent to her: "He had a profound trust in human nature. But be chaste, prudent, pay your debts, and do not love immoderately" (63). When Kate remarks of the situation in Stockholm, "There are no foreigners in a business like Krogh's; we're internationalists there, we haven't a country," she's describing a state of affairs that would, within a couple of decades, become almost the norm across the Western world (11). Kate is ahead of the curve, and part of her success comes from rejecting certain values she associates with her rejected fatherland. A profound trust in human nature is naïve in the calculating business world, and Kate is far from chaste, using her sexuality to establish a partnership with Krogh, a man she doesn't love but who represents her best opportunity for power and a kind of independence. Kate identifies herself as internationalist, which is nearly synonymous with being an individualist. Both identifications are disavowals of filial ties.

Kate's rejection of her country is seemingly countered by an indication of her brother Anthony's patriotism. The novel's title is an ironic echo of Rupert Brooke's well-known patriotic poem "The Soldier," which is alluded to a few times in the book. The poem comes to Anthony's mind like a sentimental scrap of popular culture when, feeling lost and alone in Sweden, he seeks shelter from the rain in a restaurant and feels kinship with a waiter with whom he manages to meagerly communicate in English. "The pale lamps burning in the daylight dusk, the waiter who had served him, his chair, his table, 'some corner of a foreign field that is for ever England,' he dwelt on them with a lush sad sentiment. His manner momentarily had a touch of nobility,

of an exile's dignity [. . .]" (74). In Brooke's poem, of course, the 'corner of a foreign field' is the spot where the soldier's body is buried, the 100% Made-in-England corpse enriching the inferior soil. Here the phrase is extrapolated to imply the vaguer, but still patriotic, notion of the English presence abroad. To Anthony it implies the comfort of finding nothing entirely foreign. "Although he had traveled half-way around the world in the last ten years he had never been far away from England. He had always worked in places where others had established the English corner before he came" (75).

Anthony's sense of nobility and dignity are hardly earned. He's only taking a break before a job interview that his sister has set-up for him; the effect is bathos. His connection with England in this "English corner" is vague at best; no real cultural presence identifies it. It exists merely as a sense of ease, an underwhelming connection that could be predicated on any slight comfort. This sense is amplified when he desires "to establish his corner of England a little more securely by talking about the weather" with the waiter. "He wanted to hang his corner with the conversational equivalents of Annette's photograph, the [cheesecake] pictures from *Film Fun* [. . .]" (*England* 74). Annette is a favored prostitute back in dear old Blighty, and in checking off the types of English corners he's used to encountering, Anthony considers that "even in the brothels of the East English was spoken" (75). The sequence is a lampoon of patriotism, connecting pride in national identity with nothing more noble or philosophical than base creature comforts and feeble affiliation.

Anthony's real identity is as a transient through the world, alternately sentimental about England and indifferent to it. In the beginning of the novel,

Anthony meets Kate at a little restaurant in a London train station, and he's described as being "at home in this swirl of smoke and steam, at the marble-topped tables, chaffing in front of the beer handles, he was at home in the one-night hotels, in the basement offices, among the small crooked flotations of transient businesses" (*England* 12). The image is of a concrete place vaporized, set in constant nebulous motion; even the 'marble-topped tables,' when juxtaposed with a 'swirl of smoke and steam,' seem intangible, the swirling patterns of the marble becoming like ripples, scum or smoke on water. There is flow, the one-night hotels comforting in their temporariness. And of course, the promise of escape even from these impermanent lodgings is ever present as the trains go by.

Later in the novel, Anthony admits the shakiness of his national identity. He says, "I'm not young enough and not old enough: not young enough to believe in a juster world, not old enough for the country, the king, the trenches to mean anything at all" (*England* 180). He uses his persona as an Englishman as just an affectation, a variable part of his wardrobe. He wears a school tie from Harrow, which he never attended, knowing an association with such an institution would open doors for him. But it brings him into contact with Minty, a genuine Harrovian, who though very unthreatening, could dislodge Anthony's façade through his persistent friendly questioning. Anthony wants to be unfettered from any attachments not of his own choosing, national bonds included, and Minty is an ever-present reminder of such bonds.

