

# THE CLOUD ATLAS

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**David Mitchell**



RANDOM HOUSE

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*—The Times (London)*

ALSO BY DAVID MITCHELL

*Ghostwritten*

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# CLOUD ATLAS

A NOVEL



RANDOM HOUSE TRADE PAPERBACKS

*New York*

FOR HANA AND HER GRANDPARENTS

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The Ewing and Zachry chapters were researched with the aid of a travel scholarship from the Society of Authors. Michael King's definitive work on the Moriori, *A Land Apart*, provides a factual account of Chatham Islands history. Certain scenes in Robert Fro-bisher's letters owe debts of inspiration to *Delius: As I Knew Him* by Eric Fenby (Icon Books, 1966; originally G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1936). The character Vyvyan Ayrs quotes Nietzsche more freely than he admits, and the poem read by Hester Van Zandt to Margo Roker is Emerson's "Brahma."

## THE PACIFIC JOURNAL OF ADAM EWING



Thursday, 7th November—

Beyond the Indian hamlet, upon a forlorn strand, I happened on a trail of recent footprints. Through rotting kelp, sea cocoa-nuts & bamboo, the tracks led me to their maker, a White man, his trow-zers & Pea-jacket rolled up, sporting a kempt beard & an outsized Beaver, shoveling & sifting the cindery sand with a teaspoon so intently that he noticed me only after I had hailed him from ten yards away. Thus it was, I made the acquaintance of Dr. Henry Goose, surgeon to the London nobility. His nationality was no surprise. If there be any eyrie so desolate, or isle so remote, that one may there resort unchallenged by an Englishman, 'tis not down on any map I ever saw.

Had the doctor misplaced anything on that dismal shore? Could I render assistance? Dr. Goose shook his head, knotted loose his 'kerchief & displayed its contents with clear pride. "Teeth, sir, are the enameled grails of the quest in hand. In days gone by this Arcadian strand was a cannibals' banqueting hall, yes, where the strong engorged themselves on the weak. The teeth, they spat out, as you or I would expel cherry stones. But these base molars, sir, shall be transmuted to gold & how? An artisan of Piccadilly who fashions denture sets for the nobility pays handsomely for human gnashers. Do you know the price a quarter pound will earn, sir?" I confessed I did not.

"Nor shall I enlighten you, sir, for 'tis a professional secret!" He tapped his nose. "Mr. Ewing, are you acquainted with Marchioness Grace of Mayfair? No? The better for you, for she is a corpse in petticoats. Five years have passed since this harridan besmirched my name, yes, with imputations that resulted in my being blackballed from Society" Dr. Goose looked out to sea. "My peregrinations began in that dark hour."

I expressed sympathy with the doctor's plight.

"I thank you, sir, I thank you, but these ivories"—he shook his 'kerchief—"are my angels of redemption. Permit me to elucidate. The Marchioness wears dental fixtures fashioned by the aforementioned doctor. Next yuletide, just as that scented She-Donkey is addressing her Ambassadors' Ball, I, Henry Goose, yes, *I* shall arise & declare to one & all that our hostess masticates with cannibals' gnashers! Sir Hubert will challenge me, predictably, 'Furnish your evidence,' that boor shall roar, 'or grant me satisfaction!' I shall declare, 'Evidence, Sir Hubert? Why, I gathered your mother's teeth *myself* from the spittoon of the South Pacific! Here, sir, *here* are some of their fellows!' & fling these very teeth into her tortoiseshell soup tureen & that, sir, that will grant me *my* satisfaction! The twittering wits will scald the icy Marchioness in their news sheets & by next season she shall be fortunate to receive an invitation to a Poorhouse Ball!"

In haste, I bade Henry Goose a good day. I fancy he is a Bedlamite.

Friday, 8th November—

In the rude shipyard beneath my window, work progresses on the jibboom, under Mr. Sykes's

directorship. Mr. Walker, Ocean Bay's sole taverner, is also its principal timber merchant & he brags of his years as a master shipbuilder in Liverpool. (I am now versed enough in Antipodese etiquette to let such unlikely truths lie.) Mr. Sykes told me an entire week is needed to render the *Prophetess* "Bristol fashion." Seven days holed up in the *Musket* seems a grim sentence, yet I recall the fangs of the banshee tempest & the mariners lost o'erboard & my present misfortune feels less acute.

I met Dr. Goose on the stairs this morning & we took breakfast together. He has lodged at the *Musket* since middle October after voyaging hither on a Brazilian merchantman, *Namorados*, from Fee-jee, where he practiced his arts in a mission. Now the doctor awaits a long-overdue Australian sealer, the *Nellie*, to convey him to Sydney. From the colony he will seek a position aboard a passenger ship for his native London.

My judgment of Dr. Goose was unjust & premature. One must be cynical as Diogenes to prosper in my profession, but cynicism can blind one to subtler virtues. The doctor has his eccentricities & recounts them gladly for a dram of Portuguese *pisco* (never to excess), but I vouchsafe he is the only other gentleman on this latitude east of Sydney & west of Valparaiso. I may even compose for him a letter of introduction for the Partridges in Sydney, for Dr. Goose & dear Fred are of the same cloth.

Poor weather precluding my morning outing, we yarned by the peat fire & the hours sped by like minutes. I spoke at length of Tilda & Jackson & also my fears of "gold fever" in San Francisco. Our conversation then voyaged from my hometown to my recent notarial duties in New South Wales, thence to Gibbon, Malthus & Godwin via Leeches & Locomotives.

Attentive conversation is an emollient I lack sorely aboard the *Prophetess* & the doctor is a veritable polymath. Moreover, he possesses a handsome army of scrimshandered chessmen whom we shall keep busy until either the *Prophetess's* departure or the *Nellie's* arrival.

*Saturday, 9th November—*

Sunrise bright as a silver dollar. Our schooner still looks a woeful picture out in the Bay. An Indian war canoe is being careened on the shore. Henry & I struck out for "Banqueter's Beach" in holy-day mood, blithely saluting the maid who labors for Mr. Walker. The sullen miss was hanging laundry on a shrub & ignored us. She has a tinge of black blood & I fancy her mother is not far removed from the jungle breed.

