Chapter Four

The Nomadic Subject: From Return to Departure

Travel means a traversal of the line of the inside, always going towards the other, moving without a telos, and without ever returning. (Islam 42)

Lucy had hoped to return to Windy Corner when she escaped from Cecil, but she discovered that her home existed no longer. It might exist for Freddy, who still lived and thought straight, but not for [her] … (A Room with a View 222, emphasis added)

I. Introduction

This chapter focuses on Lucy’s actions in dealing with her relationships on account of the spatial influence in Italy. Italy refreshes her and inspires her to develop a new self by degrees. As Syed Manzurul Islam notes, true travel “breaks with the route of power” and “the same never returns the same” (43, emphasis original). Travel inevitably impacts the subject, especially the nomadic travelers who enter the process of becoming. Nevertheless, becoming-other is an unconscious, ongoing process that does not move the subject into a complete new person all of a sudden, but moves as a vector that always points to different directions. The subject thus will negotiate and produce one’s nomadic self in the mean time. In A Room with a View, Lucy is not only a street-walker in the city, but also a traveler that continues to move from country to country to

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1 Lucy’s becoming-other is a proceeding process rather than a pinpointed result which appears all of a sudden. Through her traveling experiences and her encounters, Lucy opens up her horizon that she would not be able to experience in England. By undergoing her struggle and conflicts, she breaks through the boundary and makes her decision eventually, and brings her to constant changes toward becoming-traveler.

2 In A Thousand Plateaus, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the nomads are like vectors “whose orientation and direction endlessly vary” (382).
country.

For Lucy, Italy appears to be a magical place where she experiences the taste of autonomy and freedom. While in Florence, she is constantly reminded of the conventions and rules that English ideology imposes on her. Yet, she is not held back by restrictions but is attracted and affected by the Italian spatiality. Returning to England after her experiences in Italy, Lucy re-examines her life from a new perspective, thus realizing that her points of view contradict with people surrounding her, from her mother to her fiancé. In this chapter, I will employ the concept of becoming theory, the sedentary and nomadic traveler explained in the previous chapter to analyze Lucy’s actions and conflicts as she returns to England, and how it foreshadows her departure at the end of the story.

**II. Conventions: English Customs**

Unlike Lucy, Mrs. Honeychurch embodies the conventional values of English women: practical and home-bound. Her practicality is especially suggested from her dislike for music and art. Mrs. Honeychurch derides it as useless and unnecessary. She never frequents the museum or reads poetry, and art does not have any appeal to her. While Lucy is fond of music and piano-playing, Mrs. Honeychurch claims that music only “left her daughter peevish, unpractical, and touchy” (*A Room with a View* 47). Music provides Lucy with a mental space and saves her from sinking into confusions. Lucy is used to expressing herself through piano-playing, yet Mrs. Honeychurch finds music often passionate and sensual, only leading to unrealistic fantasy. Lucy tells Mr. Beebe that her mother “doesn’t like one to get excited over anything” and thinks that Lucy is “silly about it” (*A Room with a View* 36). Mrs. Honeychurch asserts a lady should be well-behaved, moderate and domesticated, maintaining that music urges Lucy to concentrate on her own feelings, oblivious to the outside world. Mrs. Honeychurch cannot understand music is a useful method for Lucy to express herself,
just as Charlotte observes that “one is very thankful that she has such a resource” when she is “evidently worried” (*A Room with a View* 211). Even so, Mrs. Honeychurch cannot identify with music.

Her conventional values also reflect on her approval of Cecil as Lucy’s suitor. Knowing that Cecil is a decent man, Mrs. Honeychurch considers Cecil an ideal choice for Lucy’s husband. When she knows that Lucy accepts Cecil’s third proposal, she replies, “I’m glad that Cecil is asking her this once more,” revealing that she approves of their engagement (*A Room with a View* 96). Lucy’s young brother, Freddy, by contrast does not like Cecil, for Cecil is conceited and arrogant. Yet, Mrs. Honeychurch claims that she likes Cecil, for “he’s good, he’s clever, he’s rich, he’s well connected […] and he has beautiful manners” (*A Room with a View* 98). She praises Cecil from an orthodox perspective, such as his education, appearance and a “much wealthier and more socially prominent family” (Freedman 95). Cecil meets Mrs. Honeychurch’s expectation in raising a conventional and stable family. She thinks that Cecil is a pleasant, “ideal bachelor” (*A Room with a View* 99). For her, Cecil is a decent gentleman from a wealthy family. She thus regards their marriage as a correct and wise choice. Even though Mrs. Honeychurch later quarrels with Cecil and finds out that he is detached and demanding, she still persists in her opinion that Cecil possesses the characteristics of a good husband. This insistence is contradictory with Lucy’s wishes.

