

HEART OF DARKNESS

JOSEPH CONRAD



EDITED BY PAUL B. ARMSTRONG

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
FOURTH EDITION

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Joseph Conrad
HEART OF DARKNESS



AUTHORITATIVE TEXT
BACKGROUNDS AND CONTEXTS
CRITICISM

FOURTH EDITION

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Introduction

By now, more than a century after its first publication in 1899, *Heart of Darkness* is indisputably a “classic” text. This is both good and bad. The advantages are clear: a “classic” continues to be read, if only because it has already been read again and again and has thereby become part of the cultural air we breathe. If authors generally intend anything, it is that their works survive beyond their passing. Demonstrating a capacity to be interpreted in many different ways (some of these perhaps not imaginable at the time of writing) is how a text lives on. *Heart of Darkness* is a “classic” not because it has an immutable meaning that has endured for several generations but because readers have been able to attribute so many different meanings to it. The disadvantages of “classic” status may be less obvious but are nevertheless real and demonstrable, and *Heart of Darkness* has suffered from them as well. A text that has been read and analyzed and discussed as thoroughly as has Conrad’s short novel runs the risk of becoming so familiar that it grows tired, losing its ability to surprise, please, or give rise to thought. A classic text also sets itself up as a target to be shot down—to be demystified for its complicity with prevailing ideologies whose interests are served by its preservation (and may, in the view of suspicious-minded critics, be the reason for its veneration). Especially after Marlon Brando’s performance as Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now*, the once resounding words “the horror, the horror” have become a cliché. For that very reason (and perhaps ironically), some of the scathing attacks that have recently been directed at *Heart of Darkness*—exposing it as a racist, sexist, or imperialist text—have made it more interesting by showing new and unexpected ways of reading it and by revivifying the critical debates through which it is preserved. Attacking and demystifying a classic text can, paradoxically, give it a new lease on life.

The critical conversation about *Heart of Darkness* over the last two decades has been spirited and diverse. This is in no small measure because readers are still responding to Chinua Achebe’s charge in a 1975 address that Conrad was “a bloody racist” and that his novel purveyed colonial stereotypes about Africans. These charges came at a time when literary criticism had begun to be

more deeply engaged with questions of social and political history and when the role of imperialism in British and European literature had emerged as a topic of particular importance. For critics with such interests, the colonial subject matter of *Heart of Darkness* and its status as an exemplar of modernist form provided compelling reasons to return to it with new questions and fresh eyes.

They did not always agree, however, about what they saw there. Does Conrad's text reflect the late nineteenth-century prejudices of Europeans about Africa and the "civilizing mission" of imperialism, or is he a pioneering early critic of the blindness and cruelty of colonial practices? Does his portrayal of Africans reinforce nineteenth-century racial attitudes, or is the text critical of European claims to racial superiority and mindful of the humanity of Africans and the suffering that imperialism caused? Is the novel's formal experimentation a tool for critical inquiry that questions dominant ideologies and challenges conventional assumptions, or is Conrad's preoccupation with innovations in narrative form a deflection from political questioning and historical analysis—an attempt to cover up real atrocities with fanciful artistic structures? Did Conrad's brief but intense experience in Africa open his eyes to Europe's crimes, or did he visit and return with the same blinders worn by others at his time?

As the selections in this Norton Critical Edition demonstrate, no critical consensus has emerged around these questions. I have attempted to collect materials that demonstrate how they have been debated and explored, with special emphasis on the years since 1988, when the last Norton *Heart of Darkness* appeared, so as to enable students and teachers to participate in the inquiries and controversies that this text still inspires. The novel's attitudes toward race and imperialism seem more complex now than they did when Achebe first issued his blast, not only because critical discourse about these matters has become significantly more sophisticated in the last two decades, but also because his critique of Conrad has prompted closer investigation and more rigorous analysis of these issues.

