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Orphans and Class Anxiety in Nineteenth-century English Novels

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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This dissertation discusses the most popular outsiders in nineteenth-century English novels—orphans. Both real and fictional orphans are often known to formulate the threatening force that disturbs conventional domesticity and obscures social boundaries, for without heritage or parentage an individual in the nineteenth century is home-less, name-less, and class-less. Suggesting Mary Shelley's creature in *Frankenstein* as the first orphan prototype in nineteenth-century novels, this dissertation shows the inevitable tension between orphans and society. However, this study also argues that literary orphan characters encourage purposeful sepa-

ration from domestic history and pursue self-reformation rejecting social and cultural interference. Novels that I have chosen insist upon legal and cultural transformation concerning the marginalized, but most of all they provide compelling stories that endanger orphans' physical and psychological stabilization yet shelter their individualities from domestic imprisonment. The prevalent class anxiety and social prejudice could discourage the self-development of this trope of outsiders, but I argue that they intentionally dispossess domesticity and reject tearful familial reunion because they find conventional social definition unnecessary and iniquitous. The examination of these unique orphan characters does not provide a historically accurate portrayal of "real" orphans. This study assumes that "real" orphans suffered from extensive economical and familial difficulties and those literary orphans enjoy the privilege of orphan-hood recreated by Brontë, Eliot, Collins, Thackeray, Craik and Dickens.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Outsiders create social and political tension as soon as they enter a stabilized society. In the name of progress and assimilation, outsiders pressure those within to accept their strangeness and attempt to transcend their own difference. Yet how do they appeal to these inside residents when their existence personifies immorality and illegitimacy? Or how do they demand acceptance when they deliberately choose transgression and alienation? The abandoned, the alienated, the ignored-orphans can be considered an emerging force for disruption within the domestic sphere, but this study underscores the potential social flexibility and mobility encouraged by the disturbing yet enlightening representation of orphans in nineteenth-century English novels. Such orphans suggest a revision of conventional Victorian domesticity and the creation of distinct individualities separate from domestic history. Examining orphan characters leads to defining their formulation of autonomous individuality as a necessary procedure to achieve social mobility and cultural acceptance. In the novels that I discuss, orphans' denial of their own identities

does not guarantee assimilation; in fact, it only accentuates their destabilized selfhood. The internal acknowledgment of their unconventionality dignifies their self-identity, which ironically leads to the more affable relationship. The profoundly meaningful and intimate relationship between orphans and society may depend upon their ability to extend and negotiate principles of traditional domesticity and ideologies, while preserving their eccentricities.

Julia Kristeva describes orphans' internal frustration and substantiation of their identities most effectively in *Strangers to Ourselves*. She writes:

> To be deprived of parents—is that where freedom starts? Certainly foreigners become intoxicated with that independence, and undoubtedly their very exile is at first no more than a challenge to parental overbearance. Those who have not experienced the near-hallucinatory daring of imagining themselves without parents-free of debt and duties-cannot understand the foreigners' folly, what it provides in the pleasure ("I am my sole master"), what it comprises in the way of angry homicide ("neither father nor mother, neither God nor master..."). If I tried...to share with them some of the violence that causes me to be totally on my own, they would not know where I am, who I am, what it is, in others, that rubs me the wrong way. (21-3)

The impossibility of imagining orphan-hood signifies the difficulty of formulating an elemental relationship with such social outsiders. The dangerous assumption that orphans must enjoy their "freedom" aggravates themselves, and Kristeva admonishes readers that an unprepared and shallow approach would cause violence, resentment, and disconnection. However, this does not mean that society should fear orphans either. She stresses how orphans suffer from the disposition to destabilize themselves psychologically. They refrain from communication, not out of resentment, but out of social ignorance and

inexperience. Unaccustomed to conventional attachment, they impede their ability to connect socially, which distracts them from domestication. Kristeva's ideas of their disorientation can be applied to literary orphan characters. Orphans that I discuss question the necessity of pretentious compliant relationships and intentionally choose to remain marginalized.

What happens if an orphan is forced to integrate into his or her society? Does a happy familial reunion resolve all conflicts? Is it possible to prefer alienation and isolation to cultural acceptance? The idea of complete solitude tortures orphans, as they too seek companionship and community to conceive self-identity. However, orphans like habitual travelers or strangers possess impulses to remain outsiders within foreign cultures because they appreciate the only consistent element and consolation that would not abandon them-the familiar solitude. Born without legitimate names, they are externally cursed and distanced from society, but the internalized sorrow of solitude remains constant. Therefore, they resist the familiar stability and pursue the unfamiliar territory.

John Richetti summarizes the essence of fictional individualities in both eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century literature:

> Eighteenth-century fiction is [important]for the understanding of this evolving entity, the socially constructed selfis increasingly (if implicitly) concerned with the problems of what it means to be an individual, with the value or significance of the particular experience of individuals as they seek to exercise agency, and of course with the related question of what constitutes the best community to support the individualin the classic nineteenth-century novel, character, author, and reader approach an understanding of socio-historical necessity and seek to reconcile such necessity with the varieties of individual freedom that seem to be available. (4)

The universality of fictional orphans' struggles raises the issue of the "socially constructed self," for they must embrace the absence of domesticity-the most primary and rudimentary unit of society. The valorization of identity is unlikely to occur if the evolution of "entity" starts awkwardly. However, such an idea stems from the assumption that only traditional domesticity and community could formulate or even fabricate any significant sense of who he or she is. Undomesticated individuality contains unique internal energy that ordinary individuals do not have, and orphan characters transcend social strata and their own anxiety to proceed as marginalized. Their distinctively different identity can survive conformity. Richetti's examination of individuality in eighteenth-century literature illuminates nineteenth-century novels when we evaluate orphan characters. He argues that the classic "nineteenth century novel characters" attempt reconciliation, and many Dickensian orphans such as Esther Summerson and Cecilia Jupe (or Sissy Jupe) prove his idea, but I look for transformative orphans who exceed social expectations and challenge patriarchal society. The nineteenth-century orphan characters that I discuss do not revolutionize their society, but their individual progress—however disturbing and unconventional—enacts reformation and transformation. They both criticize and embrace ideal concepts of Victorian domesticity and nation, striving to clarify the socially obscure territory of outsiders within.

This introduction begins with Harry Potter and discusses our cultural obsession with orphans to argue that their literary representation has evolved since Shakespeare. I have randomly chosen orphan characters, and if we trace "back" their stories, they de-familiarize their presence, associate violence, and create disturbance actively, and social compassion regresses into fear of and

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contempt for them. This review does not include orphans who are grateful to receive charitable attention and fail to exhibit self-conscious identity. Earlier narratives exhibit more indifference that turns into antagonism towards orphans, and their representation contains inherent contempt that alienates them. In this short survey of conventional orphan characters, I demonstrate that the successful initiation of healthy relationships between orphans and society must be accompanied by immediate sympathetic response and that orphan characters often solicit sympathy, not self-reliance. The problem is that orphans do not receive appropriate attention.

1.1 The Obstinate Reality Remains Undisturbed. (1997)

Currently the cultural status of Harry Potter is unquestionable, and despite critical attacks on Rowling's predictable plots and commercial movies, contemporary audiences desire Harry's success and prosperous life. Numerous twenty-first-century writers and reviewers have compared Americans' sensational response to J. K. Rowling's last novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, to nineteenth-century Americans' fascination with "Little Nell" in Charles Dickens' *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Matthew Davis, a BBC news writer, recalls similar responses to Dickens' novel in America and mentions the gathering crowd who waited for the serialized story from England at New York Harbor. They shouted, "Is [Little] Nell dead?" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/) The sentimental nineteenth-century audience pleaded for a happy ending, but

the little heroine dies. So how about the twenty-first-century audience? Many adults desired a reasonably happy ending to the Harry Potter series for their children, but Michael Booth, *Denver Post* staff writer, notes, "Die if you must, Harry. It might be good for all of us" (www.denverpost.com/ci). He does not resent orphan Harry's popularity, but he implies that we must disengage ourselves from Harry's imaginary suffering and pay attention to our real ones. American readers reveal their interest in this English character, but the nature of such fascination is complicated. Why does the death of an orphan hero create a more satisfactory closure for contemporary critics, while readers plead for Harry's happiness? How does a parentless, homeless, and classless individual initiate conversations concerning domesticity and community? Do twenty-first-century readers genuinely care about an orphan character and his fate?

The power of Harry Potter exists, not in his mastery of magic or masculine strength, but in his orphan-identity, which allows him to exceed the restrictions of childhood. The orphan status becomes a gift, a status, and a source of extraordinary confidence for Harry. Rowling describes that his orphan-status attracts attention from the very beginning: "Harry Potter rolled over inside his blankets without waking up, not knowing he was special, not knowing he was famous, not knowing he would be woken in a few hours' time by Mrs. Dursley's scream...He couldn't know that at this very moment, people meeting in secret all over the country were holding up their glasses and saying in hushed voices: 'To Harry Potter — the boy who lived!"' (17) Like in a typical orphan narrative, his parent's friend has no choice but to leave the infant "in his blanket," and grown up Harry endures cruelty from his own

relatives. Yet, "people meeting in secret all over the country" (meaning the magical world) talk of his survival and expects to witness greatness of this orphan in the future. Rowling foreshadows that her orphan character would "live" to inspire those who meet him. The fantastical adventures and his enemies threaten his life, but the "famous" Harry Potter defeats all of them, except his uncle's callousness and his cousin's brutality. Hopkins argues that "it is not the monster who is frightening, but the repressed, hypocritical society which comes together only in its wish to destroy" the abandoned child (150). The hypocrisy remains solid in reality, and Harry resists his hypocritical uncle, aunt, and cousin that lock him up in a small room, but Harry comes to enjoy the benefits of being "Harry Potter" as long as he stays away from them.[1]

The success of *Harry Potter and The Socerer's Stone* lies in the creation of

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[1] I believe that concurrent creation of Harry Potter movies has caused readers' sentimental reaction to Harry's fate. Their genuine concern for Harry Potter increases, as they watch the visual representation of his stories, and it becomes easier for late twentieth-century and twenty-first audiences to identify with this imaginary character. In the nineteenth century, serialized novels could easily entertain the public, but in the twenty-first century, it is difficult to capture the public's attention without visualization. The expectation of twenty-first century readers differs from that of the nineteenth century. Rowling's novels deserve our admiration, but the sensational interest in Harry's destiny could not have occurred without the movies that creates the illusion of intimate relationships between characters and audiences. The movie captures the fantasy of the magic school and wizard and contrasts the miserable condition of reality more effectively. This is why I focus my arguments on the movie. In *Harry Potter and The Socerer's Stone*, the representations of orphan-hood, despite its limitations, surpass reality and depend on the idea of a socially flexible community. The surreal elements of the fantasy facilitates Harry's acceptance. Yet, the magical community does contain evil forces and terrifying creatures that threaten his life. Hopkins claims that the gothic elements of the movie are crucial in terms of extending the image of ideal domesticity: "[such movies provide] a fantasy world designed to seem safe and nostalgically appealing to parents" and "these films also offer children an imaging ofthe strains and tensions of family life. For all these film's emphasis on mummies, ghosts, and wizards, the real fears being explored are about what lies at the heart of the family" (116). The essential force that unites a family emerges through unexpected appearance and attacks of "scary" creatures, and such ordeal reaffirms the family bond. Harry's newly found community tells him that he could establish a closer relationship with his efforts to preserve and protect the community from danger.

two worlds that do not collide, enabling Harry to live as a contradiction. The fantastical talent that he possesses immediately turns into "abnormal"-ness (Rowling 53) in the real world, and Harry cannot choose his residence. He must live in both worlds. Harry's separation from the household of his obnoxious relatives makes them more inhumane and contemptuous toward him. Despite Harry's elevation in the other world, the reality maintains its permanent imperfection. The magical world of Hogwarts stands next to the human world, but Harry the heroic magician has little influence over its social inflexibility and moral deterioration. The problematic social and psychological dislocation confounds Harry, but since his existence requires no justification in Hogwarts, he gains more strength to bear stigma in reality. The successful completion of each adventure in the magical world reveals Rowling's and the director's perception of reality. Why does the modern world remain mundanely and realistically so "real"? Why does Rowling distinguish her orphan protagonist's struggle from that of the real world and keep returning Harry to reality? The constitution of a hero demands social and political negotiation, and the extensive communication between heroes and society is crucial. Such an interaction would tarnish Harry's outsider-hood, destroying his uniqueness. Why should he negotiate with the uninteresting reality, when he could celebrate his strangeness without restraint in the other world? Of course Hogwarts, the school of magic, enforces strict rules of its own and punishes Harry when he violates them, but the environment remains compliant to the orphan.

A. S. Byatt criticizes the lack of realistic context of this magic school: "If we regress, we regress to a lost sense of significance we mourn for. Ursula K. Le Guin's wizards inhabit an anthropologically coherent world where magic

really does act as a force. Ms. Rowling's magic wood has nothing in common with these lost worlds. It is small, and on the school grounds, and dangerous only because she says it is" (http://dir.salon.com/story/books/feature/). The magical world reacts to Harry's internal and external struggles, and it stands as a romantic setting that allows him to prove his superiority. As Byatt says, the environment lacks "coherence" and does not rationalize or justify its purpose in Harry's adventure. It only accommodates his ambition and commemorates his name. However, I believe that Harry's empowerment fueled by incredible magic attracts the reader more than the creation of a "coherent" world that Byatt speaks of. Byatt argues that Rowling conveniently creates a favorable world for Harry Potter's fame, which could be dangerous or safe depending upon Harry's actions, but Rowling encourages the embodiment of "abnormal"-ness (53) to change into a simple "greatness." The fantasy elevates Harry's position, raises confidence within him and makes him a scary person who could say, "They don't know we're not allowed to use magic at home. I'm going to have a lot of fun with Dudley (his cousin) this summer" (309). These last lines in Book 1 imply that Harry would no longer remain a passive orphan in the house. Harry's determination may seem threatening, but it also predicts that the child would exhibit unequivocal ability to challenge the domestic authority of his uncle and his family. From the very beginning Rowling's focus has been Harry's transformation, not that of the world.

On the other hand, Rowling does show that Harry is not a perfect human being endowed with bravery. He gradually learns to suppress his anger and does not take great action in the human world because he must learn to cope with two different worlds. When his best friend Ron jokes about his fame in

Hogwarts, Harry sadly recognizes that he would be nobody again in Dudley's house during the summer: "Not where I'm going, I promise you" (308). The oppressors in his life are his uncle, aunt, and cousin-all relatives. As Jane Eyre bears physical and emotional violence from the Reeds, with them Harry often remains defeated. Harry's mood improves only when his friends and teachers from the magical world interfere with his struggles. Harry does not attempt to transform or modify the imperfect reality in which he must endure injustice. He simply crosses over the boundary. His relatives' violence increases, and as he grows up, Harry distances himself from them. Undeniably, Harry is the hero who finds the Sorcerer's Stone, fights monsters, and is surrounded by his friends who would risk their lives to help him. But at home, he remains a nuisance.

Does Rowling disregard family because Harry could prosper without parents? Richard Adams argues that Harry's lack of family does not undermine the importance of traditional domesticity:

> Parentage forms an important background throughout the series. Socially, wizards are so strongly attached to the nuclear family that they cannot conceive that Harry wants to avoid his family during the school holidays. Rowling's commitment to the traditional family-despite being a single parent herself-means Harry has to endure the cruel and violent treatment of his aunt and uncle, Vernon and Petunia Dursley, who took him in after his real parents were killed. (http://books.guardian.co.uk/harrypotter/story)

The despicable personalities of Harry's blood relations strongly contrast with the magnanimous Albus Dumbledore, the master wizard of Hogwarts. Neither Harry nor his audiences want to face his aunt and uncle. And their irrationally overprotective attitude towards their own son disgusts them. However, the

significance of a family does not fade away in the movie. Without his parents, Harry cannot survive or exist. The fantastical world of magic acknowledges him only because he is "Harry Potter." The name defines, rewards and restricts the course of his life in Hogwarts, as his reputation is based on the fact that he is an orphan who survived an evil attack. In the human world he lives as a victim of his relatives' cruelty, but he is socially invisible. Yet, as soon as he enters Hogwarts, flocks of students and wizards and imaginary creatures ask his name. Harry must carry the burden of his too famous orphan-hood in return for recognition. In return, Harry deserves a happy ending.

1.2 "The victim of a systematic course of treachery and deception" (1838)

Most Dickensian orphans respect benevolent benefactors, constantly apologizing for their mere existence. Self-deprecating orphan characters often appear in Dickens's novels, and Oliver Twist does not differ greatly from those social victims. However, Oliver once makes a scandalous request, which shocks the administrators of his workhouse. It hardly counts as a rebellion, but it agitates the authorities. Oliver's request does not sound unreasonable, but Dickens indicates that even authorities of charities prefer not to hear any constructive opinion from orphans:

> "Please, sir, I want some more." He gazed in stupefied astonishment... The assistants were paralyzed with wonder; "What!" said the master at length, in a faint voice. "Please, I want some more." "Mr. Limbkins, I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist has asked for more!" There was a general start. Horror was depicted on every

> countenance. "For MORE!" said Mr. Limbkins ... "Do I under-
> stand that he asked for more, after he had eaten the supper allotted
> by the dietary?"... "He did, sir." "That boy will be hung...that
> boy will come to be hung." (10)

Oliver's words disturb those who torture these children in the name of official philanthropy, but for Dickens the absurdity lies in their ridiculous response. They believe that Oliver has questioned their authority and expressed his ingratitude, but the scene mockingly exaggerates their inflexible attitude towards an orphan's simple request. Instead of re-examining the appropriate distribution of food in the workhouse, they only feel threatened by Oliver's unexpected words and discredit his purpose. Dickens fears that the strictly utilitarian philosophy hinders the dissemination of genuine philanthropy and implies that Oliver's request must penetrate the wall of negligence, as the gap between the rich and the poor creates irreparable tension and unnecessary antagonism. Mr. Limbkins ostracizes orphans by defining them as permanent sinners, as he repeats his belief that Oliver would be executed for his demand. Yet, it is he who threatens the orphan: "during...his solitary incarceration, Oliverwas carried every other day into the hall..., and there sociably flogged as a public warning and example" (14). Limbkin hopes to maintain his authority by punishing Oliver physically.

1.3 Sentimental Readers and Crying Orphans (1807)

William Wordsworth wrote the following note for his poem titled "Alice Fell; Or Poverty" in 1807:

> Written to gratify Mr. Graham of Glasgow, brother of the Author of "The Sabbath" . . . a man of ardent humanity. The incident had happened to himself, and he urged me to put it into verse, for humanity's sake. The humbleness, meanness if you like, of the subject, together with the homely mode of treating it, brought upon me a world of ridicule by the small critics, so that in policy I excluded it from many editions of my Poems, till it was restored at the request of some of my friends, in particular my son-in-law, Edward Quillinan.

According to this note, Wordsworth received offensive criticism from "the small" critics who could not discover literary significance in this poem. Out of a friendly gesture, he wrote this sentimental poem about an orphan girl's pauperism, but his critics could not understand its humanistic purpose so Wordsworth excluded it from his collection for a while. Did they consider poetry too sacred and intellectual to discuss humble human misery? Or did they merely resent the commonality of this social topic of poverty? The poem's thematic simplicity does not contain any significant convoluted social commentary. Yet, it effectively introduces the invisibility of orphans' existence in nineteenth-century England:

> I heard the sound,–and more and more;
> And still I heard it as before. . .
> "Whence comes," said I, "this piteous moan?" . . .
> "My cloak!" no other word she spake,

But loud and bitterly she wept...
She checked herself in her distress,
And said, "My name is Alice Fell;
I'm fatherless and motherless..."
And I gave money to the host,
To buy a new cloak for the old...
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell!
(http://www.bartleby.com/145/ww190.html)

Alice's ragged cloak is entangled in the speaker's "chaise," but its furious movement has prevented him from recognizing the identity of the moaning. When he finally discovers that Alice has been dragged by the carriage, he gives her money to buy "a new cloak," and the poor orphan girl is satisfied. The portrayal of Alice the orphan does not interest me. Rather the speaker's integrity conveys the prevalent social negligence regarding the marginalized. Alice's crying sound is heard repeatedly, but it takes a while for the speaker to recognize the source of its sound. His inability to identify the pain leaves Alice with torn clothes. The speaker's action increases the distance between the privileged and the marginalized. He gives Alice money to help her in order to eliminate his guilt, and "the little orphan" disappears happy and "proud." Alice's tears moved his soul, but she fades from his memory, and we do not learn what he does after this act of compassion. Wordsworth's friend asked him to write Alice Fell's story "for humanity's sake," and the poet describes the brevity of humane connection between society and social outcasts and laments the absence of nineteenth-century philanthropy.

1.4   An Orphan Priest's Blasphemy (1795)

The controversial representation of Ambrosio in The Monk incites religious conversations, but this scandalous protagonist is also an orphan. Matthew Lewis destroys his credibility most disturbingly. The priest enters the world of divinity without choice, and the respectable monks create a religious hero out of an orphan, whose mysterious past only accentuates his godliness and innocence:

> [They] found him while yet an Infant at the Abbey door. All attempts to discover who had left him there were vain,...the Monkshave not hesitated to publish that He is a present to them from the Virgin...He is [in] total seclusion from the world, and mortification of the flesh...In the whole course of his life He has never been known to transgress a single rule of his order; The smallest stain is not to be discovered upon his character...an observer of Chastity,...The common People therefore esteem him to be a Saint. (10)

Instead of suffering the social stigma of being an orphan, young Ambrosio carries the burden of maintaining religious chastity. The public expectation suffocates the young priest. Intentional social alienation does not aggravate the orphan outsider, but rather the unwanted glorification torments him. According to the public of Madrid, "the smallest stain" cannot be "discovered" within him, and this distorted hero worship pressures the priest to externalize his distress violently.

The religious contravention seems trivial compared with his murderous character, but we also notice the innate loneliness, which he never overcame

in the sacred space of the Catholic Church. He warns Rosario, his worshiper, not to abandon society, before it abandons him:

> Were it possible. . . for Man to be so totally wrapped up in himself as to live in absolute seclusion from human nature, and could yet feel the contented tranquillity which these lines express,. . . Man was born for society. However little He may be attached to the World, He never can wholly forget it, or bear to be wholly forgotten by it. . . . He feels all the monotony of his way of living. . . and finds himself alone in the Universe. (21)

Ambrosio believes it is impossible for a person to live outside of society, but he was born an outsider. He resents the unnatural identity and despises the idea of "tranquility" which humans believe they obtain when they separate themselves from civilization. The stoic life of a priest makes him more nostalgic for human affection, which he has never experienced. He declares, "man was born for society." His strange identity may not fit within the human world, but Ambrosio insists that as an outsider, he must force his existence upon it because it is more painful to be forgotten than despised. A social outcast endures prejudice, but such affliction occurs in relation to other human beings, which he seeks desperately[2]. Ambrosio resorts to violence when he cannot conceal his deterioration from both the Church and the city of Madrid, which compelled him to remain faultless. The description of the priest as a criminal only enhances the public fear of strangers. Ambrosio destroys female innocence and takes a human life: " He dragged her towards the Bed. . . , endeavoured to put an end to her existence. He . . . was sustained with inhuman firmness the

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[2]This attitude is also discovered within Victor Frankenstein's creature. The creature's justification of murder horrifies Victor, but the father does not realize that the series of violence transpire in order to maintain the antagonistic relationship between the father and the abandoned son. This is why the creature chooses to murder his father's beloved family, not Victor himself.

spectacle of her agonies, when soul and body were on the point of separating …[he] beheld before him that once noble and majestic form, now become a Corse, cold, senseless and disgusting" (242). Once the endearing young priest, Ambrosio has lost common sense as he kills the woman, who turns out to be his mother. The narrator's portrayal of Ambrosio's evil announces the violent return of hatred within this resentful orphan. He returns to his mother only to locate himself within a domestic tragedy and realizes that no intimate territory exists for a stranger like him to reside in. Lewis eliminates any hope for the orphan Ambrosio. The absence of any intimate domestic relationship turns Ambrosio into a "cold, senseless" monster, and Antonia and her mother becomes a misguided victim of his insanity. Those who respected him might have insisted upon his perfection too severely, but it is the orphan who violates the human law, thus condemning himself to Hell.

1.5   A Bastard's Conspiracy (1608)

One of the most infamous "[bastards]" in literature is Edmund, the illegitimate son of Gloucester from *King Lear*. Condemned as the "bastard son," he laments his pathetic condition, disavowing his illegitimacy. Edmund blames the inflexible legality of his birth right:

> Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law
> My services are bound.
> Why bastard? wherefore base?
> When my dimensions are as well compact,
> My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
> As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
> With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base? (I. 2, line 1-10)

Although Edmund is Gloucester's natural son, the legal system deprives him of his right to be his father's legitimate heir because of his mother's lower social status. Thus, Edmund addresses "nature" as "[his] goddess" and insists that she should be the only "law" that he follows. This foreshadows his intentional transgression of human laws. The illegitimate son despises "the plague of custom" because it determines his "baseness." He believes that it opposes the divine laws of nature. The condescending nuance of the word bastard has unfairly discredited his life, as he cries, "Why bastard?....Why brand they us with base? With baseness?" The repetition of the word heightens his tension, and we fear the consequence of such rage. If no one can recognize the "generous" and "true" form of Edmund, he plans to implement his political conspiracy to impose recognition.

Edmund's soliloquy continues with great resentment. His "bastardy" leaves him with bitterness, which leads him to conspire against "legitimate Edgar." He threatens to annihilate the domesticity which refuses to include him:

> Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take
> More composition and fierce quality
> Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
> Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,
> Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,
> Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
> Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
> As to the legitimate: fine word,–legitimate!
> Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
> And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
> Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:
> Now, gods, stand up for bastards! (I. 2, line 11-22)

Edmund belittles the sanctity of a legal marriage bed by labeling it "a dull, stale, tired bed." In a mocking tone, he claims that such a marriage only produces "a whole tribe of fops," but those "fops" are treated with respect as they are the "egitimate" children. Edmund cannot claim the title of the "legitimate" heir, thus he questions the authenticity of the word legitimacy. Edmund despises the word, as he says, "fine word-legitimate," but enormous pain exists underneath this line. He hungers for recognition and resents the unreasonable legality. When Edmund decides to dominate his father's affection-which has been, from his point of view, taken over by his "egitimate" brother, Edgar-Shakespeare warns us that a tragedy is inevitable. "I must have your land: our father's love is to the bastard Edmund," he says. The bastard son, unable to penetrate the ungenerous walls of his society, turns to cruelty and evil. When he mockingly declares that "Edmund the base shall top the legitimate," he has reached insanity, turning to inhumanness beyond imagination. As such, those who are related to him by blood will heavily pay for their refusal to embrace the "baseness" of Edmund.

Edmund's untimely decision to support justice at the end of *King Lear* (to tell Edgar about his conspiracy to murder Cordelia and Lear) makes him an embodiment of criminality, but the illegitimate son's frustration must be noted. His actions result in domestic tragedy, but his life began as a tragedy as soon as he was labeled "bastard." He desires to legitimize himself through conspiracy, for he cannot legally enter his father's legitimate family. He promises himself "growth" and "prosperity" in his future, as he concocts a cunning plan to defame his half brother Edgar. It begins with an illegitimate child's effort to escape from his domestic tragedy only to die as a villain who destroys a

legitimate domesticity.

1.6   Conclusion

Orphans that I have chosen here suffer the psychological torture enacted by the family, whether it is their original family or an adopted one. The inconsistent nature of their social location makes them "unfit" for most types of traditional families. Domestic ideology persistently banishes orphans or bastards, refusing to legitimize their identities. The distorted images of orphan outsiders result from such irrational repugnance they have experienced within the domesticity. And social isolation reproduces unnecessary violence within orphans. Orphans exhibit inconsistent personalities. Our current orphan hero Harry kills mystical monsters but gives in to his aunt's relentless criticism. Oliver could ask for more food only to submit to more horrific treatment of the workhouse. Pretending that they have not been tainted by their past, Ambrosio and Edmund eventually externalize their hatred to transgress moral boundaries. However, the characterization of orphans in literature has changed since Shakespeare, and the novels that I discuss in the following chapters present intricate and comprehensive stories of orphans whose individual and social versatility contribute to or at least suggest restructuring and modernizing traditional domesticity and society.

My dissertation will concentrate on the social significance of literary orphans in nineteenth-century English novels. Orphan characters challenged, tamed, and even strengthened the social hierarchy. I will argue that they promote social mobility without revolutionizing the contemporary system. I

will address the following questions. Why are orphan characters "with no name and no class" dominating Victorian novels? What kind of roles do these orphans play in terms of class anxiety and the rising middle-class? How do orphans with no inherited name and no financial security survive in the society? What do the writers of 19th century suggest or recognize in terms of social responsibility for those with "no name"?

The purpose of chapter one is to provide a historical context for the novels that I will be discussing and to introduce "real" orphans. The reality of orphans in the nineteenth century differs from that of those in literature. By examining the success and failure of the Poor Law, I will discuss both financial and social difficulties that orphans and the illegitimate faced. While considering poverty a sin, England was aware of its social responsibility for the poor, and it built orphanages to provide for their children. I will argue how nineteenth-century England embraced and rejected its outsider.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) introduces a prototype of an orphan-abhorred, abandoned, and ignored. In chapter two, with Lucy Snowe in *Villette* (1853) and Eppie in *Silas Marner* (1861) I will discuss the philosophical or psychological questions that orphans ask themselves (where do I belong?) and their crisis as an individual. Such questions rise, as they live in a society that is obsessed with class and propriety. The signs of class anxiety increase both in high and middle classes, as the boundaries and standards change constantly. I present here literary orphans as those who promote a socially flexible world. And their imagination of domesticity does not threaten to destroy the traditional. They simply create their own ideal.

In chapter three, Becky in *Vanity Fair* (1847-8) and Magdalen in *No Name*

(1862) revenge social mistreatments they received as orphans. William Thackeray and Wilkie Collins grant them opportunities to announce their existence, to disturb the socially comfortable class, and to enter the society that appears to have no place for the nameless. Masking themselves, they inadequately pursue social mobility, and Thackeray and Collins discover the force of reformation through their criminal actions.

The last chapter focuses on male orphans, Daniel Deronda in *Daniel Deronda* (1876) and John Halifax in *John Halifax, Gentleman* (1856). In the beginning their economical and social circumstances differ from each other, but gaining their socially acceptable status, they need to ask themselves whether they deserve the title "gentleman." Their moral principles and psychological strength are on trial, and they prove that they deserve to be historicized as heroes. However, they do not tolerate unconventional femininity.

Chapter 2

Invisible Orphans-To Threaten, To Serve and To Moralize

Whether politically instigated or not, the stories of orphans produced at least two cultural phenomena in the nineteenth century. Their existence stirred anxiety among both middle and higher class families. The stories also introduced a didactic model for chastity and charity that accommodated a social urgency to distinguish the difference between respectable and unrespectable citizens clearly in Great Britain. The term "orphans" in this discussion refers to parentless children separated from their parents (either alive or dead) who relied upon social institutions or themselves to survive. Why did some Victorians predicate that orphans would threaten domestic stability? Could they procure respectable positions and eradicate their invisibility through the use of social welfare and private charities? How did Victorians envision their relationship with individuals possessing inappropriate identities?

What kind of society did Victorian orphans actually live in? Nineteenth

century English society solidified its social structure based on class, and most Victorians embraced that structure. In *Daily Life in Victorian England*, Sally Mitchell claims how it was only natural for "the railroads [to designate] different cars for first class, second class and third class," and "passengers knew where they were expected to ride" (17). She exemplifies that a "working man [that] had just won a lot of money would not dream of riding home in the first -class car" (17). The idea of propriety rhetorically dominated nineteenth century patriarchal society. Class was inherited, and one had one proper ticket to hold to ride in a specific car. Yet, an increasing number of middle class citizens, attempting to extend their territory within the social strata, created vacillating boundaries. While individuals concurred with their designated roles to preserve their social status, the idea of social advancement encouraged the self-reliant to progress politically. All classes suffered from class anxiety, however, whenever they could not maintain their class status for economic or cultural reasons. David Newsome claims that "England in Victorian times was not a closed society, but it was certainly acutely class-conscious" (63). It exceeded its limitations through appropriate social mobility, but the traditional sense of social hierarchy still imbued conservative and anxious Victorians. They panicked when social barriers and boundaries started to disappear. In reality, orphans rarely had the opportunity to comprehend the significance of their unconventional individuality, for everyday survival haunted them. They rarely witnessed social mobility. The stigma of being an orphan or the perception of illegitimacy diminished their individuality and any romantic notion of social liberation.

The literary fascination with orphan characters in the nineteenth century

was closely related to a contradictory societal response to orphans in real life. Victorians condemned their obscure origins, yet they simultaneously displayed compassion. This chapter provides a brief history of the living conditions of orphans in the nineteenth century and demonstrates that the concerns of such orphans differed greatly from those of Victorian literary orphans. The charitable rich and the middle class effectively proclaimed themselves as being more respectable by virtue of their recognizing the marginalized. Orphans could prosper to serve the privileged through timely institutional education. But in the process, they were often forced to sever their family ties. In nineteenth-century novels some orphan characters did reunite with their middle class parents or be married into a better class, but in reality, most nineteenth-century orphans were born into poverty and educated to live in servitude or to immigrate to English colonies. Based on this discrepancy between material reality for and literary representation of orphans, I argue that the destabilization of orphans' lives resulted, not just from the patriarchal legal system, but also from prejudice and discrimination. Wealthy Victorians distanced themselves from the poor, orphans and the illegitimate.

Usually managed by middle class philanthropists and religious institutions, private charities garnered criticism for their perfunctory performance, being suspected of hypocrisy and misdirected interference (Roberts 233). However, the government did not entirely ignore the desolate condition of a rising number of orphans. The Poor Laws provided for the destitute, revising the previous laws to accommodate their needs. Thus, both public and private agents attempted to "rescue" orphans.[1].

