

Losing the Plot: Frank Tuohy's last novel

'His biography is there, whether it is written or not, whether we read it or not, whether or not it will ever be written...'

Frank Tuohy, 'T.S. Eliot: A Note'

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The world is filled with unwritten books. Though they occupy no real space on library shelves, they lodge permanently in the spaces of memory or imagination. Often no more than an idea or a title, they tease the reader with possibility and hope. Our knowledge of them comes from what the author wrote or said about them, so that there is usually a record of some kind, but tantalisingly insufficient and often resistant of investigation. Yet it may also be that they were abandoned at some stage, or deliberately destroyed. Uncompleted works that partially exist, like 'Kubla Khan' or *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, may be examined and discussed. In this essay I should like to consider a long story on which the English novelist and short-story writer Frank Tuohy (1925-1999) was working towards the end of his life, and left unfinished at his death. It was meant to be a novel, and would have been his first in over thirty years, had he managed to complete it.

Frank Tuohy's *oeuvre* is not large, and consists of three novels, written in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and three books of short stories, composed between and after these, the last in the 1970s. On publication of his first novel, *The Animal Game* (1957), set in Brazil, Tuohy was hailed as one of the new hopes of English fiction at that time. This novel was shortly followed by a second, *The Warm Nights of January* (1960), set once more in Brazil but written mainly in Paris. Both drew on his experience of life in South America, but the second book, unlike the first, was refused publication in the United States on account of its portrayal of an interracial union (between a French woman and a younger black Brazilian man). In the archive of Tuohy's papers at Boston University, there is a brief despairing note in one of the exercise books he used for composition: 'I don't think I shall ever be able to finish my second novel without returning to Rio, and I

am completely unable to write about England.¹ Much of Tuohy's fiction is set abroad, and his third novel, *The Ice Saints* (1964), which takes place in Poland, won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize the year that it came out, and another prize the year after.² It was the last full novel that he published, though not the last that he would attempt to write. After his first visit to Japan in the 1960s, he started a novel about a couple named 'Mark' and 'Libby', who had returned to England from there, but this was abandoned, though the first part of the manuscript survives.

Tuohy won the first Katherine Mansfield Prize for the short story that gave the title to his first collection, *The Admiral and the Nuns* (1962), and wrote some excellent short stories set in Japan, but never seems to have attempted a novel about it (apart from the abandoned 'Mark and Libby' manuscript, which casts a backward look towards it).³ Other of his short stories have settings in all the countries mentioned, as well as a number that take place in England. His three volumes of shorter fiction were later issued together as *The Collected Stories* (1984) and received high praise, but were only followed by a few more short stories, appearing in volumes of *The London Magazine* or *Winter's Tales*. Despite the fact that Tuohy hoped to complete another collection of short stories and a novel, before laying down his pen, neither of these projects was finally accomplished.⁴

The successful publication of *The Collected Stories*, subsequently issued as a Penguin paperback, brought renewed attention to Tuohy's writing. He was then living once more in Tokyo, where he taught at Rikkyō (St. Paul's) University, 1983-89. In an interview-article by Christine Chapman for the *International Herald Tribune* in 1988, he was reported to be 'working on a novel'. The piece continues: "It goes very slowly," he admitted. "It's set in England, but it goes abroad too. I'm trying to fit in places I haven't used yet."⁵ Like most authors, he did not wish to divulge the content of the book while he was still working on it. Others also took an interest, though the substance of the story remained a mystery, and it was not until Tuohy died and his papers were examined that the nature of what he had been working on became apparent. Having known Tuohy, and met or visited some of his friends and relatives, I was eager to discover what might remain myself. During a long weekend at the home of his friend and former editor, Alan Maclean (1924-2006), who then had possession of the papers before they were sent to the Boston University

archive, I had the chance to examine them. Besides some early and probably unpublished stories, essays, and the beginnings of one or two longer fictions, there was a substantial draft of a late novel, much of it typed and some of which Alan Maclean had been asked to read, which was clearly the unnamed novel Tuohy had been working on. Other notes and notebooks seemed to contain earlier drafts of it, or to refer to it, but it was evidently still unfinished. At the risk of being unfair to the author, who had not seen the work through to completion, I would like to give some account of it here.