What can we learn from studying the history of the Congo and European reactions to King Leopold's abuses there that would shed light on Conrad's attitudes toward colonialism, Africa, and Africans? The controversies spawned by Achebe's charges have brought renewed interest and attention to the historical backgrounds out of which the novel arose, especially Conrad's journey to the Congo in 1890 and his experience traveling upriver on the steamer named in Leopold's honor, the *Roi des Belges* ("the King of the Belgians"). This Norton Critical Edition includes new materials about the Congo Free State that explain the history of its founding

before Conrad's visit and describe the abuses that led to its dismantlement a decade after *Heart of Darkness* was written. Two articles from different editions of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* at the turn of the century show how Conrad's contemporaries viewed the state that Leopold administered as his private domain. The first article, which appeared in 1902, the same year that *Heart of Darkness* was published in book form, gives an account of the diplomatic maneuvering that led European nations to grant Leopold control of the Congo and describes its geography and natural resources (especially the ivory and rubber that Europeans coveted). The second article, a supplement added just eight years later, records how growing public criticism throughout Europe of his brutal exploitation of the Congo compelled Belgium to end his regime. Leopold's statement of his "sacred mission" to "civilize" the Congo stands in stark contrast to two reports from eyewitnesses who traveled extensively there. George Washington Williams, an African American minister and lawyer, wrote Leopold a long letter after visiting the Congo in 1890 in which he describes "the deceit, fraud, robberies, arson, murder, slave-raiding, and general policy of cruelty . . . to the natives" that he observed and that he appeals to the king to remedy.¹ Conrad apparently never met Williams, although they were in the Congo at the same time, but he did know Sir Roger Casement, whose 1904 "Congo Report" to the British Parliament was pivotal in turning British public opinion against Leopold. Conrad wrote to Casement in December 1903 as Casement was finishing his report: "You cannot doubt that I form the warmest wishes for your success. . . . It is an extraordinary thing that the conscience of Europe which seventy years ago has put down the slave trade on humanitarian grounds tolerates the Congo State today. It is as if the moral clock had been put back many hours."² Excerpts from Casement's report, reprinted below, give graphic evidence of the brutality and suffering that were endemic in Leopold's Congo.

The leader of the Congo Reform Association in Britain, Edmund D. Morel, used Casement's report and Conrad's letter of support in his campaign against Leopold's atrocities. As the excerpt below from his influential book *King Leopold's Rule in Africa* shows, however, Morel was opposed only to the techniques of "forced production" that Leopold's representatives employed and not to the transformation of Africa into a market for European trade. One of the best histories of the Congo Free State and the protest Morel or-

1. George Washington Williams, "An Open Letter to His Serene Majesty Leopold II, King of the Belgians and Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo," reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.
2. Joseph Conrad, letter to Roger Casement, 21 December 1903, reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

ganized against it is *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (1998) by Adam Hochschild. An excerpt from this book describes Conrad's six-month journey to Stanley Falls and speculates on a possible model for the figure of Kurtz. As Alan Simmons suggests in his account of Conrad's and Casement's friendship and their different experiences in Africa, criticism of *Heart of Darkness* has generally paid insufficient attention to the role of this text in shaping British public opinion about Leopold's exploitative reign. *Heart of Darkness* is not only a text about the history of imperialism but was itself a participant in that history through its effects on the Congo reform movement. Morel called it "the most powerful thing ever written on the subject."³ Casement's report is very different from Conrad's novel, however, and Simmons analyzes the contrasts between them to ask about the capacity of language, whether a governmental document or a work of fiction, to adequately represent unspeakable atrocities.

In order to understand Conrad's attitude toward Africans and to evaluate the charge that he is "racist," it is important to situate *Heart of Darkness* in the discourse about race characteristic of his time. A new section of this Norton Critical Edition is consequently devoted to documents that represent a range of nineteenth-century attitudes toward race in general and the relation of Europeans to Africans in particular. As with the atrocities recounted by Williams and Casement, some of these materials may make for distasteful reading, but they should aid an understanding of Conrad's complicated, sometimes contradictory depictions of Africans that is informed by historical differences. One of the most influential nineteenth-century philosophers, the German idealist G. W. F. Hegel, made extraordinary generalizations about the supposed lack of a history or a fully developed moral or spiritual consciousness among Africans, claims that seemed so self-evident to him as to require little proof or argumentation. Charles Darwin, the founder of modern evolutionary theory, gave rise to a tradition of speculation about the role of different races in human evolution that sometimes had unfortunate manifestations in the eugenics movement and in Social Darwinism. (A useful history of Darwinism and race theory is Joseph L. Graves, *The Emperor's New Clothes: Biological Theories of Race at the Millennium* [New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2001].) As the excerpt reprinted below from *The Descent of Man* suggests, however, Darwin himself was more struck by the similarity of people from different races that to him proved that humans originated from a common ancestor than he was by dissimilarity.