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[1]The significance of rescue mission incited passionate philanthropists domestically and

This chapter examines the material conditions of nineteenth-century orphans to argue that England envisioned orphans as "outsiders," whose social invisibility functioned to reinforce domestic ideology. Orphans effectively separated from their "contaminated" heritage by entering orphanages, but they could work to re-position themselves as respectable members of the lower middle class. Victorians considered orphans to be a side effect of poverty or immorality. England provided foster care and also a good dose of social discrimination. Such "savages"[2] should be "tamed" and inserted into the social hierarchy as legitimate workers to serve the middle and higher classes. They had re-created respectable lower class citizens out of orphans, apart from their sinful domesticity. Social prejudices against poverty and illegitimacy coalesced into a preconception against orphans as well.

2.1 The Unreliable Poor and the Unreliable Workhouses

In *Sketches of London Life and Character* (1849), Albert Smith depicted "[poor] People, [who are], naturally fond of dirt" and criticized their deception. Referring to young street entertainers, he writes that parents pushed their children to earn a living (3). According to Smith, "street beggars" de-

internationally. The idea of "rescue mission" generated insensitive philanthropy and violated the subjective dignity of their charges (Roberts 250). The "rescue mission" for the uncivilized outside of England resembled the domestic mission to save the poor.

[2]According to Herbert F. Tucker's *A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture*, homeless children and waifs in nineteenth century were often called "savages" to implicate social and political responsibility to "civilize" these children (72). The term "savages" encouraged both contempt and compassion.

pended upon "trickery, trickery all" (24). He demeaned their begging as good "acting" (18): "Honest poverty is not shamefaced, but it does not parade its woes in the crowded street, nor "make up" to excite compassion…the very symbols of its distress…point them out and make them the more obvious by contrast, in order to reap the richer harvest. No: honest poverty will be seeking for work, while dishonest poverty is pocketing alms" (24). He asserted that those who were poor due to misfortune would not think of "begging" because their personal integrity would not allow them to ask for charity. This deeply rooted distrust of the destitute encouraged social denunciation of the helpless, and especially the middle class, by applying the principle of "self-reliance" to reprove the poor working class. When "nineteen cases out of twenty" (Smith 18) reeked of "dishonest poverty," how could respectable English citizens ever commiserate with an apparently poor child for his or her tragic condition?

Poverty alone did not deserve condemnation. It became catastrophic only if transformed into "indigence." Patrick Colquhoun, a magistrate in London, argued in "A Treatise on Indigence" (1806) that people should understand the difference between poverty and indigence: "Poverty is that state and condition in society where the individual has no surplus labour in store,…, it is the state of every one who must labour for substance…Indigence…is the evil,…the state of any one who is destitute of the means of subsistence, and is unable to labour to procure it to the extent nature requires" (7-8). A poor person consistently would work for survival or accept starvation. An indigent man was unwilling to work for food and lacked assiduousness. Such a distinction arose, as the rising number of poor demanded public support. England could not disregard its moral responsibility, but it also refused unconditional assis-

tance. Colquhoun understood that "the barrier between these two conditions in society [was] slender" (8), but he also believed that "the public interest" (8) should not be sacrificed for the poor. His attitude revealed the distorted impression of the poor in the nineteenth century-as undisciplined, unreliable, and thus "evil."

To dispense proper aid to the honest poor, the State chose to promote strict social welfare and built workhouses that discouraged entrance. It believed that a systematic cruelty would encourage people to seek work and that the nation's economical "productivity" would improve accordingly (Colquhoun 7-8). Late nineteenth-century social investigators, such as William Booth and Seebohm Rowntree, rebuked such beliefs, claiming that "the causes of poverty" were "low wages, unemployment and old age-over which the individual had little or no control" (Rose 236). For efficacious philanthropy, the state abandoned elementary humanism. CW Craven deplores this lack of civility in "A Night in the Workhouse" (1887). Disguising himself as a wandering "mechanic," he entered a workhouse to discover the harsh treatment of the poor:

> A rusty can was then brought in, containing about two quarts of cold water, which was to serve as a drink for all of us. A strong feeling of indignation rose within me as I observed the Miserable fare, and the contemptuous manner in which it was served out. Of the general treatment of vagrants is that the system is much too severe. . . I am of opinion that the lowest of mankind deserve better treatment than that accorded to pigs, dogs, and other animals of creation. The food furnished was scarcely fit for these last mentioned, whilst about the harsh treatment the less said the better. It is a disgrace to any civilised country. (www.workhouses.org.uk)

Craven lamented how the inmates suffered more inside this workhouse. Not only the amount of food and water, but also "the contemptuous manner" that

dominated this "philanthropic" institution enraged him. Human indolence could indeed exacerbate the problems of the poor, but Craven insisted that they "deserve better treatment" than animals. Associating poverty with savagery, people failed to grasp that poverty was an unfortunate condition, not an inherent identity. Naturally poor children and orphans on the street could not avoid such cultural contempt. The idea of street children as synonymous with savages arose from Victorians' perceptions of children as inferior souls to be rescued: "This representation of street children as savages was possible only because the idea of the savage as either noble or romantic had by mid-century been severely dented; the savage had become someone who needed to be rescued, saved and civilized" (Cunningham 97). A "civilized" nation like England could "save" its savages. Craven, however, accused workhouse officials, warning that his "civilized country" should not condone such "harsh treatment" of the poor.

Defined as "Paupers' Palaces" in the eighteenth century, workhouses had initially been designed to distribute proper relief for those poor unable to support themselves (www.workhouses.org.uk). Their condition, however, changed dramatically in the nineteenth century to discourage such social accommodation. Also the budget for "outdoor relief," a form of social assistance provided by the parish for women and children without entering the workhouse, increased due to the rising population (Roberts 110). The poor-rate tax enacted on local economies could support neither those in the workhouse nor the poor in their own parishes. Poor Law officials believed that the existence of "outdoor relief"[3] did not motivate the poor to seek work and that it was

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[3]Under the Poor Laws of Great Britain those who could not earn their living, for ex-

only an ineffective strategy: "Outdoor relief-morally destructive, as it eroded the recipient's ambition for better-paid employment and encouraged idleness which would inevitably lead to the deterioration of all working people...It was also claimed that the economy suffered disequilibrium from low wages illegally supported by outdoor relief and so disturbed the natural freedom for the labour market" (Humphreys 14). The situation financially challenged the parishes, which could barely feed their poor residents. This frustration transformed into "moral" attacks, which emphasized that poverty was associated with a religious evil that disrupted social harmony. Unconditional generosity might have "[encouraged] idleness" among the poor, but decreasing budgets, an increasing number of paupers, and fading compassion culminated in loss of concern for those whose survival depended upon social welfare. When their "idleness" and "low wages supported" by the parishes troubled the Capitalist "labour market," Victorians disburdened their anxieties directly upon the poor. Social journalists admonished this escalating condescension against the marginalized. In 1838 James Grant wrote: "Why cannot those entrusted with the distribution of relief to paupers, treat the poor wretches who are obliged to fawn on them and lick the very dust before them, with decency at least, if not with respect?" (246)

Could any form of charity or welfare actually harm the poor? Charles Dickens recorded an old man's wish in "A Walk in a Workhouse" published on

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ample, wives and children "[deserted by their husbands]" could receive monetary assistance instead of entering the workhouses (Webb 36-7). Poor Law administrators did not completely disregard orphans. Outdoor relief was available to "the offspring of widows" or extremely poor parents, who often did were able-bodied; approximately 200,000 continued to receive help from 1834 to 1899 (Horn 186). The cost of such aid, however, became burdensome, and more public "district schools" were built to educate orphans and separate them from the morbid workhouses (Horn 188).

May 25th, 1850 in *Household Words*: "I am greatly better in my health, sir; but what I want, to get me quite round, ... is a little fresh air, sir ... The regular leave for going out, comes round so seldom, that if the gentlemen, next Friday, would give me leave to go out walking, now and then ... for only an hour or so, sir!" (http://www.workhouses.org.uk/) As a social journalist Dickens asked the old man in the workhouse about his health and wanted to investigate the amount of workhouse food available. Yet, the old man's answer revealed that while the workhouse could feed the poor, it also enforced strict regulations regarding individual activities, taking away his freedom to enjoy "a little fresh air." Hippolyte Taine visited England between 1861 and 1862 and later noted in *Notes on England* (1874) that when he visited the Manchester Workhouse, he was rather surprised by the emptiness of the place (170). Sometimes the English poor refused to enter workhouses, for they "[considered] it a point of honour not to go there" (171). Ten to twenty percent of the poor lived in the workhouses, and this number did not rise much because of the horrific living conditions (Rose 160). The poor preferred to remain free and hungry.

Yet, the preservation of their dignity was not the only reason they stayed away from workhouses: "Perhaps it must be admitted that the system of administration is foolishly despotic and worrying, ... the human being becomes a machine; he is treated as if he were devoid of feeling, and insulted quite unconsciously" (Taine 171). This French philosopher's indignation against the insensitive English "system of administration" suggests that an irreparable distance existed between the poor and the state.[4]

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[4]Ursular Henrique summarizes the "insensitivity" of the Commissioners of Inquiry regarding the Victorian Poor Law and mentions the Andover workhouse scandal. This workhouse inmates participated in the bone-crushing work and also ate the bones. She points out

Poor Law officials and numerous parishes searched for ways both to improve economic efficiency and to encourage moral purification of the poor, but they often failed to notice basic human necessities: "the possibility that the poor themselves may suffer emotional stress when threatened with workhouse incarceration was brushed aside by the Local Government Board as carrying the danger of creating misplaced compassion among local administrators" (Humphreys 48). This reluctance to acknowledge the poor as sensitive beings created a calamitous relationship between the poor and "the Local Government" that managed the workhouses. An animosity transferred to orphans and children on the street.

Children, too, often preferred the unprotected and dangerous streets, where they starved, yet were free to release their anger towards adults.[5] The dark city-streets easily became their home. Unless orphans had benefactors, there was little difference between orphans and poor street children. These children created a dangerous community, "living as a class, though shifting as individuals, perpetuating and multiplying their filthy number." And "[out of 1600] 162 confessed that they had been in prison" (Hodder 1848). They could grow up to be a menacing force, especially whenever "children were growing up in non-familial situations, which could be perceived to be a source of disorder"

that the extreme parsimony and inflexible nature of the Poor Law Commissioners resulted in such cruelty.

[5]An orphan girl in Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* said: "We don't know anything about our fathers...Mother died seven years ago, I've got myself, and my brother and sister a bit of bread ever since, and never had any help but from the neighbours. I never troubled the parish. O, yes, sir, the neighbours is all poor people, very poor, some of them" (136). Her account revealed her willingness to support her brother and sister, but she had no intention to consult her parish that would send these children to a workhouse. She chose to remain poor and among the poor.

(Cunningham 21). It was crucial to "save" these children before destitution contaminated them. Yet, if orphans would not go to workhouses, where did they go?

2.2 Orphanages or Orphan Asylum

Building orphanages became a social trend in the 1860s. The public grew wary of the threatening, yet invisible, complaints of the poor, and thus it became fashionable to participate in charitable activities. However, Victorian contempt for the poor effected a belief that domesticity could not coexist with poverty. It was better to be an orphan than poor because an orphan's social "blankness"[6] contained the possibility of social legitimacy, while association with poor parents could lead to corruption (Cunningham 21). Social investigators witnessed the horrific living conditions of fatherless children, and their observations resulted in policies whereby both public welfare workers and private charities segregated poor children from unethical parents and their unsanitary, residences. This prejudiced policy aggrieved parents, who unwillingly placed their children in orphanages. In addition to destitution, they suffered destruction of domesticity and unbearable separation from their own children.

In the 1860s and 1870s, the need to provide for orphans was realized through orphanage under different names, including Refuges, Home for Children, Catholic Children's Protection Society, Infant Orphan Asylums, Ragged Schools, etc. "Denominational orphanages and boarding schools" quickly

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[6]Discussing the function of London hospitals for foundlings in nineteenth century, Jenny Bourne Taylor uses the term "blank" (297) in order to refer to the social anonymity of abandoned children.

demonstrated their philanthropy and religious beliefs by establishing additional homes for orphans (Horn 193). The English, however, could not escape its cultural compulsion to categorize individuals according to a social hierarchy that created another form of tension among orphans- between "respectable" orphans and "illegitimate" orphans. Fatherless families left many middle class women economically and socially helpless. They did not possess practical skills to make a living and feared social degradation by stepping out of their domestic sphere. In addition, "desperate to maintain middle-class respectability" (Grist 2), these women could not turn to workhouses, feeling they would be humiliated. They needed charitable institutions to protect their fatherless children's "respectability." A philanthropist, Reverend Andrew Reed, understood their predicament and established orphan asylums for "the child [who] must be the offspring of respectable parents" (Grist 10). The level of respectability was determined by their fathers' income, social relationships and professions when alive. He believed he had converted nameless children into healthy humans, but his asylum could not liberate children of questionable heredity. Children of criminals and illegitimate children could not enter Reed's selective institutions. Such rejection violated a fundamental principle of charity. Andrew Reed's Infant Orphan Asylum calculated "respectability' and carefully selected orphans based on their parents' social positions and values. The administrators of this asylum measured orphans' eligibility based on "good conduct, respectable connections, and [the] profession of [the] father" (Grist 10). They used the terms "creditable, respectable, [and] very respectable" (Grist 10) to differentiate one orphan from another. For example, "a creditable widow with two children could [earn] 32 pounds per year [but might]

not be eligible but the Very Respectable widow also with two children would be eligible [earning] 54 pounds per year" (Grist 11). Furthermore "parochial relief" (Grist 11) or workhouse experience prevented orphans from entering Reed's Asylum. Illegitimate babies were not considered, as the institution required parents' marriage certificates (Grist 11). This discriminatory policy convinced class-conscientious Victorians that this highly selective process was necessary. Reverend Reed and his supporters attempted to protect orphaned children of middle-class parents from "social evils" because they believed such children deserved to receive distinctive compassion and support, but paradoxically they failed to realize the initial purpose of an orphanage. By accepting children whose mothers earned more than others, Reed turned away those who actually needed more help.

Due to limited spaces inlegitimate orphanages, fierce competitions among orphans and their local patrons occurred. As the committee of orphan asylums evaluated orphans' qualifications, they could not always be trusted to conduct a fair election (Grist 15). Reed's Asylum received from 180 to 250 pounds from benefactors for admitting their chosen orphan, which was called "[buying] a child into the Asylum" (Grist 15), but general admittance was based on documents and recommendations. Many parishes suffered from limited funding, and thus it was cheaper to send orphans from their region to privately funded orphanages rather than support them in workhouses. This quandary resulted in "bribery" and corruption.

Orphans did not concern themselves with politics and finances. "Incurious" to their external surroundings, they were only glad to find any kind of shelter

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(Grist 17).[7] Preoccupied with hunger and fatigue and isolation, infants and young orphans found a community in the orphanage providing them with some sense of "home." These children were the lucky ones. Parishes immediately opted for more economical solutions, such as workhouses, which often led to child abuse.

Meanwhile Dr. Thomas Barnardo exhibited a different philosophy from that of Andrew Reed regarding orphans. His institutions claimed "No Destitute Child [was] Ever Refused Admission"(www.goldonian.org/barnardo), and he refused to categorize orphans already abandoned.[8] He was inspired by his meeting with Jim Jarvis, the orphan boy who enlightened him about the conditions of children on the street. After the meeting, he wrote "My First Arab" (1872), a story that received sensational attention and heralded the need to accommodate street children. Fueled by that enthusiasm, Barnardo commenced an organized advertising campaign to shelter orphans. His photographs of orphans gathered both public attention and money. Workhouses failed to protect children due to the financial crises of regional parishes, leading people to question their legitimacy. Barnardo benefited from such skepticism and publicized his philanthropic mission.

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[7]In contrast literary orphan characters that I mention in the following chapters here exhibit immense curiosity and a determination to obtain independence and determine their own destiny.

[8]Thomas Archer suggested that Victorians should embrace these social outsiders and stop ostracizing them. The persistent contempt for the poor continued and extended itself to nameless children, and the term "street Arabs" dignified such discrimination. Instead of imputing the existence of 'social evil' and immorality to the poor and orphans, he assigned the responsibility to all Victorians. He said: "The truth is, that these forlorn boys and girls-these street Arabs whom we have been so ready to relegate to the great London desert as a race apart from ourselves are or our own heritage, and we have no birthright that does not also belong to them, in as mush as they are indivisibly connected with us for future good or future evil." (272-3).

Barnardo's strategy of displaying pictures of children with dirty clothes and no shoes backfired when one mother criticized him for lying. When she saw the picture of her daughters in dirty clothes, she appealed to the Thames Police Court, arguing that she had sent the children for care in clean clothes. She reluctantly left them in Barnardo's care to save them from hunger, but she became furious when the public saw them as orphans abandoned by their parents (Murdoch 12-14). Many parents voluntarily placed their children in Barnardo's institutions to prevent their children from starving (Murdoch 7). If their circumstances improved, they promised to return and claim their children.

Many young children were forced to support themselves on the street because their parents could not provide for them. Social critics recommended this separation of poor children from their poor parents. The administrators of orphanages preferred to break the tie between poor children and parents to eradicate the source of poverty, recreating "better" citizens out of young orphans (Murdoch 3-7). In the category of the marginalized included the poor, the working class, widows and unfortunate women, but orphans were placed in "the deserving poor" category. The adult poor, "victims of their own improvidence," could not rightfully demand social assistance (Mandler 13). It was sinful to live in poverty, and orphans were unfortunate innocents who inherited their parents' sin. Thus, those children benefited if they did not return to their disgraced heritage. Philanthropy came with continuing destruction of poor families. The salvation of poor children became a charity project that forced them to become "orphans." While advocating ideal domesticity for the middle and upper classes, some philanthropists insisted on breaking apart

poor families.

2.3   Illegitimacy

Illegitimacy directly opposed two principles of domestic ideology-regulated sexuality and disciplined domesticity. To legitimize an illegitimate child required political connections.[9] For other unfortunate children, it was their painful fate to live as a symbol of their families' disgrace. Illegitimacy belonged to the morally deteriorated poor, as Victorians concluded that the poor's inability to regulate their sexuality resulted in illegitimacy. In *London by Day and Night* (1852) David W. Bartlett reported on the inevitability of improper sexuality among the poor working class: "all ages and both sexes, fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, grown-up brothers and sisters, stranger adult males and females, amid swarms of children ... [were] herded together with a proximity ... where it [was] physically impossible to preserve the ordinary decencies of life, where all sense of propriety and self-respect must be lost" (128). The poor could not afford appropriate living space, and Barlett's report incited sympathy but also contempt, as it confirmed their moral deterioration.

Legal measures failed to protect illegitimate children, while social attitudes marginalized them.[10] The "indolence" of the poor was considered "evil," and

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[9]Even royal children could not escape this disgrace. In the very first year of her reign, Elizabeth I "legitimized herself" by signing the "Act of Recognition of the Queen's Highness' Title" that recognized her royal heritage, since her father Henry VIII had annulled his marriage to her mother Ann Boleyn (Teichman 35). Her father did allow Elizabeth to inherit the throne, but he never legally pronounced her his "legitimate" child (Teichman 35). In the midst of this legal confusion, Elizabeth made sure that she was the legal descendent by formally announcing the validity of her throne in writing. This historical act indicates that even the social status of royalty could be degraded by the accusation of illegitimacy.

[10]All over Europe the medieval maxim, filius nullis (a son of nobody), disseminated the

illegitimacy, a moral disease. One member of the Royal College of Surgeons, William Acton, read his observation of illegitimacy before the Statistical Society of London on May 17, 1859: "Social evils claim, as urgently, to be investigated and discussed as physical plague spots. It is conceded on all hands, even in what is termed "Society," that society itself, [when] moved by public opinion, must take action against these evils if it be desirable to remedy them…No social evil more constantly and obtrusively presents itself before us than ILLEGITIMACY" (491). Acton believed that "illegitimacy" would "plague" his society like a disease and that it must be uprooted to prevent criminal activity. In the name of "progress" new industrial movements had created unhealthy living conditions for the working class. As a result, Acton believed that "social evils" such as "illegitimacy" sickened the whole society. His tone resembles that of a Christian preacher driven by his religious zeal to eradicate a "social evil." In England and Wales 42,651 illegitimate children were reported to the Registrar General's statistics in 1856, and at least 2,761 in Scotland in 1858 (Acton). Their numbers increased moral anxiety among the middle and upper classes, as the rate of illegitimacy "did not fall below 8 or 9 percent of live births" from 1855 until the 1890s (Mearns 107). To Acton, the heedless public needed to recognize the pervasive immorality caused by illegitimacy.

As illegitimacy was considered evil, those associated with it did not deserve sympathy. Social compassion had to be selective. The appropriate reaction to illegitimacy emphasized the sinister nature of those who could not control their sexuality. To the sanctity of English society, children born out of

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idea that illegitimacy tainted one's domestic history (Pinchbeck 314).

wedlock enacted that paradigm of a tragic domestic history based on unregulated sexuality: "Outsiders or deviants are created initially by social forms and social forces ... The outsider strengthens the head instinct of the insiders by being an object lesson ... by ostracizing illegitimate individuals and unmarried mothers, one demonstrates one's own legitimacy and one's loyalty to the sexual and property laws of the community" (Teichman 12). Jenny Teichman positions "illegitimacy" in terms of social discrimination, helpless women, and propriety.[11] The unfavorable appearance of "unmarried mothers" could purify communities morally by distancing themselves from impure women. Such an analysis coincides with Laura Peters' arguments that orphans actually functioned as a cultural catharsis for middle-class domesticity and helped rediscover the familial bond by emphasizing the impossibility of embracing the outsider as a family member (1). Illegitimate children and their mothers carried the burden of social humiliation, and their existence verified that women's sexuality posed a severe moral danger if not regulated appropriately (Elliot 7). The "Respectable" noticed the illicit nature of these orphans' past, then publicized that illegitimacy to disinfect their own families.

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[11]The tendency to associate illegitimacy with promiscuity leads to defilement of unmarried mothers. According to U. R. Q. Henriques, the Bastardy Clause of 1834 exposed the patriarchal society's distorted perception of women and sexual immorality. Local authorities repined that these young mothers with illegitimate children would commit perjury to force men to marry them. Anxious to minimize the financial burden of the local parishes and to liberate putative fathers from false accusations, the Commissioners proposed the Bastardy Clause of the New Poor Law of 1834, which excused them from legal responsibility for the child, if they claimed inability to support their illegitimate baby. If a mother is unable to support her child without a father, they would be sent to a workhouse, the most cost-effective solution for many parishes with declining financial resources (Henriques 107-112). This clause was not created to protect the illegitimate children. It represented a conscious effort to reduce illegitimacy by formulating a hostile culture for unmarried mothers and their children.

Victorians distinguished between social assistance for the "deserving" poor and rejection of unmarried mothers.[12] To aid an unmarried woman with an illegitimate child challenged the ideal of feminine purity and endorsed uncontrollable sexuality. When a father refused to acknowledge his responsibility, unmarried women suffered the consequences of unwanted pregnancy alone. If the working-class father could not provide for her and for his child, the woman would be forced to live in the workhouse, starve with her child, or turn to baby farming. When a female domestic servant became pregnant, few official aids protected her. Usually she would lose her position. Further, public accusation would leave her with no references for another.

Between 1855 and 1860 eighty percent of the applicants to the Eindburgh Magdalen Institute, an asylum for prostitutes, were former domestic servants (Smout 196-7). In 1857, out of 180 children in St. Marylebone, 8 children reportedly had middle class fathers, and the rest were children of working or low middle class fathers (Rose 18). Such economical vulnerability of working women stemmed from their limited work opportunities. Victorians ostracized female domestic servants, who turned into unmarried mothers, fearing that they could disturb their daughters with such sexual transgression.

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[12]Novelists were aware of such discrimination against these women. Eliot's portrayal of an unmarried mother, Molly Farren, in *Silas Marner* confirms that such a woman receives unfavorable perception. Enslaved by "the demon Opium," this young mother curses her lover, Godfrey Cass. Eliot describes how "the sense of her want and degradation transformed itself continually into bitterness" (108). Molly in "her dingy rags" exhibits only "vindictiveness" (108) and conspires to expose Cass in her "poisoned chamber" (109). Despite her misfortune, it seems difficult to sympathize with Molly until she dies in the cold.

2.4 Conclusion

The limited social welfare system resulted in ostracizing the poor and their children. However, both orphans and poor children separated from their parents received attention from Victorians. Through institutional training, they could be saved from the "social evil" their parents represented. Once these children were classified as "orphans" legally, state officials and philanthropists endeavored to re-create them as proper citizens. Most orphans served the middle and upper class families, but they could never fully escape from their social stigma. Victorians believed that orphans' servitude succeeded to "rescue" them from misery, but the quality of their domestic history could not be improved.

The inherent distrust between the poor and the privileged stemmed from class anxiety, and yet the compulsion to categorize individuals existed in every class. In *Rich and Poor* (1896) Mrs. Bernard Bosanquet argues that the poor and the working class were extremely class-conscious. The privileged class feared any challenge to their social distinctions, but the poor possessed similar anxieties within their own class (Bosanquet 4). The tendency to appraise respectability was not exclusive to the privileged:

> And within the large class massed together by the outsider as "working people" there is the same manifold gradation in the social scale as that which exists at the upper end; there is the same sensitiveness to class distinctions which are invisible to all abut themselves, and the same resentment felt at any intrusion of one grade into another. I have known an engine-driver's daughter cut off from all intercourse with her family because she had demeaned herself by marrying a skilled mechanic, and a shoe-maker's daughter refuse a steady young fellow to whom she was much attached

solely because, being a soldier, he was below her in social standing. (Bosanquet 4)

"Invisible" social boundaries consumed most Victorians. An engine-driver could be above a mechanic, while a shoe-maker's wealth stood superior to that of a penniless soldier. Both rich and poor Victorians submitted to their cultural positioning in the social hierarchy.

Based on this chapter's historical summary, I will argue that literary orphans did not represent their historical counterparts, but rather provided a cultural vision. English novelists concretized class anxiety through the rebellions, successes and failures of orphan characters. They used "orphans" to contest ubiquitous social problems, such as growing antagonism towards the privileged, accelerating capitalism, and lack of veneration for aristocracy and the rising middle class. I will argue that literary orphans subvert the systems that faithfully tried to reflect Victorians' obsession with class. In the novels, the conflation of orphans' namelessness and resistance leads to a more encouraging and constructive vision of social mobility. To procure individual improvement was to eradicate social boundaries that discouraged the advancement of orphans. The reluctance to distribute privileges to orphans existed both in fact and fiction, but the orphans in the following chapters demystify idealistic social philanthropy and resist the romantic characterization of grateful homeless children. Lucy, Eppie, Magdalen, Becky, Daniel, and John: all dispute the domestic ideology that banishes them. Instead they valorize their struggles by reconciling with their socially unrecognizable identities.

Chapter 3

Dismantling Class Anxiety: Two Orphans' Obsession with Individuality and the New Family of Orphans

In Oscar Wilde's play, *The Importance of Being Earnest* Lady Bracknell says: "To lose one parent, Mr. Jack Worthing, may be regarded as a misfortune; to lose both looks like carelessness" (Act I).[1] She thus belittles Mr. Worthing, presuming that he was abandoned "to conceal a social indiscre-

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[1] Oscar Wilde. *The Importance of Being Earnest*. 1895. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. Act I. Lady Bracknell is also horrified by the fact that he was left in a "bag." She says: "To be born, or at any rate bred, in a hand-bag, whether it had handles or not, seems to me to display a contempt for the ordinary decencies of family life that reminds one of the worst excesses of the French Revolution. And I presume you know what that unfortunate movement led to? As for the particular locality in which the hand-bag was found, a cloakroom at a railway station might serve to conceal a social indiscretion - has probably, indeed, been used for that purpose before now-but it could hardly be regarded as an assured basis for a recognized position in good society (Act I).

tion" (Act I). She blames an orphan for being orphaned. It is not compassion that she demonstrates, as she calculates Worthing's education, income, and the number of bedrooms in his country house with her daughter's interest in mind. Mark Poster argues that "marriage was a political act of the highest order" and that "the fate of the line depended on marriages which kept the family holdings intact" (179). Does Worthing then deserve to join the Bracknell family? Found in a handbag, he has no family to socially define him. Even his name "Worthing" was given to him by his benefactor, who "happened to have a first-class ticket for Worthing,..a place in Sussex" (Act I). Without either inherited name, his income "between seven and eight thousand a year" (Act I) does not impress Lady Bracknell. To her, Jack Worthing's social obscurity disturbs the safe domestic sphere of the privileged. Refusing to "form an alliance with a parcel," Lady Bracknell contemptuously advises Worthing: "I would strongly advise you, Mr. Worthing, to try and acquire some relations as soon as possible, and to make a definite effort to produce at any rate one parent, of either sex, before the season is quite over" (Act I). The orphaned Worthing is thus asked to procreate "relations" or a family to be acceptable. In *Proper Stations*(1971) Richard Faber says that while Victorian society was conscious of fluctuating standards, the structure remained solid. According to Faber, both wealth and birth were needed to survive with dignity and pride. So what happened to an individual that had neither? Many English writers became enthralled with this question.

The motif of orphans permeates nineteenth century English novels. Ann G. Kirschner suggested that orphan characters are attractive to writers, as they "must move in a narrative" (5) and provide "the seemingly unlimited

vitality of [their] characterization" (6). They begin their lives as outsiders and "disturb" that world as they enter it. Their mystery engages both writers and readers. Charles Dickens's affectionate attention to the socially neglected created Pip, Oliver, David, Esther, Estella, Sissy, Scrooge, and Jo. His orphans often demonstrate predictable personalities, but their stories also decorate their illegitimate names with the hope of social reformation and individual maturity. Esther Summerson in *Bleak House* (1852) is educated to be a "companion" to Richard and Ada, wards of Mr. Jarndyce. Dickens' angelic female orphans, such as Esther and Ada, appeal to the reader's compassion by exhibiting unrealistically good natures. Sissy in *Hard Times* (1843-4) develops into a parental figure for those who lead tragic lives despite their domestic security. Pip in *Great Expectations* (1860-1) and George Eliot's Daniel in *Daniel Deronda* (1876) oscillate between their desires to become true gentlemen and an awareness of their obscure social status. Jane in *Jane Eyre* (1847) becomes a governess to instruct a more privileged child in order to earn her living. These literary orphans dream of uncovering the secrecy of their birth, so they can legitimize their place in society. Becky Sharp in *Vanity Fair* (1848), rather than being discouraged by her limitations, laughs in the face of a society that fails to domesticate her. She manipulates those who both despise and sympathize with her. Magdalen Vanstone in Wilkie Collins' *No Name* (1862) crosses the boundaries between classes as if the world were her artistic stage, which has taken away her social legitimacy and financial advantages.[2]

Novelists observed the psychological burden of maintaining their characters' social status and socially defining themselves. Gwendolen in *Daniel*

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[2]I discuss these two recalcitrant female orphans in the next chapter.

Deronda initially trembles at the idea of living in a humble cottage unsuitable to her social status. She bitterly protests that "[she] shall do what is more befitting [her] rank and education" even though her mother simply says their "money has gone" (233). She suffers from class anxiety and strives to preserve her pride. Gwendolen concludes that despite cultural contempt for actresses, it is better to act on the stage than to be with rich children as a governess. She detests the idea of being a socially obscure governess, claiming "there are hardships everywhere for a governess" (234) and chooses instead to take advantage of her talent as an actress. In *Jane Eyre*, Bessie says to Jane Eyre, an orphan, "you are less than a servant, for you do nothing for your keep" (9). This goodhearted yet simple servant only sees social obscurity, not individual potential.

George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë contextualize class anxiety and indicate that orphans must endure social prejudice, as they lack clear domestic history to define themselves. Both writers are aware that Victorians measured individuals according to class, while they endeavored to preserve their own. On the other hand, a rising middle class began to challenge the traditional definition of "status," as they established their social and political authority by exercising self-reliance and accumulating wealth through active participation in the industrial economy. Their social emergence, however, came with another standard of social distinctions. In *Vanity Fair*, William Thackeray dramatizes how once comfortably settled, the middle class would not encourage further social mobility for the working class. Mrs. Sedley, whose husband is a model of a self -made man, initially wonders why "her son would demean himself by a marriage with an artist's daughter" (61), thus despising Becky

Sharp's lower status as an orphan. She distances herself and her middle class family from Becky.

Before exploring two special literary orphans, I will discuss the social limitations of and the conventional prejudice against orphans as represented in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1817) and Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (1852-3) because both demonstrate how social discrimination against orphans aggravates their psychological disruption, which in return disquiets their communities. In "Incarnations of the Orphan" Nina Auerbach studies orphan characters appearing in a range of eighteenth century to twentieth century English novels and concludes that "orphanhood meant nullity of self" in the eighteenth century, and "pure selfhood" in the nineteenth century (404). Through Lucy Snowe and Eppie Marner, I argue that in addition to "pure selfhood," orphanhood signifies individual defiance against conventional domesticity. The force of social resistance may differ from one another, but orphans' selfhood must contain their rejection of domestication, submission, and re-location. However disoriented and unstable they were psychologically and culturally, orphan characters begin to externalize their internal disappointment in nineteenth century English novels. Novelists presented orphans in internal crisis who interrogated their dislocation within an inflexible society.

Shelley explores the social stigma of being an orphan in *Frankenstein*(1818). She provides an early model of the nineteenth-century orphan protagonist, the creature, and suggests that those who reside within the middle and upper class domestic sphere oscillate between compassion and contempt for orphans. Before Victor Frankenstein decides to procreate a son, we understand that he comes from a family closely related to orphans. The Frankenstein fam-

ily marries, adopts, and yet abandons orphans. Their domestic generosity is commendable. Orphans enter their house as "a pretty present" (37) or as servants, whose individuality consists of selfless devotion to this high middle class family. The family is the ideal and virtuous family. Victor's reverence for his ideal family starts with his father's decision to marry his mother, Caroline, an orphan left by his father's friend. Later, his parents adopt Elizabeth, "the sweet orphan," who was "the daughter of a Milanese nobleman" (36). Victor believes it is "a sense of justice" (36) that encourages his family to embrace orphans. At first, Victor and his family willingly include them within their domestic harmony, although they embrace only female orphans. Silvia Bowerbank argues that "the social order, in *Frankenstein*, repeatedly redeems pretty, tractable females from wretchedness" (422). Female identities and social status depended on the male authority in the nineteenth century, and female orphans pose little threat to existing domesticity.[3] The family thus prefers to adopt females. Victor Frankenstein, however, does not uphold what he has learned from his father's "sense of justice." Justine Moritz, another orphan adopted by the family to be a servant, is executed for a crime she did not commit, and Victor, concealing the truth, walks away. The court alone could not protect innocent Justine Morritz, and internally Victor professes that he is torn apart, but takes no action to prevent this injustice. As a creator and father of the creature, Victor circumvents parental obligation, forcing him to react indignantly. He knows that his son commits murder incited by his father's cowardice. His guilty conscience tortures his soul, but he is still free to

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[3]In *Wuthering Heights* the evil male orphan, Heathcliff, destroys domestic harmony, and the middle-class family fears his presence.

