An Analysis and Interpretation of The Short Stories and Tales of Joseph Conrad

Leona Berry
Fort Hays Kansas State College

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AN ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
OF THE SHORT STORIES AND TALES
OF JOSEPH CONRAD

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

Leona Berry, A. B.
York College, York, Nebraska

Date: July 23, 1947

APPROVED:

Major Professor

Chair, Graduate Council
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PREFACE

The writer of this thesis has always been interested in the study of the short story. In the selection of material the volumes of short stories and tales written by Joseph Conrad, with the exception of his book-length fiction, have been used as the basis for the proposed problem.

In the thesis the writer has attempted to analyze and interpret the short stories and tales of Joseph Conrad by first summarizing and then criticizing each story. In the concluding chapter the writer has attempted to draw as definite conclusions as possible as to the selection of subject matter and literary technique of Joseph Conrad as shown in his short stories and tales.
CHAPTER I

SURVEY OF THE LIFE AND THE WORKS
OF JOSEPH CONRAD

Born in the Kiev section of Ukraine, Poland, on December 3, 1857, Teodor Josef Konrad Korzeniowski passed his childhood under the influence of revolutionary Poland. His father, Apollo Nalecz Korzeniowski, was a leader in the organization of the secret National Committee, whose aim was to gain independence for the Polish people. Moreover, his grandfather, Teodor Korzeniowski, a lieutenant in the Napoleonic armies in 1807, had been captain in the Polish Army during the uprisings of 1831. Thus the father and grandfather, as well as other relatives and friends of Joseph Conrad, were intensely patriotic to the national existence of a suppressed Poland.

In 1861, Apollo Korzeniowski and his family moved to Warsaw, where Conrad's father was actively engaged in encouraging a movement to incite moral resistance to Russian domination. Because of his activities with this movement, Apollo Korzeniowski was arrested and condemned to exile in Perm in the eastern part of European Russia on the Volga River not far from the Ural Mountains. His wife, Evelina, asked to go with him, and her request was granted on the condition that she also submit herself to the role of an exile. When on their way, the order was changed; the

exiles, Conrad and his parents, must go to Vologda in northern Russia.

Conrad's mother, never very robust, now became critically ill and was allowed a three-months' leave in 1865 to visit her brother, Thaddeus Bobrowski, in the hope that her health might be improved.

To Conrad, who accompanied his mother to the Ukraine, this was a delightful time. He did not recognize the tragic significance of the visit. His cousin, a quick-tempered little girl, and other children of the neighborhood were his constant companions. The governess while playing with the children taught Conrad to speak and read French. This faithful friend, "the good, ugly Mlle. Durand, the governess, with her black eyebrows meeting over a short thick nose, and a complexion like pale brown paper," begged Conrad when he left to go back with his mother into exile, "'N'oublie pas ton francais, mon chéri.'"

Mme. Korzeniowski, whose health steadily became worse, was not permitted to prolong her visit. When the time came for her to leave, Mme. Korzeniowski was able, however, to walk down to the carriage on the arm of her brother. The day was one never to be forgotten by Conrad.

The elongated, bizarre, shabby travelling-carriage with four post-horses, standing before the long front of the house with its eight columns, four on each side of the broad flight of stairs. On the steps, groups of servants, a few relations, one or two friends from the nearest neighbourhood, a perfect silence, on all the faces an air of sober concentration; my grandmother all in black gazing stoically, ... at the top of the flight my little cousin in a short skirt of a tartan pattern with a deal of red in it, and like a small princess attended by the women of her own household.

Thus the relatives and friends of Conrad and his mother solemnly waited to watch the party go back to Russia.

3. Ibid., pp. 64, 65.
4. Ibid., p. 64.
Soon after in 1865, Conrad's mother died. The boy living with his father at Tchernikow spent much of his lonely time in reading. Not long after his mother's death while he was still wearing a black blouse with a white border for mourning, one afternoon Conrad went to his father's room. Some two hours later his father found him, kneeling in the chair with his elbows on the table and his head held in his hands. Conrad was reading a manuscript of loose pages. Suddenly Conrad's father appeared in the doorway, but after a moment all that he said was, "Read the page aloud."

The manuscript, his father's translation of the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," was Conrad's first introduction to English literature. Another translation of deep interest to the boy was Victor Hugo's "Toilers of the Sea."\(^5\) Conrad was also acquainted with "Nicholas Nickleby." Conrad remarked in later years that it was "extraordinary how well Mrs. Nickleby could chatter disconnectedly in Polish and the sinister Ralph rage in that language."\(^6\) By the time Conrad was ten years old, he had read much of Victor Hugo and other romantics. He read in Polish and in French, history voyages, novels, and poetry. He also knew "Gil Blas" and "Don Quixote" in abridged editions.

In December, 1867, the dying Apollo Korzeniowski, no longer considered dangerous, and his son were given a passport to travel for one year. Back in Cracow, the exile entered Conrad in the Royal and Imperial Gymnasium of St. Anne. The winter of 1868 was a long, gloomy one for Conrad. At eight o'clock each morning he would trudge down Florian Street and at

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5. Ibid., pp. 71, 72.
6. Ibid., 71.
seven o'clock each evening he would return to the big old house beyond Great Square. There in a large drawing room, "panelled and bare, with heavy cornices and a lofty ceiling," Conrad would prepare his lessons for the next day. Later in the evening he was permitted to tip-toe into his father's room to say good-night.

Only two weeks before Apollo Korzeniowski's death, Conrad witnessed the burning of his father's manuscripts. M. Korzeniowski, propped in an armchair, watched the attending sister as she threw the papers into the fire-place. Soon in May, 1869, M. Korzeniowski died. At the funeral, a large portion of the population of Cracow paid tribute to Korzeniowski and the spirit of Polish national patriotism. Later, to honor Conrad's father, the Municipal Council of Cracow gave Conrad freedom of the city and exempted him from tax.

In 1873, when Conrad was fifteen years old, Conrad told his uncle of his longing to be a sailor. After the close of school that year Conrad and his tutor had journeyed through Vienna, along the upper Danube, the Falls of the Rhine, and Lake Constance. While in Switzerland, Conrad met his first Englishman. Staying over night in a hotel near Hospenthal, the couple found that the house was really a boarding-place for some English engineers who were working on the St. Gotthard Tunnel. The two saw these men, but again on the top of Furca Pass Conrad met another unforgettable Englishman.

He was clad in a knickerbocker suit, but as at the same time he wore short socks under his laced boots, for reasons which, whether

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hygienic or conscientious, were surely imaginative, his calves exposed to the public gaze and to the tonic air of high altitudes, dazzled the beholder by the splendour of their marble-like condition and their rich tone of young ivory. He was the leader of a small caravan. The light of a headlong, exalted satisfaction with the world of men and the scenery of mountains illumined his clean-cut, very red face, his short, silver-white whiskers, his innocently eager and triumphant eyes. In passing he cast a glance of kindly curiosity and a friendly gleam of big, sound, shiny teeth towards the man and the boy sitting like dusty tramps by the roadside, with a modest knapsack lying at their feet.

This English traveller restored confidence in the boy. More than ever Conrad was determined to be a sailor.

None could convince Conrad that he should not go to sea. His uncle, Thaddeus Brobrowski, finally decided that Conrad would have to decide for himself and admonished him that he must meanwhile do the best that he could in the yearly examinations.

In October, 1874, Conrad reached Marseilles, where Baptistin Solary helped to find a ship for the boy. Baptistin Solary was related to a number of well-to-do families of Marseilles, one of whom was a ship-broker with English ships. Conrad soon became known as "le petit ami de Baptiste" by the Corporation of Pilots and was given freedom of their boats.

During the time spent with these pilots, Conrad saw his first English ship. On a short cruise Conrad was at the tiller and under instructions from the patron, who told him to keep the boat in the furrow of the moon. Early in the morning a high-class cargo steamer with three masts hove into sight. The name on the bow was the James Westoll. A number of the sailors rowed over to the steamer in a dinghy. Pulling along side

10. Ibid., p. 123.
of the ship, Conrad for the first time heard himself addressed in En-
glish, the language of his choice. No doubt the speech was not eloquent,
for he was warned by a big fat fellow to "Look out there." The pur-
pose of this warning was to call Conrad's attention to a rope dangling
along side of the ship. As Conrad and his companions shoved off, Conrad
felt for the first time "the smooth flank of the first English ship" that
he had ever touched in his life.

In 1876, Conrad and three of his friends formed a syndicate and
bought the Tremolino, a boat built on the Savona River and rigged in Cor-
sica. Of the adventurous group who were interested in the Carlist move-
ment in Spain, J. M. K. Blunt was a North Carolinian gentleman. His
family had lost their fortunes in the Civil War, and he was now wandering
from place to place in Europe. Henry C____ was a Londoner, who merely
introduced himself as the "black sheep." The third partner was Roger P.
de la S____, a Scandinavian-looking fellow who often times took his
friends home for lunch. The life of the Tremolino was short-lived, for
the little tartane was deliberately wrecked upon a rock in order to escape
being caught with a contraband cargo.

Conrad then boarded an English steamer, the Mavis, which on its re-
turn trip from Constantinople arrived at Lowestoft on June 18, 1878. Con-
rad was in England for the first time. Soon Conrad signed on The Skimmer
of the Seas, a coaster between Lowestoft and New Castle.

11. Ibid., pp. 130-137.
Here Conrad began his first work in English, and for him it was real work. Conrad tells in a letter to Joseph de Smet of his acquaintance with the English language.

My first English reading was the **Standard** newspaper, and my first acquaintance by the ear with it was in the speech of fishermen, shipwrights and sailors of the East Coast. But in 1880 I had mastered the language sufficiently to pass the first examination for officer in the Merchant Service, including a *viva-voce* of more than two hours. But 'mastered' is not the right word; I should have said 'acquired'!... I've never opened an English grammar in my life. My pronunciation is rather defective to this day. Having unluckily no ear, my accentuation is uncertain, especially when in the course of a conversation I become self-conscious. In writing I wrestle painfully with that language which I feel I do not possess but which possesses me,—alas.13

Conrad then decided that he wanted to serve on a deep-ocean vessel; so he went to London to secure a place. He had written a letter, his first composition in English, to the Liverpool Station. When he arrived in London, Conrad was glad to find that the shipping agent at the station had been able to understand his letter. This agent helped Conrad to secure a berth as ordinary seaman on the **Duke of Sutherland**, which sailed to Australia.

In June, 1880, Conrad passed his examination for third mate, and in August, he embarked at London for Sydney on the **Loch Etive**.

When in September, 1881, Conrad embarked as second mate on the **Palestine**, he was about to experience the most memorable voyage of his life. The ship nearly sank twice before she got under way. The barque when she left London loaded with a cargo of coal for Bangkok was caught in a storm

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in the English Channel and returned to port. Then in November, 1881, the Palestine started again but was forced to return to Falmouth for repairs. A year later she took to sea again. When the Palestine reached the Java Sea, the cargo caught on fire; the bridge blew up; and the crew was forced to take to three lifeboats. The voyage was completed in open boats to Singapore. Most of the details of this adventure are told in "Youth."

Conrad returned to England and, after passing his examination, he sailed in 1883 as second mate on the Riversdale bound for Madras. Conrad left the ship because of a dispute and sailed as second mate on the Narcissus. The Nigger of the "Narcissus" is a realistic picture of this voyage.

The year 1886 is a turning point in Conrad's life. On August 19, 1886, Joseph Conrad received his British certificate of naturalization. Conrad then passed the examination which made him a Master in the Mercantile Marine on November 11, 1886. Conrad was also to become known as an author in the second foreign language which he had learned. His first efforts at writing had been his entering the story "The Black Mate" in Tid Bits in 1885.

After sailing on the Tilkhurst and the Falconhurst, Conrad then sailed as first mate on the Highland Forest. During his voyage on the Highland Forest, Conrad was injured seriously when he was hit in the back by one of the minor spars. After being in the hospital for two months

at Samarang, Conrad embarked as second mate on the S.S. Vidar. This voyage took him from Singapore through the Corimata Strait and along the coast of Borneo, a savage wilderness.

In 1888, Conrad was appointed to the Otago, his first command. The former captain, a queer fellow who was fond of playing his violin, had died. After trading between Australia and the Malay Archipelago for a couple of years, Conrad returned to London.

While waiting for a command to go to Africa, Conrad went to visit his uncle, Thaddeus Brobowski, at Kazimierowka in Polish Ukraine for the first time since 1874. Upon Conrad's return to London, he accepted a position to command a river steamer on the Congo in Africa. Years before while a boy studying geography, Conrad had declared that some day he would go to Africa. The aim of the voyage of the Roi des Belges from Kinshasa to Stanley Falls must have been to "relieve one of the agents of the Company, who was stationed at the Falls and whose health was giving the gravest anxiety." On the return trip at an awkward turn of the river between Kinshasa and Leopoldsville, Conrad was nearly drowned. He reached Boma not caring whether he were dead or alive. "It may be said that Africa killed Conrad the sailor and strengthened Conrad the novelist."

After a long illness in a hospital at Champel near Geneva, Conrad, after returning to London in 1892, sailed as chief officer on the Torrens. On this journey to Australia Conrad showed an unfinished story to a passenger, a young Cambridge man by the name of Jacques. Conrad was

17. Conrad, Last Essays, p. 16.
19. Ibid., p. 142.
anxious to know the opinion of the fellow so asked him,

"Is it worth finishing?"

"Distinctly."

"Were you interested?"

"Very much!"

"Now let me ask you one more thing. Is the story quite clear to you as it stands?"

"Yes. Perfectly."20

This critical judgment encouraged Conrad, and from that time he felt that he was compelled to write volume after volume as he had been compelled to go to sea. In 1894, *Almayer’s Folly*, the story which he had showed to his friend, was accepted by T. Fisher Unwin and published in May, 1895.

With the appearance of *Almayer’s Folly* Conrad had begun his life as an author. Immediately, he began to write other tales of the life that he knew. *An Outcast of the Islands* and "The Lagoon" were soon written by the same old steel pen. Upon a sudden impulse Conrad relates that he tucked the pen in his waistcoat pocket. Afterwards the pen would turn up in various drawers and boxes until finally the pen appeared in a wooden bowl containing buttons, string, loose keys, and "similar minute wreckage that washes out of a man’s life into such receptacles." One day Conrad found two old pens in the bowl. Not being able to determine which pen should receive due praise, Conrad threw both of the pens out of the window into a flower bed.

Writing was not easy for Conrad. His first problem was what language should he choose. His native language was Polish; he spoke French fluently; he knew and used English with difficulty. English, however, was the speech which appealed to him directly. Conrad in a letter to Hugh Walpole wrote of the fascinating qualities of the English language: "The sheer appeal of the language, my quickly awakened love for its prose cadences, a subtle and unforeseen accord of my emotional nature with its genius." French, Conrad felt, was "crystallized in the form of its sentence and therefore more exacting and less appealing." 22

In March, 1896, Conrad married an Englishwoman, Miss Jessie George. After a honeymoon on the coast of Brittany Conrad and his wife lived in "Ivy Walls" at Stanford-le-Hope in Essex. Here in January, 1898, the eldest son Borys was born. Shortly afterward, the Conrads moved to Pent Farm near Hythe, Kent. The Conrads made a number of trips so that Conrad himself might gather more material for his work and so that his health might improve. In January, 1905, the Conrads left England for Capri and Italy. Late in May the Conrads returned to Kent.

In 1914, Conrad and his wife and two sons, Borys and John, journeyed to Poland to make a visit which the family had intended to make for many years. After Conrad's arrival in Cracow, he went to visit the university librarian. There, contrary to the belief that all of his father's manuscripts had been burned, the librarian told Conrad that there was a bundle of correspondence and a large portion of his father's manuscripts

preserved in the library. Conrad arranged with the librarian to have copies of the manuscripts made on the following day. But the next day war was declared; Austria began to mobilize.

Not being able to secure permission to travel, Conrad and his family lived in Konstantinowka near Cracow until October when through the assistance of Mr. Frederick C. Penfield, the American Ambassador to Vienna, Conrad and his family escaped into Italy. From Milan the Conrads went to Genoa and then sailed to London.

In April, 1923, at the invitation of his American publisher, F. N. Doubleday, Conrad undertook a trip to America. Conrad was enthusiastically received but made only one appearance in public, that at the home of Mrs. Arthur Curtiss James in New York. He as well was delighted with America. Writing to Mr. Elbridge L. Adams, Conrad said,

I am going away with a strong impression of American large-heartedness and generosity. I have not for a moment felt like a stranger in this great country, about the future of which no sensible man would dare speculate. But no sensible man would doubt its significance in the history of mankind. I am proud to have had from it an unexpected warmth of public recognition and the gift of precious private friendships.

From 1919 until 1924, Conrad's home, known as "Oswalds," was at Bishopsbourne, Kent. He liked especially to have his friends visit him. R. B. Cunninghame Graham, John Galsworthy, Sir Hugh Clifford, and Ford Madox Ford were among Conrad's intimate friends.

As a man Conrad was

small rather than large in height; very broad in the shoulder and long in the arm; dark in complexion with black hair and a clipped black beard. He had the gestures of a Frenchman who shrugs his shoulders frequently. When you had really secured his attention he would insert his monocle into his right eye and scrutinise your face from very near as a watchmaker looks into the works of a watch. He entered a room with his head held high, rather stiffly and with a haughty manner, moving his head once semi-circularly. In this one movement he had expressed to himself the room and its contents; his haughtiness was due to his determination to master that room not to dominate its occupants, his chief passion being the realisation of aspects to himself.26

His accent was precise, rather dusky, the accent of dark rather than fair races. He impressed the writer [Ford Madox Ford] at first as a pure Marseilles Frenchman; he spoke English with great fluency and distinction, with correctness in his syntax, his words absolutely exact as to meaning but his accentuation so faulty that he was at times difficult to understand and his use of adverbs as often as not eccentric.27

At the time of his death, August 3, 1924, Conrad was working on Suspense. He had intended to add to his work a second volume of impressions which would have supplemented The Mirror of the Sea. Thus ended the life of a great literary figure--Polish by birth but an Englishman by choice.

27. Ibid., p. 29.
# CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE WORKS OF JOSEPH CONRAD

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<td>1902</td>
<td><em>Youth: A Narrative; and Two Other Stories</em></td>
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1. Dates are those of publication.
   * Works used in the preparation of this thesis.
CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE WORKS OF JOSEPH CONRAD (cont’d)

1920  The Rescue : A Romance of the Shallows

1921  Notes on Life and Letters*

1922  The Secret Agent (play based on the book of the same title published in 1907)

1923  The Rover

1924  The Nature of a Crime (Written in collaboration with Ford Madox Ford)

Two Plays: Laughing Anne and One Day More

1925  Suspense

Tales of Hearsay*

1926  Last Essays*

* Works used in the preparation of this thesis.
CHAPTER II

THE NIGGER OF THE "NARCISSUS"

The first ten pages of The Nigger of the "Narcissus" were written at the time Conrad was on his honeymoon in France in 1896. The tale was not finished until February 19, 1897. Almost immediately after writing the story Conrad wrote a preface, which was not published with the book. Later in 1897 W. E. Henley serialized The Nigger of the "Narcissus" in the New Review and printed the preface as a last installment to the tale.

In September, 1883, Conrad had sailed as second mate on the Riverdale bound for Madras. He left the ship because of a dispute, went overland to Bombay, and sailed as second officer on the Narcissus. Throughout the story is presented the picture of the six months of Conrad's life as he served on the Narcissus during 1884.

The Nigger of the "Narcissus"

Mr. Baker, as chief mate of the ship Narcissus, began his job of checking the men for the next journey. Aboard the ship were a number of new hands in addition to the old hands. There were a fellow called Craik but nicknamed "Belfast" and a lad by the name of Archie. A Russian Finn, Wamibo, in a yellow shirt with pink stripes, two Scan-

Dinavians, and old Singleton, the oldest and best seaman on board, were among the crew. Charley, another member, was doing his best at trying to learn the intricacies of knot tying. Another new man, Donkin, delighted in the fact that at least it was a "'omeward trip."

As Mr. Baker checked his list he found that he was one hand short. But at that very moment he heard a deep voice. A tall figure pushed through the crowd and stood before him. This fellow with the whites of his eyes and his teeth gleaming distinctly announced that his name was James Wait.

After a few moments the "nigger" explained that he belonged to the ship. The captain had notified him that morning; but being unable to get aboard sooner, he felt that Mr. Baker would have his name on the list and would understand. Mr. Baker after a moment's hesitation told the "nigger" to go with the other men.

Then the "nigger's" eyes rolled wildly, became all whites. He put his hand to his side and coughed twice, a cough metallic, hollow, and tremendously loud; it resounded like two explosions in a vault; the dome of the sky rang to it, and the iron plates of the ships bulwarks seemed to vibrate in unison, then he marched forward with the others.

James Wait suddenly asked if the cook was a colored man, but he was told that the cook was a white man. The cook, who had a wife and three children, had been with the captain for seven years. He was a serious-minded fellow who went to sleep every evening with the lamp lit, a pipe in his mouth, and a Bible in his hand. Always someone had to go put out the light, take the pipe out of his mouth and the Bible from his hand.
The very next morning the Narcissus went to sea. "She resembled an enormous and aquatic black beetle, surprised by the light, overwhelmed by the sunshine, trying to escape with ineffectual effort into the distant gloom of the land."

Captain Allistoun had commanded the Narcissus since she was built. He loved his ship, and he longed to make a quick passage so that the feat would be mentioned in nautical journals.

As the crew were assembled one day, James Wait appeared. He looked thinner than usual and walked with a faltering step. As he came into their midst, they became silent; each waited for the "nigger" to speak. Finally he thanked them for their silence, especially their yelling before his door. He had tried to sleep but couldn't because of their infernal chattering like a group of old women. He reminded them that he knew that they cared little for a dying man.

The idea of a "stalking death" was what they had expected, but yet they hated to hear of the threat and the odious menace of an old "nigger."

"Was he a reality—or was he a sham—this ever expected visitor of Jimmy's?"

The men hesitated between mistrust and belief yet yielded to Jimmy's whims. Even Archie refused to play his concertina after Jimmy, as the crew now called him, lectured him on a number of occasions. Some of the crew believed, some doubted, the seriousness of Jimmy's illness.

The "nigger" remained in his bunk nearly all of the time. He refused to take any medicine. He asked for paregoric, but after it was given to him, nobody ever saw him take any of it. Despite the protests of Jimmy, he was carried to his new cabin on deck where the crew waited upon him as before.
Meanwhile the Narcissus had passed out of the monsoon. She had sailed by Madagascar and Mauritius without seeing the shore line. But as the ship progressed, she ran into bad weather along the cape. The thirty-second day out of Bombay, the sea smashed one of the galley doors, and the carpenter was washed across the deck twice while he was trying to repair the damage. That night there was no one who could sleep. The gale continued, and every member of the crew felt that the wind could blow no harder. Old Singleton yelled for them to look out for themselves as a great wave came toward them. The ship gave another lurch to the leeward; the doors swung open and the men scrambled to the high side of the deck, "sloping more than the roof of a house." The men then climbed up the ladder of the poop. From there they could see their pillows, blankets, and chests floating out upon the sea. The fury of the storm did not decrease; half of the deck of the ship was below water.

In their efforts to save themselves and to keep the ship going, Jimmy had been forgotten until someone suddenly asked of his whereabouts. He had been caught in his cabin. The men went to the carpenter's shop; on the other side of the bulkhead would be Jimmy. Together the men shouted. Then they heard him screaming and knocking like a man inadvertently shut up in a coffin. Digging through a mass of axes, chisels, saws, crowbars, and all of the tools common in a carpenter's shop, the men after much difficulty finally got to the bulkhead, which was made of stout planks, for the Narcissus was a well built ship. Archie with the aid of a crowbar tried to get through the opening one inch wide and three inches long. After a larger hole was torn in the bulkhead Belfast plunged in headfirst to drag Jimmy out of his prison.
By the time Jimmy had been pulled through the opening, he had collapsed completely. Finally, the men were able to drag him up on the poop with the rest of the crew. They had risked their lives to save Jimmy who perhaps was only malingering.

After the gale the ship was righted, and the crew began to repair the damage. None of the men were missing nor were any of them hurt except Mr. Creighton, the second mate, who had an injured leg. Jimmy, remaining in his berth after his harrowing experience, contended that the day on the poop had weakened him extremely. As he lay there he would watch through the door or listen to footsteps upon the deck. In the evening the men usually came to the cabin and visited.

The cook was one who often dropped in with a cup of tea. He was also concerned with the state of Jimmy's soul, and upon one occasion caused such a disturbance that he had to be ordered out of the room. The cook had insisted that Jimmy repent of his wicked deeds, for he was a dying man. Jimmy, confused and bewildered, called for help. As a result of the experience, he told the captain that he was going on duty the next day.