Furthermore, Mrs. Honeychurch epitomizes country circle³ in England. She deliberately holds a garden party in the neighborhood to “show people that her

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³ In the novel, Forster describes that Windy Corner is located in the suburban England, where “most of the houses were larger […], and were filled by people who came, not from the district, but from London, and who mistook the Honeychurches for the remnants of an indigenous aristocracy” (*A Room with a View* 126). Even though the Honeychurches are not of a wealthy family, Mrs. Honeychurch still tries hard to establish good relationships with her neighbors, attempting to let her family “rooted in the best society obtainable” (*A Room with a View* 127). Accordingly, since Mrs. Honeychurch tries to maintain her relationship with the other families, she recognizes that Cecil is “a presentable man” that she can publicly announce to everyone.
daughter was marrying a presentable man” (*A Room with a View* 111). She intends to show her neighbors that Cecil and Lucy match perfectly well in that Cecil “looked distinguished, and it was very pleasant to see his slim figure keeping step with Lucy, and his long, fair face responding when Lucy spoke to him” (*A Room with a View* 111). The neighbors’ congratulations and compliments please her and satisfy her sense of vanity. She further arranges Cecil to stay with “some stuffy dowagers” in order to present their status (*A Room with a View* 112). She aims to make Lucy’s marriage publicly known in her neighborhood, establishing social relations with a view to reconsolidating her concept for home. Her home-bound characteristic can be seen from her attitude toward travel. Whereas every character in the novel more or less has travel experiences, Mrs. Honeychurch is the only one that stays at Windy Corner all the time.

Since Mrs. Honeychurch is home-bound, her home-oriented personality is particularly presented in her conflicts with Lucy. She can never really support Lucy’s decision. In fact, she “hated all changes” (*A Room with a View* 208). As Lucy decides to leave Windy Corner and to head for Greece, Mrs. Honeychurch opposes her, asserting that she doesn’t “see why Greece is necessary […] it must be something [she] can’t understand” (*A Room with a View* 217). Mrs. Honeychurch cannot figure out why Lucy must leave her home to travel somewhere else since Lucy has just returned from Italy for three months. She is bewildered that Lucy seems to be always pursuing travel. Yet, Lucy refuses to answer her and “would rather be with those inquisitive old maids than with Freddy and [Mrs. Honeychurch]” (*A Room with a View* 222). Since she has repressed her thoughts for so long, Mrs. Honeychurch “burst out” concluding that Lucy is “tired of Windy Corner” (*A Room with a View* 222). Mrs. Honeychurch’s observation in fact is correct. Nevertheless, Lucy is not conscious of her motivation. She only insists that she is not tired of her home but only needs to refresh herself and
to expand her horizons into different countries, for Lucy reflects that she “ha[s] seen so little of life” (*A Room with a View* 223). Confronted with Lucy’s persistence, Mrs. Honeychurch explodes, criticizing that Lucy “can’t stand [her] own home” (*A Room with a View* 223)! Regardless of Lucy’s explanation, Mrs. Honeychurch interprets it as selfish and egoistic. Whereas Lucy illustrates that she is in need of independence, such as sharing a flat with friends and living her own life, Mrs. Honeychurch ridicules at her, denouncing her,

> Very well. Take your independence and be gone. Rush up and down and round the world, and come back as thin as a lath with the bad food. Despise the house that your father built and the garden he painted, and our dear view—and then share a flat with another girl. (*A Room with a View* 224)

Mrs. Honeychurch is convinced that Lucy is preoccupied with leaving and travels because she despises her home. As Lucy turns to be a nomadic traveler in her becoming, her concept for home will not be confined within her hometown, Windy Corner. Since nomadic travelers continually cross the boundary, Lucy is boundless and will not stay long in her original home.

Given to Mrs. Honeychurch’s home-bound values, it is impossible for her to acknowledge Lucy’s elopement with George. Lucy not only chooses to leave Windy Corner, she aims to start a new life with George in Italy, even without her mother’s permission. As Lucy enters her process of becoming-traveler, her life journey extends to the scope of whole world rather than to be limited in her small house in Windy Corner. Mrs. Honeychurch, however, “had not forgiven [her and George]” and “wouldn’t give her consent” (*A Room with a View* 239). Mrs. Honeychurch obviously cannot approve of Lucy’s decision when she plans to leave for Greece, let alone her decision in “alienat[ing] Windy Corner, perhaps forever” (*A Room with a View* 239).
Mrs. Honeychurch will not understand that Lucy’s departure for Italy is not out of her love to George, but out of her pursuit for boundless freedom in the vast world.

III. Cecil as a Sedentary Traveler

A. Appearance and Personality

In *A Room with a View*, Cecil is the opposite of Lucy. With a decent and cultivated appearance; possessive and self-centered personality, Cecil “was medieval [l]ike a Gothic statue. Tall and refined, with shoulders that seemed braced square by an effort of the will, and a head that was tilted a litter higher than the usual level of vision” (*A Room with a View* 100). His look is courteous and genteel, “resemble[ing] those fastidious saints who guard the portals of a French cathedral” (*A Room with a View* 100). Cecil ostensibly appears to be civilized and well-bred, presenting a sense of elegance. Yet, his refined courtesy also reveals his indifferent attitude toward others and his stereotypical classification in categorizing people surrounding him. Just as his medieval appearance suggests, Cecil evaluates people with conventional perspectives and rooted prejudices. Freedman points out that he “represented as the very type of the would-be dominating male” (96). Though he is “well educated, well endowed,” Cecil is used to judging others from his own standpoint. He is indeed aesthetic and tasteful, yet his inability to establish intimate relationships with others determines his sedentary personality. Cecil may have talent in dealing with artworks, but fails to understand and appreciate various and diverse personalities in people. His refined manners “are superficially perfect but rest on the flawed foundation of self-satisfaction” (Lago 25). He assumes himself democratic and gentlemanlike, but is arbitrary and bossy in nature.

