

1
2 NARRATOR: Welcome to By Mouth--bringing classic novels to sonic life...
3 in their essence.
4
5 You're listening to Part One--of a two-part podplay--of the classic novel
6 Outcast of the Islands by Joseph Conrad.
7
8 The Year? 1872. The Setting? The port of Macassar, on the island of
Sulawesi--in the Dutch East Indies (present day Indonesia).
9
10 Our tale begins down at the docks.
11
12 A sharply dressed young man in his 30's--Willems--stumbles onto an empty
jetty. His tropical "whites" bloodstained down the front, he glances around
frantically, desparately. Spying, at jetty's end, a red light, he scrambles
towards it. Grabbing the rail, he's lifting his leg over it when Captain
Lingard, a British skipper in his 50's, appears. Seeing Willems, the
Captain drops his shore bag and approaches smiling. As he does, Willems
quietly retracts his leg.
13
14
15 CAPTAIN (as if to a boy of 15): Now, where did you spring from, my boy--eh?
16 Been hiding, have we? Speak out, boy! You didn't come here to scare me half
to death, for fun, did you? (Laughs warmly and heartily.)
17
18 NARRATOR: The Captain warmly clasps his arms around Willems, who remains
facing forward to hide the bloodstains.
19
20

14 CAPTAIN: We remember that scene, don't we--eh? What were you then, all of
fifteen? Why I'd know that backside of yours anywhere, I would! Your
English wasn't so good back then, as I remember. I said, "You ran away from
the big ship that sailed this morning, didn't ya?" Ya looked at me like a
starved cat. "Me want stop here" you said. "Here get money, home no good."
(Laughs again heartily) I looked at ya hard--real hard--remember? Then I
says "How old are ya, son?" "Fifteen" you say. "Well, there's not much of
you for fifteen!" You just stared back at me--with the hungriest eyes I've
think I've ever seen.

15
16 WILLEMS (covering): Yeah...

17
18 CAPTAIN: Now look at you! Hudig's trusted second!

19
20 WILLEMS (cover-smiling) Mmm...

21
22 CAPTAIN: Oh, you were hopeless as a seaman--hopeless! I soon found that
out. I even offered to send you home--remember? You begged me to stay. You
wrote me that letter--in that lovely hand o' yours. By then your English
was perfect. You were always good with figures. So I made you useful,
didn't I? You developed beautifully, my boy, beauuutifully...You
trading...while I made out-of-the-way trips to...(chuckles and
smiles)...out-of-the-way places. When ya asked to throw in with Hudig,
I admit, I was a little sore but...still, I was proud! Such a clever young
fellow! And to think I found you on this very jetty--not much more than
skin an' bone. Now look at you! You know more about island trading than
I do!

23
24 WILLEMS (unconvincingly): Yes...

25
26 CAPTAIN: Why the long face? You've barely said a word?

27

28 WILLEMS (attempting to cover his despair): Why, only this morning Hudig
asked me "Have you found out where the Captain gets all that rubber, eh,
Willems?" "No, Mr. Hudig, not yet," I said. "Well, try harder," he says
"I've been trading with that old fox for thirty years--and I've yet to
figure out how he gets all that rubber!"

29

30 CAPTAIN (seeing bloodstains--shocked): What's this? Blood?

31

32 WILLEMS (after a pause): Yes. (another pause) Not mine a--another fella's.

33

34 CAPTAIN (skeptically): Yeah?

35

36 WILLEMS (reluctantly): My brother-in-law's.

37

38 CAPTAIN (alarmed): Your brother-in-law's?

39

40 WILLEMS: Yes. I had a...a run of bad luck, see. (Pause--again reluctantly)
At cards.

41

42 CAPTAIN: Cards?

43

44 WILLEMS: That and, well...That was combined with the, uh...the failure of a
small...speculation I had undertaken--on my account.

45

46 CAPTAIN: Speculation--you?

47

48 WILLEMS: At the same time, there was a...an unexpected demand for
money...from my wife's family.

49

50 CAPTAIN: But--surely--you could turn to Hudig? Why he trusts you
implicitly.

51

52 WILLEMS: Well--you see--almost before I was aware of it myself,
I had, uh...veered off the path. For one solitary moment, I...strayed.
(Desperate to reassure) But I do possess the courage to wade
bravely through the mud--I do!--that is, if there be no other road.

53

54 CAPTAIN: No other road?

55

56 WILLEMS: I committed myself to restitution, you see, and I devoted myself
to the, uh...to the duty of...well, of not being found out.

57

58 CAPTAIN: Found out? Good Lord!

59

60 WILLEMS: A few days ago was my 30th birthday--and I had nearly enough saved
to pay it back. A few days more and there'd be nothing to suspect. But this
afternoon--when I came back from lunch--Hudig's other secretary, Mr Vinck--
he's always been jealous--he jumps up from his desk and buries his head in
the safe. I knew then that the game was up. For the last time, I passed
through the little green door into the great man's inner sanctum. (Sighs)
When I left--beneath Vinck's pointy little ears--was the tiniest hint of a
smile.

61

62 CAPTAIN (shocked): Well, well...

63

64 WILLEMS: I must have been mad. That's it--mad! Anyway, pretty soon I found
myself in the garden before my house--Hudig's wedding gift to us you know.
At that point my past was so utterly gone I was surprised to find the house
still standing--neat and tidy in the sunshine. (Brief pause) I thought: I
must tell my wife. She'll cry, she'll be frightened but she will surely
stand by me. I'd have to console her, of course, get her ready to go, to
leave--we would have to leave. But do you know what she said? She said
"Oh, you great man!" Her voice was barely above a whisper. "Oh, you
greaaaat maaan! You think I'm going to starve with you. With you?"

65

66 CAPTAIN (expels air):

67

68

WILLEMS: That's when her brother--her lay-about, money-grubbing brother--came in. And there on his ugly face was the same smile that Vinck had. They'd plotted together. "You go boast somewhere else, and starve somewhere else" the brother says to me. Then my wife--my own wife--she goes and stands next to him. Can you imagine? A half-caste to whom I've given everything and she stands next to him? Hiiiim?

69

70

CAPTAIN (sighs deeply):

71

72

WILLEMS: The next thing I know, I'm standing over the brother and he's bleeding from his nose and mouth. And my wife is shouting "This house is mine! This house is mine!" At that point, I just ran and ran, until I felt planks under my feet and saw this red light here--the end of the road. One step more and...the end of everything. What else could I do?

73

74

CAPTAIN: Well, well, well...I've heard a great deal, a great deal. You are no saint, Willems, I'll tell you that! No saint! And you've not been over-wise either. I'm not throwing stones, mind you, but I'm not going to mince matters either! Never could, never could!

75

76

WILLEMS: I can understand Vinck--he was jealous--of Hudig's trust in me. But the brother--he licked my boots.

77

78

CAPTAIN: Yes, and you no doubt did your best to cram your boot down the fella's throat. No man likes that, my boy.

79

80

WILLEMS: I was forever giving his lot money. Always a hand in my pocket.

81

82

CAPTAIN: Just so. They asked themselves where all that was coming from and concluded it was safer to throw you overboard. After all, Hudig is a greater man than you and they have a claim on him also.

83

84

WILLEMS: On Hudig? What do you mean?

85

86 CAPTAIN: Why you're not going to pretend you didn't know your wife was
Hudwig's daughter? Come now! You can't be serious.

87

88 WILLEMS: Huh...I thought there was...But, no. I never guessed.

89

90 CAPTAIN: Oh, my dear boy! Well, well! Steady now...Pull yourself
together...

91

92 WILLEMS: Yes...

93

94 CAPTAIN: Did you really think Hudig was marrying you off and giving you a
house and--I don't know what else--out of love for you?

95

96 WILLEMS: I'd served him well. You know yourself--through thick and thin.
No matter what work, what the risk, I was always there. (brief pause)
You know Hudig...you know what he's like...(mimicks Hudig's voice)
"Call there often...Most respectable ladies...Knew the father well...Ahem,
ahem...Best thing for a young man...Settle down...Glad to hear the thing's
arranged...Recognition of valuable services!" (as himself) What an ass I
was! Of course he knew the father well. (Attempts to break free of
Captain's grasp) Let me go, I say! Let me go and I shall kill that--that--!

97

98 CAPTAIN: Oh, no, you don't! You want to kill, do you? You lunatic. Ah!
Be still! Be still!

99

100 NARRATOR: The two men struggle fiercely--with the Captain forcing Willems
towards the rail, where they continue to wrestle. Just when the Captain
seems unable to restrain Willems much longer, Willems's muscles relax, and
the Captain pins him--by a final effort--to the rail.

101

102 WILLEMS: All right, all right! Don't brake my back over this infernal
rail--I'll be still!

103

104 CAPTAIN: At last, you're reasonable. What on earth made you
fly out like that?

105

106 NARRATOR: The Captain leads Willems back to the jetty's end and--holding
him with one hand--fumbles for his whistle with the other. (Whistle Blast
SFX) Almost directly--over the water--comes an answer...

107

108 CAPTAIN: My boat will be here directly. Think what you're going to do.
I sail tonight.

109

110 WILLEMS: What is there for me to do? Except one thing.

111

112 CAPTAIN: Now look here! I picked you up as a boy, and consider myself
responsible for you--in a way. You took your life into your own hands those
many years ago--but still...Look, I will make it right with Hudig. Go back
to your wife. Don't abandon her.

113

114 WILLEMS: I haven't abandoned her--don't you see? She's abandoned me.
As to going back...To walk among men who only yesterday were ready to
crawl before me--and then to have to endure their looks of pity or their
smiles? No, I'd rather hide from them at the bottom of the sea.

115

116 CAPTAIN: Come now! It is hard but...Whose fault is it now? Whose?

117

118 WILLEMS: Captain, if you leave me here on this jetty, you might as well
just cut my throat. For I shall never return to that place alive--wife or
no wife.

119

120 CAPTAIN: Don't you try to frighten me, Willems. (Pause as he considers)
I should tell you to go and drown yourself, and be done with you!
Hmph...But I won't! We're...responsible for one another. I'm almost
ashamed but I can understand your dirty pride. I can!

121

122 NARRATOR: A light from a lantern can be seen approaching from the water.

123

124 CAPTAIN: Here's my boat...

125

126 NARRATOR: The Captain picks up his shore bag and makes for a nearby
gangway. His hand on the rope, he stops, turns back and stares long and
hard at Willems. Then--impulsively--the Captain waves the young man over.

127

128 CAPTAIN: Come--my boy--come! I didn't turn from you then and I
shall not today!

129

130 WILLEMS (overcome with relief and gratitude): Why, sir, I...

131

132 CAPTAIN: I'm taking you to Sambir. It's up that river of mine that people
talk so much about but know so little. I've found an entrance in. I am the
only trader. You'll see.

133

134 WILLEMS (with exaggerated deference): Yes, sir!

135

136 NARRATOR: Our tale continues two weeks later at Almayer's Trading Post,
a remote jungle compound on the island of Sambir. The main house--which
includes a decent size verandah with table and chairs, a hammock and a bird
cage--is fronted by a spacious courtyard. A gate separates the courtyard
from a jetty, which leads to the river. Encircling the compound on three
sides are dense bushes and trees. At the verandah's rail--peering out
through a spyglass--stands Almayer, a fleshy, chatty Englishman in his
40's. Behind him, on a perch in her cage, is Almayer's pet Myna bird,
Eugenia.

137

138 ALMAYER: Father is coming, Eugenia! (training bird) Father...Father...

139

140 BIRD: Fa-ther! Fa-ther!

141

142 ALMAYER (pleased) Yes--that's my dearest!

143

144 NARRATOR: Almayer returns the spyglass to his eye then quickly lets it
145 fall. Setting it on the table, he approaches the bird cage, retrieves the
146 bird and begins gently stroking her feathers.

147
148 ALMAYER: We shall make you pretty for Father, sha'n't we, dearest?
149 (training her) Pre-tty...Pre-tty...

150
151 BIRD: Pre-tty! Pre-tty!

152
153 ALMAYER: Yes, that's my pet! My sweet, sweet pet!

154
155 NARRATOR: Placing the bird on his shoulder, Almayer steps down from the
156 verandah in the direction of the courtyard. At the same time, the Captain
157 is leading Willems up the jetty.

158
159 CAPTAIN: Now, remember--the Rajah is a friend of mine--my word is law here.
160 My partner, Almayer--I think you know him--from Hudig's, yes? Well, he's
the only other white man who knows the way here. Now you must keep mum
about my enterance. You saw--it wasn't easy. And there's many here would
give their eye-teeth for knowledge of it. You'll help Almayer in his
trading if you've the mind to. Just to kill time--til I come back.
Six weeks at most.

161
162 NARRATOR: Almayer and the bird approach.

163
164 BIRD: Fa-ther! Fa-ther!

165
166 CAPTAIN: Don't you Father me! I've told you.

167
168 ALMAYER (trying to hide he's wounded): Yes.

169
170 CAPTAIN: I think you two know each other.

171
172 ALMAYER (trying to hide his displeasure): Yes.

165

166 WILLEMS (formally but unenthusiastically): Almayer...

167

168 CAPTAIN: You see, Willems? I've brought prosperity to this place.
Isn't that so, Almayer?

169

170 ALMAYER (hesitating): Well, yes, I--

171

172 CAPTAIN: Of course it's so! And I mean to keep the Arabs out of it, with
their craftiness and their intrigues. And I shall keep them out, if it
costs me my fortune.

173

174 NARRATOR: Almayer's Manservant--a native Malay man in his 40's--approaches
with a tray of drinks.

175

176 MANSERVANT: Greetings, Rajah Lau-ut!

177

178 BIRD: Ra-jah Lau-ut! Ra-jah Lau-ut!

179

180 NARRATOR: The Captain grabs a drink, which he drains in one gulp.

181

182 CAPTAIN: Ah! (wipes mouth) Means King-o'-the-Sea. (Pleased and proud)
It's what they call me in these parts. (Brief pause) All righty now!
Must go! Must go!

183

184 ALMAYER: Father--? (Corrects himself) I mean--Captain--I know--

185

186 CAPTAIN: That Arab, Abdulla, will be waiting and he'll be after me like a
shot once I'm in his sights. But, never you fear! Rajah Lau-oot and his
trusty Flash will have the heels of anything that floats among these
islands!

187

188 ALMAYER: Yes, but...But I--

189

190 CAPTAIN: Take good care of him, Almayer. Six weeks, no more.

191

192 ALMAYER: But--

193

194 CAPTAIN: Six weeks!

195 NARRATOR: The Captain heads for the jetty and doesn't look back.

196

197 CAPTAIN (FAR--OVER HIS SHOULDER): Known him since he was a boy. Clever!
He's a trader--like us.

198

199 BIRD: Tra-der!...Tra-der!

200

201 ALMAYER (CLOSE--bitterly): Yes...

202

203 NARRATOR: Later, at dusk, in a wilder part of the island, a native camp
can be seen. Three thatch huts ring a large fire pit. An obsequious Malay
man in his 50's--with eye-patch, beetle-juice stained lips and clothes of a
pirate-sage--tends a small fire. Nearby, an earthy, Malay woman nearer 60
uses a large stick in a wooden pot to husk rice.

204

205 BABALATCHI: It was written, I tell you! Written--on his forehead--that he
should end his life in darkness. Like a man walking in a black night--
eyes open yet seeing nothing.

206 OLD WOMAN (blowing out air derisively then): Huh!

207

208 BABALATCHI: You don't believe Babalatchi?

209

210 OLD WOMAN (derisively): Be-lieve...

211

212 BABALATCHI: I tell you--Babalatchi--

213

214 OLD WOMAN (dismissively): Babalatchi...

215

216 BABALATCHI: --was by his side when he had many slaves and many wives, and
217 much merchandise! Yes! Boats for trading and boats for fighting!