Greene abstracts Minty into all of England as he looks at Anthony through bars that may be a figurative prison. "England was again outside, keeping a watch on

him through the iron patterning of the gateway, one bloodshot eye on each side of a tender branching iron plant" (77). If any character can legitimately be said to have been made by England, it is Minty. The distinction is hardly flattering, though, and it's not incidental that Minty is framed as if incarcerated by his national identity in a natural jail. For all of Minty's pride in the national identity Harrow provides him – and it seems the only meaningful connection he has – his experiences at school were, in part, harrowing. Always a kind of outsider, a scholarship student, "He hated and he loved. The school and he were joined by a painful reluctant coition, a passionless coition that leaves everything to regret, nothing to love, everything to hate, but cannot destroy the idea; we are one body" (83). His connection with Harrow (and it could be said, by extension, England) is described in terms of a filiation, a chance blood relationship. Minty so desperately clinging to it is a sordid sight. When he tries to organize a Harrow reunion, an "evening in the year when one's not a foreigner," the Minister of the British Legation in Stockholm chastises his unweaned neediness: "Damn it all, Minty, this isn't the Sahara. We're only thirty-six hours from Piccadilly. You don't have to be homesick" (87). Minty's misery seems in part self-perpetuated because he doesn't allow himself to sever that filial tie and find a more fulfilling affiliation.

Anthony doesn't have Minty's problems in part because he has granted himself the freedom that comes from being unbound from national identity. To create his "English corner" in his Stockholm hotel room, all Anthony needs to do is slap "a photograph of Claudette Colbert in a Roman bath" and another of "girls playing strip poker" on his walls with the temporary adhesive of soap, and voila, he begins to

“make the room like home” (*England* 61). The phrase ‘a home from home’ becomes almost a mocking refrain in the book. Kate is unable to make ‘a home from home’ because of her ultimate dislike of the cultural ephemera of England that delight her brother: “she couldn’t build up his London inside the glass walls of Krogh’s as a seaside landlady can construct Birmingham with the beads, the mantel ornaments, the brass-work in the fender. She wouldn’t if she could” (138).

The very end of the novel has Minty reflecting on England, missing it and itemizing the pale substitution he’s accumulated in his flat, culminating with a “spider withering under the glass, a home from home” (*England* 207). Like that spider, Minty is trapped in the sleek glass international/nationless world that affords no substitute for the country ties he feels he so badly needs. But Minty has trapped that spider, and he has in a sense trapped himself. By choosing to make his national identity so important to him, Minty makes himself miserable and unfulfilled. In Greene’s work, nationality is an anchor, not a root; it prevents growth and movement; it causes characters like Minty to wither away.

Twenty years after *England Made Me*, Greene created another English journalist abroad, Thomas Fowler in *The Quiet American*. Fowler is almost the complete opposite of Minty, though. He thrives on being away from England. He has been covering the war of independence in French Indochina and taken a mistress, the much younger Phuong, whom he is pleased to be unable to marry because his wife back in England won’t give him a divorce. Fowler enjoys having few responsibilities outside his job. He befriends the naively idealistic American Alden Pyle, but eventually helps set up Pyle’s death when the young man both proves to be an agent

who orchestrates violent acts that serve as anti-Communist propaganda and attempts to be Phuong's white knight by offering her marriage, which Fowler can't. Fowler's complacency is shaken, and he's roused to action, making this the first of several books Greene wrote about the awakening of commitment in a jaded man.

Fowler's act of commitment is morally dubious in that it's murder undertaken partially for selfish reasons (to keep Phuong), but also for the good of the people, not the nation, of Vietnam. This commitment is a major alteration in Fowler's credo, to not be involved, a willful disassociation with any ties, filial or affiliative. He proclaims, "The human condition being what it was, let them fight, let them love, let them murder, I would not be involved. My fellow journalists called themselves correspondents; I preferred the title of reporter. I wrote what I saw. I took no action – even an opinion is a kind of action" (*Quiet* 28). Fowler sees Pyle's involvement as pernicious in both theory and practice, and he decides for the first time to be a subjective correspondent as opposed to an objective reporter. He realizes his affiliation with humanity, which is placed in stark contrast to the goals of countries, or nations.

