THE DOUBLE AND NARCISSISM IN HAROLD PINTER'S PLAYS:
A STUDY OF A SLIGHT ACHE, THE CARETAKER, AND NO MAN'S LAND

DISSERTATION

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DEDICATION

To Yunhi, John and Michael
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In many of Harold Pinter's plays, one can find various kinds of intruder figures. Even though the details differ from play to play, the intruders display common elements: the intruders mirror the residents, reflecting their otherness. As a result, the residents struggle with their mirror images and finally accept or deny the otherness which is in fact themselves. In that sense, the characters' narcissistic experience of looking at themselves is related to an oedipal search for identity, which constitutes a considerable part of Pinter's overall thematic paradigm.

Along with Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter is known as "one of the most important playwrights of our day,"¹; indeed, one critic has described him as "the most fascinating, enigmatic and accomplished dramatist in the English language."² Austin Quigley points out Pinter's steadfast reputation in the theatrical world as follows:

Of the dramatists who came to the fore in what seemed a great resurgence of the English theater in the late fifties, only Pinter has consistently maintained a momentum of achievement. Where
Osborne, Wesker, Simpson, Arden, and even Beckett have gradually faded as playwrights, Pinter increasingly attracts the attention of scholars, critics, and audiences alike. (273)

Pinter's unique dramatic style, which has drawn the attention of scholars, critics, and audience alike, has led to the invention of the word "Pinteresque." Benedict Nightingale explains the word as follows:

[The word is] a capsule-word conveying sexual hostility, territorial acquisitiveness, loaded silences, obliquely expressed menace, the practice of saying what you don't mean and meaning what you don't say. (5)

Pinter himself seems to feel uncomfortable about the word. When an interviewer mentioned "Pinteresque," he replied: "That word! These damn words and that word Pinteresque particularly—I don't know what they're bloody well talking about!" (Bensky 31). Whether Pinter likes the coinage or not, "Pinteresque" is frequently applied to the dramatists who are influenced by Pinter.

Pinter's plays often resist understanding, mainly because they do not provide solid facts. Pinter himself has explained the ambiguity of his plays:

"... The desire for verification is understandable but cannot always be satisfied. There are no hard distinctions between what is
real and what is unreal, nor between what is true and what is false. The thing is not necessarily either true or false; it can be both true and false. The assumption that to verify what has happened and what is happening presents few problems I take to be inaccurate. A character on the stage who can present no convincing argument or information as to his past experience, his present behavior or his aspirations, nor give a comprehensive analysis of his motives is as legitimate and as worthy of attention as one who, alarmingly, can do all these things. The more acute the experience the less articulate its expression." (quoted in Esslin, Pinter 44)

Here, Pinter argues that it is not always necessary to try to distinguish "what is real" from "what is unreal." If a character believes that something is real, it can be real even if the thing has never happened. Pinter's view on psychological reality is well described by Anna in Old Times: "There are some things one remembers even though they may never have happened. There are things I remember which may never have happened but as I recall them so they take place" (27-28).

Many scholars in their own ways have contributed a great deal to the comprehension of Pinter's ambiguous and elusive plays. For example, Martin Esslin, in his book, The
Peopled Wound: The Work of Harold Pinter (1970), tries to interpret Pinter's plays in a somewhat pluralistic way:

I want to show how the realistic representation of the particular can transcend itself—through the poetic truth and power of the manner of the representation—and assume the significance of the symbol, the mythical, the archetypal. The individual and particular—observed with the perception and represented with the creative power of a real past—can thus become the metaphor of its own deeper, general, all-embracing significance. (112)

While Esslin tries to use the combination of "the realistic," "the symbolic," and "the archetypal" to understand Pinter's plays, Katherine H. Burkman suggests an approach through myth criticism. Her book, The Dramatic World of Harold Pinter: Its Basis in Ritual (1971), is "the first full-length study of the ritual metaphor perceived in Pinter's work" (Merritt 100). In the book, Burkman argues that "Frazer's Golden Bough kings offer an excellent metaphorical clue to the ritual sacrifices at the center of Pinter's dramas" (16-17). According to her, many of Pinter's intruders can be considered as "the old king-priest-god" "who must suffer death or banishment, either to be reborn as the new spirit of spring and life . . . or to be replaced by a new god. . . ." (134). In the same way, the
female characters can be considered as "fertility goddess[es]" or "earth mother[s]," who welcome the new god to keep life going (134).

If Burkman interprets the main actions in Pinter's plays as the ritual of replacing old kings with new ones in Frazerian terms, Steven M. Gale has a little different approach. In his book, *Butter's Going Up: A Critical Analysis of Harold Pinter's Work* (1977), Gale argues: "I believe that works of art are created to convey some sort of intellectual or emotional meaning" (143). He uses "residual New Critical close-reading strategies" and defines five "basic concepts" in Pinter's dramas—love, loneliness, menace, communication, and verification (Merritt 90).

While Gale tries to "analyze, describe, and evaluate" Pinter's work, Austin E. Quigley defines "a dichotomy between the surface of the plays and some deeper level of meaning" (13). In his book, *The Pinter Problem* (1975), Quigley suggests:

> the attempt to formulate the relationship between language and situation in Pinter's work is a step in the right direction. The obscurity and inexplicitness of Pinter's language can only be understood in terms of their function in the overall structure of the individual plays. (15) Quigley insists that he attempts not "to perceive the 'hidden meaning'" but "to explain how the 'hidden' is, or
becomes, visible," by illuminating "structural and textual implications of the interrelational function of language" (75).

Another consistent stream in Pinter criticism is psycho-analysis. For instance, in The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays: A Psychoanalytic Approach (1976), Lucina Paquet Gppard suggests:

- Much of the obscurity in the plays can be illuminated by applying the mechanisms that Freud attributes to the dreamwork. The ambiguity can be understood as the result of the overdetermination so typical of dreams. (16)

Arguing that the major action in Pinter's plays has the structure of Freudian dreams, Gppard suggests that the Oedipal wish is one of the most important hidden motives of Pinter's characters.

Along with psychoanalysis, there is the feministic approach. For example, Elizabeth Sakellaridou tries to "explore the changes in Pinter's portrayal of women" in her book, Pinter's Female Portraits: A Study of Female Characters in the Plays of Harold Pinter (1988). She argues that "the delineation of his female characters as dramatic personae and their role as theatrical functionaries are dictated by a prevailing masculine discourse" in the earlier plays, while his later heroines are "full-blown, three-dimensional women with a clearly-defined feminine ideology"
and discourse" (12). Therefore, Sakellaridou concludes that Pinter has shown a slow but steady development in describing his heroines from "mutilated and often disparaged or silent creatures into integrated, dynamic, conscious and articulate human beings" (13).

In addition, we cannot ignore another important approach that has been recently added to Pinter criticism: the view that Pinter's plays are political. As some critics point out, Pinter's dramatic techniques are apparently far from those of the traditional political playwrights. However, since Pinter has recently published several plays such as One for the Road (1984), Precisely (1987), and Mountain Language (1988) which are obviously political, many critics have returned to his earlier plays, searching for some continuous political elements in them. For example, Mel Gussow suggests, "In retrospect . . . [Pinter] can identify the political content in his plays, which he can trace back to The Birthday Party and The Dumb Waiter" (Merritt 178). Besides, Pinter's work has "thematically and technically" dramatized "one character's struggle to assert dominance over another" (Prentice 9). In other words, Pinter's plays are political when we interpret the "struggle for dominance" as a power game between the powerful and the powerless.

Just as there are many approaches which can provide clues to understanding Pinter's enigmatic plays, there are
also several ways to understand the dynamics of the relationship newly established by the intruder figures. Indeed, the majority of the Pinter canon includes an unexpected intruder. For example, in Pinter's first play, *The Room*, the mysterious visitor, Riley, intrudes into Rose's room; in *The Birthday Party*, Goldberg and McCann come into Stanley's shelter; in *The Collection*, James tries to disturb Bill and Harry's house; in *Night School*, Walter investigates Sally's room; in *The Homecoming*, Ruth is an unexpected guest in Teddy's home in London; in *The Basement*, Stott and Jane visit Law's house and initiate the repetitive cycle in which the visitors displace the host; in *Old Times*, Anna suddenly intervenes between her old friend, Kate, and her husband, Deeley.

Even in Pinter's recent plays, such as *A Kind of Alaska*, *Mountain Language*, and *One for the Road*, there are intruders. In *A Kind of Alaska*, Dr. Hornby might be considered as an intruder in Deborah's world of "a kind of Alaska" by injecting her with L-Dopa and revitalizing her. The soldiers, such as the Sergeant and the Officer in *Mountain Language*, can be viewed as intruders who try to disintegrate the human relationships of the Mountain people. Likewise, Nicholas is a brutal intruder on and destroyer of Victor's happy family in *One for the Road*.

From a Freudian psychoanalytic approach, the intruder may represent a son figure who wants to achieve his
unfulfilled oedipal desire in these plays. One can also apply myth criticism; the intruder may arrive to displace the old king figure. If one uses the feminist approach, the woman intruder may try to attempt to reverse the hierarchy of the patriarchal household. And from a political perspective, the uninvited guest comes to secure his own territory and to assert an upperhand over the residents.

The various approaches mentioned above have contributed a great deal to understanding the meaning of the intruder figures in Pinter's plays. Still, I feel that there may be another way of explaining the role of the intruder. That is, the resident people share many characteristics with the intruders while they think the counterparts are merely separate enemies. The counterparts may, on some level, be eventually no other than the characters themselves, as their doubles. Here, the confrontation with the double reminds one of the myth of Narcissus. Just as Narcissus looks into his image on the water, the characters see themselves, reflected in the doubles.

It is true that some critics have already explored some aspects of the double in Pinter plays. However, as far as I know, no one has fully investigated Pinter's use of the double in terms of narcissism. Therefore, I suggest that the use of narcissism as well as of the double in Pinter's plays will offer clues to understanding the dynamics of the situation created by the intruders.
The idea of the "double" has enriched literature throughout the ages:

Few concepts and dreams have haunted the human imagination as durably as those of the double—from primitive man's sense of a duplicated self as immortal soul to the complex mirror games and mental chess of Mann, Nabokov, Borges.

(Guerard 1)


Not only in the novel but also in drama, doubling is used in a considerable part of the canon. Indeed, doubling in dramatic literature has a long history. It is generally agreed that Plautus is one of the earliest dramatists who dealt with the theme of the Doppelpacker. In his drama, *Amphitruo*, which was written around 200 B.C., Jupiter disguises himself as Amphitryon to fulfill his sexual desire for Amphitryon's wife, Alcmene, during her husband's absence. Having experienced the ecstatic night with Jupiter—she does not know he was the god Jupiter until
toward the ending of the play—Alcmene cannot be satisfied with her real husband. She is torn between a passionate lover and a traditional husband. However, it is not Alcmene but Amphitryon who is trapped in a serious dilemma. When Jupiter appears and tells the couple what really happened, Amphitryon faces a possible annihilation of his integrity as a patriarch and even of his own identity:

The apparent schism resulting from this situation is due to loss of identity on the part of Amphitryon whose psychic depletion is projected on a greatly inflated external representation of the ego which he recognizes as omnipotent Jupiter, his immortal double. (Neumarkt 359)

Since Plautus's Amphitryon, many dramatists have used the idea of the double in their plays: from Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors to Strindberg's To Damascus to modern dramas such as Brecht's The Good Woman of Setzuan and Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot.

In spite of the fact that the idea of the double has had an immense influence on literature, the word "double" seems to be vague as a term in literary criticism. One of the most remarkable pioneer scholars who has studied the idea is Otto Rank. In his essay, "The Double as Immortal Self," Rank suggests that the idea of the double today has emerged from "the same need for immortalization" felt by primitive man:
In confronting those ancient conceptions of the dual soul with its modern manifestation in the literature of the Double, we realize a decisive change of emphasis, amounting to a moralistic interpretation of the old soul belief. Originally conceived of as a guardian angel, assuring immortal survival to the self, the double eventually appears as precisely the opposite, a reminder of the individual's mortality, indeed, the announcer of death itself. Thus, from a symbol of eternal life in the primitive, the double developed into an omen of death in the self-conscious individual of modern civilization.

(75-76)

According to Rank, the double was originally created "as a wish-defense against a dreaded eternal destruction" and thereby mainly represents "the messenger of death."

If Rank suggests that the psyche of modern man is fundamentally the same as that of primitive man with its search for immortality, Ralph Tymms classifies the double into two types: "the double-by-duplication" and "the double-by-division" (15). The first means merely a physical double like twins with physical resemblance while the second means "a spiritual double." By closely analyzing German romantic literature, Tymms examines how frequently the "spiritual double" appears in various forms in many works of
that period and how it develops into a representation of the unconscious part of the human psyche. He then concludes that the idea of the double is one of the most appropriate means to describe "subjective realism" in literature:

Those periods of modern literature in which the double appears as a vehicle for psychoanalysis are seen to coincide with the recurrence of 'subjective realism'—the paradoxical attitude that insists on the faithful and realistic reproduction of mental processes, even when they seem to have a purely subjective validity.

(119)°

Like Tymms, Claire Rosenfield explains the idea of the double by examining the literature of the Romantic Movement. She suggests that psychological doubles usually juxtapose two characters: "the one representing the sociably acceptable or conventional personality, the other externalizing the free, uninhibited, often criminal self" (328). In addition, she points out that the idea of the double is closely related to the crisis of identity in the modern period:

In the twentieth century Doppélganger novel there can no longer be any question of whether the author realizes that he is exploiting the conflict between the conscious and the unconscious life, the constant menace of personal disintegration which apparently threatens
us all and the loss of identity consequent both upon mental disorder and the necessity that the character mask his internal life by creating roles to play.

(343)\(^{10}\)

If Rosenfield suggests that authors inevitably turn to the motif of the double to describe the characters' inner conflicts and psychological disintegration, her suggestion is quite similar to that of Robert Rogers.

Rogers suggests that the literary double is a result of the author's need to solve his conflicts about incompatible but coexistent inner drives. Moreover, according to him, there are two kinds of doubles: "manifest" doubles and "latent" doubles. For instance, Golyadkin's double in Dostoyevsky's The Double or Wilson's double in Edgar Allan Poe's William Wilson are manifest because the double character looks exactly like the original self in appearance. However, the four brothers in Dostoyevsky's The Brothers Karamazov are latent doubles, expressing the multiple aspects of a son's attitude toward the father. By inventing the term "latent" double, Rogers broadens the idea of the double and even suggests that "the terms doubling, splitting, fragmentation, and decomposition are synonymous" (4). These multiple aspects of doubling refer "characters which may be thought of, from a psychological point of view, as directly portraying, or indirectly generated by, conflict which is essentially intrapsychic or
endopsychic" (4).

While Rogers introduces the idea of the latent double, a term related to Tymms's "spiritual double," Carl Keppler creates the term "the Second Self." He rejects the word "Double" or "Doppelganger" because those words "inescapably suggest duplication, either physical or psychological or both" (2) which are not broad enough to describe the various aspects of the phenomenon. Moreover, he complains that the words "have been so loosely used by writers on the subject that they can mean virtually everything" (2). To solve these problems, Keppler uses the term "Second Self" because he believes that it suggests "twofoldness without implying duplication".

 Automatically, in being "second," the second self presupposes and is differentiated from the "first self." For, as we shall see throughout, the two participants in the twofold relationship not only are distinct from each other but are distinct in a particular way. The first self is the one who tends to be in the foreground of the reader's attention, usually the one whose viewpoint the reader shares; he is the relatively naive self, naive at least in tending to suppose that he is the whole self, for he seldom has any conscious knowledge, until it is forced upon him, of any other self involved in his make-up. The second
self is the intruder from the background of shadows, and however prominent he may become he always tends to remain half-shadowed; he is much more likely to have knowledge of his foreground counterpart than the latter of him, but the exact extent and source of knowledge, like the exact nature of his motivation, are always felt in comparative obscurity. (3)

According to Keppler, the second self is closely related to the first self and, at the same time, is quite distinct from it because the second self is "the self that has been left behind, or overlooked, or unrealized, or otherwise excluded from the first self's self-conception" (11).

Apparently combining Rogers's and Keppler's ideas on the double, Clifford Hallam invents a new term, the Incomplete Self:

The term "Incomplete Self" then, is like Rogers's "composite character" in that it is meant to imply something about the Double-motif that is best explained by depth psychology, and it is like Keppler's phrase "second self" in that it offers a more focussed definition of the figure than does "Doppelpanger" or "Double." (19-20)

Hallam believes that the term "Incomplete Self" is most appropriate to express the double motif in that the term is more specific than the word double and that it presupposes a
psychological basis on which the double depends.

As this brief survey suggests, scholars have invented various terms which they think represent the idea of the double most appropriately. Whatever terms they use to represent the idea, there seems to be a common background among scholarly studies on the double. That is, the double is an entity that reflects the other side of a character whether it is unconscious and latent or intentionally suppressed by the character. Therefore, to a character, the encounter with a double is a narcissistic experience; to look at one's double is to look at himself, just as Narcissus looks into himself in the water.

When Narcissus looks into the water-mirror and falls in love with his own image, he comes to have an existential problem. He is not only a subject but also an object of love: "What am I to do? Am I to be wooed, or do I woo?" (465):

The face that enchanted him, as either boy or flower, was of course his own; yet gazing up out of the fountain's surface into the down-gazing face above it, desired as object by the other-as subject, it was not his own; indeed the separateness between these faces is no less important to the legend of Narcissus than is their sameness. (Keppler 1)

As Keppler rightly suggests, along with the motif of self-
love, one of the most essential elements in the Narcissus myth can be explained as an identity crisis which is created when the "sameness" and the "separateness" meet each other.

In fact, the myth of Narcissus is one of the best-known and fascinating of ancient legends. Since Ovid first transformed the legend into poetry in *Metamorphosis*, many artists have tried to interpret and adapt the myth in their own ways. Berman explains the reason why the legend is so popular to writers throughout the ages:

The richness of myth is inexhaustible. Narcissus dramatizes not only the cold, self-centered love that proves fatally imprisoning, but fundamental oppositions of human existence: reality/illusion, presence/absence, subject/object, unity/disunity, involvement/detachment. These dualisms continue to preoccupy literary theorists, psychologists, and philosophers. (1)

The psychoanalytic view on the Narcissus myth is first explored by Freud. His essay, "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (1914) is the first major essay which anticipates the object relations theory developed by his successors.

According to Freud, there are three different stages in the child. The first is a stage of primary narcissism or self-love. The second is an attachment to objects outside the self as a result of partly giving up self-love. The
final stage is a self-repression and an acceptance of the laws of society. In the tripartite sequence, the development from the first stage to the second one, from the love for self to love for others is very important. In that stage, the child has to learn to distinguish self from mother. The psychological development suggested by Freud can be described as preoedipal, because it occurs before the child enters the oedipal stage. Nowadays, many psychoanalysts focus on preoedipal dynamics rather than oedipal ones: "theories of the self shift attention from the father-mother-child triangle to the dyad of child and earliest love object (usually mother)" (Layton 97).

Heinz Kohut agrees with Freud by assuming that object relations; according to Kohut, when a child realizes the limitation of omnipotence and perfection which he experienced during early symbiosis, the child designs a grand, omnipotent image of itself. This narcissistic conception of self-grandiosity as part of the self is normally withdrawn and integrated into the maturing personality. However, when the process of reduction and integration is disrupted, the grandiose self remains in the adult person and keeps him pursuing "the archaic narcissistic aims of grandeur and perfection" (6). Kohut defines the pathological features of the narcissistic personality as follows:

(1) in the sexual sphere: perverse fantasies, lack
of interest in sex; (2) in the social sphere: work inhibitors, inability to form and maintain significant relationships, delinquent activities; (3) in his manifest personality features: lack of humor, lack of empathy for other people's needs and feelings, lack of a sense of proportion, tendency toward attacks of uncontrolled rage, pathological lying; and (4) in the psychosomatic sphere: hypochondriacal preoccupations with physical and mental health, vegetative disturbances in various organ systems. (23)

Kohut's definition of the narcissist seems quite similar to the criteria established by the Task Force on Nomenclature and Statistics of the American Psychiatric Association for diagnosing the narcissistic personality:

A. Grandiose sense of self-importance and uniqueness, e.g., exaggerates achievements and talents, focuses on how special one's problems are.

B. Preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love.

C. Exhibitionistic: requires constant attention and admiration.

D. Responds to criticism, indifference of others, or defeat with either cool indifference, or with marked feelings of rage, inferiority, shame, humiliation, or emptiness.
E. At least two of the following are characteristics of disturbances in interpersonal relationships:

(1) Lack of empathy: inability to recognize how others feel, e.g., unable to appreciate the distress of someone who is seriously ill.

(2) Entitlement: expectation of special favors without assuming reciprocal responsibilities, e.g., surprise and anger that people won't do what he wants.

(3) Interpersonal exploitativeness: takes advantage of others to indulge own desires for self-aggrandizement, with disregard for the personal integrity and rights of others.

(4) Relationships characteristically vacillate between the extremes of over-idealization and devaluation. (quoted in Tufts 141)

Narcissus fails to achieve self-integration, owing to the narcissistic symptoms described above. When Narcissus's mother asks Tiresias about her beautiful son's future, the seer replies that Narcissus will live a long life if he does "not get to know himself" (Ovid 346-48). Narcissus "get[s] to know himself" by looking into the pond and finding his own image. However, the image is not a complete one because it reflects only the beauty of Narcissus's image:

The prophet [Tiresias] replied "Only if he never comes to know himself." Not only is such an
oracle the opposite of the famous "Know thyself" of the Delphic Oracle, but Tiresias' prediction appears even more enigmatic than most Delphic pronouncements. In fact, we shall see that Tiresias' prophecy is best read as a warning about the costs of partial—genuine but incomplete—self knowledge. (Alford 23-24)

Failing to abandon "his archaic ego ideal" and to take steps toward maturity (Alford 28), Narcissus contrasts with the hero of another Greek myth, Oedipus. At first, Oedipus's situation is quite similar to Narcissus's: he can't see beyond his own grandiose image, believing that as a king he should be worshiped almost as a god. However, he comes to find himself to be a criminal who is doomed to be condemned forever for the horrible crimes he unwittingly committed. Unlike Narcissus, who only sees his beauty in the mirror, Oedipus has a chance to see his "otherness" that he has unconsciously suppressed and that he has unwittingly exposed. Now his choice is to accept the otherness as his own or deny it. While Narcissus remains stuck with his idealized image of himself, separated from a fuller sense of his otherness forever, Oedipus overcomes his "archaic ego ideal" and achieves maturity by heroically accepting the harsh fate imposed on him.

Returning to Pinter, one finds his characters often come closer to Narcissus than to Oedipus. At first, they
perform a kind of spiritual journey for self-knowledge like Oedipus, initiated by their mirrors—the doubles. However, while Oedipus in Sophocles's *Oedipus the King* bravely confronts the truth and frees himself by heroically accepting it, many of Pinter's characters do not follow the same path. Instead, the characters remind one of Narcissus because they cannot accept the otherness mirrored in their counterparts. Their narcissistic characteristics can be summarized as "the combined reflection and the desire to flee, the simultaneous idealization and debasement of the Other, the longing followed by rejection, the self-exaltation leading to self-disgust, the self-projection leading to self-rejection" (Kestner 21).