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create his own family with Elizabeth. A working class orphan has in effect released a middle class gentleman from moral responsibility.

Victor may have grown watching his parents' actions of benevolence, but he abandons his first child. Initially he pursues his scientific creation out of an ambition to "break through the ideal bounds of life and death" (55). He calls himself the future "father" of his creation and rejoices in the idea that "no father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as [he] should deserve theirs" (55). Then, he simply runs from his son. While Victor's father included orphans in the "domestic tranquility" (Bowerbank 420), Victor turns his son into an orphan. He then escapes to his own "domestic bliss" represented by Elizabeth and his father. Afterwards, Victor's actions are irresponsible. When he believes that he has been liberated from his creation, he selfishly says that "[he] was undisturbed by thoughts which during the preceding year had pressed upon [him]" and that "[he] bounded along with feelings of unbridled joy and hilarity" (71-2). Victor avoids his now orphaned son.[4] Victor has pursued his scientific creation out of his ambition to be idolized, but when he realizes his failure, he walks away. Although Frankenstein's family adopted orphans into their household, Victor does not take responsibility for his first scientific achievement which results in his own son's tragedy- that of being an orphan. As a consequence, the angelic orphan, Elizabeth, within the house is murdered by the "evil" one whom Victor has condemned to solitary misery.

The creature chastises his father for his irresponsibility and accuses him of being the conspirator behind his inhumane crimes. He explains that "the

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[4]Charles Dickens treats this social indifference with fear and contempt in *Bleak House*, when he describes the disconcerted city authorities, who would shun an orphan to avoid any responsibilities.

strange system of human society" can only lead him to violence and insanity:

> The strange system of human society was explained to me. I heard of the division of property, of immense wealth and squalid poverty, of rank, descent, and noble blood. The words induced me to turn towards myself. I learned that the possessions most esteemed by your fellow creatures were high and unsullied descent united with riches. A man might be respected with only one of these advantages, but without either he was considered, except in very rare instances, as a vagabond and a slave, doomed to waste his powers for the profits of the chosen few! And what was I? Of my creation and creator I was absolutely ignorant, but I knew that I possessed no money, no friends, and no kind of property. ... When I looked around I saw and heard of none like me. And what was I? The question again recurred, to be answered only with groans. (122-3)

Victor's creature learns of "the division" that categorizes people, and this social custom confounds him. Orphaned, he observes that he would not fit into "the strange system," which would not recognize him. He laments that he does not "belong" anywhere legitimately and does not possess any "rank, descent, and noble blood." Without birth and wealth, he cannot create any social identity. Patricia Ingham emphasizes the importance of birth: "[W]hatever the classification, the interpretation of society and its meaning were based on a grading largely dependent on inherited status at birth, ownership or non-ownership of land, and profession or occupation. It provides the individual with a personal identity, a role to play, a status and a set of social mores" (5). Thus, the class of an individual becomes possible through society's judgment, which depended on "inherited status." To a creature that does not even understand his existence, formulating an identity based on external circumstances is impossible. The creature learns that without Victor, his father, who abandoned him, he could not have "a personal identity" or "a role to play."

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The question of "what [am] I" resonates in his mind, horrifying him.

In *Bleak House* Dickens implies that Victorians circumvent responsibility for the marginalized. He criticizes their "domestic tranquility" that excludes orphans. A street boy named Jo wanders through London and is told to "move on" by the city authorities. In reply, Jo exclaims, "I've always been a-moving and a-moving on, ever since I was born" (284). Jo's words indicate that England frowns upon the filthy appearance of poor children. With his special interest in orphans, Dickens's literary vision relies on his representation of how the privileged must instigate political and social reformation. Dickens knew that orphans were not social projects, but individuals. Richard Carstone seeks practical measures to retain his individuality. He curses his fate and believes an orphan is innately unstable. He confesses to his fellow orphan, Esther Summerson:

> My dear Esther, I am a very unfortunate dog not to be more settled, but how can I be more settled? If you lived in an unfinished house, you couldn't settle down in it; if you were condemned to leave everything you undertook, unfinished, you would find it hard to apply yourself to anything; and yet that's my unhappy case. I was born into this unfinished contention with all its chances and changes. (23)

Orphans were "condemned" to live in incompletion. As one of Mr. Jarndyce's wards, Richard Carstone attempts to restore what "seems" to belong to him by seeking wealth and status independently. Psychological and economical instability threatens him. His passion for his cousin, Ada Clare, and his materialistic greed would not release him from the abyss of Jarndyce and Jarndyce, a case never to be resolved. Yet, I also see here an orphan who finds it difficult

to "settle down." Richard explains how it is naturally difficult as an orphan to be comfortable with what is stable, because he is "born into" instability and obscurity.[5] This impatient young man recognizes the "unfortunate" and "unfinished" condition of his life; he has no wealth, no social status, and no profession-he is an orphan. Richard laments that orphans are "born into this unfinished contention," which they are unable to complete. Mr. Jarndyce, an ideal representative of the privileged with authority to improve orphans' conditions, intervenes to stabilize Richard's life, and his attention he could depend on, but only if he obeyed his benefactor's plans. As an orphan, Richard is grateful, but as a young man, he refuses this opportunity to improve his condition. Dickens foreshadows Richard's fate by hinting at his impatient personality. Richard then predicates that the instability of his "condemned life" as an orphan is inevitable. Mr. Jarndyce deplores Richard's reluctance to accept social compassion: "I want to set you more right yet. I want to set you more right with yourself" (358). Yet, Richard is adamant: "'I hope you will excuse my saying, sir,' returned Richard in a fiery way, but yet respectfully, 'that I think I am the best judge about myself' " (358). Richard is grateful to his benefactor for offering him opportunities, but his inability to decide his own life frustrates him. He claims he cannot simply consume what is given to him, for he is "condemned" to be unsatisfied with what is "finished." He possesses the propensity to dissociate from a stable, conventional, yet meaningless life. Refusing to be a mere ward of a benefactor, Richard seeks unstable

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[5]We should note that despite their similar situations Ada, a young female orphan, does not suffer from such anxiety, because she is one of the conventionalized angelic characters, who could only exhibit gratitude and self-sacrifice to patriarchal society. The orphan characters that I have chosen in this study rebel against social authority and persever with or without social compassion.

independence and creates his life only to destroy it. He dies in agony. His death signifies that the uncontrollable autonomy of an orphan poses danger and that Richard should have respected Mr. Jarndyce's charitable gesture. Dickens's sense of social mobility is conservative. He promotes social mobility only through socially constructed authority. Dickens recognizes Victorians' negligence towards orphans like Jo, but he dramatized how the act of reformation has to be initiated by the reasonable members of the middle and upper classes.

Many orphan characters gain social legitimacy by revealing their parents' identity and by marrying into families that can redefine them. Yet, orphans that I discuss are "different." I observe that while their social invisibility poses itself in direct opposition to conventional domesticity, it liberates them from social restrictions. They develop their individuality uncontaminated by conformity. While orphans' social obscurity might have been unbearable, fictional orphans provided writers with an effective tool to represent how people of all classes could define themselves. Literary orphans, however, do not necessarily perceive their unconventional nature as freedom because they constantly battle with their discredited reputation. They do not romanticize their social unfamiliarity. Yet, orphan characters demand independence, resisting categorization, for writers emphasize their strength to determine their fate regardless of name, class and gender.

In *Orphan Texts: Victorian Orphans, Culture and Empire*, Laura Peters claims that Victorians believed that orphans imperiled domestic harmony and that Victorian writers represented insecurity with orphan characters. She argues that some nineteenth century novelists offered an idealized closure for

their orphan protagonists to prove that all individuals must locate themselves in a proper social position. Their appropriate (re)location relieved Victorians, no longer threatened by marginalized orphans. Peters argues that Victorians considered orphans as threats in literature and fact; they used the uncomfortable existence of orphans to stabilize their own families by recognizing these orphans as the "difference within":

> Although one would expect that orphans needed a family, in short, the reality was that the family needed orphans. The family and all it came to represent- legitimacy, race and national belonging-was in crisis. In order to reaffirm itself the family needed a scapegoat. It found one in the orphan figure...the orphan's very presence is both vital to and a disruption of notions of being-particularly home, nation, discourse and writing. The orphan then performs a paradoxical function: he or she is both redemptive and a threat.[6] (1)

Peters believes that representing orphans as threats stabilized the Victorian social system, and Victorian families reinforced their values to protect their interests. Richard Faber confirms that "to [Victorian] novel readers traditional social standards were the only ones that mattered" (125).[7] Peters and Faber claim that an orphan enters the domestic territory of a peaceful middle class family, disrupts its harmony within, exposing its deterioration. Peters's literary examples are "devilish" Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* and George

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[6]Peters argues that "the prevalence of orphans" leads to the England's attempt to "expel" (1) orphans. She provides historical context such as "emigrating orphans" to "Bermuda, New South Wales and Canada."

[7]He says that Victorians sensed that "values and powers were shifting, that money was becoming more important than land and that the barbarians were beginning to beat at the gates" (125). Out of cultural insecurity and nostalgia for the past, Victorians intensified the traditional social categorization.

Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*. Despite the fact that each family is enlightened and perhaps transformed the orphan must ultimately leave the house. Even though Daniel Deronda exemplifies successful social adoption, he still returns to Israel, and Peters implies that England could not embrace him nationally. Yet, I argue that such literary orphans as Lucy Snowe and Eppie Marner promote social mobility without destroying the social hierarchy because their pursuit of identity encourages their communities to acknowledge them as individuals rather than as contaminated social types. Lucy and Eppie protect themselves from class anxiety and the standards of social boundaries. Their want of family could be a great strain, but it functions to liberate them from the "categorizing impulse" (Young 51).[8] Lucy Snowe and Eppie Marner develop "middle class subjectivity" (Young 51), separate themselves from familiar concepts like "home," and redefine the concept of "family."

Domestic separation diminishes domestic ideology. According to Mark Poster, such original development later unnerved analysts like Sigmund Freud. Poster argues that Freud's examination of individuality begins with family:[9]

The family is the nexus of the experiences . . . Freud seeks to de-

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[8]Arlene Young's study does not discuss orphans specifically, but is focused on the tension between the middle class and the lower middle class. As she explains Victorians' class anxiety, she indicates that "categorizing impulse" exists in each class. I borrow this term to argue that orphans' lack of inherited social position free them from such impulse. Lucy and Eppie notice how their communities are bewildered by their indifference to social inferiority. I believe their orphan-hood eliminates the source of class anxiety. Young also argues that the consistent negative response to and ridicule of the lower middle class in reality and literature indicate "bourgeois insecurity" (51). Through literary disparagement and domestication, the middle class strive to preserve their superiority. According to her, the middle class writers responded to this injustice.

[9]He also points out that Freud's theory works better with middle class and high class families, but it seems to apply to every family.

compose the individual into his essential (but unconscious) family relationships. . . . As an isolated unit, the individual is unintelligible to the analyst. The most personal and particular characteristics of the individual's inner life remain obscure, only becoming meaningful signs when they are traced back to the medically significant body of the family. Hence, the family is the secret of the individual. (2)

Freud's psychoanalysis culminates in the Victorian belief that the absence of family is detrimental to development because "individuality is gained at the price of unconsciously incorporating parental norms" (Poster 178). Lady Bracknell's unreasonable request to produce "relations" suggests that Victorians relied on familial existence to individuate. Wilde criticizes this adamant belief in domestication. Yet, from a Freudian point of view, a person without family cannot exist. Many literary orphans, such as Jane Eyre and Esther Summerson, however, rediscover their birth parents (or close relatives) and become domesticated. Yet, Lucy Snowe and Eppie Marner resist such a reunion.

The fact that these orphan characters do not belong to domestic life does not mean that they do not appreciate the benefits of belonging to a family. Unwanted solitude and psychological insecurity torture Frankenstein's creature and Lucy Snowe, and the creature finally suggests that he "needs" a companion to establish a his own family. He justifies his crime by insisting that a monster is created by his lack of a family that could refine him. Drew Lamonica defines "the Victorian family" as the source of cultural guidance:

For boys and girls, the Victorian family, like families throughout the centuries, acted as the original disciplinarian, imposing limits on the self. Within the family, restrictions were set, transgressions punished, restraints internalized, conscience developed, and

the principles of subordination implanted according to a hierar-
chy of power relations. . . Recognizing limits was a vital part of a
nineteenth-century child's home education. (16)

Frankenstein's creature lacked "the original disciplinarian imposing limits on
the self" because he did not belong to an ideal Victorian family. Yet, I am
interested in fictional orphans that exceeded this limitation. Sometimes it is
not the orphan who does not fit into a family. It is Victorian ideology of
family that does not fit the orphan mind. In life, the social stigma of being
an orphan poses both economical and psychological problems, as I discussed
in Chapter one. However, in literature, writers ponder the possibility of un-
limited subjectivity through orphan protagonists. Lamonica defines "the Vic-
torian family" as the dogmatic discipline that "[imposes] limits on the self."
Such limitation provides protection; it also provides inherited roles. Char-
lotte Brontë, George Eliot, and others examine unconventional possibilities
for orphans to (re)establish self-hood. Orphans may recover their identities
or reunite with their families, if they willingly submit to these "principles" of
limitations. However, orphans discussed in this chapter choose "self" rather
than (an ideal) "family." Their dislocations do not reduce their social status.
They obscure the social boundaries of classification, destabilize the concept of
family, and promote social mobility, as they also remain orphaned.

This chapter discusses two unusual orphan characters to demonstrate that
not all fictional orphans merely caused social disturbance. These orphans
dismantled nineteenth century class anxiety by pursuing individual maturity
and promoting the revision of conventional Victorian domesticity. Charlotte
Brontë and George Eliot took special interest in orphan protagonists because

of their characters' social and cultural ambiguity. Orphans may appear to threaten Victorian domestic and social harmony, but these two writers consider orphans to be heroes who are not entrapped by the bondage of conformity and social categories. Lucy Snowe in Villette (1853) and Eppie Marner in Silas Marner (1861) distinguish themselves by dismissing class anxiety and social discrimination. Lucy Snowe redefines her identity according to her needs and standards, pressuring her society to transform itself. Eppie Marner refuses to give in to class anxiety and willingly rejects the opportunity to achieve social ascendancy.

Brontë and Eliot make it possible for these nameless individuals to (re)define their identities by integrating their unrestricted selfhood and uncompromising subjectivity. Arlene Young asserts that this individual dislocation starts with nineteenth century middle- class characters, claiming that "the essence of the bourgeois character in nineteenth-century British novels is interiority, the strong sense of a personal and integrated identity that is formed and controlled by the individual consciousness" (17). Like the ideal middle- class character that demonstrates an affinity for self-reliance and individualism, some orphan characters deviate from what is encouraged and determined and mandated by society. Young discusses this "middle class subjectivity" to differentiate "the bourgeois character" from "the lower middle class character" (46-7). They discover their identity, not by returning to their original homes or families, but by separating from them. They detach from conventional concepts of "home" that denies unconventionality and even restricts their social mobility. Focusing on Villette, Lamonica calls such detachment the "strategy of displacement" (179). An orphan's social obscurity presents the possibility of ascendancy,

and middle- class readers would certainly identify with the social rise of orphan characters, provided they deserved such a legitimate status. Dickens criticized the privileged middle and upper classes for neglecting orphans. Yet, middle class virtues are accessible to orphan characters, promoting a more flexible society. The literary orphans I discuss detach themselves from traditional constructions of class, thereby constituting true individualities that accept intentional alienation. While Victorians compulsively categorized individuals, fictional orphans work to establish their internal "self" by social dislocation.

Rick Rylance understands "the private cost of public image," when an individual is obsessed with "the vision of a [good Victorian] character" (148). He argues that "novelists and others increasingly explored not only the ideological limits of popular perceptions of 'character', but also the psychological consequences of trying to live in this way" (151). By using the Brontë novels, he shows that a significant study of human nature becomes possible through examining the psychological state of those who oscillate between ideology and reality. Brontë and Eliot turned their attention to orphans to re-imagine the process of formulating individual autonomy. Was it possible for a person to create identity without family privileges? They also envision an improved world free from class anxiety. Two orphans in Villette and Silas Marner struggle for independent selfhood, thereby unsettling the system and releasing themselves from the nineteenth-century obsession with class.

3.1   Lucy's only question: "Who am I indeed?"

In Villette, one of Lucy Snowe's students, Ginevra, mercilessly describes Lucy Snowe: "I suppose you are nobody's daughter, since you took care of little children when you first came to Villette: you have no relations; you can't call yourself young at twenty-three; you have no attractive accomplishments - no beauty . . . I believe you never were in love, and never will be; you don't know the feeling . . . Isn't it all true?" (160) A spoiled middle- class English daughter in Villette recognizes only Lucy's social inferiority. The absence of "relations" in Lucy's life disturbs her, and she refuses to understand her without domestic connection. Lucy is "nobody" if she is "nobody's daughter." Lucy has lived with such a perception of herself and learns to challenge it. However, Lucy's individuated progress occurs outside of England in Villette, where she exists as a foreigner. She exiles herself, and the fundamental element that constitutes Lucy turns out to be the threatening force of her self-marginalization. Her disposition to disregard her family in England, resist cultural assimilation in Villette and retain her Englishness proves that Lucy chooses her own principles of virtues to follow.

Lucy Snowe searches for a job, a friend, and her internal comfort, but she rarely turns to her family. In an earlier Brontë's novel, *Jane Eyre*, Jane's despicable cousins and aunt torture her, but despite their cruelty Jane pursues what seems inaccessible. She establishes her own family and gains domestic authority. Ultimately she no longer relies upon unconventionality to maintain her selfhood. On the contrary, Lucy maintains a psychological distance from "family" and "home" and relies on her suppressed passion to live. Brontë

provides little information on Lucy Snowe's family, and such deficiency is not to build up any mystery. The brief, yet intense, tension between an unknown letter and Lucy's anxiety denotes that she feels more comfortable with familial disconnection: "One day, a letter was received of which the contents evidently caused Mrs. Bretton surprise and some concern. I thought at first it was from home, and trembled, expecting I knew not what disastrous communication; to me, however, no reference was made, and the cloud seemed to pass" (8). She is relieved to hear nothing from her "home." The idea interrupts the peace she enjoys at Mrs. Bretton's house. Trembling, Lucy fearfully assumes that news from home could be a "disastrous communication." It is not clear what kind of family she had, but she fears any association with it. Lucy calls herself "a placeless person" (48), and this acknowledgement encourages further isolation. Later, Lucy's separation from England isolates her.

Villette begins, not with an introduction of her own family or even herself, but rather with "[her] godmother" (7). A typical nineteenth century family solidified itself with "rootedness and durability" (Lamonica 190). But Lucy describes Mrs. Bretton's family: "Her husband's family had been residents there for generations, and bore, indeed, the name of their birthplace-Bretton of Bretton" (7). The family has existed "for generations" so as to secure its "genteel" presence, and its members proudly bear the name "Bretton." The close relationship between their family name and "the name of [their] birthplace" reinforces their domestic history and legitimacy. While Lucy has a last name, she does not provide her family's history nor indicate their social status. Dickens's orphan Pip in *Great Expectations* begins with his short introduction: "My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name

Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip" (3). Although his remembrance of his parents is vague and unreliable, he defines who he is based on what he has shared with his family-his father's name. Lucy, on the other hand, feels at "home" with her godmother, Mrs. Bretton. This relationship may be superficial, but Lucy appreciates Mrs. Bretton's bourgeois generosity. Yet, these two women cannot develop a more intimate relationship, as mother and daughter. In spite of her unconventional circumstances, Lucy learns that even a slight proof of connection with her family can improve her situation. In London, as soon as she "intimated [her] connection" (mentioning her uncles' names), her position becomes socially "clear, and on a right footing" (53). Lucy, nevertheless, chooses not to negotiate her position without family.

Lucy Snowe describes a genuine "home" without affection. She calmly suggests that she has not been fortunate enough to experience the "normal" advantages of belonging to a family. For Lucy, "home" and family exist, but not as a shelter or a place of comfort: "little thinking then I was never again to visit it: never more to tread its calm old streets - I betook myself home, having been absent six months. It will be conjectured that I was of course glad to return to the bosom of my kindred. Well! the amiable conjecture does no harm, and may therefore be safely left uncontradicted" (39). Lucy knows that "mid-Victorian culture deified the family as a place of fulfillment and serenity" (Lamonica 191). She has not experienced "the amiable," but still she describes herself as "a bark slumbering through halcyon weather, in a harbour still as glass" (39). Lucy's attitude toward "the amiable conjecture" that a person is always comforted by his or her family does not exhibit distress,

but sorrowfulness that has already begun to fade away. In her vague memory, no one in her family interrupts her solitude or recognizes her, and this lack of interaction leaving her extremely hungry for human relationships in Villette,[10] but she does not abandon her socially awkward personality. Throughout Lucy articulates her sentiments passionately and imposes autonomy upon herself. Unable to rely on her past or her family, she understands that "[she] could only go forward" (52), but to where? She does not know. She only learns to accept the distance between her and her non-existent home without resentment.

Lamonica interprets Lucy's metaphorical reference to her family as her memory of a death. Therefore, Lucy "seeks to create a self out of destruction and death" (189). Lamonica depends heavily on Brontë's personal domestic tragedy to understand Lucy's character: "The self that both Lucy and Charlotte must confront is specifically one dispossessed by death and forced to reestablish an identity out of loss and memory" (189). Her protagonist, however, lives a different life. Lucy's family does not present any physical existence in her narrative. Her lack of relations completes her outsider-hood. Lucy Snowe seeks liberation from a traditional source that assists individualization, resisting domestication. The following reference to Lucy's family contains that resistance:

> However, it cannot be concealed that, in that case, I must some-
> how have fallen overboard, or that there must have been wreck at
> last. I too well remember a time-a long time-of cold, of danger, of

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[10] Lucy is used to being ignored. Consumed by her utter solitude, she leaves her dormitory one day to disappear into another village, but not even "the cuisiniere" is aware of her "absence" for a few days (212). In the midst of her wandering she surprises a Catholic priest with her sudden appearance. She later explains her behavior to Dr John Graham: "I wanted companionship, I wanted friendship, I wanted counsel. I could find none of these in closet or chamber, so I went and sought them in church and confessional" (214).

contention. To this hour, when I have the nightmare, it repeats the rush and saltness of briny waves in my throat, and their icy pressure on my lungs. I even know there was a storm, and that not of one hour nor one day. For many days and nights neither sun nor stars appeared; we cast with our own hands the tackling out of the ship; a heavy tempest lay on us; all hope that we should be saved was taken away. In fine, the ship was lost, the crew perished. As far as I recollect, I complained to no one about these troubles. Indeed, to whom could I complain? (39)

The vagueness of this passage increases the mysteriousness of Lucy's family. Yet, the resonating sentiment is clear. Lucy is troubled by her past memory, but embraces her exhausted body and mind without guilt. Lamonica suggests that perhaps "the family suffered disgrace, financial and/or marital, as well as death" (193). He indicates that Lucy separates herself from her family because of the painful memory of death. Yet, I also see a recognition of uncompromising tension within the domesticity because Lucy remembers the time "of cold of danger, of contention" before the disaster. She never experienced domestic intimacy within her own family. Lamonica seems to believe that external elements disrupted this family's harmony, but from the beginning, Lucy distanced herself from her family. Lucy's "heavy tempest" may represent internal or domestic conflict. The last two lines of this passage imply that Lucy has inherited unexplainable domestic conflict, and she accepts her social marginalization. Rather than chasing an illusion of an ideal family that does not exist for her, she dislocates herself both internally and externally by resisting the conventional Victorian means of self-identification.

Did Brontë believe that a construction of identity can happen without family? Sue Ann Betsinger compares Jane Eyre's unique adventure to Eve's fall in the Bible and describes Jane Eyre as an orphan guided by "the mother nature"

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(111) in order to liberate her entity from patriarchal society and rediscover her true self.[11] She surmises that Brontë creates Jane, "who consistently resisted overbearing authority," to write a "new story" (123) about a woman that cannot be explained using contemporary perspectives. Jane's rebellion only leads to socially liberated enlightenment, which is made more possible because she is an orphan. Like Jane, Lucy is compelled to construct her independence, but her life is more challenging Jane's. Throughout the novel Lucy stands outside her family. Because she does not inherit wealth unexpectedly like Jane Eyre or have a constant provider like Mr. Jarndyce, Esther Summerson's benefactor, she must earn her own living. Lucy must find ways to ascertain "an autonomous introspective 'self' " (Young 47) without domestic guidance.

Although Richard's audacity to refuse Mr. Jarndyce's generosity leads him to destruction, Lucy's refusal to accept Mr. Home's offer preserves her uncompromising orphan-hood. She declines an offer to be close to her privileged and beneficial friends, Paulina, Dr. John, and Mrs. Bretton, which reflects her inability to conform:

> Mr. Home himself offered me a handsome sum - thrice my present salary - if I would accept the office of companion to his daughter. I declined. I think I should have declined had I been poorer than I was, and with scantier fund of resource, more stinted narrowness of future prospect. I had not that vocation. I could teach; I could give lessons; but to be either a private governess or a companion was unnatural to me. Rather than fill the former post in any great house, I would deliberately have taken a housemaid's place,

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[11]Betsinger, 111-123. According to her, Charlotte Brontë "reinterprets myth" and believes that the Creator's love is a sign of his love for the human beings. She argues that Eve's Fall "demonstrates the human beings' superiority" and marks the transition between "pre-human creaturehood" to "fully human being." Jane Eyre's frequent conversation with her vision proves that she is connected with God.

bought a strong pair of gloves, swept bedrooms and staircases, and cleaned stoves and locks, in peace and independence. Rather than be a companion, I would have made shirts and starved. I was no bright lady's shadow - not Miss de Bassompierre's. (345)

Why would such an educated woman protest that it is better to be "a house-maid" than "a companion"? Lucy's rebellious nature surfaces in her response to Mr. Home. She refuses to be subjugated to professional stability by rejecting the position of governess. She defamiliarizes herself again by not submitting to domestic stability. Mr. Home's daughter, Paulina, represents the ideal middle- class woman with her "sexual purity, selflessness, moral and emotional refinement, maternal and domestic skills, and submissiveness" (Ingham 177). Lucy finds it unbearable to be this "bright lady's shadow." Her eccentricity resulted in solitude, but freed her from conformity. Although she admits that "self-reliance and exertion were forced upon [her] by circumstances" (40), she finds it difficult to accept conventional life. To Lucy, social acceptance does not equal spiritual stability. Lucy is free of class anxiety, although she lives in "a class based society [that is] visibly competitive" (Ingham 12). Victorians' "categorizing impulse inherent in the class system itself" (Young 51) stabilizes society politically. However, as long as she remains Lucy Snowe, she cannot be "a companion" to Paulina. Unlike the docile orphan, Esther Summerson, who says "I was no one" (57) and submits to her benefactor's wishes, Lucy resists social compassion and chooses to struggle with her social obscurity. Mr. Home's house can provide not only financial security but also social protection, and above all, a faithful friend, Paulina, who regards Lucy as "a sort of unconscious necessary" (330)" and perhaps even as a mother, for she also has no mother. Lucy would have a "home" with Paulina and her family. She says

it is "unnatural for [her] to be" a governess. Yet, it was assumed that any educated woman with no means to marry would become private governesses or companions to girls like Paulina. Lucy sees the circumstances otherwise. As much as she has been "invisible" all her life, she refuses to become a "shadow." She can bear social neglect and invisibility. She could even live without a lover, but she cannot willingly be a shadow.

Lucy is grateful to Madame Beck, her foe, as a model in her life. The successful school mistress understands Lucy too well: "Madame Beck and I, without assimilating, understood each other well. I was not her companion, nor her children's governess; she left me free: she tied me to nothing - not to herself - not even to her interests: . . . [Madame Beck] said, . . . 'One thing, however, I can do to please you - leave you alone with your liberty' " (331). Madame Beck comprehends what Lucy needs, for she herself is an example of social resistance to conventional gender roles. With an unusual ability to dominate others, traditionally a masculine virtue, Beck's personality defies Victorian femininity. She manipulates for her own "interest," and the patriarchal society only exists for her "interest." Lucy explains how Madame Beck's school of "machinery" performs its duty-through "espionage" and leadership. I would add Beck's standard of class categorization. Beck enters Lucy's room at night, opens her memorandum-book and "coolly [peruses] its contents" (77). Even Lucy calls this immoral action "her duty" (77). She is under constant surveillance in Madame Beck's school, and her privacy is violated without warning, but Lucy complies with her demands, not only because Beck is her employer, but also because she recognizes the same form of resistance in Madame Beck. Lucy understands Madame Beck's attempt to preserve her authority in her own

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house, because they both desire to be the mistress of their own lives. They are so similar to each other that Lucy sometimes misinterprets Beck's intentions as signs of rivalry and jealousy (Berglund 203).

Madame Beck, however, is not an orphan, and her social position is much more stable than Lucy's. Still, the school mistress demonstrates her class anxiety, as she is accustomed to constant social competition. While Lucy Snowe embraces her own socially ambiguous position, Madame Beck relies on clear social definitions of class to prove her superiority over Lucy. When she first employs Lucy to replace the previous English teacher, she performs a test to determine the appropriate position for the new teacher. She "summons" Lucy "to dress [her]" (79). "It appeared my place was to be a hybrid between gouvernante and lady's-maid" Lucy says (79). When Beck discovers that Lucy is not a skilled chambermaid, she is ordered to become her children's "nursery-governess" until she can prove herself to be an "English teacher" for sixty students. Beck also visits Lucy at La Terrasse, her godmother and Dr. John's house in Villette, when Lucy's "prolonged" stay stimulates her curiosity and anxiety. When Lucy, whom Beck believes to have no legitimate social connections, appears with such friends, Madame Beck performs her usual test. Lucy observes: "[I] suppose she had resolved within herself to see what manner of place Dr. John inhabited. Apparently the pleasant site and neat interior surpassed her expectations. . . . In that brief fraction of time what a change had been wrought! An instant ago all sparkles and jests; she now sat sterner than a judge and graver than a sage! Strange little woman!" (219) The process is subtle, but the intention is obvious. Beck must decide where this English foreigner belongs in terms of class, and she is perplexed by Lucy's lack of socially

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constructed identity. She constantly changes positions. Only when Lucy is properly placed, is she able to control, manipulate and associate with Lucy, Beck believes. Beck's testing functions in two ways. It examines Lucy's sociality, femininity and intelligence to provide a more accurate portrayal of her foreign employee. And it also allows her to calculate the extent of the present and future relationship between two women. She only formulates hierarchical relationships except within her family. The result of her test disturbs Beck. How could an invisible orphan teacher reside in such a legitimate household, protected by her friends? She sees Lucy only as a discordant element within Mrs. Bretton's house. Lucy, however, simply smiles at Madame's stern face and calls her a "strange little woman!" (219)

Lucy's "strategy of displacement" (Lamonica 179), which involves voluntary alienation and disconnection, confounds more around her who are unable either to domesticate or comprehend her intentions. They suspect Lucy's intention, declaring how disturbed they are by her inconsistent identity. Lucy welcomes this reaction. The familiar sorrow of her isolation does frustrate her, but to watch the perplexed, who have denounced her social obscurity, compensates her for solitude:

> 'Who are you, Miss Snowe?' she inquired, in a tone of such undisguised and unsophisticated curiosity, as made me laugh in my turn. 'You used to call yourself a nursery governess; when you first came here you really had the care of the children in this house: I have seen you carry little Georgette in your arms, like a bonne - few governesses would have condescended so far - and now Madame Beck treats you with more courtesy than she treats the Parisienne, St. Pierre; and that proud chit, my cousin, makes you her bosom friend!' 'Wonderful!' I agreed, much amused at her mystification. 'Who am I indeed? Perhaps a personage in disguise. Pity I don't

look the character.' (341)

Ginevra's response to Lucy's social mobility allows Lucy to reject traditional classification. Ginevra and Madame Beck only trust external standards affirmed by traditional hierarchy, which cannot categorize orphans. A position of a governess was socially ambiguous to both the lower class and the middle class, but when Ginevra and Madame Beck witness Lucy's social ambiguity allowing her to cross established class boundaries, they are forced to question who Lucy Snowe is. Ginevra is surprised at Lucy's indifference to social condescension. In her eyes, to be a nursery governess for Madame Beck means to renounce her dignity as an educator, and "few governesses would have condescended so far." Ginevra does not realize that Lucy has already destabilized her concept of home and distanced herself from conventional domestic space and its comforts. Lucy does not participate in social competition and have any "categorizing impulse." Thus, she is able to perform various roles simultaneously. Lucy, with a smile, thus reiterates the same question that Frankenstein's creature desperately presented, but answers with a disturbing confidence: "Who am I indeed? Perhaps a personage in disguise" (341). The very idea that she is unrecognizable amuses Lucy. Frankenstein's creature believes he could not answer this resonating question without inherited rank and wealth. Lucy finds comfort in her social equivocalness, which must be familiarized. She does not answer Ginevra's mundane question.