As we passed below the Indian hamlet, a "humming" aroused our curiosity & we resolved to locate its source. The settlement is circumvallated by a stake fence, so decayed that one may gain ingress at a dozen places. A hairless bitch raised her head, but she was toothless & dying & did not bark. An outer ring of *ponga* huts (fashioned from branches, earthen walls & matted ceilings) groveled in the lees of "grandee" dwellings, wooden structures with carved lintel pieces & rudimentary porches. In the hub of this village, a public flogging was under way. Henry & I were the only two Whites present, but three castes of spectating Indians were demarcated. The chieftain occupied his throne, in a feathered cloak, while the tattooed gentry &

their womenfolk & children stood in attendance, numbering some thirty in total. The slaves, duskier & sootier than their nut-brown masters & less than half their number, squatted in the mud. Such inbred, bovine torpor! Pockmarked & pustular with *haki-haki*, these wretches watched the punishment, making no response but that bizarre, beelike “hum.” Empathy or condemnation, we knew not what the noise signified. The whip master was a Goliath whose physique would daunt any frontier prizefighter. Lizards mighty & small were tattooed over every inch of the savage’s musculature:—his pelt would fetch a fine price, though I should not be the man assigned to relieve him of it for all the pearls of O-hawaii! The piteous prisoner, hoarfrosted with many harsh years, was bound naked to an A-frame. His body shuddered with each excoriating lash, his back was a vellum of bloody runes, but his insensible face bespoke the serenity of a martyr already in the care of the Lord.

I confess, I swooned under each fall of the lash. Then a peculiar thing occurred. The beaten savage raised his slumped head, found *my* eye & shone me a look of uncanny, amicable knowing! As if a theatrical performer saw a long-lost friend in the Royal Box and, undetected by the audience, communicated his recognition. A tattooed “blackfella” approached us & flicked his nephrite dagger to indicate that we were unwelcome. I inquired after the nature of the prisoner’s crime. Henry put his arm around me. “Come, Adam, a wise man does not step betwixt the beast & his meat.”

*Sunday, 10th November—*

Mr. Boerhaave sat amidst his cabal of trusted ruffians like Lord Anaconda & his garter snakes. Their Sabbath “celebrations” downstairs had begun ere I had risen. I went in search of shaving water & found the tavern swilling with Tars awaiting their turn with those poor Indian girls whom Walker has ensnared in an impromptu *bordello*. (Rafael was not in the debauchers’ number.)

I do not break my Sabbath fast in a whorehouse. Henry’s sense of repulsion equaled to my own, so we forfeited breakfast (the maid was doubtless being pressed into alternative service) & set out for the chapel to worship with our fasts unbroken.

We had not gone two hundred yards when, to my consternation, I remembered this journal, lying on the table in my room at the *Musket*, visible to any drunken sailor who might break in. Fearful for its safety (& my own, were Mr. Boerhaave to get his hands on it), I retraced my steps to conceal it more artfully. Broad smirks greeted my return & I assumed I was “the devil being spoken of,” but I learned the true reason when I opened my door:—to wit, Mr. Boerhaave’s ursine buttocks astraddle his Blackamoor Goldilocks in *my* bed *in flagrante delicto!* Did that devil Dutchman apologize? Far from it! He judged *himself* ‘the injured party & roared, “Get ye hence, Mr. Quillcock! or by God’s B— —d, I shall snap your tricky Yankee nib in two!”

I snatched my diary & clattered downstairs to a *riotocracy* of merriment & ridicule from the White savages there gathered. I remonstrated to Walker that I was paying for a private room & I

expected it to remain private even during my absence, but that scoundrel merely offered a one-third discount on “a quarter-hour’s gallop on the comeliest filly in my stable!” Disgusted, I retorted that I was a husband & a father! & that I should rather die than abase my dignity & decency with any of his poxed whores! Walker swore to “decorate my eyes” if I called his own dear daughters “whores” again. One toothless garter snake jeered that if possessing a wife & a child was a single virtue, “Why Mr. Ewing, I be ten times more virtuous than you be!” & an unseen hand emptied a tankard of sheog over my person. I withdrew ere the liquid was swapped for a more obdurate missile.

The chapel bell was summoning the God-fearing of Ocean Bay & I hurried thitherwards, where Henry waited, trying to forget the recent foulnesses witnessed at my lodgings. The chapel creaked like an old tub & its congregation numbered little more than the digits of two hands, but no traveler ever quenched his thirst at a desert oasis more thankfully than Henry & I gave worship this morning. The Lutheran founder has lain at rest in his chapel’s cemetery these ten winters past & no ordained successor has yet ventured to claim captaincy of the altar. Its denomination, therefore, is a “rattle bag” of Christian creeds. Biblical passages were read by that half of the congregation who know their letters & we joined in a hymn or two nominated by rota. The “steward” of this demotic flock, one Mr. D’Arnoq, stood beneath the modest cruciform & besought Henry & me to participate in likewise manner. Mindful of my own salvation from last week’s tempest, I nominated Luke ch. 8, “And they came to him, & awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, & rebuked the wind & the raging of the water: & they ceased, & there was a calm.”

Henry recited from Psalm the Eighth, in a voice as sonorous as any schooled dramatist: “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou has put all things under his feet: all sheep & oxen, yea & the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air & the fish of the sea & whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.”

No organist played a *Magnificat* but the wind in the flue chimney, no choir sang a *Nunc Dimittis* but the wuthering gulls, yet I fancy the Creator was not displeased. We resembled more the Early Christians of Rome than any later Church encrusted with arcana & gem-stones. Communal prayer followed. Parishioners prayed ad lib for the eradication of potato blight, mercy on a dead infant’s soul, blessing upon a new fishing boat, &c. Henry gave thanks for the hospitality shown us visitors by the Christians of Chatham Isle. I echoed these sentiments & sent a prayer for Tilda, Jackson & my father-in-law during my extended absence.