My purpose here is to explore the intruder-figures in Pinter's plays, by examining the use of the double and narcissism in them. For that purpose, I have chosen three of Pinter's plays: *A Slight Ache* (1958), *The Caretaker* (1960), and *No Man's Land* (1975). I have selected the three plays mainly because I have been fascinated by the tramp figures in the plays. The tramp figure is an emblem of modern man who is divested of traditional values. In a discussion of the radio production of *A Slight Ache*, whereas Donald McWhinnie always refers to the Matchseller as Matchseller, Pinter almost always calls the figure "an old tramp":

The implication is that for Pinter the old man's
occupation is less significant than the idea of a tramp, a transient figure of uncertain origins whose role in life is as unclear as his role in the lives of Edward and Flora or his role in the life of Pinter's drama. (Wertheim 67)

The Caretaker's Davies and No Man's Land's Spooner as well as the Matchseller are mysterious outcasts or tramp characters who frequently appear in modern drama. One remarkable example is a pair of tramps in Beckett's Waiting for Godot—Estragon and Vladimir:

Gogo and Didi [are] quite literally "on the road."
Whatever they once were, they are tramps now, which means that like all tramps they are in a perpetual state of unfulfillment, their lives defined by what they lack—money, food, clothes, shelter, booze, family, friends, work, respect, security, and so on. According to the myth of tramp-life, tramps move down the road or the tracks in endless pursuit of an elusive destination. ... (Calderwood 368)

The tramp figures in modern drama reflect modern man, who endlessly wanders in the spiritual labyrinth of the void. Pinter also chooses a tramp as an important character in his plays for the same reason:

...by selecting a tramp as his main character he [Pinter] introduces the archetypal symbol of life
as a journey ... life may be a journey but for present-day humanity it has no certain destination and there is little compulsion purposefully to undertake it. (Boulton 138)

While the tramp figures in Pinter's plays provide an "archetypal symbol of life as a journey," the archetypal journey is underscored by their narcissistic dilemmas. More significantly, the tramps also initiate their counterparts' narcissistic crises. The old tramps intervene in the protagonists' lives in order that they may embark on a spiritual journey to discover their otherness and to find the meaning of their lives. The remarkably different appearance of the tramps from the other characters emphasizes the otherness which is reflected in the mirror.
Notes


3 Susan Merritt's recent book, Pinter in Play (1990), is a helpful guide which extensively and intensively shows one how Pinter criticism has developed.

4 Sakellaridou summarizes Pinter's apparent non-political characteristics as follows:

By the rules set and practiced by political theater, Pinter's work occupies its exact antipodes. Absurdity, ambiguity, inarticulateness, lack of spatio-temporal specificity, repetitiveness and fragmentation in all structural aspects of the theatrical discourse—all features that have secured the long-lived fame of Pinteresque drama—are precisely the elements dismissed by political theater as unsuitable for ideological propaganda. Now that Pinter has decidedly brought politics into the core of his work, it is noticeable that he has endorsed only the ideology of committed theater.
In the formal aspect of his work he still rejects the aesthetic principles fostered by a series of contemporary political dramatists. ("The Rhetoric" 44)


Paul Neumarkt surveys how the Amphitryon legend is described from different angles by writers from different ages. See his "The Amphitryon Legend in Plautus, Moliere, Dryden, Kleist, Giraudoux and Kaiser," American Imago 34.4 (1977): 357-373.


His idea seems to have influenced Robert Rogers, who considers the decomposition of a character as an important aspect of the double.

Tymms's suggestion that the double is an appropriate vehicle for expressing "subjective realism" reminds one of Pinter's frequent use of the double in describing his own idea of psychological reality.
Again, Rosenfield's connecting the use of the double with an expression of the identity crisis in the modern age is closely related to Pinter's recurrent interest in the theme of the search for identity.

For example, Jean Jacques Lacan invented the word "the mirror stage" to describe what he considers two I's: one as a subject to perceive, the other as an object to be perceived. As Steve Burninston has suggested:

At this stage the infant has no organization of data into those associated with its own body and those associated with its exteriority. It has no sense of its physical separateness or of its physical unity. This is the moment referred to retroactively after the "mirror phase," by the phantasy of the "body in fragments." The mirror phase is the moment when the infant realizes the distinction between its own body and the outside; the "other." The infant sees its reflection in a mirror and identifies with it....The image with which the infant identifies, which Lacan says can be described as the "Ideal-I," is positioned in the world exterior to the infant....The ego results from the entry of the I into an identification with an object in the other (the non-infant). (Burninston 212)
CHAPTER II

A SLIGHT ACHE

A Slight Ache, just like The Room, is an important piece in the early Pinter canon because it contains many themes which will be fully developed in his later plays. It was first conceived for radio production and broadcast on the BBC Third Programme on 29 July 1959. Since it was presented on stage at the Arts Theatre, London, on January 18, 1961, the play has been performed from time to time. Recently, it was performed on the stage as a double-bill with The Lover, another of Pinter's one-act plays, in London in June 1987. In a review of the stage production, John Peter hints at the connection of the play with later plays, such as No Man's Land:

Harold Pinter is, among other things, the master cartographer of the divided self: that treacherous no man's land where one's inadequacies come face to face with each other. Who am I? Which of these unsatisfactory selves is the real me, and how can I bear it? His early one-act plays, The Lover and A Slight Ache are both about this inner rupture: the uncertain self scouring the world for
what it thinks might be its missing or alternative self. ("The Anguish" 51)

As "one of Harold Pinter's successfully disturbing plays" (Wertheim 64), the play reveals how Edward and Flora respond to their mirror image, which is created by the mysterious intruder, the Matchseller, who anticipates Davies of The Caretaker and Spooner of No Man's Land.

In fact, criticism on A Slight Ache has been concentrated on the meaning of the ancient matchseller. For example, Ruth Milberg considers the Matchseller as Edward's "alter-ego":

The character in decline, Edward, projects his fears and frustrations outward where they assume the bodily form of the ancient matchseller, Barnabas, who then proceeds to torment him. (230)

Another critic, Lillian Back suggests that the Matchseller is Edward's double in a different sense: Edward creates his "double" to protect himself from Flora's "engulfing, mothering" love (390).

Many critics seem to view the Matchseller in terms of his relationship to Edward: that is, they see the old tramp as a mirror image of Edward. However, I think the Matchseller is also the double of Flora because he mirrors Flora as well as Edward. While the Matchseller has basically the same function for Edward and Flora by reflecting both of them, the couple's responses to the
mirror are far different from each other.

Flora and Edward are "a well-to-do-couple" who feel superior to their neighbors (Burkman, Dramatic World 48). For instance, Edward believes that the villagers respect him: "I entertain the villagers annually, as a matter of fact. I'm not the squire, but they look upon me with some regard" (182). With their superior attitude, the couple ignore the villagers' concerns:

Flora. I can remember Christmas and that dreadful frost. And the flood! I hope you [the Matchseller] weren't here in the floods. We were out of danger up here, of course, but in the valleys whole families I remember drifted away on the current. The country was a lake. Everything stopped. We lived on our own preserves, drank elderberry wine, studied other cultures. (190)

Edward and Flora's apparent high self-esteem seems to reveal two narcissistic tendencies: a "grandiose sense of self-importance" and "lack of empathy" (quoted in Tufts 141).

However, the narcissistic alienation from the world outside cannot provide solidarity for the couple. They have kept a somewhat inharmonious relationship with each other, as one can see from the very beginning of the play:

Flora. Have you noticed the honeysuckle this morning?
Edward. The what?
Flora. The honeysuckle.
Edward. Honeysuckle? Where?
Flora. By the back gate, Edward.
Edward. Is that honeysuckle? I thought it was ... convolvulus, or something.
Flora. But you know it's honeysuckle.
Edward. I tell you I thought it was convolvulus. (169)
Flora wants to talk about the various flowers in bloom in the garden; Edward cannot follow her because he cannot tell honeysuckle from convolvulus. Flora thinks Edward pretends to be ignorant of the flowers' names because he does not want to join in conversation with her topic. One is not sure whether Edward's ignorance is real. The important thing is that he is deaf to Flora's needs, trying to dominate Flora with his ignorance.

In other words, in the subtext of the dialogue, Flora wants to direct Edward's attention to herself, while Edward egoistically rejects her challenge. However, Flora is quite tenacious; in an effort to induce Edward into her own concerns, she continues the discordant conversation. Finally, Edward stamps out Flora's challenge callously: "I don't see why I should be expected to distinguish between these plants. It's not my job" (170). Edward temporarily succeeds in keeping his superficial mastery of the situation by using his patriarchal authority. For the same reason, he declines Flora's suggestion to put up the canopy so that Edward can work in the garden: "It's very treacherous
weather, you know" (170). He does not like Flora's offer because he believes it is another form of her challenge.

Edward's attitude toward his wife can be summarized by his words: "You're a woman, you know nothing" (189). Indeed, "almost every word he [Edward] speaks to his wife is an exasperated insult" (Wardle, "The Lover / A Slight Ache" 18). Edward's egoistical behaviors seem to reflect one of the narcissistic disturbances described by Kohut: "lack of humor, lack of empathy for other people's needs and feelings" (23).

Edward's desire to dominate his surroundings is revealed again when a wasp intrudes into the room:

Edward. Pass me the hot water jug.

Flora. What are you going to do?

Edward. Scald it. Give it to me.

Edward. I'll pour down the spoon hole. Right ... down the spoon-hole.

Edward. Ah, yes. Tilt the pot. Tilt. Aah ... down here ... right down ... blinding him ... that's it.

Flora. Is it?

Edward. Lift the lid. All right, I will. There he is! Dead. What a monster. [He squashes it on a plate.] (173-74)
Edward traps the wasp in the jar to catch it; he engages in scalding, blinding, and smashing the wasp. To Edward, the wasp is not merely an insect but a "vicious creature" (173) and even "a monster." Many critics have pointed out the significance of the wasp episode. For instance, Burkman suggests:

On one level the wasp symbolizes the matchseller, the arrival of summer, "the first wasp of summer," over which Edward triumphs. On another level, however, the wasp is a symbol of Edward as victim—another indication of the essential oneness of the two characters. Edward complains during the killing scene of the slight ache in his eyes, so that even in his moment of triumph his future role as victim is prefigured. (Dramatic World 59)

Ooi seems to echo Burkman's view by suggesting that the death of the wasp is a "rehearsal of the model of Edward's downfall—a kind of prefiguration of the whole action of the play itself" (137).

As a prefiguration of Edward's role as "victim," the wasp provokes Edward's unusual response; he probably considers the wasp as an intruder who tries to rebel against his narcissistic authority, just as Flora does and the Matchseller will do soon. Wardle's observation of the scene in the stage production of the play supports the view: "Witness Barry Foster's [Edward] dance of triumph in snaring
a wasp in a jar of marmalade: it is as though he had laid out an armed robber" ("The Lover/ A Slight Ache" 18). In other words, the wasp episode effectively expresses Edward's narcissistic "preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited power" (quoted in Tufts 141).

Having defeated the imaginary enemy, Edward seems to be relieved a great deal. When he finishes the job of killing the wasp, he says, "What a beautiful day it is. Beautiful. I think I shall work in the garden this morning. Where's that canopy?" (174). Now he seems to be prepared to cope with the possible "treacherous weather." However, Edward's attempt to maintain his power is challenged again, more seriously this time:

Edward. Ah, it's a good day. I feel it in my bones. In my muscles. I think I'll stretch my legs in a minute. Down to the pool. My god, look at that flowering shrub over there. Clematis. What a wonderful ... [He stops suddenly.]

Flora. What? [Pause.]

Edward, what is it? [Pause.]

Edward...

Edward [thickly]. He's there.

Flora. Who?

Edward [low, murmuring]. Blast and damn it, he's there, he's there at the back gate. (174)

Edward's virile mood is suddenly interrupted by the
intruder, the Matchseller. As far as Edward and Flora know, the old man has stood at the back gate of Edward's house for two months without selling a box of matches.

The seemingly mis-located tramp looks all the more mysterious when one considers that the play is originally composed for radio:

In its radio form the play is bound to be more effective, because then it can remain open whether the central character, the matchseller, who never speaks, actually exists or is no more than a projection of the two other characters' fears.

(Esslin, Pinter 91)

Because he does not say a word throughout the play, the tramp technically does not exist in a radio performance; he seems to exist only in Edward's and Flora's mind. Jackson's suggestion about psychological projection helps us to understand the Matchseller's role:

The double functions as a figure onto which are externalized inadmissible and tabooed desires. They are products of projection, by which is meant "the operation whereby qualities, feelings, wishes or even 'objects,' which the subject refuses to recognize or rejects in himself are expelled from the self and located in another person or thing. Projection so understood is a defence of very primitive origin (and is at work especially in
cases of paranoia). (Jackson 47)
The Matchseller is the double of Edward and Flora by acting as their projection, "another person or thing" that reveals what the couple "refuse[s] to recognize or reject[s] in himself [themselves]."

Flora and Edward project quite different qualities onto the Matchseller. For Flora, the mysterious intruder is not annoying at all: "He is a quiet, harmless old man, going about his business. He's quite harmless" (176). When Edward reveals his intention to talk with the tramp, Flora asks Edward to treat him gently: "He's an old man. You won't be rough with him?" (181). Later, when Edward becomes exhausted by his meeting with the Matchseller, Flora still believes that the Matchseller is harmless:

Flora: I could show him out now, it wouldn't matter. You've seen him, he's harmless, unfortunate...old, that's all. Edward--listen--he's not here through any...design, or anything, I know it. I mean, he might just as well stand outside our back gate as anywhere else. He'll move on. I can...make him. I promise you. There's no point in upsetting yourself like this. He's an old man, weak in the head...that's all. (188)

While Flora insists that the Matchseller be a wholly harmless being, Edward's attitude toward the Matchseller is negative. He calls him "bastard" and "imposter" (179). For.
Edward, the main aim of inviting the Matchseller into his house--into his study--is to conquer and expel him: "What a farce. No. There's something very fake about that man. I intend to get to the bottom of it. I'll soon get rid of him. He can go and ply his trade somewhere else" (179, emphasis added). Just as he treated the wasp maliciously, Edward now wants to master the Matchseller.³

It is interesting that the first thing Edward does to the Matchseller is to make him sit down: "Now, now, you mustn't...stand about like that. Take a seat" (183); "Sit down" (183); "I really cannot understand why you don't sit down" (186). Edward is quite obsessed with having the Matchseller sit down as soon as the old man is led into his room by Flóra. It is certain that Edward decides to dominate the Matchseller under the guise of kindness.⁴ In that sense, this scene reminds one of a scene in another of Pinter's plays, The Room, in which, Mrs. Sands tries to make her husband sit down in Rose's room:

Rose. Come over by the fire, Mr. Sands.

Mr. Sands. No, it's all right. I'll just stretch my legs.

Mrs. Sands. Why? You haven't been sitting down.

Mr. Sands. What about it?

Mrs. Sands. Well, why don't you sit down?

Mr. Sands. Why should I?

Mrs. Sands. You must be cold.
Mr. Sands: I'm not.

Mrs. Sands: You must be. Bring over a chair and sit down. (112)

There is a tension between the couple in the scene. Mrs. Sands wants to control her husband by making him take a seat and Mr. Sands tries to reject her advice, recognizing her real intention. For the same reason, Edward seems to try to have the Matchseller take a seat; he wants to show that he is the master in his study.

Not only does he try to control the Matchseller by forcing him to sit down, but Edward also threatens him by showing off his possessions. Diamond describes Edward's overbearing tirade as follows:

Beginning with his [Edward's] private property ("my canopy," "my table" [p.184]), he moves on to absorb the village (where, though not a squire, he is looked on "with some regard" [p.182]). He then extends himself to Asia Minor (where he "wouldn't mind making a trip" [p.184]) and to Africa (which he calls a "country" [p.183]). Listing the contents of his liquor cabinet, he whirls through England, Scotland, Spain, Germany, and France. (35)

Edward's bragging seems to be a parody of his essay on space and time which, he asserts, deals with "dimensionality and continuity of space...and time..." (177). At the same time,
it manifests the feeling of emptiness which he disguises with delusions of "self-grandiosity" that Kohut defines as so central to narcissism (Kohut 16). Edward's delusion of "self-grandiosity" is expressed by his "exhibitionistic" tendencies: he "requires constant attention and admiration" (quoted in Tufts 141). Against Edward's verbosity, the Matchseller remains totally silent. In fact, the Matchseller's action is described only through Edward's speeches. According to Edward, he is a calm and quiet man: "You possess the most extraordinary repose, for a man of your age" (184). Ironically, however, his mysterious silence is far more powerful than Edward's harangue.

Edward's verbal attack on the silent Matchseller and the result of the confrontation are remarkably similar to the situation described in Pinter's short prose piece, The Examination. In the beginning of The Examination, the examiner, "I," allows Kullus, the examined, some intervals between the examinations, being confident of his dominance:

When we began, I allowed him intervals. He expressed no desire for these, nor any objection. And so I took it upon myself to adjudge their allotment and duration. ... as I suspected they might benefit both of us, I allowed him intervals.

(251)

However, the examined becomes so powerful with his silence during the intervals that the hierarchy between the two is
overturned:

Never, at any time, had I reason to doubt his active participation, through word and through silence, between interval and interval, and I recognized what I took to be his devotion as actual and unequivocal, besides, as it seemed to me, obligatory. And so the nature of our silence within the frame of our examination, and the nature of our silence outside the frame of our examination, were entirely opposed. (251)

Now, the allotment and duration of the intervals becomes the examined's imposition. As "I" is sucked into the examined's silence, he is totally dominated by the examined:

For he journeyed from silence to silence, and I had no course but to follow. Kullus's silence, where he was entitled to silence, was compounded of numerous characteristics, the which I duly noted. But I could not always follow his course, and where I could not follow, I was no longer his dominant. (252)

At first, "I" "was naturally dominant, by virtue of my owning the room" (254). However, when "I" gets overwhelmed by Kullus's silence, "my room" becomes Kullus's room. The prose ends, "we were now in Kullus's room" (256). The examiner's room is not his room any more; as Kullus controls the situation with his solid silence, the room becomes the
examined's domain.

The struggle between the two people and the final overturning of the hierarchy in *The Examination* is the very process which Edward and the Matchseller pass through in *A Slight Ache*. Just like the examiner in *The Examination*, an agitated and verbose Edward cannot overcome the Matchseller's adamant calmness. With his silence, the old tramp effectively reveals "the uncanny" which is a characteristic of the second self in Keppler's theory:

The second self is the shadowed self, surrounded by an aura of the uncanny that sometimes makes him seem to belong to a different order of reality from that the world in which he moves, ... A part of this uncanniness is that the second self tends to be the possessor of secrets that the first self can never quite fathom, and thus in being the stranger is also the stranger, always tending to be in real control of the relationship. (11)

As Edward's "second self" who seems to possess the mysterious secret which Edward cannot easily fathom, the Matchseller effectively defies Edward's narcissistic fantasy of absolute power. When Edward realizes the counterpart's strength, he tries to expel his fear of being defeated by keeping the old tramp in the darkness: "Go into the corner then. Into the corner. Go on. Get into the shade of the corner. Back. Backward. ... Now you're there. In shade,
in shadow. Good-o..." (186).

At the same time, Edward still tries to deny his fear of the old tramp:

Edward. No doubt you're wondering why I invited you into this house? You may think I was alarmed by the look of you. You would be quite mistaken. I was not alarmed by the look of you. I did not find you [the Matchseller] at all alarming. No. No. Nothing outside this room has ever alarmed me. (187)

His statement is highly ironical; if his study represents his own world and ultimately his own self, his speech shows that there has existed a possibility that he would be alarmed by his inner self all the time. Moreover, the Matchseller is now inside the room; therefore, Edward is accepting that the old tramp is powerfully "alarming" to him.

When Edward finally succeeds in making the Matchseller take a seat, he apparently dominates the intruder:

The Matchseller stumbles and sits. Pause.

Edward: Aaaah! You're sat. At last. What a relief. You must be tired. [Slight pause.] Chair comfortable? I bought it in a sale. I bought all the furniture in this house in a sale. The same sale. When I was a young man. You too, perhaps. You too, perhaps. (187)
The time when Edward "bought all the furniture" in his house in a sale may be his own prime time of youth and virility; he was establishing himself in society. However, Edward realizes that the Matchseller had been a young man just like himself: "You too, perhaps. You too, perhaps. . . . At the same time, perhaps!" Behind his exclamation, there is Edward's recognition that the Matchseller's old age and shabbiness reflect Edward's own present situation. When the old tramp exposes Edward's real identity, covered by his apparent middle-class security, Edward's own narcissistic delusion, which has suppressed the otherness, is severely shaken. It is not strange that the Matchseller's stumbling and sitting down coincide with Edward's extreme exhaustion: at the moment when he thinks he now conquers the Matchseller, one may see that Edward is also conquered.

Therefore, the Matchseller provides a kind of narcissistic crisis for Edward, who has lived in his own narcissistic realm for a long time:

Edward. My sight is excellent...no, it was not so much any deficiency in my sight as the airs between me and my object...the change of air, the currents obtaining in the space between me and my object, the shades they make, the shapes they take, the quivering, the eternal quivering...nothing to do with heat-haze. Sometimes, of course, I would take shelter, shelter to compose myself. yes, I
would seek a tree, a cranny of bushes, erect my canopy and so make shelter. And rest. [Low murmur.] And then I no longer heard the wind or saw the sun. Nothing entered, nothing left my nook. I lay on my side in my polo shorts, my fingers lightly in contact with the blades of grass, the earthflowers, the petals of the earthflowers flaking, lying on my palm, the underside of all the great foliage dark, above me, but it is only afterwards I say the foliage was dark, the petals flaking, then I said nothing, I remarked nothing, things happened upon me, then in my times of shelter, the shades, the petals, carried themselves, carried their bodies upon me, and nothing entered my nook, nothing left it.

(198, emphases added)

Edward's long speech seems to be one of the "long exploratory speeches that sometimes lose their grip" which, Wardle believes, appear in some of Pinter's earlier plays ("The Lover/ A Slight Ache 18).

The speech is, however, significant because it describes Edward's world in terms of the Narcissus myth rendered by Ovid in Metamorphosis:

There was a slimeless spring, with shimmering, silvery waters, which neither shepherds nor goats that graze upon the mountain had touched, nor any
other flock, which no bird nor wild beast had disturbed, nor any branch fallen from a tree. There was grass around it, nurtured by nearby water, and a wood that let no sunshine in to overheat the place. Here the boy, tired from keen hunting and the heat, had lain down, drawn there by the spring and by the beauty of the place, and while he drank, he saw a beautiful reflection and was captivated, he loved a hope without a body, and what he thought was body was but water. He was overwhelmed by himself and, unmoving and holding the same expression, he was fixed there like a statue moulded out of Parian marble.

(407-419)

There is a remarkable similarity between Edward's long speech above and Ovid's description of Narcissus, who gets captivated by his image reflected in the water. First of all, Narcissus's pool is quiet and dark; no wild animals had disturbed the pool before, or "no sunshine" had ever been let in. Likewise, Edward's "shelter" is silent and dark: "And then I no longer heard the wind or saw the sun."