Of the members of the crew, Belfast was certain that Jimmy would never live to see port. There was no question that, as old Singleton had predicted, Jimmy would die in sight of land. It was Belfast who spent his time in Jimmy's cabin caring for him and doing all that he could to make the "nigger" comfortable. Most of the others still suspected that Jimmy might be pretending.

On one particular visit Donkin plainly told the "nigger" that his time was short. In fact, he might die the very next day. Jimmy was
frightened and amazed at the thought of being thrown overboard, dead. While there, Donkin slipped the key from beneath Jimmy's pillow and rummaged through the contents of a box belonging to Jimmy. As Donkin turned to leave the cabin he looked back at Jimmy only at see a "scarlet thread hung down his chin out of the corner of his lips." Jimmy was dead.

After the usual preparation, the corpse was carried up to an open port. Mr. Baker read the service, and as he committed the body to the deep, the wrapped weighted corpse on the sliding board did not move. The boatsmen raised the board higher and higher, Belfast, in dismay shrieked, "Go, Jimmy!--Jimmy, go!" At that moment, the corpse swung loose and into the sea.

A week later the Narcissus entered the Channel and sailed on into port. The crew of the Narcissus were paid, and each went his separate way.

Criticism

The Nigger of the "Narcissus" is a tale of an exciting voyage from Bombay to London. The ship, a worthy craft, encountered every kind of weather from a calm to the most terrific gale. As the Narcissus began her homeward journey, the craft "ran easily before a fair monsoon." Later she ran out of the monsoon and into a calm for a few days. Soon, however, after passing Madagascar and Mauritius, the ship ran into heavy seas. The climax is reached during the gale that follows. Captain Allistoun did not leave the deck, and when he would try to drink a cup of coffee, half of it would be blown out of the

5. Ibid., p. 28.
cup before he could drink it. The Narcissus plowed through the seas with half her deck under water. As she rolled to the leeward, the men scrambled to the high side of the ship "like vermin fleeing before a flood." The storm was terrific, blowing and battering the men as they clung desperately to whatever was nearby. In this excitement, the crew discovered that Jimmy was missing.

On the other hand, The Nigger of the "Narcissus" is a characterization of the negro, James Wait. From the first of the story when Jimmy is attacked by such a racking cough, one realizes that there is something seriously wrong with him. Jimmy tries to make the others believe that he is a dying man, but the crew are hardly convinced that this is true. They seem almost to hate the "nigger," but at the same time they rescue him from his cabin and provide for his comfort as best as they can. Belfast spends much of his time in caring for the poor miserable man.

Throughout the tale, Conrad is especially vigorous in his description. Nor is there a lack of description of any character or scene. Each is portrayed with a reality which one can experience with little effort. Wamibo is "wearing a yellow shirt with pink stripes." The two Scandinavians are referred to as "young giants with smooth, baby faces." Another particularly interesting picture is that of Singleton, tattooed like a cannibal chief all over his powerful chest and enormous biceps. Between the blue and red patterns his white skin gleamed like satin; his bare back was propped against the heel of

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6. Ibid., p. 28.
9. Ibid., p. 6.
of the bowsprit, and he held a book at arm's length before his big, sunburnt face. With his spectacles and a venerable white beard, he resembled a learned and savage patriarch, the incarnation of barbarian wisdom serene in the blasphemous turmoil of the world.10

Conrad's scenes are likewise definitely vivid and graphic. During the gale the crew could see their belongings floating out upon the sea. The straw beds swam high, the blankets, spread out, undulated; while the chests, waterlogged and with a heavy list, pitched heavily like dismantled hulks, before they sank; Archie's big coat passed with outspread arms, resembling a drowned seaman floating with his head under water.11

The plight of the crew during the storm is equally vivid as they wait for the ship to turn over altogether and fling them into the sea. They gripped rails, they had wound ropes' ends under their arms; they clutched ringbolts, they crawled in heaps where there was foothold; they held on with both arms, hooked themselves to anything to windward with elbows, with chins, almost with their teeth; and some, unable to crawl away from where they had been flung, felt the sea leap up, striking against their backs as they struggled upwards. Singleton had stuck to the wheel. His hair flew out in the wind; the gale seemed to take its life-long adversary by the beard and shake his old head. He wouldn't let go, and, with his knees forced between the spokes, flew up and down like a man on a bough.12

Conrad is vivid and breath-taking in describing the gale. He does not let the reader doubt for a moment the severeness nor the destructiveness of the storm. The description of that wild, terrific sea is painfully poignant. Conrad says that a big, foaming sea came out of the mist; it made for the ship, roaring wildly, and in its rush it looked as mischievous and discomposing as a madman with an axe.13

The reader does not become especially fond of any of the characters; yet at the same time one becomes well acquainted with a number of the crew. James Wait, of course, is the main character. One at times sympathizes

10. Loc. cit.
11. Ibid., p. 58.
12. Ibid., pp. 59, 60.
13. Ibid., p. 57.
with him, but at other times one suspects that he is unworthy. The cook, although rather fanatical in his religion, is to be admired for his ability to cope with difficulties. In spite of the rolling of the Narcissus he says that "As long as she swims I will cook."

Donkin, a detestable person who probably took what he wanted of Jimmy's possessions, is also despised by the other members of the crew. Throughout the tale Belfast is to be admired for his continuous devotion to Jimmy.

CHAPTER III

TALES OF UNREST

The volume Tales of Unrest, containing "Karain," "The Idiots," "An Outpost of Progress," "The Return," and "The Lagoon," appeared in March, 1898. Of these five stories, "The Lagoon" was written first by the same steel pen that Conrad had used to write An Outcast of the Islands. "The Lagoon" with its setting in the Malay Archipelago was first published as a serial in the Cornhill Magazine.¹

"An Outpost of Progress," a story of what Conrad carried away from Africa, and "The Idiots," a tale of Brittany, were written during Conrad's honeymoon in France in 1896. Of "An Outpost of Progress" Conrad says that "the story itself is true enough in its essentials. The sustained invention of a really telling lie demands a talent which I do not possess."² "The Idiots" was written as a result of a visual, not a mental suggestion.³

Conrad's first contribution to the Blackwood's Magazine, "Karain: a Memory," was accepted by that magazine on July 19, 1897. The background and setting of the story is similar to the setting of "The Lagoon."

"The Return," was written in 1897 and was very difficult for Conrad to write. He says that "the writing of that fantasy has cost me in sheer toil, in temper, and in disillusion."⁴

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¹. Conrad, Tales of Unrest, Author's Note, pp. vii, viii.
². Ibid., p. ix.
³. Loc. cit.
⁴. Ibid., p. xi.
"Karain"

"Karain: A Memory" is the story of a Malay chieftain who is the ruler of three villages along an isolated bay in Mindanao. Ten years before the opening of the tale, Karain had taken his people, a group of wandering Bugis, to the bay, where they had lost all concern for the future.

Karain had many friends and also many enemies as he often said to the traders, "Friends and enemies--many enemies; else why should I buy your rifles and powder?"\(^5\) The eccentric chieftain would often visit with his friends aboard the schooner. Karain would usually appear suddenly in the doorway of the cabin. Followed closely by one attendant, an old wrinkle-faced sword-bearer, here Karain would share with the traders, especially the three of whom he seemed to be very fond, his plans and his secrets. He seemed to be able to forget any Malayan superstitions which bound him from speaking freely. Always during his visit Karain would ask about the Queen. Soon the traders had to invent answers to satisfy his curiosity.

While aboard the schooner, Karain preferred to talk of his native country, a small Bugis state on the island of the Celebes. He would also tell of his mother, the ruler of a small state at the head of the Gulf of Boni. She had, after the death of her first husband, married a rich trader, a Korinchi man of no family. Karain was a son of this second marriage.

The traders who had visited Karain for two years at intervals came

5. Ibid., pp. 3-55.
to like and admire the chieftain. But Karain had been plotting and preparing for a war for some time, and the traders did all in their power to persuade him that such an undertaking was futile.

The next time that the traders appeared in the bay, they heard that Karain's sword-bearer had died a few days earlier. For five days the traders waited to see Karain. Then during a storm, Karain again appeared at the doorway of the cabin as was his custom, but this time he had swum to the boat.

Karain was a different man. He was worn and tired both mentally and physically. He looked as if he had not slept for weeks.

Finally Karain spoke to his friends, Jackson, Hollis, and the narrator, and told them his story.

Years before trouble had broken the alliance of the four states of Wajo. The Dutch had watched the natives of these states fight until they were exhausted. Then they steamed into the harbor and offered to give the country their protection. Karain's brother was a ruler, and he was one of those who had given a promise of safety to Dutch traders. Pata Matara was a councillor of the ruler and a friend of Karain.

One of the Dutchmen under the promise of safety had built a house in Matara's country, and not long afterward Pata Matara's sister fled to the house of the Dutchman. Matara was disgraced; he vowed that the deed should be avenged, but he felt that, if the Dutchman's blood was spilt on their land, the natives would have to pay for the deed. The council agreed that nothing should be done until the trader left.

Fearing for the life of the girl and for his own life, the Dutchman,
taking the girl with him, left the country. Karain and Matara then began a long search for them. Across the sea, over mountains, and through the land of the stone cities, the couple searched for the girl. Working where and for whatever small amount they could get, the two men asked, inquired, waited, and watched.

Matara's plan was to kill the girl, then to kill the man. Finally, after many months, the search ended. The Dutchman and the girl were found. After lying in wait for three nights, the two friends completed their plans; Matara was to take the life of his sister for her unfaithfulness, and Karain was to kill the big Dutchman. On the fatal night, Matara leaped to take the life of his sister, he leaped in front of the big Dutchman. A shot was fired; Matara, not the Dutchman, was dead.

When captured by the men, Karain said that he knew nothing of the shot and that he did not know the dead man. In turn, the girl said that she had never seen Karain before.

Up until this time Karain had always felt the presence of his girl, following him from place to place. Then after the death of Matara, it was he who followed him night and day. Always the spirit of Matara tortured him. He had no peace until he met the old man who became his sword-bearer, and now he was dead.

Someone must present him with a charm. Finally Hollis left the cabin and then reappeared with a small leather box. From among the contents, he found a small coin, a Jubilee sixpence. Awkwardly he cut from the palm of a lady's white glove a piece large enough to cover the coin. Sewing the coin in the leather, then sewing this to a piece of blue ribbon,
he placed the amulet about Karain's neck. After being assured by the three traders that Matara's shade was no longer there, Karain left the schooner.

Only the memory of Karain remains in the minds of the traders. Did the amulet give Karain peace and contentment?

Criticism

In the story of "Karain," Conrad presents the tale from the point of view of one of the traders. This trader, known to the reader only as "I," relates the story except the portion which deals with the personal adventures of Karain, which are the basis for the superstitious thread in the story.

Karain is an eccentric character who cannot be taken away from his Malayan surroundings. Being the child of a queen and a Korinchi trader, Karain is an outcast. Nevertheless, his people are devoted to him, for he had secured for them a place to live. Proud as the Malayan is of his holdings, Karain is bothered by an unforgettable feeling which is always following him. He is more at ease when his sword-bearer is with him, but after the death of the old fellow, Karain again loses his sense of security. He feels that he must have some means of escape. The crude amulet fashioned by Hollis is the answer. Karain accepts the charm without a question and immediately is at ease again.

The setting, a bay in Mindanao, provides splendid background for the mood which is current throughout the story. The smoke of fires, the hills, the native houses, and the crudeness of backward places add color to the story. The storm on the night that Karain tells his personal
story coincides with the storm in Karain's own mind. Conrad, very definite in his description, pictures the storm as a real one.

A single clap of thunder detonated in the hollow with a violence that seemed capable of bursting into small pieces the ring of high land, and a warm deluge descended. The wind died out. We panted in the close cabin; our faces steamed; the bay outside hissed as if boiling; the water fell in perpendicular shafts as heavy as lead; it swished about the deck, poured off the spars, gurgled, sobbed, splashed, murmured in the blind night.6

The story is mainly a characterization and an interpretation of the life of Karain as he lived on an island in the Eastern world. He lived as any native of that place would live, true to the life and culture that he knew. Karain did not change, but he felt that perhaps the white traders in their unbelief could help him solve his own problem, that of escaping from the spirit that followed him.

The island of Mindanao was at the time of the story of "Karain: A Memory" a Spanish possession. However, throughout the story there is little evidence of any direct influence of the Spanish rulers. Karain and his people live in their own way on the island without being suppressed or dominated by foreign rule.

One wonders what language Karain spoke in conversing with the traders. Conrad does not give any suggestion in solving the problem. Evidently, Karain knew some language, probably Dutch, that was common to him and the traders.

"The Idiots"7

As the two travellers in the story of "The Idiots" jogged down the

6. Ibid., p. 21.
7. Ibid., pp. 56-85.
road from Treguier to Kervanda, they saw a younger, a red-faced boy of perhaps sixteen, dart through the tall grass along the roadside. Still another peculiar-looking child stood in the road several yards ahead of them. He, too, was a misshapen creature who peered at the couple as they went by.

Upon further questioning, the narrator found that there were four of these odd children, three boys and a girl who were idiots. The children were living with their maternal grandmother. Little by little at various times the narrator finally pieced the tale together.

It was the story of Jean-Pierre Bacadou who, seeing that the farm was deteriorating upon his return from military service, decided that he must get married and take care of the farm and his aged parents. After the wedding, a large affair, for the Bacadous were well-to-do farmers, Jean-Pierre and his bride lived with his mother and father.

When the first children, twin boys, were born, Jean-Pierre's mother was no longer with them. Several months later Jean-Pierre suspected that his children were not like other children. There was no doubt about it; they were idiots. Jean-Pierre only hoped that his third child, another boy, would be normal. But now, even the grandfather suspected that there was something wrong with his grandsons. In his distress, Jean-Pierre asked his wife to see what her religion could do for them.

A year or so later a girl was born. In spite of the disappointment Jean-Pierre felt perhaps that he could marry her to a decent fellow, and that besides the next child might be a boy.

The girl, too, was an idiot. The situation rested heavily upon the
Bacadou household. As Jean-Pierre went about his work from time to time, he knew that he had no one to help him. He became morbid and dissatisfied.

One day his wife's mother, Madame Levaille, who travelled through the country handling her business, had gone to her house near Kervanion. The old house stood among the rocks near the bay of Fougère. When the tide was out, the bay, nearly fifty feet below the house, presented a formidable picture.

Late in the evening Susan, Jean-Pierre's wife, startled her mother by suddenly appearing in the doorway. Madame Levaille, thinking perhaps that the farm had caught on fire, for she could think of no other reason for her daughter's appearance, insisted that Susan explain why she had come. Susan only stared and muttered incoherently. Madame Levaille instantly recalled that her husband had been insane for a few years before his death, and now she suspected that her daughter was deranged. After a few moments Susan finally told her mother that she had killed her husband with the scissors. In her despair Susan ran out of the house and hid among the rocks and boulders near the edge of the bay. In her attempt to get away she lost her balance and fell down the steep incline to the water's edge.

When warned by the people along the shore that the tide was coming in, Susan thought that it was her husband calling after her. Wildly, she ran along the bay until she came to a rocky islet, the Raven, which was connected with the main land by a bridge of slippery stones. Here she had planned to escape and to go back and explain the matter to those at
home. But before her was one whom she believed to be her dead husband. Millot, who attempted to save Susan, only frighten ed the insane woman more, and as the water came up around her, she refused to be helped to safety.

In a closing scene Madame Levaille lamented the fact that her daughter could not be buried in consecrated ground. Monsieur le Marquis assured her that he would speak to the priest, for surely Susan was insane, and the fall was only accidental.

Criticism

In the tragic tale of "The Idiots," the narrator has secured bits of information from here and there to piece together the story of a mentally afflicted family who lived along the coast of Brittany during the late nineteenth century. Although the account of a murder and the accidental drowning of an insane woman are related in the story, the chief interest lies in Conrad's characterization of a normal person who is surrounded by abnormal people.

As one reads "The Idiots," one can see that Conrad's story is a sordidly realistic picture of insanity. Jean-Pierre had married Susan, who, one learns, was the daughter of a man who became insane before his death. Then all four children of Susan and Jean-Pierre were idiots. When Jean-Pierre realized that all of his children were unbalanced, he became morbid and distressed. He had no one to take care of the land when he died. In his attempt to solve the problem, he sacrificed his convictions and was outwardly converted to Catholicism. Regardless of all his efforts, Jean-Pierre could not solve the situation and so became bitter and
quarrelsome. Never after the beginning of the story does one see any of the idiot children. They are not the basis for the story, but only a result of a poor marriage. Conrad's effort is in picturing the effect of such an environment upon Jean-Pierre and the mental torture of the insanity of Susan. Too much cannot be expected of Susan, who is the daughter of an insane man and has a morose husband and four idiotic children. Susan's unbalanced state of mind is portrayed very vividly by Conrad in her hysterical outburst and confession of the murder of Jean-Pierre. Not only does his blasphemy at the church door and the murder of her husband upset Susan, but people have accused her of being the mother of idiots. In her dilemma, she has prayed, but there were no answers to her prayers.

"An Outpost of Progress"

Two white men, Kayerts, a short fat fellow, and Carlier, a tall man perched on a pair of thin legs, were left in charge of a trading station upon the Congo River in the interior of Africa. The third man on the staff was a negro who said that his name was Henry Price, but others called him Makola. The trading post was some three hundred miles away from the nearest station, and the steamer which had brought the two men would not come back for another six months.

Kayerts and Carlier, who were told to plant a garden, build a storehouse, and construct a landing place, soon seemed to become somewhat attached to one another.

Often the two would talk of the fellow now lying under a wooden cross in his grave, who had preceded them, or Kayerts would chatter
about his daughter Melie. Then, too, they would talk about Mr. Makola. They read the old torn books that their predecessor had left, and thus they became acquainted with many strange personages. But never did the two white men do any work.

Often Gobila, a neighboring chief, would visit at the trading-post. Gobila had a strange belief that all white men were immortal, and he was absolutely unable to decide whether the first man at the post had really died or whether the fellow had pretended to die and had himself buried for some strange purpose. Gobila's village supplied the station with all the necessary food supplies, fowls, sweet potatoes, palm wine, and sometimes a goat.

Kayerts and Carlier did not notice the change in their features during the five months of inactivity at the station. Each of the men had become weak, hollow-eyed, and very irritable.

One morning a group of armed men from Loanda along the coast came out of the forest and advanced towards the station. No one except Mrs. Makola could understand the strange language of the men. And then suddenly Makola himself seemed to have forgotten French and would not talk with the two men at the station. Excitement reigned, but the two could find out nothing. During the night the two heard a shot fired, but they could not agree as to the direction from which it came. That afternoon Makola informed the two white men that ivory could be secured, but that the white men must let him manage the trade.

The next day when Kayerts and Carlier called for the station assistants, ten native workers, they did not come. After a while,
Makola admitted that they went with the coast people. Yes, Makola had managed the affair. Six large tusks lay on the ground; the workmen were gone. Makola insisted that no trade had been made. Nothing was recorded on the books; everything was correct.

Kayerts and Carlier were indignant and upbraided Makola for such a transaction, but finally the two decided that they could do nothing about the matter.

After this event Gobila and his people did not visit the station. Supplies, therefore, became more scarce, and Kayerts and Carlier became more degraded. The men tried to provide their own food, but there they were seriously handicapped. No fish could be caught in the river, which was running low. Once Carlier shot a hippo, but they had no method of floating the animal to the shore, and so when the hippo drifted down the river, Gobila's people secured the carcass.

Meanwhile rations became less and less; Kayerts and Carlier lived on rice and coffee. Kayerts insisted that the last of the sugar, fifteen lumps, should be kept in case of sickness.

Day by day the two men became more quarrelsome. Carlier demanded one day that Kayerts fetch the sugar. In the ensuing fight, Kayerts grabbed for his gun, then ran for his room. Afraid that Carlier would break in the door, Kayerts scrambled through a window and ran around the house. Carlier, several yards behind, ran after him. Kayerts in his confusion did not know which way to run, so he turned to the left.

The two collided, and after a burst of gunfire, Kayerts, thinking that he had been shot, prepared to surrender to the other man.
As he waited, no one came until Makola appeared. Makola told Kayerts that Carlier was dead. Then Kayerts realized that he had shot an unarmed man.

Kayerts remained on the verandah in a stupor till early in the morning, when suddenly he heard the shriek of a boat whistle in the fog.

Progress was calling to Kayerts from the river. Progress and civilization and all the virtues. Society was calling to its accomplished child to come, to be taken care of, to be instructed, to be judged, to be condemned; it called him to return to that rubbish heap from which he had wandered away, so that justice could be done.

Kayerts realized the significance of the situation, as Makola darted by the window yelling that the men aboard the steamer were whistling for the station to ring the bell.

The "Managing Director of the Great Civilizing Company" landed first to find that there was no one at the landing-stage to meet him and the members of his party. The director called for his men to follow.

Suddenly he yelled that he had found one of them, Kayerts. There hanging from the arm of the cross that marked the grave of his predecessor was Kayerts, and "irreverently, he was putting out a swollen tongue at his Managing Director."

Criticism

The tale "An Outpost of Progress," written from the point of view of the omniscient author, is one of only two stories that Conrad brought out of Africa. The presentation of the story is an ironical view of whether or not civilization does follow trade. Kayerts and Carlier are sent to direct the affairs of the station for a period of six months. During their stay, the two men gradually deteriorate into half-civilized
persons. Because of their inactivity, both mental and physical, Kayerts and Carlier, little realizing the change that is creeping upon them, become victims of their own self-indulgence. The two men at first are individuals who are a credit to society, but degenerate into beings not wholly responsible for their own actions.

Mr. Henry Price, a negro from Sierra Leone, better known as Makola, seems to have grasped the ways of the white man to better advantage. He speaks English and French, takes pride in being named Henry Price, and is on the whole a combination of a primitive and of a more advanced civilization. He manages station affairs without an accursed conscience bothering him. The trading of the station assistants for the ivory is just part of the game.

"The Return"9

Alvan Hervey dashed through the ticket gate of a West-End station into the street. After hesitating for a moment in the doorway, he decided that he would walk home.

This evening as he went home, he thought of his position and his own life. He thought himself well educated and intelligent. Five years ago he had married a girl, healthy, tall, and fair, whom he considered also well educated and intelligent.

After their marriage they settled down and became rather successful. They had become acquainted with a number of people. Thirty knew them

when they saw them; twenty more smiled when they saw them at social functions, and fifty others were aware that they lived.

Hervey had become interested in politics and had also met a literary man who financed a society paper. He had taken up philanthropic work and had become a member of numerous societies. Thus for five years Alvan Hervey and his wife had lived together, but they hardly knew each other.

As Mr. Hervey entered his home, he was met by a maid. His wife insisted that only women servants be employed. As he went upstairs, he noticed the marble woman on the first-floor landing, the heavy curtains in the corners, and the numerous pictures on the wall. His tastes were artistic.

He went up the next flight of stairs and into the dressing room. Suddenly while he was going to the wardrobe, he chanced to see an envelope on his wife's dressing table. Upon further notice, he found that the envelope was addressed to him. It was odd that his wife should leave a letter for him upon her own dressing table. He opened the letter, read it, and sat down. His wife was gone.

He had not been prepared for that blow. Why should his wife leave him? She had everything she wanted. Why should she give up everything decent and permit him to be humiliated?

As he pondered over the situation, he became violently angry. He tore the letter into shreds and scattered the bits upon the dark carpet.

Then amidst his intense anguish, he heard the front door bell ring. He could not receive anyone. But as he waited he heard footsteps ascend the stairs and stop outside the door.
His wife stepped into the room and sat down. Finally he said the only thing that he could say, "How long do you intend to stay here?"

She did not answer immediately.

Each in anger accused the other. Alvan Hervey accused his wife of making love to another man. She in turn said that she did not know that her husband loved her.

The next evening as they dined together neither gave any hint of their recent misunderstanding. Both were self-controlled, acting as if nothing had ever happened. Yet the farce could not go on.

As he watched her, he felt that he would never know what she meant. She had lived with him for five years, had left him, and had returned. He believed it would be best to forgive and forget the whole affair. But she did not ask for forgiveness. She felt that he wanted a wife, but he did not love her. It was himself that he loved.

Only too late did Alvan Hervey realize what he had wanted. He had found that through losing his wife. Upon a sudden impulse he thought perhaps his wife would help him find that trust and love. She refused to help him. Moments later a heavy door slammed. Alvan Hervey never returned.

