



If I hadn't been a novelist I would have been a rare book dealer – it's like a constant treasure hunt.

Attributed to Graham Greene.

An object in a museum case, he wrote, must suffer the de-natured existence of an animal in the zoo. In any museum, the object dies – of suffocation and the public gaze – whereas private ownership confers on the owner the right and need to touch. As a young child will reach out to touch the things it names, so the passionate collector, his eye in harmony with his hand, restores to the object the life-giving touch of its maker. The collector's enemy is the museum curator. Ideally, museums should be looted every fifty years and their collections returned to circulation.

Bruce Chatwin, Utz.