Narcissus laid himself on the grass to watch his reflection: "No thought of Ceres, no thought of rest could drag him from there but, stretched out upon the shady grass, he gazed at the deceiving image with an insatiable gaze..." (437-439). Edward's posture in the shelter is quite similar
to Narcissus's: "I lay on my side in my polo shorts, my fingers lightly in contact with the blades of grass... then I said nothing, I remembered nothing..." (198). Edward's absolute peace and quietness in his shelter also echo Narcissus who is "fixed like a statue moulded out of Parian marble." Edward's experience is about the matter "between me and my object," which is, in fact, the quintessential concern of Narcissus. In that sense, Edward's frozen moment, in which "Nothing entered my nook, nothing left it," seems to be a primeval form of Pinter's No Man's Land, "which never moves, which never changes, which never grows older, but which remains forever, icy and silent" (153).

Edward's narcissistic domain includes not only his own "shelter" but also his whole domestic world. Edward emphasizes that everything in his "territory" is "polished": "The house was polished, all the banisters were polished, and the stair rods, and the curtain rods. My desk was polished, and my cabinet. I was polished" (195). Enumerating his possessions like a child who shows off his toys, Edward reveals the "infantile desires for omnipotence, for total control over other" (Layton 101). In addition, Edward's narcissism is emphasized by the fact that his world is immaculately polished to reflect his own image everywhere.

However, a crisis is brought about in Edward's
narcissistic world: "But then, the time came. I saw the wind. I saw the wind, swirling, and the dust at my back gate, lifting, and the long grass, scything together..." (199). The "wind" "at my back gate" unmistakably means the Matchseller who disturbs the calmness of Edward's narcissistic pool. At first, Edward tries to include the existence of the intruder in his realm:

Edward. [I] Admitted that sometimes I viewed you through dark glasses, yes, and sometimes through light glasses, and on other occasions bare eyed, and on other occasions through the bars of the scullery window, of from the roof, the roof, yes in driving snow, or from the bottom of the drive in thick fog, or from the roof again in blinding sun, so blinding, so hot, that I had to skip and jump and bounce in order to remain in one place. 7 (197)

Edward admits that he has observed his "object" for a long time "in season and out of season," just as Narcissus could not leave the pool because of his yearning for his own image.

Looking into the mirror--the Matchseller--Edward struggles with ambivalent longing for identification with his double and for detachment from it as far as he can. On the one hand, he recognizes the Matchseller is "my oldest acquaintance. My nearest and dearest. My kith and kin"
(196). On the other hand, he rejects the recognition:

Edward. Did I then invite you into this room with
express intention of asking you to take off your
balaclava, in order to determine your resemblance
to--some other person? The answer is no,
certainly not, I did not. ... (197)

Therefore, Edward's bifurcated attitude toward the
Matchseller is, indeed, a pathological narcissist's conflict
between "the need for identification and the need for
rejection of identification" at the same time (Alcorn 106).

Keppler's idea about the relationship of the first self
and the second self is also helpful to understanding
Edward's situation. According to him, "there is a certain
closeness, a certain strange and special affinity between
them ... This affinity shows itself in various ways; by
inexplicable emotional reactions to each other, usually
antagonism but often attraction (perhaps, always, at some
level, both)" (11, emphases added). In Keppler's terms,
even though Edward is preoccupied with the interaction with
the Matchseller, he reveals strong antagonism toward his
double, rather than attraction. That is why Edward tries to
keep the Matchseller away as far as possible, emphasizing a
difference between himself and the old man: "I should be the
same, perhaps, in his place. Though, of course, I could not
possibly find myself in his place" (188). As far as Edward
is not prepared to accept the Matchseller as his own
otherness, it is natural that he would not understand the meaning of the Matchseller's appearance: "As yet, I haven't discovered the reason for his arrival here. I shall in due course . . . by nightfall" (188).

Edward's inability to accept what he sees, that is, his denial of the oedipal journey toward self-knowledge is symbolized by the slight ache in his eyes. It is quite suggestive that the slight ache Edward has suffered from the beginning of the play has increased just before he meets the Matchseller:

Flora. Your eyes are bloodshot.
Edward. Damn it.
Flora. It's too dark in here to peer . . .
Edward. Damn.
Flora. It's so bright outside.
Edward. Damn.
Flora. And it's dark in here.

[Pause.]
Edward. Christ blast it!
Flora. You're frightened of him.
Edward. I'm not.
Flora. You're frightened of a poor old man. Why?
Edward. I am not!
Flora. He's a poor, harmless old man.
Edward. Naah my eyes.
Flora. Let me bathe them.
Edward. Keep away. (178)
The darkness of the scullery where Edward stays is sharply contrasted with the light of the outside where the Matchseller stands. Like Oedipus before the recognition, Edward stays in spiritual darkness which is symbolized by the dark inside. However, unlike Oedipus who relentlessly pushes on to fulfill his task, Edward does not have the courage to go outside and meet the Matchseller. The more he feels scared, the more his eyes ache; still, he denies the real meaning of the slight ache—the possibility of self-knowledge.

Along with Edward who struggles with his otherness reflected in his narcissistic pool, Flora also confronts her otherness mirrored by the Matchseller. When Edward insists that the old tramp wears "a glass eye" (185), he seems to believe so because he can see his own image reflected in the counterpart's eyes. Likewise, Flora mentions the Matchseller's eyes: "Your eyes, your eyes, your big great eyes" (192). His eyes looks "big" to her because she can see her whole reflection in the Matchseller's eyes. Flora also expresses her hope of talking to the Matchseller, using Edward's words: "Edward! Listen to me! I can find out all about him, I promise you. I shall go and have a word with him now. I shall ... get to the bottom of it" (189, emphases added).

In addition, Edward and Flora have the same impression
that the Matchseller looks like a bullock. Edward says, "I'll soon get rid of him. He can go and ply his trade somewhere else. Instead of standing like a bullock...a bullock, outside my back gate" (179). However, it is Flora who first calls up the image:

Flora. Good Lord, what's that? Is that a bullock let loose? No. It's the matchseller! My goodness, you can see him...through the hedge. He looks bigger. Have you [Edward] been watching him? He looks...like a bullock. (177)

In fact, a bullock is a young bull that is strong and virile. At the same time, however, the word also applies to a castrated bull. The two incongruous meanings of the term "bullock" seem to emphasize the Matchseller's ambiguous meaning for Edward and Flora. Burkman astutely suggests the Matchseller's two-sided aspect: the old tramp "operates both as a herald of death or death's personification and as a herald of new life" ("Death and Double" 137). Therefore, the double meaning of "bullock" effectively reveals that Edward and Flora see far different images in the same mirror. The argument is further supported by the couple's different descriptions of the bullock. While Edward calls the old tramp "a great bullockfat of jelly" (189), Flora says, "You're [the Matchseller] a solid old boy. Not at all like a jelly" (192).

Even though her intention to meet the Matchseller is
the same as Edward's, Flora's attitude toward the Matchseller is free of enmity. She addresses the Matchseller gently and kindly; her first approach to him sounds like a formal invitation to her house for lunch: "I wonder if you could ... would you care for a cup of tea?" (180). The Matchseller's response to Flora is the same adamant silence. However, his silence seems not threatening to Flora, while it is overwhelmingly menacing to Edward. For Flora, whose talking is always cut down by Edward's cold uninterestedness, the Matchseller's silence appears to hold a tacit consent to her concern. Rather encouraged by his silent acquiescence, she justifies the Matchseller's standing at the back gate in a practical sense: "Might I buy your tray of matches, do you think? We've run out, completely, and we always keep a very large stock. It happens that way, doesn't it?" (180).

Indeed, Flora's ability to confront the Matchseller's silence without any trepidation provides a turning point in overturning the hierarchy in Edward's household. Since Edward gets exhausted after the meeting with the Matchseller, there is a sharp change in Flora's attitude toward Edward. Until this point, Edward orders Flora around, ignoring her wishes and sticking himself to his own narcissistic world while Flora has seemed to follow his orders. Now, for the first time, Flora shows that she can command Edward:
Flora. [With dignity.] I shall wave from the window when I'm ready. Then you can come up. I shall get to the truth of it, I assure you.... A woman... a woman will often succeed, you know, where a man must invariably fail. (190)

While Edward accepts the matchseller as his double by declaring him "My [Edward's] oldest acquaintance," the old man is also a kind of "oldest acquaintance" for Flora:

Flora. Do you know, I've got a feeling I've seen you before, somewhere. Long before the flood. You were much younger. Yes, I'm really sure of it. Between ourselves, were you ever a poacher? I had an encounter with a poacher once. It was a ghastly rape, the brute. High up on a hillside cattle track. Early spring. I was out riding on my pony. And there on the verge a man lay--ostensibly injured, lying on his front, I remember, possibly the victim of a murderous assault, how was I to know? I dismounted, I went to him, he rose, I fell, my pony took off, down to the valley. I saw the sky through the trees, blue. Up to my ears in mud. It was a desperate battle. [Pause.] I lost. (191)

To Flora, the matchseller is the suspect of the "ghastly rape" which had occurred a long time age. However, the association does not make her disgusted with the old tramp.
Instead, she seems to understand the experience as an intimacy which does not exist in her relationship with Edward.

Edward's lack of interest in sex is not only indirectly described in the beginning of the play, in which he refuses to discuss the garden with Flora but is also directly revealed when he says, "I slept. Uninterrupted. As always" (72). Kohut suggests that "lack of interest in sex" is a pathological feature of the narcissistic personality in the sexual sphere (23). Flora is glad to liberate an aspect in her which has been suppressed by egoistic Edward; she wants to feel the revivification of her youth by open communication with the Matchseller, who is her "oldest acquaintance." That is why she "seductively" asks, "Tell me all about love. Speak to me of love" (192). Her feeling for the Matchseller is not "antagonism," which Edward feels for him, but, in Keppler's terms, "attraction" (11). The old tramp is Flora's double, who "suggests some aspect of the first self that has been suppressed or unrealized" (Keppler 9). While Edward's narcissism chooses "lack of interest in sex," Flora's seems to take another way as she indulges in a kind of perverse fantasy of love (Kohut 23).

It is also interesting that Flora and the old tramp are united by the color of their hair--red. Edward is led to recall the three daughters of a squire when he confronts the old tramp:
Edward. Three daughters. The Pride of the county. Flaming red hair. ... The youngest one was the best of the bunch. Sally. No, no, wait a minute, no, it wasn't Sally, it was ... Fanny. Fanny. A flower. (182-83)

Perhaps, the old tramp's red hair or beard evokes Edward's old memory. A little later, Edward also describes his wife as "Wonderful carriage, flaming red hair" (184). Because Edward's wife's name is Flora which is closely associated with "Fanny. A Flower," it is probable that the youngest daughter of the squire with "flaming red hair" is Flora. Flora also discerns a poacher who was brought to her as her rape suspect mainly because the poacher had the same "red beard" (191). Therefore, Flora and the Matchseller are not only "oldest acquaintance[s]" but also "kith and kin." Their common bond is ironically confirmed by Edward: "You [the Matchseller]'re no more disgusting than Fanny, ...In appearance you differ but not in essence. There's the same..." (187).

Flora's narcissism is revealed in the play as well as Edward's. She says at one point, "I was up at seven. I stood by the pool. The peace. And everything in flower" (170). It is not hard to imagine that she looked into the pool to see her image when she "stood by the pool." The imagery of silence and flowers in the scene also reminds one of Edward's long speech about the narcissistic world in his
shelter; Flora is also a Narcissus who indulges in her own reflection. Moreover, Flora mentions that the Matchseller is included in the scene: "He's [the Matchseller] always there at seven" (175). Flora is obviously conscious of the old tramp's existence and even his gaze on her; in her morning ritual of narcissism, the Matchseller provides another mirror which satisfies her desire for being admired.

Therefore, it is not strange that she assumes that the old tramp has come to claim her:

Flora. It's me you were waiting for, wasn't it?
You've been standing waiting for me. You've seen me in the woods, picking daisies, in my apron, my pretty daisy apron, and you came and stood, poor creature, at my gate, till death us do part.

(193)

Flora believes that the Matchseller has come because he is fascinated by her charm. Her image reflected in the old tramp's eyes is not what she is now—rather an old, unhappy woman—but what she wants to be—a young, happy girl who is as pretty as flowers. That is why she decides to keep the mirror:

Flora. I'm going to put you to bed and watch over you.
But first you must have a good whacking great bath. And I'll buy you pretty little things that will suit you. And little toys to play with. On your deathbed. Why shouldn't you die happy?
In Freudian terms, in which "all love begins as self-love and remains so even when it appears to be directed at external objects" (14:85), Flora's rather unusual affection for the old tramp partly manifests another form of her narcissism: self-love.

If Edward fears and struggles not to be overwhelmed by his otherness, which is reflected in the old tramp, Flora is astute enough to transform her own otherness into the sameness she is eager to identify with. Satisfying her narcissistic "preoccupation with a fantasy of beauty or ideal love" (quoted in Tufts 141), Flora becomes not only "a sexual and motherly figure" but also an archetypal woman: in Burkman's terms, a "fertility goddess" (Burkman Dramatic World 53). In Flora's fertility ritual, Edward can be considered as "the old king of ancient ritual who represents the dying winter season and must be sacrificed to make way for the new" (Burkman Dramatic World 54).

Just before his collapse, Edward says:

Edward. I saw the wind. I saw the wind, swirling, and the dust at my back gate...[slowly, in horror].
You are laughing. You're laughing. Your face. Your body. [Overwhelming nausea and horror.]
Rocking ... gasping ... rocking ... shaking ...
rocking ... heaving ... rocking ... You're laughing at me! Aaaaahhhh! (199)
Here, Edward's fragmented speech reminds one of Kurtz's speech at his deathbed in Joseph Conrad's novel, *The Heart of Darkness*. Kurtz epitomizes his exploration into his own dark self by the famous utterance, "The horror! The horror!" (71). Kurtz goes into the forest in the Congo to "humanize, improve, instruct" the savages. However, isolated from human civilization, the primitive instincts in him which have been suppressed all the time come to the fore. His consequent transformation from civilized person to an undescribable savage is closely related to his narcissistic characteristics:

Like a child ("sometimes he was contemptibly childish," Marlow reports [148]), Kurtz responds to the awesome potentiality of the jungle as if it were a huge reservoir for narcissistic gratification. Kurtz takes advantage of his unique role in the colonization process to indulge his infinite ambitions and "feed" his intense and childish need for esteem. (Alcorn 108)

As an expression of their desire to fulfill "narcissistic gratification," both Edward and Kurtz emphasize their belongings. Edward talks about "my canopy," "my table," "my desk," "my cabinet," "my house," "my wine," "my duck," "my territory." Likewise, Kurtz keeps talking about "my intended," "my ivory," "my station," and "my river." Even though the situations are far different, one can say that
Edward is gradually sucked into his own darkness just as Kurtz.\textsuperscript{10}

It is interesting that the play, \textit{A Slight Ache}, starts in the morning and ends at night; Edward has performed the long oedipal journey into night, into his dark self. However, he cannot accept what he has found and ends his journey in total darkness. If his first address to the Matchseller is "Here I am. Where are you?" (182), his final speech, again, is to ask the Matchseller's identity:

Edward: [With great, final effort—a whisper.] Who are you?

Flora [off]: Barnabas?

[Pause.] (199)

Flora's voice answers Edward's question, "Who are you?" by calling, "Barnabas?". In fact, she has given the Matchseller the name, Barnabas, which "my [Flora's] husband would never have guessed" (192).\textsuperscript{11} Therefore, the scene above symbolically reveals that Flora knows who the Matchseller is, while Edward does not. Edward's journey toward the truth has stopped while he is still on the verge of his final destination. While Flora can achieve a kind of self-fulfillment by transforming her otherness into something acceptable, Edward is engulfed by the darkness; he is destroyed on the verge of self-knowledge. He has stumbled in the darkness and then fallen down, immobilized like Narcissus.
If one understands the play on the basis of narcissism, one can add another dimension to its meaning. It is too simple to assert that "The protagonist of *A Slight Ache*, Edward, is betrayed by his wife, Flora, and goes blind" (Ooi 136). It is not appropriate to assume that Edward creates his own double to protect himself from the suffocating Flora, either:

Edward both wants and doesn't want the kind of engulfing, mothering love that Flora promises...

The cost of a mothering love is too high for Edward; it threatens annihilation of self, of identity. Consequently, Edward protects himself from the seductive existence Flora offers by creating his "double"—a surrogate for his own potential destruction. (Lillian 390)

Rather, Edward and Flora both have a narcissistic experience through their mirror, the Matchseller. However, the relief from each person is different; Flora's success in transforming the mirror image for her own good is well contrasted with Edward's failure to grasp the meaning of the mysterious intruder.
Notes

1 An anonymous critic hints at the similar argument:
"For Edward, the matchseller is the mirror image of his fears and failures, and in self-defensive, self-incriminating monologues, Edward crumbles like dry rot. For Flora, the matchseller reflects her desire and the need to love and cherish a man."
(quoted in Back 386)

2 Interestingly, Edward suggests showing the garden to the Matchseller toward the end of the play: "You want to examine the garden? It must be very bright, in the moonlight. I would like to join you ... explain ... show you ... the garden ... explain ... The plants. ..." (199).

3 James R. Hollis rightly points out Edward's intention: "He [Edward] invited the Matchseller in so that he can deal with him as a master deals with a subordinate, as a man deals with a wasp" (55).

4 Diamond suggests that "positioning the Matchseller is Edward's means of controlling the situation, of literally putting the intruder in his place" (35).
5 According to Sakellaridou, the friction between Mrs. Sands and Mr. Sands is "a game of dominance and subservience" (214). Furthermore, Gabbard even suggests that this struggle for dominance can be interpreted as "an attempt on Mrs. Sands's part to castrate Mr. Sands symbolically" (Pinter's Female 27).

6 According to Back, "He silently indicates the approach of death, the dissolution of identity" (389). Burkman takes a somewhat different view: "The Match-seller operates both as a herald of death or death's personification and as a herald of new life" ("Death and Double 135).

7 Edward's description of himself standing in a hot roof, skipping, jumping, and bounding, reminds me of Margaret's nervous situation in Tennessee Williams's A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Another mention of Pinter's imagery associated with Williams's plays will be discussed later in the chapter on No Man's Land.

8 It is interesting that Caryl Churchill, who is a well-known British playwright, remembers the title of this play as A Blind Ache ("The Master and the Muse" The Sunday Times Oct 20, 1991: 19). Her unintentional mistake seems to reflect the strong impression brought about by the imagery of blindness in the play.

9 Burkman has the similar view: "He [Edward] is out of touch too with Flora, whose name reflects the garden over which she presides as a kind of goddess" (Dramatic World 54).
Another link connecting Edward with Kurtz is Flora's mentioning that he was writing "an essay about the Belgian Congo" (177). The Congo is the place where Kurtz performs the archetypal journey into his own darkness.

With regard to the meaning of the name, "Barnabas," Burkman's suggestion is most helpful: The day of Saint Barnabas, June eleventh in the old-style calendar, was the day of the summer solstice, and Barnaby-bright is the name for the longest day and the shortest night of the year. Flora merely recognizes her new god as the incarnation of summer itself, the advent of which is considered to take place at its height. (Dramatic World 60)
CHAPTER III
THE CARETAKER

The Caretaker is one of the best-known plays in the Pinter canon. Ever since it was first performed at the Arts Theatre, London, on 27th April, 1960, the play has attracted attention from both critics and general audiences. Recently, the play was performed in 1991 under the direction of Pinter himself. In reviewing the performance, John Peter suggests:

Thirty years on, Pinter's The Caretaker is still holding its own: a modern classic, a spiritual shocker, tough, cruel, and brutally funny. This play, like Waiting for Godot, became a classic more quickly than anything in European drama, even Ibsen! (Confronting" 13)

The play had eleven productions overseas in its first year alone, and since then there have been many productions each year worldwide. In explaining the popularity of the play, Lachlan Mackinnon again compares the play with Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot:

Rather than action, what we get is great slabs of language punctuated by cryptic silences. There is
so little variation of pace or tone within or between these that the play turns into a weird ritual, and in doing so reveals its extensive indebtedness to *Waiting for Godot*. (17)

Even though the play is highly esteemed by audiences as well as scholars as a modern classic, it still resists understanding just as most of Pinter plays do:

The meaning of this play [*The Caretaker*] has been discussed by the critics more than all the rest of Pinter's work put together, although no one has yet come up with a satisfactory explication.

(Taylor, quoted in Gale, *Butter's* 15)

If criticism of *A Slight Ache* has focused on the meaning of the Matchseller, arguments on *The Caretaker* have been focused on what kind of changes the brothers experience throughout the play. Scholars' opinions have been bifurcated; some believe that, even though the brothers yearn for a love relationship by breaking their isolation, they cannot change because of their limitations. According to the critics who hold this view, the brothers remain as they were, cherishing their old dreams. Others support the idea that a new bond has been created between Aston and Mick when they oust the intruder, Davies. The critics who hold this view believe that a new solidarity and communication between the brothers develops, one which they have struggled to get throughout the play. In arguing whether the brothers
achieve communication or not, one can find another clue in understanding their relationship if one sees the intruder's role as that of a mirror for the brothers.

The situation in *The Caretaker* is established by the two brothers; Aston and Mick, and a tramp, Davies, who is introduced to their house. First of all, Aston and Mick obviously do not get on well with each other just as Flora and Edward are on poor terms in *A Slight Ache*. If the uncomfortable relationship between Flora and Edward is revealed through their incongruous conversation, Aston and Mick's distant relationship is described by the lack of conversation. They rarely talk to each other on the stage. Whenever Aston comes in the room, Mick goes out stealthily as if he is afraid of confronting Aston. Even on the rare occasion when they do meet, they seldom speak to one another. For example, at one time when Aston finds his brother in the room, he just "sits down and resumes fixing the toaster" (45), even without saying hello.

One of the major reasons for their conflict seems to be an issue about the house. As the owner of the house, Mick wants Aston to remodel it so that it can be rented as a luxurious flat. Aston is also conscious of the task imposed on him: "I'm supposed to be doing up the upper part of the house for him [Mick]" (49). Aston thinks he can do the job: "I can work with my hands, you see. That's one thing I can do. I never knew I could. But I can do all sorts of things
now, with my hands. You know, manual things" (49). While Aston believes he can do "all sorts of things" with his hands, Mick believes that Aston is not a good worker. Mick complains, "He [Aston] doesn't like work, that's his trouble" (57). Besides, not only does Mick want Aston to work on the house, but also he tries to push Aston to get "going in the world": "If you got an old brother, you want to push him on, you want to see him make his way. Can't have him idle, he's only doing himself harm. That's what I say" (58). In other words, by making Aston work on the house Mick wants to kill two birds with one stone. However, Mick is frustrated because his plan does not proceed as he intends. Mick keeps complaining that Aston "works shy" (58). While Mick gets impatient with Aston's tardiness, Aston is not wholly satisfied with Mick, either: Aston hesitatingly complains, "...he [Mick] tends ... he tends to see the funny side of things" (49).

Into Mick and Aston's incongruous relationship, a stranger, Davies, intrudes. Davies's identity is as mysterious as the Matchseller's in A Slight Ache. If the Matchseller keeps being mysterious by remaining absolutely silent, Davies's identity is mysterious in spite of his verbosity.¹ Even though Davies talks a lot on the stage, he keeps silent about his origin:

Aston. Where were you born?

Davies. (darkly.) What do you mean?
Aston. Where were you born?

