Atonement is truly a remarkable novel in many ways, but one of its more distinct features is its tangible atmosphere. Having established that this in some way was connected with place, my aim in this study became the exploration of the relationship between place and character as well as the function of place in the novel in general. To provide depth to the analysis only one novel character was chosen for this purpose. Robbie Turner is, next to the protagonist Briony Tallis the most important character in the novel, but he has largely been overlooked in the existing criticism on Atonement and, therefore, he constitutes the focus of the analysis. Since Robbie is most present in Part Two of the novel, which chronicles his retreat to Dunkirk, this is the part which was analysed most closely. The results from the analysis show that place is employed as a tool for developing character and emotion in the novel. Throughout Part Two elements like water, sun, vegetation and sky are used to create emotions in Robbie as well as to mirror his physical and psychological state and foreshadow his death. Nature is thus used as a metaphor for portraying the many conflicting feelings in Robbie. Furthermore, the war images of the retreat were found to have a direct impact on his mental state and his sense of guilt. In the analysis it was further established that the many instances of intertextuality that the novel contains influences the way the reader perceives of Robbie's character. Finally, it was argued that one of the ideas of place in Atonement is to through a strong character portrait to show the horrible consequences of war and shed light on the retreat to Dunkirk.