A Study of Graham Greene

The Pinkies (Ⅳ)

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Ⅵ

In the preceding chapter, " The Pinkies (Ⅲ) ",[1] the features of Pinkie, the protagonist of *Brighton Rock*, are examined through the image of fallen angels to clarify the specific components of Pinkie. The purpose of this chapter is also to demonstrate the figuration of Raven, the protagonist of *A Gun for Sale*,[2] who is included in the family of " the Pinkies " by Greene, in order to expound the characteristics of the criminal and evil characters in the works of Graham Greene.

Raven is represented as a cool professional killer who revenges himself for double-crossing and is embodied similar to Pinkie as a character. As mentioned above in the preceding chapter, Greene has commented that Raven " is a Pinkie who has aged but not grown up. The Pinkies are the real Peter Pans " and " have something of a fallen angel about them, a morality which once belonged to another place." [3] " A morality " superficially contradicts the cruel deeds of a killer; however, it is one of the specific peculiarities found in Raven, who discriminates between justice and injustice. Another point is that he is a character whose tendency towards humanization from dehumanization differentiates him from Pinkie embodied as a character who has no possibility of development in quality. The transition from a dehumanized predicament to a humanized state, that is, from a deviated and forlorn man to a humane and ordinary man, is a peculiar feature of Raven. To make his inner growth clear, Greene applies the similes from and allusions to *The Snow Queen* by Hans Andersen to the description of Raven. Another advantage is the introduction of the lines from *Maud* by Alfred Lord Tennyson to give some motives to the development of Raven's feelings and behaviour. By these clues and the investigation of Raven's revenge

story, the peculiarities of Raven and their inherent meanings are revealed along with the similarities and differences between Raven and Pinkie.

Raven's deformed lips imparting his parents' poverty and the chip of ice in his heart symbolize his past and present existential condition. The former is a symbol of the bitterness and misery he experiences and the latter is of his inner frozen sensitivity, which is introduced in the description of him in the scene where he and Anne pass each other for the first time.

> The man with the hare-lip came back down the street; fast walking hadn't made him warm; like Kay in *The Snow Queen* he bore the cold within him as he walked. ... The man hardly paused; he went on down the street, walking fast; he felt no pain from the chip of ice in his breast. (p. 9)

The cold, or the chip of ice Raven has, means he is a Kay who gets in his eyes and heart the splinters of the Devil's glass. In *The Snow Queen*, the hearts into which the evil splinters entered change into " lumps of ice." [4] When Kay gets the splinters of Devil's glass in his heart and eyes, he becomes a clever and annoying boy who " would mimic the ways of everyone in the street, especially if they were odd or unpleasant," " would always find fault and argue " and would like games "so scientific and practical." [5] He changes from an affectionate, considerate boy to a fault-finding, rational boy. For example, Kay comes to conclude that snow flakes are much more beautiful and interesting than real flowers. Kay, who is fascinated with the beauty of snow and who is eventually captivated by the Snow Queen, becomes, by her kiss colder than ice, the dweller in the lake of the Snow Queen's palace, no longer feeling the cold. The lake is called the Mirror of Reason and Kay is indulged in " the icy game of reason." [6] Kay's heart " was hardly more than a lump of ice," [7] and because he is " stiff and still," " anyone might have thought that he was frozen to death." [8] So the chip of ice leads to this dehumanized situation of Kay and this is where Raven lives now, as a " sour bitter screwed-up " [9] outlaw.

One of the characteristics of Raven is that he is proud of his education at the home where he spent his boyhood and repeats that he is educated. Raven has certainly got abililty to think reasonably and rationally, especially concerning Christianity, and consequently, he feels mad about the sentiment of Christmas.[10] Like Pinkie, Raven has some knowledge of Christianity but while Pinkie believes only in Hell and is proud of his ability for damnation, Raven has got a sense of fair play, so he sympathizes with only a double-crossed Christ. He is now watching The Holy Family in the windows of a religious shop.