Davies. I was...Uh...oh, it's a bit hard, like, to set your mind back...see what I mean...going back.... a good way...lose a bit of track, like...you know. (34)

He evades Aston's question with the pauses and the fragmented gibberish. Perhaps he may have thought that the information about his identity was not helpful but just harmful in establishing a new relationship with Aston.²

Another difference between Davies and the Matchseller is that the latter remains anonymous throughout the play while the former has more than one name. According to him, his assumed name is Bernard Jenkins, and his real one is Mac Davies. However, there is no way to confirm if this is true. As an invisible man in society because his identity cannot be justified with a name, he does not have any social or economic status in the society. At his old age, he is a kitchen helper in a bar. He comes to the brothers' house with Aston, who saves the tramp from a row in the bar.

Just as Flora and Edward react very differently to the Matchseller in A Slight Ache, Aston's and Mick's attitudes toward Davies are opposite. First of all, Aston is very nice to him. Interestingly, the first words Aston says to Davies are an offer to have a seat: "Sit down" (16). Aston takes out a chair from the pile of junk and offers it to Davies: "Here you are" (17), "Take a seat" (17). Indeed,
Aston's efforts to make Davies sit down remind one of Edward's attempt to make the Matchseller take a seat. But, if Edward uses the offer as an attempt to control the Matchseller, Aston's offer seems to be genuine: he tries to offer a good rest to the tramp. Not only does Aston save Davies from the danger of being struck, but he also offers Davies many things—clothes, a cigar, money, and lodging. When Aston buys a bag with some clothes in it and hands it to Davies, one can see Aston's serious efforts to build a favorable relationship with the old tramp.

By contrast, Mick is extremely hostile to Davies. While Aston kindly offers Davies a chair, Mick forces him to lie flat on the floor on their first meeting. Moreover, he aggressively asks:

Mick. What's your name?
Davies. I don't know you. I don't know who you are.

Pause.

Mick. Eh?
Davies. Jenkins.
Mick. Jenkins?
Davies. Yes.
Mick. Jen...kins.

Pause.

You sleep here last night?
Davies. Yes:
Mick. Sleep well?
Davies. Yes.

Mick. I'm awfully glad. It's awfully nice to meet you.

Pause.

What did you say your name was?

Davies. Jenkins.

Mick. I beg your pardon?

Davies. Jenkins!

Pause.

Mick. Jen ... kins. (39-40)

In spite of his occasional efforts to resist, Davies has no choice but to answer as required. About Mick's verbal stratagems to establish the superior status in this scene, Gautam suggests: "Mick repeats his question several times in different forms and forces Davies to acknowledge his position of an inferior interactant by repeating answers that he has already given" (55). By repeating his questions and making the old tramp answer them helplessly, Mick succeeds in dominating the stranger. If Mick asks Davies, "What's the game?" at the end of the first act, Mick clearly shows that he is the master of the game.

In addition to his verbal interrogation, Mick also calls the old tramp by many degrading appellations:

Mick. You're a born fibber (43).

You're an old rogue (44).

You're nothing but an old scoundrel (44).
You're stinking the place out (44).
You're an old robber (44).
You're an old skate (44).
You're an old barbarian (44).

Moreover, it is interesting that Mick one time calls Davies by the same word which Edward uses about the Matchseller: "the imposter" (81).

Still, Mick's attack on the old tramp is stronger than Edward's. If Edward rather obliquely intimidates the Matchseller by showing off with what he apparently has, Mick's threatening is direct and practical:

Mick. I've got the van outside, I can run you to the police station in five minutes, have you in for trespassing, loitering with intent, daylight robbery, filching, thieving and stinking the place out. (45)

Not only does Mick verbally threaten Davies, he also uses physical violence; when he seizes Davies's arm and forces it up his back, Davies screams in pain. Later, when Mick chases Davies with an electrolux in the dark, Davies is terrified by this nightmarish experience. By manipulating the old tramp at his own will, Mick, just like Edward in A Slight Ache, tries to fulfill his narcissistic "fantasy of unlimited power" (quoted in Tufts 141).

Even though the brothers' attitudes toward Davies are
extremely different, Davies's role for them seems to be alike. Just as the Matchseller mirrors Edward and Flora, Davies mirrors Aston and Mick. First of all, Davies shares some aspects of personality with Aston such as cleanliness and fastidiousness. For example, Aston cannot drink Guinness from a thick mug: "I only like it out of a thin glass. I had a few sips but I couldn't finish it" (28). Not only is he sensitive but also he is concerned with being "clean." When Davies impudently provokes him by saying, "You build your stinking shed first!" (78), Aston replies: "That's not a stinking shed. It's clean. ... " (78). Aston's fastidiousness is reverberated in Davies's story about his wife; "I might have been on the road a few years but you can take it from me I'm clean. I keep myself up. That's why I left my wife" (18). Davies says he left his wife because she was not clean.

Aston and Davies also share a kind of persecution complex as a result of their failure in society. Aston believes that he was unfairly treated and finally rejected by those who surrounded him: the men at the cafe and the men at work, and the doctor. Aston wants to meet the doctor who did electrotherapy or shock treatment to him: "I've often thought of going back and trying to find the man who did that to me. But I want to do something first. I want to build that shed out in the garden" (64). For Aston, the doctor seems to represent the society that has been, he
believes, unfair to him. Likewise, Davies believes that he is maltreated in the world and he keeps blaming his failure on the foreigners such as "Greeks, Poles, Blacks, the lot of them, all them aliens" (17). At the same time, Davies hopes to see one of the men who have done wrong to him, "I'll get him. One night I'll get him. When I find myself around that direction" (19). For Davies, the man who did wrong to him seems to represent the society that ignores and rejects him. However, their wishes are not likely to be fulfilled because they are attached with provisoes which seem not to be fulfilled.  

Both of them also cherish hopes of establishing themselves in society as well as of confronting the alleged source of their persecution. Aston wants to build a shed to start renovating the house. For him, "to build the shed" is the expression of his strength to confront society. For that purpose, he piles junk all over his room and tries to purchase proper instruments for the job, such as a jig saw or a saw bench. However, he never can get the instruments for some reason. Similarly, Davies wants to go to Wembley to find a job in a cafe. But when Aston asks about the result, he answers: "Well, I didn't get down there. No. I couldn't make it" (48). More interestingly, he keeps suggesting that he is going to go down to Sidcup to get "the papers" which can identify him. However, he cannot find right shoes to perform the journey, just as Aston cannot get
the tools to build the shed.

Besides, Aston and Davies are united by the fact that they are not fit for the job of caretaker. In some sense, Aston is a caretaker for Mick's property. However, he apparently cannot perform the job properly and tries to hire Davies as his substitute. However, Davies cannot do the job appropriately either. When Aston offers the job of caretaker to Davies, the old man is not prepared to take it:

Aston. You could be...caretaker here, if you liked.

Davies. What?

Aston. You could...look after the place, if you liked...you know, the stairs and the landing, the front steps, keep an eye on it. Polish the bells.

Davies. Well..., I...I never done caretaking before, you know...I mean to say...I never...what I mean to say is...I never been a caretaker before. (51)

Davies hesitates to accept the offer not only because he is not confident of performing the job but also because he suspects Aston's kindness, being accustomed to the hostility of society. By mirroring many aspects of Aston's personality, Davies can be said to be Aston's double in Keppler's terms. According to Keppler, the second self contains many affinities with the first self even though they are distinct in a particular way (11-12). Therefore, to keep the old tramp in his room is a kind of narcissistic
experience for Aston.

If Davies mirrors Aston's personality, another narcissistic experience of Aston's is revealed in his long monologue about his past:

Aston. I used to go there quite a bit. Oh, years ago now. But I stopped. I used to like that place. Spent quite a bit of time in there. That was before I went away. Just before. I think ... place had a lot to do with it. They were all ... a good bit older than me. But they always used to listen. I thought ... they understood what I said. I mean I used to talk to them. I talked too much. That was my mistake. The same in the factory. Standing there, or in the breaks, I used to ... talk about things. And these men, they used to listen whenever I ... had anything to say. It was all right. The trouble was, I used to have kind of hallucinations. They weren't hallucinations, they ... I used to get the feeling I could see things ... very clearly ... everything was so clear ... everything used ... everything used to get very quiet ... everything got very quiet ... all this ... quiet ... and ... this clear sight ... it was ... but maybe I was wrong. Anyway, someone must have said something. I didn't know anything about it. And ... some kind
of lie must have got around. And this lie went round. I thought people started being funny. In that cafe. The factory. I couldn't understand it. Then one day they took me to a hospital, right outside London. (63-64)

Pinter once suggested about Aston's speech: "The one thing that people have missed is that it isn't necessary to conclude that everything Aston says about his experiences in the mental hospital is true" (Bensky 28). However, one already knows that it is not always necessary to attempt to distinguish "what is real" from "what is unreal" in Pinter's dramatic world. Aston's assumed past is psychologically real in the sense that Aston believes it has happened.

In his long monologue, one can find some important points: Aston's hallucinations about his clear sight, his mother's betrayal by letting the doctors do the treatment for him, the trauma of the electroshock therapy, and Aston's insistence on his inability to lead a normal life since then. First of all, Aston had a kind of "hallucinations," in which he used to get a feeling that he could see everything so "clear." The moment of achieving the "clear sight" is described as quiet and clear: "Everything ... was so clear ... everything used to get very quiet ... all this ... quiet ... and ... this clear sight ..." Aston's epiphany is quite similar to Edward's narcissistic experience in his shelter with "excellent sight" and
absolute quietness (198).

Aston believes that "clear sight" is an unique experience available only for him. He assumed that the people around him who "were all ... a good bit older than me" would listen to him, admiring his "clear sight." Aston's delusion is a kind of narcissistic "self-grandiosity" in Kohut's terms. According to Kohut, one symptomatology of patients with narcissistic disturbances is "the unrealistic claims of an archaic grandiose self" (17):

The image of self-grandiosity is experienced as part of the self and is therefore narcissistic. Normally, it is reduced gradually and integrated into the maturing personality. Whenever this process is interfered with, the grandiose self is preserved in the adult person who will continue to pursue the archaic narcissistic aims of grandeur and perfection. Naturally, this will lead to manifold collisions with reality, for which the archaic and therefore very fragile structure of the grandiose self is ill-suited. (Dierks 38)

It is also interesting that Kohut attributes the establishment of grandiose and exhibitionistic images of the self to "the unavoidable shortcomings of maternal care" (25). Aston's situation seems to tally with Kohut's theory. In the monologue, he expresses the feeling of being betrayed by his mother:
Aston. Well, I wasn't a fool. I knew I was a minor. I knew he couldn't do anything to me without getting permission. I knew he had to get permission from my mother. So I wrote to her and told her what they were trying to do. But she signed their form, you see, giving them permission. I know that because he showed me her signature when I brought it up. (64-65)

Aston still believes that if his mother had not signed the paper, the electroshock therapy would not have been done to him. Even though the mother's "betrayal" comes later than his "clear sight," it is not difficult to assume that the hallucination is an expression of "self-grandiosity" which is a narcissistic response to the separation from the preoedipal stage.

As Astón's hallucinations are a symptom of narcissistic patients who did not "receive empathic, stage-appropriate affirmation from the parent" (Layton 99), it is not strange that he has difficulty in his contacts with women:

Aston. ... I happened to be sitting at the same table as this woman ... We were just sitting there, having this bit of a conversation ... then suddenly ... she said, how would you like me to have a look at your body?

Davies. Get out of it.

Aston. Yes. To come out with it just like that, in
the middle of this conversation. Struck me as a bit odd. (34)

It is probable that her suggestion was not so much sudden as Aston believes; the woman might have thought that the mood between them was ripe enough for the proposal. However, he might have been unable to follow "the conversation" because of his "psychopathology of the narcissistic personality in the sexual sphere: perverse fantasies, lack of interest in sex" (Kohut 23). He is another Edward who cannot and/or will not follow Flora's talk about the garden in A Slight Ache.

Moreover, Aston claims that his impotence is due to the treatment:

Aston. The trouble was ... my thoughts ... had become very slow ... I couldn't think at all ... I couldn't ... get ... my thoughts ... together ... uuuuh ... I could never quite get it ... together.

(66)

He cannot accomplish anything because he cannot think clearly; that is why he "works shy." It might be partly true that the therapy is to blame for his impotence. On the other hand, his impotence seems to have something to do with a narcissistic disturbance as described in Kohut's theory:

Many of the most severe and chronic work disturbances of our patients are in my experience due to the fact that the self is poorly cathexed
with narcissistic libido and in chronic danger of fragmentation, with a secondary reduction of the efficacy of the ego. Such people are either chronically unable to work at all, or (since their self is not participating) they are able to work only in automatic way ... (Kohut 120)

When Aston is divested of his hallucinations, his design of self-grandiosity, he remains depressed, which is a basic symptom of narcissistic disturbance.

When Aston is kind to the tramp and tries to befriend him, Aston seems to be tolerant of his mirror image. As Gabbard suggests, when he saw the old tramp knocked about in the bar, he probably remembered "his own struggle with the doctors and attendants at the hospital" (103). However, their rather favorable relationship does not last long. Aston soon withdraws his favor from the old man. The assumed reason for his rejection is the old man's attempt to take advantage of his favor and even to displace him. However, it is interesting that the direct source of their disharmony is that Davies makes noises during sleeping. Ever since Aston has spent the nights with Davies in the same room, Aston keeps complaining of Davies's noises: "You were making noises. ... You were making groans. You were jabbering (31)"; "I...I didn't have a very good night again ... You were making ...[noises] (61)." Finally, Aston rejects Davies for the same reason:
Davies: ...You mean you're throwing me out? You can't do that. ...What do you say, we'll keep it as it is?

Pause.

Aston: No.

Davies: Why ... not?

Aston: You make too much noise. (86)

According to Aston, he himself was forced into the mental hospital mainly because of his verbosity: "I talked too much. That was my mistake" (63). If the people surrounding Aston expelled him for his excessive talk, Davies's jabbering irritates Aston so much that he wants to get rid of the old tramp.

In other words, Aston rejects Davies for the same reason that Aston himself was rejected from society. According to Rank, one of the meanings of the double is as "a representative of the individual's past":

Originally the double was an identical self (shadow, reflection), promising personal survival in the future; later, the double retained together with the individual's life his personal past; ultimately, he became an opposing self, appearing in the form of evil which represents the perishable and mortal part of the personality repudiated by the social self.

("Immortal Self" 81)
It is not appropriate to call Davies a "form of evil"; however, he represents Aston's past which he wants to suppress. That is partly a reason why Aston rejects his double, along with his assumed recognition that he is in danger of being replaced by the old tramp in the room. After the rejection, Aston seems to return to his own narcissistic world: "Anyway, I'm going to be busy. I've got that shed to get up. If I don't get it up now it'll never go up. Until it's up I can't get started" (85). As Burkman rightly suggests, "He still clings to his dream, undefeated" (Dramatic World 80). By exorcising the otherness represented by his dark past, Aston retrieves the energy to keep meaning in his life—to build the shed.

Mirroring Aston as his double, the old tramp also reflects many aspects of Mick's personality. First of all, Mick and Davies are common in the sense that they are on the move all the time. As a tramp, Davies has "been on the road for a few years" (18); he has been moving all the time. Likewise, Mick says; "I don't stand still. I'm moving about, all the time. I'm moving ... all the time" (83). Moreover, the landlord is somewhat attracted by the intruder: "I can't help being interested in any friend of my brother's" (56). Even though Mick verbally and physically attacks Davies, at the same time, he seems to explore possible channels to approach the intruder. In other words, his aggressiveness can be interpreted as his efforts to have
communication with the old tramp.

The decisive turning point for Mick and Davies' relationship occurs when Davies, frightened by Mick's attack, draws his knife to protect himself:

Mick. Eh, you're not thinking of doing any violence on me, are you? You're not the violent sort, are you?

Davies. (vehemently) I keep myself to myself, mate. But if anyone starts with me though, they know what they got coming.

............... 

Mick: . . . I just wanted to say that ... I'm very impressed by that.

Davies: Eh?

Mick: I'm very impressed by what you've just said.

Pause.

Yes, that's impressive, that is.

Pause.

I'm impressed, anyway. (55-56)

Even though Mick seems to tease the old man, still, he seems to find a possible common ground with Davies. When he witnesses that the seemingly helpless old tramp can use physical violence toward him just as he uses it on his counterpart, Mick tries to make up with the old tramp: "We just got off on the wrong foot" (56).

It is interesting that Mick insists that Davies reminds
him of some other people he has known:

Mick. You remind me of my uncle's brother. He was always on the move, that man. Never without his passport. Had an eye for the girls. . . . To be honest, I've never made out how he came to be my uncle's brother. I've often thought that maybe it was the other way round. I mean that my uncle was his brother and he was my uncle. But I never called him uncle. As a matter of fact I called him Sid. My mother called him Sid too. It was a funny business. Your spitting image he was. (40)

About the identity of Mick's uncle's brother, Esslin suggests:

Who is one's uncle's brother? Another uncle—or one's father. As Mick's mother never called Sid his uncle, it follows that the man, of whom Davies reminds Mick, was Mick's father. (Pinter 113)

Esslin's suggestion that the uncle's brother might be, in fact, Mick's father has been widely accepted. For example, Gabbard suggests that "Mick projects onto Davies all the unpleasant aspects of a father" (107).

Mick also associates the old tramp with another man:

Mick. You know, believe it or not, you've got a funny kind of resemblance to a bloke I once know in Shoreditch. . . . Dead spit of you he was. Bit bigger round the nose but there was nothing in it.
It seems meaningful that the bloke's "old mum" lived at the Angel (emphases added), that Mick "used to leave a bike in her garden," and that Mick calls it "a curious affair." The details of the situation seem to be connected with the former story and indirectly and ambiguously suggest a kind of oedipal structure. However, it seems not to matter if the uncle's brother or the bloke in Shoreditch is Mick's father figure, who is ultimately associated with the old tramp. The important thing is that Mick instinctively feels that the old tramp is not a total stranger but someone familiar with and related to him. In that respect, Davies is a kind of double of Mick, who has "a certain strange and special affinity" with him (Keppler 11).

While Aston's narcissistic world is described in his long monologue about the electroshock treatment, Mick's narcissism is expressed in his plan to renovate the house:

Mick: (ruminatively) I could turn this place into a penthouse. For instance ... this room. This room you could have as the kitchen. Right size, nice window, sun comes in. I'd have ... I'd have teal-blue, copper and parchment linoleum squares. I'd have those colours re-echoed in the walls. I'd offset the kitchen units with charcoal-grey worktops. Plenty of room for cupboards for the crockery. We'd have a small wall cupboard, a
large wall cupboard, a corner wall cupboard with revolving shelves. . . . Venetian blinds on the window, cork floor, cork tiles. You could have an off-white pile linen rug, a table in ... in afromosia teak veneer, sideboard with matt black drawers, curved chairs with cushioned seats, armchairs in oatmeal tweed, a beech frame settee with a woven sea-grass seat, white-topped heat-resistant coffee table, white tile surround. . . . it wouldn't be a flat it'd be a palace. (69)

As Morgan suggests, "it seems unlikely that a man in the building trade would believe that an old house in the middle of a run-down neighborhood could have any real value" (93). Mick's plan of renovation has meaning not on a realistic level but on a psychological one; for Mick, the plan seems to be a projection of wish-fulfillment.

If Aston reveals a tendency of "self-grandiosity" in his "hallucinations" and "clear sight," Mick's dream for the house seems to come from the same origin. According to Kohut, depression and creation are the two extreme poles in the theory of narcissism:

The other pole—joyful liveliness, creativity, inspiration—is attained whenever the archaically-bound narcissistic libido finds its way to the mature self and strengthens it. The activities of the self will still retain the principal pattern
of striving for greatness which may lead to
grandiose designs, but in this state they may be
realistically aimed, for example, towards artistic
work. ... As Freud already pointed out, this can
lead to a remembrance of the "original
psychological universe, i.e. the primordial
experience of the mother." (Dierks 44)

By transforming his yearning for the preoedipal stage into
the artistic dream of rebuilding the house, Mick maintains
his own realm of self-grandiosity.

If the house is of great significance for Mick, he
wants to use Davies as a kind of means for communicating
with his awkward brother so as to push him to perform the
job. That is why Mick declares: "You're [Davies] just the
man I been looking for" (60), and asks him, "why don't you
have a chat with him, see if he's interested [in working on
the house]?" (70). To help Aston to get "going in the
world" (58) seems to be the secondary aim—a kind of a side-
effect of his wish-fulfillment. Therefore, it is natural
that Mick does not hesitate to reject Davies as soon as he
is informed that Aston wants to get rid of the old man. If
Davies doesn't have any influence on Aston, he is of no use
to Mick either.

However, it is worth noting Mick's reason for rejecting
Davies:

Mick. What a strange man you are. Aren't you? You're
really strange. Ever since you come into this house there's been nothing but trouble. Honest. I can take nothing you say at face value. Every word you speak is open to any number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies. You're violent, you're erratic, you're just completely unpredictable. (82)

The momentous passage, "Every word you speak is open to any number of different interpretations," in fact, has to be applied to Mick himself, who has maneuvered Davies with a capricious game throughout the play:

From beginning to end of the play Davies never knows where he stands; neither whether he can stay or has to leave, nor which bed he must sleep in. He never really knows what the brothers expect of him. When one says yes, the other says no.

(Woodroffe 7)

Davies's insecurity in the room is mainly created by Mick, who has been "violent," "erratic," and "completely unpredictable" with Davies. Therefore, Mick is accusing Davies of his own faults.

Not only does Mick accuse Davies of his own shortcomings, he also accuses the old man of not performing the role which is originally imposed on Aston:

Mick. Well, you say you're an interior decorator, you'd better be a good one.
Davies: No, no, not me, man. I'm not an interior decorator. ... give me a bit of time to pick it up.

Mick: I don't want you to pick it up. I want a first-class experienced interior decorator. I thought you were one. (83)

In fact, Davies has never said he is a decorator. Instead, Mick once calls his brother, Aston, "a number one decorator" (45). Moreover, if one remembers Mick's implausible tirade about the decorating plan, Mick himself seems to be the most qualified "decorator" among the three.

Therefore, when Mick preposterously accuses Davies of not being "an experienced first-class professional interior and exterior decorator" (81), he shifts his own wish as well as his expectations of Aston's role on Davies. In that respect, his speech seems quite sincere: "You are the only man I've spoken to. You're the only man I've told, about my dreams, about my deepest wishes..." (81). Mick's accusation sounds somewhat genuine, in spite of his whimsical acts throughout the play. Probably, it is true that Davies is the only man to whom Mick has poured out his "dreams" and "deeper wishes": his long speech about his plan of renovating the house was performed in front of Davies.

The exorcism of the old tramp contributes to revivifying the uncomfortable relationship between the
brothers. Mick's breaking of Aston's Buddha can be understood in the same vein. There are many different views on Mick's act of breaking the Buddha. For example, Esslin suggests:

Mick's destruction of the Buddha at the moment when he has decided to get rid of Davies is a symbolic action ... He vents his rage against Davies on an object which reminds him of his brother's failing that led to the appearance of Davies in the house. (Pinter 116)

A. Potter has a similar view; for him, Mick's smashing of the Buddha could be said "to conclude the stripping down process which Aston has experienced at the hands of those closest to him" (27). On the other hand, Burkman suggests:

The climax of the play, Mick's smashing of his brother's most prized possession, his Buddha, is not a expression of Mick's hostility but an expression of his effort to free himself from his brother, to whom he has felt strongly tied.

(Dramatic World 83)

If Burkman understands the act as Mick's attempt to free himself, Henderson views it as Mick's attempt to free Aston: by smashing the Buddha, "Mick ... seems to attempt to bring Aston out of his desensitized stupor" (52).