218

219 OLD WOMAN (contemptuously): Boats for fighting...

220

221 BABALATCHI: He was a great Chief in those days, let me tell you! Before the
222 breath of the Merciful put out the light in his eyes. He was brave, he was
223 pious--he was a great pirate! For years he led the men who drank blood on
224 the sea--first in prayer and first in fight! Aye! Those were the days!

225

226 OLD WOMAN (disdainfully): Those were the days...

227

228 BABALATCHI (ignoring her): O he was rich, my Chief was! Rich and strong!
229 (grabs own wrist firmly) Strong!...In those days...

230

231 OLD WOMAN (disparagingly): Those days...

232

233 BABALATCHI: There were not so many fireships with guns that shot
234 death from afar. Not in those days...

235

236 OLD WOMAN (expels air):

237

238 BABALATCHI: But now?...Now he eats from a beggar's bowl. Only a daughter
239 for company.

240

241 OLD WOMAN: I've seen her. A she-dog with white teeth. Like a woman of the
242 white man.

243

244 BABALATCHI: Her mother was from the West you know--from Bagdad.

245

246 OLD WOMAN: I know, I tell you! Only the eyes, the eyes...

247

240 BABALATCHI: But the daughter--she doesn't wear the veil. Why? Because
nobody comes near--except to ask the Blind One for a blessing--and then--

241

242 OLD WOMAN: --they leave quickly, I know, I know. This talk is good--once,
twice--but when said too often becomes foolish, like the babbling of a
child.

243

244 BABALATCHI: How many times, old woman--

245

246 OLD WOMAN: Don't you old-woman me!

247

248 BABALATCHI: How many times have I predicted the cloudy sky and read the
wind of the rainy seasons?

249

250 OLD WOMAN: It must be of seasons past, for I cannot hear it in your talk.

251

252 BABALATCHI: I tell you--before Rajah Lau-ut...

253

254 OLD WOMAN (contemptuously): Rajah Lau-ut...

255

256 BABALATCHI: ...the Blind One was the true King of the Sea. After Rajah
Lau-ut, only burning and death--and the wailing of woman and child.
The ground slippery with blood, the mangroves full of men struck down
before they could lay their eyes on the enemy. Our once-swift boats
wedged together in the narrow creek, burning, burning.

257

258 OLD WOMAN (skeptically): Huh!

259

260 BABALATCHI: He was half-dead, you know--when Babalatchi found him.
And completely blind. Both sons--burned alive. By fire. From the
ships of the white man.

261

262 OLD WOMAN (she' heard it a thousand times): Yes, yes...

263

264 BABALATCHI: But I, Babalatchi--

265

266 OLD WOMAN (mocking him): You, Babalatchi...

267

268 BABALATCHI: I, Babalatchi--

269

270 OLD WOMAN: You saved the Blind One, I know, I know. And you crawled to our Rajah and you begged. And so you are a beggar now, too!

271

272 BABALATCHI (dismissing her): Ahhh!

273

274 OLD WOMAN (warning him): I can still handle this stick you know!

275

276 BABALATCHI: Yeah? And where do you think that rice you're husking comes from, eh? Eh, beggar woman?

277

278 OLD WOMAN: It comes from the rice paddy, you disreputable, old schemerer!
(Pause) Now, take that busy tongue and that one good eye of yours--and get!
Or you sha'n't enjoy your bowl of evening rice tonight. (insinuatingly)
Or what comes...after.

279

280 BABALATCHI (laughs devilishly--then MOVING AWAY FROM MIC--laughs devilishly some more)

281

282 NARRATOR: A day or two later, by the bank of an inlet under a giant tree, Willems disembarks from a small canoe to watch a raven-haired young native woman in her 20's fill bamboo water jugs from a nearby brook.

When the jugs are nearly full, Willems quickly retreats and sits--his back turned--on the grass. Emerging from behind the tree, the native woman is startled to see the back of this strange, white man. Taking cover behind the tree-trunk, she steals furtive glances at Willems. Finally, he turns.

283

284 WILLEMS: Who are you?

285

286 NARRATOR: Aissa pokes out her head from behind the tree.

287

288 WILLEMS (smile in his voice--encouraging) That's it!

289

290 NARRATOR: She pokes her head out again.

291

292 WILLEMS: I don't bite. At least not at first. (Smiling) I'm Willems.

293

294 AISSA (pause, then): I am the Daughter of the Blind One.

295

296 WILLEMS: The Blind One? You mean Blind Omar.

297

298 AISSA: Yes. (Brief pause) You...You are the son of the white trader?

299

300 WILLEMS: I am white. But--

301

302 AISSA: You are a great man, yes? A great man of Sambir.

303

304 WILLEMS: No, I, uh...I'm a...an outcast, actually.

305

306 AISSA (Not comprehending): Out-cast?

307

308 WILLEMS: Yes. (Changing the subject) But you...you are...beautiful.

309

310 AISSA: Beautiful...(She laughs).

311

312 WILLEMS: Yes. Very.

313

314 AISSA (She laughs again):

315 NARRATOR: Willems goes to her and, gently taking one of her water jugs,
gestures to a nearby pathway, down which the two stroll casually in
flirtatious conversation.

Later, Babalatchi and the Old Woman eat bowls of rice before the fire.

316
317 BABALATCHI (after smack of a last relished bite): I tell you, old woman--

318
319 OLD WOMAN: Tell me what, old man?

320
321 BABALATCHI: Since Rajah Lah-ut left the strange white man here, the
Daughter of the Blind One has spoken to other ears than mine.

322
323 OLD WOMAN: Why would a white man listen to a beggar's daughter?

324
325 BABALATCHI: Aye! Babalatchi has seen! Has seen!

326
327 OLD WOMAN (disparaging): What has Babalatchi seen? With his one eye?

328
329 BABALATCHI: He's seen the strange white man walking on the narrow path
before the sun could dry the drops of dew on the bushes. He's heard the
whisper of the white man's voice as he spoke to that daughter with the
big eyes and pale skin--woman in body but man in heart!

330
331 OLD WOMAN (dismissive): Ack...

332
333 BABALATCHI: Babalatchi knows the white man. In many lands has he
seen them--always slaves to their desires, always ready to yield their
strength, their reason...

334
335 OLD WOMAN (with a chuckle): Reason...

336
337 BABALATCHI: ...into the hands of some woman.

338

339 OLD WOMAN (indignant): Hmph...

340

341 BABALATCHI: Let one white man destroy another, I say! They are fools.
They know how to keep faith with their enemies but towards each other
they know only deception. Aye, Babalatchi has seen! Has seen!

342

343 OLD WOMAN (skeptical): Seen what?

344

345 BABALATCHI: Babalatchi's seen plenty! No--what is needed--what is
needed, old woman--is an alliance. Someone to...set up against the
white man. A rich trader. Someone who could help defeat Rajah Lau-ut.

346

347 OLD WOMAN: Rajah Lau-ut, Rajah Snou-ut! (Snorts like a pig.)

348

349 BABALATCHI (ignores her): Another white trader we wouldn't be able to
trust--no. The man we want should be rich and without scruples. He should
have many followers--be a well-known personality in the islands.

350

351 OLD WOMAN (guffaws then): Personality...

352

353 BABALATCHI: Such a man might be found among the Arab traders...

354

355 OLD WOMAN (dismissively): Arab, scarab...

356

357 BABALATCHI: He's kept every one of them out of the river. Most are afraid--
afraid to provoke the white man's anger. But all, I tell you--all do not
know--they simply do not know--how to get here. Only Rajah Lau-ut knows
that. Or perhaps someone who has recently come here with Rajah Lau-ut, eh?

358

359 OLD WOMAN: A white man? Betray his people?

360

361 NARRATOR: The Old Woman rises and collects Babalatchi's bowl. Babalatchi
stands--then moves behind the Old Woman and presses up against her.

362

363 BABALATCHI: Anway, Babalatchi must be patient. It would not do to be seen
to have a...

364
365 NARRATOR: Babalatchi cups the Old Woman's breasts.

366
367 BABALATCHI: ...hand in this.

368
369 OLD WOMAN (lustily): Your hands are in everything.

370
371 BABALATCHI (smiling): Yees...But should my plan fail, the vengeance of
Rajah Lau-ut would be--(thrust grunt)--swift--and (thrust grunt again)
certain.

372
373 OLD WOMAN (makes a cutting sound with her tongue and teeth):

374
375 NARRATOR: Casually removing Babalatchi's hands, the Old Woman makes for a
nearby hut. But sensing he hasn't stirred, she stops and turns.

376
377 OLD WOMAN: Well?

378
379 BABALATCHI (still focused on his plan): No...Babalatchi must
wait--must wait!

380
381 OLD WOMAN (lifting her eyebrows): I wouldn't wait too long.

382
383 NARRATOR: She shoots him a come-hither smile then vanishes into the hut.
With an anticipatory grin, Babalatchi follows.

The next day, Willems lays sprawled out under the big tree chewing a
blade of grass when Aissa, toting her water jugs, pokes her head out
from behind the trunk.

384
385 AISSA: Pssst...

386

387 WILLEMS (vocal smile then): You came.

388

389 NARRATOR: Aissa smiles back. After a pause, she comes closer. When he
smiles, she moves closer still.

390

391 AISSA: Your...

392

393 NARRATOR: Aissa gestures to her own arm.

394

395 WILLEMS: Arms?

396

397 AISSA: Yes...They're so...so...

398

399 WILLEMS: Big?

400 AISSA: Yes, big.

401

402 WILLEMS (laughs):

403

404 AISSA: And this...

405

406 WILLEMS: The hair--on my arm?

407

408 AISSA: We do not have.

409

410 WILLEMS: Don't you?

411

412 AISSA: See?

413

414 WILLEMS (after a pause): Huh...

415

416 AISSA: And your...

417

418 WILLEMS (brief pause, then): Adam's apple?

419
420 AISSA: No. Your...(reaching down low to imitate his voice) Mmm...
421
422 WILLEMS: Oh--my voice!
423
424 AISSA: Yes, your voice. It is--
425
426 WILLEMS: You like it?
427
428 AISSA: It's like the sound...in a...cave.
429
430 WILLEMS: You mean-- (lowering voice even more) --deep?
431
432 AISSA: Yes. Deep.
433
434 WILLEMS & AISSA (chuckle):
435
436 WILLEMS: You...you are...beautiful.
437
438 AISSA (laughs):
439
440 WILLEMS: You are!
441
442 AISSA (wanting to be convinced): Yes?
443
444 WILLEMS: Undoubtedly.
445
446 AISSA: (laughs again--then after a pause) Wil-lem.
447
448 WILLEMS: Willems.
449
450 AISSA: Wil-lems.
451
452 WILLEMS (smiling): Yes. (Pause) Like I said...an outcast.

453
454 AISSA: Not great?
455
456 WILLEMS: Once.
457
458 AISSA: No more?
459
460 WILLEMS: Perhaps again.
461
462 AISSA: Hmmm. Father was once a great man. A great fighter...What is
463 your word?...Pirate.
464
465 WILLEMS: A pirate, eh?
466
467 AISSA: Yes. Against the white man.
468
469 WILLEMS: I see. Yes, that occupation is no longer quite so...lucrative.
470
471 AISSA (uncomprehending): Loo-cra-tive?
472
473 WILLEMS: Profitable.
474
475 AISSA (still uncomprehending): Huh...
476
477 WILLEMS: No money in it.
478
479 AISSA (finally understands): Ah! No money. Yes. And pirates all die.
480 Except Father. And Babalatchi.
481
482 AISSA: One-Eye. Yes.
483
484 WILLEMS: I see.

485

486 AISSA: One-Eye and me--we save Father. We steal canoe full of coconuts.

487

488 WILLEMS: Did you now?

489

490 AISSA: Take Father to the village of our Rajah. Rajah give Father rice.
I cook rice for Father. (Smiles) I cook rice for Wil-lems, too.

491

492 WILLEMS: Will you now? Well...I don't know what to say. Except...that I
miss your smile already and we haven't yet parted.

493

494 AISSA: My smile--you like it?

495

496 WILLEMS: Yes. Very much.

497

498 NARRATOR: Aissa quickly puts down her jugs and takes his hand in hers.
He immEDIATELY pulls it back--as if from instinct. Staring at him intently,
she begins to lightly caress the hair at his temple and the skin down his
cheek. While he trembles, she springs up, grabs her jugs, and dashes off.
He gets to his feet slowly--then walks deliberately over to the canoe, gets
into it and takes up the paddle--stopping only to turn and stare at the
spot she--and he--had occupied moments before.

Later that evening, at the Trading Post, Almayer and Willems sit before a
finished meal--and half-empty bottle--at the table. A manservant fills
water glasses and clears.

499

500 WILLEMS: Lend me your gun, Almayer? I have a mind to go look for a
deer tonight when the moon's full.

501

502 ALMAYER (laughs):

503

504 WILLEMS: You might say yes or no instead of making that unpleasant sound.

505

506 ALMAYER: If I believed one word of what you say, I would. As it is--
what's the use? You know where the gun is--take it or leave it.

507

508 NARRATOR: Almayer drains his drink and pours himself another.

509

510 ALMAYER: Hunt deer! It's a gazelle you are after, my honored guest.
You'll be wanting gold anklets and silk sarongs for that game, mighty
hunter. And you won't get those from me, I promise you. (Takes a drink)
All day amongst the natives. A fine help to me you are.

511

512 WILLEMS: You shouldn't drink so much, Almayer. You don't have the
head for it. Never had, from what I remember.

513

514 ALMAYER: I drink my own. Which is more than I can say about you.

515

516 NARRATOR: After looking at each other savagely, they both turn away and
then stand. As the Manservant loads a tray with dishes, Almayer kicks off
his slippers and scrambles into the hammock. Willems descends the steps and
makes his way across the courtyard towards the jetty.

517

518 ALMAYER: Bring me another bottle. And some fresh water for Eugenia.

519

520 MANSERVANT: Yes, Mr. Almayer.

521

522 NARRATOR: As the Manservant exits and Willems continues down the jetty,
Almayer moves to the cage and takes out the bird.

523

524 ALMAYER: I thought the bad man would go, didn't I, dearest? (Shouting after
Willems) Hey! Don't you want the gun? (After a brief pause, Almayer laughs)
That man's a pig, isn't he, Eugenia? (training her) Pig...Pig...Pig...Pig...

525

526 NARRATOR: Back at the camp, it's sunset and One-Eye stands outside the
middle hut.

527

528 BABALATCHI: Chief, it is I, Babalatchi!

529

530 OMAR (feeble groan):

531

532 NARRATOR: Babalatchi enters the hut and--after a few moments--emerges
leading a blind, gaunt, headshaven, Malay man in his 60's, Omar, who he
guides to a stump near the fire.

533

534 OMAR: Is the sun near it's setting?

535

536 BABALATCHI: Yes, Chief. Near, very near.

537

538 OMAR: Where am I? Why have I been taken from the place I knew,
where I could move without fear? I've not heard the sound of her footsteps
since morning! Twice a strange hand has given me my food. Why? Why?
Where is she?

539

540 BABALATCHI: She is near, O Brave One.

541

542 OMAR (dropping his voice): And he? Where is he? Not here, I hope.

543

544 BABALATCHI: No, not here.

545

546 OMAR (encouraged): Not here, eh?

547

548 BABALATCHI: But he shall return soon, O Brave One.

549

550 OMAR (alarmed): Return? O Crafty One! I have cursed him three times.

551

552 BABALATCHI: He is cursed--no doubt. Yet he shall be here soon enough.

553

554 OMAR: You, too, are crafty and faithless. I have made you great. You were
dirt under my feet--less than dirt.

555

556 BABALATCHI: I have fought at your side many times, O Brave One.

557

558 OMAR: Why did he come? To foul the air I breathe, to mock my fate--
to poison her mind and steal her body? She's grown hard of heart to me,
she has. Hard and merciless--and stealthy like rocks that tear out a ship's
life under a smooth sea. She's forgotten me--and my sons are dead, and that
man is an infidel and a dog! Why did he come? Did you show him the way?