Fowler was once as English as Minty, attached by a filial bond, the only one he knew. He describes how that changed:

When I first came [to Vietnam] I counted the days of my assignment, like a schoolboy marking off the days of term; I thought I was tied to what was left of a Bloomsbury square and the 73 bus passing the portico of Euston and springtime in the local in Torrington Place. Now the bulbs would be out in the square garden, and I didn't care a

damn. I wanted a day punctuated by those quick reports that might be car-exhausts or might be grenades, I wanted to keep the sight of those silk-trousered figures moving with grace through the humid noon, I wanted Phuong, and my home had shifted its ground eight thousand miles. (*Quiet* 25)

When he gets re-assigned to England, he tells his friend Pietri "I'm going back." 'Home?' Pietri asked [. . .] 'No. England'" Fowler replies (68). By denying England as his home, Fowler quietly betrays a filial bond. Home, Saigon, becomes an affiliation for him, but until he decides to act on its behalf, he remains a kind of tourist, a voyeur certainly, attracted by the excitement of the place, the sex and violence he sees in it. Beyond Vietnam's immediate thrills, though, is a grace and beauty, the land's "real background that held you as a smell does: the gold of the rice-fields under a flat late sun: the fishers' fragile cranes hovering over the fields like mosquitoes" etc. (25). It is this world that Fowler acts to preserve. His view of nations, of the Empires of the West, is that they are ultimately temporary, and that "in five hundred years there may be no New York or London, but they'll be growing paddy in these fields" (95). Fowler not only rejects England as his home, but also the international hegemony of Western culture in general.

The Quiet American is remarkable for how well it works as both allegory and realistic novel. Fowler can be seen at first to represent European colonialism, having been lured by the exoticism of Vietnam (embodied by Phuong) and selfishly exploiting it. Pyle even more readily suggests American market colonialism, exporting ideology and culture to ensure international supremacy. He wants to

Westernize Phuong by bringing her back to the U.S. with him, whereas Fowler just wants her as an unaltered exotic possession. What complicates this allegory, though, is that Fowler doesn't seem like a colonial. It's not that he's "gone native" like Conrad's Kurtz, but that by rejecting his ties to England, he has in a sense ceased to represent colonialism in the novel. The book is to a large degree about the end of colonialism, its death throes.

During much of Greene's career, the British Empire was in afterglow. Many of the traditions and icons of British and English culture existed as myths, most clearly exposed as such through the rose-tinted perceptions of foreigners. Though Fowler has rejected England and sees it destined to disappear, his Vietnamese mistress Phuong buys into the cult of at least one aspect of it. She "had only the vaguest knowledge of European geography, though about Princess Margaret of course she knew more than" Fowler (*Quiet* 12). Even as Fowler and his American rival Pyle debate which of them should 'have' her, Phuong flips through the pages of a picture book of the Queen's life (132-3).

Phuong's interest in the West is not much different than Fowler's initial interest in Vietnam; they are both foreign spectacles, enticing in their difference. Pyle is motivated less by aesthetics than by ideology, though. He's under the spell of York Harding, Greene's composite of right-wing American academics of the fifties, who advocates U.S. interventionism to spread Democracy in books like *The Role of the West* and *The Advance of Red China* (*Quiet* 28). Harding's suggestion is to use a Third Force, supported by U.S. dollars, that will drive a wedge between Communism and European colonialism and gain the popular support of the people. When Pyle

mentions this Third Force, his expression takes on a “fanatic gleam, the quick response to a phrase, the magic sound of figures” (25). Pyle funds a revolutionary who sets off a bomb in a crowded city square; the destruction is attributed to the Communists. When Fowler accuses Pyle of his complicity in murder, he says “You’ve got the Third Force and National Democracy all over your right shoe” [Pyle has stepped in blood while surveying the damage] (162). Later, Pyle has the audacity to say that the casualties “died for democracy” (179). The statement is an absurdity, and would be even if the innocent victims had been aware of their role in the political maneuver. By making the statement, Pyle shows that his allegiance to an idea, one irrevocably associated with his country, takes precedence over life itself. Pyle as a figurative and literal representation of the U.S. illustrates how nations act destructively towards individuals.