After the service, the doctor & I were approached most cordially by an elder “mainmast” of that chapel, one Mr. Evans, who introduced Henry & me to his good wife (both circumvented the handicap of deafness by answering only those questions they *believed* had been asked & accepting only those answers they *believed* had been uttered—a stratagem embraced by many an American advocate) & their twin sons, Keegan & Dyfedd. Mr. Evans made it known that every week he had the custom of inviting Mr. D’Arnoq, our Preacher, to dine at their nearby home, for the latter dwells in Port Hutt, a promontory some miles distant. Would we, too, join their Sabbath Meal? Having already informed Henry of that Gomorrah back at the *Musket* & hearing cries of “Mutiny!” from our stomachs, we accepted the Evanses’ kindness with

gratitude.

Our hosts' farmstead, seated half a mile from Ocean Bay up a winding, blustery valley, proved to be a frugal building, but proof against those hell-bent storms that break the bones of so many hapless vessels upon nearby reefs. The parlor was inhabited by a monstrous hog's head (afflicted with droop-jaw & lazy-eye), killed by the twins on their sixteenth birthday, & a somnambulant Grandfather clock (at odds with my own pocket watch by a margin of hours. Indeed, one valued import from New Zealand is the accurate time). An Indian farmhand peered through the windowpane at his master's visitors. No more tatterdemalion a *renegado* I ever beheld, but Mr. Evans swore the quadron, Barnabas, was "the fleetest sheepdog who ever ran upon two legs." Keegan & Dyfedd are honest woolly fellows, versed principally in the ways of sheep (the family own two hundred head), for neither has gone to "Town" (the islanders thus appellate New Zealand) nor undergone any schooling save Scripture lessons from their father, by dint of which they have learnt to read & write tolerably well.

Mrs. Evans said grace & I enjoyed my most pleasant repast (untainted by salt, maggots & oaths) since my farewell dinner with Consul Bax & the Partridges at the Beaumont. Mr. D'Arnoq told us tales of ships he has supplied during his ten-year on Chatham Isle, while Henry amused us with stories of patients, both illustrious & humble, he has benefacted in London & Polynesia. For my part I described the many hardships overcome by this American notary in order to locate the Australian beneficiary of a will executed in California. We washed down our mutton stew & apple dumpling with small ale brewed by Mr. Evans for trading with whalers. Kee-gan & Dyfedd left to attend to their livestock & Mrs. Evans retired to her kitchen duties. Henry asked if missionaries were now active on the Chathams, at which Mr. Evans & Mr. DArnoq exchanged looks & the former informed us, "Nay, the Maori don't take kindly to us *Pakeha* spoiling their Moriori with too much civilization."

I questioned if such an ill as "too *much* civilization" existed or no? Mr. DArnoq told me, "If there is no God west of the Horn, why there's none of your constitution's *All men created equal*, neither, Mr. Ewing." The nomenclatures Maori & Pakeha I knew from the *Prophetess's* sojourn at the Bay of Islands, but I begged to know who or what Moriori might signify. My query unlocked a Pandora's Box of history, detailing the decline & fall of the Aborigines of Chatham. We lit our pipes. Mr. DArnoq's narrative was unbroken three hours later when he had to depart for Port Hutt ere nightfall obscured the dykey way His spoken history, for my money, holds company with the pen of a Defoe or Melville & I shall record it in these pages, after, Morpheus willing, a sound sleep.

*Monday, 11th November-*

Dawn sticky & sunless. The Bay has a slimy appearance, but the weather is mild enough to allow repairs to continue on the *Prophetess*, I thank Neptune. A new mizzen-top is being hoisted into position as I write.

A short time past, while Henry & I breakfasted, Mr. Evans arrived hugger-mugger, importuning

my doctor friend to attend to a reclusive neighbor, one Widow Bryden, who was thrown from her horse on a stony bog. Mrs. Evans was in attendance and fears that the widow lies in peril of her life. Henry fetched his doctor's case & left without delay (I offered to come, but Mr. Evans begged my forbearance, as the patient had extracted a promise that none but a doctor should see her incapacitated.) Walker, overhearing these transactions, told me no member of the male sex had crossed the widow's threshold these twenty years & decided that "the frigid old sow must be on her last trotters if she's letting Dr. Quack frisk her."

The origins of the Moriori of Rekohu (the native moniker for the Chathams) remain a mystery to this day Mr. Evans evinces the belief they are descended from Jews expelled from Spain, citing their hooked noses & sneering lips. Mr. D'Arnoq's preferred theorem, that the Moriori were once Maori whose canoes were wrecked upon these remotest of isles, is founded on similarities of tongue & mythology & thereby possesses a higher *carat* of logic. What is certain is that, after centuries or millennia of living in isolation, the Moriori lived as primitive a life as their woebegone cousins of Van Diemen's Land. Arts of boatbuilding (beyond crude woven rafts used to cross the channels betwixt islands) & navigation fell into disuse. That the terraqueous globe held other lands, trod by other feet, the Moriori dreamt not. Indeed, their language lacks a word for "race" & "Moriori" means, simply, "People." Husbandry was not practiced, for no mammals walked these isles until passing whalers willfully marooned pigs here to propagate a parlor. In their virgin state, the Moriori were foragers, picking up *paua* shellfish, diving for crayfish, plundering bird eggs, spearing seals, gathering kelp & digging for grubs & roots.

Thus far, the Moriori were but a local variant of most flaxen-skirted, feather-cloaked heathens of those dwindling "blind spots" of the ocean still unschooled by the White Man. Old Rekohu's claim to singularity, however, lay in its unique pacific creed. Since time immemorial, the Moriori's priestly caste dictated that whosoever spilt a man's blood killed his own *mana*—his honor, his worth, his standing & his soul. No Moriori would shelter, feed, converse with, or even *see* the persona non grata. If the ostracized murderer survived his first winter, the desperation of solitude usually drove him to a blowhole on Cape Young, where he took his life. Consider this, Mr. D'Arnoq urged us. Two thousand savages (Mr. Evans's best guess) enshrine "Thou Shalt Not Kill" in word & *in deed* & frame an oral "Magna Carta" to create a harmony unknown elsewhere for the sixty centuries since Adam tasted the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. War was as alien a concept to the Moriori as the telescope is to the Pygmy. *Peace*, not a hiatus betwixt wars but millennia of imperishable peace, rules these far-flung islands. Who can deny Old Rekohu lay closer to More's Utopia than our States of Progress governed by war-hungry princelings in Versailles & Vienna, Washington & Westminster? "Here," declaimed Mr. D'Arnoq, "and here only, were those elusive phantasms, the noble savages, framed in flesh & blood!" (Henry, as we later made our way back to the *Musket*, confessed, "I could never describe a race of savages too backwards to throw a spear straight as 'noble.' ")