559

560 BABALATCHI: He found the way himself, O Brave One. But then Babalatchi saw
a way for the white man's destruction and our greatness. And if Babalatchi
saw correctly, there shall be peace and glory and--riches, O Brave One,
riches!

561

562 OMAR: Do not let him come back.

563

564 BABALATCHI: He cannot escape his fate, O Brave One! He shall come back and
the power of men we have always hated, you and I, shall crumble into dust
in our hands.

565

566 OMAR: And you see all of this, while, I...I see--

567

568 BABALATCHI: Only darkness--yes, O Brave One!

569

570 OMAR: No! Flame! The flame of that last day. I see it--still! And I
hear it--the sound of the earth--when the flame of the fire from the
deathship took my sons.

571

572 BABALATCHI: You are my Chief and you are wise, O Brave One. And in your
wisdom you shall speak to the Arab Abdulla when he comes. You shall speak
to him as Babalatchi has advised. Babalatchi, your servant, the man who
fought at your right hand for many, many moons.

573

574 OMAR (grunts in skepticism): Hmmph!

575

576 BABALATCHI: I have heard--by messenger--that Abdulla is coming late
tonight. For these things need to be done secretly, lest Rajah Lau-ut
hear of them.

577 OMAR (disdainfully): Rajah Lau-ut!

578 BABALATCHI: Abdulla will be here by daylight. (bowing) Allah willing.

579

580

581 OMAR: So I am to speak--to the mighty Abdulla--your wisdom, which I do not
understand.

582 BABALATCHI: You must trust Babalatchi, O Brave One.

583

584 OMAR: How many white men are here, O Crafty One?

585

586 BABALATCHI: Two. Two white men to fight one another.

587

588 OMAR: Will they die? Tell me--will they both die?

589

590 BABALATCHI: They shall surely die.

591

592 OMAR: So I can pass my hand over their faces when Allah has
made them stiff?

593

594 BABALATCHI: If such is their fate--and yours. Allah is great!

595

596 OMAR: (After a fit of coughing, wheezing and moaning): O, I'm alone,
I'm alone. Is anybody near me? Anybody? I'm afraid of this strange place.

597

598 BABALATCHI: I am by your side, O Brave One. As in the days we were
both young.

599

600 OMAR: Was there such a time? I've forgotten. (Pause) Has the sun set,
Babalatchi?

601

602 BABALATCHI: Low as the highest tree, O Brave One.

603

604 OMAR: Then it's time for prayer.

605

606 NARRATOR: As Babalatchi helps Omar stand, Aissa enters without a sound.
Motioning for her to remain silent, Babalatchi leads the old man back
into the hut. Emerging a moment later, Babalatchi approaches Aissa.

607

608 AISSA (whispering): It's the third sunset--the last! And he is not here.
What have you done? What have you done?

609

610 NARRATOR: Babalatchi leads her out of earshot.

611

612 BABALATCHI: I have kept my word, O Daughter of the Brave One. This morning
I sent a man in a canoe to look for him. Then, at the fifth hour, I sent
another canoe with four men. The man you long for may come when he likes.

613

614 AISSA: But he is not here! I waited for him yesterday. Tomorrow I shall go.

615

616 BABALATCHI: Do you doubt your power, O Daughter? You, who are more
beautiful to him than an houri of the Seventh Heaven? Why he is your slave!

617

618 AISSA (taking it to heart): A slave does run away sometimes and then the
master must go and find him.

619

620 BABALATCHI: Do you want to live and die like a beggar?

621

622 AISSA: I do not care.

623

624 BABALATCHI: Do you think, girl, that he himself would agree to live like a
beggar, even with you?

625

626 AISSA: He is great. He despises all of you! All of you! He's a man!

627

628 BABALATCHI: Remember girl with the strong heart--to hold a man you must be
like the great sea to a thirsty traveler--a never-ceasing torment--and a
madness, a madness.

629

630 ANGRY MALE VOICE #1 (FAR FROM MIC): Hold him!

631

632 ANGRY MALE VOICE #2 (FAR FAR FROM MIC): Beat him down!

633

634 ANGRY MALE VOICE #3 (FAR FROM MIC): Strike at his head!

635

636 WILLEMS (FAR FROM MIC): You can go to hell, you sons of dirty..! Go to
hell, I say!

637

638 BABALATCHI: The fool! Babalatchi has kept his promise. Remember--like the
sea to the thirsty! Go! Go!

639

640 NARRATOR: As Aissa runs off in the direction of Willems's voice,
Babalatchi exits in the opposite direction.

641

642 AISSA (FAR FROM MIC): Let him be!

643

644 NARRATOR: From inside the hut, Omar recognizes his daughter's voice.

645

646 OMAR (FAR FROM MIC--calling): Daughter, are you there?

647

648 NARRATOR: Omar crawls out of the hut on hands and knees.

649

650 OMAR: Daughter?...Daughter?

651

652 NARRATOR: Lifting his arms, Omar tries futilely to feel with them.

653

654 OMAR: Daughter?...Daughter?

655

656 NARRATOR: Willems enters carrying Aissa--her body pressed to his,
her eyes closed, her arms around his neck. Their faces illuminated by the
glare of the fire, Willems stares hard at the blind and prostrate Omar.

657

658 OMAR: Is somebody there? (Brief pause) Who's there, I say?

659

660 NARRATOR: Willems turns and vanishes with Aissa into a hut.

661

662 OMAR (increasingly desperate): Who's there? Who's there?...
Who's there, I say? Who's there?

663

664 NARRATOR: You've reached the end of Part One--of a two-part podplay--of the
classic novel Outcast of the Islands by Joseph Conrad. This podplay was
brought to you By Mouth--bringing classic novels to sonic life...
in their essence.

665

666 To stream or download more of our work, please visit: bymouth.org

667

--Continue to NEXT PAGE for Part II--

668 NARRATOR: Welcome to By Mouth--bringing classic novels to sonic life...
in their essence.

669

670 You're listening to Part Two--of a two-part podplay--of the classic novel
Outcast of the Islands by Joseph Conrad.

671

672 The Year? 1872. The Setting? The exceedingly remote island of Sambir--in
the Dutch East Indies (present day Indonesia).

Our tale contines five weeks later at Almayer's Trading Post.

673

674 ALMAYER (snoring):

675

676 BIRD (mimics his snoring):

677

678 NARRATOR: Suddenly, the figure of Willems can be seen moving stealthily
across the courtyard to a spot below the verandah, where he hides.

679

680 WILLEMS (much changed from man in Part I--whispers): Psst! Almayer!

681

682 ALMAYER (waking with a start): What? What's that?

683

684 WILLEMS (whispers again): Here! Down here, Almayer!

685

686 ALMAYER (whistle of astonishment): Good heavens! I thought you were a
ghost.

687

688 WILLEMS: May I come up?

689

690 ALMAYER: Don't you dare! Don't you dare! I don't want to hear you--or
speak to you either.

691

692 WILLEMS: Listen to me! It's something important.

693

694 ALMAYER: Not to me--surely.

695

696 WILLEMS: Yes! To you. Very important.

697

698 ALMAYER: You were always a humbug. Always! Even in the old days. Fellows used to say there was no one like you for cleverness--but you never took me in. I never believed in you, Willems.

699

700 WILLEMS: I admit your superior intelligence. (Pause) Listening to me would be further proof of it. (Pause--another tack) You'll be sorry if you don't.

701

702 ALMAYER: Oh, come up, come up! You'll catch sunstroke and die on my doorstep. And I don't want any tragedy here! Come on!

703

704 NARRATOR: Almayer retrieves the bird from her cage and places her on his shoulder. Willems, who has climbed the verandah stairs, steps into the light. There has been a drastic change in Willems. His beard's unkempt, his jacket's torn and--below the waist over bare feet, instead of pants--he wears a faded sarong.

705

706 ALMAYER (surprised--not unpleasantly): Well...

707

708 WILLEMS: I am here.

709

710 ALMAYER: So I see. You might have spared me this treat. You've been gone five weeks, if I'm not mistaken. I got on very well without you, thank you--and now that you are here...you are not very pretty to look at.

711

712 WILLEMS: Let me speak, will you!

713

714 ALMAYER: What--you think you're in the forest with your...your friends? This is a civilized man's house. A white man's house. Understand?

715

716 WILLEMS: I've come here--I've come here for your good...and mine.

717

718 ALMAYER: You look as though you'd come for a good meal. Don't they give you enough to eat, these--what am I to call them--these new relations of yours? Why that old blind cutthroat must be delighted by your company. You realize he was the greatest thief and murderer of these seas. Say! Do you exchange confidences? Tell me, Willems, did you kill somebody in Macassar or did you only steal something?

719

720 WILLEMS (wounded): I didn't steal, I...borrowed. They lied, I--

721

722 ALMAYER: So you did steal. I thought it was something of that kind. And now you steal again. (Brief pause) Oh, I don't mean from me. But that girl, eh, the daughter? You stole her. You didn't pay the old fellow. She is no good to him now, is she?

723

724 WILLEMS: (Tormented) Stop it! (pause--different tone) Almayer, listen to me! If you're a human being, listen. I suffer...terribly--and for your sake.

725

726 ALMAYER: For my sake! (scoffs) Now, you're raving.

727

728 WILLEMS: You don't know. She's gone. Gone! Two days.

729

730 ALMAYER: Had enough of you already, eh? It's not flattering for you, my superior countryman.

731

732 WILLEMS (as if he hasn't heard): At first--at first it was like a...a vision of heaven, she and I. Pure, unblemished...heaven. But since she left, I now know what hell means--what darkness is. I know what it's like to be...torn to pieces.

733

734 ALMAYER: You may--of course--come and live here with me again. After all,
735 Father did leave you in my care. You satisfied yourself by going away.
736 Very good. Now you want to come back. So be it. But--mind you--I am
no friend of yours. I act strictly for the Captain.

737
738 WILLEMS: Come back? To you? And abandon her? You think I'm mad? To think
she moves...lives...breathes...out of my sight. I'm jealous of the
739 wind that fans her, of the very air she breathes. I haven't seen her for
740 two days--two days!

741
742 ALMAYER (affecting a yawn): You bore me, Willems. Why don't you go after
her--instead of coming here?

743
744 WILLEMS: Pfft!

745
746 ALMAYER: What--don't you know where she is? She can't be very far.
No native craft has left this river for the last fortnight.

747
748 WILLEMS (after a long pause): She's in...Babalatchi's camp.

749
750 ALMAYER: (relishing Willems' pain) Is that right? With that old pirate, eh?
751 Afraid of ol' One-Eye, are you? (Brief pause) Or is it your dignity that
752 prevents you from following her there, my high-minded friend?

753
754 WILLEMS: You're a fool. I should like to kick you.

755
756 ALMAYER (smiling): No, you're too weak for that. You look starved.

757
758 WILLEMS: I don't think I've eaten anything the last two days, perhaps more--
759 I can't remember. (Brief pause) Look--I've been biting myself. To block
out the other...torment.

760
761 NARRATOR: Willems collapses into a nearby chair and closes his eyes.

756 ALMAYER: What a revolting exhibition! I can have Eugenia here give you a
757 real bite if that's what you're after. Honestly, what could Father
758 see in you?

757

758 WILLEMS: That from you, who sold your soul for a few guilders?

759

760 ALMAYER: Not so few. But you--you've thrown yours away for nothing--
flung it under the feet of a damned savage! Why she's made you what you
already were--and she'll kill you soon enough, with her love or with her
hate. Whatever I've sold--and at what price--I never meant you of all
people to spoil my bargain. Why, even Father wouldn't touch you now,
not with a ten-foot pole.

761

762 WILLEMS (sarcastically): Father...

763

764 ALMAYER: Yes, Father!

765

766 WILLEMS: I want to become a trader in this place, Almayer.

767

768 ALMAYER: You do, do you?

769

770 WILLEMS: I want a house and trade goods--perhaps a little money.

771

772 ALMAYER: Anything else you want? This coat perhaps? (Brief pause)
Or my boots?

773

774 WILLEMS: It's only natural she should expect the advantages which...and
then I could shut up that wretched father of hers. I'd have her all to
myself, away from her people--all mine--to mould...to adore...to
soften...to...Then go away to some distant place where--far from all she
knew--I would be the world to her. (different angle) I would repay every
cent, of course. Every cent. It needn't interfere with your business.
I would cut out the small native traders is all. The Captain would approve.
It would be a loan, after all, and I'd be safe at hand.

775

776 ALMAYER (scornfully): The Captain would approve! (enraged) The Captain
would approve, would he?!

777

778 WILLEMS: Believe me, Almayer, I have good grounds for my demand.

779

780 ALMAYER: Curse your demand!

781

782 WILLEMS: Your position here is not as safe as you think. An unscrupulous
rival could destroy your trade in a year. The Captain's absence gives
courage to certain individuals. Proposals have been made. You are very much
alone here. Even the Rajah...

783

784 ALMAYER: Damn the Rajah! I am master here.

785

786 WILLEMS: Don't you see?

787

788 ALMAYER: Yes, I see. I see a mysterious ass. What are the meaning of these
veiled threats? The Arabs have been hanging about outside this river for
years--and still I am the only trader here. Do you bring me a declaration
of war? Then it's from yourself only. I know all my other enemies. I ought
to shoot you. But you're not worth the powder and the shot. You ought to be
destroyed with a stick--like a snake.

789

790 BIRD: Snake!...Snake!

791

792 ALMAYER (violently): Clear out--clear out, I said! Don't you see how you
frighten the bird?

793

794 NARRATOR: As Willems descends the steps, Almayer takes the bird on his
finger and strokes her.

795

796 ALMAYER: Don't you fret, my love. The bad man is going away. Nasty bad man!
Never come back! If he comes back, Papa will shoot him. (Brief pause)
Look how he runs away, Eugenia. Isn't that funny? Call "pig" after him,
dearest. (training) Pig...Pig...

797

798 BIRD: Pig!...Pig!

799

800 ALMAYER: That's my pet!

801

802 NARRATOR: As Almayer strokes the bird's feathers, he continues to track
with his eyes--and gloat over--the retreating Willems.

803

804 ALMAYER: Yees...yees...

805

806 NARRATOR: At dusk in the gated courtyard before his house, Babalatchi walks
with Abdulla, a handsome, prosperous-looking Arab in his 40's. Dressed in a
flowing white gown, Abdulla has a close beard trimmed to a rounded point,
a regal bearing and prayer beads in his hands.

807

808 BABALATCHI: With all reverence, O Excellent One--who is this white Captain,
to keep all the world away but for him?

809

810 ABDULLA: True. Very true.

811

812 BABALATCHI: He took hold of our Rajah's mind and hardened his heart. He put
words into his mouth and caused his hand to strike left and right. We had
to trade with him--accept such goods as he would give. And he exacted
payment every year--every year!

813

814 ABDULLA: Yes. Also true.

815

816 BABALATCHI: What could we do? A man must trade. There was nobody else.

817

818 ABDULLA: Of course.

819

820

BABALATCHI: We are tired of paying debts to that fat, white man, the son of the Captain. He's not content to hold us in the palm of his hand, he seeks to cause our very death. He trades with the forest people, who are no better than monkeys--buys from them rubber and rattans--while we starve. Why only two days ago I went to him and said "Tuan Almayer, I have such and such goods to sell, will you buy?" He spoke to me as if I was a slave. "One-Eye, you are lucky to get anything in these hard times. Bring your goods quickly and I shall receive them in payment of what you owe me from last year." Then he laughed, and he struck me on the shoulder with his open hand--his open hand, O Excellent One!

821

822

NARRATOR: There is a pause as the prayer beads click thru Abdulla's fingers.

