



CHAPTER - III

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Since his conversion, Brighton Rock appeared in 1938, as Greene's first recognised novel which brought him wide reputation. It marks the beginning of the 'Catholic Phase' of Greene's work in which religious theme is successfully manipulated. It is with Brighton Rock Greene tries to bring the religious sense to English fiction.

Brighton Rock appeared in USA as an 'entertainment', kind of literature that entertains a reader. But further it is published in UK and it has been considered as a good novel since then. Probably Greene's study of the French Writer, Mauriac has helped him to change it from entertainment to novel.

In Brighton Rock, Greene dramatises the questions of faith. He explores the realm of spiritual debate more explicitly in his later novel. The Power and The Glory and The Heart of The Matter. These three novels from Greene's best 'Trilogy' that deals overtly with the central theme of 'Sin and Salvation'. Greene discusses here Sin and its consequence. He further shows that divine grace can ultimately save sinners from their damnation.

Brighton Rock is a successful thriller deals with the brutal violence of razor-gangsterdom of 1930's Brighton. The Brighton, a town of

races and gangsters. Has probable been depicted from the imaginary creation of Greene. The geography of the Brighton is the part that belongs to an imaginary geographical region. Probably Greene wants to depict here 'the disreputable geography of London'.

Brighton is the dark world of crime and violence in which razor-slash, pain and death create a harrowing intensity. It is the world where cut-throat methods are employed ruthlessly. The inhabitants are of all types. They are race-goers, tourists, gangsters and local slum-dwellers. The city is type of junction where all aliens meet. In the novel, Greene brings out the atmosphere of a squalid, miss-happen and decaying world.

Greene seems to be dealing with Sins. He seems to have seen the life of the people in the underworld. Probably it may have given him some kind of meat to write about. He traces here on the criminality of the underworld people. Naturally his character spring from this atmosphere. They are born with sins. Greene shows that sometimes these sinners behave with complete understanding of their sins. Greene with his superb analytical procedure depicts his characters. He faithfully narrates them from the incidents, depicted in the novel.

Killing, murders, lust, betrayal all such things are very common with the these evil-minded people. They do not bother about morality or the

concept of goodness. Underworld is nothing but the projection of deteriorated conditions of the contemporary man. These conditions drive man to commit sins. He further doesn't bother about any activities, that he prepares to satisfy his ego. People are with selfish attitudes and in order to establish their power, they follow the track that leads them to the world of sinners. It seems that these people are hungry after power. They wish to be powerful. This tendency shows their lust for power and authority.

The novel opens with a thrilling note.

"Hale knew before he had in Brighton three hours. They meant to murder him. With his inky fingers and his bitten, nails, his manner of cynical and nervous, anybody could tell didn't belong to early summer sun, the cool white-sun wind of the sea, the holiday crowd."¹

Pinkie Brown is a seventeen year old boy who is protagonist of the novel. He takes the charge of leadership of the race-course gang after the death of Kite. Kite was original leader of the gang. Whom Pinkie considers his father. Hale Fred who was also the member of the same gang grasses Kite to the rivalry gangster Colleni who arranges Kite's murder at the railway station. So Pinkie is ruthlessly determined to kill Hale to take revenge against him.

Hale Fred is now Kolley Kibber of a popular newspaper. He is a man hired to leave cards at various points in the town for tourists to pick up. If any cardholder recognises him from his picture in the paper, he can claim the prize. The advertisement in the paper run,

“Kolley Kibber in Brighton today. In his pocket, he had a packet of cards to distribute in hidden places along his route, those who found would receive ten shillings from the messenger, but the big prize was reserved for whoever challenges Hale in proper form of words, and a copy of messenger in his hand. You are Mr. Kolley Kibber I claim the daily Messenger Prize.”²

Hale is aware of his end. He realises that since his movements have been advertised in the Daily Messenger, Pinkie's gang can keep track of him. So sensing the danger he naturally finds under the tension and wanders in a frightful manner to save his life. Sometimes he needs the company of somebody to relieve his tension. Soon he finds the companionship with Ida Arnold, a big friendly woman. She is the singer of old ballads. Perhaps the sweet music may satisfy the tormented mind of Hale. He seems to be governed with evil ideas but somewhere in the core of his heart, feels good things. In a frightening state, he tells Ida,

“I am going to die I am scared”³

Ida makes Hale to feel secure. She tries to protect him at every moment but the death seems to be following Hale. When they drive in taxi to the palace pier, Hale knows that Pinkie is following in his old 1925 Morris Car. At palace pier Ida declares to take wash and the death takes an opportunity. She leaves him at turnstile and goes to Ladies lavatory. An appointed time at two O'clock Hale is picked up by Pinkie's mob and is killed. It seems that the underground world is very dangerous. In such gang-warfare, the death can appear any moment.