Glass & peace alike betray proof of fragility under repeated blows. The first blow to the Moriori was the Union Jack, planted in Skirmish Bay's sod in the name of King George by Lieutenant

Broughton of HMS *Chatham* just fifty years ago. Three years later, Broughton's discovery was in Sydney & London chart agents & a scattering of free settlers (whose number included Mr. Evans's father), wrecked mariners & "convicts at odds with the New South Wales Colonial Office over the terms of their incarceration" were cultivating pumpkins, onions, maize & carrots. These they sold to needy sealers, the second blow to the Moriori's independence, who disappointed the Natives' hopes of prosperity by turning the surf pink with seals' blood. (Mr. D'Arnoq illustrated the profits by this arithmetic—a single pelt fetched 15 shillings in Canton & those pioneer sealers gathered over two thousand pelts *per boat!*) Within a few years the seals were found only on the outer rocks & the "sealers" too turned to farming potatoes, sheep & pig rearing on such a scale that the Chathams are now dubbed "The Garden of the Pacific." These parvenu farmers clear the land by bushfires that smolder beneath the peat for many seasons, surfacing in dry spells to sow renewed calamity

The third blow to the Moriori was the whalers, now calling at Ocean Bay, Waitangi, Owenga & Te Whakaru in sizable numbers for careening, refitting & refreshing. Whalers' cats & rats bred like the Plagues of Egypt & ate the burrow-nesting birds whose eggs the Moriori so valued for sustenance. Fourth, those motley maladies which cull the darker races whene'er White civilization draws near, sapped the Aboriginal census still further.

All these misfortunes the Moriori might have endured, however, were it not for reports arriving in New Zealand depicting the Chathams as a veritable Canaan of eel-stuffed lagoons, shellfish-carpeted coves & inhabitants who understand neither combat nor weapons. To the ears of the Ngati Tama & Ngati Mutunga, two clans of the Taranaki Te Ati Awa Maori (Maori genealogy is, Mr. D'Arnoq assures us, every twig as intricate as those genealogical trees so revered by the European gentry; indeed, any boy of that unlettered race can recall his grandfather's grandfather's name & "rank" in a trice), these rumors promised compensation for the tracts of their ancestral estates lost during the recent "Musket Wars." Spies were sent to test the Moriori's mettle by violating *tapu* & despoiling holy sites. These provocations the Moriori faced as our Lord importuned, by "turning the other cheek," & the transgressors returned to New Zealand confirming the Moriori's apparent pusillanimity. The tattooed Maori *conquistadores* found their single-barked armada in Captain Harewood of the brig *Rodney* who in the dying months of 1835, agreed to transport nine hundred Maori & seven war canoes in two voyages, in *guerno* for seed potatoes, firearms, pigs, a great supply of scraped flax & a cannon. (Mr. D'Arnoq encountered Harewood five years ago, penurious in a Bay of Islands tavern. He at first denied being the *Rodney's* Harewood, then swore he had been coerced into conveying the Blacks, but was unclear how this coercion had been worked upon him.)

The *Rodney* embarked from Port Nicholas in November, but its heathen cargo of five hundred men, women & children, packed tight in the hold for the six-day voyage, bilged in ordure & seasickness & lacking the barest sufficiency of water, anchored at Whangatete Inlet in such an enfeebled state that, *had they but the will*, even the Moriori might have slain their Martial brethren. The Goodly Samaritans chose instead to share the diminished abundance of Rekohu in preference to destroying their *mana* by bloodletting & nursed the sick & dying Maori back to health. "Maori had come to Rekohu before," Mr. D'Arnoq explained, "yet gone away again, so

the Moriori assumed the colonists would likewise leave them in peace.”

The Moriori’s generosity was rewarded when Cpt. Harewood returned from New Zealand with another four hundred Maori. Now the strangers proceeded to lay claim to Chatham by *takahi*, a Maori ritual transliterated as “Walking the Land to Possess the Land.” Old Rekohu was thus partitioned & the Moriori informed they were now Maori vassals. In early December, when some dozen Aboriginals protested, they were casually slain with tomahawks. The Maori proved themselves apt pupils of the English in “the dark arts of colonization.”

Chatham Isle encloses a vast eastern salt marsh lagoon, Te Whanga, very nearly an inland sea but fecundated by the ocean at high tide through the lagoon’s “lips” at Te Awapatiki. Fourteen years ago, the Moriori men held on that sacred ground a parliament. Three days it lasted, its object to settle this question: Would the spillage of Maori blood also destroy one’s *mana*?

Younger men argued the creed of Peace did not encompass foreign cannibals of whom their ancestors knew nothing. The Moriori must kill or be killed. Elders urged appeasement, for as long as the Moriori preserved their *mana* with their land, their gods & ancestors would deliver the race from harm. “Embrace your enemy,” the elders urged, “to prevent him striking you.” (“Embrace your enemy” Henry quipped, “to feel his dagger tickle your kidneys.”)

The elders won the day but it mattered little. “When lacking numerical superiority” Mr. D’Arnoq told us, “the Maori seize an advantage by striking first & hardest, as many hapless British & French can testify from their graves.” The Ngati Tama & Ngati Mutunga had held councils of their own. The Moriori menfolk returned from their parliament to ambushes & a night of infamy beyond nightmare, of butchery, of villages torched, of rapine, of men & women, impaled in rows on beaches, of children hiding in holes, scented & dismembered by hunting dogs. Some chiefs kept an eye to the morrow & slew only enough to instill terrified obedience in the remainder. Other chiefs were not so restrained. On Waitangi Beach fifty Moriori were beheaded, filleted, wrapped in flax leaves, then baked in a giant earth oven with yams & sweet potatoes. Not half those Moriori who had seen Old Rekohu’s last sunset were alive to see the Maori sun rise. (“Less than an hundred pure-blooded Moriori now remain,” mourned Mr. D’Arnoq. “On *paper* the British Crown freed these from the yoke of slavery years ago, but the Maori do not care for paper. We are one week’s sail from the Governor’s House & Her Majesty maintains no garrison on Chatham.”)