823

824

ABDULLA: If my ship can enter this river, I shall come.

825

826

BABALATCHI: It can, Tuan! It can! There is a white man here who--

827

828

ABDULLA: Yes, I want to see the Blind One--and this white man you wrote about.

829

830

BABALATCHI: You shall see them both, O Excellent One! When I saw the second son of the white man enslaved by the daughter of the Blind One, I knew he would be soft in my hand like the mud of the river. At first he answered my talk with bad words, in the manner of the white man. Afterwards, when listening to the voice he loved, he hesitated. He hesitated for many days, O Excellent One--too many. Knowing him well, I brought the Blind One and his daughter here. Then the white man raged for three days like a hungry panther. This evening, he came. He is in the grasp of one with a merciless heart. I have him.

831

832

ABDULLA: That is good.

833

834 BABALATCHI: And he shall guide your ship and lead in the fight--if fight
there be.

835

836 ABDULLA: By Allah!

837

838 BABALATCHI: And you will have to open your hand, O Beneficent One! You will
have to satisfy the greed of a man who is not a man and so is greedy of...
ornaments.

839

840 ABDULLA: They shall be satisfied. (Strokes his beard) But...

841

842 BABALATCHI: What is it, O Excellent One?

843

844 ABDULLA: The man is an unbeliever. He cannot live under my...shadow.

845

846 BABALATCHI: No, O Pius One.

847

848 ABDULLA: When this man has...done all we want, what is to be...
done with him?

849

850 BABALATCHI: He can be made useful in other ways.

851

852 ABDULLA: Must I feed this infidel for ever and ever?

853

854 BABALATCHI: Not for ever, no. Only while it serves your designs, O Generous
One! When the time comes--and you give the order--a little poison may be
found that will not...lie.

855

856 ABDULLA (smiling ever so faintly and nodding): Yees...

857

858 BABALATCHI: I am your slave. And your offering. If you'll allow me...

859

860 NARRATOR: Babalatchi moves to the door of his house and opens it.

861

862 BABALATCHI (in a loud voice): The honorable Omar, O Excellent One!

863

864 NARRATOR: Once Abdulla has disappeared inside, Babalatchi closes the door and makes his way back thru the gate to the fire pit. There, he squats and--grabbing some kindling--feeds it to the flames. When Willems emerges silently from his hut, Babalatchi takes no notice.

865

866 WILLEMS: Where's Abdulla?

867

868 NARRATOR: Babalatchi jumps at the sound of Willems's voice.

869

870 WILLEMS: I said, Where's Abdulla?

871

872 BABALATCHI: In my house. With the Blind One.

873

874 WILLEMS: Add more wood to the fire--I want to see your face.

875

876 NARRATOR: As Babalatchi adds more wood, Willems looks at him hard.

877

878 BABALATCHI (comically frightened): You are in good health, please God?

879

880 WILLEMS (nervous and, so, too loud): Yes, yes! You?

881

882 NARRATOR: Willems grabs Babalatchi by the shoulders and Babalatchi sways. With a jerk, Willems lets him go. Stumbling backwards, Babalatchi wriggles his shoulders as Willems turns on his heel then warms his hands at the fire.

883

884 BABALATCHI (clicking deprecatingly): Tse! Tse! Tse! (Brief pause) What a man! What a strong man! A man like that could upset mountains--mountains!

885

886 WILLEMS (a dismissive exhale through the nose):

887

888 BABALATCHI: But why be angry with Babalatchi, who only thinks of your good?
Did Babalatchi not give her refuge in his camp? Yes, it is Babalatchi's
camp. But he will let you have it for free--because a woman, Tuan, a woman
must have a home.

889

890 WILLEMS (another dismissive exhale through the nose):

891

892 BABALATCHI: But who can know a woman's mind, eh? And such a woman!
If she wanted to go away from that other place, who is Babalatchi to
say no! After all, Babalatchi is her father's servant. I said:
"Gladden Babalatchi's heart by taking his house." Did I not do right?

893

894 WILLEMS: You listen carefully--if she takes a fancy to go away from this
place, it is you who shall suffer. I shall wring your neck.

895

896 BABALATCHI: Why slay Babalatchi--eh, Tuan? You know what she wants.
A splendid destiny--like all women. You have been wronged and cast out
by your people. She knows that. But you are brave, you are strong--you are
a man! And, Tuan, Babalatchi is older than you--you are in-her-hand.
Such is the fate of strong men. She is of noble birth and cannot live
like a slave.

897

898 WILLEMS (contemptuously): A slave...

899

900 BABALATCHI: You know her. You are in-her-hand. Remember--Babalatchi has
seen much. Submit, Tuan! Submit! Or else...

901

902 WILLEMS (after a short laugh): Or else what?

903

904 BABALATCHI: She may go away again. Who knows?

905

906 NARRATOR: Willems spins around sharply and Babalatchi jumps back.

907

908 WILLEMS: If she goes, it will be bad for you. You hear me?

909

910 BABALATCHI: Yes, I have heard it before. If she goes, Babalatchi--
(Makes a cutting sound with tongue and teeth) But will that bring her back,
Tuan? (Pause) If it is Babalatchi's doing, it is Babalatchi's doing...
Yet--who knows--you may have to live without her.

911

912 WILLEMS: You threaten me, do you?

913

914 BABALATCHI (obsequious): Babalatchi threaten? He who speaks only of life
when Tuan speaks only of death?

915

916 NARRATOR: Aissa emerges from a hut with her body wrapped and wearing a
veil--only her eyes are visible.

917

918 WILLEMS (to Aissa): I told you not to wear that. You look like you're in a
harem! (moves to her) You think that man's eyes can see you through the
walls of that house? Take it off! (Brief Pause) I said, Take it off!

919

920 NARRATOR: Still, Aissa doesn't move. In the distance, Abdulla can be seen
emerging from the house.

921

922 BABALATCHI (pointing): There is Tuan Abdulla!

923

924 NARRATOR: As Babalatchi sets off to fetch Abdulla, Willems and Aissa don't
move--their eyes remain fixed on the man in the white gown. Babalatchi
opens the gate and bows to Abdulla.

925

926 BABALATCHI: I shall now take you to the white man, O Excellent One.

927

928 ABDULLA: Proceed.

929

930 NARRATOR: As Babalatchi shepherds Abdulla to the fire pit, Abdulla's eyes
remain fixed on Willems. Within two paces of him, Abdulla stops and
lifts his right hand in greeting. Willems nods.

931

WILLEMS: We know each other, Tuan Abdulla.

933

ABDULLA: Yes, we have traded together. But it was far from here.

935

WILLEMS: Yes. But I think we may trade here also.

937

ABDULLA: The place does not matter. It is the open mind and the true heart that are required for business.

939

WILLEMS: True...true...

941

ABDULLA: Both of us are travelers. In leaving home one learns life. One returns with much wisdom.

943

WILLEMS: I shall never return. I'm done with my people.

945

NARRATOR: Abdulla lifts his eyebrows--then gestures with his arm "just so".

947

AISSA: Greetings, O Excellent One! I am Daughter to the Blind One! We welcome you as a member of our family!

949

NARRATOR: Abdulla glances at her swiftly then fixes his eyes on the ground. Aissa puts out her hand, covered with a corner of her veil, and Abdulla takes it, presses it, drops it and turns towards Willems. Aissa backs away then vanishes into a hut.

951

WILLEMS: I know what you came for, Tuan Abdulla. I've been told by that man there. (Brief pause) It won't be easy.

953

ABDULLA: Allah makes even the difficult easy.

955

NARRATOR: As Willems moves away from the fire and from Babalatchi, Abdulla follows.

957

958 WILLEMS: I was at sea with him for many years. And I watched carefully
when he piloted into the river.

959

960 ABDULLA: In knowledge, there is safety.

961

962 WILLEMS: Of that, you can be sure.

963

964 ABDULLA: Allah willing.

965

966 WILLEMS (after a pause) You shall pay me the money as soon as I step on
board. The boat that brings me shall then take the money to the Blind One.

967

968 ABDULLA: Of course.

969

970 WILLEMS: Then I shall pilot you into the river.

971

972 ABDULLA: Agreed.

973

974 NARRATOR: Willems grabs Abdulla's passive palm and shakes it.

975

976 WILLEMS: My life is in-your-hand.

977

978 ABDULLA (coolly): Yees...I shall go now and wait for you outside the river.
Until the second sunset.

979

980 NARRATOR: Taking several strides away, Abdulla suddenly turns back.

981

982 ABDULLA: You have only one word, Tuan.

983

984 WILLEMS (to Abdulla): Yees...Only one.

985

986 NARRATOR: Abdulla nods, taking his leave. As Willems watches Babalatchi shepherd Abdulla to the gate, Aissa emerges and gently touches Willems on the back. He spins and violently tears off her veil, stamps on it and then retreats to the fire. Aissa doesn't flinch--and after a long pause, she exits swiftly into the hut.

Meanwhile, Babalatchi and Abdulla stroll in the courtyard.

987

988 BABALATCHI: I trust you will not forget the humble servant who has brought you here, O Generous One.

989

990 ABDULLA (annoyed): Yes, yeees...

991

992 BABALATCHI: Have I not spoken the truth? She has made roast meat of his heart--

993

994 ABDULLA (firm): He must be perfectly safe--do you understand? As if he was among his own people. Until...

995

996 BABALATCHI: Until when, O Excellent One?

997

998 ABDULLA: Until I say. As to the Blind One, he shall dwell with me, once the...But no matter. Remember: the white man must be safe.

999

1000 BABALATCHI: He lives in your shadow, O Pius One!

1001

1002 NARRATOR: Abdulla turns and exits down a bushy pathway. Babalatchi then retreats thru the gate towards the fire-pit. Seeing Aissa emerge from the hut, Babalatchi takes cover and watches. Aissa silently approaches Willems, who adds wood to the fire. Reaching out with her fingers, Aissa strokes Willems gently at the nape of his neck, which immediately softens him.

1003

1004 AISSA (flirting): What should I say to a man who has been away from me for three days? Three!

1005

1006 NARRATOR: Willems snatches at the fingers she's held up but she whisks them
behind her.

1007

1008 AISSA: No! I cannot be caught. But try--try and catch me with your mighty
hands!

1009

1010 NARRATOR: After a brief dance, he catches her and embraces her
passionately.

1011

1012 WILLEMS (drinking her in): Closer! Closer!

1013

1014 NARRATOR: Slowly raising her arms, she puts them over his shoulders and--
clasping her hands behind his neck--swings off the full length of her arms.
Her head falls back and her thick, luscious hair hangs down. His expression
is that of a starving man looking at food. She draws herself to him and
rubs her head gently against the skin of his cheek.

1015

1016 WILLEMS: I wish I could die like this! Right now!

1017

1018 NARRATOR: Taking his hand, Aissa leads Willems into the hut. Once they're
inside, Babalatchi stands and, approaching the pit, begins adding wood to
the fire.

1019

1020 BABALATCHI (singing--under his breath): I am Chief of Ja-va / I've no match
at sea / I'm home from the Straits / My boat is run-nin' free / My hilt's
rich with sil-ver / Sa-rong's red like wine / My men's smi-lin' faces /
Mean plunder so fine! / My men's smi-lin' fa-ces / Mean plun-der so fine!

1021

1022 NARRATOR: Feeding a final branch to the fire, Babalatchi stands--
then sets off contentedly in the direction of his house.

1023

Willems emerges from a hut pulling on his shirt. Aissa follows behind.

1024 AISSA: Now tell me, tell me--all the words spoken between you and
Tuan Abdulla.

1025

1026 WILLEMS: Leave it.

1027

1028 AISSA: Tell me--now!

1029

1030 BABALATCHI (FAR FROM MIC): My hilt's rich with sil-ver / Sa-rong's
red like wine...

1031

1032 WILLEMS: Wait...

1033

1034 AISSA: What?

1035

1036 BABALATCHI (FAR): My men's smi-lin' fa-ces / Mean plun-der so fine! /
My men's smi-lin' fa-ces / Mean plun-der so fine! (Laughter, coughing)

1037

1038 WILLEMS: Who was that?

1039

1040 AISSA: Could be Babalatchi--I don't know.

1041

1042 WILLEMS: Hunh...

1043

1044 AISSA: Now promise me, promise me--you will not return to your people
without me. Do you promise?

1045

1046 WILLEMS: Haven't I told you? That you're everything to me?

1047

1048 AISSA: Yes, but I like to hear you say it--every day, and every night--
whenever I ask. And never be angry because I ask.

1049

1050 WILLEMS: Mmm.

1051

1052 AISSA: White women, are they very beautiful? (Brief pause) They must be.

1053

1054 WILLEMS (finding it funny): I don't know. And if I did, looking at you--
I've forgotten.

1055

1056 AISSA: Three days and two nights you have forgotten me also! Why? Why were
you angry when I first spoke of Tuan Abdulla? You were remembering somebody
then, yes? One of your people.

1057

1058 WILLEMS (desenting): Hunh.

1059

1060 AISSA: Yet...I believe you when you talk of your love for me. But I'm
afraid.

1061

1062 WILLEMS: I'm with you now. It was you who went away.

1063

1064 AISSA: When you have helped Abdulla against Rajah Lau-ut, I shall not be
afraid any longer. (Pause) What is that land beyond the great sea from
which you come? You asked me to go there with you. That is why I went away.

1065

1066 WILLEMS: I'll never ask you again.

1067

1068 AISSA: There is no woman there--waiting for you?

1069

1070 WILLEMS (pause then): No.

1071

1072 NARRATOR: Her lips hover above his face and her long hair brushes against
his cheeks.

1073

1074 AISSA: You taught me the love of your people. Like this.

1075

1076 WILLEMS: Yeah, like this.

1077

1078 NARRATOR: As she kisses him, he closes his eyes and trembles.

1079

1080 WILLEMS: I love you, my sweet, my...beautiful girl!

1081

1082 AISSA: Yees...Yees...Yees...

1083

1084 NARRATOR: Slowly the door of a nearby hut opens and--out of the corner of his eye, Willems notices the head of Omar--knife between his teeth--inching towards him. Willems is spellbound as the outlines of a body crawling on all fours emerges, creeping towards him inch by inch. Willems turns back to an oblivious Aissa and drowns himself in a deep kiss. Again, he kisses her but only after moving his head so he can see the blind man moving closer--the emaciated face, the hollow temples, the sunken cheeks, the dark sockets, the dead eyes. Omar raises himself to his knees and the blade between his lips catches a gleam from the fire. Omar's hand reaches out and touches Willems on his side. Taking the knife in his other hand, Omar raises it high above his head. With an intense effort, Willems tears his eyes off Omar and onto Aissa, who--suddenly sensing danger--turns, grabs her father's hand, flings him to the ground and struggles with him for the knife.

1085

1086 AISSA: Father! Father!

1087

1088 OMAR: Son of the Devil! Son of the Devil!

1089

1090 NARRATOR: The Old Woman emerges as Omar attempts to plunge the knife into Aissa's breast. But Aissa resists and the blade plunges instead into Omar's breast. Omar responds by trying to fight back but Aissa holds him down.

1091

1092 AISSA (in tears): Father!...Father!...

1093

1094 OMAR: Devil!...Devil!...

1095

1096 NARRATOR: As Aissa continues to hold her father down, Willems stands and steps-forward. But Aissa turns a wild face to Willems.

1097

1098 AISSA: Stay back! Don't come near! You hear me?

1099

1100 NARRATOR: Willems stops short--the last of Omar's struggle is ferocious.
Tears stream down Aissa's face as she holds him down. Finally, he gives up.
With tremendous effort, Aissa begins dragging her father into a nearby hut.
Willems remains standing, mouth ajar.