Ida is shocked by the death of Hale. After attending the funeral, she begins to make enquiries. Hales' death is officially declared as natural but Ida thinks otherwise. She knows that someone has killed him mercilessly infuriated with revenge, she talks in harsh language with inspector,

"I can manage this my own way. I don't need your police, I have got my friends."⁴ She decides to avenge the murder of Hale. Her feelings of vengeance seem to be very strong, as she says,

"Somebody had made unhappy and somebody was going to be made unhappy in return. An eye for eye and tooth for a tooth for a tooth."⁵

It seems that feeling of revenge reveals the tendency.

In meantime, One of the Pinkie's gang-members plants the cards that Kolley Kibber should have planted at fixed times so as to create an alibi. One of the cards is placed underneath a table in Snow's restaurant. Pinkie goes to fetch card. In the restaurant he meets Rose, a teen-aged waitress. She has recognised the Kolley Kibber. Pinkie warns her,

"Only I'd warn you for your own good- you've got the money If I was you I would forget it, forget all about that fellow who left the card. He is dead, sees, you have got the money that's all the matters"⁶

Pinkie tries to compete with the rich gangster, Mr. Colleoni, who has suite at cosmopolitan. Soon Pinkie and Spicer are attacked by Colleoni's men, carrying with razors. Spicer goes down and Pinkie is kicked and slashed. However, Pinkie is saved by the timely arrival of police. In wretched condition he is sheltered in a cellar behind snow's by Rose. Then Pinkie decides to marry Rose to avoid her evidence against him. Since they are both under age, the marriage is arranged by the lawyer, Mr. Prewitt. In meantime Pinkie is warned by the police inspector to leave the Brighton but he stays there because he has now here else to go. He marries Rose in a registry office, having obtained the consent of Rose's parents.

Ida Arnold entertains her role of detective. Her endless effort is to secure evidence to hang the murderers of Hale, She pursues Rose to get

information about the card, about Hale but Rose is determined not to say a word. Ida tries to bring Rose's notice that Pinkie is wicked and reckless man. She warns her,

“Don't be silly now. I am your friend. I only want to save you from that boy. You are crazy about him aren't you?”⁷

Again after the marriage, she pays another visit to warn Rose,

“You are careful dear, you don't want to be murderer's baby, you take pre-cautions”⁸

But Rose is too loyal to be changed.

Pinkie's gang begins to break up Pinkie cuts the nerve of Spicer and pushes him through rotting banisters to the death at the foot of stair-case. Cubbit being afraid of Pinkie deserts him and joins. Mr. Celleoni. In the Hotel Cosmopolitan, Cubitt is persuaded by Ida to tell the secret of Hales's death. Pinkie persuades Prewitt to go to France to get him out of the way because of his knowledge of Spicer's murder, he disturbs his loyal friend, Dallow. It seems odd that Pinkie instead of containing the gang war turns against his own.

Being desperate from Ida's pursuit, Pinkie persuades Rose to undertake suicide-pact but his intention is to kill her and remain alive himself, free forever from incriminating witnesses.

Meanwhile Ida pretends that Prewitt has been brought back by the police and confessed his knowledge of Spicer's murder. She threatens Dallow with her knowledge of both murders. Ida seems now to ^{be} _{be} confident, takes both Dallow and police inspector along with goes to trap Pinkie. They catch up with him at the crucial stage, just before it he has given his gun to Rose. Rose throws the gun away because now she comes to know the devil-side of Pinkie. Pinkie infuriates and tries to throw acid at Rose's face ^{but} _{but} it burns his face back. Finally he jumps over a precipice to meet death.

After the death ^{of} _{of} Pinkie, Rose goes to St. John's to confess but she doesn't want get absolution. She says,

"I am not asking for absolution. I want to be like-damned."⁽⁹⁾

The priest consoles Rose that probably her love will redeem her. He also hopes for Pinkies' redemption. He gives her an example of Peguy, French Catholic man,

"He was good, a holy man and he lived in Sin all through his life, because he couldn't bear the idea that any soul could suffer damnation".⁽¹⁰⁾

It seems that Pinkie dies in mortal sin. It is certain that he will be damned but there is no limit for the mercy of God. Probably Pinkie will be redeemed by the mysterious power of God.

The novel like its' beginning ends with horrifying note. The poor Rose is left alone in desparating condition. To her worst, he is shocked to hear the message on gramophone record,

"God damn you, you little bitch, why can't you go back home forever and let me be?"