I asked, why had not the Whites stayed the hands of the Maori during the massacre?

Mr. Evans was no longer sleeping & not half so deaf as I had fancied. “Have you ever seen Maori warriors in a blood frenzy, Mr. Ewing?”

I said I had not.

“But you have seen sharks in a blood frenzy, have you not?”

I replied that I had.

“Near enough. Imagine a bleeding calf is thrashing in shark-infested shallows. What to do—stay out of the water or try to stay the jaws of the sharks? Such was our choice. Oh, we helped the few that came to our door—our shepherd Barnabas was one—but if we stepped out in that night we’d not be seen again. Remember, we Whites numbered below fifty in Chatham at that time. Nine hundred Maoris, altogether. Maoris bide by *Pakeha*, Mr. Ewing, but they despise us.



Never forget it.”

What moral to draw? Peace, though beloved of our Lord, is a cardinal virtue only if your neighbors share your conscience.

*Night—*

The name of Mr. D’Arnoq is not well-loved in the *Musket*. “A White Black, a mixed-blood mongrel of a man,” Walker told me. “Nobody knows *what* he is.” Suggs, a one-armed shepherd who lives under the bar, swore our acquaintance is a Bonapartist general hiding here under assumed colors. Another swore he was a Polack.

Nor is the word *Moriori* much loved. A drunken Maori mulatto told me that the entire history of the Aborigines had been dreamt up by the “mad old Lutheran” & Mr. D’Arnoq preaches his Moriori gospel only to legitimize his own swindling land claims against the Maori, the true owners of Chatham, who have been coming to & fro in their canoes since time immemorial! James Coffee, a hog farmer, said the Maori had performed the White Man a service by exterminating another race of brutes to make space for us, adding that Russians train Kossacks to “soften Siberian hides” in a similar way

I protested, to *civilize* the Black races by conversion should be our mission, not their extirpation, for God’s hand had crafted them, too. All hands in the tavern fired broadsides at me for my “sentimental Yankee claptrap!” “The best of ’em is not too good to die like a pig!” one shouted. “The only gospel the Blacks *savvy* is the gospel of the d— —d whip!” Still another: “We Britishers abolished slavery in our empire—no American can say as much!”

Henry’s stance was ambivalent, to say the least. “After years of working with missionaries, I am tempted to conclude that their endeavors merely prolong a dying race’s agonies for ten or twenty years. The merciful plowman shoots a trusty horse grown too old for service. As philanthropists, might it not be our duty to likewise ameliorate the savages’ sufferings by *hastening* their extinction? Think on your Red Indians, Adam, think on the treaties you Americans abrogate & renege on, time & time & time again. More humane, surely & more honest, just to knock the savages on the head & get it over with?”

As many truths as men. Occasionally, I glimpse a truer Truth, hiding in imperfect simulacrum of itself, but as I approach, it bestirs itself & moves deeper into the thorny swamp of dissent.

*Tuesday, 12th November—*

Our noble Cpt. Molyneux today graced the *Musket* to haggle over the price of five barrels of salt-horse with my landlord (the matter was settled by a rowdy game of *trentuno* won by the captain). Much to my surprise, ere he returned to inspect the progress in the shipyard, Cpt. Molyneux requested some confidential words with Henry in my companion’s room. The consultation continues as I write. My friend has been warned of the captain’s despotism, but

still, I do not like it.

*Later—*

Cpt. Molyneux, it transpires, suffers from a medical complaint which, if untreated, may impair those divers skills demanded of his station. The captain has therefore proposed to Henry that my friend voyage with us to Honolulu (victualing & private berth gratis), assuming the responsibilities both of Ship's Doctor & personal physician to Cpt. Molyneux until our arrival. My friend explained he had intended to return to London, but Cpt. Molyneux was most insistent. Henry promised to think the matter over & come to a decision by Friday morning, the day now set for the *Prophetess's* departure.

Henry did not name the captain's illness, nor did I ask, though one needs not be an Aesculapian to glean Cpt. Molyneux is a slave to gout. My friend's discretion does him much credit.

Whatever eccentricities Henry Goose may exhibit as a collector of curios, I believe Dr. Goose is an exemplary healer & it is my zealous, if self-serving, hope that Henry returns a favorable answer to the captain's proposal.

*Wednesday, 13th November—*

I come to my journal as a Catholick to a confessor. My bruises insist these extraordinary past five hours were not a sickbed vision conjured by my Ailment, but real events. I shall describe what befell me this day, steering as close to the facts as is possible.

This morning, Henry paid Widow Bryden's hut another call to adjust her splint & reapply poultice. Rather than submit to idleness, I resolved to scale a high hill to the north of Ocean Bay, known as Conical Tor, whose lofty elevation promises the best aspect of Chatham Isle's "backcountry" (Henry, a man of maturer years, has too much sense to tramp unsurveyed islands peopled by cannibals.) The tired creek who waters Ocean Bay guided me upstream through marshy pastures, stump-pocked slopes, into virgin forest so rotted, knotted & tangled, I was obliged to clamber aloft like an orang-utan! A volley of hailstones began abruptly, filled the woods with a frenzied percussion & ended on the sudden. I spied a "Robin Black-Breast" whose plumage was tarry as night & whose tameness bordered on contempt. An unseen *tui* took to song, but my inflamed fancy awarded it powers of human speech:—"Eye for an eye!" it called ahead, flitting through its labyrinth of buds, twigs & thorns. "Eye for an eye!" After a grueling climb, I conquered the summit grievously torn & scratched at I know not What o'Clock, for I neglected to wind my pocket watch last night. The opaque mists that haunt these isles (the Aboriginal name Rekohu, Mr. D'Arnoq informs us, signifies "Sun of Mists") had descended as I ascended, so my cherished panorama was naught but treetops disappearing into drizzle. A miserly reward for my exertions, indeed.

