Major Works Data Sheet Heart Of Darkness

XXXII. Suddenly he felt himself whirled round and round—spinning like a top. The water, the banks, the forests, the now distant bridge, fort and men—all were commingled and blurred. Objects were represented by their colors only; circular horizontal streaks of color—that was all he saw. He had been caught in a vortex and was being whirled on with a velocity of advance and gyration that made him giddy and sick. In a few moments he was flung upon the gravel at the foot of the left bank of the stream—the southern bank—and behind a projecting point which concealed him from his enemies. The sudden arrest of his motion, the abrasion of one of his hands on the gravel, restored him, and he wept with delight. He dug his fingers into the sand, threw it over himself in handfuls and audibly blessed it. It looked like diamonds, rubies, emeralds; he could think of nothing beautiful which it did not resemble. The trees upon the bank were giant garden plants; he noted a definite order in their arrangement, inhaled the fragrance of their blooms. A strange, roseate light shone through the spaces among their trunks and the wind made in their branches the music of Æolian harps. He had no wish to perfect his escape—was content to re- main in that enchanting spot until retaken.

(Woodruff 1964): 158. (Erskine 1973): The phrasing here evokes paradise and is clearly metaphorical (73). (Davidson 1974): 270. (Fabó 1982): The motion of the top symbolizes much of the motion of the story itself (229). The motion de- scribed here is typical of many other motions in this tale (229). (Fabó 1982): Some of the phrasing here resembles highly similar phrasing elsewhere in the story. Such echoing is typical of this tale (230). (Powers 1982): 280. (Davidson 1984): Once Farquhar attains dry land, his thoughts and emotions become more steady and judgmental than when he was in the water (51). His perception of his surroundings now begins to reflect his perception that coherence and harmony are possible once again. The harmony he perceives mirrors the greater harmony he now feels (51). (Holladay 1986): 1645. (Linkin 1988): The discourse here, as elsewhere in Section III, is both Romantic and religious (147). The reference to "roseate light" may look back to Farquhar's perception of the sun in Section I (148). (Conlogue 1989): 37. (Stoicheff 1993): Here as elsewhere, the physical details Farquhar imagines reflect what is truly happening to his body during the hanging (353). (Walz 1995): 265. (Bailey 2001): The sentences referring to the vortex and to a "few moments" are part of a pattern in Section III emphasizing that time now seems to be speeding up (171).

XXXIII. A whiz and rattle of grapeshot among the branches high above his head roused him from his dream. The baffled cannoneer had fired him a random farewell. He sprang to his feet, rushed up the sloping bank, and plunged into the forest.

(Woodruff 1964): 158. (Erskine 1973): Here as elsewhere Bierce punctures an illusion (74).

XXXIV. All that day he traveled, laying his course by the rounding sun. The forest seemed interminable; nowhere did he discover a break in it, not even a woodman's road. He had not known that he lived in so wild a region. There was something uncanny in the revelation.

(Woodruff 1964): Since the forest represents Farquhar's own mind, it seems to have no limits (159). (Erskine 1973): The word "interminable" is relevant to the story's larger theme of distorted time (74). (Powers 1982): 280. (Davidson 1984): Earlier in this section, Farquhar had seen the forest as a garden; now he sees it as much less benign. His new view reflects a darker view of his own sub- conscious—a part of his mind he has previously ignored. The "wild … region" implies Farquhar's realization that he is indeed dying (53). (Holladay 1986): 1645. (Linkin 1988): The perception expressed in the final sentence here might as easily come from Bierce as from Farquhar (148). (Stoicheff 1993): 349. (Bailey 2001): The opening sentence of this passage is part of a pattern in Section III emphasizing that time now seems to be speeding up (171).

XXXV. By nightfall he was fatigued, footsore, famishing. The thought of his wife and children urged him on. At last he found a road which led him in what he knew to be the right direction. It was as wide and straight as a city street, yet it seemed untraveled. No fields bordered it, no dwelling anywhere. Not so much as the barking of a dog suggested human habitation. The black bodies of the trees formed a straight wall on both sides, terminating on the horizon in a point, like a diagram in a lesson in perspective. Over- head, as he looked up through this rift in the wood, shone great golden stars looking unfamiliar and grouped in strange constella- tions. He was sure they were arranged in some order which had a secret and malign significance. The wood on either side was full of singular noises, among which—once, twice, and again—he dis- tinctly heard whispers in an unknown tongue.

(Woodruff 1964): The abrupt discovery of the road, like its paradoxical appear- ance, violates standard logic—as befits a fantasy (159). (Erskine 1973): The lan- guage here is paradoxical at several points (74). The opening sentence here illus- trates Bierce's frequently effective repetition of consonant sounds (74). (Davidson 1974): The "lesson" Farquhar learns concerns his own mortality (270). (Fabó 1982): Some of the phrasing here resembles highly similar phrasing elsewhere in the story. Such echoing is typical of this tale (230). (Davidson

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