Criticism

"The Return" is a characterization and an impression rather than a story of plot. Conrad says that "the story consists for the most part of physical impressions; impressions of sound and sight, railway station, streets, a trotting horse, reflections in mirrors and so on, rendered as if for their own sake and combined with a sublimated description of
a desirable middle-class town-residence which somehow manages to produce a sinister effect."^10  

Throughout the story Conrad is extremely artistic in presenting the impressions connected with his characters. The couple are portrayed from the first of the story as a pair whose marriage has not been founded on love and trust. In speaking of Alvan Hervey and his wife, Conrad says that "they skimmed over the surface of life hand in hand, in a pure and frosty atmosphere—like two skillful skaters cutting figures on thick ice for the admiration of the beholders, and disdainfully ignoring the hidden stream, the stream restless and dark; the stream of life, profound and unfrozen."^11  

The home is described as artistically beautiful, without warmth. The marble woman on the first floor-landing, the heavy curtains, the sketches are inconceivably correct in an artistic sense, but what do they add to a home? In the dressing room a bracket lamp in the form of a bronze dragon added to the threatening mystery. The mirrors reflected a crowd of men like Mr. Hervey, reserved and restrained. All portray a life of shallowness, but absolute correctness.  

Sounds throughout the story produce a marked effect upon the characters. Not only are the characters conscious of every sound, but the reader is also aware of any movement. Perhaps one reason for the unusual effect produced in the story is the suggestion which follows each occurrence of sound. Alvan Hervey, realizing that there is no one in

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10. Ibid., Author's Note, p. x.
11. Ibid., p. 123.
the house since his wife has left him, is bewildered when he first hears the outside door close, then footsteps in the hall and on the stairway. He is alarmed when he hears the door-knob rattle. He is almost beside himself when he hears a slight groan. He sees that his wife has returned home. The slamming of the outside door as Alvan Hervey goes never to return leaves a strange and mysterious feeling with the reader.

"The Lagoon" 12

"The Lagoon" is a tale of a Malay who tells his own story to a white trader who spends the night at the home of the Malay native. The white man, who is known to the natives as Tuan, tells his eight Malay boatmen that they will pass the night in Arsat's clearing.

As the sampan proceeds up the river, they enter a narrow outlet into a small lagoon. On the far side of the lagoon is Arsat's hut perched high on piles. The boatmen would much rather spend the night somewhere else than here on this lagoon. They dislike the lagoon, and they detest Arsat, a strange Malay who says that he is not afraid to live among the spirits who are present in uninhabited areas.

As the boatmen near the rude dwelling they call for the man, Arsat. The white trader crawls up the ladder to the platform before the hut. Arsat, a strong, young Malay, appears and immediately asks for medicine.

Within the hut is Arsat's wife. Diamelen, unconscious and with a high temperature, lies upon a couch. Arsat questions the white trader

12. Ibid., pp. 187-204.
as to whether his wife will die. The white man tells Arsat that he is afraid that she will not live.

As the two men sit before the fire during that night, Arsat tells the story of his life. He and his brother were men of good family and had been sword-bearers of the native ruler. During that time he became fond of a slave girl. Arsat told his brother about the girl, and they, being men of a people who take what they want, decided that they would take the girl away with them.

Soon after, while the ruler and all the important people were down at the mouth of the river fishing by torchlight, Arsat and his brother kidnapped the slave girl and escaped in a canoe. As they left, Arsat’s brother had wanted to shout defiance at the people, but Arsat had refused to give such warning.

The three in the canoe passed out of the river and rowed along the coast. The brothers paddled the canoe swiftly, for many times they had won races in that very canoe. The next morning after they had run the canoe on the beach along a little bay, they made a fire and cooked rice. Not long after, Diamelem’s warning brought them face to face with the fact that they were being pursued. Arsat’s brother, who was armed with a gun which Tuan had given him before Tuan went away, commanded the two to follow the path which led to the other side of that narrow strip of land. There on the other side they would find a fisherman’s hut and a canoe. By the time Arsat’s brother had fired the fourth and final shot, for he had only a handful of powder, Arsat and Diamelem had reached the opposite shore. After grappling with the old
fisherman, Arsat and Diemelen stepped into the canoe and shoved off from the shore. Looking back, Arsat saw his brother, pursued by the natives, fall, but soon he was up and on his way to the canoe. He called for Arsat to aid him, to strike back, to kill, but Arsat never looked back again. Arsat was afraid of death but not of life. With Diemelen he would find a country "where death is forgotten--where death is unknown!"

As Arsat arose and stood before the hut, he seemed to hear a stir from within the house. He went into the hut and within a few minutes returned, saying, "She burns no more."

Tuan offered to wait all the morning if Arsat would go with him, but Arsat refused. Arsat had left his brother among enemies, but as soon as he was able to see clearly he would strike.

As Tuan and his men left, Tuan looked back, only to see Arsat looking "beyond the great light of a cloudless day into the darkness of a world of illusions."

Criticism

The main body of the story of "The Lagoon" is told from the point of view of the Malayan. He tells his tale to a white trader with whom he has become acquainted in earlier years and who is spending the night at his hut in an uninhabited section of the Malay Archipelago.

Conrad is extremely vivid in picturing the setting of this story. As the boatmen follow the course of the river, they seem "to enter the portals of a land from which the very memory of motion had ever departed."

13. Ibid., p. 188.
Then as they turn to enter the lagoon they follow a narrow creek bordered by immense trees and tangled vegetation. On the eve of their journey, Conrad says that the darkness oozed out from between the trees, through the tangled maze of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstirring leaves; the darkness, mysterious and invincible; the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests.\(^{14}\)

Throughout the story there is description of the forest, the river, the stars, and the sunrise. The picture of the lagoon sets the mood of the story. This wide, stagnant pool "of weird aspect and ghostly reputation" is a foreboding of some unusual and mysterious happening.\(^{15}\)

As the boatmen move slowly up the stream, they seem shrouded by a mysterious foreboding. This atmosphere of apprehension is present throughout the tale. And as Conrad pictures the men, the description is an appealing one showing his aptitude in describing motion.

The steersman dug his paddle into the stream, and held hard with stiffened arms, his body thrown forward. The water gurgled aloud; and suddenly the long straight reach seemed to pivot on its center, the forests swung in a semicircle, and slanting beams of sunset touched the broadside of the canoe with a fiery glow, throwing the slender and distorted shadows of its crew upon the streaked glitter of the river. The white man turned to look ahead. The course of the boat had been altered at right angles to the stream, and the carved dragonhead of its prow was pointing now at a gap in the fringing bushes of the bank. It glided through, brushing the overhanging twigs, and disappeared from the river like some slim and amphi-bious creature leaving the water for its lair in the forests.\(^{16}\)

The emphasis of the story is upon characterization. Arsat, a Malayan, finds that in his attempt to find life, he has not found happiness to the extent that he had thought that he would find it. His brother had

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\begin{align*}
14. & \text{Ibid., p. 189.} \\
15. & \text{Loc. cit.} \\
16. & \text{Ibid., p. 188.}
\end{align*}
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been killed, and now Diamelon had died. Death had followed him in spite of his effort to escape it. Although Arsat could not see clearly what road he must follow, he was going back to his own country to strike back at those who had caused his brother's death.
CHAPTER IV

YOUTH: AND TWO OTHER STORIES

In May and June of 1898, Conrad wrote "Youth," the first story contained in the volume Youth: And Two Other Stories. The story, Conrad's second contribution to Maga, was the first tale to introduce to the public the man Marlow, a literary figure with whom Conrad was to become well acquainted.

The story "Heart of Darkness" was written soon after "Youth" and is the second of the only two stories brought out of Conrad's experiences in Africa. The fundamental parts of the story are as authentic as those of "Youth."

"The End of the Tether," begun in October, 1902, is a tale of the sea. A large portion of the story is the result of Conrad's experience.

The only tie between the three stories, "Youth," "Heart of Darkness," and "The End of the Tether" is the fact that they were written after the completion of the Nigger of the "Narcissus" and before the beginning of one of his best works, "Nostromo."

"Youth."

A director of companies, an accountant, a lawyer, Marlow, and the narrator, all acquainted with life on the sea, were sitting around a table talking of old times.

2. Conrad, Youth: And Two Other Stories, Author's Note, pp. ix, x.
3. Ibid., p. xi.
4. Ibid., pp. 3-42.
Marlow then began his story of his first voyage to an Eastern port. Just twenty-two years ago, at the age of twenty, he had joined the Judea as second mate. The Judea was an old wooden ship of about four hundred tons. She sailed from London to a northern port to get a cargo of coal for Bangkok.

After a week the ship had got as far as Yarmouth Roads when she ran into a terrific gale. The second night she shifted the sand ballast to the leeward. There was nothing for the men to do but try to right the ship by shoveling the sand to the other side. Sixteen days later the ship arrived at the Tyne, where she remained for a month.

Finally the ship was loaded and ready to leave port when a steamer struck the bow of the Judea. Just three weeks were required to repair that damage.

By the time the ship had started for Bangkok, three months had passed since leaving London. But at last the Judea set sail. It was soon, however, that the ship ran into another gale. The crew were kept at the pumps constantly. Nothing else mattered; they must keep the Judea going. The deck house was swept away, but Abraham, the steward, was found in the wreckage.

After the gale, the Judea headed back for Falmouth. Here the ship was repaired, and at the end of the week started for Bangkok with the third crew. But again the old ship leaked frightfully, and this time did not get out of the harbor. The ship was recaulked and again made seaworthy.

Now, on this voyage a new crew was sent from Liverpool. The Judea
at last sailed for Bankok at the rate of three miles per hour. After many weeks she reached the Indian Ocean.

One Saturday evening as Marlow went down to get an extra bucket of water for the men to wash their clothes, he smelled a peculiar odor, something like "hundreds of paraffin-lamps" that had been burning for many days. There was no doubt that the cargo was on fire.

The next day the cargo really began to smoke. The wet coal was badly broken up because of so much handling. Now it had become heated and had caught on fire.

First, the crew tried to put out the fire by smothering, but the smoke came out of all the crevices. Then they tried to put the fire out by pumping barrels of water into the hatch. They even attempted to dig down to the fire, but no one could stand the fumes.

One day when the ship was about one hundred and ninety miles south Java, the cargo suddenly quit smoking. The crew spoke of spontaneous combustion lightly and joked about their ability to put out fires. Suddenly, several days later, the cargo exploded. However, the Judea remained afloat. Surprisingly, no one was hurt, but each of the crew was badly bruised and battered. Marlow's hair, eyebrows, eyelashes, and prized mustache were burnt off. Others of the crew were black and singed.

Not long afterward a steamer, the Somerville, on the route from Australia to Singapore by way of Batavia, came to the assistance of the Judea. Captain Nash agreed to two the ship to Anjer or Batavia. At noon the journey began. By ten o'clock that night the crew, for the
first time, saw the actual fire. The speed of the ship had fanned the fire into a blaze. Mahon and Marlow then cut the tow rope with an axe. Because of the mails, Captain Nash refused to stand by to see the last of the Ada. Captain Beard would not leave the ship; so he and his crew were left behind on the burning Judea.

Everything that could be loaded aboard three small boats was taken off the Judea. Then being ready to leave the ship, Marlow yelled for the crew to come. Waiting impatiently, after a half hour, Marlow climbed aboard the Judea. There on an old cushion was Captain Beard asleep, and near by were the rest of the men eating bread and cheese and drinking "bottled stout."

Sixteen hours after the explosion, the Judea was abandoned. During the rest of the night the two sick men in the three boats waited for the ship to sink. At day break when the Judea went down, the men headed north. At sunset Marlow, anxious to sail on alone, soon lost sight of the two boats. For days he and the two men who were in his boat sailed in their open boat. Then after steady rowing for eleven hours they reached port. Three hours later Captain Beard came in with his boat; Mahon was not far behind.

Captain Beard asked Marlow to row over to a steamer that had just come in to see if he could arrange for passage for the crew. The captain of the Celestial, which was on her return trip from Singapore, said that he would make arrangements with Captain Beard the next morning.

Marlow concluded his tale by remarking that the best time of life is one's youthful days on the sea.
Criticism

The story of "Youth" is in almost every detail the story of the experiences of Conrad when he sailed as second mate on the Palestine in 1881. The Palestine after several attempts had sailed for Bankok with a crew of eight men and two boys. The cargo, consisting of five hundred tons of West Hartley coal, caught on fire, and the crew was forced to abandon the Palestine not far off the coast of Java. Conrad, being in the smallest boat with two other men, was given orders to stay close to the two other lifeboats. But Conrad, wanting to show his ability, soon lost sight of the other boats.

The main interest of the story is that of the adventurous voyage of the Judea. The ship with the motto "Do or Die" written upon the stern gallantly weathers every storm until finally she is destroyed by flames. In the first gale that the Judea encountered Conrad is meticulous in describing the actions of the barque. He says that "she tossed, she pitched, she stood on her head, she sat on her tail, she rolled, she groaned," and the crew was forced to hang on to whatever was near by. Conrad is no less vivid in presenting the old ship after the explosion. "The deck was a wilderness of smashed timber, lying crosswise like trees in a wood after a hurricane." Through the wreckage a "greasy fog" of smoke poured like a "poisonous thick mist in some valley choked with dead wood."

As the crew wait for the burning ship to sink, Conrad again paints a vivid picture of the Judea.

5. Ibid., p. 10.
6. Ibid., p. 23.
Between the darkness of earth and heaven she was burning fiercely upon a disc of purple sea shot by the blood-red play of gleams; upon a disc of water glittering and sinister. A high, clear flame, an immense and lonely flame, ascended from the ocean, and from its summit the black smoke poured continuously at the sky. She burned furiously; mournful and imposing like a funeral pile kindled in the night, surrounded by the sea, watched over by the stars. A magnificent death had come like a grace, like a gift, like a reward to that old ship at the end of her laborious days. The surrender of her weary ghost to the keeping of stars and sea was stirring like the sight of a glorious triumph.8

The tale of "Youth," told by Marlow, is very realistic in presentation. Marlow (who is probably to be identified with Conrad) often digresses to give his own viewpoint on matters not especially concerned with the story. Thus in telling the story from his own experience, Marlow creates a life-like situation. To add to the familiarity in the tale is the recurrent request "Pass the bottle" by the old seamen gathered around the table.

The young Marlow, aboard the Judea, typifies the spirit of youth. Gallant to the very point of recklessness, he assumes full command of his life boat which he has equipped with a make-shift mast of a spare oar and a boat-awning. Although thoroughly over-masted, the reaches port safely ahead of the other boats. As the old seaman Marlow speaks to his companions, he is not quite certain whether it is the sea or youth that is more glamorous. He then asks his friends if, after all, "wasn't that the best time, that time when we were young at sea; young and had nothing, on the sea that gives nothing, except hard knocks—and sometimes a chance to feel your strength—that only—what you all regret?"9

8. Ibid., pp. 34, 35.
9. Ibid., p. 42.
"Heart of Darkness"10

Marlow, a lawyer, an accountant, a director, and the narrator, sat aboard the Nellie anchored on the Thames reminiscing about the sea. Each of the company was familiar with sea life, but only Marlow was still in active service on the sea. As the old seamen talked, the men soon realized that they were "fated, before the end began to run, to hear about one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences."

At one time in his life, Marlow had done some fresh-water sailing. It was the story of this adventure that he began to relate. When a boy he had longed to go to Africa and had remarked that he would go there sometime.

Marlow secured an appointment with a company who had received word that one of their captains had been killed. Marlow learned later that the captain had been killed as a result of a squabble about two black hens.

Upon Marlow's arrival at a company station thirty miles up the Congo, he saw a chain-gang, natives waiting for death to take them from their misery. Marlow had to wait for ten days before going up to the next station. While he was at the first station, the accountant remarked that perhaps Marlow had heard of Mr. Kurtz, who was in charge of a trading post in the interior.

With a caravan of sixty men, Marlow started on the two-hundred mile trip to his location. The men mutinied, but after fifteen days, the

10. Ibid., pp. 45-62.
party reached Central Station. After Marlow informed the general manager that he was the captain for the steamer, the manager told Marlow that the steamer was sunk. The manager insisted that there be no delay in raising the sunken craft for Mr. Kurtz was reported to be ill. While at Central Station Marlow often heard of Kurtz. Later Marlow saw a sketch made by Kurtz. The oil painting was of a woman "draped and blindfolded, carrying a lighted torch." The light upon the face produced a sinister effect.

The repair of the ship was constantly hampered by the lack of rivets. Several times caravans had arrived from the coast, but no rivets came with the cargo. Impatiently Marlow waited, and finally, after two months the steamer was ready for the trip up stream.

The trip was like "travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world." The forest and the stillness of the atmosphere foreboded strange happenings.

As the steamer pushed upstream, the natives and perhaps a white man or two at various posts would rush out to the bank to watch. Since Marlow had heard so much concerning Kurtz, his sole purpose was to find Kurtz; so slowly the steamer "penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness."

Fifty miles or so below Inner Station Marlow came upon a small hut by the river with a stack of neatly piled wood near by. When he went ashore, he found scribbled on one piece of wood: "Wood for you. Hurry up. Approach cautiously." While prowling around the hut, Marlow also found a tattered copy of "An Inquiry Into Some Points of Seamanship."
On the margin were notes written in what appeared to be cipher. Marlow slipped the book into his pocket, got aboard the steamer, and proceeded up stream.

Two days later in the early morning as the steamer was about eight miles from Kurtz's station, Marlow suddenly heard the low discordant chant and then the piercing shriek of natives in the distance. Would they attack?

As the steamer pushed her way through a treacherous stream into within a mile and a half of the station, the boat, within ten feet of the bank, was suddenly attacked by a swarm of arrows. Peering through the dense foliage, Marlow saw a mass of natives. The stream was too narrow for the steamer to go back. The crew felt that no doubt by this time Kurtz had been killed.

Here Marlow stopped in his narrative and tried to account for the attitude of Mr. Kurtz. Kurtz, the son of a half-French father and a half-English mother, had been educated partly in England. He had been instructed by the International Society for the Suppression of Savage Customs to make a report for further plans which would be of use to the society. Kurtz had written a seventeen-page report before his own degradation. The report began with the argument that white men usually appear to the native in the role of supernatural beings. Whatever Kurtz was, he had the power to control those natives, and at least one white man was his devoted friend.

In sight of the station, Marlow saw a white man standing on the bank. In the background was a long building surrounded by a few posts, topped
with what appeared to be round balls. Marlow discovered later that these balls were human heads.

The man standing there on the bank told Marlow that he had been busy keeping the natives away, but really they meant no harm. The fellow, a run-away son of a Russian arch-priest, jumped aboard the steamer. Marlow soon learned that the deserted hut belonged to this man, who was especially delighted to get back his book, "An Inquiry Into Some Points of Seamanship." He informed Marlow that the notes were in Russian. Marlow questioned the man as to why the natives attacked the steamer. He answered that they did not want Kurtz to leave.

Soon a group of men appeared carrying a stretcher bearing the emaciated form of Kurtz. Near the shore was a woman, evidently a priestess, who came up near the steamer, stood there a moment, then disappeared into the bushes.

In the night Marlow heard the strange chant of the natives. Eager to find Mr. Kurtz, Marlow went ashore. Here he followed a trail through the grass. Soon, by making a large semi-circle, Marlow confronted Kurtz, within thirty yards of a native sorcerer standing near a fire. Kurtz assured Marlow that he knew what he was doing. He had great plans. But in spite of his plans, Marlow convinced him to return to the cabin.

The next day at noon, the steamer started on her return trip with Kurtz aboard. Two thousand natives swarmed on the shore, but they scurried to safety when Marlow blew the whistle.

As the steamer began her trip down stream, it was evident that Kurtz would not live long. Constantly was he tortured by shadowy images of his
past life. His incoherent utterances were always of his "intended," his ideas, his station, and his fortune. One morning Kurtz gave Marlow a package of papers and a photograph. These he wanted Marlow to keep for him. As he lay on the couch he muttered, "Live rightly, die..." Several days later he told Marlow that he was waiting for his death. As Marlow left, Kurtz cried out, "The horror! The horror." In a couple of hours, Kurtz was dead.

After Marlow's return to England, he gave the letters of Kurtz to his fiancée. True to the trust that he had placed in Kurtz, Marlow told the girl not of the Kurtz that he had seen, but of a man that the girl believed to be Kurtz. The girl, anxious to know of Kurtz's last words, was told that he had said her name. Marlow could not tell her the truth; that would have been too dark.

Marlow ended his story. All was silent until finally the director remarked that the tide had gone out.

Criticism

The "Heart of Darkness" is an absorbing character study of Mr. Kurtz. Early in the story one suspects that this figure is a strange personality. He is mentioned first by the clerk at the station near the coast, who says that Mr. Kurtz is a first-class agent who sends in as much ivory as all of the other agents. At Central Station Kurtz is highly spoken of as being an excellent agent; in fact, some believed that he would be assistant manager within a year. However, when Marlow at last meets Kurtz, he is amazed. Mr. Kurtz has a strange power in controlling the natives. They seem to recognize him as a supernatural being and do not want him to
leave. The worship of his existence which Kurtz has encouraged in the natives is a result of greed for power. Kurtz, in the heart of Africa, where there were no restrictions placed upon him by civilization, was not able to withstand the temptations inherent within himself. Can it be said then that civilization is only a veneer? Or was Kurtz a weakling?

Conrad is consistent in maintaining an atmosphere of hopeless darkness which is in keeping with the personality of Kurtz. At the beginning of the story the sight of the chain gang composed of natives tortured by disease and starvation is a despicable picture of despair. The curious sketch of a woman which Kurtz had painted a year before, the vacant hut on the river bank, and the strange devotion of the natives for Mr. Kurtz add a morbid and superstitious atmosphere to the narrative.

As in "Youth", the "Heart of Darkness" is also told by Charlie Marlow; surprisingly, Conrad says that the old seamen were fated to hear another of Marlow's tales. Marlow is a seaman, but he is a wanderer, too. He is fond of telling stories of his own experiences, and his audience listens obediently.

"The End of the Tether" 11

Captain Whalley with his faithful Serang had been aboard the Safola, which had sailed between Low Cape and Malantan for three years. The route of the Safola was not an eventful one, especially not for Whalley, who had been captain of the famous Condor. He had never lost a ship and had never taken part in shady dealings.

11. Ibid., pp. 165-339.
Captain Whalley's wife had died, and his daughter lived in Melbourne. He, however, had bought the Fair Maid as his last command and accepted a cargo of freight for Australia so that he might see his daughter. He was not at all pleased with his daughter's choice of a husband; so he did not stay long.

One day Whalley received a letter saying that his son-in-law had been injured and that he would never walk again. The daughter needed two hundred pounds to establish a boarding house, her only method of making a living. Captain Whalley did not have that much money. His only choice was to sell the Fair Maid.

He sold the ship to a Japanese company and sent the two hundred pounds to his daughter Ivy. He then had five hundred pounds left to put away for future use, but eventually he intended to give that to Ivy also.

One day Captain Elliot of the Ringdove told Whalley about the Safola. She was an old steamer, a coaster, owned by Massy, the head engineer. Massy had bought the craft with money which he had won in the Manila Lottery. The Safola was now, however, about to lose her trade because she could not keep a captain for more than one trip.

Now, Mr. Massy could not understand why Whalley was constantly accompanied by this Malay Serang. But the matter did not bother the old captain.

A ridge of mud in the bottom of the entrance of the river near Batu Beru was hard for the ship to get over. Captain Whalley ordered that the ship go extremely slow, as Serang watched carefully. Soon the Malay peered over the side and saw that the keel of the boat must be stirring
the mud. He was certain that the Safola was out of the track for crossing the bar. However, if the Captain wanted to choose that course, Serang was not alarmed. Then as the ship edged on over the bar, Serang told the Captain that she was over.

The ship owner, Mr. Massy—that is, owner except for the five hundred pounds Captain Whalley had invested in the ship—was especially indignant at the way the ship was handled. He did not like Serang to attend to so many of the Captain's duties. Massy even went so far as to tell the Captain that perhaps he would fire him and freeze the Captain's money for a year.

Sterne, the mate, who was to be promoted, confronted Massy with the suspicion that the captain was failing. Once before on the last voyage Sterne knew that the Captain had missed the main course. Every day Sterne seemed to find new proof. His only thought during those days was that he would have to make Massy understand the situation. In spite of his growing dislike for the Captain, Massy would not listen to Sterne.

Mr. Van Wyk, an ex-naval officer who had given up a promising career to become a pioneer of Batu Beru, tobacco-planting along that part of the coast, now anxiously waited for the mail brought each month by the Safola. But lately the irregularity of the arrival of the ship had made Van Wyk very antagonistic, especially toward Massy. At dinner that evening the Captain refused to discuss the character of Massy. During the meal, it seemed that Captain Whalley failed in trying to eat anything. While cutting a piece of pineapple, Captain Whalley upset his water glass. Then Mr. Van Wyk remembered that he had heard the Captain
catch his toe on the bottom stair as he had come up the walk earlier in the evening. Yes, Van Wyk knew the truth, too. Suddenly, the Captain startled his host by admitting that he was going blind. Moreover, he felt that he had deceived them all because he had wanted to keep up all appearances. His blindness had come on him gradually. He had the Serang with him, and so he had decided that he would deceive them all. His only hope was to complete this trip with Massy.