Lucy Snowe finds pleasure in being unrecognizable, having been habitually underestimated. She has been considered invisible at her own "permanent residence" and been belittled in public. Both Ginevra and Madame Beck

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consider her inferior, as they only see in her a "nobody's daughter." Lucy is startled by Ginevra's unapologetic remark about her social status and cries out internally that she is "the nobody you once thought me!" (341) She is not furious, but rather exhausted with the weight of social classification. Sometimes she ironically "marvels" at those who could adroitly "categorize" her only by observing her appearance:

> Much I marvelled at the sagacity evinced by waiters and chambermaids in proportioning the accommodation to the guest. How could inn-servants and ship- stewardesses everywhere tell at a glance that, I for instance, was an individual of no social significance and little burdened by cash? They did know it evidently: I saw quite well that they all, in a moment's calculation, estimated me at about the same fractional value. The fact seemed to me curious and pregnant; I would not disguise from myself what it indicated, yet managed to keep up my spirits pretty well under its pressure. (65)

Lucy acknowledges that people can immediately detect her nameless position since she travels alone without a companion and wears average clothing. Lucy's social value does not include her interiority. The society constructs and maintains itself through social classification. Lucy is "an individual [is] of no social significance," and as a result, she becomes invisible. Brontë, however, provides Lucy with peculiar patience. As Lucy's strength comes from her dissociation from class-obsession, her "spirits" are not dismantled by this ruthless treatment, but she is keen enough to detect social apathy. Lucy unconsciously represents orphans, yet does not call herself an orphan.

Paul defines her self-isolation as religious difference, which he willingly accepts. He says: "Remain a Protestant. My little English Puritan, I love Protestantism in you. I own its severe charm. There is something in its

ritual I cannot receive myself, but it is the sole creed for 'Lucy'" (572). Paul is attracted to what he does not comprehend in Lucy and believes it is her religious difference that fascinates him, but Lucy remains incomprehensible because she does not see the need to persuade anyone that is disturbed by "a placeless person." She remains a disturbance as she is. Paul's reaction is much more comforting to Lucy. Others scrutinize her and demand that she be subject to their conventional standards. Paul tells her to remain difficult and different. She is an outsider, but Paul does not see the need to conventionalize her and dress her in a "pink dress" (231). Lucy "claims for herself the right not to be judged by conventional standards" (Berglund 203) and Paul Emanuel participates in Lucy's resistance to conventional classification.

3.2 George Eliot's New Victorian Family: "We are a family of orphans."

While Dickens devotes himself to the socially neglected by creating orphan characters to encourage social awareness among the middle and upper classes, Eliot criticizes the deterioration of Victorians suffering from class anxiety in *Silas Marner*. He resents social negligence, but does not lose hope for social compassion, but Eliot approaches her concern in a different way. Instead of appealing to privileged Victorians with ideal families to embrace orphans, she creates a new ideal domesticity. She creates the unconventional family of orphans in *Silas Marner*.

In the previous section, we examined Lucy Snowe, who does not have a

past to return to. Her resistance to female domestication distinguishes her from Esther Summerson and Oliver Twist, who reunite with their families and would relocate themselves according to accepted social categorization. Even a dissenter like Jane Eyre reunites with her living relatives and eliminates her social obscurity through restored wealth and dramatic coincident. A working class orphan boy turns out to be a lost son of an aristocrat, or a poor governess inherits her wealth from her dead uncle, who has been looking for his niece. Yet, Eppie, in *Silas Marner*, refuses to accept her original family. She experienced ideal domesticity already with her foster father, Silas Marner. Her lack of class obsession liberates her from the common desire of social ascendancy. Her birth parents return to claim her and provide her with upper social status, but she refuses to return to her selfish biological parents, for she has a new home.

Through Eppie's decision, Eliot suggests that social stability does not ensure domestic harmony. Eliot punishes upper class men like Godfrey Cass, who abandoned his daughter to conceal his illegitimate sexual affair and to avoid public embarrassment, but still regards his illegitimate child as his legal possession. Eppie does not threaten the domestic and social harmony of the privileged. Rather conventional ideology toward orphan status threatens to destroy the family of orphans only to fail. Eliot creates community as an "imagined" project that teaches individuals to protect and maintain social and cultural stability through "sympathy" (Pyle 22). Pyle describes how "sympathy is the imaginative impulse that [transcends] the egotism and [renounces] the desires of self" (6). Eppie the orphan demonstrates and exercises such sympathy to preserve her new family and community. She does not define

her decision as "sympathy," but its nature and function coincide with Eppie's choice. Eppie constructs her ideal family unconventionally, and the "egotistic" aristocrat could create discord, but he cannot challenge the permanency of such family of social outsiders.

Where Brontë explores an orphan's social liberation from class obsession with Lucy Snowe in *Villete*, Eliot examines how one's lack of domestic origin culminates in individual dislocation and isolation. Silas Marner's disturbing presence in Raveloe after fifteen years of residence proves that the traditional disapprove of social obscurity. She underlines the futility of inherited family in *Silas Marner*. The novel begins with the narrator's describing conventional skepticism for those who do not have "names":

> No one knew where wandering men had their homes or their origin; and how was a man to be explained unless you at least knew somebody who knew his father and mother? To the peasants of old times, the world outside their own direct experience was a region of vagueness and mystery; to their untravelled thought a state of wandering was a conception as dim as the winter life of the swallows that came back with the spring; and even a settler, if he came from distant parts, hardly ever ceased to be viewed with a remnant of distrust, which would have prevented any surprise if a long course of inoffensive conduct on his part had ended in the commission of a crime. (1)

The nostalgia of fading tradition encourage the country people to idolize what is inherited. With minimum contact with "the world outside," they preserve the tradition of categorizing individuals according to their families. Yet, the narrator later points out that this village is situated near the plain called "Merry England" (3). Despite radical transformations in the economical activities such as industrialization, "Merry England" still accommodated and ac-

cepted traditional beliefs. Family identity produced individual identity. "The peasants of old times" feared the destruction of the social equilibrium, if those "wandering men" or vagabonds entered their community. This anxiety compelled peasants to associate the socially obscure with the "wandering," the traveling people or gypsies.[12]

Silas Marner also suffers from this "remnant of distrust" when he arrives in the village. Like a gypsy, he silently wanders around. His "acquaintance with medicinal herbs and their preparation" (6) adds to this mystery, which terrorizes the villagers, who believed that "traveling people" might possess the "arts to rule, as they desired, the workings of men's brains" (Arnold, "The Scholar Gypsy" 45-6). Silas's medical knowledge appears as dark magic to the villagers. They believe that Silas will communicate with those who "could only speak the devil" (2). Also his vague past without a history makes people believe that the weaver is "partly crazy" (60). Silas has a sorrowful past, but does not give information about his family or origin. To the villagers of Raveloe, Silas has no definite past.

Eliot liberates Silas from his human past. Silas Marner's act of weaving demonstrates that he does not need to justify himself. Silas's isolation satisfies him, but no one else. His solitude consorts perfectly with his creative act of weaving, which interprets his private identity:

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[12]The very act of wandering indicated an unwillingness to abide by traditional mores. Peters points out how the Liptons created Heathcliff's social obscurity in terms of such nomadism: "The nomadism which characterizes the traveling lifestyle disrupts the notion of rootedness understood to characterize the family and the home. The legacy of the family home functions not only as property in the family economy, but as the location [centre] of familial identity and social place ... Heathcliff, the orphan, by his very presence continually disrupts the home and the family" (49). The uncivilized Heathcliff thus immediately becomes the embodiment of evil, and the family turns against him psychologically and physically.

> He seemed to weave, like the spider, from pure impulse, without
> reflection. Every man's work, pursued steadily, tends in this way
> to become an end in itself, and so to bridge over the loveless chasms
> of his life. Silas's hand satisfied itself with throwing the shuttle,
> and his eye with seeing the little squares in the cloth complete
> themselves under his effort. He hated the thought of the past
> . . . Thought was arrested by utter bewilderment, now its old narrow
> pathway was closed, and affection seemed to have died under the
> bruise that had fallen on its keenest nerves. (14)

Unlike Heathcliff, who responds to social stigma and discrimination with fear
and violence, Silas Marner ignores the society that ignores him. This social
isolation leads to his obsession with gold, but until Eppie enters his house, his
objective is to exist on his own terms. The village may consider him a dis-
ruptive force. If, however, his past only tortures Silas, why should he expose
it? Silas chooses misunderstanding over social recognition, and he chooses
weaving cloth for others as his self-expression. He performs this creative act
in solitude and does not encourage Raveloe to embrace him. Neither his in-
difference nor his existence threatens Raveloe's social stability. Silently Silas
remains marginalized. Eliot warns that habitual ideologies should not domi-
nate the indefinable out of cultural convenience. Silas Marner does not need
to sacrifice his individuality for the preservation of domestic ideals.

Eppie is an illegitimate child abandoned by her father, Godfrey Cass, and
left in Silas's care by accident. Godfrey has concealed his illegitimate affair
with Eppie's biological mother, Molly Farren, to marry Nancy Lammeter, a
woman of his social class. He fails, however, to create an ideal family because
his upper-class wife cannot bear a child. He seeks his abandoned daughter to
establish his patriarchal authority. Godfrey firmly believes that Eppie would
not refuse to join her biological father's upper class culture.

Cass offers his abandoned child an opportunity to obtain a legitimate position and rise socially. Cass' family could achieve domestic stability only through propriety. Yet, his daughter already has an ideal home from her point of view. She may not have wealth, but she has a family with her working class foster father, Silas Marner, who has reared her. The prospect of socially rising by returning to her birth father is irrelevant to Eppie when she has an ideal home. Cass's outburst is desperate, cowardly, and authentic. He contends with his daughter's lack of interest in his name. He even demands the weaver to respect propriety by persuading her. He cries: "But I've a claim on you, Eppie-the strongest of all claims. It's my duty, Marner, to own Eppie as my child, and provide for her. She's my own child; her mother was my wife. I've a natural claim on her that must stand before every other" (169). Cass's desperation is problematic. Instead of orphaned Eppie being a threat to the Victorian family, Eliot demonstrates that she becomes necessary to complete it. Even with status and wealth, Cass's family suffers domestic infelicity. Thus, Cass repeats the word "claim" to emphasize his legal right to repossess his orphan. That he abandoned his child and renounced his responsibility does not concern him.

With his family history well-known in the village, no one should question Cass' position. He believes that Raveloe will condone his lack of integrity, when he has a legitimate family. In contrast, Eppie's foster father, Silas Marner owns a mysterious past, which led to his predicaments and misunderstandings. His class is lower than Cass'. Silas may have reared Eppie, but a closure would reunite the orphan with her biological father. Eppie, however, refuses to return: "I can't feel as I've got any father but one" (172). Her sense of home

is practical and without pretension: "I've always thought of a little home where he'd sit i' the corner, and I should fend and do everything for him. I can't think o' no other home. I wasn't brought up to be a lady, and I can't turn my mind to it. I like the working- folks and their victuals and their ways" (173). Eppie's justification for not returning to her birth father challenges the conventional worth of what is inherited. Her biological connection positions her within the upper class. Yet, she distances herself from her heritage, for she is only familiar with "the working-folks." She has already established her domestic comfort with the humble name of Marner. She remains among the working class and proudly announces her simple plan: "I'm promised to marry a working-man, as'll live with father, and help me to take care of him" (173). Eppie's assertion reminds me of Lucy Snowe's circumstances in *Villette*. Lucy describes her original home as a place "of cold, of danger, of contention" (39), as if her separation from biological family was inevitable. Lucy's home is not a place of protection and affection; thus she leaves without regret. She finds another home with Monsieur Paul and her indefinable world. Eppie already has a home where her foster father sits in the corner.

Godfrey Cass fails to re-claim his abandoned daughter because Eppie Marner does not suffer from class anxiety. Social mobility is suggested, but not enforced. Lucy Snowe lives the idea that it is better to be obsessed with one's own individuality than with family name. Through Eppie Marner, free of social anxiety, Eliot represents that the marginalized should not submit to social discrimination and not be discouraged by the sanctity of traditional domesticity. Silas Marner embodies the new ideal family of orphans, and ironically the upper class family, Godfrey Cass and his wife, threatens the orphan's family

and home. The town of Raveloe may believe in class status, but Silas and Eppie discover a new home with each other.

Eliot discredits the absolute value of "inherited" name and reexamines the cultural definition of family. At the end of the novel, Silas sentimentally remembers his original home and returns to the village that once ostracized him, hoping to bring closure to his ambiguous life. With no living relatives, his only family is his adopted daughter. Now the old Silas would like to return to "where he was born" (177). He believes that his first home will welcome him back and exonerate him from the robbery he did not commit. When he returns, however, he does not recognize "that big factory" (180) that looks back at him without emotion; the old town and people have vanished. Silas, then, realizes where his home is: "the old home's gone; I've no home but this now" (180). The factory represents how in industrializing England a new generation faces different demands. As Eppie willingly separates from her unfamiliar past, Silas disconnects from his original home and accepts the home he has created with his orphan daughter. People will never discover the truth about the robbery, but Silas has found his own personal truth with Eppie.

Brontë wrote to her publisher about the ending of *Villette*: "The cruel-hearted will on the contrary pitilessly impale him on the second horn of the dilemma– marrying him without ruth or compunction to that - person - that - that - individual - 'Lucy Snowe"' (603).[13] She stresses "that person" and "that individual," as if she herself is fascinated by her character's obscurity. Through *Villette*, Brontë advocates for recognition of orphans as legitimate

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[13]Brontë wrote this letter to George Smith on March 25 1853. A portion of this letter is provided in the Notes by Professor Helen M. Cooper.

"individuals." With Eppie Marner Eliot suggests that legal or even biological legitimacy does not necessarily stabilize domesticity, but that an orphan's determination to obtain stability despite her illegitimate birth could create a legitimate family.

Chapter 4

Their Inappropriate Resistance: Female Impostors in the House

> I resisted all the way: a new thing for me, and a circumstance which greatly strengthened the bad opinion Bessie and Miss Abbot were disposed to entertain of me. The fact is, I was a trifle beside myself; or rather out of myself, as the French would say: I was conscious that a moment's mutiny had already rendered me liable to strange penalties, and like any other rebel slave, I felt resolved, in my desperation, to go to all lengths. (9)

Jane Eyre describes the exhilaration she feels when she aggressively attacks her cousin, John Reed, who has tormented her incessantly. Reduced to a social nuisance, she attempts "a new thing for [herself]." She reacts to the social oppression directed toward the inferior and is determined to "resist all the way." Such aggression affirms how orphans threatened domestic harmony by invading the domestic sphere and thus enervated familial solidarity. On the one hand, they do appear to destroy domestic unity. Jane Eyre enters the house to burn it down, Heathcliff bewitches the precious daughter of a gentleman, and

Miss Sharp steals money and husbands. These "placeless" individuals expose yet re-imagine hostility towards them to improve and modernize social structures to accommodate, not exclude, these marginalized children. Particularly interesting are the devilish female orphans like Jane Eyre and Becky Sharp. Mr. Brock admonished Victorians for the "little castaway" who was "not a member of the true flock" (56). Yet, as "the Terrible Mother, far from being an individual deviant, frequently embodied a radical indictment of her society" (Manheimer 530), it was the resistance of these "bad" orphans that effectively mobilized nineteenth-century society and suggested effective modification of the Victorian social hierarchy.

This chapter thus focuses on the inappropriate and improper schemes realized by two scandalous female orphans. Regardless of how unconventional and destructive Jane Eyre turns out to be, her actions seem less perilous compared with those of Magdalen in Wilkie Collins's *No Name* (1862) and Rebecca Sharp in William Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847-8). With Lucy Snowe and Eppie Marner, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot suggest that Victorians should appreciate orphans' intentions to preserve their indefinable subjectivity in spite of their socially and culturally disturbing and unfamiliar presence. Miss Vanstone and Miss Sharp, however, attempt to (re)locate themselves properly within the social hierarchy by disguising themselves as the familiar or the proper within that society. With no privileged name, no money, and no home, they both enter and exit the world possessing multifarious identities. They refuse to be victimized and actively pursue social respect and privilege, for they believe they deserve both. They resist and challenge social stigma by abandoning their socially insignificant, yet original, identities and defying traditional femi-

ninity. Nina Auerbach calls them "solitary wanderers destroying great houses, and self-transforming, magical protagonists" (xviii). I argue that, born with the dispositions to transgress boundaries, these two protagonists purposefully disassociate themselves from Victorian standards of compliance to construct socially deceptive identities. I consider their conspiracy a form of social defiance indeed to be reprimanded morally, but their anomalous activities also politicize their invisibility that turns into socially diverse identities.

This view does not mean that Collins and Thackeray condone Miss Vanstone's and Miss Sharp's illegal activities or crimes. Both protagonists ultimately receive proper punishment, yet they do dramatize the proximity between the privileged and the marginalized. Miss Vanstone should be punished for her deception and conspiracy, but she is also the illegitimate child of a seemingly legitimate Victorian family. She is not "the difference within" (Peters 60).[1] Victorian domesticity; she has been and remains part of the family. In *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray reveals how decadent individuals like Miss Sharp permeate upper middle class society. This protagonist extends the scope of her deception with political support from corrupted men. Both Collins and Thackeray lament middle class England's extreme "theatricality" and insert Magdalen and Becky– as social disturbance and revelation– to dismantle the

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[1]Peters, 30-60. Peters defines Heathcliff as the "unknowable and unassailable" difference that cannot be embraced, although Catherine passionately identifies with his orphan-hood. Heathcliff has been and always will be a source of destruction of the family. In "Stabilizing the Family System at Mansfield Park," Paula Cohen writes that "the history of nineteenth-century family and of the nineteenth-century novel is a struggle to achieve the perfect equilibrium [in the family] and to come to terms with its impossibility" (670). He shows that Fanny, the orphan-like figure in the house, comes to stabilize her aunt's family by improving their relationships that involves a genuine interactive bond rather than the blood line (678). She secures a firm position within the family not because she is their cousin, but because she improves the internal relationship among them.

illusion of restricting domestic ideology and categorization of individuals based only on class and social appearance. They represent how the fragility of familial unity comes from within the family. Collins and Thackeray discover in them the potential progress and metamorphosis of Victorians to visualize a more liberating yet profoundly intimate Victorian domesticity.

Hans Mayer's terms from *Outsiders: A Study in Life and Letters* (1975) helps me in analyze the nature of outsider-hood. Mayer differentiates an "existential outsider" from an "intentional" one. An intentional outsider purposely transgresses, whereas an existential one faces an unusual challenge. The primary difference between them: the former possesses the relentless motivation for socially and culturally disturbing digression, while the latter submits to destined marginalization:

> Existential outsiders, it must be clear, are those who were, literally in their cradles, sung to of what they would one day be. They are those whose move into the margins and the outside was enjoined at birth through sex, origin, or psychic and corporeal makeup. A further characteristic of existential outsiderdom is that it is no longer a single individual who is envisaged, a rebel, one marked man or woman... They have become a genus. They can be lumped together as a minority with specific characteristics. The negative judgment stands. (xvii)

This distinction creates an interesting tension among outsiders. For existential outsiders, the very social limitation of the marginalized transforms into a destiny. However, the societal perception of "existential outsiders" may not be favorable. In *Vanity Fair*, Miss Sharp's origin and/or her mother's foreign nationality become a pretext for her reprehensible actions. Those who chastise her arrogance and deception mention that her mother belonged to the

inferior class of artists and opera singers and emphasize that she was French. They attack Becky's "indecency" by assuming that she is predestined to be a social nuisance. Meanwhile, Miss Vanstone in *No Name* complains with the restraint exercised by her sister Norah yet exhibits the unusual ability to mimic her sister on stage. This talent foreshadows her destiny, which is to assume various identities in order to deceive others. Despite "the negative judgment" (Mayer xvii) existential outsiders like Miss Sharp and Miss Vanstone "have become a genus." The overwhelming numbers of orphan characters in nineteenth-century English novels prove that they invoked substantial interest in both writers and readers. Ronald Berman claims that "the central message in Thackeray's rewriting of history is that Victorian life and culture needs some kind of energy that they do not have" (63). Thackeray and Collins–pursued such "energy" in their fictional outsiders precisely to trigger social and cultural reformation.

The following two sections discuss Magdalen Vanstone's and Becky Sharp's individual processes of marginalization and investigate the complications rendered by "intentional" and "existential outsiderdom" (Mayer 7). Both orphans use their social obscurity to reinvent their identities and locate themselves within the social system. Their social resistance and defiance threaten, yet enlighten, a class-conscious society. Collins and Thackeray dramatize the moving force of their protagonists social obscurity and their theatrical talents to criticize their contemporary social obsession with class. Destined to receive condemnation, Miss Vanstone and Miss Sharp prove that their empowerment originates from their ability to transcend inherited identities.

4.1 A Female Orphan's Request: "Give me any name you like."

No Name refers to Collins's criticism of a legal system that mercilessly deprived illegitimate children of their birthrights. As both lawyer and writer, Collins recognized the injustice practiced by English law. Illegitimate children could not use their father's name, and their status could not even be legitimized by "the subsequent marriage by the parents, contrary to the legal practice of almost every other European country" (Maceachen 123). Mr. Peril embodies Collins' concern, as the Vanstones' lawyer, who disapproves of this irrational legal system: "I am far from defending the law of England as it affects illegitimate offspring. On the contrary, I think it a disgrace to the nation. It visits the sins of the parents on the children; it encourages vice . . . and it claims to produce these two abominable results in the names of morality and religion. . . , [it] has no mercy on *these* children" (138-9). Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone conceal their secret marriage from their family and community, but due to their deadly accident, their daughters, they fail to legalize their marriage, leaving Norah and Magdalen Vanstone as illegitimate children without inheritance. They inherit only social stigma and poverty. They are forced to leave their beloved house. They are "Nobody's Children" (138) according to the lawyer, and their estranged cousin, Noel Vanstone, whose lack of morality disgusts his own servant, inherits their father's wealth. Outraged by the legal system and her cousin's cruelty, Magdalen is determined to restore her birthright. She marries Noel Vanstone, concealing her true identity, but still fails to retrieve her inheritance, when Noel's handmaid interferes with her scheme. Her sister,

however, miraculously marries the man who inherits Noel's wealth. Such a dramatic ending captured audiences' attention. Domestic melodrama dealt with familial discord that enervated the bond and emphasized the plight of those neglected children or orphans who are "helpless and unfriended" (Vicinus 130).[2]

In *No Name*, Collins depicts an involuntary transformation of two middle-class daughters into social outcasts. The Vanstone family fully enjoyed middle class privileges, but because of English laws, they had to renounce their name and status. In the preface, Collins says that this novel "depicts the struggle of a human creature" and that it is his "aim to make the character of Miss Vanstone, which personifies this struggle, a pathetic character even in its perversity and its error" (5). He pleads to ordinary readers to sympathize with his orphan character's struggle. By attacking the legal system, Collins exposes its need for reformation.

Victimizing both privileged and marginalized, Collins discredits standards of social classification by exposing the theatricality and superficiality of Victorian society. He effectively uses the melodramatic plot of an illegitimate child's revenge and the social stigma of being an orphan to accomplish that end, but above all, he highlights Magdalen Vanstone's ability to "become" any individual of any class and liberates her from the social insecurity of an illegiti-

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[2]Martha Vicinus. "Helpless and Unfriended": Nineteenth-Century Domestic Melodrama. New Literary History. Vol. 13, No. 1, On Convention: I (Autumn, 1981), 127-143. The unstable economic and social conditions would often alarm Victorians, and melodrama would capture the universal anxiety according to Vicinus. He also says: "For powerless women and men, melodrama was a vehicle for releasing frustrated talents, unrealized because of social conditions or financial constraints" (136). Magdalen's acting talent seems useless in her middle class family, but while she has fallen socially by exercising her talent, her existence is no longer limited to her father's house. The fallen state accommodates her domestic liberation.

mate child, a nameless individual, an outsider. She actualizes social resistance through her theatrical talent, so Magdalen jettisons her original identity. Her deceptive performance fails mainly because another conniving female impostor discovers her. Magdalen's exposure of the theatricality of her world forces the reader to re-examine the social classification and Victorian legal system that ostracizes orphans. I argue here that an illegitimate child's "nameless" condition releases her from social constriction and that Magdalen empowers herself by misusing her social obscurity and exercising her theatrical talent. She is "an active agent in her own suffering" (Jones 201), choosing to be unrecognizable so as to attain selfhood without restraint. Thus, she restores her family wealth to her sister and liberates her "character" (Chattman 81).

Beautiful and headstrong, Magdalen grows up in a comfortable middle-class family whose secret has been long concealed. Her social gaiety and independence contrast with her elder sister Norah's timid personality and compliance, but Miss Vanstone has been contained within her safe middle- class family. Her willingness to pursue her own romantic relationship with Frank Clare and her artistic talent are perceived as unusual, but pleasant, as a legitimate daughter of her legitimate parents. Miss Vanstone, however, becomes dangerous when she learns that "Mr. Vanstone's daughters are Nobody's Children" (143). Her romantic passion becomes an excessive emotion, and her acting ability, the scandalous device of deception. When English law pronounces her nameless, she inverts her situation and leaves her society helpless before her manipulation. The unique form of resistance against social injustice and stigma compromises the Victorian belief in inherited identities. Melynda Huskey argues: "Magdalen's weapon against society is her femininity, her

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marginality" (10). Her deliberate dissociation from her domestic history helps her exchange identities, which in turn allows her to pursue her sense of justice.

Magdalen's theatrical talent, with which she was born, transforms the social degradation and marginalization to her advantage. Before the Vanstones' death, Miss Vanstone's friend offers her an opportunity to perform on stage or to escape her own identity. Exhausted from boredom, Miss Vanstone accepts her friend's suggestion to act in a small play. She seizes the opportunity to pass for another individual:

> The effect of this cool appropriation of Norah's identity to theatrical purposes on the audience...asserted itself in a storm of applause on Miss Vanstone's exit...Norah herself could not deny this time that attribute of approbation had been well deserved...there, plainly visible to the dullest of the spectators, was the rare faculty of dramatic impersonation, expressing itself in every look and action of this girl of eighteen, who now stood on a stage for the first time in her life. (62-3)

Her parents protected and controlled her life, and her "habit of mimicry" (17) provided amusement to her parents. Miss Vanstone is able to turn "a dexterous piece of mimicry" into "a living reality" (17). This is a significant moment. Without hesitation, she transforms herself into Norah, who is "so strangely dissimilar in person and character" (68). But her younger sister fascinates strangers' eyes by imitating her to perfection. Norah's reserve and shyness distinguish her from her outgoing and gregarious sister, but on stage, she observes that her younger sister has become her. Magdalen "performs" her sister's conventional femininity by reproducing Norah's "peculiarities of manner and movement" perfectly. Collins foreshadows how Magdalen will rely on her "faculty of dramatic impersonation" to create and steal personalities

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and names. When the law forces her to abandon her legitimate name, her "nameless" status allows her to take any name.

Magdalen's first successful appearance on stage indicates how a vibrant middle -class woman could "perform" femininity. Perhaps she impersonates Norah because she could easily observe her, however Magdalen acts her reserved sister in spite of her own dynamic and sometimes unfeminine personality. She rarely has the opportunity to step out of the domestic haven created by her parents. Helena Michie credits "sisterhood" for Magdalen's decision: "Magdalen vows revenge; Norah advises caution...reminding us that the dark and the fair sister are positions, not characters, and that dark and fair can change places with changing material conditions...Female identity in *No Name* is always contingent, spectacular, always in flux within the structuring and enabling framework of sisterhood" (409-410). The conspicuous opposition between the sisters compensates for what they have been dispossessed of by the unexpected death of their parents and their illegal marriage. Magdalen rebels against the gender role in relation to her sister's compliance. Standing on the stage with another identity, even for a brief moment, represents Magdalen's violation of her own individuality, but the role is immediately restricted because this violation occurs by her imitating her sister's conventional femininity. Magdalen's aggressive response to her family's tragedy will restore the Vanstone sisters' inheritance, but her sister's social passivity constricts Magdalen's resistance and disguise.

Lauren Chattman, defining Magdalen's discordance as the involuntary "doubled femininity" of "actress heroines" in Victorian novels, argues that Collins uses Magdalen's first performance as a tool to reveal "the theatrical

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nature of the domestic role" (82). The rigid standard of ideal womanhood impels women to feign submission and conformity. When Magdalen teaches her maid to act like a middle- class lady, she says: "Shall I tell you what a lady is? A lady is a woman who wears a silk gown, and has a sense of her own importance. I shall put the gown on your back, and the sense in your head" (613). Magdalen's dramatization damages the integrity of the title "lady." She contends that the inherited social prerogative could be replicated without appropriate upbringing and class. Stripped of her own family name, Magdalen proves that social identities demand performance, not family. And the boundary between the theatrical and the real is obscured by her role-play.

Armed with acting talent and passion, Magdalen first disconnects from her domestic history and her original identity. She separates herself from her sister, who would stop her younger sister's conspiracy. Magdalen cannot embrace her own deception when her sister– her only family member– still defines and participates in her identity. The very existence of her sister reminds her: "I can almost think I have come back again to my former self" (371). In a letter to her sister, she writes: "I dare not show myself to you as I really am... You know, Norah, we must get our living for ourselves; I have only gone to get mine in the manner which is fittest for me. Whether I succeed, or whether I fail, I can do myself no harm either way. I have no position to lose, and no name to degrade" (181-2). Magdalen fears Norah's moral judgment, yet she seeks not to "live" as a "helpless, virtuous victim of a conspiracy" (Jones 290). She marginalizes herself to externalize her suppressed anger and desire and restore her name and wealth for her sister and her. She has descended socially from middle class to illegitimate orphan, but she discovers or desires

self-determination and sovereignty. She is relieved to realize that she has "no position to lose." Her deliberate self-efficacy gives power to her. In front of her enemy, Noel Vanstone, Magdalen can say, "You are entirely mistaken in your estimate of the person you have to deal with" (290). She admonishes her vicious cousin that he should not dismiss a seemingly powerless orphan.

How dangerous is an orphan's ability to act? How did an eighteen-year-old female orphan possess a threatening force? Any impostor willing to enter society with a false identity threatened public and domestic harmony, but an orphan actress and seductress was especially frightening. Collins uses the governess of the Vanstone sisters and her observations as an example of Victorian concern about orphans. Miss Garth has lived with the Vanstone sisters for a long time, developing an immeasurable affection for them. Yet, after learning of their parents' death, Miss Garth sees in Magdalen a dangerous individual she suddenly cannot fathom. Norah, is likely to comply with her legal situation, but Magdalen is disturbing in Miss Garth's mind. From the perspective of the governess, as soon as the lawyer pronounced theVanstone sisters orphans, the house turns into "the orphanage" (143), and Miss Vanstone, a potential social menace. Referring to "the orphan sisters" (146), Miss Garth is especially concerned with Magdalen's strange composure when she hears for the first time that she is an illegitimate child without name or money. She ponders her anxiety, as she observes Miss Vanstone:

> Does there exist in every human being, beneath that outward and visible character which is shaped into form by the social influences surrounding us, an inward, invisible disposition, which is part of ourselves, which education may indirectly modify, but can never hope to change?. . . Are there, infinitely varying with each individ-

ual, inbred forces of Good and Evil in all of us, deep down below the reach of mortal encouragement and mortal repression- hidden Good and hidden Evil, both alike at the mercy of the liberating opportunity and the sufficient temptation? (78)

As Miss Garth imagines Magdalen's potential "evil" force, her longtime pupil intimidates her. She no longer belongs to a family that moderates "forces of inborn and inbred disposition." Witnessing her silence, she observes that Miss Vanstone's "all-attractive openness and high spirits" have been transformed into "shadowy and terrible possibilities" (146). The discrepancy between outward and inward character terrorizes her, and so the governess turns her attention to what has been repressed and contained within her family, thus questioning the existence of Miss Vanstone's "inward, invisible disposition" that she could apprehend. She fears it may be associated with a "hidden Evil." A desperate orphan may seize "the liberating opportunity" to externalize her anger toward social discrimination and in that process destroy the domestic harmony of other families. Miss Garth had no earlier concern for her younger pupil's "invisible disposition," but without her parents, she cannot domesticate Magdalen. She "can never hope to change" what lies beneath this illegitimate child. She believes "dangerous elements [exist] in the strength of Miss Vanstone's character" and "the life of the younger [is] doomed to be the battle-field of mortal conflict with the roused forces of Evil in herself" (147).[3]

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[3]This recognition of "evil" in an orphan also occurs in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Peters emphasizes that constructing Heathcliff "as the embodiment of the difference within [that] takes the form of an enforced marginalization from the family based on his orphanhood" (46). She says: "Heathcliff appears like a sphinx. . . as a transgressive figure coming from the outside to continually disturb the harmony of the domestic sphere. The narrative reinforces that everything about Heathcliff is unknowable. . . the outsider without origin" (49). Such a lack of origin renders fear in Victorians. Both Miss Vanstone and Heathcliff represent the menacing force of domestic and social destruction. Peters believes that "or-

Although Magdalen's autonomy always concerned her conservative governess and her compliant sister, Miss Garth took little action because her parents controlled, educated, and protected such unfeminine yet harmless divergence. Collins contrives a domesticity, where parental authority could effectively restrict or even imprison disorderly individuality. Steven Mintz summarizes "the new ideological burdens and responsibilities that were beginning to be attached to the middle-class home" (39) and emphasizes the significance of families and parents in nineteenth-century:

> Not only was the family to instill a high degree of self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and self-direction. . . but the institution was also responsible for counterbalancing these aspirations with a capacity for self-restraint and an internalized sense of duty and obligation. Given the weakness of other institutional and communal controls, the stability of society appeared to depend primarily on the ability of individual parents to instill a capacity for self-government within children. (39)

Mintz argues that not only domestic, but also social and national harmony, depended on the successful education of unconventional children. She announces her love for Frank Clare proudly and voluntarily, and her courage to speak up for her timid and cowardly lover distinguishes her. Yet, due to her "sense of duty and obligation," she anxiously waits for the approval of her father and

phanhood, and the unknown genealogy it implies, is the embodiment of Victorian culture's fears of illegitimacy and miscegenation" (143). Miss Vanstone's genealogy is known, but her family is an illegitimate one, an inappropriate model for Victorian domesticity. Peters also suggests that constructing Heathcliff in relation to evilness and immorality "results in the unification of the family and larger community" (48). The legitimate families solidify and strengthen themselves by "excluding the orphan" (48). However, such exclusion is not always a necessity to unify Victorian families. The orphan characters discussed here do not reinforce the traditional family, but do alter the conventional definition of ideal domesticity and promote mobility between classes. These orphans could also formulate their own families outside of the domestic domain of legitimate families, where they could celebrate their "pure selfhood."