3. From a letter to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 7 October 1909, quoted in Alan Simmons, "The Language of Atrocity: Representing the Congo of Conrad and Casement," reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

ties that led other thinkers to treat races as if they were different species. By contrast, his contemporary Alfred Russel Wallace, a naturalist who independently developed a similar theory of evolution, argued that humans may have been at one time, long ago, "a homogeneous race" with a common origin, but that subsequent differential development of the "higher faculties" had resulted in the formation of distinctly different races.

Such reasoning prompted Francis Galton to speculate about the "comparative worth of different races" and to construct elaborate scales to measure relative intelligence that will strike a reader today as absurd and pseudo-scientific but that were regarded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as rigorous, objective analysis. Darwin viewed evolution as morally neutral and not necessarily progressive (a variant with adaptive advantages in a particular environment may help a species survive and propagate, but its value is entirely relative to its circumstances). Under the sway of Victorian convictions about moral progress, however, Social Darwinists equated the "survival of the fittest" with the constant improvement of a species. The prominent and influential Social Darwinist Benjamin Kidd, for example, regarded differences between races as an evolutionary progression in which, not surprisingly, European peoples epitomize the pinnacle of evolutionary success, with non-European peoples ranked as more or less "backward." By analyzing different contemporary uses of the term *race*, Peter Edgerly Firchow shows how the positions of thinkers like these were reflected in language and attitudes common among Conrad's audience. In the late nineteenth century, the semantic ground covered by *race*, he shows, also included territory that we would separate into the categories *ethnicity* and *nationality*. Such distinctions neither exonerate Conrad nor condemn him, but they may help the reader begin to delineate where his depictions of Africans reinforce assumptions characteristic of his period and where they challenge or depart from prevailing prejudices.

Conrad's own journey to the Congo in June–December 1890 began with high hopes and great expectations but ended in illness, exhaustion, and disillusionment. His autobiography *A Personal Record* recalls the youthful spirit of adventure with which he pointed to a map of Africa and declared, "When I grow up I shall go *there*."⁴ He eventually did, and his letters document how his eager, naive sense of anticipation gave way to the sobering realization that he had not understood what he was getting himself into, as well as disappointment and anger at the failure of promises and expectations as he endured what turned out to be a life-threatening ordeal.

4. Joseph Conrad, *A Personal Record* (1912), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

"Everything here is repellent to me," he wrote to his aunt from the Congo. "Men and things, but men above all. And I am repellent to them, also."⁵ His diary is a particularly fascinating document, not only for the hints it gives of the observations and experiences that he drew on in composing *Heart of Darkness*, but also for all it does not say about what he must have been thinking, feeling, and enduring that eventually found expression in his novel. The short excerpt from his "Up-river Book" of detailed navigational notations shows the professional consciousness of a steamship officer at work, blocking out all of the emotions and reflections that the future author of *Heart of Darkness* must have been experiencing in order to focus single-mindedly on the task at hand. The retrospective reflections of the older and wiser Conrad in "Geography and Some Explorers" (written the year before he died in 1924 at age 66) provide a revealing summary of his African adventure. He recalls how he felt at Stanley Falls when he remembered his "boyish boast" that he had so inauspiciously fulfilled: "A great melancholy descended on me. Yes, this was the very spot. But there was no shadowy friend to stand by my side in the night of the enormous wilderness, no great haunting memory, but only . . . the distasteful knowledge of the vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience and geographical exploration. What an end to the idealized realities of a boy's daydreams!"⁶