> Love, Charity, Patience, Humility - he was educated; he knew all about those virtues; he'd seen what they were worth. They twisted everything; even that story in there, it was historical, it had happened, but they twisted it to their own purposes. They made him a God because they could feel fine about it all, they didn't have to consider themselves responsible for the raw deal they'd given him. He'd consented, hadn't he ? That was the argument, because he could have called down 'a legion of angels' if he'd wanted to escape hanging there. On your life he could, he thought with bitter lack of faith, just as easily as his own father taking the drop at Wandsworth could have saved himself when the trap opened. He stood there with his face against the glass waiting for somebody to deny *that* reasoning, staring at the swaddled child with a horrified tenderness, 'the little bastard', because he was educated and knew what the child was in for, the double-crossing Judas and only one man to draw a knife on his side when the Roman soldiers came for him in the garden. (p. 106)

His antipathy towards Christianity derives from people's intention of distorting the historical fact and from their indifference to double-crossing. A. A. De Vitis also interprets that Raven's attitude to Christianity expresses "a sense of loss, a feeling of inadequacy, life without justice or pity." [11] His antipathy thus signifies that Raven, a cool killer, has an acute sense of justice like fallen angels that once gained a sense of morality. His sense of justice or of injustice is based on class-consciousness and on a sense of fellowship. Raven " had been betrayed by the lawless "[12] of his own kind, and by his own class : for example, Mr. Davis (namely, Cholmondeley) and his boss Sir Marcus who order Raven to kill the old minister and pay him the stolen notes, his board-

ing house owner and his employee who betray his lips to the police, and Dr. Yogel and his nurse who try to inform on him. Raven is clever and reasonable enough to justify his own murder of the old minister and his secretary; nevertheless, he believes this kind of double-crossing or injustice is even more evil.

> He was shocked by it just as he had been shocked by Mr. Cholmondeley's duplicity. He felt no guilt about the old War Minister, he was one of the great ones of the world, one of those who 'sat', he knew all the right words, he was educated, 'in the chief seats at the synagogues', and if he was sometimes a little worried by the memory of the secretary's whisper through the imperfectly shut door, he could always tell himself that he had shot her in self-defence. But this was evil: that people of the same class should prey on each other. (p. 108)

His word " evil " indicates his strong sense of justice, which moreover expounds his moral attitude beyond the realm of right and wrong and over to the realm of good and evil, where fallen angels once belonged. Raven, being double-crossed from the people of his own class, feels excluded from everyone. In this meaning he is forlorn and almost dead like Kay in the cold frozen lake of " Reason " of the Snow Queen, enclosed by only the sense of unfairness and the intention to revenge himself for the double-crossing.

Anne Crowder breaks the enclosure of dehumanization into which Raven has strayed with her natural friendliness, showing no repulsion to his lips, and eventually her frank friendliness causes the frozen heart of Raven to melt, like Gerda who saves Kay from the world of ice.

In order to escape from the police pursuit Raven threatens Anne to get her ticket by using the automatic, but she does not behave as he expects, and unnerves him.

> ... but smiled as well as she could with her mouth full. He said, ' I want your ticket. The police are after me. I'll do anything to get your ticket.'
>
> She swallowed the bread in her mouth and began to cough. She said, 'For God's sake, hit me on the back.' He nearly obeyed her; she'd got him rattled; he wasn't used to normal life and it upset his nerve. (p. 47)

" It was normality he couldn't cope with " [13] because he has never experienced a normal family life and has never felt ordinary natural feelings of people. He is an abandoned child, like Pinkie and Peter Pan as clarified in the preceding chapter, and he doesn't know any love of parents or people because of his parents' death and his boyhood in the home. He has been deformed in his environment. Therefore, Raven nearly loses his confidence when he meets Anne's natural friendliness. Hearing Anne sing to keep up her spirits when she is shut up in a speculator's house, Raven begins to shed tears, an indication of his possibility of changing. There is also a scene where Pinkie weeps hearing a song from the movie. Pinkie's reaction to music reveals his whole lost world and his wish to get limitless freedom, which he can never get hold of. In the case of Raven, music plays the role of warm stimulation that causes his cold frozen heart to melt.