Restrainted and dignified, Cecil is unable to remove the boundary that he has created between himself and the other. When Mrs. Honeychurch invites him to the garden party in Windy Corner, he is tired of having social interaction with those
dowagers, complaining to Lucy that this arrangement “seemed perfectly appalling, disastrous, portentous” to him (A Room with a View 112). Even though he is about to marry Lucy, he has no interest in visiting Lucy’s neighborhood. He censures Mrs. Honeychurch’s intention to hold a public announcement of their engagement, criticizing that “it is so disgusting, the way engagement is regarded as public property—a kind of waste place where every outsider may shoot his vulgar sentiment” (A Room with a View 112). His discontents imply that Cecil dislikes establishing relationships with others. He disdains Lucy’s country society, commenting that “there are certain irremovable barriers between [himself] and [the country society]” (A Room with a View 113). Cecil is the type that will clearly be aware of the existence of boundary, holding hostility toward others. He tells Lucy that “it makes a difference […] whether we fence ourselves in, or whether we are fenced out by the barriers of others” (A Room with a View 113). Accordingly, Cecil is alert in discerning different boundaries around him and will always stay distant from the other. His intentional boundary further propels him to “rescue” Lucy from this vulgar society⁴ (A Room with a View 126). While Lucy’s family quarrels over the family trifles, Cecil again determines that “in January he would rescue his Leonardo from this stupefying twaddle” (A Room with a View 166). He holds a sense of superiority over Lucy’s family, believing that his family “was more splendid than her antecedents entitled her to” (A Room with a View 126). Such is Cecil’s attitude: He presumes himself with the power to control the other. Preoccupied with the responsibility to protect Lucy, he deems her as his “protégés,” and thus his relationship with Lucy is not one of respect, but merely of possession (A Room with a View 177).

⁴ Whereas Lucy comes from a comparatively poor family, Cecil is a Londoner living in a nice flat. His social class and family background apparently is higher than Lucy’s, and in his flat, Windy Corner appears to be “crude” (A Room with a View 140). Therefore, Cecil considers his marriage with Lucy will be a blessing to her.
B. A Sedentary Traveler

Accordingly, Cecil stays in his own cultivated social circle and is reluctant to step out of his own world even when he travels to other countries. He is a typical sedentary traveler that can only see the world with limited vision. George mentions, “men fall into two classes—those who forget views and those who remember them, even in small rooms” (*A Room with a View* 182). Whereas Lucy travels to Italy “worked some marvel in [her],” Cecil on the contrary only learns to reconsolidate his marked boundary (*A Room with a View* 127). As Islam explains, sedentary travelers are often “bound by the pre-set goals[…] on a rigid line which keeps them grounded in the enclosure of their home” (56). For Cecil, “Italy had quickened [him], not to tolerance, but to irritation” (*A Room with a View* 127). He consequently sees the “local society was narrow” (*A Room with a View* 127). Since Cecil considers Lucy’s country society intolerable, it is impossible for him to embrace the outside world with a broad mind. Unlike Lucy, who initiated her process of spatial becoming in Italy and returns to England a changed person, Cecil remains unchanged from his journey. He still acts and behaves as usual, commenting and judging others personally. His standard for people is like a rigid track and Cecil must follow its route. George also tells Lucy that Cecil “is the sort who is all right as they keep to things—books, pictures—but kill when they come to people” (*A Room with a View* 190). George further illustrates that he first sees Cecil in the National Gallery, and Cecil “wincers because [his] father mispronounced the names of great painters” (*A Room with a View* 191). George points out that Cecil always looks highly on himself, despising others. Just as Cecil refuses to remove the barriers against the other, Cecil reinforces his fences after his Italian experiences.

With his “portable territory,” Cecil cannot open up his mind and accept others. (Deleuze and Guattari 320). Cecil bears a similarity with sedentary travelers, traveling
with his moved body. He “never leave[s] the point of departure” and “move[s] folded
in the inside” (Islam 56). He carries his rooted perspectives and viewpoints to Italy.
As he admits, he “only go[es] into the country to see [his] friends and to enjoy the
scenery” (A Room with a View 105). Cecil regards his travel to Italy merely as a tour.
Guarding against the heterogeneity outside the boundary, Cecil cannot abandon his
position wherever he goes. He is an immobile, sedentary traveler that returns with
sameness. Sticking to his own principle and judgment, Cecil will not be influenced by
any kind of spatial interactions. Just as he cannot distinguish the differences between
“a Parish Council and a Local Government Board,” in England, Cecil claims that Italy
bestows no particular differences on him (A Room with a View 105). When he, Mrs,
Honeychurch and Lucy sit together admiring the country scenery before them, Cecil
mentions “I count myself a lucky person […] when I’m in London I feel I could never
live out of it. When I’m in the country I feel the same about the country” (A Room
with a View 115-116). Accordingly, Cecil has fixed opinions toward his surrounding
environment. The spatial settings will not endow any other influence on him, for he
walks along a rigid line in the striated space, following the regulated norms and
principles unaffected by other interactions or changes.