In the early afternoon, the Safola left Batu Beru for the next port, Pangu. Massy did not know to what extent the Captain was afflicted, so if something happened to the ship, it was not his fault. Thus Massy decided that if the craft went to the bottom of the sea, and if he had the insurance money in his pocket, he would be much better situated. Yes, he knew of a plan. Late that evening he hunted up all of the pieces of scrap iron that he could find and put them in his coat pocket. Then, on deck, as was his customary practice, he hung his coat near the binnacle.

Not long after, the Malay perceived that the ship was not following the right course northward to Pangu Bay. Now and then the Captain would ask the Serang if he had sighted land. The reply was "Not yet." As time passed, the Captain felt that something strange had happened. Perhaps he could see the binnacle if he stooped close enough. As he tried to see the binnacle, he put out his hand and knocked down Mr. Massy's coat. Stunned by the realization that there was iron near the compass, he yelled for the crew to stop the ship.

Suddenly the ship struck a reef with a terrific blow. The ship crashed into the rock a second time. Standing knee-deep in the wreckage, Captain Whalley still holding Massy's coat, shouted at the head engineer...
that he had made him lose the ship. Yes, Whalley was "at the end of his tether." He refused to get into the life-boats and went down with the ship. After six hours the rest of the men landed at Pangu.

Mr. Massy took the insurance money and headed for Manila the very next day.

In Australia, several months later, Whalley's daughter received a letter addressed by a lawyer. In this letter was a message from Captain Whalley written several months before his death and entrusted to the lawyer to be mailed to her in case of his death. The Captain had written his daughter that he was sending her five hundred pounds. He also told her that he was going blind. Captain Whalley knew of his nearness to "the end of the tether."

Criticism

"The End of the Tether" is a pathetic tale of a captain who goes blind without the crew realizing to the fullest extent what is happening. At one time during Conrad's days on the sea, it is said that he, too, was extremely worried about his eyes, but Conrad escaped that affliction.

Captain Whalley, faithfully attended by the Malay Serang, realizes that blindness is creeping upon him. He does all that he can to deceive the members of the crew so that he may fulfill his duties until the end of the voyage. The reader becomes sympathetic when the truth of the Captain's plight is realized. Admiration for the captain increases with the knowledge of Captain Whalley's loyalty and of the esteem with which

he is held by the Serang and Mr. Van Wyk. "The End of the Tether" has a timeliness which perhaps none of Conrad's other tales have. Mr. Edward Weeks, a present day editor, has written an interesting comment in which he says that the story has an interpretation "which is little short of prophecy."

For me, Captain Whalley is the embodiment of the English command of the sea. In his youth he had been a fearless navigator who had opened up new passages in the East in his famous white clipper, the Condor. He had made, and lost, his fortune at sea; his forty years in the East had spanned the building up of the Treaty Ports, and in his time he had seen Singapore grow from a mucky little landing with mud huts to the great harbor it is; he had built up a reputation known through the China Station and he had seen his authority dwindle as steam dispersed the clipper fleet; he had watched the German tramps snatch up cargoes until the Sailors' Home was full of English officers without a command and, as age closed in, he himself had been forced to sell to the Japanese the Fair Maid, the darling barque on which he had hoped to end his days. Fit together these telltale bits of Captain Whalley's background and then ask yourself with how much foreboding Conrad planned this narrative back in 1899. Could he had foreseen so surely the blows which were to fall upon the Empire? Whether you take this novel for its personal or its prophetic tragedy, there is no doubt that it has in it the elements of endurance and heartbreak which must stir the sympathies of any reader in the English-speaking world here and now. 13

Conrad disregards all thought for consecutive order of time in the story. He begins the story with Captain Whalley and the Serang aboard the boat. Then Conrad goes back and gives a part of the life of Captain Whalley before the actual time of story. Piece by piece thus Conrad relates to his reader the tale of Captain Whalley.

CHAPTER V

TYphoon: AND OTHER STORIES

Typhoon: And Other Stories, a volume containing the tales, "Typhoon," "Amy Foster," "Falk," and "To-morrow," was written during 1901 and 1902 immediately following the writing of "The End of the Tether."

With the exception of "Falk," the only short story by Conrad never serialized, each of the tales in this volume appeared in various magazines. "Typhoon," under the direction of Mr. Halkett, and "To-morrow" were printed in Pall Mall Magazine. "To-morrow" was later dramatized under the title "One Day More." "Amy Foster" appeared in the Illustrated London News.¹

Conrad says that the tales in the volume Typhoon: And Other Stories are not "stories of experience in the absolute sense of the word. Experience in them is but the canvas of the attempted picture."²

"Typhoon"³

Captain MacWhirr of the Nan-Shan stood in the chart room reading the barometer. The fall of a barometer did not mean much to him, but he did think perhaps that "There must be some uncommonly dirty weather knocking about."

The Nan-Shan was on her way to Fu-chau with a cargo and two hundred

¹. Conrad, Typhoon: And Other Stories, Author's Note, p. xxi.
². Ibid., p. ix.
³. Ibid., pp. 3-102.
Chinese coolies returning to their homes in Fo-Kien. The men, all seven years' men of the Bun Hiu Company, were being sent home. Each man had a chest which contained his possessions.

As the Nan-Shan plowed through the China Seas, the weather was terrifically hot. The sun poured down a "leaden heat." The Chinamen lay prostrate on the decks. In the engine room the temperature had gone up to 110 degrees.

That evening a heavy cloud appeared in the north. The barometer was still falling. And as Jukes, the chief mate, wrote up the ship's log that evening, he closed it by writing, "Every appearance of a typhoon coming on."

Late in the night Captain MacWhirr awakened suddenly. "The lamp wriggled in its gimbels, the barometer swung in circles, the table altered its slant every moment; a pair of limp sea-boots with collapsed long tops went sliding past the couch." Why hadn't he been called? But at that moment Jukes appeared, saying that the gale had begun only five minutes ago.

Then suddenly the gale hit with full force "like the sudden sneaking of a Vial of Wrath." The boat was being looted with a senseless, destructive fury; trysails torn out from the extra gaskets, double-lashed awnings blown away, bridge swept clean, weather-cloths burst, rails twisted, light-screens smashed—and two of the boats had gone already.

It seemed impossible for the ship to withstand the gale.

Most of the crew had taken refuge in the port alleyway at the beginning of the storm. There in a dark, dismal place, they were safe but not content. The boatswain sarcastically told them that if they wanted
to they could go outside and be done with everything in a short time. The boatswain decided that by going through a bunker with an iron door leading into the fore 'tween-deck, he could get one of the lights from the coolies. None of the crew volunteered to go with him. As he reached the door, he heard a noise. When he opened the door, he was amazed.

Pieces of wood whizzed past... At his feet a man went sliding over, open-eyed, on his back, straining with uplifted arms for nothing; and another came bounding like a detached stone with his hands clenched. His pigtail whipped in the air, he made a grab at the boatswain's foot. He recognized a silver dollar, as one would recognize a familiar object in the unprobabilities of a nightmare.

This was what the boatswain had to report to Captain MacWhirr. Immediately the Captain ordered Jukes to go below to see about the fighting Chinamen.

The chests had broken open, and money was rolling all over the place. Jukes was dumbfounded as he saw the men tossed by the rolling ship and at the same time clawing, biting, and yelling at each other. Jukes slammed the door shut. Nothing could stop the rout except force. Some were probably dead, but the rest of the Chinamen would go on fighting. This was all that Jukes could report to the Captain through the speaking tube. Then Jukes heard the Captain telling him to pick up all the dollars.

Jukes with the aid of the boatswain and eleven of the crew armed with pieces of rope and chain succeeded in getting the money by driving the Chinamen forward when the ship pitched.

As Jukes went up on the deck, the Nan-Shan reminded him of an old dismantled steamer that he had seen a number of years before. Jukes
reported to the Captain that the money had been picked up, but the
trouble was not over yet.

The gale ceased as suddenly as it had begun. However, when Captain
MacWhirr went to his chart-room, he found that the barometer was still
low. After a fifteen minute calm, the typhoon again bent its fury upon
the ship, but to no avail. The Nan-Shan, battered and damaged, reached
port.

The narrator abruptly changes the scene to the home of Captain
MacWhirr in England. Mrs. MacWhirr, after leisurely skimming through a
letter from the Captain, later remarked to her friend that the Captain
wasn’t coming home yet, but it was “such a comfort to know he keep so
well.”

After the Nan-Shan reached port, the money was distributed equally
among the coolies. Captain MacWhirr believed that this was the only
thing that could have been done. The Captain “had not done so badly
for such a stupid man.”

Criticism

In “Typhoon” Conrad pictures a violently stormy sea. The reader
is taken all over the ship as the typhoon rips and tears at the Nan-
Shan. From the bridge to the wheel-house and even to the coal bunkers,
one feels the effect of the storm.

Conrad is vivid in describing that sea as he says that

Nobody,—not even Captain MacWhirr, who caught sight of a white
line of foam coming on at such a height that he couldn’t believe his
eyes,—nobody knew the steepness of that sea and the awful depth of
the hollow the hurricane had scooped behind that running wall of
water.
It raced to meet the ship, and with a pause, as of girding the loins, she lifted her bows and leaped. The flames in the lamps sank, darkening the engine room. One went out. She had not leaped quite high enough, for with a tearing crash and a swirling, raving tumult, tons of water fell upon her decks as though she had darted under the very foot of a cataract.

She pitched into the hollow straight down as if tumbling from a cliff. The engine room toppled forward menacingly, like the inside of a tower nodding in an earthquake. An awful racket of iron things falling came from the stoke-hole.4

Conrad is equally powerful in painting the picture of the Nan-Shan as she comes to rest in the harbor.

She came in from a green, hard sea, green like a furrowed slab of jade, streaked and splashed with frosted silver......

She seemed indeed to have served as a target for the secondary batteries of a whole fleet. A hail of shells could not have given her upper works a more broken, torn, and devastated aspect.... She was incrusted and grey with salt to the trucks of her masts and to the top of her funnel...5

During the typhoon, there is a "human echo" in the fight of the Chinese coolies in the 'tween-deck. Their plight forms another instance in which Captain MacWhirr shows his ability to meet and cope with unusual circumstances.6

Although the main interest of the story is in the plight of the Nan-Shan with her cargo of coolies, Captain MacWhirr remains a favorite of the reader. He is a steadfast character who is equal to the task ahead of him. He finds that the answer to some problems cannot be found in books.

The tale of "Typhoon" is for the most part told by a member of the crew. However, when Conrad feels that there are some necessary details which the narrator in the story cannot tell, Conrad does not hesitate to

4. Ibid., p. 75.
5. Ibid., p. 90.
supply that information. He calls in a witness to supplement the report of the narrator. The story which takes place on board the Nan-Shan is also suddenly interrupted by a scene at the home of Captain MacWhirr in England. Conrad adds this part of the story without the aid of a narrator within the story. The incident does not detract from the tale but gives an interesting glimpse of the way Mrs. McWhirr reads the Captain's letters.

"Amy Foster"

Kennedy, a country doctor, who had been a surgeon in the navy, practices medicine from Brenzett and Colebrook up to Darnford, fourteen miles away. The narrator, being invited to visit the doctor, upon one occasion accompanies the doctor on one of his country trips in a small cart. As they jog down the road, they see a young woman with "scanty, dusty brown hair drawn into a tight knot at the back of the head" throwing a dripping blanket over a line. As they pass, Kennedy inquires of the lady about the health of her son.

Then Kennedy remarks to his friend that the husband used to be one of his patients. Kennedy begins the story of Amy, the daughter of Isaac Foster, a shepherd whose misfortunes have been the result of his marriage to the cook of his widowed father.

When Amy, the oldest of a large family, was fifteen, she went to work for Mr. and Mrs. Smith, the tenants at the New Barns Farm. During the four years that Amy was there, she would occasionally go home on Sun-

7. Ibid., pp. 126, 127.
day afternoon. Wearing stout boots, a large gray hat with a black feather, and carrying a slender parasol, she trudged across the field to her own home. Then later in the afternoon, after having given the children tea, she would go back to her work.

Amy, to the astonishment of everyone, fell in love. He was a peculiar sort of fellow, a castaway, who, being the only one to survive the shipwreck, huddled among the sheep in the storm. He was uncouth in body and possessed a "long elastic stride."

Late in the evening Kennedy resumed his story. The stranger did not know the name of his ship, but he did know that his father had sold a pair of piebald mountain ponies and an old cow so that the son might go to America. After he was cast upon the shore, he was shamefully mistreated. The school teacher spoke harshly to him; the milk cart driver lashed him; three boys stoned him.

Later it was discovered that the man was a mountaineer from the eastern range of the Carpathians. The vessel that had sunk was the Hamburg emigrant ship, the Herzogin Sophia-Dorothea.

One day while searching for shelter, the stranger was locked in a woodshed by Mr. Smith. Amy Foster was firmly convinced that the man meant no harm. So the next morning she slipped half of a loaf of white bread to the poor fellow.

About that time Kennedy had come along on one of his country trips. No one could converse with the stranger, for he couldn't understand the language. The doctor tried speaking Spanish and French to him, but the man could not understand either of those languages. Then the ladies from
the rectory read Dante and Goethe with the aid of a dictionary. Still the fellow couldn't understand.

Mr. Smith felt that he could not keep the man; so Mr. Swaffer, a gentleman owning an estate in the neighborhood, took him. Miss Swaffer, who was forty-five and who always wore black in memory of her fiancé who died twenty-five years before, kept house for her brother. A steel cross which Miss Swaffer wore was a great encouragement to the poor castaway.

Yanko Goorall, as the stranger was called, received regular wages after he had rescued Mr. Swaffer's grandchild, little three-year-old Bertha Wilcox, who had fallen into a horse pond.

Although he was still peculiar, the people of the neighborhood gradually became accustomed to Yanko. His rapid walk, olive complexion, and high-pitched voice marked him. Yanko's manner of courting Amy was odd, too, but he did what was customary in his native country and that was to buy her a green satin ribbon.

Naturally, everyone opposed Yanko's marrying Amy. Mr. Foster felt that Yanko was very good with sheep, but he was not fit for anyone to marry. Nevertheless, Amy and Yanko were married. Mr. Swaffer gave Yanko a cottage and an acre or so of land because Yanko had saved his grandchild.

Troubles began after the marriage. Amy began to change; she could not understand the lullabies that Yanko would sing to their son, and in desperation she would snatch the child away from him.

Yanko became ill with lung trouble. Amy was afraid of him, for she could not understand him. In his deliriousness, he in his native tongue demanded that she give him water. Amy, frightened and still unable to
understand him, fled to her father's home.

The next morning Kennedy found Yanko, who was dreadfully ill, outside the gate. Yanko told him that Amy had gone. Whey, he did not know, for he had only asked her for a drink of water. Yanko lived only a few minutes longer.

On his return trip when Kennedy met Mr. Foster, the doctor told Mr. Foster that Yanko would never frighten Amy any more.

Amy with her son Johnny, resembling his father who died of "loneliness and despair," continued to live in the cottage and to work for Miss Swaffer.

Criticism

The tale of "Amy Foster" as told by Doctor Kennedy is a story of the tragic loneliness of a castaway, Yanko Goorall. The main interest of the story lies in the characterization of Yanko, a victim of circumstance, almost a victim of the sea, who is certainly not aided by the neighboring people of Colebrook. Instead of helping the castaway to secure at least food and clothing, as one might expect, the people merely refuse to be bothered by his plight. Mr. Swaffer does, however, consent to keep him for awhile. The reputation of Yanko is raised somewhat, especially in Mr. Swaffer's estimation, by his rescue of Mr. Swaffer's granddaughter. Yanko remains a queer person, and in spite of his effort to adjust himself to the ways of the people, he at last succumbs to loneliness and disease.

Amy, who is perhaps a little queer, too, is attracted by the young man because of his need of sympathetic attention. In spite of the protests of the whole community she marries Yanko. She is irritated by his outbursts
and when Yanko needs her most, she deserts him. She, too, failed to understand Yanko and failed to help him adjust himself to his new surroundings.

"Falk" 9

Several old seamen in a hotel thirty miles from London are reminiscing about old times, ships, wrecks, and the like. Then a former sea captain of about fifty years of age begins a story of himself, his friend Hermann, and his enemy Falk in a certain Eastern seaport which lies up the river like London on the Thames.

Hermann was a Schiff-führer, a ship conductor. His ship, the Diana of Bremen, was the home for his wife, a stout woman who wore baggy blue dresses with white dots, and his four children, Nicholas, Lena, Gustav, and Karl. Hermann's nineteen-year-old niece had lived with them for three years. She was a conscientious, hard-working girl with a single braid of tawny hair hanging down her back.

The narrator (that is, the former sea captain) usually visited Hermann nearly every evening. Their friendship had grown from the time the two had chased a Chinaman, who was employed by the old seaman as a steward and had stolen thirty-two golden sovereigns from his employer.

Falk, a Dane or a Norwegian, was also a frequent visitor on board the Diana. Being the only one who owned a tug boat, he towed ships up and down the river. Needless to say, he extracted his just dues and more, too.

Because of a bar in the river, the ships could be only partly loaded.

But after being towed down the river eighteen miles, the ships could wait for the remainder of the cargo. The narrator notified Falk in the forenoon that his ship was ready to be towed down the river. Later in the day Hermann also notified Falk that the Diana was ready for the trip.

The next morning without any explanations Falk towed the Diana down the river. While waiting for Falk to return, the narrator went down to the hotel to see Schomberg, the proprietor. Here Mr. Schomberg, who insisted that Falk was fond of Hermann's niece, told of an affair concerning Falk which had occurred two years before. At that time Falk had fallen in love with Miss Vanlo, but nothing came of the affair, and the girl left broken-hearted. While the narrator was at the hotel, Hermann dressed in his best clothes, black coat, white waistcoat, and gray trousers, and Falk entered the room. Hermann, it seemed, wanted the matter clearly understood that he was not to blame for the Diana being towed down the river first.

The next morning as the narrator waited for his ship to be towed down the river, he saw Falk's tug go by. Since half of the crew were sick and the others restless, the narrator decided that he must by some method get his ship down the river even if he had to dredge the river with the anchor. He though that perhaps Johnson, one time a captain of a ship and married to a native woman, might help him. After inquiring about Johnson at the consulate's office, the constable at the office agreed to help the narrator find Johnson. They finally found Johnson in a native compound, and as they entered the gateway they saw Mrs. Johnson crawling on all fours after a silver dollar.
After being offered eighteen dollars, Mr. Johnson, a grizzled old fellow with mud on his elbows and back, refused to aid the narrator. Mr. Johnson informed the two men that he was a friend of Falk.

After the return of the two men to the hotel, Falk appeared in the doorway. The narrator told Falk that it was necessary that he talk with him.

In the subsequent conversation the narrator discovered to his astonishment that Falk though that he, too, was interested in Hermann's niece. Consequently, during the conversation while the two played cards, the narrator agreed to speak to Hermann for the unfortunate man Falk.

The next morning Falk towed the narrator's ship down the river to withing a short distance of the Diana. That evening the narrator went over to the Diana and placed the subject of Falk's admiration Hermann's niece before the old captain. Hermann was angry, for Falk had while towing the ship down the river, damaged the vessel to the extent of forty-seven dollars and fifty cents.

Later in the evening Falk came to the Diana to tell the tragedy of his life which had occurred ten years before. He felt that the girl who was to be his wife should know the tale. To the amazement of everyone, Falk told them that he had eaten a man. He felt that it was a great misfortune, and he wished that he were dead. Hermann was angry and denounced Falk in no uncertain terms.

Later in the evening aboard the narrator's ship, the narrator succeeded in questioning Falk and obtaining the story. It seemed that Falk had served aboard the Borgmester Dahl, which sailed from Good Hope
and New Zealand. During that particular voyage the tail-shaft broke, and the propellor dripped off. The ship drifted southward and encountered gale after gale. Six of the crew were chosen to set out in the last life boat, but two of the men seized the boat and left, never to be seen again.

One day after the supply of food had been exhausted, the carpenter attempted to take Falk's life with a crowbar. Falk escaped to his room, where he could watch the approach to the fresh water pump through the port window. But the carpenter crept up under the window, and at daybreak looked in and fired at Falk, but missed. Falk aimed and found his mark.

The three other members of the crew as well as Falk shared the grim meal. After finally being picked up by a whaler, the three died, but Falk did not.

Now, the next morning the narrator assured Hermann that he knew all the details concerning the story of Falk, and that there was a great deal of exaggeration in the tale.

The narrator saw Falk and the girl, hand in hand upon the deck, only one more time. Five years later Mr. and Mrs. Falk had left that port. However, there is still a tale told there that Falk won his wife at cards from the captain of an English ship.

Criticism

"Falk" is the strange story of a man who felt that he was condemned for eating human flesh. The main interest of the tale lies in the characterization of Falk. This man had experienced a peculiar situation in which he and three companions through their efforts to save their own lives were
forced to eat a member of the crew. Falk, an extremely sensitive man, felt that it was unfortunate he had not died as had the other members of the crew. The experience affected Falk permanently, and one finds him, a mysterious, reticent fellow.

The subject of the tale is concerned with Falk's attempt to get married. The incident is not of particular importance except as one is able to decipher the character of Falk.

The women characters in the story never speak, but it does not seem that they should. One might expect that the girl would speak, but no situation is presented in which there is need for her conversation. The girl is, however, very real in the story.

Comrad says that he did not intend that the story should shock anyone. His intention was to capture the reader's attention by securing his interest and enlisting his sympathies for the matter in hand, whatever it may be, within the boundaries of human emotion.

"To-morrow"

In the seaport of Colebrook, Captain Hagberd owned a couple of brick cottages. In the one, he lived; in the other dwelt Josiah Carvil, an old, blind boat-builder, and his daughter Bessie.

Captain Hagberd, a retired skipper, who always dressed in number one sail cloth, had been advertising in the London papers for his son Harry.

The old sailor had often said that Harry would come back "next week--next

10. Ibid., Author's Note, pp. ix, x.
11. Ibid., pp. 243-277.
month--next year," but now he knew that Harry would return home "to-morrow." Harry would be thirty-one next July, just the right age to get married.

During the time Captain Hagberd had been a sailor, he had never been out of sight of the English coast for more than two days at a time. As soon as his wife had inherited a house, he had given up his command. Now the Captain dug in his front yard every day, but it would not be necessary to plant it until Harry returned.

Bessie cared for her father, who, when he wanted his pipe or any article for that matter, always howled for her. She humored her father, as well as the landlord who still advertised for his son in the Sunday papers.

Often Bessie would talk to the Captain over the wood fence which separated the two cottages. The Captain would tell Bessie that she was working too hard and that Harry would get her a servant when she and Harry were married. Bessie would never contradict the captain.

One evening a man came down the street, passed the cottage, but then hesitated a moment and returned to ask the Captain if he were not Captain Hagberd. The stranger told the Captain that Harry was coming home to-morrow.

Hagberd, irritated by the man's poking fun at his suit and offering to give information about the son, soon retreated inside.

To Bessie, who had come out into the yard, the man confessed that he was the son. His chum had seen the notice in the paper and had told him of it.

Harry knocked on the door of the cottage and told the Captain that
he was Harry, who had come home a day too soon. The old man opened the window and threw a shovel at his son.

Harry had been gone for sixteen years. During that time he had sheared sheep, harpooned whales, rigged ships, prospected for gold, and skinned dead bullocks.

While Harry was there in the yard, he sang an old tune of Mexico, a song of the Gambucinos, who, prospecting in the land of gold, stay nowhere for any length of time. Sometimes Harry thought that he himself was a Gambucino. No girl could keep him for more than a week.

Harry told Bessie that he had fallen in love with her, but that he refused to do what his father expected him to do—to marry, to settle down, and become a lawyer's clerk, perhaps.

At that moment Captain Hagberd poked his head out of the window and admonished Bessie to leave this stranger alone, for Harry was coming tomorrow.

After Bessie had given him a half sovereign, Harry, saying that he never forgot any of the women he knew, kissed her and hastened out into the dark street.

Captain Hagberd poked his head out of the window and asked Bessie if the man was gone. Then without answering, Bessie went into her own cottage, for her father was shouting for her.

Hagberd, joyful in his madness, was glad that the "information man" had left.