> He said, ' I've heard that tune.' He couldn't remember where: he remembered a dark night and a cold wind and hunger and the scratch of a needle. It was as if something sharp and cold were breaking in his heart with great pain. He sat there under the sink with the automatic in his hand and began to cry. He made no sound, the tears seemed to run like flies of their own will from the corners of his eyes. (p. 52)

Raven's reaction to music shows that he has begun to change painfully in his heart. However, the chip of ice, which results from hatred towards his parents and fear for merciless treatment in the home, is too hard to melt away. Even the thought of the possibility of Anne's believing him and not betraying him, makes him feel uneasy because he

> wasn't used to any taste that wasn't bitter on the tongue. He had been made by hatred; it had constructed him into this thin smoky murderous figure in the rain, hunted and ugly. His mother had borne him when his father was in gaol, and six years later when his father was hanged for another crime, she had cut her own throat with a kitchen knife; afterwards there had been the home. He had never felt the least tenderness for anyone; he was made in this image and he had his own odd pride in the result; he didn't want to be unmade. He had a sudden terrified conviction that he must be himself now as never before if he was to escape. (pp. 76-77)

Greene has employed the childhood trauma to construct the figure of Raven and has made him cool and intelligent enough to understand his own identity with " an odd pride " to go on, like Pinkie. Raven's image or his reality is not his fault: " he has been made in this image." Raven doesn't feel ashamed of his deformed lips, his ugliness, even though he gets bitterness from the people who notice it. To him ugliness means something morally offensive or repulsive. He feels hatred towards his mother who did not conceal her suicide trying " to lock the door so as I shouldn't see. And after that, there was a Home. ... You'd say that was ugly too, but it wasn't ugly as *that* was."[14] And he compares his cruel deeds with hers: " He'd done some ugly things in his time, he told himself, but he'd never been able to equal that ugliness."[15] He also perceives that the killing between the gangsters is not ugly but " Funny thing is, it wasn't ugly. It was natural "[16] and even his shooting the minister's secretary isn't ugly[17] because it could be his self-defence. Therefore, ugliness certainly connotes almost the same as morally offensive deprivation of tenderness and love; that is, for Raven it represents the dehumanized state in which he has belonged.

It is Anne's behaviour that shocks Raven with astonishment when he learns Anne didn't go to the police and betray him. He feels secret painful joy in his heart, though he tries to be once again himself made of hatred. In the following scene in a garage his swaying heart is described with an image of " dagger of ice " melting, introducing some lines from *Maud* by A. L. Tennyson. Raven finds shelter in a stranger's garage.

> ... it was obviously not used for a car, but only to house a pram, a child's playground and a few dusty dolls and bricks. Raven took shelter there; he was cold through and through except in the one spot that had lain frozen all his life. That dagger of ice was melting with great pain. He pushed the garage gate a little further open; he had no wish to appear furtively hiding if anyone passed along the river beat; anyone might be excused for sheltering in a stranger's garage from *this* storm, except, of course, a man wanted by the police with a hare-lip. (p. 77)

In *Brighton Rock* there is also a scene set in a garage, as examined in the preceding chapter, where Pinkie hiding himself from the gangsters

feels only hatred towards the security and happiness of an ordinary citizen family life, designated by a doll, a pram, and a broken rocking horse. Raven, on the other hand, shelters there and wants to appear not as a man hiding furtively from the police, but as an ordinary man sheltering from the storm. In this point the garage scene demonstrates an evident difference between Raven and Pinkie. Raven accepts and affirms an ordinary life and wishes to be someone accustomed to natural life and the friendliness of others, which he perceives in the attitude of Anne. However, listening to the lines of *Maud* from the radio in the cold garage he remembers repulsive deeds of parents and others who depressed him.