The Human Factor is Greene’s novel that most explicitly details the threat an individual’s country poses to him. In it MI6 agent Maurice Castle is a rare Greene protagonist, a family man with a great interest in domestic comfort and security. He also exhibits a nostalgic cultural interest in England that is not common for Greene’s principal characters. What pulls him into Greene’s typical orbit is that he’s disloyal. He has been a double agent, leaking information to the Soviet Union. However, his motives are revealed as much more than mercenary. Castle had once been stationed in South Africa where he fell in love with Sarah, breaking anti-miscegenation laws. A mutual friend and communist helped Sarah escape imprisonment for her illegal relationship. Castle, Sarah and her son (adopted in infancy by Castle when he married Sarah) escaped the draconian restrictions of apartheid and moved to Castle’s

hometown in England. His traitorous acts in the secret service are done out of gratitude for their communist friend. When he's found out, Castle is forced to flee to Moscow for his safety, but it is *unsafe* for Sarah to leave England, so they are indefinitely separated from each other. Sarah and their son Sam are virtually alone in England after having had to flee their original country, South Africa. Castle is alone in Moscow, having had to flee England, his birth country and the one he had felt secure in after the ordeal in South Africa. Nations are placed in opposition to individuals in this novel, and individuals lose.

Castle's return to England with Sarah and Sam in tow was a return specifically to his hometown, Berkhamsted (Greene's own hometown). The place draws him to it through a combination of the comfort of childhood memories and its redolence of England's past glory:

In a bizarre profession anything which belongs to an everyday routine gains great value – perhaps that was one reason why, when he came back from South Africa, he chose to return to his birthplace: to the canal under the weeping willows, to the school and the ruins of a once famous castle which had withstood a siege by Prince John of France and of which, so the story went, Chaucer had been a clerk of works. . .

(*Human* 12)

Castle's visualizes England as still retaining traces of the medieval past, Chaucer and the Hundred Years war, and chivalry, but that is not the England others in the novel see or in which Castle really lives. Berkhamsted itself now carries little of its former traces of Old England; the castle has become nothing more than "a few grass mounds

and some yards of flint wall" (12). Any sense of national pride or connection to England in the novel is couched purely in terms of nostalgia and ancient history.

Castle's romanticized vision of England is most fully symbolized by a fancy of youth, a protective dragon living on the commons. In his childhood imagination, the dragon intimidated the bullies that made his school life miserable (*Human* 60). Castle's idea of England and the dragon are both myths, though. Wm. Thomas Hill considers Castle's dragon as part of his "cultural and psychic dwelling," an emblem of Castle's childhood that isn't a part of Sam's culture (127). Sam has his equivalent to the dragon in the fantasy of the James Bond-like spy, protecting England from foreign threats, and no more realistic, as Castle well knows, than the legendary creatures of his own youth. As Castle puts it, "He talks about spies like children talked about fairies in my day" (63). Castle has transferred some of his faith in the dragon to the government, specifically thinking of "his cousin at the Treasury, as though he were an amulet that could protect him, a lucky rabbit's foot" (14). But Castle's faith in a connection with another branch of the government is no more helpful to him than the other myths. The dragon and all it might represent to Castle ultimately offers him no real protection, just as the Berkhamsted castle is no longer even remotely a barricade, and the modern, international, world pulls him away from his home, family, domicile, and England itself.

In a detail reminiscent of Phuong's interest in British royalty, Greene offers the suggestion that it's foreigners, with a mythologized vision of England, that do the most to maintain English tradition. The head of the secret service, Sir John Hargreaves, admits during the hunting weekend he hosts that he "never used to shoot

in Africa, except with a camera, but my [American] wife likes all the old English customs" (*Human* 27). *The Human Factor* is awash with suggestions that England is no more, that its unique cultural traits are vanished and irrelevant. Castle's attempts to find security in his national roots are futile because England, at least the England he knows, is a thing of the past.

Although Castle instinctively thinks in terms of national filiation, Sarah helps to disabuse him of that habit. When he confesses to her that he has been a double agent, he explains that he leaked secrets that would help black South Africans. He feels that a Soviet influence there would be much friendlier to those oppressed by apartheid than the exploitative secret plan he's jeopardized, the Uncle Remus operation, a collaborative effort of the U.S., U.K., and some European countries designed to militarily intimidate the U.S.S.R. from gaining influence in South Africa. He says that his exposure of Uncle Remus "may save a lot of lives – lives of your people." She responds, "Don't talk to me of my people. I have no people any longer. You are 'my people'" (*Human* 210). When he wonders why she hasn't reprimanded him for being a traitor to his country, Sarah says "We have our own country. You and I and Sam. You've never betrayed that country, Maurice" (211). In radically redefining the idea of country, Sarah Castle transcends the lesser loyalties and identifications that comprise patriotism and national filiation.