The manuscript consists of 163 typed A4 pages, extended by another twenty handwritten foolscap sheets, which then end mid-sentence. There would appear to be three sections, and a handwritten page in a separate notebook offers some tentative titles for the parts, or perhaps the whole, which I shall refer to in this examination. There is also a typed note at the beginning, saying that the novel is 'meant to be episodic'. It opens with a car, belonging to an English doctor called Woodruff, who is returning from a call and being driven home by his chauffeur, Winnett. A baby of mysterious parentage has just been born, followed by the death of the mother, and this child the doctor apparently adopts, placing it in the care of a neighbouring family called the Bicknells. The doctor seems to be the narrator's father, and the England portrayed here is one of ignorance and hypocrisy about sexual matters, somewhat similar to the prewar world into which Tuohy (whose own father was a doctor) had been born, and whose attitudes evidently stayed with him. In the second short chapter we are introduced to a school friend of Gregory Woodruff, the doctor's son, named Richard Wilkes, at a birthday party. The illegitimate child, known only as 'Stevie', is present too, and teased at the birthday party. Much of the rest of the first part is concerned with Richard and Gregory as adolescents, their rivalry and sexual development, to which Stevie's growth and presence form a doubtful, and disturbing, contrast. At school the two boys make friends with a teacher called Vere Henderson, who claims to know 'Tom' Eliot (clearly the poet T.S. Eliot, 1888-1965).⁶ Henderson gives them an introduction to a 'Captain Waldron who lives at Barstead Mill', who has a younger, evidently unfaithful, wife called Mariana, and a forbidding German housekeeper. Gregory becomes the lover of Mariana, while her impotent husband goes off to Portugal. Gregory's father dies early in this section, and his mother develops a slight

religious mania. Stevie makes an appearance singing at a concert, and there is some hint that he may have been interfered with by a 'Father Bradwell' at his school, which is a different one from that which the other boys attend. There is also a 'Major Burnaby' who takes especial interest in the child, who appears angelic when he sings. This brings the story to the end of the first part, which Tuohy has divided into nine fairly short chapters, covering fifty pages. At the end of it we know that Richard will go to spend a year in France, using money from his grandmother perhaps, as he seems to have no parents.

In Part One, one of the three tentative titles that Tuohy noted down has been clearly implanted in the text and story. This is 'The Moated Grange', which alludes not only to the poem 'Mariana', about a lonely and neglected woman of this name, by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, but also, beyond that, to the play by Shakespeare from which both Tennyson, and afterwards a number of Victorian painters, took this febrile subject.⁷ Quite what Tuohy intends by introducing it is not clear, but it was presumably as a metaphor for sexual repression in the British Isles. (Frank Tuohy was of Irish descent on his father's side, while his mother was Scottish.) Nico Waldron figures later in the story, and is one of rather too many characters in the novel that have names that begin with 'W' (Woodruff, Winnett, Wilkes) or 'B' (Bicknell, Bradwell, Burnaby), a subject which might yield some meaning in itself.

The second section, or Part Two, while all of it is typed, is not fully divided into numbered chapters, and Tuohy's notes suggest that some parts are missing. The chapters do not run quite in sequence, since there is no tenth chapter (unless it has been numbered incorrectly). The eleventh chapter is the last to have a number, and ends on page 96, though the remaining fifty pages of the typescript can be easily divided up. This part opens suddenly in Paris, where Richard is visiting a friend called Lydia, whom he had met in Provence, and goes to attend a cabaret with her and her friend Babette. The revelation is that Stevie, to Richard's astonishment, is performing as a singer in this 'International Cabaret'. The two recognise each other and talk together afterwards, and there is a hint here for the first time of Stevie's sexual ambivalence, from the account he gives of his life in Paris, and then again when he travels south by train with Richard. But there is also a suggestion of cruelty, in a joke he plays on Richard when they visit the Roman amphitheatre