> *A shadow flits before me,*
> *Not thou, but like to thee;*
> *Ah Christ, that it were possible*
> *For one short hour to see*
> *The souls we loved, that they might tell us*
> *What and where they be.*

He dug his nails into his hands, remembering his father who had been hanged and his mother who had killed herself in the basement kitchen, all the long parade of those who had done him down. The elderly cultured Civil Service voice read on:

> *And I loathe the squares and streets,*
> *And the faces that one meets,*
> *Hearts with no love for me . .*

He thought: give her time and she too will go to the police. That's what always happens in the end with a skirt,

> *—My whole soul out to thee——*

trying to freeze again, as hard and safe as ever, the icy fragment. (p. 78)

These lines[18] express strong aspiration of the afflicted and oppressed hero in *Maud* for his beloved and of the days never retrieved, which shows " Greene's uncanny ability."[19] And this sense of being never re-

trieved recalls Raven's memories of the people to whom Raven has a paradoxical obsession, and his heart sways from a secret longing for trust in Anne to a distrust of her. Especially the line *"Ah, Christ, that it were possible"* flashes across his mind repeatedly at an impediment and imparts his true wishes that cannot be fulfilled.

This aspiration for trust is appeased and eventually rejected in the scene of the night in a small workmen's shed between the lines in the station yard. In this scene the dual role of Anne is gradually revealed. One is the role of Gerda and the other is that of the Snow Queen. She is also the femme fatale[20] in the meaning that her acceptance and betrayal of Raven leads to his change and growth and simultaneously to his death. Concerning Anne's role there is another interpretation that through Anne, the Judas theme is embodied,[21] but it may be emphasizing only her betrayal, neglecting Raven's trust of her that causes his heart to change.

At first Anne accepts his ugly deformed lips, "You are all right",[22] which causes Raven's tears and she makes her words certain, " I like you, ... I'm your friend—," " I'm not going to the police. ... I promise you I won't. I like you as well as any man-except my friend,"[23] " You can trust me all right."[24] These words bring deep happiness to Raven who is now awaked into the natural human affection resulting from mutual trust, just as Gerda can thaw the lump of ice away in Kay's heart with her hot tears of friendship and love.[25] The warm feelings of human relationships for the first time fill him with calmness and contentment and he wishes to express fully his trust.

> He brooded over his memories with a low passionate urge towards confession. There had never in his life been anyone he could trust till now. He said, 'You don't mind hearing these things?' and listened with a curious deep happiness to her reply, 'We are friends.' He said, ' This is the best night I've ever had.' But there were things he still couldn't tell her. His happiness was incomplete till she knew everything, till he had shown his trust completely. He didn't want to shock or pain her; he led slowly towards the central revelation. (pp. 152-153)

In the dark, Raven confesses to Anne everything that has been in his

mind, every cruel feat and deed he has endured and committed, from the death of his parents and miserable boyhood to the murder of the old minister whose death might cause a new war.

The murder of the old minister, especially, is the cause of his sense of guilt, which is expressed in the description, " the death of the minister lay, ... like an albatross round his neck."[26] This expression alludes to "the albatross / About my neck was hung," by S. T. Coleridge[27] and implies a sign of guilt derived from the deed of killing the albatross, the pious bird of good omen.[28] This image of an albatross round the neck usually signifies a sense of guilt,[29] and it imparts Raven's guilty feeling towards the death of the minister which derived from his ignorance of the real figure of the minister who makes efforts to take care of the slum people the same class as Raven. Raven also hasn't comprehended that his crime helps Sir Marcus with his increasing wealth because of the rise of the munition shares by the death of the old minister.

Raven's feeling of regret and sorrow for his guilt is expressed in one of his dreams in the dark cold shed. In the dream Raven is a child with a catapult in his hands who weeps at not being able to shoot the old minister and the minister says, " Shoot, dear child. We'll go home together. Shoot."[30] The minister's words suggest forgiveness of Raven's guilt and the peace of trust of a family life; the peace " like going to sleep for a long while."[31] About this dream, especially the minister's words: " Shoot, dear child. We'll go home together. Shoot," Kunkel has appropriately made an interesting interpretation that the old minister is Christ who would be crucified to save all people.[32] So it can be properly said these words suggest that Raven would be atoned for and rendered an absolution.

Anne, in the role of a priest, hearing Raven's confession of murdering the minister and his secretary, feels repulsion towards him but, concealing her true feelings, she again reassures her friendship, " I'm not going to leave you."[33] Believing her words, Raven, putting her cold hand against his unshaven cheek, expresses his satisfaction and gratitude: " It feels good to trust someone with everything."[34] His behaviour is an indication of his capability for humbleness, trustfulness and tenderness as a human being. Raven has stepped into his new region of the world

as can be seen in the following quotation.