Maurice Castle's affiliation with his family, with Sarah and Sam, is entirely a matter of choice. The only direct blood relative he has is his mother, to whom he, Sarah, and Sam make regular obligatory visits that are not very enjoyable to anyone (*Human* 117). Castle's mother is perhaps the least supportive mother in all of

Greene's fiction. When she finds that he's been a double agent, she shows her deference to convention and propriety by preferring national to familial loyalty, labeling him a "traitor to his country" without making any attempt to understand his actions or motives (*Human* 299). She even remarks that "I'm glad his father's dead" so that he wouldn't have to bear a similar mortification and threatens legal action to take Sam away from Maurice and Sarah (300). His mother may feel betrayed, but Maurice has not betrayed his real family, his real country, the one he chose.

The transcendence by Castles of the bonds of national identity would be a triumph if it weren't for the inability of the individual to escape the machinations of the state. They have developed an internal sense of freedom but are nonetheless imprisoned, both driven into separate exiles. As Castle plans his flight from the British authorities, he has a foreboding of the permanence of his removal from Sarah and Sam. "He felt as though he had already lost contact with everything he had known in England" (*Human* 252). Sarah, meanwhile, finds herself in a limbo, waiting in vain to be reunited with Maurice, even to hear anything from him. Living in domestic comfort with her emotionally distant mother-in-law, she longs for her life of apartheid, a life she at least shared with Castle. "She would have exchanged this Sussex town with its liberal inhabitants who treated her with such kindly courtesy even for Soweto. [. . .] She loved Maurice, she loved the smell of the dust and degradation of her country – now she was without Maurice and without a country" (271). Her husband, isolated in his shabby Moscow apartment, is in the same boat, and the novel ends with little hope that their situations will change for the better.

The Castles end up as exiles, forced from both their countries of filiation (England and South Africa) and affiliation (each other). Their experience is horrifying, perhaps even tragic. They are isolated, independent examples of the “mass dislocations” of groups of people made homeless by wars and other political disruptions that Edward Said has said “is as close as we come in the modern era to tragedy” (“Reflections” 183). But exile can also be voluntary, taking the form of expatriation. Thomas Fowler’s expatriation is a deliberate rejection of filiation with the fatherland. He has chosen his home, one more suited to his needs. Anthony and Kate Farrant have left England as well, but instead of forging a new affiliation, they choose to be nationless. Anthony, despite his occasional half-hearted sentimentality about England, is a drifter requiring no strong national ties, and Kate has found a home in a place she considers to be international, perhaps post-national. In Greene’s work, ties to a nation are either dangerous or irrelevant. The freedom to make new affiliations or exist free of any connections to a homeland is an essential component of individuality.

Conclusion – The Exile, Betrayal and Escape

In his essay “Reflections on Exile,” Edward Said writes, “The exile knows that in a secular and contingent world, homes are always provisional. Borders and barriers, which enclose us within the safety of familiar territory, can also become prisons, and are often defended beyond reason or necessity. Exiles cross borders, break barriers of thought and experience” (185). Graham Greene’s writing is frequently informed by this premise. In the restlessness and travel of his life, Greene lived in a sense as an exile. In doing that, he was able to “not be at home in one’s home” and to evaluate “the discrepancies between various concepts and ideas” that the life of ‘home’ relegates to “dogma and orthodoxy,” as Said expresses the thoughts of philosopher Theodor Adorno (184-5). Central to Greene’s view of the world and humanity, a view that leaked into every stage and genre of his writing, is the idea that ‘home,’ the comforts and rootedness of it, prevents growth and experience. People’s birth families and homelands are arbitrary, accidental attachments, and an uncritical acceptance and reliance on them, and on one’s abode, is ludicrous and potentially damaging. Exile, or at least the chosen exile of expatriation, would appear the ideal state of existence in Greene’s fiction.

In the previously discussed novels, Greene offers varying degrees of exile and expatriation for his characters. In some cases, exile appears anything but an ideal state. The Castles in *The Human Factor* are the most exiled characters, but their condition is not favorable because it’s forced upon them. The home they have created – their relationship comprises their sense of family, domicile and nation – is at the mercy of

hostile outside forces. Minty's exile in *England Made Me* is unfavorable because he is incapable of abandoning a hostile filiation. In other works, characters fail to expatriate themselves from home. *Brighton Rock*'s Pinkie stubbornly persists in confining himself to a hellish vision of home. Conversely, Anne in *A Gun for Sale* foolishly adheres to a fantasy of home that she should be disabused of by experience. But in *The Comedians* (1966) and *Travels with My Aunt* (1969), Greene presents his most complete narratives of exile and expatriation; in each the move away from merely rejecting an element of home towards a full embrace of homelessness clearly expresses the benefits of exile.