I suggest that Mick's smashing of the Buddha symbolizes
the liberation of both Mick and Aston mainly because the Buddha functions as Aston's mirror:

Davies picks up the statue of Buddha.

Davies. What's this?
Aston. (taking and studying it). That's a Buddha.
Davies. Get on.
Aston. Yes. I quite like it. Picked it up in a ... in a shop. Looked quite nice to me. Don't know why. What do you think of these Buddhas?
Davies. 'Oh, they're ... they're all right, en't they?
Aston. Yes, I was pleased when I got hold of this one.

It's very well made. (27)

According to Delphendhal, "One of the first functions of the double is to reflect the self and to defend itself against the fear of not-being by producing a creature immune to time, change, or mortality" (142). By consoling Aston with its implication of immunity to "time, change, or mortality," the Buddha plays the role of the double for him. When Aston decides to reject his double, Davies, Mick also destroys Aston's other mirror, the Buddha, that is also an emblem of Aston's narcissistic detachment.

Moreover, it is significant that Mick modifies his own dream about the house at the same time that he breaks the Buddha:

Mick. Anyone would think this house was all I got to worry about. I got plenty of other things I can
worry about. ... I've got to think about the future. I'm not worried about it. He can do it up, he can decorate it, he can do what he likes with it. I'm not bothered. I thought I was doing him a favor, letting him live here. He's got his own ideas. Let him have them. I'm going to chuck it in. (83)

By deciding to let Aston decorate the house in his own way, Mick gives up a considerable part of his self-grandiosity, represented by his plan for the house.

The brothers' final confrontation in the play after the moment of awakening is quite suggestive:

Aston comes in. He closes the door, moves into the room and faces Mick. They look at each other. Both are smiling, faintly.

Mick. (beginning to speak to Aston). Look...Uh...He stops, goes to the door and exits. Aston leaves the door open, crosses behind Davies, and sees the broken Buddha, and looks at the pieces for a moment. He then goes to his bed, takes off his overcoat, sits, takes the screwdriver and plug and pokes the plug. (84)

There has been critical controversy over interpreting the "faint smile" the brothers exchange with each other in the scene. Some critics understand the scene quite negatively.

For example, Diamond suggests: "That Mick departs just after
Aston arrives confirms the instability of their communication" (79). On the other hand, others are rather optimistic: "[The moment] is one of those moments of consummate, silent communication, of an understanding so complete that articulation becomes impertinent" (Durbach 24). I agree with this positive view, believing that the smile is a sign that they are reconciled with each other and understand each other better than before. They can come closer to each other once they try to modify their own isolated, narcissistic worlds.

Squeezed between the brothers, Davies becomes a final "odd man out" in the triangular structure. At first, Davies appears to have an important status in the room; he is offered a job as caretaker from both Aston and Mick in turn. However, as soon as the old man learns that Mick is the superior figure of the two, he turns his back on Aston who has been his benefactor:

Mick. You're a friend of his.
Davies. He's no friend of mine.
Mick. You're living in the same room with him, en't you?
Davies. He's no friend of mine. You don't know where you are with him. I mean, with a bloke like you, you know where you are. (70)

Davies has an illusion that he can find a kind of permanent security in the room by leaning on Mick. When he betrays
Aston's generosity and lays himself at the mercy of Mick's whim, his scheme is doomed to failure. Therefore, it is doubtless that Davies's final expulsion from the house is his own fault. Esslin describes the old tramp's "tragic flaw" as follows:

Davies is unable to react with sympathy, with gratitude for the maimed man's kindness, his offer of friendship. He must enjoy the thrill of treating his benefactor with the superiority of the sane over the lunatic. Transferred to the lower levels of contemporary society, this is the hybris of Greek tragedy which becomes the cause of Davies's downfall. (107)

Esslin's description of Davies's flaw exactly coincides with symptoms of pathological narcissists: Davies shows "lack of empathy: inability to recognize how others feel, e.g., [he is] unable to appreciate the distress of someone who is seriously ill" (quoted in Tufts 141). Moreover, the old tramp also reveals "interpersonal exploitiveness" by taking advantage of others to "indulge his own desires for self-aggrandizement, with disregard for the personal integrity and rights of others" (quoted in Tufts 141). With these pathological narcissistic disturbances, Davies cannot establish a genuine relationship with other human beings. All he can do is to exploit someone else for his own good because he tends to treat others not as "subjects" but as
"objects."

Another narcissistic tendency in Davies is revealed through his obsession with the thought of being watched all the time. For example, when the old man belatedly finds out he left his belongings in the bar, he is anxious: "Every lousy blasted bit of all my bleeding belongings I left down there now. In the rush of it I bet he's having a poke around in it now this very moment" (19). While he suspects that somebody will poke around his stuff, it is Davies himself who rummages through Aston's belongings as soon as Aston leaves the room.

The old tramp's fear of being observed is related to his persecution complex which tenaciously hovers about him. Ever since he has settled in Aston's room, he keeps being concerned about the neighbors. For example, even though Aston explains that a family of Indians lives next door, he keeps asking, "How many more blacks you got around here?" (23). In addition, he is always afraid that somebody may intrude into the room and confiscate his freedom. His fear is represented by the neighbors' imaginary trespass:

Davies. ... he [Aston] don't seem to take any notice of what I say to him. I told him the other day, see, I told him about them blacks, about them Blacks coming up from next door, and using the lavatory. I told him, it was all dirty in there, all the banisters were dirty, they were black, all
the lavatory was black. (68)

One is not sure if the neighbors really use the lavatory: probably, this is an expression of Davies's fear about his insecure status. Davies not only fears the neighbors but also blames them for his own actions. For instance, when Aston complains that Davies makes noises in his sleep, the old man puts the blame on the neighbors: "Maybe it were them blacks" (32).

Davies's xenophobic tendency and persecution complex is related to his splitting himself in two; the sameness which he can accept and the otherness which he cannot. By pouring out his fears and anxieties about the otherness to someone else, the old tramp intentionally tries to evade the confrontation with his otherness. The fact that he has two names also supports that he has a kind of split personality. Therefore, Davies falls into a category which Tymms suggests: the double is a result of "the subjective transference of [a part of his] personality into an external individual" (56). In this case, the double is derived from "inward dualism" which equates with "physical likeness" (56). In other words, the blacks and the foreigners whom he hates so much are, in fact, just the otherness of himself. Because he does not want to accept the uncanny in his own self—if we use a Freudian term—he externalizes his darkness, by attributing anything wrong to the foreigners.

Moreover, since the old tramp stays in Aston's room, he
believes that Aston keeps watching him:

Davies. Listen! I wake up in the morning ... I wake up in the morning and he's smiling at me! He's standing there, looking at me, smiling! I can see him, you see, I can see him through the blanket. ... What he don't know is that I'm watching him through that blanket. He don't know that! he don't know I can see him, he thinks I'm asleep, but I got my eye on him all the time through the blanket, see? But he don't know that! He just looks at me and he smiles, but he don't know that I can see him doing it! (72)

It is not easy to guess the reason why Aston looks at the old man, smiling; one is not even sure if what Davies says is true. An important point here is that Davies keeps watching Aston on the pretense of being watched by him: "I got my eye on him all the time through the blanket." Later, the old man threatens his roommate by the same way: "Your brother's got his eye on you! He knows all about you. They can put the pincers on your head again, man!" (76).12

According to Freud, there is "a special psychical agency which performs the task of seeing that narcissistic satisfaction from the ego ideal is ensured and which constantly watches the actual ego and measures it by that ideal" (14:95). Recognition of this agency, a primal form of superego, sometimes brings out a symptom of paranoid
diseases, that is, "delusions of being watched": "Patients of this sort complain that all their thoughts are known and their actions watched and supervised" (14:95). With the delusion that he is continuously watched, Davies is incarcerated in his own narcissistic domain.

Again, Freud suggests that the narcissistic feeling of being observed and supervised by someone else is usually created by the critical influence of his parents or of an indefinable host of all the other people who had influences on him (14:96). One recalls Davies's tale about his wife: 

Davies. ... I keep myself up. That's why I left my wife. Fortnight after I married her, no, not so much as that, no more than a week, I took the lid off a saucepan, you know what was in it? A pile of her underclothing, unwashed.... That's when I left her and I haven't seen her since. (18)

Even though Davies insists that he left his wife just because she was not clean enough, his story is bizarre and as improbable as Aston's story about the woman in a cafe. The episode mainly reveals Davies's fastidiousness which makes him unable to harmonize his wife's sexuality with her image as a good mother or as a nourishing provider, which is suggested by in the "sauce pan." In fact, men's inability to cope with women's multiple roles as mother, whore, and wife is one of the constant motifs Pinter uses in his plays. Just as Aston's self-grandiosity is a result of
his disillusionment with maternal care, Davies's narcissistic neurosis comes from the same origin.

Davies's disillusionment with the maternal figure is repeated in his episode about the monastery. In the episode, the old tramp had gone to a monastery on "the other side of Luton" to get a pair of shoes. However, the monk is very hostile: "If you don't piss off, he [the monk] says, I'll kick you all the way to the gate" (23). What the old tramp got there is a bite to eat:

Davies. Meal they give me! A bird, I tell you, a little tiny bird, he could have ate it in under two minutes. Right, they said to me, you've had your meal, get off out of it. . . . What about them shoes I come all the way here to get I heard you was giving away? I've a good mind to report you to your mother superior. One of them, an Irish hooligan, come at me. I cleared out.

(24, emphases added)

Just as he could not get what he wanted in his marriage, he is given an unsatisfactory meal instead of shoes in the monastery. The "mother superior" is not available to solve Davies's problem; all he could do is "clear out" of the monastery, just as he escaped from his wife.

Davies's experience in the monastery is repeated again in his situation in Aston's room:

Davies. See, what I need is a clock! I need a clock
to tell the time! How can I tell the time without a clock? I can't do it! I said to him, I said, look here; what about getting in a clock, so's I can tell what time it is? I mean, if you can't tell what time you're at you don't know where you are, you understand my meaning? See, what I got to do now, if I'm walking about outside, I got to get my eye on a clock, and keep the time in my head for when I come in. But that's no good, I mean I'm not in here five minutes and I forgotten it. I forgotten what time it was! (71)

The old tramp desperately needs a clock; he feels lost whenever he gets in the house because there is no clock. However, Aston does not provide one for him: Davies cannot get what he wants.

Davies's plan to go to Sidcup can be interpreted in the same context:

Davies. (with great feeling) If only the weather would break! Then I'd be able to get down to Sidcup!

......................

Aston: Why do you want to get down to Sidcup?
Davies: I got my papers there!

......................

Aston: What are they doing at Sidcup?
Davies: A man I know has got them. I left them with
him. You see? They prove who I am! I can't move without them papers. They tell you who I am. You see! I'm stuck without them. (28)

The old tramp says he keeps trying to travel to Sidcup to get papers that identify him. In the film version of the play, Mick points out that Sidcup is only five minute's drive from the house and even suggests he will give the old man a ride (Carpenter 68). Therefore, it is clear that the trip to Sidcup has a psychological meaning for Davies.

To perform his journey, Davies feels that he needs a good pair of shoes. For Davies, shoes are extremely important: "Shoes? It's life and death to me" (22). He asks Aston, "you haven't got a spare pair of shoes?" (22), and he also asks Mick, "You can't pick me up a pair of good shoes, can you? I got a bad need for a good pair of shoes" (60). However, Davies can never get what he wants from Aston and Mick. The shoes Aston brings Davies are not the right size or they lack shoelaces. Moreover, when Mick gives him a sandwich instead of shoes, one remembers Davies's past experience with a monk who expelled the tramp, giving him a meal instead of shoes. The fact that Davies cannot get what he wants—a good pair of leather shoes that are the right size—suggests that his attempt to start his journey is doomed to failure. Besides, Davies's choosy attitude about Aston's offering of shoes reflects that he also hesitates to embark on the journey. Indeed, it is
obvious that Sidcup represents Davies's "need for identification and the need for rejection of identification," which is a common symptom in pathological narcissists.

If Davies invites disaster by his own narcissistic disturbances,¹⁴ one also cannot deny that Davies's failure is doomed from the first. He has hardly had a chance to survive between the brothers:

Mick. ... I could turn this place into a penthouse ... it wouldn't be a flat it'd be a palace.

Davies. I'd say it would, man.

Mick. A palace.

Davies. Who would live there?

Mick. I would. My brother and me.

Pause.

Davies. What about me?

Mick. (quietly) All this junk here, it's no good to anyone.  (69 - 70)

Just before this exchange, Davies has suggested to Mick, "You and me, we could get this place going" (69, emphases added); Davies tries to displace Aston and even remove him from the room. However, Mick deliberately excludes Davies, hinting that Davies is just one of the many pieces of junk which Aston has collected, but which are of no use at all.¹⁵ Davies's role of victim is strongly suggested by Pinter's original plan for the end: "Originally Pinter was
thinking of a violent end—perhaps the killing of the old man by the two brothers. But he realized in time that this was quite unnecessary" (Esslin, Pinter 109). If Davies's expulsion is a disguise of the murderous desire of the brothers, Davies is certainly a scapegoat figure in the brothers' ritual of exorcising their narcissistic disturbances.

Davies is, then, "tantalizingly strung between the possibilities" of "redeemer" and "victim" (Dutton 110). He is a kind of redeemer when he contributes to the rehabilitation of the brothers' relationship. At the same time, he can be described as a victim if the brothers use him as a means of conversation and then discard him when he is of no use any more. In this respect, Davies's situation is quite similar to that of Edward who is "victim and victor" (Burkman Dramatic World 49) and consequently to that of Oedipus. Indeed, the cause of Oedipus's downfall is bifurcated. First, Oedipus is a helpless agent manipulated by the god's will; his fate was decided long before his birth. He is punished for the crimes which he unwittingly committed. At the same time, however, he redeems his city from disasters, even at the cost of all the things he possesses. Without his courage to perform the task, the city could have not escaped from a disastrous fate. In that respect, Oedipus is the "victim" as well as the "redeemer."

Even though Davies's role in the play has two sides,
just like Oedipus's, still, his experience is far different from the Greek hero's. Obsessed by his pathological narcissism, Davies cannot achieve his metaphysical journey for self-knowledge. His experience is even different from Edward's in A Slight Ache. While Edward is defeated at the glimpse he has of his otherness, Davies does not even have a chance to look into his otherness. His desperate response to Mick's persecution, "I don't know who you are" (14), reverberates at the end of the play when he realizes that he has to leave:

Davies. What am I going to do?

Pause.

What shall I do?

Pause.

Where am I going to go?

Pause. (87)

However, Aston does not answer; he responds to Davies with adamant silence.

To sum up, the three characters in The Caretaker stay in their own narcissistic domains. With Davies's appearance, the brothers have a chance to reflect on themselves and finally succeed in partially modifying their isolated worlds. In the sense that Davies provides a chance for the other characters to examine themselves, he plays almost the same role as the Matchseller in A Slight Ache. However, Davies shows that he is also obsessed with
his own narcissistic domain. Therefore, Davies is a new complex mirror, compared with the Matchseller, who just reflects the other two without any voluntary action.

Ironically, Davies fails in his own journey for self-knowledge, while he unwittingly succeeds in offering an opportunity for Aston and Mick to pass through the journey. The characters' spiritual experiences on the narcissistic and oedipal levels are signified in "a silent scene of communication between the brothers" in the film version of the play:

"The brothers do not speak, Mick staring into the pond, Aston at some wood and then the pond. Davies is at the window wondering what they are looking at." (Donner, quoted in Burkman, Dramatic World 88-89)

Davies is excluded from the unspoken relationship that unites the brothers and mitigates their narcissistic alienation.
Notes

1 In contrast with the case in *A Slight Ache*, Aston, who is the counterpart of Edward, is usually silent while Davies, the old tramp, keeps talking: "Aston's reticence discomfits the tramp who cannot bear the silence of his spaces" (Hollis 79).

2 Dutton believes that Davies does not want to reveal his origin because "he is anxious not to be labelled as any kind of outsider" (103).

3 It is interesting that Davies, at one time, says that he has been in a mental ward, too: "I know them places, too hot, you see, they're always too hot, I had a peep in one once, nearly suffocated me, so I reckon that'd be the best way out of it ..." (85). Even though Davies says he just "had a peep" in a mental institution, he might have been there as a patient. One already knows Davies's words are highly unreliable.

4 As Dutton suggests, it is possible that Aston thinks of "Davies's presence as a help out of his impasse" (107).

5 Gabbard suggests that the "clear sight" might suggest "the primal scene" of his parents at night which he witnessed when he was a small boy.

6 According to Burkman, "the tramp, indeed, is only
included by Mick, hired by him as caretaker, because he wishes
to communicate with Aston and finds it hard to do so directly"
(Dramatic World 82). Diamond shares this view: "Perhaps the
brothers need a new intruder, a new series of gamelike
maneuvers, in order to make contact with one another" (79).

Dutton seems to have a similar opinion: "At least a time,
Davies seems to represent for Mick the key to fulfilling those
illusions of respectability which are so much part of him and
which he invests so heavily in the room and its potential.
This lies at the heart of his proposition that Davies should
stay on as caretaker" (106).

For similar views, see Carpenter who considers Mick's
smashing of the Buddha as a symbolic repudiation of the very
quality of peacefulness (70) and Norris, who believes that
Mick's destruction of the Buddha, his brother's possession, is
a tacit assent to some of Davies's criticism of Aston (81).
In addition, Morgan suggests that the Buddha "becomes symbolic
of the false, respectable facade which Davies has erected
against self recognition" (88).

Indeed, there has been an extensive study on the meaning
of the Buddha itself. For example, Potter's article is a
detailed study on the function of the Buddha in The Caretaker.

Gale is also optimistic about the ending: "A result of
the two brothers' experience with the old man may be that they
are brought closer together than before as they unite to
overthrow a potential usurper" (89).
Donald Pleasence, who played Davies in the first production of the play, recalls in an interview: "'What did you feel about the old man at the end?' I asked him [Pinter]. 'Thank Christ they got rid of the old bastard,' he said. That was very helpful to me" (Lewis 5/1).

In fact, a character's feeling of being watched is one of the constant motifs in the Pinter canon. For example, in The Heart of the Day, one of Pinter's screen plays, Harrison tells to the woman he loves:

"The first time I saw you, you were lying quite like this, in Regent's Park. Your eyes were shut. Then you opened your eyes and looked up at the sky. And you didn't know that I was looking. I was watching every move you made." (quoted in Knowles 83)


Many critics feel negative toward Davies. Yvonne Shaffer summarizes Davies's personality as follows: "Davies reveals the greedy, proud, hypocritical, uncivilized qualities of the
alazon throughout the play" (40). Gale has a similar view: "It is difficult to feel much compassion for him, though, because of his unsympathetic nature—he seems to deserve what he gets" (Butter's 87).

15 John Arden remarks, "Taken purely at its face value, this play is a study of the unexpected strength of family ties against an intruder" (New Theatre Magazine 4 July, 1960, 29).

16 Katherine Burkman uses similar terms: "victim and victor" (77).

17 The twofold nature of Davies's situation is suggested by John Peter who reviews the production of the play in 1991: "Donald Pleasence's tramp looks the perfect casting, as it did 30 years ago: the ratlike eyes swivel deviously, but they're also quite capable of a cunning, saintly innocence" (13).

18 Burkman also suggests a positive aspect of the ending: "Far from a plotless play, The Caretaker's structure is built upon that war in the members and ends in more than despair as the trio "go on finding themselves through what they cannot find in others" (Dramatic World 86).
CHAPTER IV

NO MAN'S LAND

No Man's Land contains many Pinteresque characteristics:

There are standard Pinter ingredients: the gentleman confronted by the tramp; the room as haven and prison; the uncertainty of identity; the enigma of the past; a pervasive menace—all couched in dialogue at once comic, poetic and absurd. (Kalson 342)

Benedict Nightingale, in a theater review of the play, also suggests that this play is so Pinteresque that it gives an impression of déjà vu, while the play is, nevertheless, fascinating (1). However, if the themes of the play are familiar, No Man's Land is known as one of the most difficult plays in the Pinter canon. It is so "multileveled and enigmatic" that "no single interpretation of the work can be exhaustive" (Adler 197). Many critics have tried to puzzle out the enigmatic text by interpreting the mysterious meaning of Hirst's no man's land.

No Man's Land shares a lot with The Caretaker and with A Slight Ache, especially because of a tramp figure who
intrudes into the residents' domain—a room. Spooner takes his place among the tramp-intruder-stranger figures in Pinter's plays, standing with the Matchseller in *A Slight Ache* and Davies in *The Caretaker*. "An educated Davies" (Whitaker 185), Spooner disturbs the superficial tranquility of Hirst's household and leads the residents into the surrealistic circumstance in which narcissistic fantasy is the only reality. By providing a mirror image for the residents, Spooner offers them an opportunity to look into their own otherness. However, the narcissistic chance for them is not connected to an oedipal journey for self-knowledge. Spooner's brief disturbance of Hirst's world results in a stronger than ever fortification of the frozen no man's land in which he lives.

First of all, Hirst and his servants, Briggs and Foster, have a somewhat uncomfortable relationship. On the surface, Hirst is a well-established man of letters and Foster and Briggs help him—cooking, cleaning, and assisting Hirst with his writing. Their mutual relationship seems to be that of a normal family. Foster's speech suggests this superficial impression: "We [Foster and Briggs] take care of this gentleman, we do it out of love" (111).

However, looking into their relationship, one can easily find some tension and conflict in it. Even though Hirst is "a rich and powerful man" (111) and "a man of means, a man of achievement" (110), he is not a happy man. Hirst feels
that he is bound by his own assistants. To Spooner, who insists that he is a "free man," Hirst gloomily answers: "It's a long time since we had a free man in this house" (83). Later when Briggs refuses to serve alcohol for Hirst and even ignores Hirst's threat to fire him, it is clear that Hirst is almost a helpless, titular master of the household.

If Hirst is not happy with Briggs and Foster, the two servants are not content with the master, either; they think Hirst ignores their own needs. For example, Briggs complains:

Briggs. The boss could be his [Foster's] patron, but he's not interested. Perhaps because he's a poet himself. It's possible there's an element of jealousy in it, I don't know. Not that the boss isn't a very kind man. He is. He's a very civilized man. But he's still human. (125) Briggs believes that Hirst would not help Foster who wants to establish himself as a poet in the world because he feels jealous of the young assistant.

Into this delicately balanced situation between the master and the assistants enters Spooner, introduced by Hirst, whom he has happened to meet in a bar. Hirst seems gentle to Spooner, taking him to his luxurious house, offering him drinks, and above all else, listening to Spooner's harangue. That is why Spooner declares: "You are
clearly kindness itself" (79).

If Hirst is quite tolerant of Spooner, Briggs and Foster are hostile toward the old tramp. At their first meeting, Foster asks Spooner two questions: "How are you?" and "Who are you?" As Diamond suggests, the first question which is "the social iteration to a friend or acquaintance, becomes a pointed 'who are you?'—an abrupt question to a stranger" (188). Foster's vacillation between hostility and amiableness reminds one of Mick's first meeting with Davies in The Caretaker. Mick embarrasses the old tramp by being hostile and amiable alternately: he keeps asking "Who are you?" and then "Did you sleep well?" (39-40).