The "summit" of Conical Tor was a crater, a stone's throw in diameter, encircling a crag-walled depression whose floor lay unseen far beneath the funereal foliage of a gross or more *kopi* trees.

I should not have cared to investigate its depths without the aid of ropes & a pickax. I was circumambulating the crater's lip, seeking a clearer trail back to Ocean Bay, when a startling *hoo-roosh!* sent me diving to the ground:—the mind abhors a vacancy & is wont to people it with phantoms, thus I glimpsed first a tusked hog charging, then a Maori warrior, spear held aloft, his face inscribed with the ancestral hatred of his race.

'Twas but a mollyhawk, wings "flapping" the air like a windjammer. I watched her disappear back into the diaphanous fog. I was a full yard shy of the crater's lip, but to my horror, the turf beneath me disintegrated like suet crust—I stood on not solid ground but an overhang! I plunged to my midriff, grasping some grasses in desperation, but these broke in my fingers & down I plummeted, a mannikin tossed into a well! I recall spinning in space, yelling & twigs clawing my eyes, cartwheeling & my jacket snagging, tearing loose; loose earth; the anticipation of pain; an urgent, formless prayer for help; a bush slowing but not halting my descent & a hopeless attempt to regain balance—sliding—lastly terra firma careering upwards to meet me. The impact knocked my senses out of me.

Amidst nebulous quilts & summery pillows I lay, in a bedroom in San Francisco similar to my own. A dwarfish servant said, "You're a *very* silly boy, Adam." Tilda & Jackson entered, but when I voiced my jubilation, not English but the guttural barkings of an Indian race burst from my mouth! My wife & son were shamed by me & mounted a carriage. I gave chase, striving to rectify this misunderstanding, but the carriage dwindled into the fleeing distance until I awoke in bosky twilight & a silence, booming & eternal. My bruises, cuts, muscles & extremities groaned like a courtroom of malcontent litigants.

A mattress of moss & mulch, lain down in that murky hollow since the second day of Creation, had preserved my life. Angels preserved my limbs, for if even a single arm or leg had been broken I should be lying there still, unable to extricate myself, awaiting death from the elements or the claws of beasts. Upon regaining my feet & seeing how far I had slid & fallen (the height of a foremast) with no worse damage to my person, I thanked our Lord for my deliverance, for indeed, "Thou calledst in trouble, & I delivered thee; I answered thee in the secret place of thunder."

My eyes adjusted to the gloom & revealed a sight at once indelible, fearsome & sublime. First one, then ten, then hundreds of faces emerged from the perpetual dim, adzed by idolaters into bark, as if Sylvan spirits were frozen immobile by a cruel enchanter. No adjectives may properly delineate that basilisk tribe! Only the inanimate may be so alive. I traced my thumbs along their awful visages. I do not doubt, I was the first White in that mausoleum since its prehistoric inception. The youngest dendroglyph is, I suppose, ten years old, but the elders, grown distended as the trees matured, were incised by heathens whose very ghosts are long defunct. Such antiquity surely bespoke the hand of Mr. D'Arnoq's Moriori.

Time passed in that bewitched place & I sought to effect my escape, encouraged by the knowledge that the artists of the "tree sculptures" must earn regular egress from that same pit. One wall looked less sheer than the others & fibrous creepers offered a "rigging" of sorts. I was readying myself for the climb when a puzzling "hum" came to my attention. "Who goes there?" I called (a rash act for an unarmed White trespasser in a heathen shrine). "Shew yourself!" The

silence swallowed my words & their echo & mocked me. My Ailment stirred in my spleen. The “hum” I traced to a mass of flies orbiting a protuberance impaled on a broken-off branch. I poked the lump with a pine stick & nearly retched, for 'twas a piece of stinking offal. I turned to flee, but duty obliged me to dispel a black suspicion that a human heart hung on that tree. I concealed my nose & mouth in my 'kerchief & with my stick, touched a severed ventricle. The organ pulsed as if alive! & my scalding Ailment shot up my spine! As in a dream (but it was not!) a pellucid salamander emerged from its carrion dwelling & darted along the stick to my hand! I flung the stick away & saw not where that salamander disappeared. My blood was enriched by fright & I hastened to effect my escape. Easier written than done, for had I slipped & plunged anew from those vertiginous walls my luck may not have softened my fall a second time, but foot holes had been hewn into the rock & by God's grace I gained the crater's lip with no mishap. Back in the dismal cloud, I craved the presence of men of my own hue, yes, even the rude sailors in the *Musket*, & began my descent on the nonce in what I hoped was a southerly direction. My initial resolve to report all I had seen (surely, Mr. Walker, the de facto if not de jure Consul, should be informed of the robbery of a human heart?) weakened as I approached Ocean Bay. I am still undecided what to report & to whom. The heart was most likely a hog's, or sheep's, surely The prospect of Walker & his ilk felling the trees & selling the dendroglyphs to collectors offends my conscience. A sentimentalist I may be, but I do not wish to be the agent of the Moriori's final violation. \*

*Evening—*

The Southern Cross was bright in the sky ere Henry returned to the *Musket*, having been detained by more islanders seeking to consult “Widow Bryden's Healer Man” on their rheums, yaws & dropsy. “If potatoes were dollars,” rued my friend, “I should be richer than Nebuchadnezzar!” He was concerned by my (much edited) misadventure on Conical Tor & insisted on examining my injuries. Earlier I had prevailed upon the Indian maid to fill my bath & emerged much recruited. Henry donated a pot of balm for my inflammations & refused to take a cent for it. Fearing this may be my last chance to consult with a gifted physician (Henry intends to refuse Cpt. Molyneux's proposal), I unburdened my fears vis-à-vis my Ailment. He listened soberly & asked about the frequency & duration of my spells. Henry regretted he lacked the time & apparatus for a compleat diagnosis, but recommended, upon my return to San Francisco, I find a specialist in tropical parasites as a matter of urgency. (I could not bring myself to tell him there are none.) I slumber not.