Criticism

"To-morrow" is the story of a queer old captain who has advertised
for his son Harry for sixteen years. When the son does appear, Captain Hagberd, half-crazed with the idea that "to-morrow" the boy would come home, is too obstinate to believe that the passer-by is really his son. Consequently, the old captain goes on dreaming and planning for the future of his son.

The character of Captain Hagberd is clearly drawn. He has talked of his son so long that he is obsessed with the idea that to-morrow Harry would return. Tomorrow he could plant his garden. To-morrow Harry and Bessie would be married. The old man has become half-crazy.

Bessie is an obedient girl who humors the Captain and patiently cares for her father, a bad-tempered, surly fellow who howls and roars for what service he needs. Bessie does not contradict the Captain; she seems to half believe what the Captain says is true. But after she sees Harry, she realizes that nothing of those plans can be realized.
CHAPTER VI

A SET OF SIX

The stories, "Gaspar Ruiz," "The Informer," "The Brute," "An Anarchist," "The Duel," and "Il Conde," in the volume A Set of Six were written at various times during a three or four year period preceding their publication in 1908.1

The suggestion for the character of Gaspar Ruiz in the story of the same name was found by Conrad in a book by Captain Basil Hall, R.N., who was an officer of a British squadron on the western coast of South America between 1824 and 1828.2

The grim habits of the ship in the story of "The Brute" were told to Conrad by Captain Blake, commander of an English ship on which Conrad served in 1884.3

"The Duel," which had appeared earlier in a small volume with the title, "The Point of Honour," was based on a paragraph in a French newspaper which told of a duel ending fatally for two French officers in Napoleon's Grand Army who had fought a number of duels on "some futile pretext."4

Mr. Norman Douglas and a Polish gentleman, Count Szembek, told Conrad the story of adventure which Conrad wrote under the title "Il Conde."5

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2. Ibid., p. viii.
3. Ibid., p. ix.
4. Ibid., p. x.
5. Ibid., p. x.
In a letter to Sir Algernon Methuen Conrad says that the tales in
_A Set of Six_ are

stories of incident—action—not of analysis. All are dramatic in a
measure but by no means of a gloomy sort. All, but two, draw their
significance from the love interest—though of course they are not
love stories in the conventional meaning. They are not studies—they
touch no problem. They are just stories in which I have tried my best
to be simply entertaining. 6

"Gaspar Ruiz" 7

General Santierra was a South American of good family. He had worked
earnestly for the freeing of that continent from the rule of Spain. He had
begun his service as a lieutenant and had fought in the great battle on the
River Bio-Bio. General Santierra, now an old officer, began to tell his
guests of his experiences as a young soldier and of his acquaintance with
Gaspar Ruiz.

Gaspar Ruiz, a member of the Republican army (apparently in Chile),
had been capture later in the Royalist ranks. He had not been a deserter,
but had merely marched when a gun had been thrust into his hands. Nevertheless, his fate was to be shot as a deserter.

Lieutenant Santierra, just a boy at the time, lingered near by to
watch the ten prisoners who were to be shot as "examples."

The men, confined in a small vaulted room, which became intensely
hot with the heat of the noon day sun, begged for water. Santierra found
that the bucket of water he had carried to them could not be passed through
the iron bars. He was, as he told his guests, afraid to go to the adjutant
for the key to unlock the prison door. Gaspar Ruiz then asked Santierra

6. Conrad, Letter to Sir Algernon Methuen, Jan. 26, 1908, quoted in
Jean-Aubry, _op. cit._, vol. 2, p. 66.
7. Conrad, _op. cit._, pp. 3-70.
to cut the bonds from his wrists. After the bonds were cut from the 
prisoner's wrists, Gaspar bent the iron bars so that the bucket of 
water could be passed through. Then he gave each of the prisoners his 
share of the water.

Half an hour before sunset, the prisoners were taken to the place of 
execution. When the volleys were fired, Gaspar Ruiz fell with the rest 
of the prisoners.

But Gaspar Ruiz was not dead. In the darkness, he managed to get to 
a house not far away. No one let him in; so he lay on the porch until 
daybreak.

The Spanish family living in this house had been people of some 
wealth, but now they were ruined by the revolution. The daughter, 
Erminia, when she found that Ruiz had been shot as a deserter from the 
Republican ranks, led him to a hut in the orchard behind the house where 
he might hide.

General Robles along with Santierra suspected that Gaspar Ruiz was 
hiding with this Royalist family and so decided one evening to capture 
the fellow. As they stood within the house, they heard the low rumbling 
_of an earthquake._ Then suddenly the house began to fall; they were 
prisoners. But Gaspar Ruiz, who had come out of his hiding place, was 
outside the building. He picked up one of the porch pillars and burst 
open the door. The General and Santierra with the accompanying soldiers 
bolted down the road. No one thought of capturing Ruiz then.

Ruiz had succeeded in rescuing Erminia, but her parents were killed 
by the falling debris. Ruiz, taking the Royalist girl with him, left the
Later Ruiz sent a note to General Robles explaining that he wished to become worthy of being an honored soldier. He was permitted to make daring raids with astonishing success until finally the governor began to complain that this man had married a woman with Royalist leanings.

After this Ruiz became a fearless, independent rebel. Troops sent out against him were almost always completely destroyed. Ruiz was determined to carry on the struggle against Chile until the end. Nevertheless, war was what Ruiz wanted, and that was what he received. He had made an alliance with Carreras, "the so-called dictator of the so-called republic of Mendoza." Perhaps the purpose of this alliance was to provide a safe retreat for his wife and little girl.

Carreras, however, double crossed Ruiz and delivered Erminia and the child to the government upon certain conditions. At this time Santierra, now a prisoner of Gaspar Ruiz, had escaped being shot because Santierra had tried to help Ruiz when he had been a prisoner. It was while Santierra was imprisoned that Ruiz learned of the capture of his wife and child.

Ruiz, not waiting for all of his men, sped across the country to the fort of Pequena, where his family was imprisoned. There, the Indians who aided Ruiz were not able to cut the iron nails that bound the palisade together and so could not make an entrance into the fort.

In an desperate attempt to gain an entrance into the fort Ruiz ordered that the gun, which had been so long in coming and now had no carriage,
be mounted upon his own back. The third shot was too much for the powerful Ruiz, and he fell prostrate to the ground. His own strength had killed him. Ruiz's army had failed also and were put to rout by General Robles' army.

Santierra, no longer a prisoner, was appointed to take Gaspar Ruiz's wife and child down to Santiago. As the party made their way down the steep trail, Ruiz's wife, pleading that she was tired, entrusted her child to Santierra. Erminia then quickly threw herself headlong into the chasm at the right of the path.

The guests immediately asked General Santierra about the child. Where was she now? Through the window the guests saw a woman, about forty, walk through the garden.

General Santierra, proud of his adopted daughter and heiress, warned his listeners not to ask for her hand, for if she took your hand "it would be only to crush your bones. And she is the own daughter of her father, the strong man who perished through his own strength; the strength of his body, of his simplicity--of his love!

Criticism

The story of "Gaspar Ruiz" is told from the point of view of General Santierra. The tale is closely connected with his own experiences; for when Ruiz is condemned to be shot, Santierra, a Lieutenant in the Republican Army, guards the prisoners. Later, Santierra finds himself a prisoner of Gaspar Ruiz.

Gaspar Ruiz, a rather simple-minded fellow who possesses powerful muscular strength, finally overestimates his ability and dies from the in-
jury sustained from being a human carriage for a gun. He is willing, however, to make any sacrifice to rescue his wife and child. Ruiz is devoted to Erminia and longs for her to return that same devotion. Not until a few minutes before his death is he sure of Erminia's love for him.

The setting of the story is not confined to one locality. In his adventures Ruiz travels from Valparaiso throughout the Andes Mountains in central Chile, until his final stand near Santiago.

"The Informer"^8

Mr. X had come from Paris to visit the narrator and to see his fine collection of Chinese bronzes and porcelain.

As the two dined one evening Mr. X began a tale of amazing implications. To the narrator, Mr. X had seemed to have a shady side. Now Mr. X began to tell him of old Hermione Street in the city of Paris. A two-storied brick house on this street belonged to the children of a government official, but there was nothing to prevent them from renting the building to revolutionary workers. On the ground floor was a little Italian restaurant where the workers could meet without being watched. On the first floor was a Variety Artists' Agency, and on the top floor was an agency for Stone's Dried Soups. The advantage of this agency was that things could easily be concealed in the dry powder. In the cellar at the back were two printing presses.

8. Ibid., pp. 73-102.
A man by the name of Horne was the leader of the group of experienced revolutionists. But in spite of excellent working conditions and trained men, the plans of the group began to fail. The only conclusion that could be made was that some of the groups were not to be trusted.

In his attempt to solve the problem, Mr. X then went to call on a young lady member of the group. It was evident from the conversation that the girl knew only of the literature being printed at Hermione Street. Later a friend of hers came into the room. She introduced him as "Comrade" Sevrin.

Later Mr. X found that Horne and some of his companions had dug their way into the vaults under a public building by way of the cellar at the back of the building.

In order to find the unworthy member of the workers Mr. X organized a surprise raid upon the group. The plan worked perfectly so far as the actual raid was concerned. But it seemed that the plan had failed in all other aspects. Suddenly the girl followed by her brother appeared. When she had heard the commotion, she entered the cellar way to see what was the matter. She had saved the situation.

It was Sevrin who seemed most astonished, especially was he openly alarmed when the girl appeared. He had fallen in love with the girl and did not wish to see her taken by the raiding party whom he supposed to be police. Only by the presence of the girl had Mr. X been able to detect the "informer."

Sevrin, the anarchist, when accused of betraying the revolutionists, stoically asserted that he had been "thwarting, deceiving, and betraying"
them "from conviction." He had hoped to make the girl share that conviction also.

Mr. X was certain that Sevrin did not live long, for if Sevrin carried poison in his pocket for use in carrying out his activities, he would not fail to use it for himself.

As for the girl, she went into seclusion in a convent.

The narrator never saw Mr. X after that evening. But a friend in Paris remarked to the narrator that Mr. X was a "distinguished specimen" who liked to have his joke now and then.

**Criticism**

The main body of the story of "The Informer" is told by Mr. X a number of years after his supposed connection with the revolutionary party in France. He talks freely of his activities, and one suspects that the adventure was a myth. This suspicion is confirmed by the remark of the friend in Paris, who had sent the narrator a letter introducing Mr. X, that the fellow liked "to have his little joke sometimes."  

Mr. X succeeds in finding the "informer" because of Sevrin's interest in the girl. It is evident that Sevrin's fondness for the girl is based on his desire to make her share his convictions.

The story is interesting, but it is not one of characterization. Conrad does not picture the individuals as outstanding but as members of a type. Mr. X's position with the revolutionary group is not clearly defined, and neither are the other characters vividly drawn.

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"The Brute" 10

As the narrator came into the building, Miss Blank told him that Mr. Jermyn, Mr. Stonor, and a man that she had never seen before were in the parlor. When the narrator appeared in the doorway, the stranger, seated on the hearth rug, was telling of his dislike for the Apse Family. As the three talked on, Miss Blank appeared to tell Mr. Stonor that his cab was waiting. After this old seaman left, the narrator asked the stranger what ship he was speaking of.

The stranger began telling of the Apse Family, a ship owned by Apse and Sons, a firm that owned a whole fleet of Apses—the Lucy Apse, Harold Apse, John, Malcolm, Clara, and all the rest were named for the uncles, aunts, cousins, and other members of the family.

The Apse Family was bigger and better built than all of the other ships. Each part of the ship was a little stronger, thicker, and heavier. When the ship was weighed, Mr. Apse was terribly disappointed because the Apse Family reached only 1,999 and a fraction tons rather than 2,000 tons as he had hoped.

The Apse Family was a heavy ship, and it was nothing for her to knock off the end of a wooden wharf, but she was never damaged. The "brute" always succeeded in killing somebody every year.

After serving three years on the Apse Family, the stranger had transferred to the Lucy Apse. Then after finishing that year, the stranger received word of his appointment to the Apse Family as third mate. His

10. Ibid., pp. 105-131.
brother, Charles, was made chief mate of the ship for the same voyage.

Charles, ten years older than the stranger, was a jolly, strong, fellow. No doubt the fact that Miss Maggie Colchester, niece of Captain Colchester, was going on the voyage added to the happiness of the young officer.

Nothing of importance happened until the ship reached Sydney, where Charles bought Maggie a ring. Miss Colchester was a jolly girl with fair hair.

On the return trip Charles bragged that at last the Apse Family had been tamed. As the ship was being towed into port, Maggie was bustling about on the forecastle. She had stepped on the port anchor as it lay on the deck. Then as the stranger was on the deck he turned to see the tow rope pull under the fluke of the anchor. Before he could warn Maggie, the anchor caught her around the waist and fell clanging over the edge of the ship. The "brute" had again taken its toll.

The stranger and his brother Charles went home then. Later Charles took a command on a steamer on the China coast.

Not long afterward the Apse Family was purposely sunk on a reef, but none of the crew were lost. The talkative stranger then got up and left the room.

Criticism

"The Brute" is the surprising and brutal story of the Apse Family which took its toll in human life each year. The tale, told by the stranger who served on the ship for a number of years, is peculiarly interesting. Nevertheless, the habits of the "brute" present a grim and tragic picture.
The main interest of the story lies in following the homicidal tendency of the Apse Family. Every year the ship has taken compensation, and one begins to wonder whether or not the ship will again do so during the time that the stranger's brother is chief mate. At the end of the voyage, the Apse Family seems almost to seek its victim. True to the reputation of the "brute," the ship takes another life.

Conrad says that a ship with such habits really existed but that the end of the "brute" really happened to another ship of worthy character. Conrad thinks, however, that the ending may be justified and that his honesty in writing stories will not be questioned.11

"An Anarchist"12

For two months one year the narrator spent his time visiting the cattle estate of a famous meat-extract manufacturing company. The story, which the narrator believes to be true in nearly all parts, is of the engineer of the steam-launch owned by the Maranon cattle estate located on an island in the entrance of a South American river.

Mr. Harry Gee, the manager, called the narrator's attention to the engineer whom he had nicknamed "Crocodile." Then the manager added that the man was nothing more than a "citizen anarchist from Barcelona." The engineer protested that he did not even know Spanish, but that he would deny nothing.

The manager had found the man sneaking through the bushes on the island. He accosted him and found that the fellow had been a mechanic.

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11. Ibid., Author's Note, p. ix.
12. Ibid., pp. 135-161.
Now the manager did not intend to let the man go, for an engineer was needed on the estate. In fact the name that Gee had given him would keep him from getting employment anywhere near the ranch.

It was evident from the story told by the anarchist that "a little thing may bring about the undoing of a man."

One evening the man began telling the narrator about his past life.

The man had done military service in France and had gone to Paris to continue his trade. On his twenty-fifth birthday he and two of his friends went to a cafe to celebrate. They had become drunk and before long, the anarchist had jumped up and shouted with rage "Vive l'anarchie!"

Later he found himself in a police cell charged with "assault, seditious cries, and anarchist propaganda." He served the maximum penalty for first offenders.

When he went back to his old work, his former employer refused to hire him. He wandered from place to place. Later he was told that he was to help rob a bank. All that he was to do was to take care of a black bag containing a bomb. He was caught, sentenced, and deported to St. Joseph's Island.

Although the anarchist knew of the mutiny planned by the convicts on the island, he did not take an active part in the plans. During the mutiny he went down the path to the warder's house, in the night; he found a revolver.

Then at the pier, he found a small boat. He rowed around to the other side of the island to a spot where an old shack stood near the shore. Here he heard the voices of two convicts, Simon and Mafîle.
The two informed the anarchist that the boat belonged to them, but they consented to take the third man with them.

When the two men became tired of rowing, the anarchist produced the revolver. The men continued to row until a ship was sighted on the horizon. The anarchist felt that he must be free; so he shot the convicts and flung them overboard.

The ship, manned by all blacks except the captain, who was a mulatto, took the anarchist aboard and then at his request dropped him off on this island, where he had become the engineer.

The narrator tried to persuade the anarchist to return with him to Europe, but he refused, for he wished to be away from "them."

Criticism

The life of the main character in the tale "An Anarchist" is related by the man himself to a narrator who visits the Maranon cattle estate on an island in the mouth of a South American river.

This character, an anarchist, in telling the story of his life, explains how "a little thing may bring about the undoing of a man." Now the engineer on this estate, he relates how as a result of a drunken spree, he was jailed as an anarchist. Then because of the pressure from an anarchist group he was ordered to assist in robbing a bank. His arrest, imprisonment, and escape followed. Now on this island he is free as long as he remains there. He refuses to go back to Europe where he would be shadowed by an anarchist group.
Feraud and d'Hubert were lieutenants in a regiment of hussars during the Napoleonic wars. Lieutenant D'Hubert was fortunate in being attached to the general, while Lieutenant Feraud was doing regular regimental work.

On one afternoon Lieutenant D'Hubert went to find Lieutenant Feraud at his private quarters, but he was not there. Finally the maid admitted that perhaps the Lieutenant was calling on Madame de Lionne, who had a salon, which was frequented especially by the military society.

It seems that Lieutenant D'Hubert had been sent by the general to find Lieutenant Feraud to order him to report to headquarters. Feraud had that morning wounded a man in a duel and severe complaints were being sent to headquarters by the man's family.

Lieutenant D'Hubert found the Feraud at the salon and told him of the order. The Lieutenant was indignant. Why should he have to be called to report? Moreover, he was angry with Lieutenant D'Hubert for having taken the trouble to hunt him up in the drawing room of Madame de Lionne.

To settle the affair Lieutenant Feraud challenged Lieutenant D'Hubert to a duel to be fought immediately in the garden near his own quarters. Feraud asserted that seconds weren't necessary. The old gardener was deaf, but he had two eyes and could watch the duel.

There was nothing for D'Hubert to do but follow. In the ensuing fight which lasted scarcely two minutes Feraud received a slash on his

13. Ibid., pp. 165-266.
arm and fell backwards. Lieutenant D'Hubert attempted to stop the bleeding of the wound, but at each effort the maid attacked him fiercely, pulling his hair and scratching his face pitifully. Lieutenant D'Hubert then went down the street to tell an elderly physician to attend to Feraud’s wounds.

Because of the incident D'Hubert was relieved of his position as ordonnance officer and was not permitted to see any one. He learned later, however, that Feraud intended to continue the affair.

No one knew the exact cause of the quarrel, and the two young officers refused to talk. Soon the army took to the field and again another sword duel between the two was arranged one morning. In this encounter D'Hubert soon found himself on the ground with a hole in his side. This duel did not settle the quarrel. Feraud was sure that the next time D'Hubert would not succeed in getting by with only three weeks in bed.

The lieutenant colonel forbade D'Hubert to send a challenge to Feraud or to receive one from him for a year. Then D'Hubert received command of a troop. Consequently, Feraud could not send a challenge to a superior officer.

After the battle of Austerlitz, Captain Feraud received his troop. The next duel, in Silesia, was fought to a standstill. Each was wounded, severely, by the cavalry sabres and was forcibly led away from the field.

Later another encounter in which the two were to meet on horseback, took place near Lübeck. Captain Feraud felt that he had every advantage, but on the first attack, he received a cut on the forehead,
which ended the combat.

In the retreat from Moscow, the colonels who had no regiments were placed in the "sacred battalion." In that group Colonel D'Hubert and Colonel Feraud carried muskets. The two men struggled onward, but never did they speak to each other.

One day the two men found themselves cut off from the rest of the party by a group of Cossacks. Colonel Feraud told Colonel D'Hubert to shoot the nearest man. He himself would shoot the next one, for he said that he was a better shot than Colonel D'Hubert. The rest of the Cossacks fled after two of their number were killed. The two officers trudged into camp that night. Colonel D'Hubert carried his companion's musket and remarked that he could walk better than Colonel Feraud.

Later in Paris, Colonel D'Hubert was made a general. Colonel Feraud, when he learned of the promotion, remarked that this advancement had saved the general from a "pretty hot encounter."

General D'Hubert was wounded during the campaign of France, and Colonel Feraud became general in his place.

After the fall of Napoleon's Empire, General D'Hubert through the efforts of his brother-in-law's family was retained on the active list of the royal government. He was also given an unlimited leave.

How General Feraud was able to escape a firing squad was never quite known. He had during the Hundred Days mounted and despatched troopers from Paris for the Emperor. Believing that this was beneath his abilities, Feraud had not worked at the task very diligently. He was, however, saved from severe punishment by General D'Hubert, who was
in Paris waiting for a special command. General D'Hubert secured an interview with the Minister of Police. As a result of this interview, General Feraud's name was scratched from the list of twenty condemned men.

General Feraud, sent to a town in central France, had almost forgotten his foe until he read in a Paris paper that General D'Hubert was to be called to command the Fifth Cavalry Brigade.

Meanwhile, General D'Hubert had while staying with his sister in southern France fallen in love with a young lady who lived near by. He sent Adele flowers every morning and then appeared for lunch every day.

One day as he returned home from his daily visit, General D'Hubert met two men riding down the road. They asked immediately where General D'Hubert lived, for they wished to talk to him privately.

The men, friends of General Feraud, and General D'Hubert made arrangements for the duel to be held the next morning at sunrise in a pine grove.

Immediately General D'Hubert retraced his steps to the home of his fiancée, where he told her uncle of the affair. The General assured the man he had forgotten all about the matter until a half hour ago.

The next morning General D'Hubert arrived at the appointed place early. Soon General Feraud and his friends came. The pistol duel ended in complete triumph for General D'Hubert. With two unused bullets, he confronted General Feraud, who had fired his two shots. General D'Hubert could have taken the life of his adversary, but he had never wanted to kill him.
When the two duellists came out of the woods, General D'Hubert told the men that a reconciliation had been made.

General D'Hubert hastily walked to his home. When he reached the house, he found a great commotion. Adele had run two miles to the home of Madame Leonie when she had learned that morning that General D'Hubert was engaged in a duel. The General was indeed happy to find that Adele, to whom he was to be married within a week, really loved him.

Not long after, because Feraud had lost his pension, D'Hubert secretly sent him money, for Feraud could not bear to be aided by his adversary.

Criticism

"The Duel", the tale of two French officers during the Napoleonic wars, is told from the point of view of the omniscient author. In a letter to John Galsworthy Conrad writes that the story is his idea of a historical romance in short form. 14

Of the two officers pictured during fifteen years of service in Napoleon's army, General Feraud is a rash, uncompromising man, who is envious of the success of General D'Hubert. On the other hand, General D'Hubert is an intelligent person, worthy of the success which he has gained. After the triumphant defeat of General Feraud, General D'Hubert, who secretly helps him, comments, "It's extraordinary how in one way or another this man has managed to fasten himself on my deeper feelings." 15

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15. Conrad, op. cit., p. 266.
"Il Conde"16

The narrator became fairly well acquainted with a man, known as Il Conde, while the two were staying at a hotel in Naples.

Il Conde, a man of about sixty, preferred to stay in Naples, for he liked the climate there. Occasionally he would journey across the Alps to visit his married daughter. The Count, a widower, was a man of some fortune, apparently, enough to provide for his living in Naples.

The narrator, after having been called away to visit a friend who was seriously ill, returned to Naples after ten days.

Il Conde, glad to see the narrator, told him that he was very sad. He had, so he said, an "abominable adventure" happen to him while the narrator was away.

After dinner Il Conde began the tale of his strange experience. He had early one evening gone to the Villa Nazionale to listen to the music. Later he had returned to the hotel, deposited the greater part of his money with the clerk, and then returned to the Villa, a public pleasure ground.

After walking about for some time, Il Conde went to a cafe. He shared a table with a young Italian man with "a colourless, clear complexion, red lips, jet-black little moustache and liquid black eyes so wonderfully effective in leering or scowling."

Later in the evening, as he edged away from the crowd, Il Conde noticed a man sitting on a bench. The third time the Count walked by the bench the man, getting up quickly, asked him for a light.

16. Ibid., pp. 269-289.
As the Count reached toward his pocket he felt the pressure of a
knife, a long one with a narrow blade. Il Conde told the man that he
would not make any noise.

The man demanded the Count's money, watch, and rings. Here Il
Conde interrupted the narrative to act the remainder of the tale in pan-
tomime.

The Count gave him 340 or 360 lire; most of his money had been left
at the hotel. That evening he carried a cheap watch, for his good watch
had been left at a watch shop for cleaning. The Count refused to give
the man the ring that he wore because it had been given to him by his
wife.

As the band completed their musical number with a grand climax, Il
Conde suddenly realized that the robber was gone. Feeling quite hungry,
the Count went to the Cafe Umberto. There, as he tried to calm himself,
he glanced about the room and saw to his amazement the same man.

Pasquale, a cigar pedlar, informed Il Conde that the fellow, Camorra,
was a Cavaliere from Bari, who was attending the university. However,
Pasquale was known for his lying ability.