The Comedians and *Travels with My Aunt* are as different in tone as any two Greene novels despite having been written and published back to back. *The Comedians* is perhaps his most nightmarish work, a horrific trip through the Haiti of Papa Doc Duvalier and his Ton Tons Macoute, focused on the experiences of the Smiths, a benevolently idealistic elderly American couple, Jones, a mysterious, lovable raconteur and charlatan who pretends to be a British Army major, and the narrator, Brown, a cynical hotelier compelled, like Fowler in *The Quiet American*, to commit to a righteous cause for the first time in his life. *Travels with My Aunt* is Greene's most comic novel, an almost picaresque adventure that sees narrator Henry Pulling, the epitome of mild, straight-laced, middle-aged English conservatism, fall under the influence of his aunt Augusta, an impulsive, free-spirited woman in her seventies who whisks her nephew into a variety of eye-opening experience from Paris to Paraguay. *The Comedians* features characters who are inadvertently exiles, adrift from grounding homes of family, domicile and homeland, a condition that enables

them to choose a noble path of action. *Travels with My Aunt* celebrates the uprooting of a very grounded character and revels in escape and the betrayal of static ideas of home.

The Comedians' Brown is perhaps more 'homeless' than any other Greene character. Brown's mother was to some extent a stranger to him, having suddenly abandoned him to be raised by Jesuits. He's even unsure of her nationality, and by extension his own (54). "We have never been demonstrative," he says in understatement (64). Her most direct influence on him, apart from giving birth, was in her death, leaving him possession of a Port au Prince hotel and a calling in life. In addition to his mother's distance and eventual death, he has no idea who his father is, and it's a mystery Brown professes no interest in solving: "He had deposited not so much as a childish memory. Presumably he was dead, but I wasn't sure – this was a century in which old men lived beyond their time. But I felt no genuine curiosity about him; nor had I any wish to seek him out or find his tombstone, which was possibly, but not certainly, marked with the name Brown" (223). Even though he claims no interest in his unknown birth father, Brown finds a couple of possible father substitutes. He and Jones, another fatherless adult, see in the noble American Mr. Smith "the father we should have liked to have" (197). Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan notes that the altruistic Haitian Dr. Magiot acts as a father-figure and that his letter to Brown, urging him to take a role in the struggle, "reads like a father's will" (83). Being free of the home of family, of arbitrary birth parents, an individual is allowed to seek out ideal influences and role models.

Greene seems to suggest that positive familial connections are often best created by people who are not related. Jones, pursued by the Ton Tons Macoute, takes refuge in the embassy home of the Pinedas. The three Pinedas form an unappealing family tableau. The Ambassador, Luis, is an oblivious or complaisant cuckold; at any rate he seems largely indifferent to his wife Martha's frequent absences that allow for her affair with Brown. Their son, Angel, is a preternaturally aware and manipulative child. Regardless of all this, Jones enjoys himself with them, and they enjoy his company. Even the family dog takes to him. Brown, seeing him fitting in so well in the household, remarks "it was as if Jones had brought into the house with him a kind of domesticity" (240). The Pinedas appear to become a family only when a kind of surrogate brother or uncle is introduced. Jones later tells Brown about his experiences there. "It was good," he said. "It was like being in a family" (271). Brown says that his own friendship with Jones "was like meeting an unknown brother" (269).

Brown and Jones are also untied to domiciles. Brown lives in the hotel that he owns, but even ownership can't prevent him from feeling that a "hotel is not a home" (*Comedians* 112). The physical environments in which the principal characters spend their time are without exception places of transience: the ship *Medea* that takes Brown, Jones and the Smiths to Haiti; Brown's hotel; a brothel; a prison; casinos; the car in which Brown and Martha tryst; and Pineda's embassy. Only the graveyard where Brown and Jones hide out and get to really know each other towards the end of the book conveys permanence. These locations consistently suggest restlessness, fluidity and movement.