Mr. Clare. She may not appreciate "self-restraint," but her parents do. When she loses her parents and name, she is no longer repressed, and her desperation thus threatens her cousin Noel Vanstone's domestic harmony.

One of Magdalen's most impressive performances is her impersonation of Miss Garth. With a trunk filled with dresses and make-up products, she fiercely plots to obtain her inheritance from Noel Vanstone, who inherited her parents' wealth. Miss Vanstone's act of "an evacuation of a self and an embodiment of character" (Chattman 1) is not artistic entertainment, but desperate act of survival. However, this act also validates the idea that one's intentional effacement of inherent identity provides an outlet to celebrate individuality. Disguised as her governess, Miss Vanstone walks into Noel Vanstone's house to admonish him as her revenge. Wearing a mask, she at least gives him the opportunity to rectify his irrational mistake:

> I know her, Mr. Vanstone! She is a nameless, homeless, friendless wretch. The law which takes care of you, the law which takes care of all legitimate children, casts her like carrion to the winds. It is your law–not hers. She only knows it as the instrument of a vile oppression, an insufferable wrong. The sense of that wrong haunts her like a possession of the devil. The resolution to right that wrong burns in her like fire. If that miserable girl was married and rich, with millions tomorrow, do you think she would move an inch from her purpose?... I tell you she would resist,... I tell you she would shrink from no means which a desperate woman can employ to force that closed hand of yours open, or die in the attempt! (291)

In this poignant speech, Magdalen unfetters herself from her previous name, her illegitimate status, and any social values that have constrained her. To declare firmly that she "knows" herself is to announce her unaffected selfhood.

She points out that social laws cannot reach her. If the legal system denies her a birthright, it does not deserve her reverence. She professes that she would prefer to remain an outsider and disapprove "[their] law." This intentional separation from social authority and the legal system is dangerous for miserable Magdalen. By denouncing the legal system, she rejects any social protection and risks her very existence. However, she makes this speech disguised as another individual. This declaration is possible only because she is disguised. When auditioning in front of Captain Wragge, Miss Vanstone "displays the conflict between her acquired and essential characters" (Chattman 83), and yet no conflict is evident in this speech. Magdalen preserves the essence of her subjectivity, though she masks herself. She then becomes careless and reveals her true voice, as "the resolution of her life burst its way outward in her own words" (291). Magdalen is oblivious of her victim, Noel Vanstone; her purpose is to obtain social legitimacy, not his applause.

A governess, middle -class lady, a parlour maid– acting and manipulation reward Magdalen. She marries Noel and secures exactly "eighty thousand pounds" as her inheritance in case of his death. An illegitimate child defeats social propriety with a false one. She achieves her purpose. She proudly declares: "My position has changed. I am no longer the poor outcast girl,. . . I have made the general sense of propriety my accomplice. . . Do you know who I am?. . . I have got a place in the world, and a name in the world, at last. . . You forget what wonders my wickedness has done for me. It has made Nobody's child. Somebody's Wife" (590). In this letter to Miss Garth, Magdalen expresses indignity toward her old governess, who has attempted to interrupt her conspiracy. As soon as she gains the title of Mrs. Noel Vanstone, she shows

neither class anxiety nor compassion. She has gained the freedom to use the Vanstone family name without guilt. Whereas the old "Vanstone" promised domestic bliss and protection; the new one contains destruction and distortion. Still, her immoral deception temporarily allows her a place, a name, and a voice. It also provides social flexibility that no one recognizes, as she married Noel as Miss Bygrave. Magdalen's continuous deception results in a warped personality that refuses her friend's kindness. English law ostracized her, but now she insists on remaining an outsider to her family and friends.

Does this prove that she is an "existential" outsider? Is she born to defy "the law" that is incapable of embracing illegitimate children? Or does she intentionally marginalize herself for revenge? Even Miss Vanstone acknowledges that "there is something perverse in [her] heart" (317). Her predicament coerced her into concealing her true self, which makes her an intentional outsider. What induces Miss Vanstone to disobey the legal authority? Amy Leal argues that Collins predicts Miss Vanstone's predetermined "sad and somber dignity" with her name: "Collins uses the various apocryphal and Biblical associations of the name Magdalen to create a repentant outcast who nonetheless defies her patrilineal society by daring to reclaim her name and follow a forbidden calling" (5). She mentions that Magdalen's name, derived from "Magdala" or "Mary Magdalen," indicates her fate to be "a model of piety, strength, and ministry as well as a means of defying male oppression and gaining spiritual autonomy" (4). Magdalen's deceptive action challenges Noel's authority and threatens him. Magdalen's name predicts her resistance to "the instrument of a vile oppression" (291) established by Noel. The name, however, is not all that characterizes this outsider.

A woman's duality has become a cultural virtue in Victorian England, and Collins treats it as the exclusive essence of a woman in this novel. A skillful male impostor, Captain Wragge does exhibit an adroit treatment of his various identities, but he strictly follows the laws of capitalism, while Magdalen and her mother disguise themselves, driven by hatred and passion for their family. Magdalen relies on her romantic passion to hate and resist, and her fianc?, a fickle-minded gentleman, cannot compete with her determination. Magdalen's father, Andrew Vanstone depends on Mrs. Andrew Vanstone to survive. Magdalen's mother enters Mr. Vanstone's life to save him from his domestic entrapment. Both women exercise "feminine heroism" (Looten 241) and dispossess their domestic ties when they undertake the role of the protector of family. Mrs. Vanstone's audacious decision to secretly marry Andrew Vanstone required extreme precaution and strength, as he could not annul his previous marriage until his wife in America dies. Mr. Peril depicts young Mrs. Vanstone as a "generous, impulsive girl" (129), and Magdalen seems to have inherited the unconventional strength and intelligence of her mother:

> She had no home ties strong enough to plead with her. . . She saw, and saw truly, that she alone stood between him and his ruin. . . She decided; and saved him. . . The women are few, indeed, who cannot resolve firmly, scheme patiently, and act promptly. . . had more than the average share of a woman's tenacity and a woman's tact; and she took all the needful. . . precautions to which they were largely indebted for the preservation of their secret in later times. (129)

Mrs. Vanstone is not an orphan, but she has no significant domestic connection. Mr. Peril reveals the insignificance of her social position: "Her family

and friends occupied no recognized station in life" (129). The absence of a family in a woman's life functions as a resource for independence and unconventional character. Miss Vanstone deliberately disconnects herself from her sister because any domestic association could contain her, making it impossible to transgress boundaries. Mr. Andrew Vanstone could not marry young Mrs. Vanstone, as his estranged first wife was alive. Thus, she enters his life illegally. Sally Mitchell argues that "the second Mrs. Vanstone uses woman's superior capacity for social maneuvering towards a good end" (87). A nineteenth-century gentleman's happiness relied upon a socially inferior woman's transgression, "the art to devise." While the man is unable to propose a solution, his beloved seventeen-year-old lover demonstrates the "tenacity" and intelligence to preserve their romance and create a new family. Such strength does not prevent Mrs. Vanstone from becoming a domestic angel. While taking "precautions" to establish propriety and false domesticity, she "restored [Mr. Vanstone] to that happy home-existence" (130) and serves him as a subservient wife until they die. Collins seems to appreciate this woman's ability to suppress and control passion in a patriarchal society.

Mr. Peril considers such deception necessary and honorable, saying, "I will defend her memory" (129). Even the man of law validates Mrs. Vanstone's illegal decision, although "Christian charity" (130) may not be as charitable as he is. Her mother's past explicates Miss Vanstone's innate disposition to challenge male authority, yet her purpose is not entirely selfish. She watches her sister, a governess for "two little girls...dressed in silk," (272) and shows antagonism toward the privileged. She witnesses her sister's social embarrassment, as she is "made an object of public curiosity and amusement, ... [a] hired

victim of an old woman's insolence, and a child's ill-temper" (273). Therefore, she must re-obtain her father's inheritance for her sister and herself. Magdalen's duality grows stronger, as she designs and selects identities whenever necessary. Her conspiracy does not always rely on her character or mere coincidence. It is "the debt [she owes] to Michael Vanstone (Noel Vanstone's father)" (209) that compels her to transgress. As her mother boldly sacrifices her life to be an illegitimate wife, Magdalen takes on "her false hair, her false colour, her false dress" (272) to degrade her body and mind. Her tainted body suffers, as she eradicates feminine propriety and violates her sexuality when she falsely marries her cousin. Magdalen's unrestrained development of obscure identities and conspiracy suggests a personal battle to restore her family's dignity. Violating her original self empowers this female warrior. Due to her sacrifice, her sister rejoices in romance and re-obtains her inheritance. "I have only one end in life" (338), she says.

How does Collins salvage this criminal orphan? Noel manages to edit his will to prevent Magdalen from receiving any inheritance before his death, and ultimately she remains penniless and alone. The scandalous marriage to her cousin as Miss Bygrave does make her "unpure," and from a Victorian's point of view "a fallen female figure [that] could only exist as a definitive anomaly" (Mitchell xv). How does Collins force a rather happy closure for this infamous female orphan? Magdalen obtains salvation because she enters a new family that rediscovers her feminine quality. Infused with intentional disconnection from domesticity, her orphan-hood defines her incoherent self-identity, but Collins inserts Magdalen to another family to complete her journey.

Magdalen is talented; however, her role-playing succeeds due to the in-

trinsic theatricality of her and her new dysfunctional family of strangers. About her unfamiliar family, she says, "Any company is better than my own thoughts. . . I'm forgetting my ready-made relations-my half-witted aunt, and my uncle the rogue" (209). This newly discovered family functions in two ways. Their presence provides her with a fa?ade for her "assumed" legitimate status, which prevents others from suspecting Magdalen. She also uncovers "Norah's patience" (209) within herself, as she builds an affectionate relationship with Mrs. Wragge. She rediscovers a domestic femininity within her, when she avows herself a fallen woman. Mrs. Wragge unknowingly comforts Magdalen when she comes to despise her moral corruption. Dysfunctional and unfamiliar, this "ready-made relation" distresses yet saves her. Unlike Becky Sharp, who refuses to be a "'mamma" for her own son, Magdalen learns that her feminine quality as a maternal figure creates in her unconventional unfemininity.

Magdalen initially finds Captain Wragge and Mrs. Wragge disgusting and refrains from Captain Wragge's approach. Their social position does not correspond with that of her previous family; however, she soon realizes that she now belongs to their inferior class: "[W]ho am I, to pick and choose the way of getting to it?. . . I have been talking as if I was a young lady of family and position. Absurd! We know better than that, don't we, Captain Wragge? Nobody's child must sleep under Somebody's roof– and why not yours?" (201) Such a class-conscious realization both shocks and relieves Magdalen. The title of a dignified middle class daughter no longer entraps her, and the painful absence of her parents allows her to degrade herself and make the acquaintance of a swindler like Captain Wragge. Her decision to reveal to Captain

Wragge and his wife her conspiracy is a practical decision. When she wakes up in the "miserable room" (219), she realizes that she cannot fully actualize her scheme by herself. Her existence becomes more believable and less conspicuous if she travels with patrons. Collins, however, shows that while she has relinquished her inherited domestic ties, her new family of strangers domesticates her and contains her vengeful theatricality, allowing her to discover her maternal instinct.

Mrs. Wragge greatly differs from warrior women like old Mrs. Vanstone or Miss Vanstone. She is a docile creature whose innocence and simplicity hinder her from achieving domestic goals. Her responsibility involves comprehending and completing cooking recipes without mistakes to serve Captain Wragge. A book on "the Art of Cookery" (207) terrorizes Mrs. Wragge. Unable to maintain domestic order, she considers the words of her cook book both divine and inaccessible, calling them "poetry" (208). Mrs. Wragge's failure to be a perfect wife underlines the rigid and sometimes impossible expectations of her patriarchal culture. Haunted by her mental limitations, Mrs. Wragge strives to achieve what seems impossible- cook a perfect meal for her husband, Captain Wragge. Magdalen immediately recognizes her new companion's limited intelligence and shows compassion. She is "only a little slow, constitutionally torpid" (203) according to her husband. Collins juxtaposes these two women with contrasting attributions, and they do find each other to be different. Yet, solitude and exhaustion create camaraderie between these two. When this timid lady shouts, "don't let go of me-whatever you do, my dear, don't let go of me" (304), Magdalen performs the role of a surrogate mother for an older woman, a role that permits her to care genuinely for another. She recognizes

Mrs. Wragge's reluctance to be alone, when "she caught Miss Vanstone fast by the arm and fell into another trembling fit at the bare idea of being left by herself" (304). Captain Wragge's abuse of theatrical deception forces them to discard social life, and like Magdalen or Mrs. Vanstone, Mrs. Wragge cannot contact her relations. Neither makeup nor a false voice is required for this role. When her husband proposes to relocate his wife separately out of convenience, Magdalen says, "The poor creature's life is hard enough already. . . . I won't allow her to be shut up among strangers" (352-3). By challenging Captain Wragge's patriarchal authority, she redefines the domestic relationship in this household. When Mrs. Wragge fears the loss of her memory, she cries, "I've lost the place" (206), but Miss Vanstone consoles her: "I'll soon find the place for you again" (207). A woman cannot claim her rightful position if she fails to conform to domestic ideology. However, an orphan, who can create social positions, frees her from such cultural tyranny. Thus, these two isolated female companions seek comfort in their own social limitations. Their relationship may seem awkward: a young intelligent woman mad with hatred and social stigma and an old woman whose dream is to make "Omelette with Herbs" (207).

Captain Wragge's role in Magdalen's adventure differs from that of Mrs. Wragge. His existence reminds her that she once was the lovely daughter of her father and dominated his love. Captain Wragge's character is a swindler or "a moral agriculturist" (201) and disputes the idea that one must inherit a name and status. This philosophy coincides with Magdalen's scheme. While accumulating wealth and creating "hypothetical" social positions, he refuses to play just one role or use only one name. He says "the sacred obligation of

charity" (212) of those who have money justifies his illegal attention to manipulate them. Captain Wragge accelerates Magdalen's transformation from "nobody's child" to "somebody" (201) with his experience. However, it is not his impudence to which Magdalen becomes attached. Even with his extravagant philosophy and deception Captain Wragge fears her audacity to restore her inheritance through false marriage. He comes to care for her safety like a father. Trembling he says: "I have only done what you asked me...My last words are–for God's sake take care when I'm gone!" (512) He genuinely worries about Magdalen's marriage to Noel, in which he has played a pivotal role. To her surrogate father she humbly "bowed her head-she bent it towards him kindly, and let him touch her forehead with his lips" (512). Such a gesture contrasts with her initial attitude toward Captain Wragge, whom she considered as possessing no "common sense of honour, and a common responsibility of social position" (197). Now in this new family, she plays the role of a loving daughter without pretension. The loss of her parents has marginalized and corrupted her, but she manages to reemerge as a daughter, or as her new father says, "You have been a remarkably good girl, and you deserve to be rewarded for it" (715).

Magdalen's discovery of this new family undermines the traditional family system fortified by bloodline. Magdalen may have created another family inadvertently, but she alleviates her pain with the familial comfort provided by her new family and recovers her femininity. Captain Wragge and Mrs. Wragge perform as her adopted parents and eradicate her misguided animosity-from a dangerous swindler to a self-reliant woman. The three strangers formulate an imperfect, yet familiar, family. The family of "nobody's child" and the

two wandering lower class couples attest that an ideal Victorian family that is strengthened by heritage and wealth cannot always compete with an unconventional family when it comes to the quality of the familial relationship.

Some of us are rather disappointed with Jane Eyre's marriage to Rochester, and the sudden romance in the end between Magdalen and Captain Kirke whose ship is named "The Deliverance" (730) seems dramatic and coerced. When she manipulates the whole world, Magdalen bitterly says that her marginalization has made her a "free woman" (317), although she did not intend such liberation. However, the appearance of Captain Kirke suggests a chivalric closure that negates her independence. Auerbach criticizes Collins's reserved attention to Magdalen's subjectivity: "The actress Magdalen alone steps outside the moral frame in her fidelity to the rich fluidity of self, which precepts of honesty falsify and constrain. When [she] renounce[s] acting for the repentance of a worthy marriage, [she] collapse[s] into suicidal self-effacement" (206). Her transgression and destruction should culminate in a unique individuality, not in female desperation. "Clinging to him as she clung to the hope of her better life," Magdalen cries, "the one dear object of all my life to come is to live worthy of you" (740). Oppressed by social stigma and her own conspiracy, the orphan has lost the audacity to claim her autonomy because of the calamity she caused in others' lives. They did deserve her revenge, but the idea of social justice does not forgive her for her loss of female chastity. She must resurrect herself as a proper lady. However, a small comfort does remain. By marrying Captain Kirke, this "nobody's child" is likely to create a family of her own. The orphan is no longer an outsider.

4.2   My Family Is In My Way.

"Thus each performs his part, Mamma; the birds have found their voices,
The blowing rose a flush, Mamma, her bonny cheek to dye; And there's sun-
shine in my heart, Mamma, which wakens and rejoices, And so I sing and blush,
Mamma, and that's the reason why" (Thackeray 601), she sings. *Mamma* rep-
resents affection, compassion, and security. For Becky Sharp, this word stirs
bitterness and loneliness and transforms her from a powerless orphan girl into
a female politician. She entertains high class society and gains a fa?ade of
propriety and privilege. She sings, dances, and flirts with English and French
aristocrats. While the narrator and the reader suspect endless greed and van-
ity in her, she justifies her ambition with this song. As "birds" and "roses"
seek voices and color, Becky implies that it is only natural for her to shine and
advance in society. It may only be a performance for her audience, but singing
to her imaginary "Mamma" this orphan professes that her socially insignifi-
cant condition does not fit her disposition. If she does not have "Mamma,"
she must act the role for herself.

What would a mother do for her daughter in nineteenth-century England?
Marriages portrayed in novels often demonstrate that parents played a pivotal
role in their children's matrimony. They were "family business" (143) accord-
ing to George Osborne, Amelia Sedley's fianc?. Even Jane Austen, in *Pride
and Prejudice* (1813), comically yet realistically, suggests that a girl without
parents would face a difficult time finding a husband. In the first chapter
of *Pride and Prejudice*, Mrs. Bennet, who has five daughters, implores her
husband: "[M]my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr. Bingley when he

comes into the neighborhood. Only think what an establishment it would be for one of them... consider your daughters... Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go, merely on that account, for in general, you know they visit no new comers. Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for us to visit him, if you do not" (1). Mrs. Bennet emphasizes that formal introductions between families must be performed by the father, the male authority of the house. Then, social interactions between young men and women can follow naturally. The mother reveals frustration, for she must suppress her enthusiasm and rely on her husband's social position to socialize more properly with another family. Her hope of social ascendancy must be achieved through her daughter's marriage. Thus, the mother becomes an active agent or instigator. Becky's determination to be "her own mamma" is a realistic and class-conscious statement that foreshadows her hardships in achieving her goal– to secure a position.

How does William Thackeray sympathize with an orphan student who ungratefully tosses "Johnson's Dictionary" (13) in her teacher's face? Thackeray neither despises nor praises Becky in *Vanity Fair*. The narrator's ambiguous attitude towards her demonstrates that it is not merely moral judgment that Thackeray pursues in this novel. He suggests that we at least must listen to this orphan's claims: "I am alone in the world, said the friendless girl. I have nothing to look for but what my own labour can bring me; and while that little pink-faced chit Amelia, with not half my sense, has ten thousand pounds and an establishment secure, poor Rebecca (and my figure is far better than hers) has only herself and her own wits to trust to... I must be my own mamma" (100). Her empowerment begins with her painful acknowledgement that she

is "an unprotected orphan" (100). It is frustrating for an intelligent, beautiful girl like Becky to suppress her superiority and also watch her fortunate friend, Amelia Sedley, blossom who is surrounded by her parents and her fiancé. As Becky says, "I must be my own mamma," she declares herself to be a sovereign, a family, a community by herself. As her own mamma, Becky must initiate the necessary individualization, socialization, and association for herself. She maximizes the social and political function of "mamma" and rebels against patriarchal authority. However, she also ignores the maternal connotation of "mamma" and refuses to domesticate herself. She fails to be a good "mamma" for her own son, even though she succeeds in being her own "mamma." Becky dissociates the term "mamma" from maternity and associates the term with feminine duality. Feigning amiable femininity and domesticity to deceive powerful men, she proves that her social label "orphan" does not confine her. It only benefits her.

Who is Becky Sharp to other characters in *Vanity Fair*? Her resentful schoolmistress, Miss Pinkerton, admonishes others about this homeless girl, calling the female orphan "this rebel, this monster, this serpent, this firebrand" (21):

> Though her appearance is disagreeable, we cannot control the operations of nature; though her parents were disreputable (her father being a painter,. . .,her mother, as I have since learned, with horror, a dancer at the Opera: her talents are considerable. . . I received her *out of charity*. . . the principles of the mother-who was represented to me as a French Countess, forced to emigrate in the late revolutionary horrors; but who, as I have since found, was a person of the *very lowest order and morals*-should at any time prove to be hereditary in the unhappy young woman whom I took [in] as *an outcast.* (111)

In her description of Becky's heritage, Miss Pinkerton turns out to be severely class-sensitive. She openly resents the foreign origin of Becky and defines her as "an outcast." Becky's physical beauty always impresses both men and women, but Miss Pinkerton still characterizes "her appearance" as "disagreeable." Yet Becky's intelligence benefits Miss Pinkerton financially, and she can only watch her "charity" project ungratefully characterize her benevolence as a "useful" (21) business deal. She detests her audacity to "question [her] authority." Equipped with an additional animosity toward a French "dancer" lady whom she does not know, Miss Pinkerton readily assumes that her family must be immoral or vulgar.

This section will examine how Becky questions, challenges and defies the domestic definition of "Mamma" in *Vanity Fair*. Her inability to perform a maternal role complicates traditional familial relationships and externalizes her social ambiguity by transgressing social boundaries. Magdalen completely hides her original identity, but Becky uses her social orphan-hood to extract sympathy, singing "heaven pity all poor wanderers lone" (43), and responds with cruelty toward those who despise her. Like Magdalen, Becky possesses a natural talent as an actress and mimic. She belongs to the marginalized that have little access to power, but she gains that power by imitating what does not belong to her (such as social propriety and privilege) and applying them to her own schemes (Miller 1052). In the preface of this novel the "manager of this performance [Vanity Fair]" believes that "the famous little Becky Puppet has been pronounced to be uncommonly flexible in the joints, and lively on the wire" (6). This "uncommon flexibility" may refer to Becky's constant social mobility and transgression. Social boundaries cannot restrict her, and her

new family cannot contain her. Above all, men react to and accept her transgressions in *Vanity Fair* to indicate that she has become the involuntary yet operative agent to invigorate and transform society. Becky is the "inadvertent catalyst of social reformation" (Auerbach 71). Through her, Thackeray revises and envisions a model of a New Angel that Victorians would simultaneously admire and condemn.

4.2.1   The Ambitious Angel in the House

Coventry Patmore's poem "The Angel in the House" and its cultural ideology dominated Victorian gender consciousness. Deborah Gorham calls this phenomenon "the cult of domesticity" (4). M. Jeanne Peterson refers to the "angel in the house" (677) to scrutinize the Paget Family and Victorian ideals concerning women and their family lives. Reminding us that this domestic type is "appropriate only to the middle strata of Victorian society," Peterson argues that the very presence of the "angel in the house," the virtuous mother and wife, ensures domestic stability and "[provides] a haven from [the world's] worst pressures through her sound household management and sweetness of temperament"(677-8). Catherine J. Golden claims that Charles Dickens's angel functions as "the holy refuge for her brother, father, or husband, all of whom, in most cases, do not deserve her" (7).[4]

In *Vanity Fair* Amelia Sedley's lack of sovereignty distinguishes her pas-

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[4]Catherine J. Golden. "Late-Twentieth-Century Readers in Search of a Dickensian Heroine: Angels, Fallen Sisters, and Eccentric Women." *Modern Language Studies*. Vol. 30, No. 2 (Autumn, 2000), 5-19. Golden suggests that three types of Dickensian heroines exist in his works: angels, fallen sisters, and eccentrics. Dickens does create special sisterhood between the chaste and the fallen, but the punishment for the fallen female characters seem severe. Rather than liberating female identity of all women, Dickens chooses reinforce the cultural virtue.

sive femininity, while her innocence touches an honorable man, Major Dobbin. Thackeray, however, exhibits an irritation at his domestic angel, as he reveals how selfish this vulnerable woman is, as "she wished to give [Dobbin] nothing" and believed "that he should give her all" (787). She desires to possess Dobbin, but "she wished to give him nothing" (787). Her reluctance to marry him long after her husband's death indicates that her subservience does not indicate integrity. She pretends to uphold her late husband's questionable honor and her own virtue. Amelia's hypocritical treatment of Dobbin implies that Thackeray is not taken in by the traditional domestic angel. Discovering such duality within a self-deprecating Amelia, he admires his power of pretension.[5] Fisher claims that Amelia's embodiment of the "domestic ideal and her sincerity sharply contrast with Becky's deceptive character" (400), but Amelia's selfish pretension shows that deception is not exclusive to a willing seductress. Did the "Angel in the House" no longer exist for Thackeray?

Not many virtuous female characters defeat Becky. Their husbands find their domestic angels both tedious, unintelligent and unchanged. Rogers argues that neither Amelia's slavish compliance nor Becky's ruthless coldness satisfies Thackeray. He needs both to delineate the social limitations of the conventional ideal (Rogers 258-9). Orphans lack legitimate identities, but domestic angels lacked personality. However, Rebecca Sharp, in "her hapless orphan state" (43) does not lack personality or subjectivity. Traditional wives, comfortably stationed in their domestic territory with husbands, children and

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[5]See Lisa Jadwin. "The Seductiveness of Female Duplicity in Vanity Fair." Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900. Vol. 32, No. 4, Nineteenth Century (Autumn, 1992), 663-687. She believes that Thackeray does not merely chastise Becky's wickedness and that he is interested in the "hypocrisy of chaste virtue" represented by his culture and claimed by domestic angels.

wealth, lead their men to boredom. And they suffer from their husbands' apathy. Becky, later as Mrs. George Crawley functions as a new woman in *Vanity Fair*.[6]

I will show how traditional ideal women in *Vanity Fair* did not "please" their husbands. Becky alone fascinates them. While Thackeray carefully plots this novel to punish the orphaned Becky for her transgressions, he contrasts the so-called legitimate ladies of the house with her in order to expose the absurdity and limitations of Victorian domestic ideology. Becky thus extends the range of what is "acceptable" to appeal to Victorian men as a female politician, who shares their practical ambition. The battle between domestic angels and an ambitious angel ensues as an orphan enters the house.

Many critics have already contended the corruption of the domestic angel, but Nina Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon* provides startling observations of demonic women. She juxtaposes a description of a self-sacrificing angel to that of a secretive mermaid, who could destroy families: "The Mermaid is a more aptly inclusive device than the angel, for she is a creature of transformations and mysterious interrelations, able to kill and to regenerate but not to die, unfurling in secret her powers of mysterious, pre-Christian, pre-human dispensation" (7). Becky possesses this mysterious ability to transform without restraint, and the portrait of this woman demonized as a mermaid exaggerates men's cautious re-imagination of unconventional women. Auerbach advises us to evaluate such an embedded "capacity for self-creation" (9) of

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[6]This does not mean that Becky does not have any qualities of "the Angel." Patmore writes "Man must be pleased but him to please, Is woman's pleasure" (Book I, Canto IX). Becky can entertain any men whenever she pleases. However, she refuses to perform a compliant lady because she prefers not to.

demonic women and rediscover a womanhood that defies male authority. My discussion of Becky both embraces Auerbach's argument and extends it by inserting an orphan's instinct to fit in socially. Becky's scandalous social mobility originates from her desire to be "a good woman if [she] had five thousand pound a year" (490). She believes that she would be the dull angel if she had a mother, wealth, and position. She violates the cultural standard of femininity and disgraces motherhood, but she also insists that she could submit to social repression, if she had money. She believes that her demonic ability comes from her need to secure a better position in society.

Becky has prepared her social and political success from the beginning. In Chapter Two, titled "In which Miss Sharp and Miss Sedley prepare to open the Campaign," we notice how she "began to act for herself, and. . . to make connected plans for the future" (20). She practices her language and music, "which is considered necessary for ladies in those days" (20). Yet, where does she obtain the skills to capture husbands and defeat their domestic angels? How does she educate herself to compete with other ladies of the house? Becky Sharp demonstrates various talents, but not those of submissive domestic women. Perhaps her mother's performance and absence contributed to her unconventionality. She succeeds by un-domesticating herself. Before she launches herself in the world, she has "never mingled in the society of women" (20), for she has lived only with her father, who dazzles her mind with his witty conversation. Women's "vanity" and their "silly chat" (20) weary her. Such propensity to avoid female company assists her in her unusual success with men bored with their subservient wives. Mothers and wives maintain domestic stability, but do not invade the public sphere of men. Later I will

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discuss how Becky imprisons her own husband within the domestic sphere, as she conquers the public one. However, "this unlucky girl" has "no soft maternal heart" (20), a trait that leads her to a destructive path. She relies on her unfeminine or even masculine personality to thrive socially.

Had Becky entered a house blatantly, revealing her vicious intention, she would not have succeeded. Becky initially acts as if her purpose is to serve men in power. She can perform the role of domestic angel, but she transmutes this image into a pragmatic one. Wives must compete with Becky for their own survival. Becky's first competition, Lady Crawley at Queen's Crawley, formerly Miss Rose Dawson, presents herself as a living protagonist of a fairy tale. She, as the daughter of an ironmonger, has married Sir Pitt Crawley, "the son of Walpole Crawley, first Baronet of the Tape and Sealing-Wax Office in the reign of George II" (73). She abandons her humble and devoted young lover, who could have provided her happiness "in a snug farm, with a hearty family; and an honest portion of pleasures, cares, hopes, and struggles" (93) to alienate herself from her family and friends, "the commoners" (92), in exchange for the life of a respectable lady of Queen's Crawley. Unfortunately, the aristocrat she marries "drinks every night, beats her sometimes and leaves her alone without a friend" (92-3). As soon as she loses her physical youth, she becomes "a mere machine in her husband's house, of no more use than the late Lady Crawley's grand piano" (93). She has "no sort of character, nor talents, nor opinions, no occupations, nor amusements, nor that vigour of soul and ferocity of temper which often falls to the lot of entirely foolish women" (93). She fails as "angel in the house." Gorham says "the true wife could create the desired atmosphere of Victorian domesticity out of thin air"

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(7), meaning that the wife alone carries the burden of creating a haven. Her unbearable timidity intimates that this woman's isolation within her house has turned her into an invisible person. No one acknowledges her existence. Her husband, who married Rose Crawley because he hated his first wife, "such a confounded quarrelsome high-bread jade" (92), finds this formless person useless. Not only does her husband ignore her, but her children also distance themselves from "the languid dullness of their mamma" (93). A domestic angel would be characterized by her submission to her husband and displaying overflowing maternal affection toward her children, but Lady Crawley's complete obedience only renders condescension, and her existence does not even "awaken much affection in her little daughters" (93). Her lack of distinctive character culminates in a separation between her and the family.

Becky immediately understands the limitations of this uninspiring domestic woman. Until her death, Lady Crawley's family alienates their mother and wife for being too feminine. So what compels Sir Crawley to exclaim to Becky "[B]be my wife...you've got more brains in your little finger than any baronet's wife in the country"? (164) Becky approaches femininity in a different way, utilizing feminine appearance, while effectively distinguishing herself from other women. She intrigues Sir Crawley by becoming a modified angel, an active domestic agent in the house. Her lenient education of Crawley's daughters protects her from any internal intervention. How does Rebecca conquer Queen's Crawley? She dares not disobey Sir Crawley or criticize him. Like Lady Crawley, "Miss Sharp was respectful and obedient" and would "consult him on passages of French" (102), although she is fluent in French. While Lady Crawley minds her "small flower-garden" (93) in solitude, the orphan

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governess extends her interests beyond domestic territory. She then "read over, with indefatigable patience, all those law papers, volunteered to copy many of his letters, adroitly altered the spelling of them so as to suit the usages of the present day; she became interested in everything appertaining to the estate, to the farm, the park, the garden, and the stables" (103). Becky invades his working environment but only to assist him. She facilitates his political activities outside of the house and his management of domestic activities that his wife could not handle such as "the estate, the farm, or the stables." The boundary between what is properly masculine and feminine vanishes, implying Lord Crawley found domestic angels unhelpful and impractical. Due to her audacity, Becky firmly becomes the true "Lady Crawley," and Sir Crawley respects her. He "seldom [takes] his after-breakfast walk without her (and the children of course)" (103), while he abandons his wife without guilt. Becky has established her place within the family.

In *Nobody's Angels: Middle-Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture*, Elizabeth Langland suggests that a middle- class lady presents herself as the new woman in power in the house, and the rhetoric of domestic ideology overshadows the political characteristics of domestic management. Lady Crawley loses her opportunity to establish her authority over Becky, as the latter reconstructs Queen's Crawley as her empire. Langland argues: "A Victorian wife, the presiding hearth angel of Victorian social myth,. . . running the middle class household,. . . was an exercise in class management,. . . although the nineteenth-century novel presented the household as a moral haven secure from economic and political storms, alongside this figuration. . . :the active management of class power" (8-9). To organize her house-

hold, a middle- class lady should be involved in a political relationship with her domestic servants at home. She notices "how the private realm was increasingly implicated in such political agendas" (292), and a Victorian lady might function as the domestic manager whose responsibility accommodated "the staging of a family's social position" (9). Mere obedience and reticence cannot maintain the domestic haven. Becky Sharp fits Langland's model of evolving Victorian domesticity. Finding "many different ways of being useful to [Sir Crawley]," Becky positions herself as "almost the mistress of the house when Mr. Crawley was absent, but conducted herself in her new and exalted situation with such circumspection and modesty as not to offend the authorities of the kitchen and stable" (103-104). The position of governess often creates unnecessary conflict between the servants and poor educated women, but Becky adroitly manages those of the lower class to stabilize Crawley's residence, while the master is absent. Even younger Sir Pitt Crawley prefers to make Becky "general-in-chief" to renovate his late father's house. Like a male authority figure, she "[superintends] the female band engaged in stitching the blinds and hangings" (512), "[enjoying] herself not a little in an occupation which gave full scope to her taste and ingenuity" (513). Becky Crawley, the future legitimate wife of Colonel Crawley, finds this domestic management tedious, but she performs too well.