Greene seems to be more interested in evil than good. According to R.B.W. Lewis, evil has always stimulated Greene a good deal more than rightings of wrong.¹¹ It doesn't mean that Greene is glorifying out the evil, embodied in the God forsaken society. It seems that his pre-occupation with evil is inextricably linked with his religious consciousness, his obsessive awareness of God and His mercy.

Greene believes that good and evil are two different sides of the same force. In Brighton Rock he seems to present "Good and Evil lived in the same country, spoke the same language, came together like old friends feeling the same completion touching hands besides the iron bead stead."¹²

In the novel, Greene presents the contrast between good and evil through the characters of Pinkie and Ida and asserts the final victory of good over evil. The religious world, represented by Pinkie and Rose stands in contrast to secular world of Ida Arnold. Pinkie is dedicated to evil, betrayal cruelty, violence where as Ida is much concerned with the righting of wrongs. It seems

that Pinkie belongs to the dark world in contrast to Ida's light world. In Ida's world of sparkling gaiety, Pinkie an alien as much as she is alien in his world of sin and squalor

Ida function as a symbol of secularised middle class society she appears as an avenging to abstract human justice. She doesn't bother to believe Hell, damnation. Opposed to Ida's secular view is Pinkie Catholic heritage which includes his firm belief in hell. He attacks non-believer, "These atheists, they don't know nothing - Of course there is Hell, flame and damnation,....."¹³

This contrast seems to appear from more explicitly Pursuit motif of the novel. Pinkie, the hunted is relentlessly pursued by Ida, who is hunter. Pursuit of Pinkie is fun and excitement to her. It gives her a chance to punish wrongdoer.

Ida Arnold, pursuing Pinkie in the name of her own concept of justice, bases her actions upon personal arbitrary values and Pinkie's action however anti-human are based on a set of prescribed values. He believes in evil of his deeds and that they will lead him certainly to damnation.

Greene suggests that Pinkie is close to God than Ida because Sinners estrangement from God is not a complete separation from him. It involves a longing or love for God with whom he may be reconciled through confession and repentance. Anthony Burgess states, "Pinkie, the gangster,

despite his unremitting pursuit of the evil can be seen with the eyes of eternity.”¹⁴

Finally Ida succeeds in punishing Pinkie, ~~It~~ symbolises the victory of Good over Evil. But the point of view, the final victory is of religion as father assures salvation for Pinkie

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Greene has created new type of heroes to suit irreligious, democratic age - whom he names demonic heroes. They have certain weaknesses and merits. His *movie* heroes, by turning all accepted values upside down, have come to understand God through knowledge of devil they seek God in devil-controlled universe. Apparently more interested in evil than good, Greene presents individuals, whose spirits become battle ground between forces of God and forces of devil, basically between Good and evil. Instead of depicting good, virtuous men, Greene depicts ‘sinners’ who stumbles along the way to heavenly city, they suffer the pain of conscience and their suffering, they come to terms with salvation.

Greene tries to put forth the effect of morality, the behavioural pattern of man. Infact he is always concerned with the contemporary man and his problems.

✓ Brighton Rock is the story of Pinkie Brown, his sin and his salvation or damnation. In the novel, Greene seems to trace more on the criminality of the under world people. Pinkie belongs to this world of crime and violence. Probably Pinkie is the worst of Greene's Catholic-sinners. His character springs from the evil atmosphere. Greene with his superb analytical procedure depicts the character of Pinkie.

Pinkie's first impression in the novel is not fair. Greene describes him as, "a boy of about seventeen watched him from the door - a shabby smart suit, the cloth too thin for much wear, a face of starved intensity, a kind of hideous and unnatural pride".¹⁵ Probably Greene's intention here is to introduce Pinkie in the manner of criminal.

Further he describes, "He had a fair smooth skin, the faintest down and grey eyes has an effect of heartlessness like and old man's, in which human feeling has died."¹⁶ Greene seems to be thinking here that criminals are violent, ruthless and cruel fellows and Pinkie represents them.

Pinkie is born with evil. He is the most powerful embodiment of evil in Greene's novel. Born and brought up near Nelson place, slum area of Brighton, Pinkie is steeped in delinquency. [As an adolescent, he has escaped from the poverty and squalor of his childhood into the underworld of crime and violence. Like Raven in A Gun For Sale, Pinkie is also product of lost

childhood. His childhood is betrayed childhood. According to West Paul, "Greene chooses adolescent whose life is twisted because his boyhood encountered the adult world too early."¹⁷

Pinkie witnesses 'the evil game of Saturday'. The sexual act of his parent horribly affects on the early mind of Pinkie. Pinkie is constrained to accept the world of crime by hell-like condition. Greene describes it, "He trailed the clouds of his won glory after him : hell lay about him in his infancy"¹⁸. It reveals the sardonic reversal of a passage of Wordsworth's 'Intimations of Immortality', which presents an idealised view of childhood.