“There are those who belong by their birth inextricably to a country, who even when they leave it feel a tie,” Brown narrates. “And there are those who belong to a province, a county, a village, but I could feel no link at all with the hundred or so square kilometers around the gardens and boulevards of Monte Carlo, a city of transients” (*Comedians* 224). “I was born in Monaco [. . .] That is almost the same as being a citizen of nowhere” (235). Though Brown admits to a kind of tie to Haiti, “the shabby land of terror, chosen for me by chance” (224), he ultimately feels that “no region on the earth had taken the place of home” (223). Nationality is a liquid thing, a concept that Greene finds a perfect symbol of in the Dutch boat *Medea*. Brown says “I counted as a citizen of Holland as long as I stayed on the *Medea*” (6).

Jones, though he plays the part of an Englishman, seems not to be ‘from’ anywhere. It’s arguable that his free-spirited charm which so ensnares a great many characters in the book, and the reader it seems safe to say, derives in part from his not being tied to a particular place. As Brown says in introducing the reader to Jones, “I am not to this day absolutely sure of where, geographically speaking, Jones’ home lay” (1). And when Jones is on the run from Ton Tons Macoute, a political refugee, he doesn’t flee to the British Embassy, but instead to that great symbol of adrift nationality: “I felt I’d be more at home in the dear old *Medea*” (213). When he leaves the *Medea*, it isn’t the British Embassy he goes to, but Pineda’s, further shifting any kind of national affiliation.

Brown and Jones, with no forced allegiances of filiation, have the freedom to choose their courses of action. Their principled stand against Duvalier’s tyrannical regime, even though it’s ultimately a quixotic attempt to assist doomed

revolutionaries, is made possible by that freedom. For these two characters, being homeless is their natural state, but in *Travels with My Aunt*, Henry Pulling's liberation from home is shown as an evolution of character and a conscious choice.

Henry Pulling's father left his family when Henry was young, and he wonders "why I felt an affection for him, while I felt none for my faultless mother who had brought me up with rigid care and found me my first situation in a bank" (*Travels* 188). This implies that Henry instinctively desires independence rather than nurturing, and he identifies more with his father. But Henry's independence is slow to manifest itself. Henry, a retired banker and bachelor, is a self-professed "static character," and while this diagnosis may have been accurate for decades, it proves ultimately erroneous (11).

Travels with My Aunt begins with the funeral of Henry's mother, about which he claims to be "agreeably excited" as it was a break in his unvarying daily routine (3). At his mother's funeral Henry is told by his Aunt Augusta that his mother wasn't really his mother. The woman he had just watched cremated had married Henry's father and faked pregnancy in order to allow him to have a wife and child and live a life that Henry's biological mother wasn't interested in (9). This revelation leads, in its mordantly comic way, to Henry's immediate and casual acquiescence to regarding the woman who affectionately raised him from birth as suddenly irrelevant: "If indeed she had been only a stepmother to me, did I still want to place her ashes among my dahlias? While I washed up my lunch I was sorely tempted to wash out the urn as well into the sink. It would serve very well for the home-made jam which I was promising myself to make next year. . ." (20). At the outset, he is in no way a typical

Greene protagonist, and we are immediately suspicious of his judgment. By dismissing his stepmother because she wasn't his 'real' mother, he violates the recurrent thread of Greene's fictions that maternity is not an inherently valid or profound link.

The thread is recovered, though, as his connection to Augusta invigorates and nurtures him, bringing him out of his shell and awakening him to the world as the novel goes on. Augusta, as surrogate mother, sparks the real Henry that had been buried under years of numbing routine and suburban rot. But a paradox emerges, and dramatic irony comes to the fore as clues begin to pile up that suggest that Augusta herself is the biological mother despite Henry's apparent inability to realize the fact. At the end of the novel, Henry is unable to get Augusta's attention by calling "Aunt Augusta." But when he calls her, for the first time, "Mother," she calmly responds (253). Henry, as narrator, never comments on this nor mentions before or after this moment that he felt or knew she was his mother. Augusta likewise never acknowledges it outright. Though it seems pretty obvious that she *is* his mother, by not making a definitive acknowledgment Greene leaves open the possibility that they have only fallen into mother and son roles. At any rate, the point seems to some extent moot as throughout *Travels with My Aunt*, Greene amply illustrates the premise that meaningful family connections are forged by choice, often outside an immediate birth family, not engendered. Regardless of biological facts, Henry did have to journey to find a mother with whom he felt real affiliation.