As Cecil is a sedentary traveler, his stereotypical judgment is evident. With his
persistent arrogance, Cecil’s profound dignity prevents him from having further
interactions with the other. For example, Cecil refuses to play tennis with others. The
first time when Lucy asks Cecil to play tennis and relax himself, Cecil replies that “I
don’t play tennis—at least, not in public. The neighborhood is deprived of the
romance of me being athletic” (A Room with a View 112). Cecil obviously dislikes
exposing personal relationships and affections publicly with others, thus concealing
himself within a veil of courtesy and manners. For the second time, Lucy again hopes
that Cecil could play tennis with George and Freddy and “have a men’s four,” yet
Cecil rejects her, insisting that “I will not spoil the set” (*A Room with a View* 178). Since Cecil is not good at playing tennis, he refuses the invitation for fear of humiliating himself in front of the others. He always upholds his principles, aiming to maintain a dignified image for himself, not knowing that “it may be an act of kindness in a bad player to make up fourth” (*A Room with a View* 178). Cecil cannot understand that in victory or defeat, the joy is not to win or lose but merely play the game. He sits aside, watching them with a “lucid, critical mood, and would not sympathize with exaltation” (*A Room with a View* 179). Regretfully, his personality is too solemn and serious to realize the importance of enjoying the pleasure in a game. Regardless of games, Cecil would rather read books out loud than join in the game. His self-centered behavior “had been rather a nuisance all through the tennis” (*A Room with a View* 179-180). His reading disturbs the proceeding of the play, yet he is not conscious of it. He would “stroll round the precincts of the court and call out: ‘I say, listen to this, Lucy. Three split infinitives,” Lucy felt obliged to respond him, and thus “missed her stroke” (*A Room with a View* 180). Throughout the game, Cecil keeps on reading the book. His attitude demonstrates his superiority and inability to establish relationships with the other.

With such egocentric and conventional personality, his relationship with Lucy is thus problematic. Cecil’s inability to treat Lucy with mutual respect reveals his overly possessive control over her. In the beginning, Cecil admires Lucy not as a charming lady but as a valuable work of art, seeing her “like a woman of Leonardo da Vinci’s, whom we love not so much for herself as for the things that she will not tell us” (*A Room with a View* 102). Cecil is attracted not by who she is but by her art-like mysterious disposition. He thus treats Lucy with imperative control, calling her “little thing” and “my protégé” (*A Room with a View* 137, 177). Cecil conceives his relationship as “feudal: that of protector and protected. He had no glimpse of the
comradeship after which the girl’s soul yearned” (*A Room with a View* 177, emphasis added).

Cecil regards himself as a feudal protector, taking care of his vulnerable, peasant Lucy. He decides which song she can play, Schumann or Beethoven, Gluck’s *Armide* or Wagner’s *Parsifal*, and attempts to take control over her life. Though Lucy refuses this domination, his intention to control her is apparent. He is unable to realize and understand Lucy deeply. Cavaliero argues that Cecil “did not realize that Lucy had consecrated her environment by the thousand little civilities that create a tenderness in time, and that though her eyes saw its defects, her heart refused to despise it entirely” (104). Their discrepant attitudes hence result in a gap and barrier in their relationship. While they talk of the man and clergymen Lucy has met in Italy, Lucy deliberately fabricates a pseudonym in order to disguise her interactions with the Emersons. While at last she tells Cecil their real name, Cecil does not take it seriously. Cecil can never know that this discussion “was the most intimate conversation they had ever had” (*A Room with a View* 125). Since Cecil and Lucy’s relationship is feudal rather than mutual, they have no further close interactions at all. In spite of their engagement, Cecil still fails to truly understand Lucy.

Profound and solemn, Cecil notices that their natures are at variance. Once Cecil asks Lucy that why Lucy always chooses to walk on the road rather than “through the wood” while they encounter “a footpath diverged from the highroad” (*A Room with a View* 122). Lucy explains that “the road is more sensible,” yet Cecil questions her that “you have never once been with me in the fields or the wood since we were engaged” (*A Room with a View* 122). Cecil’s worry startles Lucy, and she is surprised at his “queerness” (*A Room with a View* 122). She always interprets Cecil as a reasonable person that is indifferent to sentimental affections. Therefore, she is sure that “it was not his habit to leave her in doubt” (*A Room with a View* 122). Lucy’s
assurance in Cecil’s rationality on the other hand reveals her distrust in Cecil’s sensibilities. Her impression and recognition of Cecil remains rigid and obdurate. Cecil is conscious of Lucy’s interpretation, telling Lucy that she must have “fe[lt] more at home with [him] in a room,” or at the most, “in a garden, or a road. Never in the real country like this” (*A Room with a View* 122-123). Ostensibly, Cecil’s metaphor suggests that he notices his conventional, rigorous personality is very likely only to give Lucy a limited view. His prejudice and egocentrism hinder him like a fence so that he cannot really encounter the other and become the other even when he travels to other countries. His irremovable barrier determines his scope of vision. Cecil then asks Lucy the crucial question: “I connect you with a view—a certain type of view. Why shouldn’t you connect me with a room” (*A Room with a View* 123)? This is the first time that Cecil is conscious of his sedentary, conventional personality, yet attempts to find different answers from Lucy. Nevertheless, Lucy’s reply disappoints him, “Do you know that you’re right? I do. I must be a poetess after all. When I think of you it’s always as in a room” (*A Room with a View* 123). Annoyed by her answer, Cecil is unsatisfied with Lucy’s reply, reproachfully questioning her whether she imagines him as “a drawing-room […] with no view” (*A Room with a View* 123). Cecil becomes worried as a result, telling her that “I’d rather […] that you connected me with the open air” (*A Room with a View* 123). The disparities between Cecil and Lucy are thus clarified through the metaphorical room and view. Even though Cecil refuses to admit it, he acknowledges the fact that Lucy cannot sense any refreshment or freedom when being with him. A room may as well provide a sense of security and reliance, but a room also confines one’s soul. Realizing this point, Cecil is daunted to find himself suffocating Lucy’s freedom.