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
from God, who is our home,
Heaven lies about us in our infancy !

Roger Sharrock presents the worst condition that led Pinkie to the world of crimes. "Pinkie bears the scars of a deprived childhood in the wretched slums of Kemptown. He is divided not only from descent people but from the big-time gangster, Celleoni by the line which separates poverty from riches : Other people are better dressed and better washed."¹⁹

Pinkie has passionate desire to commit evil. He does not bother about the religion, about morality or goodness of others or about damnation. Greene describes, "Eternal pain has not much to him : not it meant the slash of

razor blades infinitely prolonged. It seems that the boy accepts damnation. His mind seems to be full of evil thoughts. Murder, killing lust, betrayal have become day of order for him. He feels nothing for his crimes. At the age of seventeen he has become the leader of gang. Greene describes, his crime, "He had graduated in Pain : first the school dividers had been left, next the razor. He had a sense now that the murders of Hale and Spicer were trivial acts, a boy's game and he had put away child things. Murder had only led up to this - this corruption."²¹

Pinkie has devilish pride and lust for power. He is referred to as 'the Boy' by police inspector, Ida, Celleoni and others but there is nothing childlike about him. It seems that Pinkie's name suggests infancy but for pinkie, it is kind of humiliation and for that he reacts violently. Greene describes, "There was poison in his veins, though he grinned and bore it. They thought because he was only seventeen....he jerked his narrow shoulders back at the memory that he'd killed his man."²²

This inferiority complex drives him to the desire to be big-man. He wants to be Don (King) of underworld. It seems that Pinkie tries to establish himself as a powerful man. Karl F. R. clearly states, "Pinkie himself a pathological killer is first cousin to the superhuman who thinks he can conquer everything in his way. Pinkie's vision is to be an Alexander of crime - to be man-God"²³

Pinkie has strong hatredness and repulsion for sex. Probably that is resulted from traumatic experiences of his early childhood. Pinkie always horrifies to remember the week-end game of his parents. Greene describes, "he thought, today's Saturday, remembering the room at home, the horrifying weekly exercise of his parents which he watched from single bed."²⁴

Again his marriage with Rose proves to be pretending game from which he wants to save his own skin. He has neither love nor lust for her. He has married her only to avoid the evidence against him. Greene clears Pinkie's intention, "There were only two people could hang us, Spicer and the girl I've killed Spicer and I'm marrying the girl. It shows Pinkie's wickedness. He betrays his friends and innocent wife too. Greene describes sex as 'Sickness'. "She got up and he saw the skin of her thigh for a moment above, the artificial silk and a prick of sexual desire disturbed him like a sickness."²⁶

Again after their marriage, Pinkie roughly says, Rose, "You needn't think there is going to be honeymoon that nonsense. I'm busy. I've got things to do. I've got....."²⁷

It seems that Pinkie is wicked and cruel fellow. He is completely entangled in the world of crimes. He commits murders, betrays, his friends, his loyal wife and ultimately commits suicide, the worst sin of all.

Pinkie does not drink or smoke or fornicate. Being Catholic he believes in the fires and flames of Hell. He is quite sure of about his damnation. After his death Rose is left in predicament state to face the horrible reality. But it is she who becomes an instrument of salvation for Pinkie. It is cleared that Pinkie is the worst sinner who deserves damnation that means the eternal punishment. But father thinks that Pinkie will be saved because God's grace is great. It is beyond man's imagination. Hence father's faith is another dimension that reveals to Sinners to get relieve of their sins. Inspite of all his evil things and sins, Pinkie does not want to feel sorry for it. On the contrary he is very firm in his approach, he never bothers about religion and concept of sin and damnation. It seems that Greene shows a way of hope for pinkie's redemption.

Plot of the novel, is intricate and seems to be confusing for understanding. It is divided into seven parts, that have got sections in different number. Some parts have two sections, some have three but the last one is largest containing eleven sections. The novel had thrilling plot, dividing two worlds represented by Pinkie and Ida.

Greene creates an accute images that describe the seedy and squalor places. The images like the flapping gutters, glassless windows, or rotting dis-coloured face, the basin full of stale water, the rotten banister insects.

CHAPTER - III

NOTES AND REFERENCE

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