1101

1102 OLD WOMAN: You are cursed, daughter! Cursed!

1103

1104 NARRATOR: Ignoring her, Aissa keeps dragging her father towards the hut.

1105

1106 OLD WOMAN: You killed him! You killed him!

1107

1108 AISSA: No! Never!

1109

1110 OLD WOMAN: You killed him with his own blade!

1111

1112 AISSA: Never! I'd sooner strike it into my own heart.

1113

1114 NARRATOR: Aissa finishes dragging her father into the hut.

1115

1116 OLD WOMAN (to Willems): You there! You! You are the Devil's son! Get you
back to Hell, you hear! Get!

1117

1118 NARRATOR: Willems avoids her but doesn't leave.

1119

1120 OLD WOMAN: Ack!!

1121

1122 NARRATOR: The Old Woman then retreats backwards--eyes on Willems--through
the gate and into Balatchi's house. After a moment, Aissa emerges from the
hut--in her hands the bloody knife.

1123

1124 AISSA: Misfortune...Only misfortune...For those who are not white.

1125

1126 WILLEMS: Aissa, how can I live here? Let's go away. Far away. Just you and
1127 I. (Pause) Tomorrow we'll be outside, on board Abdulla's ship. You'll come
1128 with me and...if the ship were to go ashore by some chance, we could steal
a canoe and escape. You're not afraid of the sea! Freedom, Aissa, freedom!

1127
1128 AISSA: Have you not heard the old woman? She's cursed me because I love
you. You've brought me sorrow and trouble--and now you want to take me
far away where I would lose you, lose my life--because your life is
my life now. What else is there? No, don't come closer! Don't!

1129
1130 NARRATOR: Flinging the blade at his feet, Aissa bolts for the gate.
Without thinking, Willems stoops to retrieve the weapon.

1131
1132 WILLEMS: Aissa, come back! Come back!

1133
1134 NARRATOR: Opening then closing the gate behind her, Aissa disappears into
the bush. Willems runs to the gate and leans on it but does not pass
through.

1135
1136 WILLEMS (FAR--calling after her): Aissa, I'll do what you want--if I have
to set all of Sambir on fire and put that fire out with my blood! Only
come back! Do you hear me, Aissa?

1137
1138 AISSA (VERY FAR FROM MIC): You sleep! I am afraid of you. When you return
with Tuan Abdulla you shall be great. And you will find me here. And there
will be nothing but love--nothing but love!

1139
1140 WILLEMS (FAR--calling): Aissa! Aissa!

1141
1142 NARRATOR: Back at Almayer's, Almayer and the Captain stand in
mid-conversation on the verandah.

1143
1144 ALMAYER: Yes! Cat, dog, anything that can scratch or bite--as long as it is
harmful enough and mangy enough. A sick tiger would make you happy.

1145

1146 CAPTAIN: Phfft!

1147

1148 ALMAYER: Yes, a half-dead tiger you could wEEP over and then palm off on
some poor devil on your crew, to tend and nurse for you. Never mind when
the poor devil is mangled or eaten up! No, your heart bleeds only for what
is poisonous and deadly. I curse the day you set eyes on him! I curse it!

1149

1150 CAPTAIN: Now then, my boy...Now then...

1151

1152 ALMAYER: Remember that half-starved dog you brought on board in Bangkok?
It went mad the next day and bit the headman. The best headman you ever
had! The man foamed at the mouth and left two wives and however many
children. How about those damned Chinamen you rescued from that water-
logged junk in the Formosa Straits. They rose on you within forty-eight
hours. They were cut-throats--and you knew they were cut-throats! But you
had made up your mind to put down on a lee shore in a gale to save them.
I might have been ruined for the sake of those murderous scoundrels, who
had to be driven overboard after killing--how many of your beloved crew?
You call these the actions of a devoted partner?

1153

1154 CAPTAIN: Huh!

1155

1156 ALMAYER: And all on account of your absurd disregard for your safety. Yet I
bore no grudge. I knew your weaknesses. But now--now we're ruined--ruined!

1157

1158 CAPTAIN: If you'd been in trouble as often as I have, my boy, you wouldn't
carry on so. I have been ruined more than once. And--well--here I am.

1159

1160 ALMAYER: Much good that is to me. Had you been here a month ago,
you would have been of some use. But now! You might as well be in the
Formosa Straits.

1161

1162 CAPTAIN: You scold like a drunken fish-wife.

1163

1164 NARRATOR: Moving to the rail, The Captain looks out on the river.

1165

1166 CAPTAIN: It's very lonely here this morning, eh?

1167

1168 ALMAYER: Ah! You notice it. Why only a month ago this verandah would have been full of people--grinning and salaaming--to you and to me. But that day is over. It's the doing of that pet rascal of yours! Oh, he's a beauty! You should have seen him leading that hellish crowd. You would have been proud of your old favorite.

1169

1170 CAPTAIN (with melancholy): Clever fellow--you must admit.

1171

1172 ALMAYER: Is that all you have to say? O Lord!

1173

1174 CAPTAIN: Don't make a show of yourself, Almayer. Sit down. Let's talk quietly. So he led, did he?

1175

1176 ALMAYER (corrects understatement): He piloted in Abdulla's ship. He ordered everything and everybody.

1177

1178 CAPTAIN: When did this happen?

1179

1180 ALMAYER: On the sixteenth, I heard rumors of Abdulla's ship being in the river. I refused to believe it at first. But the next day there was a great council held openly at Babalatchi's camp. Almost everybody in Sambir attended. It was then I knew. Within two days, Abdulla's ship was anchored in full view of this house. (Counting) Let's see now: Six-weeks to the day.

1181

1182 CAPTAIN: And you never heard anything--no warning? Never had an idea that something was up? Come!

1183

1184 ALMAYER: I used to hear something every day. Lies mostly, as you well know.

1185

1186 CAPTAIN: You're hardly a green hand on his first voyage, Almayer.

1187

1188 ALMAYER: That scoundrel did come here one day. He'd been away from the house for a couple of months living with that woman. I only heard about them now and then from the Rajah's people when they came over. Well one day, around noon, he appeared in this courtyard, as if he had been jerked up from hell--where he belongs by the way.

1189

1190 NARRATOR: The Captain takes a pipe from his pocket and, as Almayer speaks, fills it and lights it.

1191

1192 ALMAYER: I must say he looked awful. Bad bout of malaria probably. That part of the island's very unhealthy.

1193

1194 CAPTAIN: Go on. He came to see you.

1195

1196 ALMAYER: Well, whatever it was, it wasn't enough to finish him and he turned up here with his usual arrogance. He threatened me--vaguely. Wanted to scare me--blackmail me. And said you would approve! Approve! Can you believe that?

1197

1198 CAPTAIN: Mm.

1199

1200 ALMAYER: I couldn't make out what the fellow was driving at. How could I know he knew enough to pilot a ship through. Anybody here I could deal with--but Abdulla--he carries a dozen brass six-pounders and thirty men--desparate beggars from Deli and Acheen. Fight all day and ask for more in the evening. That kind.

1201

1202 CAPTAIN: I know, I know.

1203

1204 ALMAYER: Willems brought her up himself. I could see him from here. That woman was there, too. Close to him.

1205

1206 CAPTAIN: Hm.

1207

1208 ALMAYER: There have been rumours, of course. That the blind rascal died--
under mysterious circumstances. And that Abdulla is tired of Willems.
At any rate, your pet still has to take the ship out. The headman's not
equal to it yet.

1209

1210 CAPTAIN: So he came to you first, did he?

1211

1212 ALMAYER: Said he needed to be set up as a trader--the swine! How could
I know that he would do harm in that way? A local uprising I could
put down easy with my own men--and with the Rajah's help.

1213

1214 CAPTAIN: Of course, of course.

1215

1216 ALMAYER: Come to think of it, not a quarter of an hour after I kicked
Willems out, Babalatchi himself shows up, casually like, standing where you
are now--chatting about one thing or another. Said the blind pirate and him
were quite bothered by Willems, who was hanging about that woman--
the pirate's daughter. He asked my advice--very deferential and proper.
I told him Willems was not my friend and that they'd better kick him out.
Whereupon he went away salaaming and attesting to his friendship and the
pirate's goodwill. Of course, I know he came to spy and to talk over some
of my men. And right away--wouldn't you know it--eight go missing.

1217

1218 CAPTAIN: Eight?

1219

1220 ALMAYER: I immediately sent a message to the Rajah that we ought to talk--
that there was disquiet in the settlement. You know what answer I got?
"The Rajah sends a friend's greeting but doesn't understand the message."
That was all. Cheerful, isn't it? Like cold water down the back. Well,
after my manservant disappeared, I stood--by this very table--listening to
the all the shouting and the drumming. Oh, it was a terrible racket--enough
for twenty weddings. I took the bird and brought her into my hammock. If it
hadn't been for her, I surely would have gone mad. Remember, I hadn't heard
from you for four months. Didn't know if you were alive or dead. The Rajah
would have nothing to do with me. My own men were deserting me like rats on
a sinking ship. Things were so roudy I feared they would burn the
house down over my head. So I got my revolver and laid it--loaded--on the
table. Luckily, Eugenia kept quiet all through it and seeing her so pretty
and peaceful steadied me somehow. You have to understand--there was nothing
to restrain those fellows. First, my own people and then the Rajah...
Why, only three months before I'd distributed a goodly amount of rice on
credit--there wasn't a thing to eat in this infernal place! They all came
begging--on their knees! There isn't a man in Sambir who's not in debt to
Lingard & Company. Not one. You always said that was the right policy for
us. Well, I carried it out. But a policy like that--a policy like that,
Father--should be backed by loaded rifles.

1221

1222 CAPTAIN: You had them!

1223

1224 ALMAYER: Yes, I had! Twenty! And not a finger to pull a trigger.

1225

1226 NARRATOR: The Captain drops into a chair and--without warning--strikes a
fierce blow to the table with his fist.

1227

1228 ALMAYER: You don't know your own strength. Look, the table's ruined.
I will have to eat squatting on the floor like a native.

1229

1230 CAPTAIN (laughs heartily): Well, then...don't nag me like a woman at a
drunken husband! (pause--then seriously) If it hadn't been for the loss of
the Flash--yes, she's gone, my boy--I would have been here months ago and
all would have been well. But no use crying over that. We will have
everything ship-shape here in no time--no time at all!

1231

1232 ALMAYER: I am sorry about the Flash, Father. But you don't mean to expel
Abdulla from here with a canoe, do you?

1233

1234 CAPTAIN: No, that's over, all over. Great pity, too. They'll suffer for it.
He'll squeeze them. And if I had the Flash here I...but she's gone and
that's the end of it. Poor old hooker! (Brief pause) Hey--you made a voyage
or two on her--wasn't she a sweet craft? Could make her do anything but
talk. Why, she was better than a wife to me. Never scolded, eh? And to
think I should leave her poor old bones stickin' on a reef as though I was
the kind o' skipper who must have a mile of water under his keel just to
feel safe! It's only those who do nothing that make no mistakes, my boy.

1235

1236 ALMAYER: Upon my word, you are heartless--perfectly heartless.
Does it not strike you--in all that--that in losing your ship--
through recklessness, no doubt--you ruin me--ruin us?

1237

1238 CAPTAIN: Come, come!

1239

1240 ALMAYER: You brought me here, made me your partner, and now, when
everything's gone to the devil, you talk about your ship...your ship!
You can get another. But the trade--it's gone, thanks to Willems...
your dear Willems!

1241

1242 CAPTAIN: Never mind about Willems. I shall look after him. As to the
trade...Why, I shall make your fortune yet, my boy--never you fear.
Have you any cargo for the schooner that brought me here?

1243

1244 ALMAYER: The sheds are full of rattans. And I have about eighty tons of
rubber in the well. No doubt the last lot I shall ever see...

1245

1246 CAPTAIN: So there was no robbery after all. We've lost nothing. Well, then,
you must...

1247

1248 ALMAYER: No robbery! Why that's...that's an outrage, a...!

1249

1250 NARRATOR: Almayer falls back in his chair and begins having an
epileptic fit. His face contorts, his eyes roll back in his head and
saliva drips down his chin. Grabbing a nearby water pitcher, the Captain
hastily pours out a glass and tips it into Almayer's mouth. Immediately,
the convulsions subside. After a moment or two, Almayer comes to.

1251

1252 CAPTAIN: You had a fit, my boy. Did you ever give me a fright! So sudden.

1253

1254 ALMAYER: Yes, I lose all control.

1255

1256 CAPTAIN: Well, take it easy--take it easy! You mustn't exert yourself.
You can tell me what happened but don't exert yourself.

1257

1258 ALMAYER: I told you--he anchored the ship in view of the house. Through my
glass I could see faces on deck--Abdulla, Willems, ol' One-Eye--everybody.
There was much discussion. Finally, a boat was lowered--one of Abdulla's
men got into her--and the boat goes to the Rajah's landing. Then--almost
directly--the boat comes back. Willems and Abdulla go forward--very busy
about something. That woman was with them. That woman! (Chokes and seems on
verge of another fit, but is able to compose himself) All of a sudden,
bang! They fire a shot into the Rajah's gate. Then another and the gate
bursts open. Whereupon, a feast--yes, a feast!--breaks out on board ship.
Abdulla sitting like an idol, cross-legged, hands in his lap. And Willems
dodging about forward, aloof, and looking at my house through the ship's
glass. I couldn't resist--I shook my fist at him.

1259

1260 CAPTAIN (sarcastically): Just so. If you can't fight a man the best thing
is to exasperate him.

1261

1262 NARRATOR: Almayer shoots the Captain an unkind look but doesn't respond.

1263

1264 ALMAYER: Anyway, he saw me and, with his eye still on the glass, he lifts
his arm as if answering a hail. I figured--after the Rajah--it was now
my turn. So I ran the Union Jack up the flagpole. I had no other
protection.

1265

1266 CAPTAIN: Quite right, quite right...

1267

1268 ALMAYER: I figured if anybody tried to land, I'd shoot. Then I kept quiet.
After the feast, most of Abdulla's men went home--only the great man
himself and Willems stayed back. About five, I saw Willems join Abdulla
at the wheel. Willems jabbered on, swung his arms about, then pointed at my
house, then down the river. Finally, just before sunset, they took the ship
down half a mile to the junction in the river--where she is now.

1269

1270 CAPTAIN: I see.

1271

1272 ALMAYER: Willems did make one move, which I must say surprised me not a
little. He raised a Dutch flag--on the ship.

1273

1274 CAPTAIN: Dutch? But--hang it all!--Abdulla is British!

1275

1276 ALMAYER: Abdulla wasn't there--somewhere on shore. Anyway, upon the
raising of the flag, that woman lept at Willems apparently, like a
wild beast. He had to carry her off and fling her into a canoe.

1277

1278 CAPTAIN: Huh. And what else?

1279

1280 ALMAYER: The hardest thing--the hardest thing--I've yet to tell.

1281

1282 CAPTAIN: Well, go on now! I can't imagine it's worse than what you've
already told me.

1283

1284 ALMAYER (pouts a little, then): Well, when my manservant came back,
I felt a little easier in my mind. And then some of my men turned up--
I didn't ask any questions--just set them to work as if nothing had
happened. Towards the evening, I was on the jetty with Eugenia when I heard
shouts at the far end of the settlement. At first I didn't take much
notice. But then my manservant runs up.

1285

1286 MANSERVANT: Master, give me the bird, there is much trouble.

1287

1288 ALMAYER: So I gave her to him, went inside, grabbed my revolver, and came
out into the courtyard. I heard a big crowd howling near the property line.
I couldn't see them on account of the bushes but I knew they were angry and
after somebody.

1289

1290 CAPTAIN (astonished): After somebody?

1291

1292 ALMAYER: That's right. And as I stood there wondering--you know that
Chinaman who settled here a couple years ago?

1293

1294 CAPTAIN: Yes--he was my passenger--I brought him here.

1295

1296 ALMAYER: Yes, well, that Chinaman--he burst through the bush and fell right
into my arms. Says they're after him because he won't take off his hat to
the Dutch flag. The crowd quieted a little and I thought I could shelter
him without much risk, when all of a sudden I hear Willems's voice.