The man, noticing that Il Conde paid for his risotto with a gold piece,
one that Conde kept on reserve, sneered a warning as he went past the
Count. "So you had some gold on you—you old liar—you old birba—you
furfante! But you are not done with me yet."

The Count had decided that he would leave Naples immediately. Be-
cause he felt that he was a marked man, his dignity would not permit him
to stay, even though he believed that he could not live for a year in an-
other climate.
Criticism

The story of "Il Conde" is a personal experience of a Count who lived in Naples for a time. Relating his adventure to a casual acquaintance in a hotel in that city, Il Conde is certain that he has not been robbed by an ordinary thief, but by one of the Camorra. This secret organization, formed about 1820 at Naples, was noted for its violent methods. Consequently, the tale must have taken place during the middle part of the nineteenth century.

The chief interest of the tale "Il Conde" lies in the adventure of the Count. The realization that the robbery is not one of an ordinary character, but connected with the dangerous Camorra makes the tale more interesting.

Although Conrad does often combine characterization with adventure, the volume A Set of Six deals only with strange and puzzling experiences. These experiences, nevertheless, are not more exciting than those of the tales in which Conrad includes characterization. Jimmy in The Nigger of the Narcissus is vividly individualized in addition to the portrayal of a most exciting voyage. In contrast, the characters in "The Brute," a sea story, are scarcely delineated.
CHAPTER VII

'TWIXT LAND AND SEA


"The Secret Sharer," written much earlier, was first published in Harper's Magazine in 1911.1

During the summer of 1910, while Conrad lived in Capel House, near Ashford, Kent, he wrote "A Smile of Fortune" and "Freya of the Seven Isles."2

The setting of the stories is in the region of the Indian Ocean and neighboring locations. The stories, although two of them appear in autobiographical form, are not personal experiences of Conrad.3

"A Smile of Fortune"4

The narrator, telling the story of his own thrilling experience, was eager to land on a tropic island after a sixty days' voyage.

Early the next morning the ship reached the harbor. About eight o'clock the narrator was informed that a gentleman from shore had come to see him. Mr. Jacobus unhesitatingly invited himself to have a cup of coffee. During the breakfast hour, the narrator, also the Captain of

4. Ibid., pp. 3-88.
the ship, became acquainted with Mr. Jacobus, a business man who apparently furnished ships with candles and groceries. He learned too that Mr. Jacobus had a brother, Ernest Jacobus, who was a dealer in ship supplies.

Later the same afternoon the narrator learned from Mr. Burns, the chief mate, more about the two brothers Alfred and Ernest Jacobus. Neither of the brothers had spoken to the other for eighteen years. Furthermore, no respectable person would think of associating with Alfred Jacobus. He lived in an old-fashioned house surrounded by a large garden. Mr. Burns also asserted that Mr. Jacobus kept a girl shut up there.

Mr. Jacobus appeared on board each morning. Usually he brought a large handful of flowers. It was evident that sooner or later this ship-chandler wanted something from the Captain in one way or another.

The narrator decided that he would like to pay a call to Mr. Jacobus' brother, and so he started out one afternoon. The offices of Ernest Jacobus were located in a dilapidated building. In the outer office a "lanky, inky, light-yellow, mulatto youth [sic]" after much persuasion took in the Captain's name. As the lad came bounding back through the doorway, he told the narrator to go in.

Mr. Jacobus was a large, swarthy man with a limp mustache, who growled and sputtered. After this interview, the narrator felt more kindly toward the other Jacobus.

One afternoon as the Captain visited the store he was accosted by Alfred Jacobus, who proposed that the narrator buy ten or fifteen tons of potatoes. However, at that time, trade was not in the Captain's mind. As the Captain stayed at the port he learned more of the Jacobus
brothers. Years before Alfred Jacobus had become infatuated with a circus woman. Deserting his wife, he followed the woman, from place to place. Finally, he came back with a small child. This girl, probably eighteen, who lived with her father, was never permitted to leave the house.

The Captain was having trouble loading his ship because he could not secure eleven hundred quarter-bags to hold sugar. Mr. Jacobus offered to talk to the Captain about the bags if the Captain would go up to the Jacobus house. Mr. Jacobus would accompany the Captain up to the house; then he would return as soon as he had completed his business.

When inside the garden, the Captain was introduced to Jacobus' daughter Alice. The girl said nothing as she remained seated in a wicker chair. The narrator talked to the girl about the garden and various commonplace things, but still she refused to say a word. It was not until a servant woman appeared, that the girl spoke; then it was in answer to the woman's startled exclamations.

Alice could not understand the visitor's presence, and she only wished that he would leave the family in peace.

The narrator informed old Jacobus upon his return that he would haunt the house until Jacobus was able to find the needed supplies.

True to his word, the Captain spent nearly every afternoon at Jacobus' home. Each day he found that the girl maintained her attitude of not caring about anything. She was a curious girl "like a spellbound creature with the forehead of a goddess crowned by the dishevelled magnificent hair of a gipsy tramp." Always she asked if the Captain was
never going to leave them in peace.

Then on one of his visits the Captain told Alice that he was leaving on the day after to-morrow. She asked him if he was going "so soon."

Then she flung the words, "Go away! Go away!" at him. The Captain did not know what notion the girl had of her danger, but he assured her that he would not harm her. The day after to-morrow he would be gone.

The Captain took the girl in his arms and kissed her; then quickly she entered a doorway at the end of the verandah.

Jacobus appeared immediately in the doorway of the dining room. Whether he had seen the girl, the Captain did not know. The narrator spoke of his leaving soon, and immediately Jacobus asked if he had through of the potato deal any more. Frankly, the Captain had not, but seeing that old Jacobus was determined, he said that he would take as many potatoes as he had money to buy if the potatoes could be loaded immediately.

Mr. Jacobus agreed to the bargain and was to wait on board the ship until the Captain arrived. The ship-chandler left, and Alice came out to look for the shoe that she had lost in her flight. Alice was not afraid of her father, nor was she, so she said, afraid of the Captain. The Captain bade her goodbye. As he left, he thought of Alice, "with her heavy hair and empty eyes as black as the night itself, staring into the walled garden, silent, warm, odorous with the perfume of imprisoned flowers, which, like herself, were lost to sight in a world buried in darkness."

Two days later at sunrise the ship began her voyage with a cargo
of seventeen tons of potatoes. During the voyage the smell of decaying potatoes did not add to the Captain's comfort about what looked like a misplaced bargain. When the ship docked at Port Philip Heads, the Captain found that the colony was suffering from a potato famine. Quickly the cargo of potatoes was sold to various people at a handsome profit.

That night the Captain wrote a letter to his owners outlining a plan for the ship's employment for the following two years.

Some time later the Captain received a letter saying that the company was satisfied with his plans. They had also received a letter from Mr. Jacobus, who was well pleased with the Captain and urged that the ship be sent back soon. Was it for the sake of Mr. Jacobus or for the girl?

At breakfast the next morning the Captain told Mr. Burns that he had resigned his command. In spite of the fact that his plans were upset, for the command was a stepping stone to success, the young Captain could not continue service on that ship.

Criticism

"A Smile of Fortune," told by a young Captain, is the strange adventure of the same young man. The setting of the tale is at a port on a tropic island in the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Alfred Jacobus, the brother whom the Captain calls his friend, is a ship-chandler whose business methods are apt to trick the most conservative person. The Captain is amazed to find later that the fine breakfast he shared with Jacobus the first morning in port had been prepared from groceries brought by the ship-chandler. Mr. Jacobus is a
frequent visitor on the ship. He brings flowers and uses all sorts of tactics to induce the Captain to buy from him. One suspects that Jacobus, whose past life was not frequently spoken of, has other schemes in mind. He succeeds in getting the Captain to visit at his home and in selling seventeen tons of potatoes to him.

The Captain, a young fellow, is an inquisitive chap who wants to find out all that he can about the Jacobus brothers. The purpose of his interview with Mr. Ernest Jacobus is merely to find out as much as he can about the old fellow. Although the Captain realizes that he is almost forced to buy the potatoes, the deal proves to be a "smile of fortune" for him. After receiving the letter from his own Company, he realizes that he can not continue as commander of that ship.

Alice, the daughter of Alfred Jacobus, is a strange girl. Throughout her life she has been kept away from people. She seems to have an indifferent attitude, caring for nothing and no person. She remains an enigma to the reader. Whether the Captain realized that he loved the girl but knew that she would never return that love or did not wish to be again taken in by Mr. Jacobus' scheme is not made clear by Conrad.

"The Secret Sharer" 5

The narrator had just left the Meinam River on the first part of the homeward journey. That evening as the ship anchored at the head of the Gulf of Siam, the narrator learned that another ship was anchored inside the islands.

5. Ibid., pp. 91-143.
The narrator, also Captain of the ship, was on his first command. Therefore, he was not acquainted with his men, and he did not know their abilities.

That evening at supper, the chief mate suggested that the strange ship was unable to cross the bar because of drawing too much water. Promptly, the second mate told the group that the ship, the Sephora, loaded with coal, could not cross the bar because she drew over twenty feet of water.

Since the crew was tired, the Captain offered to keep watch on deck until one o'clock. He had not been on deck long when he found that a rope ladder had not been hauled on deck. He was angry for the moment but soon realized that he had hurriedly sent the crew off duty. As he attempted to pull the ladder on board, it seemed to catch on a snag. He looked over the rail, and to his amazement he saw the naked body of a man floating by the ladder. Was it a corpse?

The Captain calmly asked what was the matter. The man answered, "Cramp." Anxious to see the Captain, the man, Leggatt by name, climbed aboard.

As the two talked, the Captain learned that Leggatt, mate on board the Sephora, had killed a man. As Leggatt, dressed in another pair of the Captain's pajamas, told his story, he strangely enough looked like the Captain.

Leggatt, the son of a parson in Norfolk, during a gale while the crew were setting a reefed fore-sail, had been angered by another fellow. Leggatt grabbed for the man's throat, and in the ensuing fight the man had been killed.
The Captain took Leggatt to his stateroom, which was in the form of the capital letter L. Anyone coming to the door could not see the long part of the room.

There Leggatt continued his tale in a whisper. He had been locked in his cabin for seven weeks. Early that evening as the Sephora had anchored, he had managed during the supper hour while his cabin was unlocked to slip out of his room and jump over board. Leggatt, an excellent swimmer, had swum to a small island. He had decided that he would be found there; so he had swum for the Captain's ship and had been able to reach the ladder.

The Captain helped the man crawl into the bunk. Soon the steward came in with the morning coffee. He told the Captain to close the port for the decks were being washed. Uneasily, the Captain retorted that the port was closed. The room was hot and stuffy. How could he keep the stranger concealed?

From then on, the Captain maintained an attitude of severe dignity. He must appear on deck. The crew began to wonder at the strange actions of the Captain.

While the steward cleaned the stateroom that morning, Leggatt hid in the bathroom. Later the "secret sharer" spent most of his time sitting on a stool behind some coats.

It was that morning that the skipper of the Sephora visited the Captain. Pretending that he was slightly deaf, the Captain asked the skipper to please speak louder. There would be doubt then that Leggatt could hear all that was said.
The skipper told the captain of the strange incident that had occurred aboard his ship. The Captain, knowing that the skipper was evidently in search of the murderer, took the skipper to see all of the ship. The state-room, storerooms, in fact every room was visited before the skipper went back to the Sephora.

As the ship continued her journey, there was always the unpleasant job of manoeuvring to go through every day so that the Captain's state-room might be cleaned by the steward.

One day the steward darted into the Captain's stateroom with the Captain's coat. The Captain was sure that the steward had discovered the "secret sharer" when the Captain learned that the coat had been hung in the bathroom. Somehow though, the steward had not seen the man.

To the amazement of the mate, the Captain ordered that evening that the ship be headed in the direction of the islands near the east side of the gulf since the breezes weren't so strong in the middle of the gulf. Perhaps the land breezes might be better.

The Captain and the "secret sharer" decided that they must be near Koh-ring. The plan was to bring the ship as close to that point as possible. Then the Captain would smuggle Leggatt on deck so that he might swim to the island.

Late in the evening the Captain gave Leggatt three sovereigns and hustled him up on deck and into a sail locker. The ship sailed dangerously near the land. The helmsman and the mate were frantic, but the Captain would not order that the course of the ship be turned until he had reached a certain point.
Then as the ship reached that point, the Captain gave the command. He himself hardly knew whether or not the ship would be grounded. He looked over the rail and saw the big floppy hat that he had given Leggatt floating in the water. The "secret sharer" was on his way.

The ship already was heading toward the middle of the gulf. The Captain was again alone with his first command.

Criticism

"The Secret Sharer" is the strange story of a captain on his first command who finds that he is not alone. The tale as it is told by the young captain is an intensely interesting story of adventure.

Coupled with the exciting episodes is the interest in the qualms and fears of the young captain afraid of being caught with his double. The fact is that the "secret sharer" upsets the captain, and he finds that in spite of everything he must help Leggatt escape.

The Captain of the ship and the Captain of the Sephora present a striking picture. The Captain, evidently a well educated man, seems to be in education and intelligence superior to the Captain of the Sephora, who is interested only that no more murders shall happen aboard his ship. He does not feel that Leggatt was anything but a confirmed murderer. The Captain of the second ship, who knows the true story of the incident, by pretending that he is deaf, evades the questions of the Captain of the Sephora. The Captain is so shrewd that the old Captain has no suspicion that the escaped man is on board.

The Captain and the escaped man are strikingly similar. Both of the men, who were about the same age, had attended Conway school. As the
Captain looks at Leggatt sleeping in his berth, he is struck by the similarity to his own features. The Captain sympathizes with Leggatt, who in a storm, while attempting to set a reefed fore-sail had been angered by a member of the crew noted for his customary insolence. When a giant wave rolled over the ship, Leggatt and the man had been jammed under the wreckage. Leggatt had not released the strangle hold on the other man; so the man had died. The strange feeling which comes over the Captain is that he is in two places at the same time. This sensation does not leave him until he knows that the "secret sharer" is on his way to a new chance to begin again. Then the Captain feels that he is alone. He also feels that he is in command of his ship, for he has been able to turn the ship just at the point of danger. His crew have obeyed him when they questioned his orders seriously. Now he is sure of himself and his command.

"Freya of the Seven Isles"6

One day, now many years ago, the narrator received a long letter from an old friend in the East. In the letter, one of the reminiscent kind, the man asked if the narrator remembered Nelson.

Certainly the narrator did. Nelson or Neilson had served English firms and had sailed throughout the tropical waters for years and year. He had been very mistrustful of the Dutch authorities in the East.

When Nelson retired, he went to live on a small island, one of the group called the Seven Isles. There he lived with his daughter Freya, a lovely girl with long, glossy hair. Freya had sailed with her parents until her mother died. Then she had lived with a lady in Singapore for

6. Ibid., pp. 147-238.
six years. When Nelson had retired, Freya, now eighteen, had gone to live with her father.

Freya had an upright grand piano which the narrator declared was the heaviest movable object on the island. Jasper Allen, who anchored his ship as close as he could to the bungalow, often in the early morning heard the girl playing.

One day as the narrator talked to Freya they saw Jasper coming up the path. Jasper was owner and captain of the brig Bonito. He had bought the ship in Manila from a middle-aged Peruvian. Then Jasper had painted the ship white trimmed with gilt. It was hard to ascertain just what were Jasper's feelings for the brig and for the girl.

Nelson was a little annoyed by the presence of Jasper, and he hoped that Heemskirk didn't show up while Jasper Allen was there.

Heemskirk, the Dutch commander of the gunboat Neptun, patrolled the Archipelago. He had never bothered the Seven Isles until he had learned that a pretty girl lived there. After he had seen her, Heemskirk visited there frequently.

The narrator told Freya that he thought it best for her to go on board the Bonito and take care of its commander. It was the last time that the narrator saw all of them together: the charming Freya, her admirer Jasper, Nelson, and the "swarthy, arrogant, black-haired Dutchman."

A few weeks later the narrator saw Captain Allen in Singapore. He was counting the days until he and Freya were to be married. It would be only eleven months until her twenty-first birthday, and then he would take her away on his brig.

Jasper's mate had left him, and so he had hired a man by the name
of Schultz. The narrator warned the Captain that Schultz had a habit of stealing from every ship he served. He would get drunk, then he would sell something belonging to the ship and buy more liquor. Jasper was surprised, but he was determined to reform the old man.

Later, on another visit to the islands the narrator learned that Heemskirk was annoyed because the government had permitted Nelson to settle on that island. He expected the old man to learn Dutch and to submit to his every whim. This was the last time that the narrator had stopped at the island.

From the letter he learns that whenever Jasper visited at the Nelson home, Heemskirk was sure to appear. Then he would not leave until Jasper had left again. On this particular occasion, Heemskirk, as he returned from Nelson's tobacco shed, saw Freya and Jasper sitting on the north verandah. The young couple, very much interested in each other, had been talking all afternoon.

Heemskirk, blind with rage, hurried around the house to the west verandah. There the Dutchman flopped into a chair and waited.

Freya, knowing that Heemskirk was there, told Jasper that he must sail early in the morning, for the old scoundrel wouldn't leave until Jasper was gone. Jasper promised her that the next time he came he would take her with him.

Freya felt that she had at least to be tactful while Heemskirk was there on account of her father. But that evening she played the piano as loudly as she could, for she knew Heemskirk didn't appreciate music. Heemskirk asked her to quit, but she only played louder. Exasperated, Heemskirk demanded that she stop. Standing behind her, he suddenly
planted a kiss beneath her ear. Freya, startled, faced him; then instantly she swung at him, hitting him on the side of his face with her open hand.

The Dutchman yelled as if he were injured severely. Not suspecting the truth of the affair, Nelson when he came in thought that the man had a severe toothache. Nelson helped Heemskirk to his own room.

The next morning Freya, remembering that Jasper was sailing early that morning, ran to the verandah to watch the brig as it left. Suddenly Freya knew that Heemskirk was watching her, but she did not care. As Freya looked through the telescope, she saw Jasper upon the deck. Then she flung kisses over the sea until she could no longer see the brig. She turned and went to play the piano.

Heemskirk, distraught and gazing wildly, left the bungalow immediately. To Nelson's astonishment the Dutchman steamed out of the harbor at an unexpectedly early time in the morning.

Several weeks later as the Bonito was sailing on her route, the Neptun was sighted. Schultz was strangely upset by the appearance of the gunboat; he was sure, as he told Captain Allen, that Heemskirk meant harm.

Heemskirk ordered that the Bonito be towed to Makassar, where an investigation would be made. Furthermore, an officer and a few men would be sent aboard the Bonito. Jasper was overwhelmed when he learned that he was to be taken aboard the Neptun.

Ships trading in the China Seas were licensed to carry a small number of firearms for defense. Jasper had, so he told Heemskirk, eighteen rifles with bayonets.
As the boats neared Makassar, they would pass Tamissa reef. Suddenly, Jasper realized that his brig was being cast adrift on the reef. He was crushed by the thought.

Half an hour later the gunboat anchored at Makassar. Soon the whole town knew that Allen was there, but his brig was stranded on Tamissa reef.

The fact of the matter was that Heemskirk, who had been ordered to seize the firearms, found the rack empty. The mate insisted that Captain Allen did not know that the rifles were gone.

Every day Allen would trudge along the coast until he reached the point near the reef; there he would watch his beloved brig.

All of this the narrator read in his friend's letter. It was strange to read too of Schultz, the mate, who told everyone that he had stolen the rifles and sold them for ten dollars apiece. No one would believe him. When he found that the Dutch court would not accept his explanation, he committed suicide.

The letter went on to say that Jasper faded into the mere shadow of a man who daily watched his ship.

Now the narrator had received a letter from Nelson, who had come to London. The narrator called on him one day in January. There the narrator learned that Freya when she found that the brig had gone ashore had taken ill.

Nelson had gone to Maskassar and there he had talked to Jasper, a mere skeleton of a man, who refused to write or go to the girl, for he realized that when his ship had gone on the reef, he had no power over
her. The only thing that he had possessed had been destroyed on the reef.

Nelson had taken Freya to Hongkong, where she caught pneumonia and died. Then the man paused and said Freya was "such a sensible girl." In reality she had died from being too sensible.

Criticism

"Freya of the Seven Isles" is based upon the story of the Costa Rica, a ship not more than five years old when Conrad was in Singapore. The ship was run on a reef by a Dutch commander whom Captain Sutton had offended in some manner. After the ship was stranded Sutton haunted the coast line in Macassar for months and finally died there.7

The chief interest of the story lies in the tale of the two admirers of Freya. Jasper is the owner of the fine little brig, Bonito. He admired the ship to the point that when he loses the ship, he loses all interest in life. Jasper loves Freya too, but fondness for the ship dominates his entire life.

Heemskirk is a detestable character who is led by the fascination he feels for Freya to do the most underhanded things. Whenever Jasper visits Freya, Heemskirk is there, and he will not leave until Jasper has left. He deliberately causes Jasper's ship to be stranded in Temissa reef. Heemskirk is a crafty, hateful individual who also is displeased that Freya's father has been permitted to settle on the island.

Freya is a likeable girl who always places the interests of her

father before her own. She tries not to antagonize Heemskirk because of her father, for she realizes that Heemskirk has influence with the Dutch authorities and could easily cause trouble. She sends Jasper away because Heemskirk will not leave until Jasper leaves. Freya would not marry Jasper until she was twenty-one. When she hears of the tragic ending of the Bonito, she realizes the true extent of her love for Jasper, but she will not admit that this is true. Her constant fidelity to her father is to be admired.
CHAPTER VIII

WITHIN THE TIDES

The stories in the volume Within the Tides, "The Planter of Malata," "The Partner," "The Inn of the Two Witches," and "Because of the Dollars," all of which were written between 1910 and 1914, were published in 1915.

Conrad in the preface of the volume tells that when asked in reference to "The Inn of the Two Witches" whether or not he had read a story called "A Very Strange Bed" that he had never seen the tale. He does not remember where he found the information concerning the bed, a strange one, discovered near the end of the eighteenth century in an wayside inn between Naples and Rome. The bed is the only "fact" in the story.

Conrad had known a Frenchman without hands who had a tobacco shop on George Street in Sydney, Australia, not far from Circular Quay. This old Frenchman was fond of spinning "Melanesian Yarns." The Frenchman in the story "Because of the Dollars" resembles this man.

"The Planter of Malata"

Renouard and the editor of a newspaper in a colonial city were talking of Renouard's recent visit with the Dunsters. Mr. Dunster was an elderly man who had been a well known colonial statesman but had

1. Conrad, Within the Tides, Author's Note, p. xi. The story referred to is probably the story by Wilkie Collins sometimes published under the title "A Terribly Strange Bed."
retired from active politics.

Renouard had arrived from Malata in his schooner only the day before. The young man had leased the island and had been carrying out an extensive program of work and adventure upon the island. Recently Renouard had employed an assistant because the editor, who thought that solitude was not good for him, urged him to do so. Renouard had engaged the first fellow in sight and had taken him to Malata.

Young Willie Dunster, who worked in the newspaper office, had been insistent that Renouard come to dinner. Was it to talk to Professor Moorsom's daughter? Yes, he had talked to her of his own adventures. He found that her late brother had gone to the same school. But at the same time it was peculiar that the girl should want to talk to him for such a long time.

It was then that the editor explained the situation to Renouard, the planter of Malata. The group were interested in finding a man who had been engaged to Miss Moorsom for a year. The fellow had been in some kind of a scrape. Although the man was innocent, he had been forced to leave. The Moorsoms learned that the young man had gone to this colonial city, but so far they could find no more.

The next day as the editor talked to the planter of Malata he asked Renouard who his assistant was. It seems that Renouard knew little about the man except that he had found him one evening and that his name was Walter. Renouard was reluctant to say any more.

That afternoon as he talked with the Dunsters and Professor Moorsom and his daughter, Renouard hoped that the search would continue for a long time. He did not wish Miss Moorsom to leave the city.
One afternoon as Renouard talked to Professor Moorsom, he learned that the girl's father was anxious to leave the city. The Professor felt that the man might be dead and that anyway he was not worthy of the search.

One evening as Renouard was visiting at the Dunster home, Willie and the editor came in to announce a discovery. The man was found. That is, the editor had learned that the man had all of his mail addressed to H. Walter, the name of Renouard's assistant.

Renouard was stunned. Yes, he told the editor that the man was on the island. The editor then proposed that the entire party sail to the island the next evening.

Renouard dashed down to the shore to his schooner. He could not slip out of the harbor. It was impossible to do that. He went to his cabin and there in a packet of letters marked "Malata" he found an envelope addressed to H. Walter, Esqr. He did not read the letter but tore it into bits, and when he returned on deck, threw them overboard. H. Walter, Esqr., was in Malata, dead. Renouard's last service to the man had been to bury him before coming to the city.