The unexpected alternation between kindness and hostility makes the tramps in both plays totally helpless and vulnerable and makes them unable to adjust to the game of the room. Foster even hints that he can kill the old man if he wants: "We [Foster and Briggs] could destroy you without a glance" (111). Moreover, it is quite symbolic that at the end of Act 1, Foster suddenly turns off the light and goes out of the room, leaving Spooner in the darkness. Foster's action again reminds one not only of Edward who tries to position the Matchseller in the dark side of the room, but also of Mick who tortures Davies with the electrolux in the dark room.

Briggs is no less hostile to Spooner than Foster: he tries to position Spooner by exposing the old tramp's
present situation: "You collect the beermugs from the tables in a pub in Chalk Farm" (99). Moreover, He calls the old tramp names, using many degrading appellations:

Briggs. To him [Davies]? To a pisshole collector? To a shithouse operator? To a jamrag vendor? What the fuck are you talking about? Look at him. He's a mingejuice bottler, a fucking shitcake baker. (146)

Briggs and Foster's basic attitude toward the intruder can be summarized by Foster's threat: "Don't try to drive a wedge into a happy household. You understood me? Don't try to make a nonsense out of family life" (112).

The residents' bifurcated responses to the old tramp's appearance is related to Spooner's main function in the play: to mirror the residents. First of all, Spooner mirrors Hirst in many ways.¹ Both of them are men of letters. If Hirst is "an essayist and critic" and "a man of letters" (125), Spooner asserts that he is "a poet" (122). In a quite surrealistic moment in Act 2, Hirst also admits this as fact: "You [Spooners] were a literary man. As was I..." (128). Moreover, Spooner keeps emphasizing that he and Hirst share something in the past. He insists that he "used to picnic in the country at the same age as he [Hirst]" (112), and tries to make Hirst recall the shared past: "What happened to our cottages? What happened to our lawns? ... We share something. A memory of bucolic life"
Spooner also insists that he can understand and serve Hirst better than the two assistants: "We are of an age. I know his wants. Let me take his arm. Respect our age" (109).

While Spooner attempts to find common ground with Hirst, the host tries to keep some distance from the suspect stranger at first. He mainly listens to Spooner's chatter, hardly speaking except in succinct utterances to keep the conversation going. However, when he reappears and tells about his dream, he suddenly becomes talkative. Finally, Hirst exclaims, "I know that man" (114). Furthermore, Hirst comes to agree to Spooner's insistence on the shared past and even goes a step further by identifying Spooner as his old pal at Oxford:

Hirst. You're looking remarkably well. Haven't changed a bit. It's the squash, I expect. Keeps you up to the mark. You were quite a dab hand at Oxford, as I remember. Still at it? Wise man. Sensible chap. My goodness, it's years. When did we last meet? I have a suspicion we last dined together in '38, at the club. Does that accord with your recollection? (126)

Many critics have suggested that their conversation about the shared past is not based on reality (Adler 201, Kalson 340). However, it does not seem important to determine if their talk is real or imaginary. The important thing is
that Hirst opens the possibility of accepting Spooner as his otherness.

If Hirst and Spooner believe they share a considerable part of their past, they also ironically have the same illusion that they are still young. Spooner asserts to Briggs, "I am young" (122). Likewise, Hirst believes that his youth never withers: "My youth...can never leave me..." (107). Moreover, both of them keep a detached attitude toward reality. As "a betwixt twig peeper," Spooner says that he always peeps and observes: "When you can't keep the proper distance between yourself and others, when you can no longer maintain an objective relation to matter, the game's not worth the candle" (81).

Just like Spooner, Hirst remains remote from the real world: all he does is sit on a big chair and drink. Unlike Edward or Aston, Hirst does not even offer any seat for the guest. Occupying the big chair in the center of the room, Hirst is obsessed with the past, which is symbolized by an old photo album. Finally, for both of them, life is figured as a running race. Hirst suggests that he has run a metaphysical race throughout his life: "Tonight...my friend...you find me in the last lap of a race...I had long forgotten to run" (94). However, Hirst remembers Spooner was a "natural athlete," and asks, "Do you run still?" (128).

By providing a mirror image for Hirst, Spooner's role
is closely related to Hirst's dream which is another narcissistic experience for him: Hirst repeatedly says he dreamed that someone was drowned in the water. It is generally agreed that dreams are the expression of desires which cannot be fulfilled in reality. For example, Lacan suggests that dreams are "a narcissistic folding back of libido and disinvestment of reality" (260). Alcorn also follows Lacan's theory in interpreting dreams as follows:

Like childhood fantasies of primary narcissism, the dream erases the tyranny of the subject-object distinction and refutes the essential otherness of the objective world in order to picture desire's satisfaction. The dream, Lacan suggests, pictures the desired object, not in terms of a "reality principle," but as the self would wish it to be. The dream expresses a narcissistic fantasy about desire's immediate satisfaction as it strives to signify desire. (111)

If one follows Lacan and Alcorn's suggestions, Hirst's dream reveals his ambivalent attitude toward himself.

In examining Hirst's dream, one notes that his story about the dream is a little different each time he tells it:

I was dreaming of a waterfall. No, no, of a lake. I think it was... just recently. (105)

Something is depressing me. What is it? It was the dream, yes. Waterfalls. No, no, a lake. Water.
Drowning. Not me. Someone else. (106)

What was it? Shadows. Brightness, through leaves. Gambolling. In the bushes. Young lovers. A fall of water. It was my dream. The lake. Who was drowning in my dream? It was blinding. I remember it. I've forgotten. By all that's sacred and holy. The sounds stopped. It was freezing. (108)

I am walking towards a lake. Someone is following me, through the trees. I lose him easily. I see a body in the water, floating. I am excited. I look closer and see I was mistaken. There is nothing in the water. I say to myself, I saw a body, drowning. But I am mistaken. There is nothing there. (153)

Indeed, to come towards a lake, to look into the water, to have an illusion that somebody is in the water—all these images unmistakably remind one of Narcissus in Ovid's Metamorphosis:

There was a slimeless spring, with shimmering, silvery waters, .... Here the boy, tired from keen hunting and the heat, had lain down, drawn there by the spring and by the beauty of the place, and while he wanted to relieve his thirst, another thirst grew in him, and while he drank, he saw a beautiful reflection and was captivated, he loved a hope without a body, and what he thought was body was but water. (Ovid 406-17)
In Hirst's relation of his dream, one can find some important aspects which are closely related to the Narcissus myth. Hirst keeps changing the place from waterfalls to a lake. Moreover, Hirst says that the body—that is, the image—in the water is not his own: "Not me. Someone else." He also describes the moment of looking into the water as "blinding" and "freezing." And then, he negates that there was any image in the water. He concludes it was a temporary illusion: "I am mistaken. There is nothing there."

Finally, he incorporates into the dream an unidentified woman.

Jones suggests that Hirst's correction of the place in the dream from waterfall to lake is meaningful because it "contain[s] vivid images of shifts from [the] dynamism of the waterfall to the static calm of the lake" (298). Jones sees that the shift from waterfall to lake provides important evidence that stasis is the structure of the play. It is true that an important difference between a waterfall and a lake is mobility: waterfalls move at a fast speed, while a lake seems almost immobile. However, a no less important difference between the two is the sound imagery. Waterfalls make an enormous sound while a lake does not make any remarkable sound.

Here again it is worthwhile returning to the Narcissus myth in Ovid's version. In the narrative of *Metamorphosis*, the narrator suddenly intervenes and addresses Narcissus
when he is suffering over the love of his image in the water:

Naive one, why do you vainly clasp at fleeting images? What you seek is nowhere; turn away, and you will lose your beloved. What you are looking at is a shadow, a reflected image. (432-434)

The sudden appearance of a voice from the narrator makes one aware of the long silence which has occupied the scene until then. Indeed, the scene of Narcissus' yearning for himself is wholly silent because the narrative of the scene is mainly "description, not conversation" (Knoespel 13). Just as Narcissus' looking into his reflection is performed in perfect silence, silence dominates Hirst's narcissistic dream. Just as Edward's narcissistic moment in his shelter and Aston's hallucinations are achieved in perfect silence, "The sounds stopped" (108) in Hirst's dream.

When Hirst approaches the water to find who is drowned, his movement symbolizes his spiritual journey for self-knowledge. It is, indeed, an Oedipal journey: confrontation with himself. This approach to self-knowledge is a "blinding" and "freezing" moment for him. However, unlike Oedipus who achieves self-knowledge at the cost of his physical sight, Hirst is not prepared to perform the task. He retreats from the awakening moment by denying that the image which is reflected in the water is not his own. Finally, he negates even the fact that there was any image
in the water. Therefore, Hirst's dream is an expression of a pathological narcissist's "need for identification and the need for rejection of identification" at the same time (Alcorn 106). In the same context, Joseph Kestner suggests that what Narcissus sees in the water is nothing but "an image in flight":

In this image of himself over which he bends, Narcissus does not discover in its resemblance a sufficient security. It is not the stable image of Herodias..., it is a fleeing image, an image in flight, because the element which carries it and constitutes it is consecrated in essence to vanishing. Water is the place of all the treacheries and all the inconstancies: in the reflection which faces him, Narcissus can neither identify himself without anxiety nor love without danger. (16)

As Kestner suggests, what Hirst sees in the water is "a fleeing image" whose essence is "vanishing." Overwhelmed by fear of confronting his identity, Hirst finally asserts not only that there was nobody in the water at all but also that there was no water at all.

More interestingly, just as Aston and Davies's narcissistic disturbances are connected with maternal figures, Hirst's dream delicately incorporates an image of a woman:
Hirst. It was blinding. I remember it. I've forgotten....Who is doing it? I'm suffocating. It's a muff. A muff, perfumed. Someone is doing me to death. She looked up. I was staggered. I had never seen anything so beautiful. That's all poison. We can't be expected to live like that. ... Am I asleep? There's no water. No-one is drowning. (108)

The woman he incorporates into his dream is also associated with Echo in the Narcissus myth. In the myth, Echo plays an important role, enriching the story of Narcissus:

There is a symmetry in the way Narcissus is reduced to something resembling Echo's strangely restricted mode of courtship. She could say what the other said, and nothing more. ... The fate of Narcissus thus mirrors the fate of Echo, with whom in a strange manner he is reunited. His body wastes away, becomes insubstantial. ... Now the words of Echo and Narcissus merely coalesce; they are the same and utterly nothing but sadness. ...

Echo became mere voice. Narcissus little more than image. (Nuttall 145)

Echo's story reflects Narcissus's fate as his "auditory mirror" (Nuttall 141) and thereby enriches the myth. More importantly, the story provides a psychological significance for Narcissus' experience:
Echo is a wood nymph, perhaps a Meliae, or ash-tree nymph (Narcissus' mother is a water nymph, or Naiad). As Robert Graves points out, "the ash-nymphs are the three Furies (Erinnyes) in a more gracious mood." Like the ash-nymphs, the Furies stem from the castrated genitals of Uranus (Hesiod, Theogony, 136-200). Originally the Furies served to avenge injuries inflicted on mothers. From this perspective Echo herself represents both the good mother and the furious, avenging mother, so closely associated with the threat of castration. (Alford 25)

As Alford suggests, Echo implies the bifurcated meaning of good mother and bad mother for Narcissus. Likewise, the woman in Hirst's dream has an ambivalent image; she is as much suffocating as fascinating. To love the woman is fatal to him. Hirst's ambivalent feelings toward the woman reflect a pathological narcissist's fear that "the desired merger with the mother or mother substitute will end in the annihilation of the fragile self" (Layton 100). Therefore, he negates the existence of the woman and blots out the memory: "I remember nothing. I'm sitting in this room" (108).

Instead of looking into his image in the water of his dream, Hirst chooses his old album as his mirror to satisfy his narcissistic desire: "My true friends look at me from my album. I had my world. I have it...we're talking of my
youth, which can never leave me... It was solid..." (107).
If the water in his dream is threatening to Hirst, the album
is a comparatively safe place. It is a past which, "having
happened, is now fixed, incapable of producing shocks of
surprises, and, therefore, to some degree comfortable"
(Jones 294). Moreover, the girls in the album are not so
much threatening or suffocating as the woman in his dream:
Hirst. The girls had lovely hair, dark, sometimes red.
Under their dresses their bodies were white. It's
all in my album. I'll find it. You'll be stuck
by the charm of the girls, their grace, the ease
with which they sit, pour tea, loll. It's in my
album. (106)

His album is a lake on which he can reflect himself, and the
fixed, unreal images in it give Hirst an illusion that he is
forever young. At the same time, even though Hirst insists
that the album—the emblem of his youth—is "solid," still,
he knows that it can be evanescent. According to him, the
people in the album can be "transformed by light, while
being sensitive...to all the changing light". (107). That is
why he does not like the natural light outside. To him,
"the light... out there... is gloomy... distasteful" (144). He
orders the curtains closed and the lamps turned on instead
and says, "What relief. How happy it is" (144).³

Hirst's rejection of reality and his obsession with his
illusion is reenacted in his relationship with Spooner.
Just as he could not accept the existence of the otherness in the water, Hirst rejects his mirror image—Spooner. When Spooner offers himself as a friend, secretary, housekeeper, and even devoted "chevalier," Hirst inconsequently responds by asking, "Is there a big fly in here? I hear buzzing" (146). Many critics have pointed out that Hirst's speech is an echo of Emily Dickinson's poem, "I heard a fly buzz when I died," considering Hirst's mention of the buzzing big fly as the sign of Hirst's imminent death. However, it is also true that the buzzing fly in Hirst's mind partly reminds one of the wasp in A Slight Ache.

The wasp on Edward's breakfast table is a harbinger of the imminent intrusion of a stranger who will bring disorder to Edward's superficial world. Instinctively understanding the threatening meaning of the wasp, Edward traps, scolds, blinds, and kills the insect. Like the wasp in A Slight Ache, the imaginary big fly which is buzzing in Hirst's ears is a sign for him of the intruder who tries to shake Hirst's own frozen domain. Just as Edward tries to control the Matchseller by showing off what he has, Hirst says:

Hirst. I shall be kind to you. I shall show you my library. I might even show you my study. I might even show you my pen, and my blottingpad. I might even show you my footstool. (136)

Sticking to his narcissistic world, Hirst rejects Spooner's
challenge: "Let's change the subject. For the last time" (149). He chooses to stay in "no man's land", "which never moves, which never changes, which never grows older, but which remains forever, icy and silent" (153).

Hirst's invention of no-man's-land has roots in the common desire of a creative mind to build a never-never land. According to Layton, when Narcissistic intellectuals cannot cope with the society in which "all source of value and meaning is known to reside in the individual," they tend to be paralyzed into "frustrated, enraged inaction":

[In the condition of pathological narcissism], a split-off reasoning capacity subjugates body and soul, placing action, passion and relationship into an alternately longed-for and disdained never-never land. It is at this time that authors like Flaubert yearn to write a "livre sur rien."

(103)

Therefore, Hirst's no man's land is his narcissistic creation of the fictitious world in which he does not have to feel pressure from the outside as well as the inside world.6

The image of no man's land described by Hirst is again closely related to the image of the lake by which the famous Narcissus yearned for the image of himself.

There was a slimeless spring, with shimmering, silvery waters, which neither shepherds nor goats
that graze upon the mountain had touched, nor any other flock, which no bird nor wild beast had disturbed, nor any branch fallen from a tree. There was grass around it, nurtured by nearby water, and a wood that let no sunshine in to overheat the place. (407-12)

Kenneth Knoespel rightly points out that many elements of the traditional pastoral scene are conspicuously absent in this landscape:

Here no shepherds ever come; here there are no female goats (a detail that emphasizes sexual isolation), no cattle, no birds, no boughs or raindrops to disturb the tranquility of the pool. Instead the pool dominates the setting and attracts Narcissus. Described as argenteus (407) it appears as a silver mirror similar to those used in antiquity. The word inlimis (407) (related to limis; sidelong, askew, aslant, askance) even suggests the pool is a place where one cannot see straight. (9)

Furthermore, Knoespel suggests that "the absence of sun and warmth" in the landscape reminds one of the frigidity of Narcissus. The image of Hirst who stays in the icy, immobile no man's land is remarkably similar to Narcissus placed in the icy, sterile, and remote landscape described in Ovid's Metamorphosis.
Therefore, it is not strange that the meaning of water, which often symbolizes rebirth and renewal in literature, is distorted in Hirst's no man's land:

Hirst. It so often rains, in August, in England. Do you ever examine the gullies of the English countryside? Under the twigs, under the dead leaves, you will find tennis balls, blackened. ... They are lost there, given up for dead, centuries old. (139)

The rain in August is darkly connected with the wet dead leaves, the wet dirty, blackened, dead tennis balls—all the things which emphasize the desolate, dead landscape.

Hirst's "memory of the bucolic life" is another aspect of his frozen metaphysical world; it is far from the traditional one which is usually associated with love, vitality, spring and warmth:

Hirst. In the village church, the beams are hung with garlands, in honor of young women of the parish, reputed to have died virgin. However, the garlands are not bestowed on maidens only, but on all who die unmarried, wearing the white flower of a blameless life. (91)

Even though the images of the beams and flowers are bright, they are related not to warmth or fertility but to frigidity or sterility. The flowers are used only as commemorating the people who "died virgin." The imagery created by
flowers and death of male or female virgins is closely associated with the Narcissus myth.

Moreover, Hirst's image as a frigid and sterile Narcissus is developed into that of Pluto in Hades through his assumed affair with Emily, Spooner's wife:

Hirst. How's Emily? What a woman... Have to tell you I fall in love with her once upon a time. ...

That summer she was mine, while you imagined her to be solely yours. She loved the cottage. She loved the flowers. As did I. Narcissi, crocus, dog's tooth violets, fuchsia, jonquils, pinks, verbena. Her delicate hands. I'll never forget her way with jonquils. ... Her ardor was, in my experience, unparalleled. (128)

Gale has astutely noted that No Man's Land owes something to Tennessee Williams' A Streetcar Named Desire (202). He associates Spooner's speech about Hirst's kindness with Blanche DuBois' famous utterance: "Whoever you are—I have always depended on the kindness of strangers" (142). In addition, the scene quoted above clearly shows that No Man's Land owes something not only to A Streetcar Named Desire but also to Williams' other well-known play, The Glass Menagerie. Anyone who knows the play will remember Amanda's long, lyrical speech about how she roamed the spring field picking up the jonquils and how abundantly she decorated her house with the flowers:
Amanda. I had malaria fever all that Spring. ... "Stay in bed," said Mother, "you have a fever!"—but I just wouldn't. I took quinine but kept on going, going! Evenings, dances! Afternoons, long, long rides! Picnics—lovely! So lovely, that country in May—all lacy with dogwood, literally flooded with jonquils! That was the spring I had the craze for jonquils. Jonquils became an absolute obsession. Mother said, "Honey, there's no more room for jonquils." And still I kept on bringing in more jonquils. Whenever, wherever I saw them, I'd say, "Stop! Stop! I see jonquils!" I made the young men help me gather the jonquils! It was a joke, Amanda and her jonquils. Finally there were no more vases to hold them, every available space was filled with jonquils. No vases to hold them? All right, I'll hold them myself! And then I—met your father! Malaria fever and jonquils and then --this--boy...

Amanda enjoys the May ritual filled with dances, picnics, young men, the fever, and most of all, jonquils. Likewise, Emily, Spooner's wife has a quite similar experience to Amanda's, with her "unparalleled ardor" in the green field and the passion for flowers—especially "jonquils." Emily must have briefly enjoyed the fertile spring, satisfying her passion through the liaison with Hirst.
However, Amanda does not have a happy ending. A Charming Prince who marries her turns out to desert her in a poor district in New Orleans. Amanda is a Persephone figure who is kidnapped by a Pluto figure while picking flowers in the spring field (Thompson 695). Like Amanda, Emily does not enjoy a happy ending from the affair with Hirst. Emily's fate is ironically implied by the fate of Hirst's wife:

Spooner. Is she here now, your wife? Cowering in a locked room. Perhaps?

Pause.

Was she ever here? Was she ever there, in your cottage? It is my duty to tell you have failed to convince. ... I begin to wonder whether you do in fact truly remember her, whether you truly did love her, truly caressed her, truly did cradle her, truly did husband her, falsely dreamed or did truly adore her. I have seriously questioned these propositions and find them threadbare. (93)

For Hirst, women, the mistress as well as the wife, have not metaphysically existed except for his own narcissistic satisfaction: "Healthy love entails a modicum of idealization; the narcissist, however, tends to be in love not with a subject, but with a selfobject, a projection" (Layton 99). As a Narcissist who only loves the mirror image of himself in women, Hirst cannot build a healthy
relationship with them. At best, he abuses them. According to Spooner, some women "have never recovered from your [Hirst's] insane and corrosive sexual absolutism" (134). Therefore, it is not hard to assume that Emily must have been discarded by Hirst helplessly, just as Amanda's husband left her.

If Spooner mirrors Hirst who is incarcerated in his narcissistic no man's land, the old tramp also reflects some aspects of Foster and Briggs. As I mentioned earlier, Foster treats the unwelcome guest in many ways and tries to get rid of him. However, at the same time, Foster feels somewhat intimidated by the old tramp and asks Briggs: "Why am I talking to him [Spooners]? I'm wasting my time with a non-starter. I must be going mad. I don't usually talk. I don't have to. Normally I keep quiet" (111). Foster's feeling that the stranger is threatening to him is not unfounded; what Spooner asks for is ultimately his own and Briggs' place—a secretary for Hirst. In other words, Spooner attempts to replace Foster:

The double represents the weakening and ultimate loss of the individual identity in an "other" who appears as the usurper of will. The other invariably resembles the person whose identity he violates while differing from him enough to establish his own reality as a distinct personal entity. (Allan 295)
For Foster, the possible usurper's appearance creates feelings of horror and fear. Interestingly, however, the young man is attracted to the old tramp. After the repeated movements between attacking Spooner and retreating to get support from Briggs, Foster finally asserts: "I know what it is. There's something about you [Spoonier] fascinates me" (111). It goes without saying that Foster's ambivalent feelings for the old tramp are what Keppler points out as the ambivalent feelings toward the double: antagonism and attraction (10).

The young man is fascinated by his possible usurper mainly because he feels they share something with each other in spite of the apparent distinctiveness. In fact, one of the remarkable similarities between Foster and Spooner seems to be their narcissistic characteristics. In some sense, Foster is no less narcissistic than Hirst. He believes everybody likes him at first sight: "People take an immediate shine to me, especially women, especially in Siam or Bali" (100). The fact that the Siamese girls loved him at first sight is the source of his pride.

Foster's memory of Bali island seems to be a description of his preoedipal stage in which "an infant identifies with its mother, with its mirror image, in order to convince itself of its wholeness, of its self-sufficiency and anatomical maturity" (Champagne 50). Just like an infant who does not have to distinguish himself from mother, Foster
was perfectly satisfied with the surroundings. However, he could not stay there forever; he was dragged out of there.

Foster. I was in Bali when they sent for me. I didn't have to leave, I didn't have to come here. But I felt I was... called... I had no alternative. I didn't have to leave that beautiful isle. But I was intrigued. I was only a boy. But I was nondescript and anonymous. A famous writer wanted me. (144)

A call from a famous writer who wanted him to be "his secretary, his chauffeur, his housekeeper, his amanuensis" (144) signifies Foster's separation from the pre-oedipal, all-satisfying situation. In other words, the call from society signifies, in Freudian terms, the formation of the ideal ego and the sign of growing up.