The impromptu journeys he takes with Augusta start to significantly alter Henry's outlook. Once the quintessence of the homebody, he finds himself missing

his travel companion and the thrill of new sights and experiences when he gets back home. He admits “the pleasure of finding again my house and garden had begun to fade” (*Travels* 134). Eventually his home even takes on an antagonistic personality: “I let myself into the house. I had been away two nights, but like a possessive woman it had the histrionic air of having being abandoned” (154). The security and comfort of routine that his life at home meant for Henry has soured.

Unchanging domiciles are equated with stagnation and death in Augusta’s tale of Henry’s uncle Jo, a restless traveler who feared ending his days in the misery of repetitious single-location dwelling after he’s debilitated by a stroke. He decides instead to live in a home with 365 rooms, so that he can move every day of the year (*Travels* 53). Jo ends up compromising, converting a house into 52 rooms and living for a week in each. And though he dies attempting to move into his last room, the bathroom, he feels as if he’s lived “a lifetime” in that one year (54). For Jo Pulling, and many other Greene characters, stasis equals death, and settling down in a personal space is tantamount to curling up in a coffin.

Though slow to recognize the morass that is his life in Southwood, Henry Pulling is Greene’s clearest spokesperson on the stultifying effects of living an entire life in the same place. After a few adventures with Augusta, Henry gets an opportunity to see beyond the boundaries of the constrained world of his hometown. “This was my familiar world – [. . .] where one read of danger only in the newspapers and the deepest change to be expected was a change of government [. . .] and in my way I had been happy here [. . .] Beyond Latimer Road there stretched another world – [. . .] To whom now could I apply for a visa to that land with my aunt gone?”

(*Travels* 159) On his second jaunt out of the country with Augusta, Henry says “Strangely enough I felt almost immediately at home in Boulogne,” and he sees England across the channel “bathed in a golden autumn sunlight” (*Travels* 137). Seeing Britain literally in sunset, a warm farewell, Henry begins to become a citizen of the globe. This moment doesn’t come off as a full-fledged epiphany, but it is the start of transcendence. In a letter Henry writes in *Travels with My Aunt*, he says his “books are a good antidote to foreign travel and reinforce the sense of the England I love, but sometimes I wonder whether that England exists still beyond my garden hedge or further than Church Road. [. . .] The future here seems to me to have no taste at all” (157). Only at novel’s end, in Paraguay, does Henry feel at home again “It was as though I were safely back in the Victorian world where I had been taught by my father’s books to feel more at home than in our modern day” (251). Only between the pages of a Victorian novel does England appear real.

At last Henry has realized that the only life he’d known isn’t home to him any longer and considers his old environs: “I remember Southwood now with a kind of friendly tolerance – as the place [. . .] where I myself no longer belonged. It was as though I had escaped from an open prison, provided with a rope ladder and a waiting car, into my aunt’s world, the world of the unexpected character and the unforeseen event” (*Travels* 193).

Life equals movement. Greene’s characters are like sharks; if they don’t move they die, figuratively anyway. Home is the ultimate inhibitor of movement. Greene seems to be saying that in order to stay intellectually, emotionally, spiritually alive, one must be disloyal to the trappings and traditions of home. Aunt Augusta gives the

most succinct explanation for this persistent, if at times deeply imbedded, motif. Henry Pulling, meeting his aunt at the airport for their relatively impromptu trip to Istanbul, asks her how long they plan on staying there. Despite its taking three full days by Orient Express, her preferred means of travel, they are only going to be there twenty-four hours. What is her justification for staying such a short time after the lengthy trip? She says, "The point is the journey" (*Travels* 59).

We've seen how Greene's characters flee home. Companionship, nurturing and role models are sought outside of the birth family. Houses and other residences are temporary shelters; if they take on more significance they become fraught with menace or shame. Identification with and attachment to countries and nations constrain individuals to predetermined and artificial roles and characteristics that can be discarded by choosing to be nationless. Bonds of filiation, in the forms of families and homelands, inhibit individuals; it becomes necessary to break those bonds. By being disloyal to home, Greene's characters are disloyal to the indolence of comfort, disloyal to the conformity of expectation and convention, disloyal to stasis.

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