After performing an extended femininity, Becky learns to enjoy the taste of authority and recognizable social status. Miss Pinkerton would fear her origin and the complete absence of a maternal presence and proper domestic education in Becky's life. However, through a female orphan without parents, Thackeray intimates that the advertisement for "the Angel in the House" and

the domestic education of women were not entirely successful. Becky triumphs within Victorian domesticity not because she exemplifies the ideal woman, but because she liberates herself from domestic ideology. Becky intensifies her power not by feminizing herself, but by appreciating what is forbidden to women and thus dominated by men. Realistically she would not ever have a seat in Parliament, but she shows deference for those who pursue better class and status. She alarms her brother-in-law, the younger Sir Pitt Crawley, for realizing his political ambition without being told. She says:

> You remain a Baronet–you consent to be a mere country gentle-
> man...No, Sir Pitt Crawley, I know you better. I know your tal-
> ents and your ambition. You fancy you hide them both, but you
> can conceal neither from me...You want to distinguish yourself in
> Parliament...You want to be Member for the County, where, with
> your own vote and your borough at your back, you can command
> anything. And you want to be Baron Crawley of Queen's Crawley,
> and will be before you die. I saw it all. I could read your heart,
> Sir Pitt. (525-6)

Her discovery astonishes the baronet. We remember that she is an orphan struggling to obtain a husband and social status. Due to her own political obsession to advance, Becky recognizes Sir Pitt's worldly purpose easily. Thackeray accentuates her undomesticated character and dominance by politicizing her conversation. Men are impressed with her social strategy. "Amazed and enraptured with her speech," Crawley thinks: "How that woman comprehends me! I never could get Jane to read three pages of the Malt pamphlet. She has no idea that I have commanding talents or secret ambition" (526). Becky also impresses Lord Steyne with her ability to resolve conflicts, and he marvels at her conniving act. Her audacity to deceive the lord and even hersupposed

promiscuity do not offend him. He only concludes: "What an accomplished little devil it is!. . .What a splendid actress and manager!. . .with her coaxing ways. She beats all the women I have ever seen in the course of all my well-spent life" (526). Instead of chastising Becky's deceptive character, Steyne recognizes a resourceful and competent politician within her.

What kind of wife does young Sir Pitt Crawley have in his house? His wife, Lady Jane declares that she "kept [her] marriage vow as [she] made it to God, and [has] been obedient and gentle as a wife should" (642). Her most outstanding virtue is that "Lady Jane was only too obedient" (525). Lady Jane's femininity has indeed touched many hearts including the old vicious Miss Crawley. Surrounded by relatives' paying respect to her wealth only, the sarcastic old lady suffers internally from a fear of death and loneliness, yet she welcomes Lady Jane without prejudice, comparing her with the "godless little Rebecca" (330), whose presence she used to favor greatly. This preference leads to her husband's profit, for he inherits most of her wealth. Quietly and inconspicuously, Lady Jane advances her husband's status. Her husband, however, does not fully appreciate the legitimate wife. Unlike Rebecca, when asked about politics, "Lady Jane blushed very much, and said 'that she did not understand politics, which she left to wiser heads than hers" (389-390). Others find her "pretty," but the lady "owned sorrowfully to herself that she was quite inferior in taste to Mrs. Becky" (557). She observes Becky's perfect presentation in terms of dress and jewelry. The statement arises not out of modesty, but truth. Her intelligence seems limited to feminine activities and motherhood, but even her domestic skills cannot matchBecky's. Once she "had insisted on making, and serving to [her husband] at dinner," which

he considered, "with something like mortification...a most abominable pie" (513). On the other hand, Sir Pitt cannot help acknowledging Becky's excellent "salmi" (513), which she actually prepared. He says, "to be skillful in domestic duties was surely one of the most charming of woman's qualities" (513), but her cooking is not the sole reason for his praise. She has already impressed him with her political intelligence; thus Becky's domestic skills can only shine, compared with Lady Jane's lack of cooking skills.

The sanctity of the domestic haven must be preserved, but life in that haven appears dull and lifeless. The narrator spends a whole chapter on Lord Styene's "Gaunt House," where men detest unconditional devotion, sadness, and female timidity. Sir Steyne may boast of his "ancient family of the Caerlyons, marquises of Camelot" (544), but his "all dark" (543) palace contains "no great happiness" (551), and he blames his women for its lack of vivacity. Sir Styene prefers "pleasure and cheerfulness" (545), and his dissatisfaction transforms into emotional violence. Threatened by Becky, his wife and daughter-in-law protest that they will leave his house, and he replies: "I shall be freed from lending money to your relations and from your own damned tragic airs. Who are you to give orders here? You have no money. You've got no brains. You were here to have children, and you have not had any" (567). He directly compares them with Becky whose lively femininity surpasses their passivity. While exhibiting her own domestic management skills, she "pleases" men and has a son to prove her womanhood. He even contends that "Mrs. Crawley [Becky] is quite innocent" (567). Jo Sedley, bewitched by Becky, also claims that "she is innocent as a child" (807). Why would two Victorian men call such a cunning woman "innocent"? They do not refer to her sexual pu-

rity. They may consider Becky "innocent" because she is not contaminated by traditional domestication that produces dull and uninteresting dolls. Their lackluster femininity does not warrant a domestic haven-only a dreary place like Gaunt House. Domestic ladies there have been reared in the conventional households, and their education reflects what was expected from women. However, Becky has not received this traditional education. Those with whom she associated as a child did not belong to the social class of Sir Crawley and Lord Styne. Most of them were men, namely, her poor father and his rambunctious male friends. She did not have a mother to enforce female discipline. With Becky's unconventional attractiveness, Thackeray questions the purpose of domestication and also its results. The ladies in the house continue to despair and fear Becky's influence. They are "compelled into submission" (592)-to an orphan whose impure origin disgusted her school mistress.

Virtuous Lady Jane is conscious of her competition, and Becky belittles her "goodness and simplicity" (531). She mocks Lady Jane's charming ignorance regarding her own husband. The mistress of the house struggles to maintain her composure in front of Becky:

> [Becky's] presence, too, rendered Lady Jane uneasy. Her husband talked constantly with Becky. Signs of intelligence seemed to pass between them: and Pitt spoke with her on subjects on which he never thought of discoursing with Lady Jane. The latter did not understand them to be sure, but it was mortifying to remain silent; still more mortifying to know that you had nothing to say, and hear that little audacious Mrs. Rawdon dashing on from subject to subject, with a word for every man, and a joke always pat; and to sit in one's own house alone, by the fireside, and watching all the men round your rival. (531)

In this scene Thackeray depicts the internalized yet intensive tension between

two different types of "Angels." Lady Jane's inability to comprehend the conversation between her husband and her sister-in-law increases her domestic insecurity. In addition to jealousy, Lady Jane senses the gap between her and her husband. His tastes and interest involve subjects that she cannot understand, and a strange woman of an inferior class forms an intimate relationship with her husband. Lady Jane becomes a victim of domestic ideology. Her compliance and sweetness cannot vie with Becky, who is indeed a strong "rival."[7]

Thackeray further attacks the limited range of topics for women's conversation. In *Vanity Fair*, women in the house receive little respect from Becky. A direct confrontation confirms Becky's superiority: "when Lady Jane was telling stories to the children,... and Becky came into the room, sneering with green scornful eyes, poor Lady Jane grew silent under those baleful glances. Her simple little fancies shrank away tremulously, as fairies in the story-books, before a superior bad angel. She could not go on, although Rebecca, with the smallest inflection of sarcasm in her voice, besought her to continue that charming story" (531). As a dutiful mother Lady Jane is performing a simple task-reading a story to her children. However, her good intention becomes insignificant when compared with Becky's conversation on the House of Parliament. Describing Becky as "a superior" and "bad" angel, Thackeray offers Becky as a reformed model of domesticity. Domestic ideology compels women

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[7]Amelia Sedley also shows such frustration when she helplessly watches her husband dance with her orphan friend too many times, "while she sat quite unnoticed in the corner" (330). George Osborne admires Becky's ability to establish a reputation wherever she goes (325), and Amelia sadly listens to her husband's praise of "her worldly rival" (325). This "angel" must bear the humiliation and helplessly watch Becky steal her husband- a woman who used to steal from her "trinket-box and drawers" (71).

to discuss "the same silver dishes; the same saddles of mutton, boiled turkeys, and entrees" (704). Becky dazzles her male audience with her unfeminine personality as well as her female body. Both Lady Jane and Becky Crawley are considered physically beautiful; thus, it is not only Becky's beauty that attracts men who have power. The domestication of women maintains male authority, but the quality of the domestic relationship remains unhealthy and uninteresting.

Through Becky's victory, Thackeray reveals the need to revitalize male authority inside the house by rectifying the role of the lady. Sir Pitt Crawley, Lord Styne, Colonel Rawdon Crawley, George Osborne, and Jo all appreciate Becky's cunning personality and social success, for they desire such political success and are relieved to associate with a woman who shares their burden. Her position does not threaten them even though she understands their political battle outside the house. The sacred domestic space is normally preserved by strictly separating it from the public world, and due to economical and political reformations, the father's authority within the house rises only when his family needs to formulate a relationship with the public.

In *Pride and Prejudice* Mrs. Bennet's outward personality overshadows her husband's reticence in the house, but she desperately relies upon his name when she needs to socialize outside her family. However, as "the father alone proved the tie between family and external world, a connection indispensable for the continued existence of the family unit," he is burdened by the pressure and turns into a tyrant, distancing himself from his own family (Weinstein and Platt 147). The father or husband seeks a companion who will not jeopardize his authority yet comprehend the nature of his external activities. Like

Lady Jane, most women fail to embrace their husbands' encumbrance outside the house. Their domesticated nature may maintain their household, but it creates incorrigible separation between wives and husbands. However, Becky obtains a man's affection through not only domestic obligation, but also political intelligence that inspires, attracts and motivates him.

4.2.2 "Why don't she ever sing to me?"

Becky protests that she is born to perform whatever role she desires in life, and her theatrical talents accommodate her progress. She captures the heart of Lord Styene and the Great Ladies' heart with her beauty and voice. All the "best" people in society enjoy her artistic performances. However, two people are not allowed in her presence: her husband and her son. If Thackeray sufficiently considers Becky or Mrs. Crawley to be "the new woman,"[8] why does she fail to maintain her prestigious position? Why must she be punished? Why do her husband, her son, and even her soft-hearted friend, Amelia, shun the orphan in the end? Unlike Magdalen, Becky fails to receive forgiveness because she abandons the traditional duties: to nurture her family and celebrate motherhood. Driven by a desire to prove her superiority over those who have parents and wealth, she becomes oblivious to her primary role as

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[8]Sally Mitchell summarizes the history of the term "New Woman" and claims that it has suffered from its own nebulous definitions. She describes the term as a social phenomenon of 1890s: "the New Woman was perhaps merely a middle-class woman who did by choice the things working-class women had always done through necessity: live apart from her parents' home, earn her own living, go places unchaperoned, take responsibility for her own sexuality. Although self-supporting and consciously self-defined women including both novelists and "women's rights women" - had been visible in London since the 1860s (or even earlier), they attracted media attention in the 1890s because education and professions - along with publicity - made independence possible for larger numbers of young middle-class women as well as for the exceptional few who had always been able to defy prescribed roles" (582).

a wife and mother. Her mission began with her society's merciless treatment of an orphan and her determination to advance socially. Thackeray supports a woman's intelligence and potential to transform society, but he does not completely discard the virtuousness of being an affectionate mother or a wife. Although Becky's lack of traditional education enables her to cross cultural and sexual boundaries, she is an indifferent mother. Her materialism and greed may appear necessary for her survival, but her lack of interest in her child cannot be justified. She simply does not care for her son or her husband.

The novel's most disturbing scene occurs between the mother and her son, young Rawdon. The child seeks his mother, and Becky, who can mimic any individual of any class , cannot perform the mother. For the young boy, "the beautiful mother-vision had faded away after a while" (516). Becky bears a strange hostility toward her son: "During near two years she had scarcely spoken to the child. She disliked him. He had the measles and the whooping-cough. He bored her. One day...attracted by the sound of his mother's voice, who was singing to Lord Steyne, the drawing room door opening suddenly, discovered the little spy,...His mother came out and struck him violently a couple of boxes on the ear" (516-7). This deviant response to her son might suggest that Becky feels guilty about her incompetence as a mother, and that she does hold "the normal feelings of a mother" (Hendy 280). However, Becky seems to hate this role. Becky considers caring for her child unconditionally boring. As an orphan, she has always strived to obtain what she needed. Motherhood is bestowed upon her without warning, and she despises its condition and its purpose. She never cares for her son until he becomes the heir of Queen's Crawley "by accident" (750). By that time, Lady Jane has already adopted

young Rawdon, depriving Becky of her unwanted motherhood. Becky is dispossessed of the only real opportunity to reconstruct her family. The narrator castigates Becky for seeking only position and discarding domesticity. Instead of nurturing her son, she sings to her rich male friend, Lord Styene, who pays the bill and enthralls her with gifts.

Becky's pragmatism sharply contrasts with the feminized behavior of her husband, Colonel Crawley. Initially, Becky rejoices over her marriage to a young man of a prominent family: "I have passed beyond it, because I have brains" (491). Later she abhors his presence and regards him as an obstacle to her social advancement. The inversion of their social roles disrupts the relationship between them. Mrs. Becky Crawley cultivates the public relationship between her family and society, while Colonel Crawley chats with his soft-hearted sister-in-law, Lady Jane, about his son and his education. She declares to her husband with contempt: "Do what you like-dine where you please- singing with Lady Jane-only don't expect me to busy myself with the boy. I have your interests to attend to, as you can't attend to them yourself. I should like to know where you would have been now, and in what sort of a position in society, if I had not looked after you" (609). Becky claims the obligation to support her family, and the tone of this speech resembles that of Lord Steyne when he terrorizes his wife and daughter-in-law and threatens to stop supporting them financially. Like a male authority of the household, Becky insists in her opinion that her social connections protect her husband and son. Despite the fact that she is able to conduct her political activities largely because she is "Mrs. Crawley," she believes that her current popularity in fact surpasses her husband's social heritage.

Becky's failure to embrace her own family signifies that she will never be comfortable with stability. Lisa Sternlieb's analysis of Jane Eyre's reluctance "'to relinquish an advantaged position" notes that Jane will constantly refrain from revealing her true intention during her marriage to Rochester (478). Sternlieb pays attention to the ending of *Jane Eyre*, where Jane expresses her intention not to tell every sorrowful episode to her husband because she does not wish to torture him. Stemliev argues that this decision demonstrates Jane's instinct to protect her personal dignity even from her husband who trusts that she would confide in him all the time. Jane continues to maintain such distance to assume "the more empowered position" during their marriage (478). Becky, who once found peaceful high class society monotonous, may never be able to satisfy herself with domestic stability, for her orphaned position has burdened her with the constant necessity to protect herself for her own benefit. As she concocts a scheme to deceive Miss Pinkerton and Lady Jane, she reminds herself that "revenge may be wicked, but it's natural" (16). This is why Becky is able to smile at the friends who hastily walk away from her at the end of the novel. It is their turn to protect themselves from their impostor.

Chapter 5

Orphans or "Sincere" Heroes

The curse of being nameless haunts and devours an orphan's mind and body. A nameless individual must rely upon the very destabilization of his or her identity; however to a third person, an orphan does have a compelling story.

> So that was the story of Dorian Gray's parentage. Crudely as it had been told to him, it had yet stirred him by its suggestion of a strange, almost modern romance. A beautiful woman risking everything for a mad passion. A few wild weeks of happiness cut short by a hideous, treacherous crime. Months of voiceless agony, and then a child born in pain. The mother snatched away by death, the boy left to solitude and the tyranny of an old and loveless man. Yes; it was an interesting background. It posed the lad, made him more perfect, as it were. Behind every exquisite thing that existed, there was something tragic...There was something fascinating in this son of love and death. (26)

In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Lord Henry initially believes that it is Dorian Gray's physical perfection that interests him, but as soon as he learns of the young man's "parentage," he realizes what has fascinated him; it is Dorian's

tragic identity as an orphan. Dorian's story involves a horrific "background" of betrayal and death. An aristocrat's beautiful daughter bears an illegitimate child and leaves the helpless baby to his "loveless" grandfather with unimaginable power. The motherless child grows up with luxurious provisions, but his orphan-hood contains intolerant silence and endless "solitude." Yet Lord Henry does not sympathize with him; rather, he only shows his artistic and literary interest in Dorian. Such emotional detachment implies that orphans exist not just as a social disturbance. They could be immortalized to be heroes or heroines. Lord Henry represents himself as a crude psychologist and focuses on ideolizing "influencing"[1] Dorian because his individuality has not yet been tainted. He rejoices in discovering a character of an "almost modern romance." Without affection for Dorian, he subconsciously contributes to his self-destruction. "This son of love and death" provides an "interesting" story to Lord Henry. When the young boy actually reacts to his "influence," he fails to comfort the fragile young man and observes his fading innocence passively. The decadence of this upper-class English man liberates Dorian from the social entrapment of propriety, but it resulted in a violent reaction within him when Lord Henry's ideology fails to fulfill his empty life. Lord Henry does not intentionally provoke Dorian to resort to violence, but his human experiment with ideological "influence" comes from his need to witness or create a hero

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[1]Lord Henry bewilders Dorian in their first meeting: "I believe that if one man were to live out his life fully and completely, were to give form to every feeling, expression to every thought, reality to every dream–I believe that the world would gain such a fresh impulse of joy that we would forget all the maladies of mediaevalism, and return to the Hellenic ideal– to something finer, richer than the Hellenic ideal, it may be" (16). Encouraging young Dorian to test "every" possibilities in life, Lord Henry releases Dorian from any moral responsibilities. Instead of practicing "the Hellenic ideal" himself, he insists that Dorian could reward world with "joy" if he could become oblivious to tragedies of humanity. This advice, which has been part of his human experiment, results in Dorian's deterioration.

superior to him. Ultimately, Dorian's beauty and deterioration are captured within the painting, as his grotesque body decays from old age. Entrapped within his tragic story, the orphan remains aesthetically "perfect" yet alienated as a distant hero in a romance.

In *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff severely resents such distance and derides Isabella's inability to recognize human imperfection of a stranger like himself. He mocks his own wife, Isabella Linton, for fabricating irrational yet romantic ideas about him and falling in love with her own illusions. Such senseless admiration and dedication disgust him. He mocks Isabella cruelly:

> She abandoned [her home] under a delusion,... picturing in me a hero of romance, and expecting unlimited indulgences from my chivalrous devotion. I can hardly regard her in the light of a rational creature, so obstinately has she persisted in forming a fabulous notion of my character and acting on the false impressions she cherished...I did not love her...no lessons could teach her that! ...Are you sure you hate me? If I let you alone for half a day, won't you come sighing and wheedling to me again. No brutality disgusted her: I suppose she has an innate admiration of it. Now, was it not the depth of absurdity–of genuine idiocy, for that pitiful, slavish,...brach to dream that I could love her? (149-150)

She has safely been nestled within her family, yet she could not resist Heathcliff's unfamiliar force. The inexperienced maiden could not discern truth from lies, and Heathcliff despises her gullibility. He questions her sanity, suggesting that she secretly admires his "brutality." Through this orphan Emily Brontë indicates that Isabella does not resist the brutality of this stranger, for her individuality demands "a delusion" separate from her domesticity. Heathcliff may have deceived her tactfully, but Isabella "persisted in" living a romantic narrative. Out of her devotion to ideal romance, she cries, "Catherine and

Edgar are as fond of each other as any two people can be!" (148) Isabella refuses to deny romance just because she fails to participate in it. On the other hand, Healthcliff perceives only "absurdity" in her illusion. Lynched by social stigma and betrayal, Heathcliff cannot comprehend Isabella's inability to deconstruct romance and abandon the ideal picture of family. He attempts to belittle her "false impressions" as "genuine idiocy." The obscurity of his origin deceives Isabella, but Heathcliff seeks genuine affection. He refuses to be immortalized within an illusion, choosing to live in misery as a real person.

To George Eliot and Diana Mulock Craik, however, orphans externalize their uniqueness, not only as ideal characters, but also as functional heroes that mobilize social reformation. Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* and Craik's *John Halifax, Gentleman* heroicize male orphans to reinforce traditional domesticity and emphasize proper stations in the nineteenth century because their society is in need of operative heroes. While Jane Austen wrote her novels to preserve the social "coherence" that propels women to seek improvement, Eliot witnessed the "fragmentary" society in need of renovation of moral values (Carroll 226). As Eliot and Craik observe the domestic destruction and political failure of the upper and middle classes, they turn to classless orphans who motivate the stagnant society. Daniel Deronda and John Halifax initiate such modification without social revolution.[2]In this chapter, I argue that Daniel Deronda and John Halifax prove the efficacy of pure self-reliance liberated from immediate families and class-privileges. However, I also recognize

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[2]See Ian Ousby's "Carlyle, Thackeray, and Victorian Heroism." Victorians develop evolving heroism and ideologies, not to jettison traditional values, but to eliminate their disappointment in contemporary society. The age is in great need of genuine heroes according to Ousby.

their limitation. On the one hand, they individually succeed in initiating their personal domestic history without a known heritage. They also improve the undisciplined privileged who do not implement gentlemanliness. On the other hand, once they stabilize their domesticity, they submit to social contracts, posing themselves as domestic heroes who galvanize traditional Victorian domesticity that excludes un-femininity. Thus, I present Daniel Deronda and John Halifax as orphan heroes that alienate unfit women.

In order to explicate the transformation of an orphan into a hero, I refer to *Heroes and Hero Worship* by Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle reconstructs "heroes" to converse with his audience the social and cultural necessity to appraise a contemporary hero. Archibald Macmechan explains that, for most Englishmen in 1840 "hero means simply soldier and implies a human soul greatly daring or greatly enduring" with "idea of moral excellence" (lxxii). Carlyle considers "the poet" or "the man of letters" and "a scheming Impostor, a Falsehood incarnate" (60) in his "heroes" category. Why does he encourage his audience to admire Mahomet? I argue that Daniel Deronda and John Halifax exemplify Carlyle's definition of heroes, which puts forth a cultural outsider as a model to be emulated. Carlyle's use of Mahomet uncovers the dubious attitude toward this foreign man. He deprecates the validity of Mahomet's religion, but he also feels confident that his Englishmen could recognize the laudable qualities of this leader and not be manipulated into his pagan culture:

> We have chosen Mahomet not as the most eminent Prophet; but as the one we are freest to speak of. He is by no means the truest of Prophets; but I do esteem him a true one. Farther, as there is no danger of our becoming, any of us, Mahometans, I mean to say all the good of him I justly can. It is the way to get at his secret:

> let us try to understand what he meant with the world; what the
> world meant and means with him. (60)

This second lecture entitled "The Hero as Prophet," proposes that Mahomet, a "savage" is a true hero, whose leadership and religious zealousness reign over millions of "Arabs." Carlyle concludes that "there is no danger" of witnessing English Christians' conversion of religion as his fellow Englishmen fully understand that Mahomet was "by no means the truest of Prophets." Thus, he feels comfortable evaluating Mahomet as a fascinating individual whose "secret" must be unveiled. Carlyle is interested in the exposition of how this "orphan boy" attains the spiritual support of his people and "what the world meant" to him. The contradictory appraisal of Mahomet coincides with Victorian attitudes toward orphans. Their existence may disturb the social stability, but the absence of heroic leaders cannot be ignored, and Eliot and Craik propose the invitation of orphans as experimental models of English heroes to imagine a better society.

According to Carlyle's commendation of Mahomet, the prophet struggled with the lack of a conventional family, and the resulting inescapable solitude commands his life. Yet Carlyle also argues that his mesmerizing spirit originated from such isolation. Whether this isolation was intentional or not, his physical and psychological dislocation helped him avoid human deviousness to unite with the purity of nature: "Life in the Desert, with its experiences, was all his education. . . with his own eyes and thoughts,. . . having no books. . . The wisdom that had been before him. . . was in a manner as good as not there for him. . . no one directly communicates with this great soul. He is alone there, deep down in the bosom of the Wilderness" (60). Without books and teachers,

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the desert became Mahomet's guidance, and the prophet immerses himself in the charming landscape. The socially disconnected boy absorbed the invisible "wisdom," which was not told, and communicated with the landscape, which did not speak. He then asked such questions: "What am I? What is this unfathomable Thing I live in, which men name Universe? What is Life; what is Death? What am I to believe? What am I to do?" (62) As orphans like Daniel and John interrogate their self-identity and even discourage their own progress in life, Mahomet suspected the purpose of his existence. Carlyle continues: "There was no answer. The man's own soul, and what of God's inspiration dwelt there, had to answer!" (62) Mahomet is forced to individuate his entity without family. He reaches sublimation in response to emptiness, the absence of human connection, not in response to orderly ideology. Purified by such absence, Mahomet later approaches his people without preconception. The story of Mahomet's reliance upon the non-responsive desert endorses the formulation of undomesticated identity. It proves that a family, a community, or a civilization may be unnecessary when a man strives to become a leader or hero.

According to Carlyle, the most significant quality of a hero is "sincerity." Carlyle stresses that a hero like Mahomet defeats other false heroes through his unpretentiousness: "what I call a sincere man. I should say sincerity, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic. Not the sincerity that calls itself sincere; The Great Man's sincerity is of the kind he cannot speak of, is not conscious of: nay, I suppose, he is conscious rather of insincerity;. . . he cannot help being sincere!" (51) Mahomet learns from the silent nature to respond only with integrity, and his natural

"sincerity" persuades his people to follow him. If an individual is aware of his "sincerity," he cannot be a Carlylian hero. A hero projects an intrinsic quality without hesitation; although he may not be conscious of his greatness, he immediately notices pernicious "insincerity." I extend Carlyle's argument regarding the inevitable sincerity of an hero in terms of two orphan characters. Their action and reaction arise out of pure sincerity, and Eliot and Craik efficiently demonstrate that an orphan could represent Carlyle's definition of a hero. Mahomet grows up to be a spiritual leader, and I argue that Daniel and John epitomize Carlyle's principles and satisfy the cultural need to worship a qualified hero.

5.1   Daniel Deronda

In this section I argue that Eliot presents Daniel Deronda as historical hero, who rescues Victorians; his heroic dynamics comes from his mysterious position of an orphan. And the constitution of this hero is established through Gwendolen's and Daniel's own eyes. Daniel displays genuine determination to serve those who fail to negotiate with inflexible rules of propriety, injustice and even domestic cruelty. He proves that his lack of coherent identity does not prevent him from "rescuing" Gwendolen and Mirah. He does not resent the lack of blood-related family in his life, but he modifies social prejudice that orphans cannot obtain stability and legitimacy. However, I also demonstrate that such representation does not liberate him from paternalism. I consider Daniel's limitation to be a failure, for the essence of unique orphans, whom I have discussed in chapters 2 and 3, derives from their unconscious and/or con-

scientious effort to separate themselves from conventional domesticity. Reed concludes: "While their begetters suffer one way or another, it is interesting that the illegitimate offspring, when they survive, prosper" (177). Daniel's decision to go to the East may indicate that he would "prosper." Although embracing the authentic history of his race is inevitable, he rejects his dishonorable mother, refusing to condone her resistance to domestic confinement. His conventional attitude disappoints his mother. Daniel believes that he is reborn through his reunion with the recognizable connection of his Jewish heritage and that his mother's intention to abandon her ethnic identity has delayed the dignified progress of his personal journey. And when Daniel becomes inseparable from his newly found community and its history, he is no longer an orphan. Daniel gives in to the attraction of patriarchal authority.

The evaluation of Daniel's actions leads to analysis of inevitability, heritage, and free will. Markovtis and Stone discuss the nature of action and human will to explain how individual actions are actualized through appropriate habits and visions in Eliot's novels: "habitual action is in some sense a contradiction in terms, precisely because habit serves as a substitute for will…Eliot's emphasis on habit connects to a corresponding emphasis on passive endurance and on suffering as a replacement for activity…so, habit and suffering endurance take the place of action" (791-2). They argue that Daniel's "habitual" curiosity and anxiety concerning his birth may result in thoughtful passivity. Yet, could it lead to meaningful actions? Daniel's thoughts on "suffering" produces compassion for humanity and "[takes] the place of action." However, Daniel also exceeds his imagined suffering by taking a meaningful action. Whether he is drawn to her suffering or her beauty, he saves Mirah's

life, and such action cannot be ignored. On the other hand, it is what he says to and how he responds to his mother that limits the spectrum of his progressive mind. Stone is aware that "the individual is not...the helpless product of nature or nurture but can break free" (41), characterizing Daniel as a social "gambler" (41) who takes chance with nationalistic visions such as "the East"or Israel: "Eliot's bent of mind was essentially religious and moralistic rather than philosophical, and she created Deronda to be a hero to lead the way...she wanted a chance-taker following his "emotional intellect" after the grail of a "passionate vision" (41). I acknowledge that Daniel proves his destiny to be a "'hero to lead," but I also detect confirmed confidence, not probability. When Daniel holds documents of his grandfather, who wanted his grandson to inherit his vision and name, it is not just passion that he follows. It becomes his unavoidable historical obligation and paternal right.

Daniel's immediate willingness to accept his predestined course of life may come from his desire to eliminate any form of void, and the discovery of origin must dominate his life personally and professionally according to Monica Cohen: "Daniel's quest for personal identity becomes inseparable from his thirst for an inspiration he can only conceive as a career, but this desire for a career is presented as a surrogate for knowing his mother's identity, for a childhood experience...Ethnic identity substitutes for vocational commitment" (329-350).[3] Cohen explains that initially what Daniel wanted to know from Sir Hugo was

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[3]Cohen also mentions how Mirah willingly abandons her prospect as a singer to fulfill the duty of a Jewish daughter, which is contrasted with Princess Leonora's decision to chase her dream as a singer by abandoning her son. The profession of singing appears in relation to other orphan characters. Becky Sharp's mother never appears in *Vanity Fair*, but she is known to be a French opera singer. Becky entraps many husbands with her singing. The act of singing professionally is frowned upon by respectable Victorians, but its irresistible force personifies mystery and seduction.

the true identity of his mother, not about the rigid course of education of an English gentleman. Since the desire to uncover his origin starts to restrict his dimension in life, he could no longer separate it from any type of social and cultural obligation. The newly discovered culture implements what Daniel has been looking for-stabilized domesticity and recognizable historical identity. It is impossible to live as an English gentleman and fulfill his ethnic duty simultaneously.[4] Cohen's interpretation of professional commitment to nationalism clarifies Daniel's willingness to embrace his culture, although he would need to sacrifice comfort and stability provided by his benefactor Sir Hugo, and I argue that it is this comprehensive dominance of his heredity that banishes his unfeminine Jewish mother.

Laura Peters emphasizes, as she does with other orphans, the fact that Daniel leaves England in the end to represent his social exile. She argues, "The irony in this final revelation of his familial identity is that it, in effect, confirms his feelings of alienation within England and his adopted family: discovering his familial origin makes Daniel a permanent outsider to the larger community and an insider to the Jewish community" (128). The discovery of his origin does make him a cultural outsider, but I argue that Daniel leaves England, not because he distrusts his relationship with Sir Hugo Malinger and obstinately believes that he would remain an orphan, but because he desires to upgrade his idealistic role as a hero. Within England he fulfills the expectations of

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[4]Monica Cohen also realizes that Mirah comes to accept the similar fate in Daniel Deronda. She says: "her membership among the Chosen People blocks all conventionally professional lines of development. Thus it is not "culture as in art that informs her future domesticity, but "culture" as in nation" (350). Her singing talent could be improved with work and contribute to advancement in life as an artist, but she only marries Daniel in the end to fulfill her duty as a Jewish woman and wife. She, too, is defined, by her nation culturally and professionally.

a gentleman despite his social obscurity. Within the Jewish community he carries on his paternal duty historicizing his identity accordingly. As a Jew Daniel is no longer an orphan. He prefers to participate in a historical quest of his people.

What does it mean to locate oneself personally and historically? Why does Daniel panic when he possesses no historical status? Eliot appears to celebrate Daniel's familial reunion with his people, but she begins *Daniel Deronda* with an insightful passage concerning "the true beginning" (1) of human history. An individual without recognizable domestic history cannot "begin" his or her life conventionally, yet is it ever possible to point out a starting point in one's life? Eliot believes that our obsession with "beginnings" and "endings" persuades us to create and recreate them:

> Men can do nothing without the make-believe of a beginning. Even science, the strict measurer, is obliged to start with a make-believe unit, and must fix on a point in the stars' unceasing journey when his sidereal clock shall pretend that time is at Nought... No retrospect will take us to the true beginning; and whether our prologue be in heaven or on earth, it is but a fraction of that all- presupposing fact with which our story sets out. (1)

The successful continuation of progress in science demands a record of history that makes scientists create "a make-believe of unit" to explain its beginning. However, Eliot points out that, despite our intimate recollection, we cannot completely retrieve our beginning. The knowledge of parental identity facilitates the process of formulating individuality, but it does not necessarily determine the subsequent personal journey. A person's prologue could reveal only "a fraction" of his or her selfhood, and in the beginning of *Daniel Deronda*

Eliot implies that characters' prologues could not predict their destinies accurately. Orphans may curse their obscure origin, fabricating their own stories with definite beginnings, but the reconstruction of personal life stories can only interfere with their social and cultural assimilation.