As Cecil gives Lucy the impression that he is a room, he in the mean time observes that Lucy longs for the embrace of the view. Yet, Cecil is such a solemn and
serious man that he cannot liberate Lucy from the confinement of the room. When
Lucy mentions she and Freddy enjoyed bathing in the lake as children, Cecil is
shocked at Lucy’s behavior, realizing that himself “had depths of prudishness within
him” (*A Room with a View* 124). Even though Cecil hereby is temporarily relived by
the refreshment of the countryside, “delighted at her admirable simplicity,” he soon
understands that irreconcilable differences still hinder them (*A Room with a View* 124).
Caught by the breathtaking view, Cecil impulsively and nervously tells Lucy that “not
even that day on the lawn when you agreed to marry me […] up to now I have never
kissed you […] then I ask you—may I now” (*A Room with a View* 124)? However,
Lucy replies, “of course, you may, Cecil. You might before. I can’t run at you, you
know” (*A Room with a View* 125). At that moment, Cecil “was conscious of nothing
but absurdities,” for her response “was inadequate,” giving such a “business-like lift
to her veil” (*A Room with a View* 125). Apparently, Cecil becomes awkward and
uneasy in the open view. He is “self-conscious and ke[eps] glancing round to see if
they were observed,” and he finds that “his courage had gone,” wishing that “he
would recoil” when he approaches Lucy (*A Room with a View* 124-125). Love and
passion should be irresistible but turns out to be powerless in front of his refined
nature. Lucy’s obligatory attitude is an accidental attack on Cecil. He not only realizes
that he resembles a room rather than a view, he also recognizes that Lucy does not
love him. Their incompatible nature contradicts each other, which illustrates that Cecil
is incapable of truly embracing and accepting Lucy. He admires Lucy but “lacks the
complete picture about her” (Sullivan 207).

**IV. Lucy’s Nomadic Changes**

When Lucy is in Italy, she is still trapped by the English conventions that she
has grown up with and the education she has received from her mother. Nevertheless,
Lucy returns with her new self as a result of the invigorating journey to Italy. Lucy
steps into her psychological becoming since her Italy journey. Even though conventions still exist, Lucy’s gradual becoming allows her to cast the conventions aside, “in favor of a freer, more natural life” (Hall 61). Yet, Lucy does not change into her nomadic self all at once, but by degrees. She desires freedom and independence, thus claiming that her mother and Cecil limit her horizon and repress her individuality. Her family “becomes a restrictive conspiracy opposing growth and intruding into [her] life” (Hall 61). As a nomadic traveler, she has no particular barriers toward others. Yet, her interaction with Cecil leads her to recognize that Cecil’s intervention impedes the freedom and independence she desires. Her behaviors and attitude toward Cecil thus change from acceptance to resistance; agreement to opposition.

Since her Italian journey, Lucy is no longer the girl that will be bewildered by the regulated conventions. She breaks through the confinement of the English spatiality and begins to live her own life. Italy rejuvenated her spirit and “gave her light” (*A Room with a View* 102). Even though Lucy herself is unaware of her becoming, her family and friends around her detect her dramatic and ostensible changes. As Cecil observes, Lucy “seemed [a] typical” English lady before she went to Italy (*A Room with a View* 102). He reflects that “he had known Lucy for several years, but only as a commonplace girl,” yet “Italy worked some marvel in her” (*A Room with a View* 102). Cecil discerns that Lucy “did develop most wonderfully day by day” in that she seems to be even more energetic and radiant after she returns from Italy (*A Room with a View* 102). Mr. Beebe, who witnesses Lucy’s becoming since in Italy, foreshadows that Lucy will not be submissive as a pet for long. He tells Cecil,

Does it seem reasonable that she should play [the music] so wonderfully, and live so quietly? I suspect that one day she will be wonderful in both. The water-tight compartments in her will break down, and music and life will mingle. Then we shall have her heroically good, heroically bad—too
heroic, perhaps, to be good or bad. *(A Room with a View 107)*

Since in Italy, Mr. Beebe notes that Lucy is expressive in music, but reserved in life. Although music embodies her flows of emotions, she demonstrates her feelings with restraint when it comes to her life. Yet, Mr. Beebe reminds Cecil of the fact that whether her becoming is better or worse, Lucy will find out her way to deal with herself truthfully. Unlike Cecil, who is convinced that Lucy has already become a wonderful artwork as a da Vinci portrait, Mr. Beebe maintains that Lucy is still “becoming” in her proceeding life, analyzing that Lucy returns with a changing self. He observes, “I must say I’ve seen her at Tunbridge Wells, where she was not wonderful, and at Florence. […] [S]he wasn’t wonderful in Florence either, but I kept on expecting that she would be” *(A Room with a View 107).* Mr. Beebe clearly sees Lucy’s process of becoming, and affirms that she will continue to change, for Lucy “had found her wings, and meant to use them” *(A Room with a View 107).* In the past, Lucy is the kite and Charlotte tightly “hold[s] the string,” but now “the string breaks” *(A Room with a View 107).* As Mr. Beebe contemplates, Lucy’s unconscious becoming implicitly leads her to make changes to her original life. The most apparent change she has made is that she has the ability to speak for herself and to pursue her freedom, which is particularly reflected on her relationship with Cecil, George and her mother.