at Nîmes, where Stevie vanishes and Richard is momentarily afraid that he has fallen, perhaps to his death. Both then reappear in London, where again Stevie (described as 'the young Rimbaud') seems to lead a vagrant and vaguely predatory life. Since it is by then the 1960s, drugs appear among the leisure activities of younger people, while there are indications that someone (Stevie, or Iris Bicknell) may be trying to extract money from Richard's grandmother, who is in a nursing home. There are also unsettling intimations of Fascist sympathies on the part of Nico Waldron. Two references to a poem by Lewis Carroll have been implanted, and thus provide the second of the three possible titles, 'The Beamish Boy',⁸ plainly in reference to the winsome Stevie, who enjoys popularity with both sexes. Another literary allusion is made through old Mrs Wilkes, when it is revealed that her grandson, Richard, is writing a biography of John Wilkes (1725-1797), a famous libertarian politician and a contemporary of the eighteenth-century poet Alexander Pope, as well as the author of an obscene parody of Pope called 'Essay on Woman'. Richard evinces surprise that his grandmother should know so much about the writings of this distinguished ancestor, mention of whom gives these characters a real historical provenance. At the end of this section Gregory has a new upper-class girlfriend called 'Teresa', whom Richard is summoned to meet, and Tuohy makes much of the class differences in their wary conversation. Though this part seems to end without conclusion, and to have some loose strands, Tuohy's notes suggest that there were other portions still to be written that might have drawn the chapters and characters together into a more coherent whole. There is much of interest in all this, though some editing might help to improve it. The scenes in France are especially well rendered, while in the English countryside it seems almost as if everyone wears tweeds and lives on shepherd's pie. But it is the third section of the manuscript that is the most engaging, and problematic.

The last part, or Part Three, is handwritten but quite easy to decipher, and takes place in Portugal. Tuohy not only lived in Brazil, but also wrote a book about Portugal (or rather an introductory essay, with notes to accompany the illustrations), and so it is a country and a language that he knew well.⁹ This unbroken chapter opens with a description of a hired car, driven by Richard, climbing through the hills to a country estate. In the distance he sees someone on horseback at the top of a hill, and this turns out to be Stevie, who is

now the permanent house-guest of Nico Waldron, and may be his illegitimate son. The grim German housekeeper is once more present, and a local priest is invited to dinner, but there are suggestions that both Stevie and Nico Waldron are preying sexually on servants or the local peasant population, with the connivance of the German housekeeper. There is a tone of amorality, almost of evil, in the bluff cruelty and indifference that the two men display. (Stevie calls Nico 'darling', which is strangely chilling, an expression of alliance rather than affection.) Richard agrees to make an outing with Stevie, and they go to Leiria, famous for its perilous stone staircase, the steps leading up to a church high above the town. There is a gap here in the text, and a note says Tuohy intended to add 'about 500 words' of description about the place, but the lack of this does not interrupt the progress of the story. Stevie disappears part-way up the steps, pretending once more to have fallen, until his reflection appears in a glass case and he knocks Richard down. Stevie then asks Richard if he remembers Nîmes, where the same thing happened once before, and the other is left feeling both furious, and 'at a loss to know what this group of images was meant to restore to his mind'. And that is where it stops, in what is by far the most absorbing part of the whole manuscript, without any hint of what will happen next, or how the tale might end.

The problem of the ending seems to have been present from the start, according to the author's first outline for the novel. The outline below was written just after his return to England, and his retirement in 1989:

Sketch for an outline (without a plot.)

Chapter one: Dr Woodruff discovers the child. He takes an interest: the child is fostered out to the Picknells in the country. Gregory and I are aware of him, first as a near neighbour, then more rarely when he makes shining goodygoody appearances.

Chapter two: Mrs: Woodruff: the headmaster's wife. Dr Woodruff's sudden death. Gregory at school and the holidays. Mrs Tyrell Bailey. His affairs at school: he

has never had much of a problem there. (Unlike oneself?) The end of this chapter is the collapse of prospects for Leonard at the Church school – Father Bouverie goes to jail.

Chapter three: Lenny as singer? Gregory has to be a journalist. More concentration on Mrs Woodruff's religious mania: she is praying for them. I stay with Gregory and his first wife (Maureen figure.) Is she happy? He drinks and is unfaithful. She goes off?