1297

1298 WILLEMS (FAR FROM MIC--calling out): Let my men enter to get the Chinaman!

1299

1300 ALMAYER: I say nothing and tell the Chinaman to keep quiet.

1301

1302 WILLEMS (FAR FROM MIC--calling out): Don't resist, Almayer. I advise you as
a friend. I am keeping this crowd back.

1303

1304 ALMAYER: You're a liar! I said--and then the Chinaman snatches my revolver
and lets it fly at them through the bush.

1305

1306 CAPTAIN (whistles in amazement--or whistle SFX):

1307

1308 ALMAYER: He must've hit somebody because--before you could wink--they were
through the bush and on top of us--and I was on my back with a couple of
fellows on top of me. I could hear the Chinaman trying to shout but then
they'd throttle him and he'd whimper. I could hardly breathe myself with
two heavy fellows on my chest. Anyway, Willems came up running.

1309

1310 WILLEMS (slightly out of breath): Take him to the verandah!

1311

1312 ALMAYER: There, Willems cut down my hammock and threw it to them.
Yanking open out a drawer, he found some needle and twine.

1313

1314 WILLEMS: Lay him out on the floor!

1315

1316 ALMAYER: There, they wrapped me in my hammock and he began to stitch me in,
as if I was a...a corpse. I called him all the names I could think of.
He ignored me and continued sewing. Sewed me up to my throat.

1317

1318 WILLEMS: (after a good laugh): That'll do. Let's go!

1319

1320 ALMAYER: But that woman--she was standing by--

1321

1322 AISSA (shrieking and clapping her hands with delight):

1323

1324 ALMAYER: They all stared at me while I lay on the floor. Oh, there was a
grin on every face and the verandah was full of 'em! (ashamed) Like a bale
of goods, I was. I wished I were dead. I do now when I think of it.

1325
1326 CAPTAIN (distracted): That's terrible, my boy--terrible...
1327
1328 ALMAYER: Finally, they flung me into the big rocking chair. I was sewed in
so tight I was stiff--like a piece of wood. That woman--she danced and
made faces. She was perfectly fiendish.
1329
1330 AISSA (arms round Willem's neck): I am like white woman.
1331
1332 WILLEM'S: Leave it!
1333
1334 AISSA (frowning): Hmph. (pause then back at Almayer): Ooo, hee hee, ha, ha!
(to Willems) When are we going to kill him? When are we going to kill him?
1335
1336 WILLEM'S: I told you, LEAVE it!
1337
1338 ALMAYER: I must've had a fit because when I came to, he was sitting close
and she was gone.
1339
1340 WILLEMS (SOFTLY): Not a hair on your head shall be touched. Tell the
Captain that the flag you have hoisted has been respected. Even though
you fired first.
1341
1342 ALMAYER: You are a liar!
1343
1344 WILLEMS (SOFTLY): A shot's been fired out of your compound and a man's
been hit. Still, you shall be respected on account of the Union Jack--
and the Captain.
1345
1346 CAPTAIN: That's what he said?
1347
1348 WILLEMS (SOFTLY): And, as for you, Almayer, you will not forget this day--
not if you live to be a hundred!
1349

1350 CAPTAIN: He said that, did he?

1351

1352 WILLEMS (SOFTLY): And, by the way, we found your manservant with your bird
hiding in the bushes up river. The bird recognized me and cried "pig" as
naturally as you would. But don't worry, I'm not angry. You look so
ridiculous in this chair that I can't be angry. (He laughs warmly)

1353

1354 ALMAYER: I then made a frantic effort to free myself to get at that
beggar's throat but I only upset the chair over myself.

1355

1356 WILLEMS (NORMAL VOLUME): I'm leaving you half your revolver cartridges and
taking half myself. We are both white men and should back each other up.

1357

1358 ALMAYER: You're a thief! I shouted. But he never looked back, his arm was
around the waist of that woman. (blows air thru nose) Suddenly, everybody
was gone. Then my manservant returned and set me free. I haven't seen
Willems since--or anybody else.

1359

1360 CAPTAIN: Well, well...

1361

1362 NARRATOR: The Captain moves to the rail and stares out at the river.

1363

1364 CAPTAIN: I am done up, my boy. Perfectly done up. All night on deck getting
that schooner up the river. Then this here with you. Feels like I could go
to sleep on a clothes line. I suppose I should eat something though.

1365

1366 BIRD: Eat!...Eat!

1367

1368 CAPTAIN (ignoring bird): You'll see about some grub--won't you, my boy?

1369

1370 ALMAYER: Of course...(adding in flattery) Rajah Lau-oot!

1371

1372 BIRD: Rajah Lau-ut! Rajah Lau-ut!

1373

1374 CAPTAIN: Yes, old girl! Least I have one native still with me! (chuckles)
Hm. (brief pause) No, we must try to keep some little trade together.
It'll be all right. Now--the great thing--the great thing--will be the
gold hunt up the river. I shall devote myself to it. I've been in the
interior before. There's gold there--I'm sure of it. And I know
what I'm talking about. Was in California in forty-nine, you know.
Dangerous, of course! But what a reward! We'd have to keep things on the
sly--at least at first. Then--after a little time has passed--we'll form a
company. That's right! In London! Splendid, eh? There is something to
live for yet! Eh, my boy?

1375

1376 ALMAYER: But what about Willems?

1377

1378 CAPTAIN (violently): Damn Willems! Damn him! (conciliatory) Oh, my boy,
my boy! The ol' Captain is tired--dog-tired. (Brief pause) Have your
manservant make up a little tray for me--in my room.

1379

1380 ALMAYER: Of course, Father.

1381

1382 BIRD: Fa-ther! Fa-ther!

1383

1384 NARRATOR: As Almayer exits into the house, the Captain turns and--
resting his tired bulk on the rail--stares out at the river into darkness.

1385

1386 CAPTAIN (bitterly): Father...

1387

1388 NARRATOR: The next day, the Captain paces about the courtyard--in one hand,
a torn-out notebook page, in the other, a fancy piece of parchment.
Reading the notebook page, he frowns. Reading the parchment page,
he frowns, too. Almayer approaches from the verandah with the
bird on his shoulder.

1389

1390 ALMAYER: Look, Eugenia, it's Father!

1391

1392 BIRD: Fa-ther!...Fa-ther!

1393

1394 CAPTAIN (impatiently): Yes, yes...Look, I've gotten two letters, Almayer.
This one's from Willems.

1395

1396 ALMAYER (reading): Come and see me. I am not afraid. Are you? W.

1397

1398 NARRATOR: Dropping the piece of parchment, the Captain snatches back the
notebook page and rips it up. Almayer retrieves the fallen parchment and
reads it silently.

1399

1400 ALMAYER: That's a decent enough letter. Abdulla gives him up to you. I told
you they were getting sick of him. What are you going to do?

1401

1402 CAPTAIN: (clears his throat and exhales): I'll be hanged if I know.
Not yet.

1403

1404 ALMAYER: I wish you would do something. Soon.

1405

1406 CAPTAIN: What's the hurry--eh? He won't go away. As it stands, he is at my
mercy, as far as I can see.

1407

1408 ALMAYER: And very little mercy he deserves, too. Abdulla's meaning--
as far as I can make it out is--get rid of that white man for me and
we shall live in peace and share the trade.

1409

1410 CAPTAIN: You believe that?

1411

1412 ALMAYER: No doubt he will share for a time--until he can grab the lot.

1413

1414 CAPTAIN: Exactly.

1415

1416 ALMAYER: Well?

1417

1418 CAPTAIN (launches into coughing fit):
1419
1420 ALMAYER: Are you unwell, Father?
1421
1422 CAPTAIN (striking his chest and clearing his throat): Hem! No, no.
Good for a few years yet. But I am bothered by all this, I can tell you!
1423
1424 ALMAYER (after a pause): You will see Abdulla--won't you?
1425
1426 CAPTAIN: I don't know. Not yet. There's plenty of time.
1427
1428 ALMAYER: You might want to consider me a little. I haven't robbbed anybody
or sold out a friend but, still...
1429
1430 CAPTAIN: Have a little patience, my boy. A day or two more.
1431
1432 ALMAYER: Abdulla is clear--if you agree to pilot his ship out and instruct
the headman, he will drop Willems like a hot potato and be your friend ever
after. As to Willems, I believe him completely. As to being your friend,
it's a lie, of course, but we needn't bother about that just yet. Just say
yes to Abdulla and then whatever happens to Willems will be nobody's
business. (after a silence) Leave it to me. I'll see to it something
happens to him.
1433
1434 CAPTAIN (smiling faintly): The fellow isn't worth the powder.
1435
1436 ALMAYER: That's what you think. You haven't been sewn up in your hammock
in front of a bunch of savages. I daren't look anybody in the face while
that scoundrel is alive. I'll...I'll settle him.
1437
1438 CAPTAIN: I don't think you will.
1439
1440 ALMAYER: You think I'm afraid of him?
1441

1442 CAPTAIN: No--I don't doubt your courage. It's your head, my boy, your head
that I--

1443

1444 ALMAYER: That's it! Why don't you just call me a fool?

1445

1446 CAPTAIN (angry): Because I don't want to! If I wanted to call you a fool,
I would. I wouldn't ask your permission. Why, I've done man's work
before you could toddle!

1447

1448 ALMAYER: There's no talking to you when you're like this.

1449

1450 NARRATOR: Almayer turns to go but then hesitates.

1451

1452 ALMAYER: You will do what you like, of course. You never take advice.
But it wouldn't be wise to let that fellow get away from here. If you do
nothing, he will leave in Abdulla's ship for sure and Abdulla will make use
of him to hurt us. Willems knows too much. (brief pause) That's all I have
to say. Now I must begin loading the schooner. Fire two shots if you
need me. (friendlier tone) I hope you'll dine with me tonight. A tray
in your room cannot be good for the digestion.

1453

1454 CAPTAIN (Long pause--then stops Almayer on the steps): Look here--I shall
want a good canoe--and your manservant--

1455

1456 ALMAYER: Right now?

1457

1458 CAPTAIN: No, no, the sun's too much for me. Send the canoe--and your man
and a canvas chair for me to sit in--around sunset. D'ye hear?

1459

1460 ALMAYER: Sunset.

1461

1462 CAPTAIN: Yes. (Pause) I shall pay our--clever fellow--a visit.

1463

1464 NARRATOR: At dusk at Babalatchi's, all that remains of the hut where
Aissa dragged her father is a small pile of ashes. Babalatchi emerges
from the hut of the Old Woman and makes his way slowly to the riverbank,
where he leans heavily on a wood post. The Old Woman, who has followed him,
comes up stealthily behind him and places her hand gently on his back.

1465

1466 BABALATCHI: The night is black...pitch black.

1467

1468 OLD WOMAN:(scolding him): I thought you might fall in, you old fool.

1469

1470 BABALATCHI: I might.(silence) He fought his last fight, my Chief.
And he lost. To his own daughter.

1471

1472 OLD WOMAN: That she-devil! And that son of the white devil! They're cursed,
I tell you--cursed!

1473

1474 BABALATCHI: That may be so.

1475

1476 OLD WOMAN: It is so!

1477

1478 BABALATCHI: Well, that may be but...Babalatchi has plans, plans!
And these curses of yours--they're not very helpful, not at the moment,
not until after Abdulla has--

1479

1480 NARRATOR: When there's rustling in the bushes, the old couple
turns to listen.

1481

1482 CAPTAIN (FAR): You think this is the place? I can see nothing.

1483

1484 MANSERVANT (FAR): It must be near, Tuan. Shall we try the bank?

1485

1486 CAPTAIN (FAR): No, this cannot be it. Let her drift, let her drift!

1487

1488 BABALATCHI: Go inside, woman. I must speak to the Rajah Lau-ut alone.

1489

1490 OLD WOMAN (dismissively): Rajah Lau-ut, Rajah--

1491

1492 BABALATCHI: Snou-ut, I know! Now, get!

1493

1494 OLD WOMAN: Hmmph!

1495

1496 NARRATOR: As the Old Woman retreats to her hut, Babalatchi enters an adjacent hut, where--a moment or two later--he emerges carrying an old rifle, which he leans--just so--against the hut's exterior. Not satisfied with how the rifle appears, Babalatchi places it again. Meanwhile, the Captain and the Manservant can be seen in a small canoe--the Manservant paddling and the Captain in back on a canvas chair.

1497

1498 MANSERVANT: I see a light. I see it!

1499

1500 CAPTAIN: Call out! Somebody may come with a torch. I can't see a thing.

1501

1502 NARRATOR: Babalatchi takes cover in the bush so as to not be seen.

1503

1504 BABALATCHI (feigning surprise): Who speaks on the river?

1505

1506 CAPTAIN: A white man. Is there not one torch in this camp to light a guest on his landing?

1507

1508 BABALATCHI: There are no torches and no men. I am alone here.

1509

1510 CAPTAIN: Alone? Who are you?

1511

1512 BABALATCHI: Only your servant, Babalatchi.

1513

1514 CAPTAIN: Babalatchi, you say?

1515

1516 BABALATCHI: Land, Tuan, and see my face. Here is my hand. Now you are safe.

1517

1518 NARRATOR: The Captain reluctantly takes Babalatchi's hand and steps out
of the canoe. As he takes a few cautious steps towards the courtyard,
the Manservant secures--then stands watch over--the boat.

1519

1520 CAPTAIN: You'd think the world had been painted black.

1521

1522 BABALATCHI: What did you say, Tuan?

1523

1524 CAPTAIN: Nothing. I only expected to find here...Where are they all?

1525

1526 BABALATCHI: As I said, I am alone. Tomorrow I go, too.

1527

1528 CAPTAIN: I came to see a white man. Is he here?

1529

1530 BABALATCHI: A man whose hand is strong but whose heart is weak. White, yes.
But still a man.

1531

1532 CAPTAIN: Is he there? In the hut?

1533

1534 BABALATCHI: No, not there, Tuan. Yet not very far either. (brief pause)
Will you not sit and warm yourself? (calls to Old Woman) Woman!

1535

1536 NARRATOR: The head of the Old Woman pops out of her hut.

1537

1538 BABALATCHI: Bring rice and fish--for our guest.

1539

1540 CAPTAIN: No, I am not hungry.

1541

1542 OLD WOMAN: Hmmph!

1543

1544 NARRATOR: The head of the Old Woman pops back inside.

1545

1546 CAPTAIN: Take me to the white man who expects me. I have no time to waste.

1547
1548 BABALATCHI: The night is long. Very long, Rajah Lau-ut.
1549
1550 CAPTAIN: You know me.
1551
1552 BABALATCHI: Aye! I have seen your face and felt your hand before--
many moons ago. You do not remember--but I have not forgotten.
There are many like me--there is only one Rajah Lau-ut.
1553
1554 CAPTAIN (skeptically): Uh-huh.
1555
1556 NARRATOR: Wandering over to the hut where is leaned the rifle,
the Captain picks it up and examines it.
1557
1558 CAPTAIN: A Mataram...Old, too.
1559
1560 BABALATCHI: Aye! I got it when I was young. From a trader with a
big stomach and a loud voice. Brave--very brave.
1561
1562 CAPTAIN: I see. You should not let it get rusty like this.
1563
1564 BABALATCHI: A good gun. Carries far and true. Better than yours there.
1565
1566 NARRATOR: With his fingertips, Babalatchi gently touches the revolver
peeking out from the Captain's jacket pocket.
1567
1568 CAPTAIN (good-naturedly): Take your hand off of that.
1569
1570 BABALATCHI: Of course, Tuan.
1571
1572 CAPTAIN: Now...About that white man...
1573
1574 BABALATCHI (as if he hadn't heard): You are a man of the sea, like us.
1575

1576 CAPTAIN: You know I am. Why ask?

1577

1578 BABALATCHI: A true Rajah Lau-ut!

1579

1580 CAPTAIN: Look, I didn't come here to chat. I came to see the white man--
show me where he lives.

1581

1582 BABALATCHI: Why hurry, Tuan? The night is long and death is short--as you
should know--you...who have dealt it to so many of my people. Do you not
remember? In Carimata--far from here...

