

***The Ministry of Fear.* Graham Greene. New York: Viking Press, 1982.**

“Like most men who live alone, he believed his own habits to be the world’s.” [18]

“One can worry too much about one’s conscience.” [20]

“Life struck back at him like a scorpion.” [24]

“He felt as though he were in a strange country without any maps to help him, trying to get his position by the stars.” [25]

“But of course if you believe in God – and the Devil – the thing wasn’t quite so comic. Because the Devil – and God too – had always used comic people, futile people, little suburban natures and the maimed and warped to serve his purposes.” [30]

“ . . . even in an odd world it was an odd story.” [31]

“That’s something I discovered when they tried me – that everything may have a bearing.” [35]

“... he wanted to forget that he had ever been happy.” ;39]

“... he was the only abnormal thing there.” [40]

“But it is impossible to go through life without trust; that is to be imprisoned in the worst cell of all, oneself.” [43]

“When he used a colloquialism you could hear the inverted commas drop gently and apologetically around it.” [42]

“A moment comes to a man when a prison-break must be made whatever the risk.” [43]

“—they still expected life to offer them other things than pain and boredom and distrust and hate.” [43]

“There were lots of people in Austria you’d have said couldn’t. . . well, do the things we saw them do. Cultured people, pleasant people, people you had sat next to at dinner.” [46]

“The rich abortionist becomes a gynaecologist and the rich thief a bank director.” [47]

“... it seemed to him that he had emerged into a quite different world.” [47]

“Her face was talcumed and wrinkled and austere like a nun’s. . . . the kind of shrewdness people learn in convents.” [52]

“Her broad white face seemed to live in worlds beyond theirs.” [53]

“... it was his normality which stood out.” [53]

“... if we are going to keep our nerve we’ve got to keep of sense of humour.” [65]

Re: dreams with a thread of logic [65-66]

“He was filled with terror at the thought of what a child becomes, and what the dead must feel watching the change from innocence to guilt and powerless to stop it.” [69]

“... the horrible and horrifying emotion of pity.” [70]

“London was no longer one great city; it was a collection of small towns.” [72]

“... she had talked as if death were still a thing that mattered.” [74]

“Conventions were far more rooted than morality.” [75]

“... the tide was washing him out to where the bigger fishes hunted.” [76]

“the dreams of the previous night had set his mind in reverse.” [77]

“It was like the religious discipline: words however emptily repeated can in time form a habit, a kind of unnoticed sediment at the bottom of the mind – until one day to your own surprise you find yourself acting on the belief you thought you didn’t believe in.” [77]

“... he was no longer capable of sacrifice, courage, virtue, because he no longer dreamed of them.” [77]

“Nobody here was standardized.” [78]

“Courage smashes a cathedral, endurance lets a city starve, pity kills. . . we are trapped and betrayed by our virtues.” [79]

“There were men who lived voluntarily in deserts, but they had their God to commune with.” [81]

“War is very like a bad dream in which familiar people appear in terrible and unlikely disguises.” [93]

“The impressions of childhood are ineffaceable.” [97]

“The two great popular statements of faith are ‘What a small place this world is’ and ‘I’m a stranger here myself.’” [98]

“He felt directed, controlled, moulded by some agency with a surrealist imagination.” [105]

“He no longer felt that he was dragging around a valueless and ageing body.” [113]

“The world was sliding rapidly towards night; like a torpedoed liner heeling too far over, she would soon take her last dive into darkness.” [115]

“We’ve got to do something, even if it’s the wrong thing.” [117]

“You may get a clue and there’s obviously no resistance – from the Freudian censor.” [123]

"I was just wondering in bed this morning which of the people I wanted to become I did in fact choose."
[123]

"... the doctor's methods were far in advance of his time." [125]

"He would drink his medicine without complaint and go off into deep sleep which was only occasionally broken by strange nightmares in which a woman played a part." [125]

"What seemed odd to him, he found, was not what seemed odd to other people." [126]

"It wasn't failure he feared nearly so much as the enormous tasks that success might confront him with."
[127]

"There aren't wo many professions. Army, Navy, Church..." [132]

Re: Law - "I can't see myself in a wig getting some poor devil hanged." [132]

"In this war there are all sorts of ideologies." [134]

"Napoleon too appealed to idealists. . . Napoleon was beaten by the little men, the materialists." [135]

"The scrapping of all the old boundaries, the new economic ideas. . . the hugeness of the dream. It is attractive to men who are not tied - to a particular village or a town they don't want to see scrapped."
[135]

"... but the idealists don't see blook like you and I do. They aren't materialists. It's all statistics to them."
[135]

"They formed, you know, a kind of Ministry of Fear - with the most efficient under-secretaries." [136]

"I suppose the only men they couldn't blackmail for something shabby woud be saints - or outcasts with nothing to lose." [138]

"A bad war, this,' the major said. Civilians with shell-shock.' It was uncertain whether he disapproved of the civilians or the shell-shock." [140]

"Her voice was like an old portrait: the social varnish was caracking." [147]

"The experience was as new to him as adolescent love: he had the blind passionate innocence of a boy: like a boy he was driven relentlessly towards inevitable suffering, loss and despair, and called it happiness." [148]

"... the iron notions of learned old men." [148]

Quoting Tolstoy: "The gross fraud called patriotism and love of one's country." [149]

". . . the small temptation didn't suit the mood of high adventure." [155]

“Whenever he thought of Poole he was aware of something unhappy, something imprisoned at the bottom of the brain trying to climb out.” [156]

“We make our own insanity.” [167]

“... like a bull who has begun to realize that he is out of place in a china shop.” [176]

“... None of the books of adventure one read as a boy had an unhappy ending.” [205]

“... a massacre on an Elizabethan scale.” [210]

“One can’t love humanity. One can only love people.” [214]