Chapter four Lenny on the loose: is he blackmailing Mrs Woodruff? In Greece and Paris: rich lovers.

GAP

Chapter five Gregory's upper-class wife. Grave pietas. The parasites move in: The dear girls. Lenny.

The essence of the story is plainly here, with some minor changes, and some significant developments and expansions. It is quite clear that, though Gregory is the doctor's son in the story, the viewpoint of the story is not his, but that of Richard, who largely represents Tuohy himself. As a writer he had never been comfortable with the self as subject, but merely as an observer of events. There are one or two name-changes, the most notable of which is that from the original 'Leonard / Lenny' to the later 'Stevie', which may offer a clue. Although we can see how the story might progress, there is no indication as to how it might end, except for an uncertain note at the bottom of this page, after a gap of four lines:

The Final Chapter: Is a murder possible?

There are further notes, dated 'Nov. 8th', on the following page:

Absence of plot very serious.

Cut out: self as commentator.

Start all over.

The shift in viewpoint, from the first person to the character of 'Richard', creates a slight confusion in the opening section of the typed version of Part One. Tuohy puts his finger on the essential problem in the last note on this page:

I'm stuck with cleaving too close to life: I must melodramatise. But cannot break through.

And again on the next page of this notebook, he clarifies the idea somewhat:

He is always around: plot determines character But I have no plot:

Two brothers? One feels the other is pursuing him. – they represent two aspects of the same person: the truly weak men.

The last statement invokes an idea belonging to the 1930s, found in the work of Christopher Isherwood (1904-1986), but owing something also to discussions with his close friend at that time, the poet W.H. Auden (1907-1973).¹⁰ The person who is 'always around' (with its suggestion of undesirability) is presumably Stevie. The comment that follows this projects a certain line of development, but still without a concrete plan of action. A further note, on another page, dated 'January 26th, 1990', gives the intended general shape:

Structure. Part I until they are 20

Part II 26-30

Epilogue after 40.¹¹

This approximate outline seems to be what Tuohy continued to work at, with expansions and adjustments but maintaining the original shape of the book, until his death nine years later. The third spare title, perhaps not intended for the whole, but recorded two or three lines below the others that he had deliberately implanted in the text, and recorded in a separate handwritten notebook, is 'The Bright Side', which might or might not refer to the epilogue, but has no clear literary reference. The last part of the book is apparently intended to be shorter, with fewer chapters, or even no divisions at all.

One noticeable change, in the drafts that survive on scattered pages, is that Gregory would have died somewhere in the second part, leaving only Richard and Stevie to figure in the third and final section, together with some lesser characters. In another unfinished early novel, the character representing Tuohy himself is called 'Richard Winter', and it is notable that both of the thin-sounding family names he chooses, and even the first name Richard, are all distinctly English, not Scottish or Irish.¹² Furthermore, the general shape of the book bears some resemblance to the two most deeply personal novels by his Cambridge forebear, E.M. Forster (1879-1970), *The Longest Journey* (1907) and *A Passage to India* (1924), both of which have a tripartite structure.¹³ In the latter case, the three parts ('Mosque', 'Caves' and 'Temple') somewhat resemble Tuohy's novel (though Forster's is much longer), in that the last section is a good deal shorter than the others, and functions as sort of epilogue to what has gone before. The story in Tuohy's most successful novel, *The Ice Saints* (1964), was sometimes compared to *A Passage to India*, since it portrayed a young English woman whose visit to a foreign country had unfortunate consequences, for herself and others. Indeed I wondered, on first reading Tuohy's unpublished novel, whether the repeated episodes of Stevie pretending to fall, on outings to sightseeing spots in France and Portugal, might not have been intended to figure in the story somewhat like the mysterious Marabar Caves in Forster's Indian novel, but I am now less sure of this. A much closer thematic, and indeed nominal, resemblance can instead be found with the former volume.