*Thursday, 14th November—*

We make sail with the morning tide. I am once more aboard the *Prophetess*, but I cannot pretend it is good to be back. My coffin now stores three great coils of hawser, which I must

scale to attain my bunk, for not one inch of floor is visible. Mr. D'Arnoq sold half a dozen barrels of sundry provisions to the quartermaster & a bolt of sailcloth (much to Walker's disgust). He came aboard to supervise their delivery & collect payment himself & bid me Godspeed. In my coffin we were squeezed like two men in a pothole, so we repaired to the deck for it is a pleasant evening. After discussing divers matters we shook hands & he climbed down to his waiting ketch, ably crewed by two young manservants of mongrel race.

Mr. Roderick has little sympathy with my petition to have the offending hawser removed elsewhere, for he is obliged to quit his private cabin (for the reason stated below) & move to the fo'c'sle with the common sailors, whose number has swollen with five Castilians "poached" from the Spaniard at anchor in the Bay. Their captain was the portrait of a Fury, yet short of declaring war on the *Prophetess*—a battle sure to bloody his nose, for he pilots the leakiest tub—he can do little but thank his stars Cpt. Molyneux required no more deserters. The very words "California Bound" are dusted in gold & beckon all men thitherwards like moths to a lantern. These five replace the two deserters at the Bay of Islands & the hands lost in the tempest, but we are still several men short of a full crew. Finbar tells me the men grumble over the new arrangements, for with Mr. Roderick lodged in their fo'c'sle, they cannot yarn freely over a bottle.

Fate has dealt me a fine compensation. After paying Walker's usurious bill (nor did I tip that scoundrel a cent), I was packing my jackwood trunk when Henry entered, greeting me thus:—"Good morning, Shipmate!" God has answered my prayers! Henry has accepted the post of Ship's Doctor & I am no longer friendless in this floating farmyard. So ornery a mule is the common sailor that, instead of gratitude that a doctor shall be on hand to splint their breakages & treat their infections, one o'erhears them moaning, "What are we, to carry a Ship's Doctor who can't walk a bowsprit? A Royal Barge?"

I must confess to a touch of pique that Cpt. Molyneux afforded a fare-paying gentleman such as myself only my lamentable berth, when a more commodious cabin lay at his disposal all along. Of far greater consequence, however, is Henry's promise to turn his formidable talents to a diagnosis of my Ailment as soon as we are at sea. My relief is indescribable.

*Friday, 15th November—*

We got under weigh at daybreak, notwithstanding Friday is a Jonah amongst sailors. (Cpt. Molyneux growls, "Superstitions, Saints' Days & other blasted fripperies are fine sport for Popish fishwives but *I* am in the business of turning a profit!") Henry & I did not venture on deck, for all hands were busy with rigging & a southerly blows very fresh with a heavy sea; the ship was troublesome last night & is not less so today. We passed half the day arranging Henry's apothecary Besides the appurtenances of the modern physician, my friend owns several learned volumes, in English, Latin & German. A case holds "spectra" of powders in stoppered bottles labeled in Greek. These he compounds to make various pills & unguents. We peered through the steerage hatch towards noon & the Chathams were ink stains on the leaden horizon,

but the rolling & pitching are unsafe for those whose sea legs have vacationed the week ashore.

*Afternoon—*

Torgny the Swede knocked on my coffin door. Surprized & intrigued by his furtive manner, I bade him enter. He seated himself upon a “pyramid” of hawser & whispered that he bore a proposal from a ring of shipmates. “Tell us where the best veins are, the secret ones you locals are keeping for yourselves. Me ’n’ my fellows’ll do the pack work. You’ll just sit pretty & we’ll cut you in a tenth share.”

I required a moment to understand that Torgny was referring to the Californian mining fields. So, a widespread desertion is in the offing once the *Prophetess* reaches her destination & I own, my sympathies are with the seamen! Saying so, I swore to Torgny that I possessed no knowledge of the gold deposits, for I have been absent this twelvemonth, but I would gratis compose a map illustrating the rumored “Eldorados” & gladly. Torgny was agreeable. Tearing a leaf from this journal, I was sketching a schema of Sausa-lito, Benecia, Stanislaus, Sacramento &c. when a malevolent voice spoke out. “Quite the oracle, no, Mr. Quillcock?”

We had not heard Boerhaave descend the companionway & nudge open my door! Torgny cried in dismay, declaring his guilt in a trice. “What, pray,” continued the first mate, “what business have you with our passenger, Pustule of Stockholm?” Torgny was struck dumb, but I would not be cowed & told the bully I was describing the “sights” of my town, the better for Torgny to enjoy his shore leave.

Boerhaave raised his eyebrows. “You allot shore leave now, do you? New news to my old ears. That paper, Mr. Ewing, if you please.” I did not please. My gift to the seaman was not the Dutchman’s to commandeer. “Oh, begging your pardon, Mr. Ewing. Torgny, take receipt of your *gift*.” I had no choice but to hand it to the prostrate Swede. Mr. Boerhaave uttered, “Torgny, give me *your* gift instanter or, by the hinges of hell, you shall regret the day you crawled from your mother’s [my quill curls at recording his profanity].” The mortified Swede complied.

“Most educational,” remarked Boerhaave, eyeing my cartography “The captain will be delighted to learn of the pains you are taking to better our scabby Jacks, Mr. Ewing. Torgny you’re on masthead watch for twenty-four hours. Forty-eight if you’re seen taking refreshment. Drink you own p— — if you get a thirst.”

Torgny fled, but the first mate was not finished with me. “Sharks ply these waters, Mr. Quillcock. They ship for tasty jetsam, they do. Once I saw one eat a passenger. He, like you, was neglectful of his safety & fell o’erboard. We heard his screams. Great Whites *toy* with their dinner, gnawing ’em slow, a leg here, a nibble there & that miserable b— — was alive longer than you’d credit. Think on it.” He shut my coffin door. Boerhaave, like all bullies & tyrants, takes pride in that very hatefulness which makes him notorious.

*Saturday, 16th November—*

My Fates have inflicted upon me the greatest unpleasance of my voyage to date! A shade of Old Rekohu has thrust *me*, whose only desiderata are quietude & discretion, into a pillory of suspicion & gossip! Yet I am guilty on *no counts* save Christian trustingness & relentless ill fortune! One month to the day has passed since we put out from New South Wales, when I wrote this sunny sentence, “I anticipate an uneventful & tedious voyage.” How that entry mocks me! I shall never forget the last eighteen hours, but since I cannot sleep nor think (& Henry is now abed) my only escape from insomnia now is to curse my Luck on these sympathetic pages.