Then one evening the schooner reached Malata. Renouard persuaded the party that since no one was expecting them and it would be difficult to land in the dark, the group should wait until morning to go ashore.

For Renouard it was a question of what to do next. After all lights were out, he silently stole overboard and swam to the shore. There he found the half-caste foreman and instructed him to say in the morning when they arrived that Mr. Walter had gone on a trading boat
around the islands. Then Renouard swam back to the schooner and waited for morning to come.

The next morning after the party had landed, Renouard told them that his foreman had informed him that Mr. Walter had gone on a trading schooner around the islands. Renouard asked them to stay to await Walter's return.

Later one evening the foreman told Renouard that there was trouble among the boys, workers on the plantation. They had been seeing a ghost. Renouard felt that in the end the poor fellow was trying to give him away, the last thing that he would want done. Later, Mr. Moorsom, a professor of philosophy, mentioned the subject of ghosts and thought that it would be interesting to investigate how ghosts came to the island.

That evening Miss Moorsom asked Renouard to take a walk with her. Mr. Renouard suggested that they walk to a hill where one could see the reefs and clouds of sea-birds. When they had reached the top of the hill, Miss Moorsom suddenly turned to Renouard and asked him where Mr. Walter was. Deliberately, the planter of Malata said that he had buried the man on the other side of the rock. The girl accused Renouard of making Mr. Walter another one of his victims, but Renouard remarked that the man wasn't good enough to be one of his victims. He had found the man, a victim of the drug habit, in a hotel and had taken him to the island as an assistant. While there Walter had slipped and fallen in a ravine. Several days later before he died he had tried to tell Renouard something about his innocence and had seemed to curse some woman.
Only Miss Moorsom could have helped Walter redeem himself and she had failed. Now she refused to believe in Renouard, who would have followed her to the ends of the earth with her permission.

The next morning the party left on the schooner, but Renouard did not go with them. That afternoon when the trader ship Janet arrived, Renouard instructed his foreman that all the workers were to be paid and sent to their homes. Luiz, the foreman, was to go also. No longer would the workers be afraid of being haunted by the ghost of a white man.

Back in the city the editor became disturbed when he found Renouard’s schooner staying in port day after day. He learned from the sailing master that the instructions were to remain a month before returning to Malata.

At the end of the month the editor sailed to Malata on the schooner. For hours the editor and the crew searched but could find no one. Toward evening the group found sandal tracks crossing a sandy beach on the north side of the bay. There on a rock were the sandals, Renouard’s white jacket, and the Malay sarong. Nothing more was found.

Criticism

The main interest of the tale of "The Planter of Malata" is the characterization of Renouard, whose actions are somewhat peculiar. The Frenchman had for five years been living on the island of Malata. There he had with the aid of workers succeeded in building a fine plantation. He was accustomed to being alone until the editor had insisted that he have some one to help him. Then Renouard had picked up a fellow, who thought perhaps that if he were on the island he could overcome his drug
habit. Renouard becomes extremely fond of Miss Moorsom and delays her going away by neglecting to tell of Walter's death. When Renouard learns that Miss Moorsom had refused to believe in the innocence of the dead man, Renouard realizes that he never can win the affections of Miss Moorsom because he hasn't stood for the truth in the matter.

Felicia Moorsom, although she appears to be searching for Walter, does not really love him. She knows that if she marries him, society will receive him again because she is a member of the upper class. At the time of the affair she refused to believe in his innocence. Because she had failed him, Walter, although innocent, had become a victim of the drug habit. When Felicia learns that Walter is dead, she does not seem to regret it very deeply, but she does realize that she had failed to stand up for truth. Although all actions of Miss Moorsom are very conservative, she appears to have been a shallow society girl who has at last found herself.

"The Partner"

In the smoking room of a hotel, a man who appeared to be an old adventurer sat spinning yarns. The narrator suspected that the fellow had never been out of England.

The old fellow when he learned that the narrator was a writer of stories acknowledged his presence with some sort of a growl. He wanted to know where writers found their stories. Some way or other he felt that writers were after money, and it was surprising how far some who were after money would go. He disliked sea life. No experience or opportunity could be found for one there. Why, Captain Harry Dunbar was a good
sailor but not used to people's tricks.

Then there was the old fellow Cloete who came from the "States" and had traveled all over the place. Anyone who had traveled with a patent-medicine group was apt to do anything from "pitch-and-toss to wilful murder."

Later the old adventurer saw Cloete in Mr. George Dunbar's office. While the adventurer was there, Mr. Dunbar and his brother Captain Harry of the Sagamore had gone out of the office.

The two brothers after receiving an estate bought the Sagamore. Neither of the two had made much money, for Captain Harry married a woman with expensive ideas and George's business had its ups and downs.

Cloete proposed that George have his brother wreck the ship for the insurance money. Then the two would have enough for establishing a larger business. George was indignant but worried. He couldn't pay his partner Cloete the few hundred pounds that he owed him. Consequently, George had to put up with the rascal.

George thought of the plan, but he could not present the affair to Captain Harry when the Sagamore arrived home the next time.

Cloete had gone so far as to find a man to do the job. Mr. Stafford was a man who had been kicked out of a steamship company. Cloete had agreed to pay the man five hundred pounds for "tomahawking" the Sagamore.

George still refused to accept Cloete's method of getting out of the difficulty. After Mr. Stafford was kicked out of the boarding house, Cloete succeeded in getting the fellow employed on the Sagamore as mate. George explained to his brother that he had to oblige his
partner in some manner. In a couple of days the Sagamore went to sea.

Here the old adventurer paused to tell the narrator that there wasn't going to be any sea life in the tale.

Ten days later the Sagamore went ashore near Westport. There were columns in the newspapers about the wreck. It was thought that if the weather improved, the ship might be saved.

Cloete was determined that the ship should be lost. He, George, and Mrs. Harry Dunbar went immediately to Westport station. There Cloete got the tug to take him to the ship. Aboard the Sagamore Cloete found the Captain, who since no life boat could come near the boat for an hour or more, told Cloete to go down to the cabin and get a bundle of important papers and some sixty sovereigns in a bag. As Cloete went on the errand, he met Mr. Stafford, who demanded no less than a thousand pounds the minute he stepped on shore.

In the argument the two men fought, but Cloete, who had the better of Mr. Stafford, locked him in the cabin. Cloete didn't intend to let anything stand in the way of making the Captain, George, and himself rich men.

When he returned on deck, Cloete informed the Captain that something was wrong with the door and that he was sorry that he couldn't get the materials.

A few minutes later when all the crew were in the life boats, Captain Harry urged them to wait a moment longer. When he did not return, the coxswain and Cloete went in search for the Captain. In the cabin they find Captain Harry dead, shot with his own revolver. The ship's papers were burned also.
Several days later Cloete saw Stafford, who admitted that he had killed the Captain. Stafford, thinking that Cloete was coming back to the cabin, shot Captain Harry the minute he opened the door. Cloete informed Stafford that the clerks knew that Captain Harry had taken sixty pounds of gold with him. Cloete also told Stafford that the coxswain had found all of the drawers empty. Yes, perhaps the case was one of attempted robbery and murder rather than suicide. At any rate, Cloete warned Stafford that he had better go to the solicitors and make the proper deposition as to the loss of the Sagamore.

Half of Captain Harry's insurance money went to his wife, now in an institution. Of George Dunbar's half there was not enough to launch the patent medicine business. Other men got control of the now famous Parker's Lively Lumbago Pills.

Eventually Cloete went back to the "States." The night before he left the old adventurer had spent all night talking with Cloete, who told him the story.

Stafford died in a hospital. His last day he begged for a parson and promised to be good. In his deliriousness he relived the hour and a half in the cabin. He had found the Captain's gun. Then, knowing that the money was in a drawer, he shot off the lock and found the canvas bag. He needed more light, so pitched a lot of papers on the floor and burned them. The Captain, finding him there, told Stafford that he, a sailor, officer, and thief, deserved to be drowned. Then Stafford had killed the Captain.

The narrator remarked that the story to be acceptable should have happened somewhere in the South Seas. But it would have taken too much
time; so here it was just as the old adventurer had told the story.

Criticism

The tale of "The Partner" is told by an old adventurer who is suspicious of those authors who write for money. He is a skeptical sort of person who the writer suspects has never left the shores of England. The old fellow has a general contempt for anything that man does. He is especially disgusted with the method of those writers who get their stories from a hint such as the writer gave of being rowed out to a reef where a wreck happened twenty years ago. The old fellow seems to be especially antagonistic toward stories of the sea. The word "rot" characterizes his attitude toward life.

Cloete is the central character of the tale. He is a rascal who by hook or crook will chance anything. As the old adventurer says, Cloete was not below doing anything from "pitch-and-toss to wilful murder." The scoundrel succeeds in getting George Dunbar within his grasp; then through him Cloete plans for the destruction of the Sagamore so that the three of them, Cloete, George, and Captain Harry may become rich. After all of the elaborate planning, the half of George Dunbar's insurance money does not prove sufficient to establish the new business. Cloete, who doesn't seem to be affected so very much by the turn of affairs, returns to the "States." One would guess that Cloete is ready for another adventure.

One partly sympathizes with George Dunbar, who is almost beside himself, but yet at the same time one wishes that he were capable of running his own affairs. Because of the lack of money, he succumbs to the wiles of Cloete.
"The Inn of the Two Witches" 5

This "tale, episode, experience--call it how you will" is said to have been written by an old man. The writer found the story in the bottom of a box of books that he had bought from a second-hand book-seller. On the loose pages of manuscript was the story of the old man, then a young man in 1813 on the Coast of Spain. He was an officer on board a sloop-of-war, but the story had nothing to do with the sea. Some of the pages were missing but the writer found that another man called Cuba Tom (Tom Corbin) was the coxswain of the sloop. The two men had landed near a small village for Tom Corbin had been selected as a messenger to go inland. Mr. Byrne had decided that he would see Tom on his way.

The two Englishmen, Mr. Byrne with a cocked hat and bushy whiskers and Tom with an enormous pigtail, attracted much attention in the village. They found that no troops had been seen near there for months and that the people were friendly toward Gonzales, the leader against the French.

Mr. Byrne thought that a mule would shorten the trip, but the coxswain said that "Shank's pony" would be best since over half of the way was along paths fit only for goats. A little man with a broad-rimmed yellow hat suggested that his brother-in-law, Bernardino, the wineseller, would be glad to find them a guide.

Byrne went with Tom a short way; then bidding him good-by, returned to the village. When he had gone only a short distance, Mr. Byrne

5. Ibid., pp. 131-165.
suddenly saw the little old Spaniard with the yellow hat. The little old man told Mr. Byrne that Bernardino had a mule, one stolen from him. Often, too, when travelers went up the road designated by Bernardino's guide, the travelers never returned. The peculiar fellow insisted that Mr. Byrne demand the mule and then follow his friend.

When Mr. Byrne reported the story to the captain of the ship, at first there was much laughter about the incident. In fact the crew felt that the affair was a fine story of an officer being asked to steal a mule for some little old man.

By evening the two men were more concerned. At daybreak Mr. Byrne with the consent of the Captain put ashore. He hurried through the town without seeing anyone. As he went on, Mr. Byrne thought that perhaps he had lost the road, but he knew that he must go on. He pushed on until dark when after descending into a ravine, he found a house.

His knock at the door was answered by a miserable looking girl with a short black skirt and an orange shawl. He forced his way in through the half-closed door. There at the other end of the room were two women sitting by the hearth stirring something in a large pot. To him they resembled some witches "watching the brewing of some deadly potion."

Byrne told them that he was an Englishman hunting a man who had come that way. Immediately Byrne suspected that the women had seen Tom. Instead of denying that the stranger had been there as Byrne had supposed that the two women would, they began to talk at the same time about seeing the man, who had stayed in their inn the preceding night. Nothing would be better than for Byrne to stay overnight and take a guide with him in the morning.
Byrne became more comfortable, and as he sat there he became drowsy. Suddenly he was awakened by the fierce quarrel of the two old women. The girl, rattling her castanets sharply, came over to Mr. Byrne and told him that he should sleep in the Archbishop's room.

Then Mr. Byrne seemed to sense Tom's voice warning him to "look out, sir." The girl showed Mr. Byrne to his room. As he went down the hall, he opened all of the doors until he came to the room that he was to occupy. The girl opened the door. Mr. Byrne closed the door in the girl's face and bolted the door with two heavy bolts.

He felt very uneasy. Examining the bed, he found that it was one worthy of an archbishop. Heavy curtains fell from an enormous canopy. In the room were some armchairs and a large wardrobe that was locked.

Taking off his boots, he flung himself on the bed and dozed for a little while. He awoke with a start and again he seemed to hear Tom's voice, "Look out, sir!" Byrne got up, examined the bolted door, and looked under the bed as a silly girl would. The warning kept running through his mind. Then he tried opening the wardrobe door with his hanger. He had almost given up when suddenly the doors flew open.

There to his amazement was Tom, "drawn up shadowy and stiff, in a prudent silence, which his wide-open eyes by their fixed gleam seemed to command Byrne to respect." Then suddenly the body fell forward, and Mr. Byrne, catching it, lowered it to the floor. Tom was fully dressed except for his shoes, stockings and a handkerchief which he usually wore around his neck. The six glass buttons on his jacket were cut off.

Mr. Byrne examined the body but could find no mark of any violence. How had Tom been murdered? There were no indications anywhere; Tom was
Just dead. Mr. Byrne was certain that he, too, would die before morning.

Finally, Mr. Byrne found a slight bruise on Tom's forehead and, looking further, he saw that the knuckles on Tom's clenched hands were slightly roughened. Evidently Tom had died when striking against something that could kill without leaving a mark.

Mr. Byrne, terrified, dragged the corpse over to the bed and rolled it on the bed. Then he flung himself into a chair and waited. He thought of committing suicide; he believed that nothing could save him.

Then as he sat there the curtains of the bed seemed to stir. "He gripped the arms of the chair, his jaw fell, and the sweat broke out on his brow while his dry tongue clove suddenly to the roof of his mouth." Byrne thought that he was going insane. The ceiling over the bed seemed to move. In fact, the ceiling, he noticed, had risen a foot. Then he understood; the canopy over the bed was coming down, first to a half-way position then with a rush it rested on the bedstead.

This then was the death that he had escaped. He heard a violent knocking at the outside door. Looking out, he saw a mob of men. Forgetting his weapons, Byrne dashed wildly downstairs and out into the yard where he seized the first man that he met. He fought until he knew no more.

Gonzales and half of his men, tired of waiting for the message from the English, had come down to the inn on his way to the coast. Gonzales took the situation in hand and, as he told Byrne, "Everything that is fitting has been done on this occasion." Another death, that of Bernardino, also met the requirements of Gonzales.
Later Mr. Byrne stepped into the boat that carried the body of Tom. Looking back, he saw the little man with the yellow hat riding a mule.

Criticism

"The Inn of the Two Witches" is the strange experience of Mr. Byrne, officer on a sloop-of-war. The story, however, is not a sea tale but an unusual happening which occurs on the coast of Spain in 1813 during the Napoleonic War. Tom Corbin sets out to take a message to Gonzales, and his friend Mr. Byrne, uneasy about Tom's safety, follows the young man.

Conrad is explicit in developing the strange sense of apprehension which appears throughout the story. The admonition of the little man with the yellow hat begins the uneasy feeling on the part of Mr. Byrne. When he sees the two witches and the gipsy-like girl, his uneasiness increases. The old witches' quarrel and their strange attitude do not allay his fears. The feeling of hearing Tom's voice warning him of danger increases Mr. Byrne's fears. Then the appearance of Tom almost drives the man insane. By the device of having his narrator find the story in a manuscript supposed to have been written by Mr. Byrne when he was an old man, Conrad manages to give a rather remarkable feeling of verisimilitude to this strange tale of horror.

"Because of the Dollars" 6

As Hollis and the narrator were walking about the wharf, Hollis remarked that the stout man whom they met was really a "good" man. Davidson, the man in question, was the commander of a steamer, the Sissie. He had been employed by a Chinaman, who soon valued Davidson as a real man.

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6. Ibid., pp. 169-211.
Just before the Chinaman's death he had the new steamer built for Davidson to command.

Then Hollis began the story of Davidson. At the time that all old dollars were being called in by the government, every trader was picking up as many as he could to be sent up before the time limit.

As Hollis told the story, the two men went over to a small eating place.

Davidson was at the time commanding the little steamer Sissie, a boat so small that she could go up creeks where no other vessel could go. Davidson thought the business of collecting dollars would be fine, so he made out a list of calls which included a settlement up a creek where a poor white man named Bamtz lived.

Davidson had, twelve years or more ago, sat in the very same room that the two men were in. Davidson had told his friends that he was going on a dollar-collecting trip, but his wife was opposed to the idea. Mrs. Davidson and the little girl lived in a bungalow where few people called because for some reason they did not feel welcome.

The man called Bamtz was a strange creature, with a long beard which was valuable because of its uniqueness. He lived on others. Occasionally he would trade some cheap article with the head of a native tribe, then live there for a time before going on. Finally, he came across "Laughing" Anne, who was stranded with little money and a boy named Tony about five or six years of age. She had been brought from Australia by "Pearler" Harry. He had left her, and since she had been knocking about from place to place. "Laughing" Anne and Bamtz had gone away together, but no one cared what happened to them.
Six months later Davidson had been offered fifty dollars by a passenger to call at the Mirrah Settlement. Davidson prided himself in the fact that the Sissie could go any place that there was "water enough to float a soup-plate." Consequently, Davidson had gone up to the settlement.

After waiting for the passenger for some time, Davidson decided to go ashore. Imagine his amazement when he saw a woman appearing in a dirty, pink satin gown with lace trimmings. "Laughing" Anne and the boy were living there. She told him much of her story and brought Bamtz out to meet Davidson. Bamtz asked Davidson to call occasionally because he thought that he could start a rattan business there.

Two years or so later Factor, who described himself as a journalist, overheard enough of Davidson's plans for them to be of use to him. Factor told his friends Niclaus, a half-breed who owned a prau, and a Frenchman without hands about the plans of Davidson. The surly Frenchman knew Bamtz. Immediately the three decided to visit the region where Bamtz lived.

Three weeks later Davidson on his homeward journey stopped at the place where Bamtz lived. It was late at night when Davidson finally reached the settlement, but there was a light in Bamtz's house. He decided that since he wanted to make an early start the next morning, he would go up to the house to tell Bamtz to have the rattans sent on board early the next morning.

When Davidson approached the doorway, he saw four men drinking and talking together. The men had not noticed Davidson, but suddenly "Laughing"
Anne saw him. When she spoke to Davidson, the men were startled.

"Laughing" Anne was glad that Davidson had come, for she felt that he might have some medicine on board for her little boy, who was ill. While Davidson looked at the sick boy in an adjoining room, "Laughing" Anne told Davidson that the men planned to rob him of his dollars. Davidson did not at once realize the extent of the plan in which Bamtz was aiding Fector, Nicolau, and the Frenchman.

Davidson refused to join in the party, saying that he would watch the boy for a little while. As "Laughing" Anne looked after the boy, she imparted more information to Davidson. He must not come near the Frenchman, for that day she had been forced to tie a seven-pound weight on his right stump. She had been warned not to tell anyone. Furthermore, she told the commander that she had told the men that he usually slept in the hammock near the cabin. If she hadn't told all she knew, Bamtz would have done so.

When Davidson returned to the steamer, he brought some clothing and placed it in the hammock so that it resembled some one sleeping there. He then loaded two revolvers and waited in one of the life-boats aboard the ship. Then finally he saw the Frenchman standing near the hammock. No doubt the others were in the cabin breaking into the lazarette. Davidson waited but heard nothing. Then he saw the Frenchman swing at the object in the hammock with all his might. The surprised Frenchman ran to tell the others.

At that moment Davidson bounded out of the life-boat and saw the other two through the skylight. As the Frenchman bellowed a warning, all of them dashed out of the cabin.
Davidson was sure that he had hit more than one, but evidently none of them were unable to get away. Davidson had no intention of following them, but then he heard Anne shriek. He must save her from the fury of the Frenchman. Horrified by the thought of the chase, he started to find Anne. Then he heard another scream cut short, and the silence that followed was more terrible.

As Davidson walked straight ahead, suddenly he saw a figure dart through the trees. He started after him, and fell headlong over a body. It was Anne, dead from the blows received from the Frenchman.

Davidson felt that he must take the boy with him, because Anne had warned him of the plot.

Davidson got the boy, and then, taking Anne's body on board, immediately steamed out of the creek. Davidson himself committed the body to the sea.

On his return home Davidson simply told his wife that the boy was an orphan, for if he told her the whole story she would never rest while he was away. Later Mrs. Davidson decided that Tony was Davidson's child. Then, learning that her husband had told others that "Laughing" Anne was dead, Mrs. Davidson blamed the commander for vile misdeeds. She demanded that the boy be sent away. Later she left. The boy, sent to the White Fathers in Malacca, wanted to be a priest.

As Hollis rose from the table he commented that this was the story that had spoiled the smile on Davidson's face. "He will have to go downhill without a single human affection near him because of those old dollars."
Criticism

"Because of the Dollars" is told by Hollis, who knew of many strange adventures in the East. The main part of the story happens in some native settlement probably on an island in the Malay Archipelago. The strange tale with a Malayan setting is a characteristic kind of story by Conrad.

The theme developed in the story is, as Hollis intimates, that Davidson was too "good" a man. By visiting the settlement occasionally, Davidson helps Bamitz start a little business. Then in an attempt to care for Anne's boy because she had risked her life to save him, Davidson is thoroughly misunderstood by his wife. Finally the commander finds himself alone.

Of Bamitz, Fector, Niclau, and the Frenchman, the Frenchman is the most repulsive character. He is deceitful and would have taken the lives of any of the members of the group. His revenge on Anne because of her betraying the men is most despicable. Probably the Frenchman received just punishment because Davidson thought that one of his shots had found its mark.

"Laughing" Anne is a character who is proud of her loyalty. She appreciates the fact that Davidson has returned occasionally so that the boy may see someone else. She seems to hope that the boy may have some opportunity in spite of all drawbacks.
CHAPTER IX

TALES OF HEARSAY

The volume Tales of Hearsay, which contains four stories, "The Warrior's Soul," "Prince Roman," "The Tale," and "The Black Mate," was published in 1925 after Conrad's death. However, Conrad had planned a volume with such a title and the title does fit the tales very well.¹

"The Black Mate," a revised version of a story with the same title, which was entered in a contest in Tid Bits in 1885, was one of his earliest stories.²

"Prince Roman," written in 1911, is the only one of Conrad's stories in which he writes of his native country, Poland. Conrad speaks throughout the story and gives his views on patriotism and impressions of his childhood.

"The Tale," written in 1917, is probably a sailor's yarn which Conrad revised. "The Warrior's Soul," also written in 1917, is a tale of "hearsay."

"The Warrior's Soul"³

An old officer of the Russian army indignantly tells a group of youngsters that the few remaining members of his generation have suffered a great deal in their time. He will not be silenced until he has related his story.

¹ Conrad, Tales of Hearsay, Prefatory note by R.B. Cunninghame Graham, p. [5].
² Jean-Aubry, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 89.
³ Conrad, op. cit., pp. 31-90.
He had been with the army when Napoleon had marched across Europe and had burned the city of Moscow. After that disaster, the retreat of Napoleon's army had begun. Day by day the armies continued to fight, but upon one memorable day the cavalry, of which the old man was a member, had not had much to do. The French had fired a few shots from their guns, but always the guns were found abandoned the next morning. Presently the Russian army had received orders to charge the retreating columns of the French. As the men carried out these orders they trampled over soldiers, who never looked to see if they were being attacked.

As the old man, (then, of course, a young man) had ridden his horse through the fray, he had seen Tomassov a little distance ahead of him. Tomassov, a handsome, young officer, was accused of having "lover's lips." Often Tomassov would tell his men of his adventures, especially those connected with love, in Paris when he had been connected with the Russian embassy.

While there Tomassov had met a woman who had a salon. She was not so very young and perhaps she was a widow, but Tomassov had not often related very many details. Nevertheless, she must have been an extraordinary woman, or Tomassov would not have talked about her as he did. While calling on this lady, Tomassov often met men of position, but early one afternoon as he called on her she was not alone as he probably had expected. A French officer, Monsieur de Castel, whom Tomassov admired rather than despised, was there. When the young Russian entered, the couple obviously had been talking about some rather disturbing news, for the French officer had remarked that the matter was not a mere rumor.
For the moment Monsieur De Castel stepped out of the room, but when he returned, he assured the lady that there was no doubt about the rumor being true.

Tomassov did not understand the meaning of the conversation between the two, but as de Castel went out of the room, Tomassov felt that he should follow him.