The tripartite structure of *The Longest Journey* is possibly the least significant of its retrospective echoes in Tuohy's uncompleted tale. Nor is it just the resemblance in certain names, though Forster's protagonist, Rickie Elliott, has a first name that might be a

shortened form of 'Richard' (but actually derives from Frederick), and the strange male counterpart in the story, by whom Rickie is at once disturbed, baffled and obsessed, is called Stephen Wonham, though only once, on the penultimate page of the novel, referred to as 'Stevie'. The first two parts, 'Cambridge' and 'Sawston' deal, respectively and retrospectively, with Rickie's student days and suburban home life. Forster too is rather repetitive with names: besides Cambridge, there are also the house at Cadover, the earthworks of Cadbury Rings, and a village called Cadford, all of them adjacent to the River Cad. We might also note a Cambridge student called Widdrington, and an agent called Wilbraham, but these are incidental, while, much more pertinently, the last part of the story takes place in, and is entitled, 'Wiltshire', the part of England where Stephen Wonham lives. It is here that Rickie, Forster's alter ego, finds solace and escape from the stultifying atmosphere of suburban England, and it is hard not to think that Tuohy has dimly, if unknowingly, remembered at least some of this while working on his final novel. It is true that the England Tuohy presents is still rigidly class-bound, a world in which people of the middle and upper-middle classes are much concerned with meeting others of the 'right sort' (a phrase that occurs in their negotiations). There are many differences between the stories, and Forster certainly has no difficulty with the aspect of melodrama, but there are also some strong similarities between the character of Stephen Wonham in Forster's novel, and that of Stevie in Tuohy's unfinished story, both of whom are marginal at the beginning of the story, but become central by the end of it. There is a mystery about their birth and parentage in each case, that is not resolved until the end, and both have been fostered and raised separately from those to whom they may or may not be related. Neither has the opportunities for education that their richer counterparts receive, nor does either of them inherit money. Despite or because of this, both are somehow free spirits, attractive to their more privileged familiars.

Richard Wilkes, in Tuohy's tale, appears to be, like Rickie Elliott in Forster, an orphan, and one also with modest literary aspirations. This is not to say that Tuohy consciously draws upon Forster, but to suggest that recollections of the novel may have come to him, dimly and unbidden, as he worked on his own story. There are, as I have discussed elsewhere, conscious literary allusions in Tuohy's writing, and some of these

are present here, and have already been described above, but the influence in this case is more likely to have been unconscious.¹⁴ It is a little perplexing, however, that Tuohy's final attempt at a novel should draw so heavily upon his early life, not only his school days in England, but also the travels that he made in France as a young man, whereas Forster's early novel is more clearly a *Bildungsroman*, attempting to resolve the problems of growing up. There are late stories of English life that remain uncollected, but the England to which Tuohy had returned in retirement, after long periods of absence, was no longer quite familiar to him. In writing about the decades of his youth and early manhood, the 1940s and 1950s, he was also perhaps indirectly essaying an autobiography, in spite of his dislike for such an idea, and he evokes the literary and educational milieu of the early postwar period with some skill. As the tale proceeds, however, it is the personality of Stevie that gathers in malignant force until it eventually takes centre place, and it completely dominates the epilogue. It is after the incident in Nîmes that Tuohy states dolefully of Richard: 'And so the troubling of his life began.'¹⁵ In Forster's novel, when Rickie Elliott first realises that Stephen Wonham is his half-brother, he thinks the parent that they share is their father, until the revelation comes to him that it is actually their mother, and he is comforted, and his life clarified, by this. The obscurity of Stevie's birth is equally mysterious, but holds no such comforting revelation for Richard in Tuohy's story, though Stevie's connection with the anti-semitic Nico Waldron may help to explain his evil nature, or at least his moral indifference. Richard's sense of Stevie and himself as being unwilling counterparts in life bears a distinct resemblance to the unhappy bond between Rickie Elliott and Stephen Wonham in the novel by Forster.¹⁶

Forster's inspiration for *The Longest Journey* came to him suddenly, as he describes it in a late preface:

In an old diary, under the date of 18 July, 1904, [I] wrote as follows: 'An idea for another novel – that of a man who discovers that he has an illegitimate brother – took place since last Saturday.'¹⁷

It came to him after a visit to Figsbury Rings, an ancient hill fort in the west of England,

when he met some shepherds there and experienced a sort of epiphany. The area, in Wiltshire, is not all that far from where Tuohy himself retired, after leaving Japan in 1989.¹⁸ Forster observed:

The whole experience was trivial in itself but vital to the novel, for it fructified my meagre conception of the half-brothers, and gave Stephen Wonham, the bastard, his home.¹⁹

Rickie Elliott has, like Richard in Tuohy's story, a close friend of similar background called Stuart Ansell, and it is he who helps the story to its end after Rickie has died in an accident. By that time, however, Rickie has been reconciled to his half-brother, whom he had earlier rejected with his wife's encouragement: 'Stephen was the fruit of sin. Therefore he was sinful.' The rejection is quite conscious:

'He has got some brute courage,' thought Rickie, 'and it was decent of him not to boast about it.' But he has labeled the boy as 'Bad', and it was convenient to revert to his good qualities as seldom as possible. He preferred to brood over his coarseness, his caddish ingratitude, his irreligion. Out of this he constructed a repulsive figure...²⁰

Despite a certain attraction toward the wildness, and forthrightness, of Stephen, it takes some time for Rickie to come round to admiration:

'Born an Elliott – born a gentleman.' So the vile phrase ran. But here was an Elliott whose badness was not even gentlemanly. For that Stephen was bad inherently he never doubted for a moment. And he would have children: he, not Rickie, would contribute to the stream; he, through his remote posterity, might be mingled with the unknown sea.²¹

The way that this strange figure affects the protagonist bodes ill for him:

Henceforward he deteriorates.... He remained conscientious and decent, but the spiritual part of him proceeded towards ruin.²²

Something similar seems to be happening in Tuohy's story, though it is Richard's moral, rather than his spiritual, nature that is being undermined. It is the sense of entanglement, between parallel and opposed natures, one cautious and sophisticated, the other opportunistic and unconstrained, that marks the resemblance between the central characters in the Forster novel and those in Tuohy's shorter tale. Both Stephen and Stevie also possess a certain physical attractiveness, to which others are unwillingly drawn.²³

That Frank Tuohy's final novel carries some echoes of another by E.M. Forster does not mean that it is a conscious imitation.²⁴ Previously I have suggested that the later work of Frank Tuohy, especially his shorter fiction, tends to have a ludic and literary quality that is less apparent in his early work²⁵. Each of his story collections consists of a dozen tales, but the last in each case is a longer one, and this pattern replicates the shape of one of the most famous of such collections, *Dubliners* (1914) by James Joyce (1882-1941), to whom Tuohy was distantly related. The similarity may be purely accidental, and the main differences are that *Dubliners* is structured to progress through different stages of life, and has fifteen stories. The third and last volume of Tuohy's stories certainly has more literary allusions than earlier work, many but perhaps not all intended. Here, however, the invocation of other writers, like Lewis Carroll and Lord Tennyson, direct references to whom are embedded in the text, is clearly intentional. In general Tuohy's fictions are not heavily plot-driven, and their quality lies elsewhere, in the clarity of his writing, his wry observations, and careful delineation of character. He remarked to me once in interview that he disliked 'the factitious element in novels', which partly helps to explain his preference for short stories. And a good short story, he said, consisted in '[p]rose expression of poetic truth'.²⁶ He did not mention plot in this assessment, though clearly he was troubled by its absence in his last attempt to write a longer work of fiction.

That Tuohy seemed about to produce another novel in later life after a long silence reminds the reader of Jean Rhys (1890-1979), who made a triumphant return to fiction with *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), after decades of absence from publication.²⁷ Like Rhys, Tuohy revisits some of the scenery of his early life, but unlike her he had returned to live in the place that he was trying to evoke, whereas Rhys employed only her memories of a nineteenth-century childhood in the West Indies, to which she did not return. Tuohy had

attempted once before, after his first residence in Japan, to write a novel about going back, though this was abandoned after only a few chapters. That he was living in a changed England may have compounded his difficulties. Presumably, too, he did not have anyone particular in mind for the slowly evolving character of Stevie, though it is quite clear that Richard, at least initially, represents himself. Tuohy's longstanding friend, John Haylock (1918-2006), with whom he several times wintered in Thailand (where he also worked on the uncompleted manuscript of his novel) after his retirement, published a final story that curiously parallels the emerging one in Tuohy's last novel. In the posthumously published *Sex Gets in the Way* (2006) Haylock describes two half-brothers, one well-off and legitimate, the other illegitimate and hard-up, which had some basis in reality. Like Tuohy, Haylock was the son of a doctor, also educated at Cambridge, and like him too had a sister, but no brothers, apart from the one alluded to in the book, whose life was played out separately from his. Haylock's story does not have the artistic merit of Tuohy's writing, and is a much more pedestrian piece of work. But the similarity in their background, and the basis of each tale, is striking.