> ... the cultivated unlived voice of the elderly critic reading *Maud*: *'Oh, that 'twere possible after long grief,* while he stood in the garage and felt the ice melt at his heart with a sense of pain and strangeness. It was as if he were passing the customs of a land he had never entered before and would never be able to leave: (p. 206)

He has become humanized. Georg M. A. Gaston explains about his change that " he has a capacity to be emotionally influenced by other people."[35] Or another interprets his change as "a curious growth in Raven." [36] And Peter Wolfe applies " his rebirth " to his change.[37] This new Raven is clearly different from Pinkie, who rejects all chances to understand and accept the pure love of Rose and like Peter Pan, to be an Everyman of the ordinary in the world. Whereas Raven has been changed and has accepted a chance to be an Everyman, even though this change is based on the fictitious bearing of Anne.

Hiding her repulsion, Anne decides to go on with Raven and let him revenge himself upon Mr. Davis and Sir Marcus and eventually stop a war. Her hidden coldness is exemplified in her cool conclusion about sacks which exposed Raven's tenderness to her during the cold night: "... but she felt no pity at all. He was just a wild animal who had to be dealt with carefully and then destroyed. 'Let him freeze,' she thought,"[38] which projects a subtle image of the Snow Queen who freezes Kay almost dead and makes him no longer feel cold in the world of ice where Kay forgets himself to be human. It is natural that Anne in the end should betray Raven to the police and drive him to death because of hatred towards him, though " she couldn't help remembering the hut, the cold, the pile of sacks, his complete and hopeless trust."[39] So it might be properly said that the femme fatale Anne, in Raven's career, plays an important role to develop Raven into a more varied and complicated figure, compared to the unchanged figure of Pinkie.

The deaths of both Raven and Pinkie are similar in the consequences that result from their crimes and being cornered by the police, but in the

meaning of their deaths, they are a little different from each other. Pinkie, with his image of a child, badgered, confused, betrayed,[40] abruptly meets his death and doesn't exactly know why and how his own death comes, though he tries to do a false double-suicide. Raven also meets his death unexpectedly because of Anne's betrayal, but he understands the reason of his death or can perceive the meaning of his own death. He accepts his death as an exit from the reality of his hopeless life. He has to shoot Mr. Davis, because " There was no other way; he had tried the way of confession, and it had failed him for the usual reason. There was no one outside your brain whom you could trust: not a doctor, not a priest, not a woman."[41] But unlike Pinkie and Peter Pan, " with a curious humility, with almost a sense of companionship in his loneliness,"[42] Raven recognizes himself to be an ordinary man who fails for the usual reason: believing a woman, though he has a strong aspiration for what he has not been given, for what would have been different from his real life: *"Ah, Christ! that it were possible"*, knowing and facing his despair and death. He cannot escape "the commonest betrayal."

> He was only aware of a pain and despair which was more like a complete weariness than anything else. He couldn't work up any sourness, any bitterness, at his betrayal. ... *Ah, Christ! that it were possible*, but he had been marked from his birth for this end, to be betrayed in turn by everyone until every avenue into life was safely closed: by his mother bleeding in the basement, by the chaplain at the home, by the shady doctor off Charlotte Street. How could he have expected to have escaped the commonest betrayal of all: to go soft on a skirt ? ... The only problem when you were once born was to get out of life more neatly and expeditiously than you had entered it. For the first time the idea of his mother's suicide came to him without bitterness, as he reluctantly fixed his aim and Saunders shot him in the back through the opening door. 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. (pp. 207–208)