If Foster believes that he was forced to leave the paradise, it is natural for him to yearn to return to the place:

Foster. I miss the Siamese girls. I miss the girls in Bali. ... A giggle at a cuddle. Sometimes my ambitions extend no further than that. I could do something else. I could make another life. I don't have to waste my time looking after a pisshound. I could find the right niche and be happy. The right niche, the right happiness. (114)
Here, to be surrounded by the girls who love him at first sight and to have "a giggle and a cuddle" with them seem to be Foster's ultimate goal in life. According to Freud, "That which he projects ahead of him as his ideal is merely his substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood—the time when he was his own ideal" (51). Indeed, his desire to return to Siam and Bali is his wish to reenact the narcissistic gratification of his childhood.

Foster's attitude about his situation, however, is more complicated. When Spooner suggests that Foster "voyage and explore," the young man answers: "I've sailed. I've been there and back. I'm here where I'm needed" (141). While Foster longs to return to the all-satisfying infantile stage, he also believes that Hirst's house is the right place for him to stay. Therefore, Foster is trapped in Freudian terms in the inner conflict between "the self-criticizing double (conscience)" and "the self-adoring double (ideal ego)" (14:95).

Foster's pre-oedipal dilemma is related to Briggs' enigmatic story about Bolsover Street:

Briggs. [The street is] in the middle of an intricate one-way system. I told him I knew one or two people who'd been wandering up and down Bolsover Street for years. They'd wasted their bloody youth there. The people who live there, their faces are grey, they're in a state of despair.
Harold Hobson, in the *Sunday Times* review of the play, wrote that he himself drove into and out of Bolsover Street, motivated by "simple inquisitiveness." After the trip, Hobson simply concludes: "I happen to know that Briggs is not speaking the truth...Bolsover Street is not in the least baffling. ... Hirst may walk out of it as easily as I drove out of Bolsover Street" (quoted in Jones 301).

It is not strange that Hobson found the street "a perfectly ordinary thoroughfare." For the characters in the play, the street has a metaphysical meaning just as "Sidcup" does in Davies's mind in *The Caretaker*. Bolsover Street is a spiritual labyrinth in which one cannot find any starting point or destination; there exists only helpless yearning to get out. Therefore, the labyrinthine Bolsover Street is a metaphor for Foster's Freudian dilemma mentioned above. Briggs' memory that he met Foster in an entrance of the street supports the argument. In addition, Bolsover Street is also related to Hirst's no man's land as "a world of blind alleys, unfulfilled hopes and unaccountable dreams" (Kalson 343).

Besides, Briggs is no less narcissistic than Foster. The most remarkable characteristic of Briggs is that he is good at calling names. He calls Spooner by many degrading names: "a pisshole collector, a shithouse operator, a jamrag vendor, a mingejuice bottler, a fucking shitcake baker"
(146). Briggs also verbally abuses Foster: "a cunt" (143), "neurotic poof, unspeakable ponce, vagabond cock" (114). According to Otto Kernberg, the narcissistic personality shows an unusual oral rage when he thinks he is ignored (227-229). Briggs' calling names seems to reveal the "oral rage" he pours out when he feels his need for esteem is not satisfied.

If Spooner incites Hirst, Foster, and Briggs to express their narcissistic dilemma by providing them a mirror to reflect on, Spooner himself is no less narcissistic than the others. Spooner's situation reminds one of Oscar Wilde's prose poem, "The Disciple." In the poem, the pool mourned so much for the death of Narcissus that the Oreads—the mountain nymphs—came to comfort it and said: "We do not wonder that you should mourn in this manner for Narcissus, so beautiful was he." However, the pool unexpectedly asked, "But was Narcissus beautiful?" The surprised mountain nymphs responded, "Who should know that better than you?" The pool answers: "But I loved Narcissus because, as he lay on my banks and looked down at me, in the mirror of his eyes I saw ever my own beauty mirrored" (846). While Echo's story embellishes Narcissus's fate in Ovid's legend, Wilde includes even the pool itself in the myth. This poem seems to imply how strong and ubiquitous narcissism can be.

Like the pool in "The Disciple," Spooner, as a pool for Hirst and his assistants, himself is no less narcissistic
than they are; in that sense, Spooner's situation is almost the same as Davies'. Spooner tries to gloss over his status; when Briggs identifies him as the collector of the beermugs in a pub in Chalk Farm, Spooner replies, "The landlord's a friend of mine. When he's shorthanded, I give him a helping hand" (99). Defending himself from the assistants' attacks, the old man tries to show off what he, he insists, has: his own house in the country, his wife and two daughters. It is highly questionable that what the old tramp says is true, especially if one accepts the Lacanian theory that "woman is the mirror image of man, without whom he cannot contemplate his own being" (Champagne 53).

Spooners's assumed wife and daughters seem to exist in his imagination only to fulfill his desire to be a complete man. Moreover, Spooner invites Foster, Briggs, and Hirst to a poetry reading in a bar over which he says he presides. He even suggests Briggs should let Foster send his writing samples to him:

Spooners. Well, if he'd like to send me some examples of his work, double spaced on quarto, with copies in a separate folder by separate post in case of loss or misappropriation, stamped addressed envelope enclosed, I'll read them. (125)

Enumerating the details of how to send the writing samples, Spooner enjoys the illusion that he is not an "old stinking tramp" but a poet with great reputation.
Not only does Spooner reject reality, but he also cuts out any possibility of committing himself to reality: "My own security, you see, my true comfort and solace, rests in the confirmation that I elicit from people of all kinds a common and constant level of indifference" (79). In contrast to Foster who finds solace by imagining that everybody loves him, Spooner insists that his security comes from other people's indifference. Moreover, the old tramp avows that he is free from love: "I have never been loved. From this I derive my strength" (88). In his assumed alienated position, the old man concludes that he is "a free man" (82). Indeed, "indifference, self-contentment, and inaccessibility" are the common symptoms of a narcissist (Dunn 25). Therefore, his belief in his freedom is nothing but a narcissistic illusion. He reveals self-contradiction by confessing that he is sometimes "a captive to memories of a more than usually pronounced grisliness" (86).

Interestingly, one of the haunting "memories" in Spooner's mind is about his mother: "I looked up once into my mother's face. What I saw there was nothing less than pure malevolence. I was fortunate to escape with my life" (88). Spooner's story of his mother seems to be a reverberation of Hirst's woman in the dream and Foster's Siamese and Balian girls. It reveals that Spooner is a pathological narcissist with a preoedipal dilemma. Any child has to experience frustration and separation from the
mother to develop an ideal ego:

A baby, inevitably experiencing frustration from the mother, splits her into a good, nourishing object representation and a bad, punishing object representation. These images as well as good and bad self images, are internalized as parts of the self. A major developmental task of childhood is eventually to be able to integrate the good and bad images, to be able to feel both love and hate toward the same whole figure. According to the Kernberg-Jacobson-Mahler model, narcissists and borderlines have not achieved this integration, and this results in the cycle of alternating idealization and deprecation common to these pathologies. (Layton 100)

As Layton suggests, Spooner failed to perform the "major developmental task of childhood," to integrate the two different images of his mother. Therefore, when he says he saw "pure malevolence" in his mother's eyes, one can easily understand that his mother's eyes are nothing but a mirror which reflects Spooner's own feeling of hatred toward his mother.

Spooners unsuccessful relationship with his mother reminds one of Davies in The Caretaker, who insists that he left home because his newly-wed wife put unclean underwear in a cooking pot. Just as Davies became a tramp on the road
because of his inability to harmonize the bifurcated images of his wife who is a substitute for his mother, Spooner reveals that he became a tramp for exactly the same reason. When Spooner asserts, "My kitchen would be immaculate" (146), he again echoes Davies who is so fastidious about cleanliness.

Interestingly, Spooner associates Hirst with "a Hungarian emigree" whom he says he met a long time ago. According to the old tramp, the Hungarian aristocrat was so quiet: "He possessed a measure of serenity the like of which I had never encountered" (87). Many years later, Spooner meets Hirst in the same bar: when Spooner says, "You are clearly a reticent man" (79), he undoubtedly connects Hirst with the Hungarian. Spooner says that his life had been wholly changed with his encounter with the old aristocrat. However, ironically, Spooner cannot even remember what the old man said:

Spooner. What he said...all those years ago...is neither here nor there. It was not what he said but possibly the way he sat which has remained with me all my life and has, I am quite sure, made me what I am. (87)

Therefore, it is evident that Spooner's meeting with Hirst will be the reenactment of the experience he had with the Hungarian long ago. He will try to make an important momento of his life through acquainting himself with Hirst
but his attempt will finally turn out to be a void, nothingness.

The old tramp tries to assume a special task for the host by volunteering to be a savior figure for him. At first, Spooner diagnoses his host: "I would say, albeit on a brief acquaintance, that you lack the essential quality of manliness" (94). Defining Hirst as "impotent," Spooner offers himself as Hirst's friend:

Spoon. You need a friend, you have a long hike, my lad, up which, presently, you slog unfriended. Let me perhaps be your boatman. For if when we talk of a river we talk of a deep and dank architecture. In other words, never disdain a helping hand, especially one of such rare quality. And it is not only the quality of my offer which is rare, it is the act itself, the offer itself—quite without precedent. I offer myself to you as a friend. Think before you speak. (95)

Indeed, Spooner's possibility as Hirst's savior causes anxiety and hostility in Hirst's assistants. The conflict between them is well expressed in their different attitudes to Hirst's album:

Spoon. (To Hirst.) You mentioned a photograph album. I could go through it with you. I could put names to the faces. A proper exhumation could take place. Yes, I am confident that I could be of
enormous aid in that area.

Foster. Those faces are nameless, friend.

Briggs. And they'll always be nameless. (141-42)

As I suggested earlier, Hirst's album provides a safe pool for him because he can see the reflection not of what there is but of what he wants to be there. Spooner proposes to liberate those who are "fixed and imprisoned" in the album, by "putting names to the faces" and ultimately to liberate Hirst himself. The old man's offer is a challenge to assistants who want to keep all "as it is." Therefore, Foster and Briggs insist that the liberation should not occur: those who are trapped in the album—and Hirst—should remain "nameless" forever.

Spooners cannot survive the assistants' counterattack because his challenge itself is not solid. If one looks into Spooner's speech, one can easily find that his motive is not a genuine offer to help a friend in need:

Spooners. I am I. I offer myself not abjectly but with ancient pride. I come to you as a warrior. I shall be happy to serve you as my master. ... I will accept death's challenge on your behalf. I shall meet it, for your sake, boldly, whether it be in the field or in the bedchamber. I am your Chevalier. I had rather bury myself in a tomb of honor than permit your dignity to be sullied by domestic enemy or foreign foe. I am yours to
command. (147, emphases added)

His offer is merely a means of expressing what he thinks he is. Spooner keeps indulging in his own fantasy of self-grandiosity which is one of the most common symptoms of narcissists:

Heinz Kohut, describing the narcissistic patient, emphasizes the feeling of inner emptiness from which the patient often defends himself by delusions of personal grandiosity. Otto Kernberg observes that the narcissistic personality exhibits unusual degrees of self-reference in interactions with others. (Alcorn 108)

If Spooner stays in the delusional world of grandiosity, it becomes clear that he is nothing but "a spurious savior" for Hirst (Burkman, "Death and Double" 143).

Spooners's failure as Hirst's savior reverberates in his incongruous interpretation of Hirst's dream of drowning. Spooner denies his own idea that he is the man who was drowned in Hirst's dream: "You saw me drowning in your dream. But have no fear. I am not drowned" (11). Spooner negates the implication that he is Hirst's otherness, thereby, shutting out the possibility that Hirst can achieve a new life with self-knowledge. He cannot fulfill the role he assumes because he cannot escape from his own narcissistic trap.

Moreover, Spooner's unsuitability as a savior in Hirst's
no man's land is well revealed in his famous speech about his experience in Amsterdam.

Spooner. Yes, one afternoon in Amsterdam...I was sitting outside a cafe by a canal. The weather was superb. ... At the side of the canal was a fisherman. He caught a fish. He lifted it high. The waiter cheered and applauded, the two men, the waiter and the fisherman, laughed. A little girl, passing, laughed. Two lovers, passing, kissed. The fish was lifted, on the rod. The fish and the rod glinted in the sun, as they swayed. The fisherman's cheeks were flushed, with pleasure. I decided to paint a picture... and to call it The Whistler. (101)

A fisherman, a moving fish, lovers, a young girl, water in the canal—all the details of the scene are doubtlessly linked with the regeneration theme of the fisher-king myth in Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*. According to Weston, the fisher-king myth is a tale about a knight's quest to restore the life of the country by curing the wounded Fisher King.

However, the theme of renewal or rebirth in the legend cannot be applied to Spooner's landscape. The old man does not name the picture in terms of its life or vitality. Instead, he decides to call it "The Whistler." Indeed, the whistler is the marginal man who seems to have nothing to do
with the vital atmosphere of the scene: "At another table, in shadow, was a man whistling under his breath, sitting very still, almost rigid" (101). The rigid man in the shadow reminds one of images of Narcissus by the pool and of Hirst's memories of bucolic life which are rigid and frozen images in spite of the vital settings that surround them."

While Spooner cannot assume the self-imposed role of a savior in Hirst's no man's land, one can find another savior figure in the play: Hirst's financial adviser. Foster, a cook in the house, can hardly sleep whenever he gets news that the financial adviser is coming the following morning:

Foster. Your [Hirst's] financial adviser is coming to breakfast. I've got to think about that. His taste changes from day to day. One day he wants boiled eggs and toast, the next day orange juice and poached eggs, the next scrambled eggs and smoked salmon, the next a mushroom omelette and champagne. ... He's dreaming of eggs. Eggs, eggs. What kind of eggs? I'm exhausted. I've been up all night. But it never stops. Nothing stops. It's all fizz. This is my life. (113)

The financial adviser is totally unpredictable -- just like Godot who keeps Vladimir and Estragon in suspense with abortive, but still plausible promises to come.

Just as Godot does not arrive in Beckett's play, the financial adviser cannot come in No Man's land, ironically
because "he found himself without warning in the center of a vast aboriginal financial calamity" (118). It is no other than the financial adviser who really needs a financial adviser just as Spooner points out: "He [the financial adviser] clearly needs an adviser" (118). Maybe Godot cannot come because he himself is waiting for a Godot figure in Hirst's no man's land.

To sum up, the seemingly fragmented and incongruous movements and speeches of the characters in No Man's Land are, in fact, organized to establish a coherent and meaningful image of a narcissistic "no man's land." Within the paradigm of Ovid's Narcissus myth, the play reveals more than a threadbare Pinteresque theme, such as "the conflict of dominance and subservience, the battle for positions" (Rosador 195). The play is a fable of modern man who yearns for and rejects an archetypal journey for self-knowledge in his narcissistic experience.
Notes

1 Some critics have pointed out that Spooner is Hirst's double. For example, Burkman suggests: "...the intruding Spooner is his [Hirst's] double, a mirror image of some of his own possibilities [of renewal]" (6). Kalson holds a similar view: "Hirst and Spooner, the successful man of letters and the failed poet, reveal themselves as aspects of each other" (344).

2 In that sense, Hirst reminds one of Hamm in Samuel Beckett's play, Endgame. For the study of the similarities between the two plays, see Ruby Cohn.

3 For the imagery of light and darkness, see Ayako Kuwahara's article in which she concludes: "Hirst, confined in the wintry prison of a no man's land, is destined to remain immobilized in timeless darkness, continuously reminiscing his ever fading past, a past reserved in relief in the sunshine" (29).

4 Adler has an opposite view: he suggests that "Hirst himself appears to be not only for Spooner/Death but even to welcome and embrace him" (201).

5 For example, Gale suggests that "Hirst's metaphor reverberates with overtones of death" because of its association with the poem (219). Gabbard also believes that
"the role of the kindly, courteous death so often present in
Emily Dickinson's poems is projected onto Spooner" (271).

Esslin suggests that "no man's land" is "the frozen
region between life and death" (200); for Jones, it is the
"equipoise between past memories and an eternal, though
inactive, present" (302); Adler equates it with "Death which
intersects with art" (197-98).

Hirst's speech seems to be based on Pinter's own memory
of a youthful romance just after the war: "There was this dark
world of sex which took place in mists and rain, in alleys and
on park benches under trees. I [Pinter] remember it with a
very special fondness ..." (quoted in Knowles 82). Pinter's
autobiographic experience is transformed into a gloomy one in
this play.

In that respect, Kalson's suggestion is helpful; he
argues that the functions of the four characters are "the
projections as well as aspects of one another" (340).

Berman mentions the poem to start his arguments in the

Berman suggests, "Nature (the pool) is no less self-
occupied, oblivious to the human objects surrounding it"
(148).

It is suggestive that Burkman argues that Hirst is "a
wounded fisher-king whose potency is the major issue" of the
play ("Hirst" 9).
Another possible Godot figure is Hirst. Burkman points out that Hirst is a Godot figure who is bound by his circumstances:

Much like Godot, who, Vladimir and Estragon speculate, cannot answer their vague supplication without consulting his friends, agents, correspondents, books, and bank account, Hirst is unable to make decisions without consulting his servants, Foster and Briggs. ("Hirst" 7)
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The tramp figures in the three plays provide a mirror for other characters and cause them to embark on a kind of spiritual journey for self-knowledge. In *A Slight Ache*, the Matchseller is Flora's double as well as Edward's; however, the couple react differently to their mirror. Obsessed by his narcissistic delusions, Edward cannot accept his otherness reflected in the mirror; his journey toward the truth has stopped while he is still on the verge of his final destination. In contrast with Edward's failure to reach the moment of self-knowledge, Flora succeeds in achieving a kind of fulfillment by transforming her otherness into sameness. When one examines the Matchseller's role as Flora's double as well as Edward's, one can better understand not only Edward's apparently mysterious defeat at the end but also Flora's seemingly bizarre behavior of expelling Edward and accepting the Matchseller.

Just as the Matchseller mirrors Edward and Flora in *A Slight Ache*, Davies in *The Caretaker* reflects both Aston and Mick. However, unlike Flora and Edward, the brothers' final
response to the double is the same. Even though Aston is tolerant of his mirror image for the time being, he finally rejects the reflection by ousting the old tramp. Unlike Edward who yields in the confrontation with his otherness, Aston sticks to his own narcissistic world by keeping his dream of building the shed. Mick also expels the old tramp, accusing him not only of his own faults such as "violent, erratic and completely unpredictable" personality but also of not performing the role as "an interior decorator" which is originally imposed on Aston and also psychologically on himself. By ousting the old tramp, the brothers modify their narcissistic worlds and, thereby, rehabilitate the uncomfortable relationship between themselves.

The main function of Spooner in No Man's Land is the same as that of the Matchseller or Davies: to mirror the other characters. The old tramp doubles all three other characters by sharing several affinities with them. Provoked by the mirror image, the three characters reveal their narcissistic dilemma which is represented by Hirst's dream of somebody drowning, Brigg's Bolsover Street, and Foster's Bali Island. Their dilemma is related to their ambivalent desires: to return to the preoedipal stage and to stay in society. Spooner volunteers to be a savior figure for their narcissistic dilemma. However, he cannot perform the self-assumed role as savior because he himself indulges in his own fantasy of self-grandiosity as a pathological
narcissist. A result of Spooner's failure is the incarceration of all four characters incarceration in "no man's land." When one sees the play within the paradigm of narcissism, the seemingly fragmented and incongruous actions of the characters in No Man's Land come to be organized to establish a coherent and meaningful image of a narcissistic "no man's land."

Literal tramp figures seem to have disappeared from Pinter's plays since 1980. However, the characters' narcissistic personalities and their desire to return to the preoedipal stage, which have been reenacted in the three plays studied above, are repeatedly described in some of his recent plays. A good example of the argument is a triptych entitled Other Places, which includes Family Voices (1980), Victoria Station (1982), and A Kind of Alaska (1982).

Family Voices was written in 1980, directed by Peter Hall, and first broadcast on BBC Radio 3, 22nd January, 1981. It was later staged in a "platform performance" by the National Theatre in London on 13 Feb. 1981, and was one of the triple bill entitled Other Places at the National Theatre in London on 14 October 1982. In a theatre review of the play, Knowles suggests:

Any objective situation is undermined by indeterminacy of genre and style. Neither epistle nor monologue, the work deconstructs itself in a parodic mode which lacks an anterior model of
reference. (85)

Being "neither epistle nor monologue," the play consists of the three voices of father, mother, and son who send messages to each other. However, they are not corresponding; each is isolated and only sends messages which cannot reach the intended recipients:

The play presents a series of disembodied voices who, because they are disembodied, cannot connect. The image that we are left with is one of separateness. Essentially, family has become a hollow concept. Everyone, even family members (whether related by blood, marriage, or emotional dependence), is isolated and lives speaking to others who cannot hear them, and hearing no one's voice but their own. (Gale, "Family Voices" 163)

Through the fragmented messages each voice sends, one can gather the fact that the son left his house presumably for self-independence, escaping from a possessive mother and a hostile father. In that sense, the situation seems to be an oedipal one. However, examining the play in terms of narcissism, one can also find another level of meaning.

First of all, the son has settled in a rather mysterious boarding house and been seemingly satisfied with his new settlement:

Voice 1. I took a seat. I took it and sat in it. I am in it. I will never leave it. Oh mother, I
have found my home, my family. Little did I ever dream I could know such happiness. (76)
The son's "taking a seat" is the familiar motif which keeps appearing in the three plays—*A Slight Ache*, *The Caretaker*, and *No Man's Land*—symbolizing the characters' desire for dominance and security in the plays. Moreover, when Voice 1 declares, "I took a seat. ... I will never leave it," one is led to recall Hirst in *No Man's Land* who keeps saying, "I'd sit here forever" (107), "I'm sitting in this room" (108). Just as Hirst's sitting in his big chair in his room manifests his decision to remain in his no man's land and to reject reality, Voice 1 declares that he will never leave the seat.

However, Voice 1's settlement in the "seat" cannot mean his separation from the old home:

Voice 1. You see, mother, I am not lonely, because all that has ever happened to me is with me, keeps me company; my childhood, for example, through which you, my mother, and he, my father, guided me.

(68)

"All that has ever happened" and "childhood" of the Voice 1 is ironically described by Voice 2—the mother:

Voice 2. When I was washing your hair, with the most delicate shampoo, and rinsing, and then drying your hair so gently with my soft towel, so that no murmur came from you, of discomfort or unease, and
then looked into your eyes, and saw you look into mine, knowing that you wanted no-one else, no-one at all, knowing that you were entirely happy in my arms,... (76)

Her words are an exact description of the preoedipal stage in which a child is perfectly satisfied with the mother's love.

Just as Freud points out that man is "incapable of giving up a satisfaction he had once enjoyed" (14:94), Voice 1 wants to come back home at the end of the play:

Voice 1. I'm coming back to you, mother, to hold you in my arms. I am coming home. ... I am on my way back to you. I am about to make the journey back to you. What will you say to me? (82-83)

His decision to return home can be seen quite skeptically on a realistic level; Esslin suggests that "the son's homecoming, it seems, will never take place" (Pinter 217). However, the important thing is not if the son really returns to his mother or not but the fact that he has already decided to make a U-turn toward home, toward his mother. When the son leaves home, he might be an Oedipus who was starting a journey for self-knowledge. However, the son's quest "from time immemorial" is ultimately related to the reunion with the mother.