Eliot rationalizes the "impulse to categorize" (Young 51) individuals with the necessity to record history. Eliot's interest in personal histories without proper prologues reappear in chapter 16, right before she introduces the "exceptional" (164) circumstances of Daniel Deronda, a ward of Sir Mallinger, who has no son to inherit his wealth. A man's beginning does not define him, and Eliot finds it impossible to identify "a true beginning" (1) in any human being. Eliot is about to tell the story of an orphan whose path cannot be predicted or imagined, suggesting that men's stories cannot be determined only by their "visible" path:

> Men, like planets, have both a visible and an invisible history. The astronomer threads the darkness with strict deduction, accounting so for every visible arc in the wanderer's orbit; and the narrator of human actions, if he did his work with the same completeness, would have to thread the hidden pathways of feeling and thought which lead up to every moment of action, and to those moments of intense suffering which take the quality of action–like the cry of Prometheus, whose chained anguish seems a greater energy than the sea and sky he invokes and the deity he defies. (164)

An objective scientist like "the astronomer" utilizes accurate data to record his or her path. Socially recognizable achievement may determine social status, but "the narrator of human actions" creates "the hidden path" consisting of inconsistent elements such as "feeling and thought," the unpredictability of individual actions. The quality of such actions depends upon both misery

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and happiness. Men's history contains "visible" and "invisible" tracks that complicate their constitution of individualities, and Eliot implicates that as men's history contains invisible elements, orphans do not deserve prejudice until they receive the opportunity to manifest their deserving qualities.

5.1.1 "My name is Daniel Deronda. I am unknown, but not in any sense great"(522).

As a young boy Daniel naturally questions his "beginning"; such underlying curiosity has been properly repressed without complaint yet externalized through his love for history. Although fortunate enough to have learned from a private tutor, Daniel realizes the unfortunate beginning of his life:

> Deronda's circumstances, indeed, had been exceptional. One moment had been burned into his life as its chief epoch–a moment full of July sunshine and large pink roses shedding their last petals on a grassy court enclosed on three sides by a gothic cloister...- "Mr. Fraser, how was it that the popes and cardinals always had so many nephews?" "Their own children were called nephews." "Why?" said Deronda. "It was just for the propriety of the thing; because, as you know very well, priests don't marry, and the children were illegitimate." (164)

Describing a significant segment of his life as a "chief epoch," Eliot allows Daniel to begin his heroic narrative. The image of "pink roses shedding their last petals" emphasizes the fading happiness in young Daniel's life, and "a gothic cloister" foretells the disturbing interference of his secret birth. The mystery of his life ultimately beautifies Daniel, but at this point he realizes that the discovery of his heritage could destroy his history, as the unknown "illegitimate" children of priests remain nameless and misidentified as their

"nephews." As much as he suffers from his obscure origin, he resists misinterpretation. The idea of being categorized as nameless "nephews" perturbs Daniel. While "the lad had a passion for history, eager to know how time had been filled up since the flood, and how things were carried on in the dull periods" (164), he discovers the frightening possibility that his existence may bear dishonor, illegitimacy and ignominy. Can he maintain the purity of his personal story that has just begun? Can he correct or erase the unwanted segment of his life, if he discovers it? Daniel lives with skepticism about his domestic, national, and historical position.

From Gwendolen Harleth's point of view, a person's social position is determined by "visible" history– heritage, class, suitable personality and talent. Blessed with physical beauty and intelligence, she despises her sister's effort to "change" herself. She says: "Yes. And I have done it because you asked me. But I don't see why I should, else. It bores me to death, she is so slow. She has no ear for music, or language, or anything else. It would be much better for her to be ignorant, mamma: it is her role, she would do it well...I don't see why it is hard to call things by their right names, and put them in their proper places" (29). Obeying her mother's command to educate her step sister, Alice, Gwendolen complains that her only parent does not understand the futility of attempt to "change" one's role. The soft-hearted mother does not acknowledge that her "slow" sister could never cultivate herself artistically, as it is her "role" to remain ordinary. Alice's destined "role" is to accept ignorance and perhaps to marry humbly– in her perspective; she dismisses the idea that her sister could excel, exceeding her expectations. Such an idea seems unnatural and irrational. In fact Alice will not be happy, if she does not accept

"her role." However, this principle does not apply to Gwendolen herself. She selfishly refuses to play the role of the daughter, when her middle-class family can no longer maintain their respectability financially.

What does Daniel Deronda's existence mean to such an obstinate insecure middle class daughter– whose miserable marriage has supported her family but destroyed her dignity? Why should she care about a ward, whose social prospects have been unreliable? I do not believe that it is Eliot's deliberate intention to support male superiority through Gwendolen's obsession with Daniel's approval, but the novel suggests that Victorians suffer from the persistent need to imagine a hero who can cleanse their corrupted society, reviving indiscriminate compassion, while solidifying the traditional domestic ideology. Eliot indicates that Daniel, despite his unrecognizable status, could assuage Victorians' grief. He could restore the morality missing in Victorian society. Although Daniel succeeds in enlightening desperate Victorians, I argue that the novel's closure tames the unconventional force of Daniel, for he surrenders to paternalism too willingly.

Daniel Deronda's position as a distant observer captivates Gwendolen. Daniel functions in two ways in her life. His social obscurity transforms into a moral objectivity from which Gwendolen cannot escape; overwhelmed by his spiritual superiority, she comes to feminize her obstinate personality. Daniel scrutinizes her action in the very first chapter of the novel, and whether his presence is visible or not, his observation starts to moralize Gwendolen. The first interference begins with a disturbing "gaze" from Daniel, an unrecognizable person, who simply annoys Gwendolen. Gamblers around the table provide a compressed image of social hierarchy, both "English aristocratic and

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English plebeian" (8), sitting side by side. Driven by her "passion of gambling" (8), Gwendolen enjoys her triumph and does not mind the presence of traders and Frenchmen. However, a stranger's eyes distract her, and like an omen they remove her fortune:

> ...in the course of that survey her eyes met Deronda's, and instead of averting them as she would have desired to do, she was unpleasantly conscious that they were arrested–how long? The darting sense that he was measuring her and looking down on her as an inferior, that he was of different quality from the human dross around her, that he felt himself in a region outside and above her, and was examining her as a specimen of a lower order, roused a tingling resentment which stretched the moment with conflict. It did not bring the blood to her cheeks, but it sent it away from her lips. She controlled herself by the help of an inward defiance, and without other sign of emotion than this lip-paleness turned to her play. But Deronda's gaze seemed to have acted as an evil eye. (10)

Conscious of "Deronda's" eyes, she feels internally humiliated before his invisible judgment. She dismisses both the lower and upper class gamblers around her as "human dross," but she could not diverge herself from his eyes, firmly believing that she has become "a specimen of a lower order" before him, despite knowing little about his social status. Eliot appropriates Daniel with such captivating force to indicate that his observing eyes could dismantle Gwendolen's materialism to change her. It is more effective to utilize the distant observer's "eyes" to raise the suspicion of internal deterioration because the same would not be raised within the individual. In order to "rescue" Gwendolen from deterioration Daniel must intervene– not as a strict teacher, but as an objective companion. His presence disturbs Gwendolen, but it signals the beginning of her internal progress. Eliot gradually demonstrates Gwendolen's inability to

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ignore "Deronda's gaze"; however Gwendolen also does not actively refrain from his influence either. This foreshadows how she would seek atonement under his guidance.

Daniel's social obscurity dominates Gwendolen, and even after she gains some information regarding his social status, Daniel remains mysteriously romanticized to her. As Lord Henry fantasizes about Dorian's past, Gwendolen imagines Daniel through his non-existent mother: "An image which had immediately arisen in Gwendolen's mind was that of the unknown mother–no doubt a dark-eyed woman–probably sad. Hardly any face could be less like Deronda's than that represented as Sir Hugo's in a crayon portrait at Diplow. A dark-eyed woman, no longer young, had become "stuff o' the conscience" to Gwendolen" (333-335). His unfamiliar appearance controls Gwendolen's reaction to Daniel. She can think of his mother with "dark" and "sad" eyes. Unable to escape from Daniel's "gaze," Gwendolen believes that an imaginary portrait of Daniel's mother could help her understand him, but he continues to prohibit her from resorting to and exploiting her physical beauty and selfishness as she used to before she met him. She says: "I wonder what he thinks of me, really? He must have felt interested in me, else he would not have sent me my necklace. I wonder what he thinks of my marriage? What notions has he to make him so grave about things?" (331) The decision to marry Grandcourt is difficult for Gwendolen, for she has willingly made his mistress's children illegitimate, even when the mother pleaded with her not to destroy their lives. At first she justifies Daniel's disturbing "gaze" as a sexual interest in her, as most men do, but she fears that his identity of unknown past contains reproach, which she secretly believes she deserves.

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Why does Daniel possess such penetrating and intrusive insight? Why have Hans Meyrick's "shy sisters. . . thoroughly accepted Deronda as an ideal. . . paint[ed] him as Prince Camaralzaman" (183-4)? Adams proposes that if "the problem is what do you do with good bastards, and the solution is to prove that they are really princes" (136). Most women find Daniel's face attractive, but Eliot implies that the absence of contrived domestic stories in his life is the essential quality that allows him to envision romance or tragic stories for others and himself. Meyrick's sisters are not the only ones who perceive Daniel as a romantic hero. Daniel grows up relying upon uninhibited imagination and rumors, suspecting that his benefactor, Sir Hugo Mallinger, must be his father. Daniel realizes that the essence of his identity pertains to a romantic narrative which he has not had the privilege to read yet. This realization destroys "his habitual feelings as happy careless voyagers" (164), when he reads, and threatens to endanger his peaceful life in his "uncle's" house.

> Having read Shakespeare as well as a great deal of history, he could have talked with the wisdom of a bookish child about men who were born out of wedlock and were held unfortunate in consequence, being under disadvantages which required them to be a sort of heroes if they were to work themselves up to an equal standing with their legally born brothers. But he had never brought such knowledge into any association with his own lot,. . . that the man whom he called uncle was really his father. . . Daniel felt the presence of a new guest who seemed to come with an enigmatic veiled face, and to carry dimly-conjectured, dreaded revelations. The ardor which he had given to the imaginary world in his books suddenly rushed toward his own history and spent its pictorial energy there, explaining what he knew, representing the unknown. (164-5)

The historical stories contain successful journeys of the illegitimate, but he also understands the necessity to accumulate heroic achievements, if they de-

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sire "equal standing with their legally born brothers." With the economic and domestic stability provided by Sir Hugo, no one has interrupted Daniel's happiness, but he considers this new discovery "the thought of danger." His affinity for history originally comes from his desire to know what human beings had done during so much time, but now he learns that he cannot be part of history unless he presents himself "a sort of [hero]." He cannot prove that Sir Hugo is his father. Gwendolen imagines "a dark lady" in relation to the individual that she cannot comprehend, and here Daniel also sees "an enigmatic veiled face" that refuses to divulge any truth. He faces "the unknown fragment" that may determine the validity of his life. How could "his own history" compete with that of "legally born brothers" when "the unknown" elements define his life? While Lucy, Eppie, Magdalen and Becky challenge their concealed histories and reconstruct their individualities through intentional dislocation, Daniel's frustration cannot be resolved until he begins to construct his identity loyal to his true heritage.

In addition to Daniel's destiny to romanticize his past and his selfhood, Eliot provides another reason to promote Daniel's position. She regrets the inhumanity of an English gentleman, who supposedly actuates the moral and intellectual operation of English society. In the description of Henleigh Grandcourt, a born gentleman, the narrator does not discover the necessary moral superiority that could solidify the nation. Eliot implies that the progress of her civilized nation does not rely upon the present patriarchal authority represented by gentlemen; rather it requires the interference of a heroic orphan whose position may be inferior yet whose qualities resemble those of a true gentleman. Grandcourt represents the hopelessly stagnant English gentleman

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without amiable relationships; he also ignores moral obligation, displaying no concern for humanity. Thanks to his wealth and status, he is vouchsafed with the proper title of a "gentleman" without any effort, and he assumes that Daniel could not compete with him. His position within Sir Malinger's house is a degraded one, not that of a gentleman. However, Grandcourt does not fulfill the qualities of an English gentleman, of which John Newman speak.[5]Eliot perceives a lifeless creature, who uncomfortably represses his emotion, restricting his socialization:

> there was not the faintest smile on his face as he looked at her, not a trace of self consciousness or anxiety in his bearing. . . It was not possible for a human aspect to be freer from grimace or solicitous wrigglings: also it was perhaps not possible for a breathing man wide awake to look less animated. The correct Englishman, drawing himself up from his bow into rigidity, assenting severely, and seemed to be in a state of internal drill, suggests a suppressed vivacity, and may be suspected of letting go with some violence when he is released from parade; but Grandcourt's bearing had no rigidity, it inclined rather to the flaccid. His complexion had a faded fairness resembling that of an actress when bare of the artificial white and red; his long narrow gray eyes expressed nothing but indifference. (111)

The difficulty of understanding a person cannot be fully solved by examining his or her appearance; however in the descriptions of her characters Eliot implies that Grandcourt's appearance includes his internal complexities, producing a fairly comprehensive portrait. No one knows about Grandcourt's dishonorable love affair just by looking at him, but Eliot suggests the existence of a great discrepancy between "his bearing" and his interiority. Relying upon his disposition to suppress emotion, Grandcourt refuses to interact gen-

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[5]I discuss Newman's definition of a gentleman in detail in the analysis of John Halifax.

uinely with other human beings– even as he looks at the woman who interests him, Gwendolen. Lord Henry desperately seeks the source of vitality within the beautiful young Dorian, because although he is a gentleman, he no longer personifies "sincerity" that could sensationalize his culture. Grandcourt's "less animated look" only reveals exhaustion. The jaded high-class gentleman lacks integrity, motivation, and direction. The depth of his pretension only disfigures his appearance, as he presents himself as an eligible man to Gwendolen, when he already has a mistress and children. Mahomet learns from the silent parent, desert, to dispossess deception and to possess inevitable integrity. Through Grandcourt's secret Eliot accentuates that the desperate cultural reformation that Victorians hunger for must come from those without inherited privileges. "The correct English man" asserts his authority through "suppressed vivacity" and "rigidity," but Grandcourt lacks "rigidity." He does not follow the discipline to subject himself to rigorous moral and intellectual training of a true gentleman. Instead he continues to maintain his title without resistance because he was born a gentleman.

The death of Grandcourt, not only represents the declining aristocratic authority, but also exalts Daniel's stature. Unlike Gwendolen, who hesitates to save Grandcourt's life, Daniel rescues Mirah before she drowns herself, imagining that his mother could have been in a similar situation:

> The agitating impression this forsaken girl was making on him stirred a fibre that lay close to his deepest interest in the fates of women- "perhaps my mother was like this one." The old thought had come now with a new impetus of mingled feeling,. . . in the presence of inexorable calamity. . . To say that Deronda was romantic would be to misrepresent him; but under his calm and somewhat self- repressed exterior there was a fervor which made him eas-

ily find poetry and romance among the events of every-day life. The desire to know his own mother, or to know about her, was constantly haunted with dread; and in imagining what might befall Mirah it quickly occurred to him that finding the mother and brother from whom she had been parted when she was a little one might turn out to be a calamity. (205-6)

He is attracted to Mirah's tragedy, for he must imagine his identity based on the suffering of his unknown mother. As he observes Mirah's pain, his unfamiliar past surfaces, telling him to save the girl. By embracing the familiar sorrow, he develops into an active rescuer. The consistent absence of a maternal presence compels him to chase ideology without hesitation. Mirah gives him a dramatic opportunity to enter a fantasy to be a hero. Yet Daniel also worries that his personal fear of his unknown past could be actualized for Mirah, another orphan. Listening to her domestic tragedy, he exhibits the genuine "sincerity" of a Carlylian hero and apprehends the potential "calamity" that she could face, if she finds her mother and brother. As Carlyle claims, Daniel detects only the "insincerity" of Mirah's invisible family, proving that he is a great hero.

In addition to Daniel's subconscious desire to be a romantic hero, Mirah's position of a vulnerable victim also empowers him. According to Nina Auerbach's perspective on female victims and their unexpected empowerment, "the victim of paralysis possesses seemingly infinite capacities of regenerative being that turn on her triumphant mesmerizer and paralyze him in turn. Dispossessed and seemingly empty, the women reveal a sort of infinitely unfolding magic that is quite different from the formulaic spells of the men" (284). Auerbach's definition of a female victim with "infinite capacities" may explain

Daniel's attraction to Mirah, but when her internal emptiness is externalized, which seizes Daniel's attention, is he paralyzed by her "[mesmerizing]" appearance, as she tries to kill herself? He is "agitated" when he discovers her, and the mysterious force of dispossession entraps Daniel. However, Mirah's externalized suffering does not "paralyze" Daniel. I believe Daniel invigorates himself through Mirah's tragedy and invites her to join his journey of self-discovery by marrying her. Their meeting occurs due to their mutual attraction, which is formed by their personal tragedies, both orphans recognize each other's invisible suffering, as Auerbach argues. Yet, Mirah exhibits no significant "magic" afterwards. She only submits to her generic role of a traditional woman prepared to accommodate Daniel's historic adventure. Only Daniel actively "saves" people in the novel.

On the other hand, Gwendolen sadly watches her husband drown. Only Grandcourt's death could have liberated Gwendolen from his tyranny, but she has failed to take action to save her husband; however, this failure becomes another psychological imprisonment. Her decision to ignore a humanitarian responsibility to save her husband leaves her subjugated to her guilt. Despite the criticism Eliot receives for the "determinism" in her novels, Gwendolen's guilt reveals that her sense of the world does not exclude humans' responsibility for their actions (Levine 269). Eliot's determinism does not "discount human will," and even though human beings find it difficult to escape the extensive territory of determined destiny and community, they also accept the consequences of their choices and must account for their actions (Levine

269).[6]From the beginnings, Gwendolen's innate disposition has resisted and challenged the dominion of the patriarchal structure of marriage. She has been impelled to marry Grandcourt out of her obligation to her family, but Eliot punishes her decision to marginalize Grandcourt's illegitimate children, disregarding their unfortunate mother's plea. Ultimately, Gwendolen must own her immoral choice.

Daniel's advice to Gwendolen characterizes his affectionate personality and attests to his integrity. He comforts her and persuades her not to allow her guilt to destroy her life: "Looking at your life as a debt may seem the dreariest view of things at a distance; but it cannot really be so. What makes life dreary is the want of motive: but once beginning to act with that penitential...You will find your life growing like a plant" (385). Daniel suggests the possibility of establishing a motive for herself, since her husband could not confine her actions any longer. He does not belittle the status of masculine authority, but he understands the pain of not having a purpose in life regardless of gender. As an orphan he has attempted to fabricate false motives to satisfy his benefactor, but as he discovers his origin, he evolves into an individual with definite destiny. Daniel advises Gwendolen not to be burdened by her own existence. His justification saves her from giving up her life. His suffering becomes a model of integrity and acceptance.

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[6]Gwendolen's redemption signifies that the force of "human will" remains the most reliable element in life, but for Daniel the context moves much more conveniently. The discovery of his racial origin, meeting Mirah, and discovering her brother Mordecai complicate Daniel's grasp of his own identity, but they all emerge accordingly to expose the "unknown" segments of his domestic history. Gwendolen receives an opportunity to compromise her un-femininity and be content with her life, but no coincidence relieves her from suffering. She must endure it.

5.1.2 "I am your mother. But you can have no love for me."

Unloving mothers violate divine domestic rules, rejecting tenderness for their children and even for themselves. Culturally the enactment of autonomy cannot concur with motherhood in the nineteenth century, and Daniel's mother has chosen selfhood without hesitation. It is interesting to note that, although Daniel releases Gwendolen from internal misery, redefining domestic imprisonment so that it becomes rather bearable for her, he cannot condone his mother's choice. Daniel's salvation does not extend to his unwomanly mother. He personifies unquestionable judiciousness to Gwendolen and Mirah, but when he attempts to extend his empowerment to his birth mother, he is unable to reduce her suffering, for his mother's active self-identity reduces his intervention to sentimental illusions and challenges his heroic position. Although Daniel penetrates Gwendolen's moral indolence, he cannot make his mother acknowledge her recklessness. She only resents her failure as an artist, not as a mother. As a result he does not forgive her.

Carolyn Dever suggests that the lack of maternity is a narrative strategy and ideological necessity for preserving Victorian domesticity. To preserve the sanctity of ideal motherhood– the fictional mothers burdened by impossibilities of traditional ideologies disappear from narratives. Therefore, when she is alive, the problem seems more serious. In regards to *Daniel Deronda* she claims:

> Daniel's significantly "undead" mother is pivotal to the novel's larger deconstruction of gender constructions...for her presence

as an unrepentant, unmotherly woman offers an implicit standard of identification for Gwendolen and an explicit standard of rejection for Daniel...The novel's women, who are almost universally resistant to cultural expectations that include their subjection in marriage, emerge as characters through that resistance; but in a vicious cycle, the novel's men, frustrated by its women, seek a notion of identity predicated on women's objectification. (144-5)

Dever explains that Princess Leonora Halm-Eberstein, Daniel's mother, disappoints Daniel through her "resistance to cultural expectations" and that her inevitable ordeal completes her son's rebirth as a Jewish son, "[seeking] a notion of identity." She emphasizes how the "undead" mother threatens to expose the fading authority of domestic ideology. The mother does remain beautiful and affectionate, when she does not exist, and Daniel's imagination involves a hopeful vision of a mother. Yet Princess Leonora Halm-Eberstein utterly destroys his vision, cruelly demanding her son to understand how "unmotherly" she is naturally. She finds her gender role disgusting, believing that her resistance defines her true self. When Daniel's impact on Gwendolen grows, she submits to his command completely. His mother refrains from such submission. In Daniel's eyes, the Princess is not a failed artist, but a misguided and irresponsible mother. With an image of a dead or undead mother, Dever's perspective appropriately analyzes Daniel's disappointment, but I would like to extend that argument in a different direction because despite his disappointment, his identity is not "predicated on [his mother's] objectification." He also does not take advantage of her cultural weakness. He simply presents himself as a heroic son who is willing to condone her faults from his perspective, as he has done with Gwendolen and Mirah. Princess Daniel does not thrive just because of her unconventionality. He moves forward as a determined Jewish

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son who would disseminate the vision of his race.

When Daniel comes to unveil the mysterious past, he naturally expects a catalytic experience. Through a justification of his suffering, he hopes to "forgive" his mother. Depending on his moral superiority, Daniel is prepared to listen to her regrets. Yet the woman receives her son with the disparaging acknowledgement that "[Daniel] can have no love for [her]" (628). She gave up her son to pursue her artistic dreams; although she eventually failed to eliminate her heritage, succeed as a singer and celebrate her un-femininity, she does not regret her choice. She only resents the social obstacle that has forced maternity upon her. She survives because of her self-alienation. She cries:

> Every woman is supposed to have the same set of motives, or else to be a monster. I am not a monster, but I have not felt exactly what other women feel– When you reproach me in your heart for sending you away from me, you mean that I ought to say I felt about you as other women say they feel about their children...I feel many things that I cannot understand...I will not pretend to love where I have no love. But shadows are rising round me. Sickness makes them. If I have wronged the dead–I have but little time to do what I left undone. (628-9)

The struggle of a woman is too evident to Daniel's mother, who lacks "the same motives" that mothers should have. She dismisses the social disapproval as irrational. Her inherent inability to "love" makes her "a monster," but she professes that she cannot "pretend" maternity. Yet, what has the Princess gained through her act of abandonment? In her old age, she senses the morbid "shadows" around her, but she does not fear its meaning. She only rationalizes that her physical sickness enervates her body and mind. She may have offended her race, her grandfather, or even "the dead" by disconnecting Daniel

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from his heritage, but she calmly accepts her fate. According to Reed: "her offense, and probably the source of her disease, is the assertion of her will in the service of her own ego and against the stream of natural feeling. Such an attempt to resist or reconstitute the human condition cannot ultimately succeed" (180). Reed's explanation of her "offense" provides the patriarchal perspective that would define it as a "disease." The Princess' transgression confuses Daniel, but from her perspective the projection of "her will" does not go "against the stream of natural feeling" because such feeling is not "natural" to her. Her decision to resist conformity could be haunting her, but she still says that she "[feels] many things that [she] cannot understand." Such a statement denotes unconventional integrity, not regret. With Reed's argument in mind, I would like to add that Princess Leonora exhibits no intention to reject domestic relationships. Her attempt to follow her instincts has failed, but to Daniel's surprise she has married another man. She separates the concept of the constitution of her autonomy from the authority of patriarchal society. She does want Daniel to recognize her attempt to liberate herself, but she does not mind indifference.

Daniel, however, prefers not to sympathize with her liberation. He pleads for his mother to reestablish their familial relationship, and she is disappointed-although not surprised-that her son refuses to understand her predicament. He does not call her "a monster" (628) but he remains silent or avoids any answer when she asks him to understand. Could a woman be satisfied with herself by rejecting maternity? Anolik describes the disfigurement of a woman who refrains from motherhood:

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> [Ironically], she effects her presence by abjecting the figures of the child and of the mother... In their refusal of the maternal imperatives of the patriarchy, [they] renounce the right to define themselves as mothers. In maintaining their autonomy, through the refusal of mother-hood, they actually follow in the tradition of the villainous husbands by abjecting the mother. This instance of resistance to paternal effacement of the mother is far from satisfying, an instance of incomplete self possession. (38)

An unfeminine woman provokes the patriarchal authority trying to achieve her independence, and "abjecting the mother" could actually help her escape motherhood. Such resistance retaliates against her when Anolik calls her as "the villainous [husband-like wife]." Unable to escape from guilt, this erratic mother loses both her family and ambition. Anolik's disfigured woman portrays Princess Leonora partially, but she does not abhor mothers. She acknowledges that she differs from "other women" (629), but she does not protest that others should imitate her example. It is her private battle.[7] She only naively believes that a satisfactory formulation of self-identity could exclude social intervention. Daniel does not deny her the title of his mother. In fact he insists that she remains his mother, asking her, "Mother! Take us all into your heart-the living and the dead. Forgive everything that hurts you in the past. Take my affection" (634). He is unable to forgive her, but he asks her to forget the dogmatic dominion of her heritage. Daniel simply wants to love a mother but does not want to understand a forsaken woman of misery and resentment.

The mother is frustrated. She has expected and experienced the inflexibil-

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[7]This attitude also distinguishes her from Daniel. From the beginning Daniel contemplates the idea of participating in history, but she sees such participation as unwanted obligation and responsibility. This is why she could disinherit her son from his paternity without regret.

ity of masculine obligation to conventional domesticity, as he perceives her as a cursed soul who must be rescued. Her son's narrow mind discourages her. She represents the failed domestic subversion, and to be regarded as a misguided woman causes her to cry: "Had I not a rightful claim to be something more than a mere daughter and mother? The voice and the genius matched the face. Whatever else was wrong, acknowledge that I had a right to be an artist, though my father's will was against it. My nature gave me a charter" (664). Eliot inserts hostility and sadness in her delineation of the direct confrontation between the mother and her orphaned son. Princess Halm-Eberstein would like to be recognized as a singer, not as a "daughter and mother." Those terms exploit her filial subordination and ignores her "talent." However, Daniel sees an unfit mother who discourages the restoration of his heredity, destabilizes his construction of domesticity and encourages separation between them. Daniel replies: "Have I not besought you that I might now at least be a son to you? My grief is that you have declared me helpless to comfort you. I would give up much that is dear for the sake of soothing your anguish" (663). Daniel's attraction to human suffering arises, as he still hopes to reaffirm his purpose in life: to "rescue" the helpless, but his mother considers him "helpless." He realizes that he would not feel the warmth of his mother's embrace, but above all, he cannot be the hero to his mother. Unlike Gwendolen, who looks into his eyes and says, "I will do what you tell me" (674) allowing him to stabilize and moralize her subjectivity, his mother criticizes his intention to help her. To obliterate the limitation of his orphan-hood he willingly became an observant rescuer and hero who compromises social conventionality-only if it is unfair-and domesticates and consoles the unstable women. However, is it only

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natural that the son feels inferior to the mother? Or should the inadequate
mother allow her son's romantic glorification of paternalism as it is primarily
her fault?

Daniel also challenges his mother's intention, questioning her judgment. He
declares that this individual instance of unnatural disobedience cannot thwart
his destiny:

> No wonder if such facts come to reveal themselves in spite of con-
> cealments. The effects prepared by generations are likely to tri-
> umph over a contrivance which would bend them all to the satisfac-
> tion of self. Your will was strong, but my grandfather's trust which
> you accepted and did not fulfill–what you call his yoke- -is the
> expression of something stronger, with deeper, farther-spreading
> roots, knit into the foundations of sacredness for all men. You
> renounced me–you still banish me–as a son...But that stronger
> something has determined that I shall be all the more the grand-
> son whom also you willed to annihilate. (663)

Respectfully yet strongly Daniel defies his mother's "contrivance." The un-
usual female strength she demonstrates does not impress him. He respects the
superior "trust" of the patriarchal authority represented by his grandfather.
How could she not understand the permanent force of "spreading roots, knit
into the foundations of sacredness for all men"? She has dared to destroy the
historical sacredness that must be preserved. With "an involuntary movement
of indignation in Deronda's voice" (663), he respectfully announces that her
pursuit of subjectivity has failed. She cannot "annihilate" the role of historical
son or "grandson," for he would condone not any impediment. This announce-
ment also reveals Daniel's inability to constitute a separate individuality- apart
from coincidence, heritage, family, and community. This very limitation char-
acterizes Daniel as a semi-independent orphan. With Lucy, Eppie, Magdalen,

and Becky, the inevitability resides within the need to alienate themselves in order to survive worldly conflicts; yet Daniel concludes that it is impossible to locate individual will above the sacred history and community. Nancy Armstrong argues that nineteenth-century gothic literature tends "to turn any formation that challenges the nuclear family into a form of degeneracy so hostile to modern-selfhood as to negate emphatically its very being" (146). Although she refers to gothic literature specifically, her argument can be extended to Daniel's mother's private formation of interiority that renounces her race. A woman courageous enough to say to her own son, "I had joy enough without you then" (663), comes to destroy her ideal. Daniel reproaches her "degeneracy." The son confronts his mother and her past mistakes, and the mother admits that she is the "loser" (663). The admission is painful. After all, Princess Halm-Eberstein claims, "I was never willingly subject to any man. Men have been subject to me" (663).

Daniel's passionate deliberation fails to convince his mother that the discovery of his origin pleases him. When he explains that his reunion with the domestic and political history of his race has salvaged and enlightened him, he talks of a "duty" that his mother has jettisoned: "But I consider it my duty–it is the impulse of my feeling–to identify myself, as far as possible, with my hereditary people, and if I can see any work to be done for them that I can give my soul and hand to I shall choose to do it" (661). The Princess calmly replies: "You are in love with a Jewess" (661). Daniel's romantic intention toward Mirah has not surfaced, and although her son has not mentioned his love, she is able to distinguish his spontaneous passion for a girl from his patriarchal obligation. Auerbach explains: "Personal and cultural disinheritance, we

feel, could go no further...all selfhood suspended as these women are invaded by the hyperconscious and culturally fraught male/master/monster...what strikes us is the kinds of powers that are granted to the women" (146). She notes the limitation of destructive unfemininity and explains how women like the Princess Halm-Eberstein have been entrapped by their fathers and must endure their children's disparagement. Yet, thePrincess also possesses an astute sense of human nature, and her son's "hyperconscious" attempt to glorify his action strikes her as being inconsistent. She is well aware of the masculine tendency to locate himself ambitiously within the historical context, but her revelation has also marginalized Daniel's position culturally, for he is a Jew in the nineteenth century. She may have unveiled his secret, but he remains a foreigner in England. Daniel's enthusiasm does not make him "a monster," but his mother's acuteness proves that she has internalized her rebellion through her romance, suffering, marriage and isolation. As Princess Halm-Eberstein hears of Mirah's un-ambitious character, she argues, "Ah, like you. She is attached to the Judaism she knows nothing of...That is poetry–fit to last through an opera night" (665). As much as Daniel finds her rebellion against her own heritage dishonorable, she finds his immediate attachment to Judaism absurd, for such history and religion cannot be appropriated simply by revelation and enthusiasm. The disgraced mother, however, does not remain silent. Despite her failure to conventionalize herself through her second marriage, she persists in her disruptive independence: "You speak as men do–as if you felt yourself wise. I see no other way to get any clearness than by being truthful– not by keeping back facts which may–which should carry obligation within them–which should make the only guidance toward duty" (664). This victim

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of patriarchal "wisdom" cannot compete with her own son's passion for his sacred right. She has deliberately dispossessed what Daniel desperately desired to possess, and their opposing desires sever the ties between them. The mother, in return, is marginalized socially and privately by her son.

5.1.3   A Hero Must be Historical.

As Daniel's mother points out, his knowledge of Judaism is minimal; it is Mordecai who properly disseminates his cultural ideas. For Mordecai, the constitution of worthy individuality does not occur separately from history. It begins simultaneously with history. He invites Daniel into his sacred territory to educate him:

> The divine principle of our race is action, choice, resolved memory. Let us contradict the blasphemy, and help to will our own better future and the better future of the world–not renounce our higher gift and say, 'Let us be as if we were not among the populations;' but choose our full heritage, claim the brotherhood of our nation, and carry into it a new brotherhood with the nations of the Gentiles. The vision is there; it will be fulfilled. (538)

Mordecai's purpose will not be hindered by death or any other form of interruption, for he believes in the continuation of the "brotherhood of [his] nation." His discussion of his nation's "vision" represents the past and future struggle of his people, but it also contains the universal confidence that social outcasts must preserve to survive. Andersen discusses how "Deronda's nationalism persistently moves toward the universalist civic model of nationality…, while Mordecai's follows the collectivist-romantic model…built on the more troubling model of a unified national will and a projected national

destiny" (41). The specificity of Mordecai's vision may exclude other cultures, resulting in nationalistic "violent blindnessess and exclusion" (Andersen 58), but more importantly, it provides an intimate category that stabilizes Daniel's journey. Eliot does not attack the exclusive nature of Mordecai's vision. Presenting Daniel, the assimilated orphan, as a mediator, she initiates a cultural conversation between two different cultures, revealing the universal conflict of the marginalized represented by the orphan. Both England and Israel need a leader to re-vitalize them. The properly imagined "brotherhood" may be lacking in Victorian society, and Eliot suggests that Daniel's intrusion, struggle, reconciliation and progress as an orphan conceptualize an alternative model for England.