" His only child " evidently means his death, and death is a rational and natural result of his life lived in despair of having no exit. However, "a child" connotes a new coming span of time and this suggestion of

new time is a specific feature found in Raven when compared with Pinkie's death of abruptly going into nothing. Moreover, in this meaning of new coming life, a child suggests a hint of natural conclusion attributed to an Everyman living in his inevitable environment and then leaving his descendant after a natural course of his time. Peter Wolfe also calls Raven's final moments "a dying - into - life."[43] And conversely there is an opinion that Raven's death has no meaning.[44] In the case of Pinkie, Greene has added, after Pinkie's death the scene of the church where the priest tells of the mercy of God that human beings cannot understand, in order to give a hint of salvation of Pinkie. In this point Raven is to be a complete character in literature and Pinkie is a character to be completed in a religious aspect. Georg M. A. Gaston appropriately explains this difference between them that Raven escapes from his past and Pinkie escapes from religious salvation.[45]

It should be concluded, from what has been examined above, that in close inspection there are deep differences between Raven and Pinkie who are superficially similar as criminal and evil characters attributed with the qualities of fallen angels and Peter Pan. One of the remarkable peculiarities of Raven is that his character has grown from a dehumanized man into a human being when he recognizes himself as an Everyman of the ordinary with capability for love and being betrayed. This is a specific quality, compared with Pinkie, found in Raven, which manifests itself in the course of Raven's inner growth.

In the next chapter, it is necessary to expound other evil characters represented in *A Gun for Sale* and Harry Lime in *The Third Man.* The investigation of them will lead to further clarification of evil and evil characters in the works of Graham Greene.

Notes

1. *Studies in English Literature,* No. 27 (The English Literary Society of Baiko Jo Gakuin College, 1991)
2. The text used in this paper is *A Gun for Sale* (William Heinemann & Bodley Head, London, 1973)
3. *Ways of Escape* (SIMON AND SCHUSTER, New York, 1980), p. 75
4. Hans Christian Andersen, trans. by Naomi Lewis, *Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales* (Penguin Books Ltd., 1981), p. 104
5. *ibid.*, p. 109
6. Hans Christian Andersen, trans. by H. W. Dulcken PH. D., *The Complete Illustrated Stories of Hans Christian Andersen* (Chancellor Press, 1989), p. 338
7. *Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales,* trans. by Naomi Lewis, pp. 137–138
8. *ibid.*, p. 139
9. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 1
10. *ibid.*, p. 12
11. A. A. DeVitis, *Graham Greene* (Twayne Publishers · Boston, 1986), p. 27
12. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 31
13. *ibid.*, p. 49
14. *ibid.*, p. 153
15. *ibid.*, p. 121
16. *ibid.*, p. 154
17. *ibid.*, p. 155
18. Alfred Lord Tennyson, ed. by William J. Rolfe LITT. D., *The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson,* vol. IV (Boston · Dana Estes & Company · Publishers, 1895), "Maud", I, II, III, & II, IV, XIII
19. *ibid.*, p. 79
20. Robert Michael Hanlon, S. J., *Graham Greene's Religious Sense* (University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1971), p. 126
21. *Graham Greene,* p. 32
22. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 144
23. *ibid.*, p. 151
24. *ibid.*, p. 152
25. *ibid.*, p. 139
26. *ibid.*, p. 105
27. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ed. by Ernest Hartley Coleridge, *The Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, vol.* I (Oxford University Press, Fly House, London W. 1, 1975), " The Rime of the Ancient Mariner ", LL. 141–142
28. *ibid.*, p. 189

29. *ibid.*, p. 191
30. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 149
31. *ibid.*, p. 155
32. Francis L. Kunkel, *The Labyrinthine Ways of Graham Greene* (Sheed and Ward–New York, 1960), p. 174
33. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 156
34. *ibid.*
35. Georg M. A. Gaston, *The Pursuit of Salvation* (The Whitston Publishing Company, 1984), p. 16
36. *Graham Greene's Religious Sense,* p. 130
37. Peter Wolfe, *Graham Greene the Entertainer* (Southern Illinois University Press, 1973) p. 57
38. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 159
39. *ibid.*, p. 167
40. *Brighton Rock* (William Heinemann & The Bodley Head, London, 1970), p. 304
41. *A Gun for Sale,* p. 205
42. *ibid.*, p. 207
43. *Graham Greene the Entertainer,* p. 58
44. Jane Burt Manly, *Graham Greene* : *The Insanity of Innocence* (University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1970), p. 40
45. *The Pursuit of Salvation,* p. 16