If the son is trapped in the "seat," in spite of his yearning to be restored to his mother, other characters in
the play seem to echo the image of the son's no man's land. For example, the mother is also incarcerated in a dark world:

   Voice 2. Sometimes I think I have always been sitting like this. I sometimes think I have always been sitting like this, alone by an indifferent fire, curtains closed, night, winter. (78)

The mother's frozen situation is epitomized by the father, who says that he lies "in this glassy grave!" (81); the father is also a Narcissus who is incarcerated in his own world—the reflection of himself. Moreover, according to Riley, Mr. Withers, "lives in another area, best known to himself" (79). In that sense, almost all the characters in the play are doubles of each other, reflecting the counterpart's image.

**Victoria Station** is another of the plays in *Other Places*, first performed in London on 14 October 1982. Esslin suggests about the play:

*Victoria Station* is vintage Pinter, reminiscent of *The Dumb Waiter* and *The Hothouse*. It is as though Pinter, after the stylistic departure of *Betrayal* was experimenting with two different styles and approaches, searching for a new synthesis between the grotesquely surrealistic on the one hand and a metaphysical realism on the other. (Pinter 224)

It is certain that the play is an amalgam of the
surrealistic and the realistic; however, it is rather inappropriate to call it "a new synthesis." The "synthesis" contains almost exactly the same paradigm as those of former plays, such as *A Slight Ache*, *The Caretaker*, and *No Man's Land*.

The play consists of the dialogues between the controller in the office and one of the taxi drivers, number 274. The driver rejects the controller's command to go to Victoria Station to pick up a little man coming from Boulogne and to take him to Cuckfield. The driver even says that he doesn't know where Victoria Station is! Instead, he insists that he already has a "passenger on board" (56).

**Controller.** Well, where does he want to go?

**Driver.** He doesn't want to go anywhere. We just cruised about for a bit and then we came to rest.

**Controller.** In Crystal Palace?

**Driver.** Not in the palace.

**Controller.** Oh, you're not in the Palace?

**Driver.** No. I'm not right inside it.

**Controller.** I think you'll find the Crystal Palace burnt down years ago, old son. It burnt down in the Great Fire of London. (57)

Even though the controller points out that the Crystal Palace was burnt down a long time ago on a realistic level, the driver still can see it: "I'm sitting by a little dark park underneath Crystal Palace. I can see the Palace. It's
silhouetted against the sky. It's a wonderful edifice, isn't it?" (55).

If the father's "glassy grave" is an emblem of each character's narcissistic isolation in *Family Voices*, the Crystal Palace has the same meaning in *Victoria Station*. For the driver, the Palace is his own narcissistic pool which is equal to Hirst's no man's land. His yearning to stay in his no man's land is emphasized by the assumed girl on the back seat of the car:

Driver. I think I've fallen in love. For the first time in my life.

Controller. Who have you fallen in love with?

Driver. With this girl on the back seat. I think I'm going to keep her for the rest of my life. I'm going to stay in this car with her for the rest of my life. I'm going to marry her in this car. We'll die together in this car.

.............

Driver. I'm very happy. I've never known such happiness. (60)

The girl seems to provide him with the reflection of his own image in the mirror, just as the Crystal Palace does. By giving the driver the narcissistic fantasy that he has finally found an ideal love, she fulfills his desire to return to a preoedipal stage.

While the girl in the back seat of the car suggests the
driver's desire to return to a primeval status, the controller's orders seem to be a call from society. Still, it is interesting that the controller is no less narcissistic than the driver. He feels that he does not get enough esteem from others: "I'm alone in this miserable freezing fucking office and nobody loves me" (58). Just like Mick in The Caretaker or Briggs in No Man's Land, the controller pours out an "unusual oral rage" which Kernberg defines as a symptom of the narcissistic personality (227-29):

Controller. I'm going to tie you up bollock naked to a butcher's table and I'm going to flog you to death all the way to Crystal Palace. (54)

I'll destroy you bone by bone. I'll suck you in and blow you out in little bubbles. I'll chew your stomach out with my own teeth. I'll eat all the hair off your body. You'll end up looking like a pipe cleaner. Get me? (58)

Along with his desire to get love and esteem from others, the controller's spiritual world is not greatly different from the driver who wants to stay beside the Crystal Palace:

Controller. You know what I've always dreamed of doing? I've always had this dream of having a holiday in sunny Barbados... We can swim together in the blue Caribbean. (59)

The controller's dream reminds one of Foster's yearning to
return to Bali or Siam Island in No Man's Land: "I miss the Siamese girls. I miss the girls in Bali. ... A giggle and a cuddle. Sometimes my ambitions extend no further than that" (114).

Finally, the controller decides to discard his responsibility as a threatening call of reality for the driver, and to join in the driver's fantastic world:

Controller. I've decided that what I'd like to do now is to come down there and shake you by the hand straightaway. I'm going to shut this little office and I'm going to jump into my old car and I'm going to pop down to see you, to shake you by the hand. All right?

Driver. Fine. But what about this man coming off the train at Victoria Station - the 10.22 from Boulogne?

Controller. He can go and fuck himself. (61)

The play ends with the controller's departure for the driver's whereabouts:

Controller. Don't move. Stay exactly where you are.

I'll be right with you.

Driver. No, I won't move.

Silence.

I'll be here. (62)

The controller turns out to be the double of the driver by sharing his narcissistic desires. At the same time, the
driver's fixed posture by the Crystal Palace is another version of Hirst's situation in no man's land.

A Kind of Alaska is a one-act play which attracted most attention from both the critics and the audience among the three plays contained in Other Places performed in 1982:

A Kind of Alaska (which strikes me on instant acquaintance as a masterpiece) moves one in a way no work of his has ever done before ... Never before have I known a Pinter play to leave one so emotionally wrung through. (Bellington 10)

Even though the play seems to be remarkably different from Pinter's former plays, still it is not hard to find reverberations of the motifs that appeared in the earlier plays.

As Pinter reveals in a prefatory note to the play, it is inspired by Oliver Sacks's Awakenings which deals with the awakening of patients with encephalitis lethargica, or sleeping sickness. In the prefatory note, the disease is described as follows:

[It is] an extraordinary epidemic illness which presented itself in innumerable forms—as delirium, mania, trances, coma, sleep, insomnia, restlessness, and states of Parkinsonism. ... The worst-affected sank into singular states of 'sleep'—conscious of their surroundings but motionless, speechless, and without hope or will,
confined to asylums or other institutions. As a victim of the disease, Deborah is awakened by an injection of the miraculous drug L-Dopa after twenty nine years in a comatose status. She gets inescapably involved in "the tensions between two-people-in-one, a girl's response to her woman's body and to a fresh world, her unpracticed efforts to conceal and to cope" (Dukore, "Alaskan" 167).

In understanding Deborah's situation, it is worth examining how Deborah fell victim to the disease:

Pauline. ... You were standing with the vase by the sidetable, you stretched towards it but you had stopped. ... Then Daddy tried to take the vase from you. He could not ... wrench it from your hands. He could not ... move you from the spot. Like ... marble.

Pause

You were sixteen. (31, emphases added)

The scene above reminds one again of Narcissus in Ovid's Metamorphosis. When he had a glimpse of his reflection in the pool, Narcissus "was overwhelmed by himself and, unmoving and holding the same expression, he was fixed there like a statue moulded out of Parian marble" (418-19). If Narcissus is stultified like "Parian marble," Deborah is also immobilized like "marble." Moreover, Narcissus's turning point in his life--falling in love with himself--
occurred when he was sixteen: "when the Cephisian had added one year to three times five" (351-52). Likewise, Deborah contracts the disease when she is sixteen.

Just as her situation is quite similar to that of Narcissus, Deborah's sickness is somewhat related to narcissistic disturbances on a psychological level. In explaining his theory of primary narcissism, Freud argues that the sleeplike state of withdrawal involves "a deliberate rejection of reality" (quoted in Hamilton 30). Moreover, Kohut's theory seems to tally with Deborah's sickness when he suggests that one of the narcissistic personality disorders is "hypochondriacal preoccupations with physical and mental health, vegetative disturbances in various organ systems" (23).

It is clear that Deborah fell a victim to a formidable sleeping sickness. Still, it is also true that her situation coincides with her own volition to remain in a frozen domain. The argument is supported by Deborah's description of her illness:

Deborah. I'll tell you what it [her comatose state] is. It's a vast series of halls. With enormous interior windows masquerading as walls. The windows are mirrors, you see. And so glass reflects glass. For ever and ever.

Pause

You can't imagine how still it is. So silent I
hear my eyes move. (39)

The dizzy and labyrinthine world created by the mirrors is similar to Bolsover Street in No Man's Land, and even Aston and Mick's house in The Caretaker where Davies gets lost whenever he gets in. Moreover, being trapped by mirrors and the dead silence of the scene—the details of Deborah's description also echo the situation of Narcissus in the myth. Deborah's narcissistic situation is well summarized by Hornby: "Your mind has not been damaged. It was merely suspended, it took up a temporary habitation ... in a kind of Alaska" (34). It goes without saying that "a kind of Alaska" which is a frozen, immobile world is another form of Hirst's no man's land.² Ironically, by the sickness, Deborah is led into an idealistic stage; she is the whole world because all the mirrors just reflect her.

In a sense, Deborah's situation can be understood from a feminist perspective. For example, Hall believes that the play "offers an expansive and accurate metaphor for the position of the female" (10): "To some extent, Deborah describes the place of the feminine in the patriarchy or phallo-centric thought—confined, other, silent, and even a bit tortured" (11). However, if one sees Deborah's situation in narcissistic terms, her awakening seems not to signal "a release, a new period of freedom" (Hall 122); rather, it is a painful awakening to return to reality. In that respect, the play reverses the movement of No Man's
Land.

At the same time, however, it is important that Deborah has also felt a call from society in her comatose status: Deborah. I'm lying in bed. People bend over me, speak to me. I want to say hullo, to have a chat, to make some inquiries. But you can't do that if you're in a vast hall of glass with a tap dripping. (39)

"To say hullo, to have a chat, to make some inquiries" is her conscience saying that she should return to reality. Hornby also points out the seemingly trivial but actually significant movement in her sleep:

Hornby. But it [her comatose status] was not entirely static, was it? You ventured into quite remote ... utterly foreign ... territories. You kept on the move. And I charted your itinerary .... (35)

Her movement in her sleep is an echo of the two ambivalent desires expressed by the characters in No Man's Land: to return to a narcissistic world and to stay in reality.

Deborah's subconscious urge to return to reality is related to another narcissistic aspect of Deborah's personality which is expressed by her desire to control her sisters: "I'm her [Pauline's] elder sister so she doesn't listen to me. And Estelle doesn't listen to me because she's my elder sister. That's family life" (16). However, Deborah's conflicts with her sisters, in fact, seem to be
more than those which are common in "family life":

Deborah. Where's Pauline? She's such a mischief. ... 
You're so sharp you'll cut yourself. You're too 
witty for your own tongue. You'll bite your own 
tongue off one of these days and I'll keep your 
tongue in a closed jar and you'll never ever ever 
ever be witty again. (13, emphases added)

Deborah's sinister curse reminds one of Echo's story in the 
myth of Narcissus. In the myth, Echo often prevents Juno 
from catching Jupiter's promiscuous behavior with nymphs 
with her talkativeness. An angry Juno finally declares:

"The power of this tongue," she said, "by which I 
have been tricked, will be rendered slight, and 
the use of your voice most brief." And she 
confirmed her threats with action: the nymph began 
only to reiterate words at the ends of speeches, 
and repeat what she had heard. (Ovid 366-369)

As a result, Echo cannot initiate any speech and thereby any 
action; her inability to speak highlights her helplessness 
when she is only derided and ignored by Narcissus.

Like Echo in the myth, Pauline is ignored in Deborah's 
narcissistic world. She is a totally forgotten being for 
Hornby who has engaged himself in taking care of Deborah:
"Your sister Pauline was twelve when you were left for dead. 
When she was twenty I married her. She is a widow. I have 
lived with you" (350). Pauline's situation is similar to
that of the driver's wife in *Victoria Station*. The driver is not concerned about his own wife, being infatuated with the girl on the back seat of his car. About his wife, he simply says: "My wife's in bed. Probably asleep" (55). Just as the driver's wife is forgotten by him, Pauline is forgotten by Hornby: she also has been ironically "asleep." Therefore, Deborah's sinister wish to cut out her sister's tongue is symbolically fulfilled. In addition, by having been asleep, even though in extremely opposite ways, Deborah and Pauline mirror each other, just as Narcissus and Echo do in the myth:

The fate of Narcissus thus mirrors the fate of Echo, ... Like Echo, his body wastes away, becomes insubstantial .... Echo became mere voice, Narcissus little more than image. (Nuttall 145)

One of the most remarkable differences between the plays written after *Other Places* with the three plays is that the later ones are political. For example, *One for the Road* (1984) is "essentially about the abuse of authority" in Pinter's own terms. In an interview with Nicholas Hern, Pinter distinguishes the play with the former ones as follows:

So all these [political] considerations were alive in my mind over those years, 1957-60 or so. Certainly the plays use metaphor to a great extent, whereas in *One for the Road* the deed is
much more specific and direct. I don't really see *One for the Road* as a metaphor. For anything. It describes a state of affairs in which there are victims of torture. You have the torturer, you have the victims. (8)

As Pinter points out, the typical multi-leveled metaphors in the former Pinter canon seem to be simplified to the relationship between the torturer and the tortured.

However, in spite of Pinter's dismissal, the play still seems to contain the multileveled metaphor which is related to the theme of the double and narcissism because the torturer has a narcissistic delusion that he is omnipotent. Nicholas, the torturer in the play is almost a megalomaniac who believes that he can control other people's lives at his own will:

Nicholas. ... I run the place. God speaks through me. I'm referring to the Old Testament God, by the way, although I'm a long way from being Jewish. Everyone respects me here. Including you, I take it? I think that is the correct stance. (36)

To emphasize his authority, Nicholas attributes the origin of his power to God. However, Nicholas's power only brings about sinister destructiveness:

Nicholas. Do you love death? Not necessarily your own. Others. The death of others. Do you love the death of others, or at any rate, do you love
the death of others as much as I do? ... Death. Death. Death. As has been noted by the most respected authorities, it is beautiful. The purest, most harmonious thing there is. Sexual intercourse is nothing compared to it. (45-46)

As an agent of brutal destruction, Nicholas tortures Victor, presumably one of the leaders of the anti-regime movement of the country. The torturer also has his victim's wife humiliated and raped by many of his men and presumably kills his son, Nicky. Having brutally destroyed one by one what Victor has had, Nicholas still seems not satisfied. What he finally has done toward the end of the play is to have Victor's tongue cut out. The act inevitably reminds one of Deborah's words in A Kind of Alaska: "I'll keep your tongue in a closed jar and you'll never ever ever ever be witty again" (13).

However, there exists an irony in the relationship between the torturer and the tortured. When Nicholas talks about the "death of others," he believes that "others" are totally separated from himself. It is interesting that the name of Victor's son who is assumed to be killed by Nicholas's men is the namesake of the torturer, Nicky. Moreover, it is not casual that the name of the tortured, the victim of the brutal and totalitarian power is "Victor." Therefore, the possibility that the situation can be reversed is strongly suggested. In other words, "the
others" can be switched to Nicholas himself and his men. Indeed, Nicholas may be the most miserable victim in the play by exposing the worst part of human instincts like Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*. Nicholas rejects his otherness and sticks to his megalomaniac narcissism; he has to go a long way to find his identity, his otherness. It is meaningful that he says "one for the road" whenever he drinks in the play.

If Deborah's sinister wish is literally realized in *One for the Road*, it is also symbolically performed in *Mountain Language* (1988). Esslin suggests: "*Mountain Language* is an openly political tract, an anguished outcry against dictatorship and torture in a totalitarian society" (*"Mountain Language"* 76). He believes that the play "states the facts about a totalitarian torture system, no more" (*"Mountain Language"* 78). However, one can find still there is more behind the facts of the abuse of power.

The most significant abuse of power by the authority is the prohibition against the Mountain people's using their own language:

Officer. Now hear this. You are mountain people. You hear me? Your language is dead. It is forbidden. It is not permitted to speak your mountain language in this place. You cannot speak your language to your men. It is not permitted. Do you understand? You may not speak it. It is
outlawed. You may only speak the language of the capital. That is the only language permitted in this place. You will be badly punished if you attempt to speak your mountain language in this place. This is a military decree. It is the law. Your language is forbidden. It is dead. No one is allowed to speak your language. Your language no longer exists. Any question? (21)

The Mountain people's tongues are symbolically cut out because they cannot speak their language. If language is one of the basic means of establishing human relationships, it also is more than merely a means of communication. In understanding the profound meaning of language, the very beginning of Genesis in Old Testament is of great help:

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters.

Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw how good the light was. God then separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." Thus evening came, and morning followed—the first day. (1:1-5)

God's means of expressing his power is words. The universe was created by God's words—that is, language. By
confiscating "words" from the Mountain people, the officer who is the representative of the totalitarian authority assumes the role of an agent of God's power. The officer is another version of Nicholas in One for the Road, who believes that he is an agent of "the Old Testament God" (36).

Still, there is a multi-leveled irony in this play. The Prisoner and the Guard both have "a wife and three kids" (31); it is possible that their situations will be reversed any time. Moreover, the Mountain people overcome the law which prohibits them from using their language by telepathic communication. The communications between the Prisoner and his mother and between the Man—another prisoner—and the Young Woman—his wife—are designated by "Voices over" in the stage directions. What the stage directions mean becomes clear in the film version of the play. In the film, the victims gaze into each other's eyes and their words are echoed while their mouths are tightly shut; they are talking without language! Their telepathic communication is a heroic achievement against the authority; they may be ultimate victors.

The torturers' delusions that they have an absolute, god-like power reverberates in Party Time (1991). The play was first given a staged reading at the Pinter Festival which was held at the Ohio State University in April 1991 in commemoration of Pinter's 60th birthday, and then staged in
London in October of the same year. In the play, a representative of those in power asserts:

Douglas: We want peace and we're going to get it. But we want that peace to be cast iron. No leaks. No draughts. Cast iron. Tight as a drum. That's the kind of peace we want and that's the kind of peace we're going to get. A cast iron peace. (15)

"A cast iron peace" means nothing but the world of death; he is dreaming of "the death of others" in Nicholas's terms in One for the Road. Another character of the party in the play even develops Douglas's sinister and megalomaniac delusion:

Terry: We could suffocate every single one of you at a given signal or we could shove a broomstick up each individual arse at another given signal or we could poison all the mother's milk in the world so that every baby would drop dead before it opened its perverted bloody mouth. (28)

As I surveyed above, the theme of the double and narcissism constantly appears in Pinter's recent plays, including the political ones. The characters in the earlier plays—that is, those preceding the political plays—than the political ones are usually trapped in the narcissistic domain which is represented by Edward's shelter in A Slight Ache, Aston's hallucinations in The Caretaker, Hirst's "no man's land" in No Man's Land, the father's glassy grave in
Family Voices, the driver's Crystal Palace in Victoria Station, and Deborah's "a kind of alaska" in A Kind of Alaska.

At the same time, the characters who want to stay near the alienated, frozen pond also reveal a narcissistic desire to control others. For example, in A Slight Ache, Edward uses all the available cruel means to destroy a wasp and feels elated, seeing the wasp dead: he enjoys the feeling of absolute power over an other object. In The Caretaker, Mick abuses Davies verbally and physically: he indulges in the game in which he can manipulate the victim absolutely as he wishes. In No Man's Land, Foster threatens Spooner, "We could destroy you without a glance" (111). Likewise, in A Kind of Alaska, Deborah puts a curse on Pauline: "I'll keep your tongue in a closed jar and you'll never ever ever be witty again" (13).

The fragmented expressions of the characters' narcissistic yearning for absolute power are fully unfolded in the latest political plays; the torturers of the totalitarian authority wish to control others absolutely. They are preoccupied with a fantasy of unlimited power, which derives from their narcissistic "self-grandiosity".

The experience of omnipotence and perfection during early symbiosis is inevitably challenged as frustrations by the mother occur. The child reacts to them by substitutions. It may then
design a grand, omnipotent image of itself—the
grandiose self—and cathect it with libido. This
image of self-grandiosity is experienced as part
of the self and is therefore narcissistic.
Normally, it is reduced gradually and integrated
into the maturing personality. Whenever this
process is interfered with, the grandiose self is
preserved in the adult person who will continue to
pursue the archaic narcissistic aims of grandeur
and perfection. (Dierks 38)
The torturers have to wake up from the narcissistic delusion
of self-grandiosity and to achieve Oedipus's maturity which
would enable them to see the victims as their own otherness,
not wholly separate entities. In that sense, those in power
are the would-be spiritual tramps who have to go a long way;
when they indulge in abusing their absolute power, they are
having "one for the road."

Pinter hints in his dramas that the narcissistic
delusion of unlimited power is a universal phenomenon of
humankind:

It is also, however, true that many of the natural
sadistic qualities, which we all possess, are
given free rein in the play [One for the Road].
The audience felt fear—but what was it fear of?
Fear not only of being in the position of the
given victim, but a fear also born of recognition
of themselves as interrogator. Because think of the joy of having absolute power.

("A Play and its Politics," One for the Road 17)

In the same context, Joseph Westlund argues that audiences of Shakespeare's The Tempest are drawn to the narcissistic Prospero "because he allows us vicariously to experience universal but infantile desires for omnipotence, for total control over others" (quoted in Layton 100).

To sum up, Narcissus's dilemma can be epitomized as his inability to accept his otherness as his own and thereby to achieve self-integration. Likewise, Pinter's characters in the three plays that are the focus of this study-- A Slight Ache, The Caretaker, No Man's Land--invariably are stuck between their narcissistic "need for identification and the need for rejection of identification" at the same time (Alcorn 106). Their dilemma is emphasized by the fact that their doubles are "stinking old tramps" who are the last persons with whom the protagonists want to identify. Still, the protagonists' courage in inviting the tramps into their own realms and their desire to complete a spiritual journey imply their potential as Oedipus-figures.

While the torturers in the political plays reflect man's universal "desires for omnipotence, for total control over others," the motif of the double and narcissism in Pinter's plays mirrors man's universal desire for achieving self-knowledge which is consummated in the myth of Oedipus.
Pinter is more courageous than his characters; he is undaunting in his description of his characters who are not able to complete their spiritual journey. His plays become an unrelenting challenge, a mirror in which we can explore with him not just the narcissistic surfaces, but the darker, life-affirming depths.
Notes

1 One of the patients in Sacks's *Awakenings* describes her experience as follows:

Worlds within worlds within worlds. Once I get going I can't possibly stop. It's like being caught between mirrors, or echoes, or something. Or being caught on a merry-go-round which won't come to a stop. (Sacks 69)

2 In that respect, Sakellaridou's view is helpful:

The image of people in sudden isolation from the moving, living world has been a recurrent theme from Pinter's memory plays onwards. He has often presented people visualizing themselves in a sound-proof, empty space, surrounded by darkness, stillness, silence. Several lyrical and poetic speeches in *Silence* and *No Man's Land* give impressionistic views of this disturbing limbo state. Especially Spooner's solemn, prophetic words at the end of *No Man's land*, "No. You are in no man's land. Which never moves, which never changes, which never grows older, but which remains forever, icy and silent" (153), describe the chilling, terrifying condition which becomes the central theme in *a Kind of Alaska*. (204-205)
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