Last night I retired to my coffin “dog tired.” After my prayers I blew out my lantern & lulled by the ship’s myriad voices I sank into the shallows of sleep when a husky voice *inside my coffin!* awakened me wide-eyed & affright! “Mr. Ewing,” beseeched this urgent whisper. “Do not fear—Mr. Ewing—no harm, no shout, please, sir.”

I jumped involuntarily & knocked my head against the bulkhead. By the twin glimmers of amber-light through my ill-fitted door & starlight through my porthole, I saw a serpentine length of hawser uncoil itself & a black form heave itself free like the dead at the Last Trump! A powerful hand seemed to sail through the blackness & sealed my lips ere I could cry out! My assailant hissed, “Missa Ewing, no harm, you safe, I friend of Mr. D’Arnoq—you know he Christian—please, quiet!”

Reason, at last, rallied against my fear. A man, not a spirit, was hiding in my room. If he wished to slit my throat for my hat, shoes & legal box, I would already be dead. If my gaoler was a stowaway, why he, not I, was in peril for his life. From his uncut language, his faint silhouette & his smell, I intuited the stowaway was an Indian, alone on a boat of fifty White Men. Very well. I nodded, slowly, to indicate I would not cry out.

The cautious hand released my lips. “My name is Autua,” he said. “You know I, you seen I, aye—you pity I.” I asked what he was talking about. “Maori whip I—you seen.” My memory overcame the bizarreness of my situation & I recalled the Moriori being flogged by the “Lizard King.” This heartened him. “You good man—Mr. DArnoq tell you good man—he hid I in your cabin yesterday night—I escape—you help, Mr. Ewing.” Now a groan escaped my lips! & his hand clasped my mouth anew. “If you no help—I in trouble dead.”

All too true, I thought, & moreover you’ll drag me down with you, unless I convince Cpt. Molyneux of my innocence! (I burned with resentment at DArnoq’s act & burn still. Let *him* save his “good causes” & leave innocent bystanders be!) I told the stowaway he was already “in trouble dead.” The *Prophetess* was a mercantile vessel, not an “underground railroad” for rescued slaves.

“I able seaman!” insisted the Black. “I earn passage!” Well & good, I told him (dubious of his claim to be a sailor of pedigree) & urged him to surrender himself to the captain’s mercies forthwith. “No! They no listen I! *Swim away home, Nigger*, they say & throw I in drink! You lawman aye? You go, you talk, I stay, I hide! Please. Cap’n hear you, Missa Ewing. Please.” In vain I sought to convince him, no intercessor at Cpt. Molyneux’s court was less favored than the Yankee Adam Ewing. The Moriori’s adventure was his own & I desired no part in it. His

hand found mine & to my consternation closed my fingers around the hilt of a dagger. Resolute & bleak was his demand. "Then kill I." With a terrible calmness & certitude, he pressed its tip against his throat. I told the Indian he was mad. "I not mad, you no help I, you kill I, just same. It's true, you know it." (I implored him to restrain himself & speak soft.) "So kill I. Say to others I attack you, so you kill I. I ain't be fish food, Mr. Ewing. Die here is better."

Cursing my conscience singly, my fortune doubly & Mr. D'Arnoq trebly, I bade him sheath his knife & for Heaven's sake conceal himself lest one of the crew hear and come knocking. I promised to approach the captain at breakfast, for to interrupt his slumbers would only ensure the doom of the enterprise. This satisfied the stowaway & he thanked me. He slid back inside the coils of rope, leaving me to the near-impossible task of constructing a case for an Aboriginal stowaway, aboard an English schooner, without attainting his discoverer & cabinmate with a charge of conspiracy. The savage's breathing told me he was sleeping. I was tempted to make a dash for the door & howl for help, but in the eyes of God my word was my bond, even to an Indian.

The cacophony of timbers creaking, of masts swaying, of ropes flexing, of canvas clapping, of feet on decks, of goats bleating, of rats scuttling, of the pumps beating, of the bell dividing the watches, of melees & laughter from the fo'c'sle, of orders, of windlass shanties & of Tethys' eternal realm; all lulled me as I calculated how best I could convince Cpt. Molyneux of my innocence in Mr. D'Arnoq's plot (now I must be more vigilant than ever that this diary should not be read by unfriendly eyes) when a falsetto yell, beginning far off but speeding nearer at a crossbolt's velocity was silenced by the deck, mere inches above where I lay.

Such a terrible finality! Prone I lay, shocked & rigid, forgetting to breathe. Shouts far & near rose, feet gathered & an alarum of "Raise Doctor Goose!" cried forth.

"Sorry b— — fall from rigging, dead now." The Indian whispered as I made haste to investigate the disturbance. "You can nothing, Missa Ewing." I ordered him to stay hidden & hurried out. I fancy the stowaway sensed how tempted I was to use the accident to betray him.

The crew stood around a man lying prone at the base of the mid-mast. By the lurching lantern light I recognized one of the Castili-ans. (I own that my first emotion was relief that not Rafael but another had fallen to his death.) I overheard the Icelander say the dead man had won his compatriots' arrack ration at cards & drunk it all before his watch. Henry arrived in his nightshirt with his doctor's bag. He knelt by the mangled form & felt for a pulse, but shook his head. "This fellow has no need of a doctor." Mr. Roderick retrieved the Castilian's boots & clothes for auction & Mankin fetched some third-rate sackcloth for the cadaver. (Mr. Boerhaave will deduct the sackcloth from the auction's profits.) The Jacks returned to their fo'c'sle or their stations in silence, every man made somber by this reminder of the fragility of life. Henry, Mr. Roderick & I stayed to watch the Castilians perform their Catholick death rites over their countryman before knotting up the sack & committing his body to the deep with tears & dolorous *adíos!* "Passionate Latinos," observed Henry, bidding me a second good night. I yearned to share the secret of the Indian with my friend, but held my tongue lest my complicity infect him.



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