In the beginning, Lucy seems to agree with Cecil’s opinion. She notices that Cecil is difficult to get along with, yet she tries to tolerate and cover up his defects. When Cecil is irritated by the garden party held by Mrs. Honeychurch, Lucy attempts to empathize with Cecil’s discontent. While Cecil expresses that he is incapable of crossing the barrier impeded between him and the dowagers, Lucy wisely comforts him that “we all have our limitations” *(A Room with a View 113).* When one of her neighbors, Mrs. Butterworth wishes to see Cecil and to have a leisure talk with him, Cecil refuses, for he “did not want to be seen,” or “to hear about hydrangeas, why
they change their color at the seaside” (*A Room with a View* 154). Cecil is a sedentary traveler coming from the city, thus he preserves his class and airs even when his environment has changed. Lucy does not censure his behavior, but “soothed him and tinkered at the conversation in a way that promised well for their married peace” (*A Room with a View* 154). Lucy understands that “no one is perfect, and surely it is wiser to discover the imperfections before wedlock” (*A Room with a View* 154). Instead of giving harsh criticism or judgment of Cecil, Lucy has the ability to respect him and to accept his impatience toward his family and neighborhood. When Mrs. Honeychurch complains about Cecil’s restless attitude, Lucy still tries to speak for him, explaining that “perhaps Cecil was a little tired […] Cecil has a very high standard for people…” (*A Room with a View* 154-155). Lucy attempts to understand Cecil’s viewpoints with an appropriate and acceptable reason. Unlike people surrounding her that hastily jump to conclusion, Lucy argues that “we mustn’t be unjust to people” (*A Room with a View* 155). While Lucy persuades her mother Cecil “does not mean to be uncivil,” she simultaneously attempts to convince herself that her engagement with Cecil is reasonable (*A Room with a View* 155).

Yet, as Lucy has more contacts with Cecil, she finds out that Cecil not only despises her family and her country society, but he also fails to understand and respect Lucy as an independent individual. Her encounters in Italy, however, propels her to cross traditional boundaries and to seek personal pursuits. Cecil always interacts with the other using self-centered and arbitrary judgments, oblivious to others’ standpoints and feelings. Lucy detects his arrogance. In addition to his abominable attitude toward her family, Lucy finds out that Cecil sees himself as a hero to rescue the confined Lucy. As Cecil considers Lucy an impeccable artwork, she notes that she can hardly develop an intimate conversation and relationship with him. While she encounters Mr. Emerson and George in Italy and is inspired and influenced, she cannot even frankly
tell Cecil their name. She would rather fabricate a lie to conceal her experience. While Charlotte suggests she confess to Cecil her accidental kiss with George in Italy, Lucy knows that she cannot follow this advice, for “she knew in her heart that she could not trust him, […] he desired her untouched” (A Room with a View 168). Her incapability to develop a mutual understanding with Cecil hints that he is not the suitable man to be her lifelong companion. As Cecil treats Lucy as his protégé, he regards Lucy as a possession that he can govern. Lucy finds out that Cecil’s sense of superiority leads him to scorn her family and herself. Cecil interferes with Lucy’s whole life, criticizing her mother and brother as shallow, vulgar and childish, her piano-playing only as a form of performance, her tennis playing as boring and foolish. He hopes to rescue Lucy from her crude life, just as Cecil’s mother urges, “make her one of us” (A Room with a View 141). Whereas Cecil attempts to assimilate Lucy, he as a result neglects the individuality and freedom that Lucy desires.

Lucy’s growing awareness for her own freedom and independence prevents her from accepting Cecil and his upper-class society as well. Lucy questions her education and lady-like manners, for “she didn’t see why. Why shouldn’t she sit in the sun with the young man” (A Room with a View 172)? Lucy apparently releases herself from the binding confinement of the conventions. Cecil’s dinner party in London epitomizes how English spatiality suppresses Lucy as well. Cecil asserts that “it did her no harm […] to learn the framework of society” (A Room with a View 139). Yet, in the party, Lucy only feels the “witty weariness” in the talk, and her enthusiasms are to—“only to collapse gracefully” (A Room with a View 140). She similarly is uneasy and tense in the London spatiality. For her, the atmosphere is gloomy and dismal, in which Lucy “saw that her London career would estrange her” from the free life she desires. (A Room with a View 140).

Worried and depressed, she begins to play Schumann, which is melancholy and
moody. Regardless of Cecil’s demands, Lucy insists that she will not play joyful Beethoven. Through music, she is able to relieve herself from the pressure Cecil imposes. She understands that the rising melody is “unprofitably magical” (A Room with a View 140). Lucy can always express her feelings through the right music, and the melody speaks for her. Her choice of Schumann “is associated with her inauspicious engagement to Cecil,” for “Schumann’s music was lacking in ethical content and the ability to inspire courageous acts” (Fillon 268, 282). Cecil’s mother, Mrs. Vyse is a nice woman whose personality “had been swamped by London” and behaves “mechanically […] as if he was not one son, but […] a filial crowd” (A Room with a View 140). With Cecil and his family, Lucy can hardly relax and breathe the air of freedom. That night she stays in Cecil’s flat and has “a cry of nightmare,” implying that Lucy cannot be secure in London with Cecil’s family (A Room with a View 141).

After a series of observations, Lucy realizes that Cecil is an intolerable choice to be her husband. Their family and personality are mutually exclusive. George clarifies this fact by acutely pointing out that Lucy cannot marry Cecil because “he’s only for acquaintance. He is for society and cultivated talk. He should know no one intimately, least of all a woman” (A Room with a View 190). Cecil may have a good taste in arts, but is feudal and conventional with his relationships. George tells Lucy that he finds Cecil “protecting and teaching you and your mother to be shocked, when it was for you to settle whether you are shocked or no […] he daren’t let a woman decide” (A Room with a View 191, emphasis original). Cecil’s overt protection impedes the development of Lucy’s independent individuality. George realizes this problem as well, specifying that “Every moment of [Cecil’s] life he’s forming you, telling you what’s charming or amusing or ladylike, telling you what a man thinks womanly” (A Room with a View 191). As Lucy gradually notices her incompatibility with Cecil, George’s analysis and observation implicitly endorse her and urge her to
cancel her engagement with Cecil.