De Castel told the young Russian that he did not care to be seen with him upon the streets, and furthermore of more importance was the fact that the Parisian police had discovered that the Russian military envoy had bribed some clerks at the offices of the Ministry of War and had obtained some very important confidential documents from them. The two men had been caught and would be shot that evening. In addition to this, Napoleon had made up his mind that the Russian envoy should be arrested.

Not only was the Russian envoy to be arrested, but all of his party were to be kept as prisoners of state in France. Tomassov could not be too grateful for this information. He, as well as the entire party, escaped.

Now, the spectacle of the starving soldiers of the Grand Army of Napoleon affected Tomassov greatly. So as the old man rode beside the Russian officer that day, they remained silent.

That evening the camp was established along the edge of the forest so that the horses might get some shelter. A few of the officers sat around the fire and discussed the events of the day. The troops had charged the main column of Napoleon's Grand Army, but the only Russian casualties were two wounded men.
Later in the evening Tomassov came into the camp leading a stranger. The figure was "extremely battered and the frost-bitten face, full of sores, under it was framed in bits of mangy fur.... The great white cuirassier's cloak was torn, burnt full of holes. His feet were wrapped up in old sheepskins over remnants of boots. They looked monstrous and he tottered on them, sustained by Tomassov, who lowered him most carefully" on to a log.

Tomassov explained that the man had told him that he was a staff officer and asked that he be granted a favor. This favor was to have his brains blown out.

"The prisoner sat between us like an awful gashed mummy as to the face, a martial scarecrow, a grotesque horror of rags and dirt, with awful living eyes, full of vitality, full of unquenchable fire, in a body of horrible affliction, a skeleton at the feast of glory."

After being refused his request, the man in desperation asked Tomassov if he didn't have the soul of a warrior.

The next morning the man spoke to the Russian men. Yes, it was de Castel, a brilliant accomplished fellow, unable to die. Again he begged that he be killed, for all his faith and courage were gone.

As the old gentleman turned to summon a couple of the troopers to take the prisoner to the village, he heard a shot. Tomassov had fulfilled his duty. "One warrior's soul paid its debt a hundred-fold to another warrior's soul by releasing it from a fate worse than death--the loss of all faith and courage."
Criticism

"The Warrior's Soul" is a tale told by an old man who fought with the Russian army during the Napoleonic invasion of Russia.

The main interest of the story lies in the problem of one soldier's duty to another. Tomassov, a young man in the Russian service in Paris, had been warned by Monsieur de Castel that Napoleon was going to arrest the entire Russian party. Consequently, Tomassov escaped. In turn during the war de Castel is brought into a Russian camp as a prisoner. He begs for Tomassov to kill him because he has lost all faith and courage. Life would be nothing to him if he did survive. At the moment, Tomassov, kindhearted as he is, cannot bring himself to do the deed. He does not want to pay the debt in that way.

This "hearsay" tale is intensely dramatic. The young Frenchman pleads for the Russians to end his life. In his agony, de Castel begs for Tomassov to fulfill his duty and finally Tomassov does fire the shot.

Conrad's presentation of the horror and misery in the story is sharp and clear, almost painful. The starving, young French officer, who writhes in agony before the camp fire, is most repulsive.

"Prince Roman"4

The year 1831 for Conrad and those of Polish nationality was an historical date, the year of the uprisings. But as the group talked, Conrad spoke of Prince Roman.

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4. Ibid., pp. 91-153.
Prince Roman had been married in 1828, the year that Conrad's father was born. The Prince had made a desirable marriage, for he had married a young, beautiful girl who was an orphan heiress. The marriage was the social event of the season in St. Petersburg, and Emperor Nicholas watched the young couple as he was in the habit of watching the activities of all Polish nobles.

Forty years later Conrad had been staying in the home of his uncle in the southern provinces. One morning during that cold winter, Conrad as a boy of eight escaped from the schoolroom and found himself in the "great stone-paved hall, warmed by a monumental stove of white tiles."

Conrad and his cousin were aware that there was a visitor, a prince, in the home, for they had been hustled off to bed the evening before. Their curiosity was aroused, for their only notion of princes was purely literary.

But on this morning Conrad had intended to see the head forester, who was a special friend of his, and who often told him stories of a lone wolf. But that morning he found no one, so he strolled into the billiard-room. He could not retreat; his uncle and the guest suddenly appeared in the doorway.

Conrad's uncle was surprised to see him. The guest, a thin man in a black frock coat with a white cambric neckcloth, smiled a little, and reached into his breast pocket for a pencil and a note pad. He wrote something on the pad; then asked how old Conrad was.

Before Conrad could answer, his uncle wrote Conrad's age upon the pad. To Conrad's questioning look, Conrad's uncle told him that the man was completely deaf. After the boy had shaken hands with the guest,
Conrad's uncle told him that he had shaken hands with Prince Roman. This he should remember when he grew up.

Conrad remembered that the Princes were among the Princes of Ruthenia and when that country became a part of Poland at the beginning of the fifteenth century, they had become Polish nobles. His ideas of princes, however, did not fit Prince Roman, who was deaf, bald, thin, and very old. He could not imagine that at one time this man had been young, rich, and happily married. Prince Roman's happiness had not lasted long, for before his daughter was two years old, his wife had died. He grieved greatly and took to roaming in the woods. One day he saw a large army of footsoldiers hurrying southward. Trouble had arisen.

The next morning the Prince sent a letter to the Tzar in St. Petersburg resigning his commission in the Guards. The next day he called an old friend, one of a family of small nobles who were servants and friends of the Princes, and told him that he was leaving. The old man was glad that one was at last showing his love and loyalty for his country. The old man would have his son Peter go with Prince Roman.

After Prince Roman's companion was killed, Roman decided to join the main Polish army facing the Russians on the borders of Lithuania. Disguised as a peasant, he made his way to a village occupied by a regiment of Polish cavalry. Giving his dead companion's name as his own, he enlisted with the regiment. The adjutant was sure that he recognized the man as Prince Roman but decided that it was no affair of his if the fellow wanted to serve in the ranks. But there was nothing to keep him from making him a sergeant.
Prince Roman as Sergeant Peter soon became famous. Cholera had struck the camps, but there were few deserters in the squadron under the young man. Besieged on every side, Sergeant Peter led his men through two hundred miles of country to a fortress which was still occupied by the Poles.

In that fortress Conrad's grandfather became acquainted with Sergeant Peter. Each agreed that the chance of either one of them surviving was slight, but that the one who remained should relate the news to the parents.

On the day of the big battle, Conrad's grandfather was severely wounded. The Prince was not bruised, but he was taken prisoner with the rest of the members of the fortress. Here he had remained with the prisoners for a month or so when one day a young man newly brought into the prison recognized the Prince, and in his amazement cried out, "My God! Roman, you here!"

One of the guards heard the exclamation and thought that the incident should be investigated. Prince Roman immediately owned up that he was the Prince, and this information was sent to St. Petersburg. At the trial in which the presiding officer tried to frame the questions so as to aid the young man, Prince Roman wrote on a piece of paper: "I joined the national rising from conviction," and handed it to the president. Prince Roman was sent to Siberia.

Twenty-five years later Prince Roman, deaf and broken in health, returned from exile. He settled on one of his daughter's estates, and there he devoted his time to helping returned exiles find a means of living.
The two men turned to leave the room. Prince Roman had asked Conrad's uncles to write a recommendation for a certain fellow as the Prince's daughter and son-in-law wouldn't believe the old fellow to be a good judge of men because they thought that he let himself be guided "too much by mere sentiment."

Criticism

There is no doubt that the speaker in this tale, "Prince Roman," is Conrad. In a letter to J. B. Pinker, Conrad wrote that "Prince Roman" was not a story but an exact biography. 5

The only one of his tales telling of Conrad's own country or dealing with politics is this tale of a Polish prince who fought for Polish freedom and patriotism disguised as a commoner. Perhaps there would be no one better able to speak of the woes of the Poles.

Throughout the story is the picture of a true Polish patriot. Prince Roman fought for the life of his country not as a distinguished officer but as one who with thousands of other Poles fought that the nation might survive. Conrad says in the story that "it requires a certain greatness of soul to interpret patriotism worthily--or else a sincerity of feeling denied to the vulgar refinement of modern thought which cannot understand the august simplicity of a sentiment proceeding from the very nature of things and men."6

"The Tale" 7

A man rose from his knees by the side of the couch where lay a woman clad in black. He stood there a moment; then he sat down in a chair. Suddenly the lady spoke and asked him to tell her a tale, a story of another world.

After hesitating a few moments he began his narrative of a Commanding Officer and a Northman who lived in another country at the time of a terrible war. This officer was in command of a ship which once had been a pleasure vessel but had been turned into a warfaring ship.

The Commanding Officer was often sent along certain coasts just to see what he could see. One nasty day upon such an occasion, the crew sighted some wreckage. It was evident upon close observation of the object that some neutral ships had been furnishing supplies to certain submarines at sea.

The fog became more dense, and slowly the ship moved toward the coast and into a sheltered inlet. Not long afterwards the Commanding Officer was informed that there was another ship in the cove. The officer felt that it was strange that the other ship had not warned them of her presence by ringing her bell. Surely they had heard the second ship come into the entrance.

A small boat had been sent over to the other ship, and when the men returned, they reported that the ship was a neutral with the usual story of disablement, bad weather, and fear of a storm. The ship, bound for an English port, had her papers in perfect order. But despite the fact

7. Ibid., pp. 155-205.
that everything seemed to be in order, the Commanding Officer was sus-
picious and decided that he would go on board the ship.

He was met by a burly old Northman who with his hands in his pockets led the officer to the chart-room, a hot, stuffy place containing the usual fixtures of such a room.

The verbose old fellow told the same tale that the boarding officer had reported an hour or so before. The story seemed true, but why was the ship lying here in the fog with steam up and why had she not given any sign of warning?

The commanding officer could not tell whether the old fellow was drunk or sober. The old Northman merely smiled and exclaimed that he didn't know where he was, for they had been in the fog for days. When confronted by the story of the floating object, he only stood motionless and dumb. Finally the commanding officer told the fellow that he must leave the inlet within a half hour. The Northman answered by insisting that he didn't know where he was nor how to get out.

The Commanding Officer told him to steer south-by-east-half-east for about four miles, a course which would lead the ship straight into a ledge of rock, and the Commanding Officer knew it. The ship steamed out according to the directions, hit the rock, and sank. The old fellow had spoken the truth in that he did not know where he was, but perhaps that was the only truth in the whole tale.

Then as the man concluded his tale he said that he himself had given that course to the Northman as a test. Now he did not know whether guilty or innocent men had gone down. He repeated that he would never know the truth and then left the room.
Criticism

Conrad's story "The Tale" is probably a retelling of some sailor's yarn of his adventures during the war, presumably the first World War. The man who tells the tale does not reveal that he was the commanding officer who sent the old Northman and his ship to destruction until the end of the story. The worry which hangs over the narrator is whether or not he has sent innocent men to their destruction.

The chief interest then is the mysterious duty of this ship. Had this ship been replenishing the supplies of certain submarines? If there was not something questionable connected with the neutral vessel, why had she remained silent? Moreover, why did the Northman act so strangely? Yet, at the same time, he must apparently have been telling part of the truth, for he sank his ship on the rocks.

Conrad is at his best in depicting the atmosphere of the story which is concurrent with the strange feeling of apprehension. The fog is so heavy that it seems to penetrate into every corner. "The very fog became motionless, growing denser and as if solid in its amazing dumb immobility... Footsteps sounded stealthy; rare voices, impersonal and remote, died without resonance. A blind white stillness took possession of the world." 8

Although Conrad is meticulous in describing details, he surprises the reader by omitting any description of the floating object seen by the crew aboard the ship. Not only does he omit the description, but he says that there is no advantage in describing whatever the object may have

8. Ibid., pp. 174, 175.
The significance of the object was not in its particular characteristics, but in the fact that the crew found the wreckage.

"The Black Mate"\textsuperscript{10}

In the eighties of the last century, a number of ships were loading at the docks in London. Each boat had an ordinary set of officers except the \textit{Sapphire}. On this ship was Mr. Bunter, who was known as the "black mate." He was not black, but he did possess very black hair, "black as a raven's wing."

As a group of captains were talking, Captain Ashton of the \textit{Elsinore} remarked that Captain Johns, master of the \textit{Sapphire}, believed that "every sailor above forty years of age ought to be poisoned--shipmasters in actual command excepted." Captain Ashton was a jolly old fellow who loved to tease.

Captain Johns tried to defend himself, but there was no doubt that others held to the same opinion, for many grizzled old seamen walked the streets in the search of a job. Captain Ashton only continued his bantering by suggesting that Johns make ghosts out of those who had passed the age of usefulness. Captain Johns indignantly asserted that it was nonsense to deny the supernatural. Why there were cases published in a certain paper every month to prove their existence.

The subject then changed to a discussion of his new mate who Captain Johns said had been sent to him by Willy, the tobacco dealer at the corner of Fenchurch Street. The new mate, Mr. Bunter, had commanded the \textit{Samaria}

\textsuperscript{9} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 169.
\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 207-288.
but had lost her in the Indian Ocean. Since that time he had not been able to get another command.

As the narrator saw Bunter on board the ship that afternoon, he felt that the man had some strange secret. Moreover, Bunter was very much annoyed by having Johns watching him so suspiciously.

When in England, Johns lived with an older sister who was especially averse to her brother's spiritualistic views. She was determined that Johns should not communicate with the dead in any manner.

The next day the ship set sail for Calcutta. Nothing serious hampered the voyage until after the ship had passed the Cape of Good Hope. There because of heavy seas, breakable objects in the pantry and state-rooms were damaged. Unfortunately Mr. Bunter had neglected to lock the two drawers beneath his berth, so the contents of each was spilled upon the floor. Captain Johns was rather pleased about the mishap because he was annoyed by the fact that the black mate was so nearly perfect. But by being very friendly Captain Johns hoped that some way he could trick the fellow. Often he would suddenly appear upon deck and would torture poor Bunter with some of his theories. "Spirits, male and female, show a good deal of refinement in a general way, don't they?" Then Johns would offer him a book from his bookcase. Other times the Captain insisted that spirits had been photographed. The Captain would tell him that if anybody murdered him, he surely would frighten the poor person to death. At this, Bunter would laugh and thus annoy the Captain.

One night the Captain was awakened by a thumping above his head. When he reached the poop, he was told by the helmsman that the mate had fallen down the poop-ladder. It seemed that Bunter had just thrown
up his hands and fallen down the ladder. For three days as he lay in his bunk Bunter did not say anything; he only looked at the people about him. The fourth day he had recovered sufficiently to say a few words and to inform the Captain that the fall was not an accident. That evening Captain Johns, too curious to wait any longer, returned to Bunter's room to get the whole story. The mate then revealed that he had seen a supernatural apparition.

During the time that Bunter was convalescent, he apparently became a more firm believer in spiritualism, although he was not especially enthusiastic about the matter. One afternoon Captain Johns was called to Bunter's room to receive some startling news. Bunter informed the captain that his hair was turning white. So when he appeared on deck later, the black mate was clean shaven and white-haired.

Meanwhile Mrs. Bunter, who remained in London, was teaching some children for a part of each day. But to allay her fears, she had received news that an uncle had died and left her a fortune.

She had intended to cable the news to Mr. Bunter, but he was by that time on his return trip from Calcutta. To shorten the time before she would see him, she decided to meet him in Dunkirk.

In Dunkirk, the narrator, looking for Mr. Bunter, was astonished to find him completely white-haired. The mate struck observers as being extraordinarily spry for a man with white hair.

As Mr. Bunter talked to his wife, the mystery of the whole situation was revealed. The bottle of hair dye had been smashed during that gale. He was thus unable to keep up the deception and so some plausible means of escape had to be invented. He could not be disgraced before the crew
and he couldn't lose his job because his wife had needed money at home. He thought perhaps that he might throw the Captain overboard until by accident he fell down the poop ladder. The rest was easy; a story did not have to be invented. The Captain thoroughly believed that the fellow had seen an apparition from beyond the grave and thus his hair had turned white. From then on the Captain was extremely fond of his mate, but little did he realize how nearly he had come to being thrown overboard by Mr. Bunter.

It is rumored that Captain Johns still tries to tell the story of the man, "a murderous, gentlemanly ruffian, with raven-black hair which turned white all at once in consequence of a manifestation from beyond the grave."

Criticism

The tale of "The Black Mate" is a peculiar story based upon a rather insignificant incident. Throughout the story one does not quite suspect the true character of the black mate until reading the last of the story. Mr. Bunter is desperately in need of a job, so secures a position as chief mate on the Sapphire. He is a rather resourceful person, as one learns later, in being able to deceive the captain so successfully.

The captain is a gullible person who has an insatiable desire in believing that there is reality in the supernatural. He becomes an amusing character to the reader.

However, the main interest of the story is not in delineating character, but rather to tell an interesting tale, full of light humor. The story is well told. Never does one lose interest in the peculiar circumstances shrouding the black mate. The unravelling of the tale is somewhat
expected, but, nevertheless, contains an element of surprise.

The narrator, who tells the story of "The Black Mate," does not accompany Mr. Bunter on his voyage, but at the same time the storyteller knows of all the happenings aboard the Sapphire. One is certain that the narrator does not know of the adventure, for he is astonished when he sees the white-haired man in Dunkirk. Apparently Conrad was not concerned about this inconsistency.
CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

As a reader familiar with the life of Joseph Conrad might expect, he was fond of telling stories of life at sea. Some of his tales at sea, such as "The Nigger of the Narcissus," "Youth," "Typhoon," "The Secret Sharer," and "The End of the Tether" surely rank with the best stories of the sea written in the English language.

Conrad is also fond of telling stories of life among primitive men in strange and far-away places. Tales of the Malay Archipelago, such as "The Lagoon" and "Karain," are representative of primitive life in that region. In the tales concerning the jungles of Africa, "An Outpost of Progress" and "Heart of Darkness" show the effect of primitive life upon "so-called" civilized men. Conrad's pictures of natives and whites in the Malay Archipelago and other "backward" lands have been likened to Kipling's tales of India.

The reader familiar with Conrad's life might expect to find among his stories scenes and characters of his native Poland, but one finds only the story of the Polish patriot in the tale of "Prince Roman." Among the stories of Conrad there are, however, several tales of continental Europe. "The Duel" and "The Informer" relate the experiences of people in France. The story of "An Anarchist" is of a Frenchman who has escaped from a penal institution of that country. "The Warrior's Soul" is a tale of a French and a Russian, soldiers during the Napoleonic Wars.
The subject of domestic life has little place in the stories of Conrad, for one finds only the tale of "The Return," a study of a marital conflict.

Among the stories of Conrad are those which deal with abnormal psychology. "The Idiots," a story of a mentally afflicted family, and "Tomorrow," a tale of an old sea captain whose mind has become half-crazed, are as realistic as any of Conrad's tales of adventure.

Conrad, too, presents studies of strange characters. In each of the following stories, "Karain," "Amy Foster," "Falk," and "Freya of the Seven Isles," some of the characters are peculiar individuals who have had unusual experiences. Karain, Yanko Goorall, Falk, and Heemskirk do not seem to be able to entirely adjust themselves in relation to each of their problems.

Unlike most writers of tales of adventures of sea and jungle, Conrad places much emphasis on the drawing of characters. In many such stories by other writers the characters seem mere types. However, one remembers James Wait in "The Nigger of the Narcissus" just as well as the thrilling storm on the sea in the same story. When one reads the adventures of "The End of the Tether," one sympathizes with the plight of Captain Whalley. Marlow is remembered as the aggressive young second mate in the tale of "Youth."

On the other hand, the volume _A Set of Six_ contains tales which are merely tales of adventure. Conrad does not attempt to draw character but tries only to be entertaining.

Sometimes, too, Conrad introduces a moral problem into a tale of adventure. Captain Whalley, who seems to have always been an upright man,
tries to carry on a deception because he has assumed the responsibility of sending aid to his daughter in Australia. Falk is almost beside himself because he feels that he can never be forgiven for eating human flesh. In the "Outpost of Progress" Kayerts and Carlier succumb to degradation because of their own weakness. Then, too, Arsat in "The Lagoon" feels that although he had deserted his brother and as a result his brother was killed he must go back and avenge the death of his brother. In "The Nigger of the Narcissus" the crew are undecided as to whether or not Jimmy is malingering. Yet at the same time they do all they can to care for him.

The favorite method which Conrad uses in writing a story is that point of view in which an onlooker or minor character tells the tale. "The Idiots," "Amy Foster," "Karain," "Prince Roman," and "The Black Mate" are among the tales that are told by an onlooker. In the stories, "The Nigger of the Narcissus," "Falk," "The Brute," and "Gaspar Ruiz," the narrator assumes the role of a minor character.

Sometimes Conrad's tales are told from the point of view of the main character as in the stories of "The Secret Sharer" and "A Smile of Fortune." Marlow, who as the main character in "Youth" relates the tale of his adventures, has come to be one of Conrad's favorite narrators. Often present day critics refer to this method of narration as the Marlow method. Marlow, although as a very minor character, also tells the tale of "Heart of Darkness."

In "An Outpost of Progress," "The Return," and "The End of the Tether" the point of view is that of the omniscient author.
Conrad in "The Inn of the Two Witches" uses the manuscript device which gives the story verisimilitude. The tale of "Freya of the Seven Isles" is a combination of the use of a letter and the experiences of an onlooker.

Conrad is often mentioned as a writer of atmosphere stories. His tales which fall in this class are "The Lagoon," "Heart of Darkness," and "The Inn of the Two Witches," stories of the jungle and far-away places. Throughout the story of "The Lagoon" Conrad builds up a strange feeling of apprehension. This same strangeness is felt in "Heart of Darkness," and "The Inn of the Two Witches." Conrad is adept in using description in writing "atmosphere" stories.

Conrad, too, is powerful in the description of characters and scenes. No one forgets his characters. In the tale of "The Brute" even the description of Mr. Stonor, who has no part in the story whatever, is remembered by the reader. Conrad says that on the other side of the fireplace

sat Mr. Stonor, jammed tight into a capacious Windsor armchair. There was nothing about him but his short, white side-whiskers. Yards and yards of extra superfine blue cloth (made up into an overcoat) reposed on a chair by his side. And he must just have bought some liner from sea, because another chair was smothered under his black waterproof, ample as a pall, and made of three-fold oiled silk, double-stitched throughout. A man's hand-bag of the usual size looked like a toy on the floor near his feet.

At once the senior pilot arose in his mighty bulk and began to struggle into his coat, with awe-inspiring upheavals. The stranger and I hurried impulsively to his assistance, and directly we laid our hands on him he became perfectly quiescent. We had to raise our arms very high, and to make efforts. It was like caparisoning a docile elephant. With a "Thanks, gentlemen," he dived under and squeezed himself through the door in a great hurry.1

In describing scenes Conrad is especially powerful in picturing all moods of the sea. In Typhoon as the Nan-Shan began her voyage she left a vanishing furrow upon the circle of the sea that had a surface like a piece of gray satin; and under this slow undulations passed, unbroken and smooth, swinging the ship bodily up and down at regular intervals.\(^2\)

Conrad describes a more restless sea in "The Nigger of the Narcissus" as the ship seemed to stand resplendent and still upon the restless sea, under the moving sun. Flakes of foam swept past her sides; the water struck her with flushing bows.

A terrific gale is encountered in the story of "The Nigger of the Narcissus" as is also the case in the tale of "Youth." Conrad describes the gale as the Jueea

wallowed on the Atlantic like an old candle-box. It blew day after day; it blew with spite, without interval, without mercy, without rest. The world was nothing but an immensity of great foaming waves rushing at us, under a sky low enough to touch with hand and dirty like a smoked ceiling.\(^4\)

Throughout all stories one finds that Conrad in his description is meticulous, powerful, and vivid in portraying moods, characters, and scenes.

Joseph Conrad, as shown by his short stories and tales, is primarily a teller of tales of adventure. Throughout his short stories one finds that Conrad is silent upon political, economic, and social issues. Although he does not present his theories concerning the political, economic, and social world, Conrad does emphasize the responsibility of the individual. A moral responsibility on the part of the individual rather than any pronounced social view is characteristic of the tales of Conrad.

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An autobiographical account emphasizing Conrad's boyhood days and his early years as an author.


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A collection of articles including "The Congo Diary" which gave interesting background material for the tale "Heart of Darkness."


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A collection of four tales which are the retelling of yarns that Conrad has heard.

Five tales in which the main character of each story has an unusual, disturbing experience.


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A valuable aid in preparing the chronological list of the works of Joseph Conrad and for suggested material for reference.


The chapter on Conrad is a good analysis of the characteristics of Joseph Conrad's style of writing.

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