Rereading *Heart of Darkness*

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"Mistah Kurtz, he dead"

I. We prefer games with rules, red and black pieces, even mazes and conundrums, rather than uncontrollable, unseen darkness lurking within. When we had hoped to find mere banality, discovery of inexplicable terrifying evil and mindless violence frightens; We don't want to deal with severed heads or the stench of buried hippo -- real or metaphorical.

II. An idealist armed with values of his culture, Kurtz reverts to racism, savagery. Indifferent to elephants, humans. his one-minded quest for ivory is cursed with ferocious accumulating impulse. Is "The horror! The horror!"

III. Fascinated, hypnotized by Kurtz as an alternative to imperialistic pawns, does not Marlow go ashore for a howl and a dance? When Kurtz escapes, Marlow stalks him in the jungle as if he were his prey before confronting the danger in himself, rediscovering moral track he almost lost. Like Gulliver, he returns shadowed, checked, yet enlightened by experience. We readers, too.