Returned with her nomadic self, Lucy is no longer the little girl that adheres to rules and conventions. She walks along the supple line that extends her to multi-layered possibilities and values. She determines to take her own flight, and leaving Cecil is her first step. She tells Cecil that “Often before I have wondered if I was fitted for your wife—for instance, in London; and are you fitted to be my husband? I don’t think so” \( (A \text{ Room with a View } 197) \). Whereas she knows that Cecil’s demanding and civil standards are unsuitable for her, she recognizes that Cecil can never respect her freedom and independence. When Lucy calmly declares the decision she has made, Cecil observes that she seems different, “from a Leonardo she had become a living woman, with mysteries and forces of her own, with qualities that even eluded art” \( (A \text{ Room with a View } 198) \). While Cecil acknowledges Lucy’s charm, he can still only judge her from the perspective of art. Sullivan analyzes that “wordy Cecil continues to use the rhetoric of abstract ‘medieval’ adoration,” for he “has always wanted an angel and he continues to worship Lucy” \( (208-209) \). Yet, Cecil cannot fully realize that with the process of becoming, Lucy is “tired of being chivalrously protected” and desires “vast panoramas, and green expanses of the sea” \( (Sullivan \ 196, A \text{ Room with a View } 60) \). Her explanation to Cecil clearly indicates her aspiration for independence and freedom and Cecil’s inability to satisfy her desire. She explicates to Cecil that he cannot know a person intimately,

you will question me, though I beg you not to, and I must say something.

[...] When we were only acquaintances, you let me be myself, but now you’re always protecting me. [...] I won’t be protected. I will choose for

\footnote{Cecil’s overt protection and attitude could be compared with the duke in “My Last Duchess” written by Robert Browning. Although Cecil is not as tyrannical as the duke, their attitude in regarding the wife as an angel-like possession is quite similar. Compared with the sweet-tempered and obedient duchess killed by the duke, Lucy claims for her own autonomy and independence in her becoming, thus bringing about completely different endings to their life.}
myself what is ladylike and right. Can’t I be trusted to face the truth but I must get it second-hand through you? You despise my mother—I know you do—because she’s conventional and bothers over puddings; but […] conventional, Cecil, you’re that, for you may understand beautiful things, but you don’t know how to use them; and you wrap yourself up in art and books and music, and would try to wrap me up. I won’t be stifled. […] That’s why I break off my engagement. (A Room with a View 198)

Lucy’s penetrating speech shocks Cecil and makes him pause. She is not a princess or an artwork that waits to be protected. Instead, she can protect herself and decides the shape and development of her life. She rebels as she “sees that [Cecil’s] protective ‘fence’ is really a prison of culture (Sullivan 208). Astounded by Lucy’s remark, Cecil unexpectedly finds that he “ha[s] never known [Lucy] till this evening,” realizing that he used Lucy “as a peg for [his] silly notion of what a woman should be” (A Room with a View 199). As Lucy is capable of defending and expressing herself, Cecil observes that Lucy is really “a different person: new thoughts—even a new voice” (A Room with a View 199). Cecil at this moment realizes that Mr. Beebe is correct. Lucy is becoming increasingly wonderful, “splendid and new,” whereas he is “bound up in the old vicious notions” (A Room with a View 200). With her nomadic self, Lucy at different phase crosses the boundary and makes continual changes.

V. Lucy as a Nomadic Traveler

Lucy as a nomadic traveler can be explored from three dimensions. In addition to her encounter the other and becoming the other in Italy, her ceaseless becoming is presented on her actions and changes in England, alienated from her home and continues her ongoing travel. Just as her family and friends observe, Lucy becomes different ever since her journey in Italy. She “had developed since the spring. […] She
was now better able to stifle the emotions of which the conventions and the world disapprove. Though the danger was greater, she was not shaken by deep sobs” (*A Room with a View* 185). She now will not vacillate or be afraid. No matter what happens, Lucy “face[s] the situation bravely” and she “never gazes inwards” (*A Room with a View* 163). Her spatial becoming in Italy inspires her to listen to her heart and wishes. Italy makes her a rebel, “offering her the most priceless of all possessions—her own soul” (*A Room with a View* 128). The atmosphere of freedom, passion and life unconsciously enters her and gradually pervades. Nevertheless, the spirit of Italy stays in her mind whereas the scenery fades and declines. She “might be forgetting her Italy, but she was noticing more things in her England, and try to find in its innumerable folds some town or village that would do for Florence” (*A Room with a View* 179). Becoming is a forth-coming process that is unrelated with the retrospective memory. Lucy will not linger in the past, but present the Italian spirit in her changes.