Conrad was not as insightful or prolific a critic as, say, Henry James or Virginia Woolf, but his writings about art and literature are often eloquent and profound, and they offer interesting perspectives on his fictions, even if they are often more suggestive than conclusive. Such is the case with his most important declaration of his artistic intentions, his preface to *The Nigger of the "Narcissus,"* in which he famously says that he intends above all "to make you see." What kind of "vision" Conrad means to impart, however, has occasioned no end of critical commentary and illuminating disagreement. Other selections from his essays and prefaces reveal as much about Conrad's own art as they do about their putative topic. For example, when he defends a novelist's "freedom" in the essay "Books" and then worries lest this descend into "moral Nihilism," he expresses his own lifelong struggle between a desire to believe in what he called "a few very simple ideas" like "the idea of Fidelity"⁷ and his sometimes corrosive skepticism that no conviction could withstand sustained critical scrutiny. When he calls Henry James

5. Joseph Conrad, letter to Marguerite Poradowska, 26 September 1890, reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.
6. Joseph Conrad, "Geography and Some Explorers," *Last Essays* (1926), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.
7. Joseph Conrad, "A Familiar Preface" (1912), from *Conrad's Prefaces*, ed. Edward Garnett (London: J. M. Dent, 1937), p. 208.

"the historian of fine consciences," the double meaning of the French "conscience" suggests Conrad's own double fascination with the workings of consciousness and the morality of conduct.⁸ Conrad's prefaces are not, however, always informative or reliable keys to his intentions, as is seen with the brevity and tantalizing elusiveness of his remarks on *Heart of Darkness* in the introduction to the volume *Youth*. The preface to *A Personal Record* gives revealing if perhaps somewhat disingenuous testimony to the deep affinity this Polish writer felt for the English language: "The truth of the matter is that my faculty to write in English is as natural as any other aptitude with which I might have been born."⁹ Some of the letters I have reprinted have to do with the writing of *Heart of Darkness*, and others are important because of their more general observations about the art of the novel. This is true, for example, of his late letter to his disciple Richard Curle, in which Conrad declares: "Didn't it ever occur to you . . . that I knew what I was doing in leaving the facts of my life and even of my tales in the background? Explicitness, my dear fellow, is fatal to the glamour of all artistic work, robbing it of all suggestiveness, destroying all illusion."¹ This is a useful reminder that backgrounds and contexts, although revealing, invariably leave crucial matters unexplained.

As the selections of contemporary responses reprinted below suggest, Conrad's reviewers recognized almost immediately that *Heart of Darkness* was an unusual work that did not fit their customary categories. The reviews are interesting for what they suggest about his audience's attitudes toward the generic conventions of adventure- and travel-writing that Conrad invokes but overturns, as well as for the evidence they give of somewhat puzzled but admiring readers attempting to assimilate literary novelty. As the perceptive anonymous critic of the review in the *Athenaeum* notes, for example, Conrad has "made his own class of work as he has made his own methods," and "the reader is warned that this book cannot be read understandingly—as evening newspapers and railway novels are perused—with one mental eye closed and the other roving."² The selections I have reprinted from his fellow modern writers attempt to characterize Conrad's methods in ways that are relevant to *Heart of Darkness* even if their remarks were occasioned by other works. Henry James's wonderful description of Marlow's manner of

8. Joseph Conrad, "Henry James: An Appreciation" (1905), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

9. Joseph Conrad, "Preface" to *A Personal Record* (1912), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

1. Joseph Conrad, letter to Richard Curle, 24 April 1922, reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

2. Unsigned review, *Athenaeum* (20 December 1902), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

rumination as “a prolonged hovering flight of the subjective over the outstretched ground of the case exposed” pertains to many of Conrad’s works (and to James’s own as well).³ Virginia Woolf’s 1924 literary obituary of Conrad similarly singles out Marlow’s persona for praise, commenting perceptively on his double role as a memorable character and an extraordinary narrative device. By contrast, E. M. Forster is not so sure that the effort Conrad’s works require is repaid, because “the secret casket of his genius contains a vapour rather than a jewel,” a famous (or infamous) criticism that raises important questions about the effectiveness of his deliberate ambiguity.⁴ Ford Madox Ford, a disciple and sometime collaborator, is more fulsome and unqualified in his praise of Conrad’s methods. I have reprinted extensive selections from his entertaining and provocative memoir, with the caveat that his observations, although often extremely insightful, sometimes say more about Ford’s techniques and aims than Conrad’s (but it is also true that a reader can learn more about the methods of *Heart of Darkness* from Ford’s masterpiece *The Good Soldier* than from any number of critical essays).