1583

1584 CAPTAIN: Why should I?

1585

1586 BABALATCHI: Then--this hair on my face was like gold in the sun. Now it is
like the foam of an angry sea.

1587

1588 CAPTAIN: Huh.

1589

1590 BABALATCHI: But Abdulla rules the land now. Rules even Rajah Lau-ut.

1591

1592 CAPTAIN: You people! You did this! And you will be sorry for it,
believe me. Abdulla's presence will bring Dutch rule here.

1593

1594 BABALATCHI: You see that forest there, Tuan? You think those big trees
know the name of the ruler?

1595

1596 CAPTAIN: Even a big tree may be felled by a small axe. And, remember--
my one-eyed friend--axes are made by white men. You will soon
find that out, since you have hoisted the flag of the Dutch.

1597

1598 BABALATCHI: The farther away the master, the easier it is for the slave--
you know that, Tuan. Your voice has been in-our-ear always. Too close--
too close.

1599

1600 CAPTAIN: If I ever spoke to the Rajah, it was for your own good--for the
good of all.

1601

1602 BABALATCHI: That is white man's talk. That is how you talk while you load
your guns and sharpen your swords--and, when you are ready, to those
who are weak you say "Obey me and be happy--or die!" You think it is only
your wisdom and your virtue that are true. You are stronger than the
wild beasts but not so wise. A tiger knows when he is not hungry.

1603

1604 CAPTAIN: Is that so? And whom did I kill here, eh?

1605

1606 BABALATCHI: Had you come a day sooner, you would have seen an enemy die.
You would have seen him die poor, blind, unhappy--with no son to dig his
grave and speak of his courage. You would have seen the man that
fought you in Carimata many moons ago die alone.

1607

1608 CAPTAIN: I told you--I don't remember.

1609

1610 BABALATCHI: He died in darkness, Tuan. Babalatchi sat by his side and held
his hand but he could not see Babalatchi's face. She--whom he had cursed
because of the white man--was there, too, and wept with covered face.
The white man walked about making noises. He stared with wicked eyes and
then Babalatchi was glad that the great Chief Omar was blind. (Brief pause)
Babalatchi dug a grave in the hut where his great chief died. Oh, she
mourned, did the daughter! She mourned so much that that white son of yours
came to the doorway and shouted. Do you understand what I say, Tuan?
Your white son--

1611

1612 CAPTAIN: Not my son!

1613

1614 BABALATCHI: --came inside the hut with great anger and took the daughter by
the shoulder and dragged her out. Yes, Tuan! Omar was dead and his daughter
was at the feet of that white man, now Abdulla's slave.

1615

1616 CAPTAIN: Yes...

1617

1618 BABALATCHI: Babalatchi held back his hand when he saw this--for there must not be any trouble with the white man--Abdulla has spoken and Babalatchi must obey.

1619

1620 CAPTAIN: So that's it, is it? (brief pause) You seem angry, Babalatchi.

1621

1622 BABALATCHI: I am not angry, Tuan. Why should I be? I am only a sailor and have fled your people many times. Servant of this one, protected by that one...I have given my counsel here and there for a handful of rice. Why should I be angry with a white man? Even when that man destroys the grave marker of a great Chief--leaving nothing but ashes. Yes, Tuan, that's right! Swearing he'd burn me--and her--inside--if we did not come out.

1623

1624 CAPTAIN: Listen--that man is not like other white men--you know that. In fact, he's not a man at all. He's a...I don't know.

1625

1626 BABALATCHI: Not like you, eh, Tuan? Yet he is cunning, eh? He has many words to say about you.

1627

1628 CAPTAIN: What does he say?

1629

1630 BABALATCHI: Why should I repeat the words of one white man about another?

1631

1632 CAPTAIN (dismissing him): Ahhh!

1633

1634 BABALATCHI: Babalatchi shall go now. (brief pause) In that house there is your white son, Tuan.

1635

1636 CAPTAIN: I can see nothing. It's too dark.

1637

1638 BABALATCHI: You've been looking at the fire too long. Soon you will see.

1639

1640 NARRATOR: Babalatchi turns to go--then turns back.

1641

1642 BABALATCHI: Mind the gun, Tuan. It is loaded.

1643

1644 CAPTAIN: There's no flint in that gun--you couldn't find flint for a hundred miles!

1645

1646 BABALATCHI: I got it from a friend who lives far away. The gun is good--it shoots straight and far. (planting a seed) I believe it would carry from here to the door of the white man's house.

1647

1648 CAPTAIN: Never mind your gun!

1649

1650 BABALATCHI: Wait a little, Tuan. By morning, there will be light enough to see the man who not so many days ago said that he alone has made you less than a child in Sambir.

1651

1652 CAPTAIN (blows through his lips):

1653

1654 BABALATCHI: But it is not good, Tuan, to sit where you may be seen.

1655

1656 CAPTAIN (truculent): Why not?

1657

1658 BABALATCHI: The white man sleeps, it is true. But he might come out early, and he has a gun.

1659

1660 CAPTAIN: He has a gun, has he?

1661

1662 BABALATCHI: Yes, a short one that fires many times--like yours.

1663

1664 CAPTAIN: Hm.

1665

1666 BABALATCHI: Look, Tuan! The house. Not far.

1667

1668 CAPTAIN: Yes, I see it.

1669

1670 BABALATCHI: Take care of the gun, Tuan. I have put in a double measure of powder and three slugs.

1671

1672 CAPTAIN: So that's it, is it? You thought I came here to murder him? (brief pause) Speak, you filthy dog!

1673

1674 BABALATCHI: What else, Tuan! You are a man. If you did not come to kill then either I am a fool...or you are.

1675

1676 CAPTAIN: It seems to me that you must have had much to do with what's happened in Sambir lately, you one-eyed son of a--

1677

1678 BABALATCHI: May I lose both eyes if my words are not true! You are here amongst your enemies. He is the greatest. Abdulla could do nothing without him, and I could do nothing without Abdulla.

1679

1680 CAPTAIN: How dare you! You are nothing! Go--I tell you--go!

1681

1682 BABALATCHI: I will. But you look to that house.

1683

1684 CAPTAIN: I'll look where I like! And you may go to hell! The islands of these seas shall sink before I, Rajah Lah-oot, serve the will of you or your people. But I will say this--I don't care what you do with him after today.

1685

1686 BABALATCHI: As you wish, Tuan.

1687

1688 NARRATOR: As Babalatchi heads for the Old Woman's hut, the Captain takes several strides back the way he came.

1689

1690 CAPTAIN (FAR): Is the canoe ready?

1691

1692 MANSERVANT (FAR): Yes, Tuan.

1693

1694 CAPTAIN (FAR): Wait for me with the paddle in your hands--understand?

1695

1696 MANSERVANT (FAR): Yes, Tuan, I understand.

1697

1698 NARRATOR: Outside the Old Woman's hut...

1699

1700 BABALATCHI (with urgency): Woman!

1701

1702 NARRATOR: The Old Woman's head pops out.

1703

1704 BABALATCHI (w urgency): Gather all of our things and meet me at the boat.

1705

1706 OLD WOMAN: Huh?

1707

1708 BABALATCHI: Now!

1709

1710 OLD WOMAN: Hmph!

1711

1712 NARRATOR: The Old Woman's head vanishes. Babalatchi quickly exits down a jungle path. (Pause) Having meandered over to the fire pit, the Captain glances around. Turning on his heel, he's taking a few cautious strides towards the house when...

1713

1714 OLD WOMAN (warning): Beware! Beware!

1715

1716 CAPTAIN: Who is that?

1717

1718 NARRATOR: The Captain must backtrack a bit to see her. Over her shoulder is a comically oversized--and over-stuffed--canvas sack.

1719

1720 OLD WOMAN: Only me, Rajah Snou-ut! (pushes up lips and snorts like a pig)

1721

1722 CAPTAIN: Rajah--! Get on with you now! Get on with you, I say!

1723

1724 OLD WOMAN: Bride of the Devil, that one is! Bride of the Devil!

1725

1726 NARRATOR: He raises his hand to give the Old Woman a slap but she
slinks away, dragging her sack with her. The Captain--after opening and
closing the gate--finds Aissa standing before the door to the house.

1727

1728 CAPTAIN: Let me pass. I came here to talk to a man.

1729

1730 AISSA: Some have called me a man.

1731

1732 CAPTAIN: Where is he hiding? Has he sent you?

1733

1734 AISSA (after a longish pause): It is my fear that has sent me here.
He is not afraid. He sleeps.

1735

1736 CAPTAIN: Well, he's slept long enough. Go and wake him. Or I shall
call him. He knows my voice well.

1737

1738 NARRATOR: Aissa falls at the Captain's feet.

1739

1740 AISSA: Please!...Please!

1741

1742 CAPTAIN: Stand up! (silence) I said, Stand up!

1743

1744 NARRATOR: Reluctantly, she stands.

1745

1746 CAPTAIN: You are Omar's daughter so you ought to know that when men meet
a woman must be silent--and obey.

1747

1748 AISSA (vehemently): I am a woman, Rajah Lau-ut--yes! But can you see my
life? Can you see it? I have heard the sounds of many fights--the pop of
guns and the rain of bullets. I've stared in silence at angry faces and at
strong hands raised high holding sharp steel. I've seen men fall dead
without a cry and I've watched the sleep of the weary--and stared at
shadows full of death--with eyes that know nothing but watchfulness.
I've faced the heartless sea, held on my lap the heads of those who died
raving from thirst and from their cold hands took the paddle and worked
so that those with me did not know that one man more was dead. What have
you done, Rajah Lau-ut? What has been your life?

1749
1750 CAPTAIN (after a silence): So it's true. You are a woman whose heart is
big enough to fill a man's breast.(pause) But still you are a woman.
And so to you...to you I have nothing more to say.

1751
1752 AISSA: Wait! (Pause as he stops.) Men of my people have often spoken by the
fires that you--the first on the sea--were deaf in battle to a man's cries
but--to the voices of woman, of child--your ears were open. Now I, a woman,
I--

1753
1754 CAPTAIN (assuring her): Your men have spoken true. My ears are open to you.
But listen to me--well. Nothing you can say will change my mind about the
man who is sleeping--or hiding--in that house.

1755
1756 AISSA: Your mind! You know nothing!

1757
1758 CAPTAIN: I know enough.

1759
1760 NARRATOR: Moving towards him, she places her two hands on his shoulders.
He is surprised at her audacity.

1761
1762 AISSA: How can you know? How can you? I live with him all the days. All the
nights. I see his every breath, every look of his eye, every move of his
lips. Even I do not understand him! Him, my life!

1763

1764 NARRATOR: The Captain's eyes blink rapidly as she speaks close to his face.

1765

1766 AISSA: There was a time I could understand him. When I knew what was in his
mind better than he knew it himself. But now he is gone.

1767

1768 CAPTAIN: Gone? Where?

1769

1770 AISSA: Gone from me. I am forever near him. Yet alone.

1771

1772 NARRATOR: Her hands slip off the Captain's shoulders and her arms
fall by her side.

1773

1774 CAPTAIN: So what do you want?

1775

1776 AISSA: I want...I have looked for...help...everywhere...against men...
all men. First they came--the white man--and dealt death from afar...
then he came. He came alone and sad. He came angry with his brothers--
great amongst his people. Angry with those I have not seen--where men have
no mercy and women no shame. He was great among them. He was great--yes?

1777

1778 CAPTAIN (sighs mournfully): Great...

1779

1780 AISSA: I saw him. I have lived by the side of brave men...of chiefs!
When he came I was the daughter of a beggar--of a man without strength or
hope. He spoke to me like I was brighter than the sunshine--more delightful
than the cool water of the brook.

1781

1782 CAPTAIN (exhales air through his nose):

1783

1784 AISSA: I was everything to him! Everything! I saw it! I felt his eyes.
I saw him tremble when I came near--when I spoke--when I touched him.
(brief pause) Look at me! You have been young once. Look at me! Look!

1785

1786 NARRATOR: Turning her head, she glances fearfully at the house behind her.
The eyes of the Captain follow.

1787

1788 CAPTAIN: If he hasn't heard your voice by now, he must be far away--or
dead.

1789

1790 AISSA: He's there. For three days he's waited for you--day and night.
I waited with him--watching his face, listening to his words--words he
spoke in daylight, words he spoke in his sleep. What was he saying?
What was he going to do? Was he afraid? Of you? Of death? What was in his
heart? He spoke many words. But I could not understand. I tried to
tell him. But he was deaf to me. I followed him everywhere, trying to catch
some word that would help me understand. When I touched him he was angry.
His mind was in the land of his people--far away from me.

1791

1792 CAPTAIN: His people...

1793

1794 AISSA: Day after day, night after night, I watched him. How my heart was
heavy. I thought he was afraid. Afraid of you! Then I... Tell me, Rajah
Lau-ut, do you know the fear without voice--the fear that comes when there
is no one near--when there is no battle, no cries, no angry faces or hands
with guns--the fear there is no running away from?

1795

1796 CAPTAIN (barely perceptible): Aye...

1797

1798 AISSA: I knew then he would not fight you! I went away twice--twice--to
make him strike at his own people--so he would be mine--mine! But his hand
was as false as your white hearts. It struck--pushed by my desire for him,
his desire for me--it struck--but killed nobody! His strength was a lie.
My own people lied to me--and to him. And to meet you--you...the Great!
He had no one but me! Only me, with my anger, my weakness--only me!

1799

1800 NARRATOR: He doesn't flinch. She moves even closer.

1801

1802 AISSA: He is everything to me. My breath, my light, my heart. Go away.
Forget him. He has no courage anymore. And I have lost my power. Go away
and forget. There are other enemies. Leave him to me. He was a man once.
You are too great. I tried. But nobody can beat you. Leave him to me and
go away.

1803

1804 CAPTAIN: You don't know what you're asking? Listen. Go to your own people.
Leave him. He's...finished.

1805

1806 AISSA: Tell the brook not to run to the river. Tell the river not to
run to the sea. But the brook and the river--they do not care. I do not
care, Rajah Lau-ut.

1807

1808 NARRATOR: She draws even closer.

1809

1810 AISSA (whispers): Do you know what I did to my own father? My own father?
Why I'd rather have--

1811

1812 CAPTAIN: You shall have his life. (silence then) Understand--I do this not
in mercy but in punishment.

1813

1814 AISSA: What punishment? Will you take him away from me? Listen to what I
have done. It is I who--

1815

1816 WILLEMS: Do not believe her, Captain.

1817

1818 NARRATOR: Standing bare-chested in the doorway is Willems. After a moment,
he moves down the plankway, stopping six feet from the Captain.

1819

1820 WILLEMS: Do not believe... (coughs) Do not... (coughs violently)

1821

1822 CAPTAIN (dismissively): Well...

1823

1824 NARRATOR: The Captain grips the revolver in his pocket tightly. Willems's eyelids begin to flutter. Gradually, the Captain's grip relaxes. Eventually he lets it go. Staring at Willems, the Captain clenches his fist, draws back his hand and delivers a strong blow to Willems's face--which Willems does not resist.

1825

1826 CAPTAIN: Defend yourself, man! Defend yourself!

1827

1828 NARRATOR: Willems stands passively, the sleeve of his jacket across his face.

1829

1830 CAPTAIN (in disgust): A coward! A plain ol' coward! Will you be a cheat to the end?

1831

1832 NARRATOR: The Captain waits for an answer but there is none. Willems's raised arm sinks from his face and drops by his side as he bleeds profusely from the nose. The Captain attempts to move closer but Aissa embraces him around the ankles so he cannot move.