Lucy’s choice of George, as a result, indicates her intense desire for freedom. As her becoming initiates a departure from conventional values, she departs from the regulated convention and moves toward self-reliance. Compared to Cecil’s character, George’s character is polar opposite. George will not be confined to rules and conventions. Instead, he is flexible and is convinced that both men and women are equally independent individuals. Accordingly, Lucy feels more at ease when getting along with George. Moreover, during his travel, George’s changeable attitude paces him toward his spatial becoming as well. Whereas George’s personality is gloomy and melancholy in the beginning, he gradually liberates his mind to become positive and optimistic due to his interactions with Lucy and her family. When George travels to Windycorner, Lucy’s brother, Freddy invites him to bath in a pond together. This sudden invitation seems ridiculous, yet magically relieves George. Bathing in the
pond, George feels that “all the forces of youth burst out,” he “smiled, flung himself at [Freedy and Mr. Beebe], splashed them, ducked them, kicked them, muddied them, and drove them out of pool” (A Room with a View 150). Just as Lucy undergoes her spatial becoming in her nomadic travel, George likewise becomes a nomadic traveler. He adjusts himself to accept the other, and he is able to act out his mind by degrees.

In their travels, Lucy and George are both fluid and changeable. Yet, both of them seek for free life. Lucy is attracted to George in that every scene she has with George in Italy is closely linked with freedom, autonomy and passion. George ignites her repressed desire and leads her to the world she has been detached from. In England, he respects Lucy and allows her to have her own thoughts and viewpoints. George will not interfere with her life or despise her family. He is able to establish a relationship on the basis of trust and understanding. He tells Lucy that “I want you to have your own thoughts even when I hold you in my arms” (A Room with a View 192). While Lucy sees too much restraint from Cecil, she at the same time seeks the freedom that George is likely to give her. Cavaliero also points out that “George, then, is the solution of Lucy’s sense of her own independent womanhood” (104).

Since Lucy’s “development’ takes her intermittently out if her frame,” her role as a nomadic traveler in pursuit of freedom and experiences is even more clear (Heath 194). As soon as she ends her relationship with Cecil, she immediately decides to head for Greece. Nevertheless, Lucy appears to be the only person that is satisfied with her decision. Mrs. Honeychurch opposes her, criticizing her for abandoning her home. Mr. Beebe also asks Lucy whether she is “filled with the fever of travel” by Italy (A Room with a View 210). Mr. Beebe is bewildered, asking Charlotte that “why could not Miss Honeychurch repose in the bosom of her family” (A Room with a View 210). Confronted by Mr. Beebe and her mother’s suspicion, Lucy simply replies, “I’ve seen the world so little—I felt so out of things in Italy. I have seen so little of life” (A
Room with a View 223). By claiming “I must go somewhere! […] I must get away, ever so far,” Lucy intends to discard her original life and retrieve her independence in other countries (A Room with a View 211). For Lucy, leaving is a natural necessity. It is through leaving and crossing the boundary she is positioned that she can discover new meanings in her life. Lucy is not home-bound. In fact, she “desire[s] a change” (A Room with a View 214). Her concept of home is boundless. While everyone doubts her choice for Greece rather than other nearby places, they fail to understand the pursuit for her nomadic travel. She aims to travel far away from England and head for other countries so as to experience a free and independent life.

When Lucy argues with her mother for going to Greece, she resorts to her piano-playing again, “attentively pursuing the Sonatas of Mozart” (A Room with a View 208). Lucy’s decision has her own reason. Yet, her becoming obviously is becoming-minoritarian since her friends and family cannot comprehend and accept her. Throughout the novel, she always chooses to play the piano when she is unable to “converse honestly about her experience” (Heath 192). As her wish conflicts with reality, Mozart marks and embodies her state of confusion. By her playing, she clarifies her mind and makes determinations. Just as Mr. Beebe perceives, Lucy will “make the fact public in her own way when she chooses” (A Room with a View 212).

Yet, in the last chapter of the novel, Lucy does not head to Greece but leaves England and goes to Italy with George, the place that inspires her becoming, where she is mostly at ease. It is with George’s companion that Lucy obtains her room with a view. Since both of them are nomadic travelers, they are very likely to continue their ceaseless travel and incessant becoming in the journey of her life. Their combination may even be transitory since both of them desires changeable freedom much more than changeless stability. Even though Lucy realizes that “the Honeychurches had not forgiven [her and George] […] she had alienated Windy Corner, perhaps forever,” she
will not return to England any more (*A Room with a View* 239). Her becoming is irreversible. Even so, she makes her choice even “at the cost of estrangement from her friends [and family]” (Cavaliero 105). With her constant spatial becoming, Lucy is now becoming-traveler.

VI. Conclusion

Lucy’s journey to Italy opens up her supple line to her life. Her becoming as a nomadic traveler departs her from the rigid line of the regulated conventions. Whereas Charlotte, Mrs. Honeychurch and Cecil always stick to the rules and notions due to their lack of becoming, Lucy deviates from her family and fiancée, pursing her freedom and independence in the process of becoming-other and becoming-traveler.

Against her mother’s conventional values and Cecil’s prejudiced sedentary personality, Lucy’s becoming allows her to move beyond her original conventional life that she has long been unsatisfied with. As she begins to questions the meaning and reason of the lady-like rules, now she will no longer be trapped by the settled boundary. Secondly, another effect of her becoming is that Lucy is able to bravely and positively face the conflicts that her decisions entail. The spatial changes bring her to understand the conventional ideology is not the only answer to deal with life. Lastly, just as Italy endows her with the possibility of freedom, her becoming-traveler will give her even more unexpected stimulations. Islam asserts that “the sign of becoming is registered […] between what has happened […] and what is about to happen […] between the irretrievable time of the past and the virtual time of the future” (76). Even though her becoming is a process of in-between rather than a result, her nomadic changes demonstrate her departure and rejection toward the old conventions.