The character of Stevie, around whom Tuohy's unfinished novel more or less revolves, is not actually a relative of Richard, and so his personality seems mainly to reflect the mores of the time. There are adumbrations of this late tale in earlier short stories, especially in the autobiographical 'A War of Liberation', as well as in 'The Palladian Bridge' and 'Live Bait'. In the first of these, Greeks and Jews have settled in the English countryside, establishing connections elsewhere, and there is also a 'Miss de Saumarez', as there is a 'Wanda Saumarez', who is a sort of companion to Richard's grandmother, in the later fiction.²⁸ In 'The Palladian Bridge', based to some extent on Tuohy's time at Stowe, there are 'several boys at the school whose families lived in Spain or Portugal, in connection with the wine trade.'²⁹ The manuscript also contains the name Peverill, in reference to the large house (now become a nursing home) where the grandmother lives, and this picks up the name of the owners of the mansion in 'Live Bait'.³⁰ It is not at all unusual for writers to reuse the names of characters in books. What remains, however, is the question of the story's meaning and value in its unfinished form. Inevitably there is some dissatisfaction, though editing might help resolve that to some extent, and selections could

be made. Clair Hughes, a scholar of fiction, known for her study of dress in the work of Henry James and other writers, remarked when she read it that the portrait of the 1950s was evocative and useful. On the other hand, Sally Sampson, formerly Tuohy's literary agent, found the picture of English life much less interesting than the concluding section set in Portugal, which she thought would be worth including in any posthumous selection. Yet the mystery of how exactly the story would end, what violence or what revelation would bring it to a climax and conclusion, remains unsolved. Apart from a few scenes that are really set pieces of the time, though Tuohy does these convincingly and well, the most vital presence in the whole story, and clearly the focus of author's and reader's attention and concern, is the ambiguous Stevie, carefully renamed in revisions of the text. Despite the absence of a specific plot, and Tuohy's artistic choice of an episodic method, something is about to happen. This open ending, this silence and this empty space, is in its way almost as intriguing as a real conclusion.

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- 1 The papers of Frank Tuohy are held in two boxes at the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center in Boston University. This is one of the few clear parts of a water-damaged notebook, written in February 1957, probably in Paris. Box 2, File 1.
 - 2 The other prize was the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize, awarded in 1965. The complete manuscript of this novel, handwritten in exercise books, is held in the archive. Box 1, File 15.
 - 3 For details of Tuohy's writing on Japan, see David Burleigh, 'Frank Tuohy (1925-1999): The Best is Silence' in *Britain & Japan: Biographical Portraits* Vol. VI, ed. Hugh Cortazzi, (Folkestone, UK: Global Oriental, 2007), pp. 234-244. Ten of Tuohy's short stories have recently appeared in Japanese, in a translation by Muramatsu Toshiko, as 「フランク・トゥーイ短編集」松村俊子訳 (東京: 鷹書房弓プレス, 2013).
 - 4 He made this remark to me informally over dinner once in the 1980s.
 - 5 *International Herald Tribune*, March 25, 1988. Tuohy papers, Box 1, File 1.
 - 6 During his first stay in Japan, in the 1960s, Tuohy contributed to a volume of essays on the poet T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), who had recently died. The epigraph to the present essay is taken from opening the paragraph of Tuohy's contribution, 'T.S. Eliot: A Note on the Earlier Poetry', in *T.S. Eliot: A Tribute from Japan*, ed. Masao Hirai & E.W.F. Tomlin (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1966), pp. 48-53.
 - 7 See *The Poems of Tennyson*, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Longmans, 1969), pp. 187-190. The editor's introductory note fully explains the provenance of the poem, in Shakespeare's play, *Measure for Measure*. The subject was popular among the Pre-Raphaelites, and was famously painted by Sir John Everett Millais (1850-51), and again by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1870), as well as by other artists.
 - 8 Novel MS, held in the archive, Box 1, File 13, typescript copy pp. 138 & 140. The phrase comes from a line ('Come to my arms, my beamish boy!') in Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem 'Jabberwocky', found in his second novel about Alice, *Through the Looking Glass* (London: Penguin, 2007), p. 28.

