

No Home for Miniature People: Home and Away in Mary Norton's *Borrowers* series and Tomiko Inui's *The Secret of the Blue Glass*

Like a running stream, there is a typical narrative flow in children's literature of the home-away-home sequence. This allows the child to have an adventure but to also return safely to the adult world and its normativities – or, as Maria Nikolajeva terms it in *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers*, aetonormativity. However, in books about miniature people, such as Mary Norton's *Borrowers* series and Tomiko Inui's *The Secret of the Blue Glass*, this flow is often dammed. The miniature people lose their home because of an encounter with a big child character but do not find a new one by the end of the text. Their original homes are not a stable environment, as they are homes within homes under the threat of constant surveillance and exposure. The home of the big people becomes the "away" or wilderness for the miniature people. However when they lose their home, they are ejected from the big people's home as well. In these texts it is not only the child who loses their home, but the whole family. I will explore what it means for the family – often closely connected to the home – to be set adrift from home and the adult normativities it inscribes. The miniature children in both texts gain power over and independence from their parents while away from home. Without aetonormativity through the home-away-home structure to return adult control, there is a potential for the subversion of the adult/child power dynamic. I will be utilizing Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer's discussions of the home-away-home structure, as well as Jane Suzanne Carroll and Ann Alston's concepts of the home in children's literature. With insight from these critics, I will discuss how the instability of the miniature home leads to its destruction and argue that this destruction results in the miniature child creating for themselves a separate identity from the family that defies the typical adult/child power dynamic.