After meeting his mother, Daniel's incomprehensible strangeness that captivates Gwendolen and others appears only ordinary, however. Mahomet's sincerity was based on unbearable silence and disturbing emptiness, before it influenced other "Arabs." Daniel's reunion with his heritage seems inevitable, yet despite his enthusiasm, he is "essentially passive" (Adam 137). The overwhelming history of suffering creates the historical road for him, and he submits to his forefathers' purposes (Adam 137).[8] His disturbing "gaze," that disoriented Gwendolen completely, turned into the passion of a Jewish traveler who will participate in his nation's present and future.

Daniel gains a reassuring confidence, which the reader has discovered in arrogant Henleigh Grandcourt previously, relying upon his heritage. Protected

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[8]I believe Eliot creates this passivity by constructing an extremely favorable world for Daniel Deronda. As I said before, the significance of human will remains solid, but somehow coincidences operate positively for Daniel, and internal contradictions that orphans possess, as they challenge and integrate into domesticity and nation, are resolved too immediately for Daniel.

by his inherited title, Grandcourt does not mind dismissing moral obligation. Daniel, however, discovers new duty. According to Marc E. Wolhlfarth, "individual will and nationalist [become] one in absorption of the individual by the corporate structure of nationhood" (200). He announces his true identity proudly:

> I come of a strain that has ardently maintained the fellowship of our race–a line of Spanish Jews that has borne many students and men of practical power. And I possess what will give us a sort of communion with them. My grandfather, Daniel Charisi, preserved manuscripts, family records stretching far back, in the hope that they would pass into the hands of his grandson. And now his hope is fulfilled, in spite of attempts to thwart it by hiding my parentage from me. I possess the chest containing them. (748)

His enthusiastic response may come from his affection for Mirah, as the cultural difference ceases to obstruct their romance. However, this moment both liberates and restricts Daniel's subjectivity. On the one hand, he is no longer socially invisible. He has found the historical line of his ancestors, and most importantly, he has documented proof, such as "preserved manuscripts [and] family records." His earlier academic interest in history has provided stories of humanity, but "the chest" of his grandfather rewards him with private stories about his original family. On the other hand, Daniel submits to the authority or authentic history without resistance. Unlike Lucy Snowe, who dispossesses any domestic relations, Daniel accepts his newly revealed family and hopes to include his name within the documented history of his race. He "[inscribes]" himself within the history of his people. There is nothing wrong with embracing his heritage, but Daniel's enthusiasm transforms his mother's choice into despicable "attempts to thwart [his grandfather's] hope by hiding [his] parent-

age from [him]" (Wolhlfarth 201). He chastises his mother for her pursuit of happiness, resenting the idea that his grandfather's patriarchal authority could have been lost to him forever.

Daniel succeeds as a moral catalyst for Gwendolen, but he fails to demonstrate compassion for his un-maternal mother. He only speaks of the historical inclusion of his identity. He also adopts the deterministic tone that Mordecai carries when he meets Daniel and says, "I have been waiting for you these five years" (493). Reed argues: "Once he understands his own nature, he subordinates his personal aims to those of his race, and through his race to the higher ideal of service to mankind. Eliot, in effect, permits the bastard to create the inheritance that authorizes his subsequent devotion" (180). Allowing "the bastard" to participate in the history of his race, Eliot broadens his perspective, but his "subordination" to history violates the unique separation characterized by orphans, which happens at the expense of his mother's guilt. As Reed argues, Daniel comes to confirm his purpose in relation to his "service to mankind," but Daniel does not "create the inheritance." In my opinion, he merely enters it, as it has been waiting for his contribution. As Mordecai says solemnly in their first meeting, "I have been waiting for you these five years" (550); Daniel has discovered his culture, not created one.

Does *Daniel Deronda* discourage the idea of formulating individuality without or in opposition to society? Putzell-Korab explains: "What [Eliot] has done, as in all her novels, is to show how individual work and thus identity are defined by community and culture...*Daniel Deronda* accordingly completes Eliot's vision of an evolving humanity by depicting the highest possible level of identification or fusion of the individual with his community. The vision is

idealist, but it is a qualified, temperate idealism" (180). Daniel's departure creates an appropriate closure as the idealist hero frees himself from social stigma, embarking on the continuation of his historical "brotherhood." However, I also see inconsistent characterizations in the novel mainly because of the primary difference between the Princess and Daniel. The mother rebels against the community and thoroughly resents its existence thoroughly, while the son resents her undutiful character. When "[Daniel] goes to the East to document their cultural heritage and to campaign for the restoration of their national state" (Putzell-Korab 176), his mother remains imprisoned in her second marriage, insisting that her transgression must be accepted. She would not submit to her son's indignation. Eliot implies two ideas: 1) the appropriate restoration of historical heritage and morality must be achieved in order to revive vivacity within domesticity, which involves the glorification of non-traditional participants of society, orphans, and 2) as a female writer, she understands that such social reformation would not be flexible enough to condone the de-feminization of domestic women. The vitalization of orphans as heroes produces possibilities of redirecting Victorians to reasonable social reformation, but she does not seem to believe that even an unconventional hero like Daniel would respond amicably towards the idea of separating feminine identities from domesticity. A male orphan's struggle begins because he has no home, not because he rejects it.

5.2 "[You] want to found a family. . . all coming generations shall live to the honor and glory of your name-our name."

Female orphans' constitution of individuality originates from their psychological destabilization and social dislocation as discussed in chapter 2 and chapter 3, but John Halifax, once the homeless orphan boy who grows up to receive an offer to join the House of Parliament, consistently pursues one ideal-a family. Holding a Greek Testament, which he inherited from his father, John seeks recognition, social status, wealth and dignity to establish the family that would commemorate his name "Halifax." Such obsession to ascertain a concrete position within domestic history has been discussed with Daniel Deronda. John's unfamiliarity gradually fades away, as he obtains respect from every class. Through his economical success Craik seems to suggest that nineteenth-century society is generous and capable of embracing "deserving" orphans who would respect the traditional class system, upholding the principles of social propriety. Adams argues: "Masculine identity is realized through a regimen of solitary but emphatically visible suffering, which claims the authority of manhood while estranging the hero from all forms of collective identity" (16). John presents himself as a suitable candidate for an ideal "masculine identity" because of his inherent social isolation. As a social outcast he does not have any specific "collective" identity, and the lack of social status allows him to pursue elevation more freely. However, this male orphan's success does not include social tolerance to incompetent Victorian women. In fact,

John becomes the masculine hero that must discipline sentimental femininity and fragile maternity.

In this section I argue that John Halifax's gentlemanliness coerces the solidification of traditional domesticity and ostracizes un-femininity to revive the disappearing patriarchal authority. Materialistic success becomes a justifiable reward for John Halifax, for he resists compassion. His stature also contrasts from the disabled and immoral masculinity of other English men. John's physical strength and moral perfection prove to be foundations of an ideal world, and he faithfully actualizes the principles of "self-reliance" to formulate his own family, which later becomes a model for other English families. The novel also disseminates the idea that the virtuous title of an English "gentleman" is not restricted to the privileged. Waters says: "If a man were not blessed with innate gentlemanliness, these characteristics could be acquired" (29), but such a desire demanded additional efforts combined with proper connections. With strict adherence to traditional values, John shows that a man of any class could obtain the title with appropriate qualities. However, John's perfect compliance constrains the spectrum of social mobility, for he also cherishes conventional values. Craik emphasizes the necessity to moralize contemporary patriarchal society through an orphan, yet once he gains domestic authority, the inappropriate femininity surfaces to expose its inferiority before his triumph. This novel demonstrates an orphan's process of self-reformation that could lead to a social ascendance because his journey of life advocates consolidation of domesticity and traditional aristocracy.

In *John Halifax Gentleman* Craik dramatizes how early nineteenth-century society suffered from the lack of appreciation for different classes. She suggests

that a class-less individual like John could eradicate the source of social antagonism in England. Before she presents John as a hero of both classes, she points out the seemingly irreparable relationship between the rich and the poor. The loyal and complacent narrator of this novel, Phineas Fletcher says:

> It was the year 1800, long known in English households as "the dear year." The present generation can have no conception of what a terrible time that was-War, Famine, and Tumult stalking hand-in-hand, and no one to stay them. For between the upper and lower classes there was a great gulf fixed ; the rich ground the faces of the poor, the poor hated, yet meanly succumbed to, the rich. Neither had Christianity enough boldly to cross the line of demarcation, and prove, the humbler, that they were men; the higher and wiser, that they were gentlemen. (66)

The discrepancy between reality and the public knowledge may indicate historians' desperate attempt to portray "a terrible time" as "the dear year." It also indicates the societal tendency to forget the uncomfortable segment of history. Phineas sadly underlines the fact that "the present generation" is ignorant of their nation's past history. Unable to eliminate the inevitable "gulf," this oblivion has created a disconnected culture. To a lonely son of a wealthy tanner, John appears as a mediator and leader. Phineas also mentions how "the line of demarcation" becomes the social obstacle that increases unnecessary tension between "the humbler" and "the higher and wiser." And John's social ambiguity could eliminate unnecessary tension.

In order to analyze John Halifax as a new model of hero, I will establish the traditional notion of an English gentleman. According to Waters, "the term continued to carry its historical denotations of status which conferred power and control...[but] was a flexible one...the arbitrary, shifting nature of the

term was problematic for the middle-class man, who could never be sure of achieving the gold of gentlemanliness" (19-20). For the so-called middle-class gentlemen, it was a cultural challenge to define themselves as "gentlemen," as they would attempt to earn the title, not inherit it; but the term remains too attractive to abandon completely. Waters mentions "the arbitrary, shifting nature of the term" that confuses them, but to a socially obscure person like John Halifax, the status of a gentleman becomes just another obstacle that he must overcome. To portray John Halifax as an English hero and gentleman, we should examine the commonly accepted definition of the term. John Henry Cardinal Newman famously lists the conventional qualities of a true gentleman:

> It is almost a definition of a gentleman to say he is one who never inflicts pain. . . he concurs with their movements rather than takes the initiative himself. . . The true gentleman in like manner carefully avoids whatever may cause. . . clashing of opinion, or collision of feeling, . . . his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. . . He never speaks of himself except when compelled, . . . He is never mean or little in his disputes, . . . He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, . . . he submits to pain, because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. (www.victorianweb.org)

Most qualities seem to accommodate a successful solidification of an ideal society, but ironically the general nature of this true gentleman resembles that of a subservient woman within a traditional domesticity. According to Newman, a gentleman refrains from "[taking] the initiative" and strives to "avoid" any form of conflicts. He fears "clashing" of aggressive opinions and "never speaks of himself." This gentleman definitely cannot compete with a female rebel like Becky Sharp, and the feminine nature of a gentleman weakens his social position, especially when the era desperately seeks a new vibrant hero.

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So how does Craik celebrate John as a hero and savior? His faithful character, proper sense of obligation and dignity seems too idealistic sometimes, and he refrains from profound criticism of social injustice. John does not reprimand the privileged for their unfair treatment of orphans. His benevolent character appeals to the rich and the poor. His tolerance resembles that of Newman's prototype of a gentleman, although he lacks refined manner and classic education. By just looking at Newman's list, John deserves to be titled a gentleman. However, I will also argue later that John does not remain passive, as Newman's ideal gentleman does, when he hears opposite opinions that discourage his progress.

To discuss the unrealistic perfection of John Halifax as an orphan, we should also examine the emerging cultural attention to appropriately changing definitions of gentlemanliness and masculinity in the nineteenth century. Again, John Halifax possesses both qualities. John Tosh differentiates "gentlemanliness" from "manliness" clearly:

> While 'gentlemen' continued to value a certain refinement and sociability, manliness spoke to the virtues of rugged individualism, and...gained in social and political weight as the century proceeded. Politeness...summed up the exclusiveness and affluence of the former, in contrast to the open and un- hierarchical character of the latter. One could be born a gentleman- in fact gentle birth gave one a clear edge in status...Manliness,...was socially inclusive. Birth, breeding and education were secondary, compared with the moral qualities which marked the truly manly character. Manliness had to be earned, by mastering the circumstances of life and thus securing the respect of one's peers. It lay within the grasp of every man who practiced self-help with single-minded discipline. (458)

An ideal English gentleman has become an illusion, and the scarcity of such

men must have disappointed England. In Craik's novel, we rarely witness a born gentleman with unquestionable virtue. Only John, with his generosity and reliable personality, impresses his community, pleasing his new family. The term "gentle" contains social status and "breeding," but as Tosh explains, the idea of "manliness" began to appeal to Victorians, while the mere politeness of those "gentle" folks was not productive in terms of economical progress. As the poor were divided into the sinful lazy poor and the "deserving" poor, gentlemen needed to prove their gentlemanliness in order to receive any kind of respect. Therefore, the more accessible notion of "manliness" started to dominate England. Craik inserts John in the narrative to embody such cultural change. Waters suggest that the "transformation of a male stereotype from an essentially aristocratic, inherited privilege to a middle-class, materialistic desire" proves the "ideological instability" regarding masculinity" (3). As "'manliness" could be "earned" according to Tosh, it naturally represented the underlying principle of the rising middle-class progress. Such ideological change stimulated society. The frequently changing ideals indicate that society may be unstable, but efficient and pragmatic transformations of masculine identities did not necessarily revolutionize Victorian culture; it also complemented the traditional notions of masculinity and extended its authority (Adams 5).

John possesses two essential qualities that many English men seem to lack in the novel: physical strength and invariable integrity. When Phineas meets him for the first time, he remembers young John as "ragged, muddy, and miserable as he was, [and] the poor boy looked anything but a "vagabond" (3). Nevertheless, Phineas could not hide his curiosity about "the stranger

lad" (3). Craik juxtaposes John's physical strength with Phineas's sickly body and establishes that this "vagabond" can be trusted because he has "a strong hand...roughened and browned with labor" (3). John's physical strength comes up frequently in the novel: "As I have stated, in person the lad was tall, and strongly-built; and I, poor puny wretch! so reverenced physical strength. Everything in him seemed to indicate that which I had not" (4). Ordered to protect his fragile son by Mr. Fletcher, John relies upon his strength to earn his living and trust from others because he does not have any relations to vouch for his skill or name. John has never experienced stable domesticity, but Craik implies that his physical advantage embodies stability. His physical strength validates John's credibility, and while Silas Marner obtains only infamy by attempting to help a sick villager with his medicinal herbs, John receives respect by using his reliable body. Physical strength alone cannot make a man a hero, but John's "physical strength" represents what Phineas does not have, and the novel seems rather nostalgic, praising a man's "strongly built" physique.

Threatened by John's body, born gentlemen despise John's nameless-ness. They suffer humiliation before John. He accidentally runs into two gentlemen drowning and saves them without hesitation, yet he receives a contemptuous response. Mr. Richard Brithwood mockingly says: "Not more than a crown will pay...you've done me a good turn for an ill one, young-what's-your-name, so here's a guinea for you" (40). John has just saved Richard, but his explicit condemnation of saver reveals that John's bravery does not deserve much recognition. He attempts to diminish his action by estimating it in mere monetary values. The other born-gentleman Mr. Henry March dis-

agrees: "Nay, nay, Richard," expostulated the sickly gentleman, who, after all, was a gentleman... "My good fellow," he said, at last, in a constrained voice, "I won't forget your bravery,... if a trifle like this,"... John returned it with a bow, merely saying, That he would rather not take any money. The gentleman looked very much astonished. There was a little more of persistence on one side, and resistance on the other; and then Mr. March put the guineas irresolutely back into his pocket, looking...-at his tall figure, and flushed, proud face" (40-1). Henry is baffled by John's refusal to take any reward. Embarrassed by his friend's rudeness, he intends to demonstrate gratitude towards a man of an inferior social position. He is resolved to act like a gentleman. John, however, refuses his offer. As Phineas pays attention to John's physique intensively, he, too, looks at this hero's "tall figure, and flushed, proud face." The diffusive power of John's masculinity defeats the enervated upper class "gentlemen." Craik resents the debilitated position of such privileged men and propagates the idea that both private domesticity and public community demand the more functional and vigorous authority, which she discovers in John Halifax.

The idea of "sincerity" has been discussed with Carlyle's heroes, and John faces persistent suspicion just because he is an orphan. Mr. Fletcher asks, "art thee a lad to be trusted?" (2), and this question follows his progress. John eventually perseveres and gains this "trust" from Mr. Fletcher through his productive body and honesty. However, Phineas's devotion to and praise of John emerge out of unconditional reverence, and it loses credibility to a degree. Without a doubt John succeeds as a businessman and father, but it is Phineas's unrestricted esteem for John that dominates the text:

> I knew, from every tone of his voice, every chance expression of his honest eyes, that he was one of those characters in which we may be sure that for each feeling they express, is a countless wealth of the same, unexpressed below; a character the keystone of which was that whereon is built all liking and all love- *dependableness.* He was one whom you may be long in knowing, but whom the more you know, the more you trust; and once trusting, you trust forever. (29)

As Gwendolen could not separate Daniel from an unknown romance to defer to his words, Phineas admires John's "dependableness." He insists that John's body coincides with his mind, corroborating hid credibility. As Carlyle says "[a great man] cannot help being sincere" (51); so John's inherent honesty appears in his "voice" and "eyes," which denotes that he is destined to achieve greatness, while his heritage may be unknown and indistinct. This recursive pattern of Phineas's complement continues thorughout the narrative. His excitement eradicates social prejudice towards orphans, for Phineas's social position precedes that of John in terms of wealth and power. However, instead of hearing John's internal struggle and resolutions, Phineas's perspective controls John's integration into society, restricting the spectrum of individuality. John must fulfill his own expectations along with those of Phineas. If John's social resistance disturbs his community, we could argue that John retains his rebellious nature as an orphan. John, however, only enters it humbly and remains humble.

Phineas discovers the intriguing force of John, his idol. His social obscurity provides possibilities of progress and superiority from Phineas's point of view. He envies the unrestricted road of possibilities of an orphan's life:

> [John's] face had that charm, perhaps the greatest, certainly the

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most lasting, either in women or men-of infinite variety. You were always finding out something-an expression strange as tender, or the track of a swift, brilliant thought, or an indication of feeling different from, perhaps deeper than, anything which appeared before. When you believed you had learnt it line by line, it would startle you by a phase quite new, and beautiful as new. For it was not one of your impassive faces, whose owners count it pride to harden into a mass of stone those lineaments which nature made as the flesh and blood representation of the man's soul. True, it had its reticences, its sacred disguises, its noble powers of silence and self-control. It was a fair-written, open book: only, to read it clearly, you must come from its own country, and understand the same language. (92)

Phineas is enthralled by the infinite possibilities of John's life of "open book," briefly forgetting the social stigma from which John suffers. This wealthy tanner's son has relied upon John's physical strength and friendship, for he is an invalid. His disabled body deepens his diffidence, and he sadly watches his father Mr. Fletcher depend upon John's intelligence. Only "infinite variety" seems to await his hero orphan. Constrained by his own lack of masculine strength, he gravitated towards John's social obscurity. However, what Phineas discovers in John's face here does not only prove his friend's manliness. It is the "tender" expression or "brilliant thought" or incomprehensible "feeling" that he sees in John's face. This confounds and intrigues Phineas, for he realizes that John comes from an imaginary world of "a fair-written, open book" where he cannot intrude. Although he has befriended John for a while, he learns that he could never fathom the meaning of this sporadic appearance of "a phase quite new, and beautiful" because such internal force comes from John's unknown past. Phineas continues to extol John, but he also understands that his admiration comes from the fact that he would never

understand the "language" of the marginalized world of John. As Daniel exists as a foreign hero to Gwendolen, Phineas sees John as a heroic character.

Craik also endows John with the strong belief in "self-reliance" but stresses that he has no intention to glorify his social position, gain political power and assume superiority. His ambition to succeed makes him value economical productivity, and he considers himself the owner of his own body. He stresses that the validation of his existence does not require social permission: "you mistake; I never begged in my life-I am a person of independent property, which consists of my head and my two hands, out of which I hope to realize a large capital some day" (11). He does have the sense of servitude that the working class should have according to the privileged, but his capitalistic perspective on his body indicates that while he does not mind working for the upper class, he retains the ownership of his entity. However, John would not advocate any social revolution that could overturn the relationship between the upper and lower classes. When Phineas invites him as a friend, he "took off his cap, and bowed ceremoniously to his master's son" (23). Hired by Phineas's father, he works arduously and cautiously maintains his distance from his employer's son. John's hope of establishing his own paternal line does not interfere with his reverence for the upper class.

Craik creates a hero whose accomplishments correspond to the Victorian need to consolidate traditional ideology and promote progress simultaneously. John Halifax proves that economical progress and social mobility do not destroy conventional values. Rising from the lowest social position, John inculcates the principles of self-reliance properly, encompassing his past. His intransigent character proves to be superior to corrupted aristocracy and in-

dolent privileged gentlemen. Through this rising hero, Craik envisions an ideal society with an ideal hero, but John's performance as a hero does not include cultural tolerance towards un-femininity. As Daniel Deronda comes to disconnect himself from his un-maternal mother, John fails to accommodate the need of an ostracized woman who could not resist sexual temptation. Specifically this novel conveys an intolerant tone towards a woman's socially inappropriate actions. While a male social outcast could become a member of the House of Parliament, Craik directly contrasts his success with an aristocratic lady's scandalous transgression. Only John remains heroized and immortalized in the end.

5.2.1 The Mad Woman and Our Hero

I have discussed Daniel Deronda's display of intolerance towards his mother's pursuit of freedom. He willingly accepts his racial identity that defines him. John Halifax overcomes his low social status and obtains his middle-class bride, Ursula, who chooses to sacrifice the inherited wealth of her well-known family. Ursula Halifax transcends social boundaries to be faithful to her feelings by marrying a socially inferior man. She ignores privileges and defies conventionalities. However, such a progressive and enlightened woman transforms into an obedient wife and mother of inflexible morality when she marries John. Both John and Ursula contract the very liberating principle that has allowed them to marry each other-that the inherited name cannot define an individual in his or her true form. They have trusted each other's self-reliant character separated from domestic ideology, but once they have comfortably established

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their primary domesticity, social position and economical success, they refuse to tolerate others' unconventionality and strangeness.

As Daniel's mother cries for her right to choose her artistic ambition over motherhood, Ursula's female cousin, Caroline Brithwood from France announces, "My will is free. [John] cannot control me" (235). The deeply rooted cultural distrust in French women often appears in Craik's novel. Emphasizing her foreign accent and inappropriately outward sexuality, Craik depicts a scandalous French lady who disobeys her husband to have an affair with a young man only to be divorced and abandoned on the street. Instead of sympathizing with this homeless lady, John displays unusual harshness towards Caroline, even though he himself has been homeless. He characterizes her passion as "a crime": "my conscience justifies me in preventing a crime... No sophistries of French philosophy on your part, no cruelty on your husband's, can abrogate the one law,– being necessary for the peace, honour, and safety of society... Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery" (235). Although John must abide by religious rules, his chastisement of the lady reveals no forgiveness, which strikingly opposes his character so far. He talks of "peace, honour, and safety of society" to justify with indignation, but those are the ideas that Ursuala risked when she married John. Her benefactor has threatened to keep her wealth, if she married him, refusing to dine with a socially inferior John. Without hesitation Ursula has stepped out of her domestic sphere of inherited "safety" and "peace." However, John fails to replicate the same generosity, courage, and flexibility.

No character realizes the absurdity of his strictness. Only his faithful worshiper and narrator, Phineas, recognizes the mysterious expression on John's

face, which only reaffirmed his idealistic character: "I could not but notice the expression of his own face... recognized how a man can be at once righteous to judge, tender to pity, and strong to save; a man the principle of whose life is, as John's was–that it should be made "conformable to the image" of Him, who was Himself on earth the image of God" (235). John becomes an untouchable hero protected by righteousness. As "a man [of] principles" he could lead or at least awaken the socially stagnant and the morally deficient to improve them. Pointing out a woman's incontrollable sexuality and passion as "a sin," he is reborn as the teacher who must guide such a woman. As Daniel moves forward politically towards the East by denouncing his mother's intent to keep his heritage from him, John's heroic virtue is compared with "the self-convicted woman" (235), who turns insane. When John discovers her for the second time on the street, he generously invites the hysterical woman into his household, while his wife fears her influence over her daughters. John gains the opportunity to prove his philanthropic purpose as a new Victorian hero by banishing and forgiving the sinful French woman.

Craik use another French orphan woman to be shunned and excluded by Ursula Halifax, who once married an orphan. She demeans herself by turning into a narrow-minded mother, who fears the possible domestic destruction caused by a foreign woman. She detects her oldest son Guy's attraction to her. She accuses Miss Silver, her daughter's governess, of lying to her, when she discovers that her real name is Louise D'Argent, the daughter of a French Politian, Jacque D'Argent, that served under the Reign of Terror. Craik's characterization of Ursula is disappointing:

"Are you a French woman?"

"On my father's side-yes."

"Why did you not tell me so?"

"Because, if you remember, at our first interview, you said no Frenchwoman should educate your daughter. And I was homeless-friendless."

"Better starve than tell a falsehood," cried the mother indignantly. (335)

Mrs. Halifax shows no sympathy towards the governess. Heavily influenced by Caroline Brithwood's wicked condition, she mistrusts all French women unfairly. The nervous mother cannot understand why a "homeless" girl would lie about her nationality in front of her. Such cultural intolerance tarnishes Mrs. Halifax's character. To have married an orphan- she could have demonstrated more forbearance and leniency towards this female orphan. Even her son accuses her of being "unjust, heartless, and cruel" (337). John's position is not compromised in this situation, as he calmly says, "a girl, who may have been her antecedents, has lived for six months blamelessly in our house" (337). While John suggests that his family should not judge Louise D'Argent based on her father's political profession, his wife becomes hysterical and unreasonable. She professes that she would not accept a French woman as her daughter-in-law. Craik seems determined to portray John as the only hero in this chapter. And not surprisingly, Mrs. Halifax suddenly submits to him witnessing his distress: "John esteems her, John likes her... I shall make a capital mother-in-law" (342). The foundation of this family was John's identity as an orphan and his self-reliant economical success. However, Ursula turns into another inflexible person who rejects orphans. Louise does marry Mrs. Halifax's son, but not Guy. She marries her other son Edwin. As the English mother has

feared, the French woman's sexual attraction causes unnecessary internal conflict between brothers, but in the midst of this domestic turmoil, John remains honorable, reserved and virtuous. As *Daniel Deronda* ends without resolving the need of the passionate Princess Leonora and delineates an adventurous future for Daniel, Craik's novel celebrates John's achievement at the expense of misguided women. He respectfully declines the offer to enter the Houses of Parliament. Such an invitation manifests that John has accomplished the most advanced form of social ascendance, but the male hero's progress has been completed at the expense of sentimental femininity and overtly protective motherhood, which are directly contrasted with his consistent masculinity. Only John's name will be immortalized and celebrated.

Both Daniel Deronda and John Halifax exceed cultural restrictions unfavorable towards orphans. They cogently question the source of discrimination against them yet do not mind negotiating with societal expectations. However, the examination of these male orphans reveals that the absence of patriarchal domesticity does not necessarily lead to rejection of such a traditional unit that usually defines individuality. With other female orphan characters, I argue that such absence naturally leads to resistance to domestic ideologies, and when female orphans pursue this resistance, their domestic detachment manifests their independence. Yet, without domesticity, community and nation, Daniel and John cannot complete their self-development. Eliot and Craik imply that the quality of masculine selfhood cannot be improved without the restoration of patriarchal authority.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* the creature says, "But where were my friends and relations? No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses; or if they had, all my past life was now a blot, a blind vacancy in which I distinguished nothing.... I had never yet seen a being resembling me, or who claimed any intercourse with me. What was I?" (124) Whenever I try to understand the source of orphans' sufferings, I think of Frankenstein's creature. Even though his creator or father is alive, he is forced to become an orphan because he cannot correct their disconnected relationship. Orphan protagonists, unable to formulate stable relationships, embody emotional rejection. They cannot obtain "a viable identity" (Hochman 134). Constantly repressing their growing hatred, they would eventually give in to irrational violence. Also Frankenstein's creature's lack of collective identity makes it impossible for him to belong anywhere, and he does not know how to formulate individuality without family, community or nation. The deeply rooted distrust in those who have no parents often appear in English litera-

ture. Peasants in *Silas Marner* question how they could trust strangers when they know nothing about their mother or father. Orphans endure isolation, and through Richard Carstone in *Bleak House* Dickens implies that orphans may be innately destabilized, destined to resist domestication just because they are orphans. The permanent void, the "blind vacancy" that the creature discovers is never filled, and he lives with this emptiness. The creature says that the only explicit elements that affect his character are unhappy "events" (124) and extreme animosity that he receives. To be an orphan is to live with a blind spot inside himself, which he or she cannot eradicate.

In most stories, orphans exhibit gratitude and obedience, and the writers depict a tolerant culture where they could easily assimilate. However, orphans that I discuss embrace inconsistent nature in their lives. How do they maintain their unique form of resistance and appeal to the readers? They present the necessity to disconnect themselves from the past. They have no choice but to embrace the present and imagine the future. They externalize the unfavorable reception of their social obscurity, and their dislocation becomes the source of their empowerment, as we look at Lucy, Eppie, Magdalen, Becky, Daniel and John.

This study interprets nineteenth-century English novels that examine the symbolic significance of being a nameless, class-less, parent-less person in a class-obsessed period. Orphans' actions determine their friendly, hostile, inconsistent, and invisible relationships with their community, and they protest against social prejudice that they fail to fit in anywhere, for they do not need to legitimize their existence according to hierarchical society. Orphans that I discuss are special for at least three reasons. 1) Orphans exclude heredity

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from their personality. When they distance themselves from it, they procure unrestricted self-identity. 2) They refuse entrance or invitation to traditional domesticity, and if they do enter it, they turn into conventional characters. 3) Their unfamiliar force of reformation and rediscovery include repressed antagonism and curiosity, due to isolation and solitude (the main side effects of being an orphan).

Let me position my study in terms of four main critics that I mention. In "Incarnations of Orphans" (1975) Nina Auerbach argues: "orphans appear in the eighteenth century as a slyly potent underground figure, who does not show himself as a waif...and if he surfaces visibly, the tension rises, resulting in destruction of harmony and/or violence" (404). She explains that in the nineteenth century, an orphan is freed from his or her past, fueled with "religious and revolutionary energy," using Becky and Jane as her examples. Auerbach argues that they utilize infinite selfhood to extend their social mutability (404). Her argument emphasizes orphans' unlimited selfhood mobilized by incomprehensible spirit, and I extend that argument by defining their identities as a form of social resistance. Lucy and Eppie reject invitations to ideal domesticity, Magdalen and Becky attack discriminating social hierarchy by deceiving it, and Daniel and John disprove cultural preconception that orphans cannot exceed their nameless-ness.

Carolyn Dever's *Death and the Mother from Dickens to Freud* (1998) approaches Victorian domestic ideology more specifically. She is concerned with the death of the mother, whether the characters are orphaned or not. Victorian narratives rely upon the mother's death or her absence to preserve the ideological motherhood and maternal image (xi). While Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*

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implies that there is no ideal mother anywhere in the nineteenth century, Dever argues that protagonists without mothers demonstrate their desire to reunite with their dead, missing, or absent mothers, and the condition of such loss empowers them (xi). She also points out how Daniel is utterly disappointed by his meeting with his mother, and that his living mother immediately destroys his fantasy by reappearing before him (144). I agree with her analysis of Daniel's ordeal, but she emphasizes that Daniel has "constituted his identity in terms of his imaginative relationship with his mother" (144), while I argue that he is more preoccupied with the possibility of joining a historic community. Daniel may need to confirm that his mother is an ideal woman, but what he really needs from her is the acknowledgement of his strength as a son, a male authority, a Jewish hero.

I have devoted my study to non-Dickensian orphans because Dickens' orphan children have already received critical attention extensively. Hochman's and Wach's *Dickens: The Orphan Condition* (1999) provides an interesting perception of orphan-hood. They argue that the orphan condition is "a state of mind" that tortures those children (134). Orphans possess an overwhelming desire to possess "home" despite their lack of domestic experience. While Victorians define their ordeal as the consequence of poverty, they imagine themselves in relation to ideal domesticity only to torture their selfhood. Initially his criticism was actually useful to my chapter on male orphans because Hochmand and Wach argue orphans must repress their feelings of abandonment and their past memories. I highlight in chapter four that Daniel internalizes his curiosity to create a legitimate domestic history for himself. However, their analysis of longing becomes pessimistic, as they discuss how Dickens in-

serts his own frustration to orphans' interiority and how Esther Summerson remains passive as a result of her anger towards her parents. Daniel does meet his mother, and the reunion causes more questions and tension rather than tears, but he does not remain passive. He is resolved to document his identity, encouraged by his mother's revelation. John Halifax is not always nostalgic for his past because he knows little about it. John says that he would like to be a gentleman like his father, but he never complains about his working class status and assumes his superiority because of his father's former social status. Orphans' longing does not turn into renunciation. They decide to create their own ideal family and own shelter to enrich their lives. And the female orphans that I discuss actually long for separation from the past and remain satisfied with their disagreeable condition.

In *Orphan Texts* (2000) Laura Peters argues: "the cultural significance of an ideal family and Victorian anxiety (that it could disappear) forced the writers to envision orphan characters as the necessary difference within" (ii). Peters believe that Victorian families needed a "scapegoat" to preserve the traditional domestic ideologies (ii). The legitimacy of a Victorian family needed to be proven through illegitimate children. So orphans may be necessary to vitalize the family, but ultimately the orphan cannot remain within the family (Peters ii-iii). The domestic sanctity must be reserved by expelling the orphans. However, it is my contention that orphans' struggles are not necessarily related to the existence of ideal families. They are curious, stubborn, and inadequate individuals, but they do not necessarily threaten to destroy domestic harmony. Orphans suggest unconventional forms of domesticity; for example a family of strangers in *No Name* and a family of orphans in *Silas*

Marner prove that they refuse to be victimized. While Peters claims that Daniel Deronda leaves England because he does not fit in, I argue that he willingly begins his journey as a legitimate participant of his Jewish history, not because he has been ostracized from England.

The fictional depiction of orphans demands a new definition of ideal domesticity and imagines a more flexible civilization. Orphans' suffering may result from their loss of the family, but the formulation of their vigorous individualities does not require ideal families or communities. Their existence does not always embody abandonment and negligence. They represent necessary cultural rebellion as imagined by Brontë, Eliot, Collins, Thackeray, and Craik.

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