Choosing a representative selection of the criticism that has been generated by *Heart of Darkness* is a daunting challenge. I have reprinted selections from several classic treatments of the novel but have then devoted most of the section of critical essays to the debates and controversies since the last Norton Critical Edition of this text appeared. The most important and perceptive analysis of *Heart of Darkness* as a psychological journey is still Albert J. Guerard’s 1958 study, which combines an unusual range of reference to the historical and autobiographical contexts of the novel with a writer’s appreciation of a fellow novelist’s craft. What it means for Conrad to make us “see” is elucidated with exemplary thoroughness and precision by Ian Watt, whose distinction between “impressionism” and “symbolism” as different modes of vision is important and useful. The selection by Peter Brooks demonstrates how a narratological and linguistic analysis of Conrad’s narrative techniques can illuminate the novel’s exploration of the inability of language to deliver the “truth” a reader may expect and desire. Although recent criticism has emphasized political and social issues, the psychological, existential, and linguistic concerns that have long interested readers of *Heart of Darkness* still resonate in the critical conversation, as can be seen in Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan’s analysis of the modernity of Conrad’s exploration of ethical responsibility and metaphysical desire. The final classic statement is, of course,

3. Henry James, “The New Novel” (1914), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

4. E. M. Forster, “Joseph Conrad: A Note” (1921), reprinted in this Norton Critical Edition.

Achebe's essay, which is reprinted as he revised it for the 1988 Norton Critical Edition, with excerpts from the original version given in the notes when the revision is significant (for example, the earlier much-quoted phrase "bloody racist" which he later changed to the still pointed but less inflammatory "thoroughgoing racist").

The selections from recent criticism attempt to suggest the considerable range of disagreement, sometimes stark and sometimes subtle, that exists about Conrad's attitudes toward race and imperialism as well as the differing assessments of his art to which these conflicting interpretations give rise. Critics like Patrick Brantlinger, Marianna Torgovnick, and Edward Said develop Achebe's charges into a fuller critique of Conrad's complicity with the imperialist project. Said and Brantlinger disagree, however, over whether Conrad's narrative innovations allow him to express a critical perspective on the limitations of his era even though he cannot escape them (the "two visions" Said finds in the novel) or are evidence of a will to power through the domination of language that carries on the politics of imperial domination in another realm (Brantlinger's claim about Conrad's "will-to-style"). Hunt Hawkins offers a careful, detailed assessment of the ways in which the depictions of Africans in *Heart of Darkness* sometimes support Achebe's charges and sometimes call them into question. He and Anthony Fothergill find significant differences between Conrad's depiction of European exploitation of the Congo and late Victorian attitudes toward Africa and Africans, and their historical analyses portray Conrad as more a critic of imperial politics than a tacit defender of them. My own essay's interpretation of Conrad's narrative experiments in *Heart of Darkness* attempts to work from style to politics by suggesting that contradictions in the text demonstrate the limits of his period's ways of knowing Africans even as he tries to get beyond them by transforming problems he cannot resolve into challenges for the reader. When J. Hillis Miller asks if we should still read *Heart of Darkness*, he answers in the affirmative because he believes that studying Conrad's stylistic innovations and verbal strategies can be a way of rigorously exploring ethical and political dilemmas that defy easy, univocal resolution. For Miller and myself, Conrad's art is a critical instrument that exposes dominant ideologies of race and empire and points beyond them, whereas for Brantlinger and Torgovnick, the aesthetic dimension of the text is part of the deception that must be unmasked.