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- 9 See Graham Finlayson and Frank Tuohy, *Portugal* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970). To gather information for the book, Tuohy drove round the country with his friend John Haylock. See Haylock's autobiography, *Eastern Exchange* (London: Arcadia Books, 1997), p. 160.
- 10 See the fictional autobiography, *Lions and Shadows: An Education in the Twenties* by Christopher Isherwood (London: Hogarth Press, 1938), *passim*.
- 11 The notebooks are held in the archive together with the Novel MS, Box 1, File 13.
- 12 This is the novel that Tuohy began writing after he returned to England from Japan, but then abandoned. There are three versions of it. Papers, Box 1, File 14.
- 13 For the personal significance of these, and particularly *The Longest Journey*, see, for example, the comments in *E.M. Forster and his world* by Francis King (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), pp. 44 & 74.
- 14 For an exploration of conscious literary allusion, see my previous essay, 'Slightly Foxed: Frank Tuohy and D.H. Lawrence' in *Ferris Studies* No. 47, 2012, pp. 53-68.
- 15 Novel MS, Part II, Chapter III, p. 72.
- 16 The other novel close to Forster's heart was *Maurice* (1971), which was published posthumously but had been written much earlier. Forster left the American rights and royalties to this book to his friend Christopher Isherwood, who in turn gave them to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, to set up a travel award in memory of Forster. Frank Tuohy was the first recipient of this award, in 1972.
- 17 Forster, E.M., *The Longest Journey* (Abinger Edition Vol. 2), London: Edward Arnold, 1984, p. lxvi.
- 18 Tuohy retired to Somerset, which is next to Wiltshire and also has a number of early settlements, similar to those described by Forster.
- 19 Op. cit., p. lxvii.
- 20 Ibid., p. 140.
- 21 Ibid., p. 192. In Tuohy's tale, it is clear that Stevie fathers illegitimate children on the Portuguese estate. MS, Part III, pp. XII-XIII, the former page typed.
- 22 Op. cit., p. 193.
- 23 Forster cautiously expresses this through Agnes, Rickie's wife, p. 260.
- 24 Unlike, for example, Zadie Smith's novel, *On Beauty* (London: Penguin, 2006), which is consciously modeled on Forster's novel *Howards End* (1910), while being set in New England and London.
- 25 See the closing pages of my previous essay on him in this journal, op. cit. One of the later stories mentioned there, 'Dreams of Fair Women', takes its title from another poem by Tennyson.
- 26 David Burleigh, interview with Frank Tuohy in *The Mainichi Daily News*, Tokyo, March 18, 1985. Tuohy in fact wrote the answers to these questions, so they are well considered comments.
- 27 'The writing of *Wide Sargasso Sea* was almost all like this: a torment of doubt... It wasn't the writing, but self-doubt, illness and age that made it take nine years.' Carole Angier, *Jean Rhys: Life and Work* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1990), p. 476. One is reminded of Frank Tuohy, who perhaps needed the encouragement that Rhys received from editors and admirers, but which he might not have easily accepted.
- 28 See Frank Tuohy, *The Collected Stories* (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 159 & 161. Both this story and the one before it, 'The Palladian Bridge', extensively reflect Tuohy's upbringing and education in the 1930s, with references to writers of the time.
- 29 Ibid., p. 152.
- 30 Ibid., *passim*. Pdraig Rooney, an Irish friend of both Tuohy's and mine, has reasonably suggested that this long story, with which the collected volume ends, might owe something to L.P. Hartley's novel *The Go-Between* (1953).