1833

1834 CAPTAIN: Let go! Let go! Let go! (Stamps SFX).

1835

1836 WILLEMS: Steady, Captain...steady!

1837

1838 NARRATOR: Soothed by a familiar voice, the Captain stands still.

1839

1840 CAPTAIN: Tell her to let me go or I shall--

1841

1842 WILLEMS: Aissa... (She drops to the ground SFX).

1843

1844 WILLEMS: All right, Captain, she's let go.

1845

1846 NARRATOR: As the Captain steps aside, Aissa lifts herself to her knees and covers her face with her hands. The Captain slowly turns and looks at Willems, who holds himself very straight, like a man who is drunk.

1847

1848 CAPTAIN: What have you got to say for yourself?

1849

1850 NARRATOR: After putting a hand to his face, Willems holds it up to his eyes
then draws it down the front of his jacket, leaving a long smear of blood.

1851

1852 WILLEMS: That's a fine thing to do.

1853

1854 CAPTAIN: I had too good of an opinion of you.

1855

1856 WILLEMS: And I--of you.

1857

1858 CAPTAIN: Hmph.

1859

1860 WILLEMS: Don't you see? I could have had that "son" of yours killed and the
whole thing burnt to the ground? You wouldn't have found as much as a
heap of ashes had I liked. But I wouldn't.

1861

1862 CAPTAIN: You didn't dare! You scoundrel!

1863

1864 WILLEMS: What's the use of calling me names?

1865

1866 CAPTAIN: You're right--there's no name bad enough for you.

1867

1868 NARRATOR: Having gotten up, Aissa stares at the two men, as if trying to
decipher the meaning of their words.

1869

1870 WILLEMS: I've told you--I won't fight.

1871

1872 CAPTAIN: Won't fight, eh?

1873

1874 WILLEMS: If I'd wanted to hurt you, I would have. I stood in the doorway
long enough to pull a trigger--and you know I can shoot.

1875

1876 CAPTAIN: You would have missed. There is such a thing as justice.
1877
1878 WILLEMS (after a silence): You know I was a good man--you always praised me
for my steadiness. You know I never stole--if that's what you're thiinking.
I borrowed. It was an error of judgement. And I paid for it.
1879
1880 CAPTAIN (derisively): Error of judgement...
1881
1882 WILLEMS: So I drank a little, played cards a little...Who doeesn't? But I
had principles. From when I was a boy. You remember.
1883
1884 CAPTAIN: Yes...principles...
1885
1886 WILLEMS: Business was business--but I was never an ass. I never respected
fools--I made them suffer when they dealt with me.
1887
1888 CAPTAIN: A clever one...
1889
1890 WILLEMS: I kept clear of women, too. Except for...but that was
Hudig's doing not mine. Then you came along and dumped me here like a
load of rubbish. Dumped me and left me with nothing to do--and damn little
to hope for. At the mercy of that fat fool, who suspected me of some
grave misdeed--suspected and hated me from the start. Because you
befriended me. Oh, I could read him like a book--he isn't very deep, your
Sambir partner, but he knows how to be disagreeeable. As the months passed,
I thought I would die of sheer weariness--of my thoughts, of my regrets...
And then...
1891
1892 NARRATOR: As Willems steps nearer the Captain, Aissa steps nearer too.
1893

1894 WILLEMS (increasingly desperate and possessed): But don't you believe her--
don't you believe her, you hear me? I've been waiting for you three days
and nights. I had to sleep sometime, didn't I? I told her to stay awake and
watch for you. What has she told you? You can't believe her. You can't
believe any woman. Who can tell what's inside their heads. The only thing
you can know is that it isn't anything like what comes out of their mouth.
They live beside you. They hate you or they love you. They caress or
torment you. They throw you over--or they stick to you closer than your own
skin for some awful reason of their own--which you can never know! Look at
her! And look at me! Me, her infernal project. What has she been saying?
What?

1895

1896 CAPTAIN: If you must know, she begged me for your life.

1897

1898 WILLEMS: And for three days she begged me to take yours. (brief pause)
For three days she planned ambushes, looking for places I could hide and
drop you with a safe shot as you walked up. It's true--I give you my word.

1899

1900 CAPTAIN: Your word...

1901

1902 WILLEMS: Look at her! She took me as if I didn't belong to myself.
She did! I didn't know there was more in me she could get a hold of.
But she did! Me, a civilized European, and clever--and her--no more than a
wild animal! Well, she found out something in me. She found it out and
I was lost. I knew it. She tormented me. I was ready to do anything.
I resisted--but I was ready. I knew it too. And that frightened me more
than anything.

1903

1904 AISSA: What does he mean, Rajah Lau-ut? Tell me what he means?

1905

1906 WILLEMS: I tried to do something. Take her away from these people.
I went to Almayer, the biggest, blind fool that's ever...Then Abdulla came
and she went away. She took with her something I had to get back.
I had to do it. It would have happened sooner or later. You couldn't be
master here forever.

1907

1908 CAPTAIN (accusatory): You...

1909

1910 WILLEMS: I fought but--she goaded me--to violence, to murder even.
She pushed me to it--persistently, desperately! There isn't anything I
wouldn't have done. She had a grip on me. Like a nightmare--terrible and
sweet. But I woke up--I woke up. Only to find myself beside a wild cat.
Her father tried to kill me and she--she...Why she would have stopped at
nothing to defend her own. And when I think that it was me--me--that...
I hate her. Tomorrow she may want my life. How can I know? She may want to
kill me next. (After a long silence) I don't want to die here.

1911

1912 CAPTAIN: Don't you?

1913

1914 WILLEMS: Look at her! Always near! Always watching. Look at her eyes!
They're on me when I sleep--if I can--and they're on me when I wake.
They follow me like a pair of jailers. They wait til I am off my guard.
Look at them! They're the eyes of a--a savage--a mongrel--half-Arab,
half-Malay. I can't stand it! Take me away, please! Take me away!

1915

1916 CAPTAIN: You are possessed.

1917

1918 WILLEMS: Yees. Isn't it pretty?

1919

1920 CAPTAIN: I've heard this kind of talk from you before. Take me away!
Well, this time I won't do it, I won't do it. I picked you up by the
waterside, like a starving cat. I don't regret it. Abdulla--twenty others--
no doubt Hudig himself--were after me. That's business. But that you
should...you...Yes, money belongs to him who's strong enough to keep it--
but this...this was different. This was...my life. (shakes his head and
sighs) I am an old fool.

1921

1922 WILLEMS: That wasn't me, I tell you! That wasn't me!

1923

1924 CAPTAIN: Then who else? Who else? Did you ever see me lie and steal?
Tell me that! Did you? (silence) What did you expect when you asked me to
see you? You know me. You lived with me. You know what you've done.
What did you expect?

1925

1926 WILLEMS: I was alone, don't you see? I was alone in that infernal savage
crowd. I was delivered into their hands. In my life--my whole life--only
one man has ever cared for me. You! You ask what I expected...Something.
Anything! Anything to take me out of this darkness--anything--to get me
out of her sight! (brief pause then laughs) To think that when I first
laid eyes on her it seemed as though my whole life wouldn't be enough to...
But now! Just look at her! I must have been mad. That's it, mad. When I
think that of everything in my life, all of my past, my future, my
intelligence, my work, there is nothing left but her, the cause of my ruin,
and you, who cared for me and whom I have...I have...

1927

1928 NARRATOR: He hides his face in his hands. When he takes them away,
he appears desperate.

1929

1930 WILLEMS: Please, Captain, anything...a deserted island...anywhere...
I promise, I--

1931

1932 CAPTAIN: Shut up!

1933

1934 NARRATOR: The Captain wipes his forehead with the back of his hand.
1935
1936 CAPTAIN: No promise of yours is any good to me. I'm going to take
your conduct into my own hands. Pay attention to what I'm going to say.
You...are my prisoner.
1937
1938 NARRATOR: Willems's head nods imperceptibly--then becomes very still.
1939
1940 CAPTAIN: You will stay here. You're not fit to be among people. You are my
mistake. I shall hide you--here. If I took you somewhere else, you would go
among unsuspecting men, and lie and cheat and steal for a little money or
for some woman.
1941
1942 NARRATOR: The Captain glances at Aissa--then back at Willems.
1943
1944 CAPTAIN: I won't shoot you--that would be the safest route. But I won't.
But don't expect me to forgive you. To me you are not Willems, the man I
befriended and helped through thick and thin, and thought much of. You are
not a human being that may be destroyed or forgiven. You are a
bitter thought, something without a soul, something that must be hidden.
You are my shame.
1945
1946 WILLEMS: You mean--I must live...here?
1947
1948 CAPTAIN: Did you ever hear me say something I didn't mean? You said you
didn't want to die here--well, you must live.
1949
1950 NARRATOR: The Captain narrows his eyes--then shakes his head.
1951
1952 CAPTAIN: You are alone. Nothing can help you. And nobody will. You are
neither white nor brown. Your accomplices have abandoned you to me
because I am still somebody to be reckoned with. You are alone but for that
woman there. You say you did this for her. Well, you have her.
1953

1954 NARRATOR: Willems grabs his hair with both hands. Aissa, who has been
looking at Willems, turns to the Captain.

1955

1956 AISSA: Is it true, Rajah Lau-ut?

1957

1958 CAPTAIN: Yes, he must live here--all his life...with you.

1959

1960 NARRATOR: Aissa looks at Willems, who remains very still. She then
spins back around to the Captain.

1961

1962 AISSA (shrill and venomous): You lie, Rajah Lau-ut! You lie like a
white man. You, who Abdulla made small. You lie!

1963

1964 WILLEMS (barely audible): Very well.

1965

1966 CAPTAIN: As far as the rest of the world is concerned, your life is
finished. You are buried here.

1967

1968 WILLEMS: And you think I will stay...that I will submit?

1969

1970 CAPTAIN: You needn't stay on this spot. There is the forest and there is
the river. Fifteen miles up, or forty down. At one end you will
meet Almayer, at the other the sea. Take your choice. (joyless laugh)
There is also a third way.

1971

1972 WILLEMS: Oh, I shall live, if that's what you mean. I may escape, too.
Away from her!

1973

1974 CAPTAIN: I don't care what you do. But I will tell you this--without that
woman your life is not worth twopence!

1975

1976 NARRATOR: As the Captain starts to slowly make his way to the gate,
Willems follows, as if led by a string.

1977

1978 CAPTAIN: Why Babalatchi here--even Abdulla himself...but you've no doubt
thought of that. And then there is the woman. She won't go.

1979

1980 WILLEMS: She was right. I ought to have shot you.

1981

1982 NARRATOR: The Captain neither stops nor looks back.

1983

1984 CAPTAIN: But, you see, you can't. There is not even that in you.

1985

1986 WILLEMS: Do not provoke me, Captain.

1987

1988 NARRATOR: The Captain turns around sharply.

1989

1990 CAPTAIN: Provoke you? What's left in you to provoke?

1991

1992 WILLEMS: It's easy to talk like that when you know that in the whole world--
-in the whole world--I have no other friend.

1993

1994 CAPTAIN: Whose fault is that, eh? Whose fault?

1995

1996 NARRATOR: The Manservant appears from the bush and joins the Captain.

1997

1998 MANSERVANT: One-eye is gone, Captain, with the old woman. They took
everything. In a huge sack.

1999

2000 NARRATOR: The Manservant grins but then--seeing the look on the
Captain's face--wipes it off.

2001

2002 MANSERVANT: Rain coming, Captain.

2003

2004 CAPTAIN: Yes. Make ready.

2005

2006 MANSERVANT: Aye, aye, sir!

2007

2008 NARRATOR: The Captain and the Manservant make their way over to the canoe
and climb into it. Resisting a strong urge to look at Willems one final
2009 time, the Captain stares straight ahead.
2010 CAPTAIN (to Manservant): Ready?
2011
2012 MANSERVANT: Yes, sir.
2013
2014 CAPTAIN: Pro--(a small catch in his voice)--ceed.
2015
2016 WILLEMS (in an unsteady voice): We shall meet again, Captain! We shall
meet again!
2017
2018 NARRATOR: Strong emotion colors the Captain's face.
2019
2020 CAPTAIN: No. (sadly but firmly) No.
2021
2022 NARRATOR: The Manservant begins to paddle fiercely.
2023
2024 MANSERVANT: Must cross river, Captain. Water less quick over there.
2025
2026 NARRATOR: Aissa shakes her fist in the direction of the Captain--then
squats at the feet of Willems, who stands motionless. The canoe and the
Captain gradually disappear from view. After a moment, Aissa gets up
and stands beside Willems. Taking a cloth, she attempts to wipe the blood
off his face but he bats away her hand. Suddenly, the canoe and the Captain
again come into Willems's line of sight. He stares at it with increasing
anxiousness.
2027
2028 WILLEMS (shouting): Captain! Captain!
2029
2030 NARRATOR: Aissa puts her hand on Willems's arm in a attempt to restrain him
but he violently shakes it off.
2031

2032 WILLEMS (increasingly frantic): Captain! Captain!

2033

2034 NARRATOR: Willems begins moving towards the river in the direction of the Captain.

2035

2036 WILLEMS (to Aissa--without looking at her): This is all your doing. You...

2037

2038 AISSA: No! No!

2039

2040 WILLEMS Please, Captain, please! Don't leave me here! Please don't leave me here!

2041

2042 NARRATOR: Willems continues to move towards the river and the departing Captain. Feeling powerless to stop him, Aissa looks around frantically. Spying Babalatchi's rifle leaning against the hut, she dashes over to it. After a brief hesitation, she snatches the rifle and turns and stares hard after Willems.

2043

2044 AISSA: To him--him! I will have nothing--nothing! Let him go! Come back! ...Have I not been faithful?...Have I not loved you? Made you happy? Made you tremble?

2045

2046 NARRATOR: Aissa slowly raises the rifle and points it in the direction of Willems, who has begun to wade out into the river.

2047

2048 AISSA: Forget their wicked, white hearts, their angry faces...Remember only the day our eyes first met, the day my skin met your skin, the day my lips met your lips, my body your body...my spirit, your spirit...

2049

2050 NARRATOR: Aissa carefully cocks the rifle.

2051

2052 AISSA: O my life! My heart! Go!...Go! With empty hands and sweet words...as you came to me...Go helpless to the river, to the great sea...to the long, long sleep that waits for you--go! Go my love...my precious...precious...

2053

2054 NARRATOR: (a gunshot is heard--then): A strange look appears on
Willems's face. Casually, he touches his fingers to his chest. Then he
falls forward. Aissa drops the gun and falls to her knees.

2055

2056 AISSA (blood-curdling wail): Noooooo!

2057

2058 NARRATOR: As she realizes what she has done, Aissa's grief moves lower and
lower in her body. Hands to her face--she seems on the verge of a complete
breakdown.

2059

2060 AISSA: Noooooo...Noooooo....Noooooo....(She then sobs with primal abandon.
After a fairly long while--once the abandon has played itself out--she
quiets.)

2061

2062 NARRATOR: Slowly removing her hands from her face, she carefully wipes away
her tears. An extremely wide smile gradually takes over each and every part
of her tear-stained face. Her two open hands lift from her sides and reach
out longingly and hopefully towards the quietly floating body of Willems.

2063

2064 AISSA (intimately and hopefully): Come back to me, my love! (coaxing--
disturbingly upbeat) Come back to me!...Come back to me!...
Come back to me!...Come back to me!...

2065

2066 NARRATOR: You've reached the end of Part Two--of a two-part podplay--of the
classic novel Outcast of the Islands by Joseph Conrad. This podplay was
brought to you By Mouth--bringing classic novels to sonic life...in their
essence.

2067

2068 NARRATOR: To stream or download more of our work, please visit: bymouth.org

2069

2070

THE END