As the discussion of race and imperialism in *Heart of Darkness* has become more complicated and diverse, gender has also emerged as an interesting and complex topic. This is perhaps surprising because Conrad the novelist of the sea, adventure, and exploration has seemed to many readers to be a man's writer with a

peculiar blindness to women and their concerns. For some critics, however, this very blindness offers revealing insights about dominant sexual and cultural attitudes. Torgovnick focuses on the portrayal of the African woman in *Heart of Darkness* to demystify a fascination with “primitivism” and the “savage” body that in her view says much about European fantasies about masculinity, desire, and power and their role in forming the sensibility of avant-garde art. Jeremy Hawthorn argues, however, that the novel’s portrayal of gender divisions reinforces its critique of imperialism and that Conrad is skeptical of the illusions of ineffectual, hypocritical idealists in their claims not only about women but also about the European mission in Africa. Andrew M. Roberts explores the male homosocial bonds that are forged in the construction of women as an “other” and that are also at work in the pursuit of empire as well as in the narrative relation between Marlow and his audience on the *Nellie*—homologous forms of male-male relationship and desire in the novel’s representations of gender, imperialism, and the narrative contract. Lissa Schneider shows that the iconography of the novel’s depiction of the feminine both replicates and criticizes idealizations that pervade European art and literature, exposing the masculine vanity and will-to-power that Conrad nevertheless participates in and carries on. Whether Conrad purveys illusions or debunks them is once again open to dispute, and this ambiguity has continued to inspire commentary not only about his politics but also about his art and his moral vision.

A film based on a novel often provides illuminating perspectives on the source-text, if only because the differences between them typically help to foreground characteristics of the literary work that are lost or transformed in the translation from one genre to another. The relation between *Heart of Darkness* and Francis Ford Coppola’s 1979 movie *Apocalypse Now*, a masterpiece and a “classic” in its own right, is much more intimate and profound, however, than the typical case of the conversion of a novel to film. The two works are inextricably linked in the cultural imagination and are frequently taught together, and a wealth of serious scholarship about their relationship now exists. I have selected examples that provide a close reading of the parallels between them (Louis Grief’s careful interpretation of their similarities and differences), that study their different originating contexts (Margot Norris’s analysis of modernism and Vietnam), and that explore how both works have acquired iconic status in popular culture (Linda Dryden’s analysis of Conrad’s relation to Coppola, *The Simpsons*, and *Star Trek*).

The text of *Heart of Darkness* reprinted here is the version masterfully prepared by Robert Kimbrough for previous Norton edi-

tions of the novel. The "Textual Appendix" includes Kimbrough's helpful history of the text and an explanation of the editorial principles he followed in revising the 1921 Heinemann edition based on evidence from other editions, the surviving partial typescript, and the manuscript. I have collected variants from the typescript and the manuscript in the appendix, where they are readily available but will not distract the general reader, and I have added materials from both sources based on my own inspection of them. The footnotes to the text have been entirely revised with an eye to the needs of students today.

I am glad to acknowledge the assistance I have received in assembling this edition. I owe a special debt to Hunt Hawkins, eminent Conradian and good friend from graduate school, where I learned from him what a firsthand appreciation of Africa and a detailed understanding of its history could reveal about *Heart of Darkness*. He graciously availed me of his expertise on Conrad and the Congo, the Achebe debate, and nineteenth-century race-theory with a thoroughness and a generosity for which I am deeply grateful. I also benefited from the wisdom and wide knowledge of Jeremy Hawthorn, who provided prompt and thoughtful criticisms of my plans at various stages. The ever-generous Keith Carabine was typically helpful and encouraging as well. He and Owen Knowles offered good advice at an early stage. Brown colleagues Jonathan Waage and Lundy Braun gave me guidance about evolutionary theory and current biological thinking about race. I am also glad to thank my longtime mentor, teacher, and friend Tom Moser, whose unfailing support and guidance have meant more to me over the years than he probably realizes or than I can easily express. I received gracious and professional help from the staffs of the Berg Collection at the New York Public Library, the Beinecke Library at Yale, the Houghton Library at Harvard, and the John Hay and Rockefeller libraries at Brown. I could also not have managed without the cheerful and ready assistance of the staff in the office of the Dean of the College, including especially Barbara Sardy, Ivone Aubin, and Betsy Valle.

As always, I am grateful to my children, Tim, Maggie, and Jack, for the example of their independent spirit and for making sure that I would not "go through life with eyes half shut, with dull ears, with dormant thoughts" (the everyday complacency Marlow warns against in *Lord Jim*). As for Beverly, a complacent life was never what we bargained for—and it is not what we have—and this is only a small part of my ever-growing debt to her.

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