THE BUTTERFLY HUNTER

Written by

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Based on My Life by Alfred Russel WAllace

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SCENE 1 MALAY JUNGLE

MUSIC - MALAYSIAN MUSIC. SFX OF MALAY JUNGLE. CACOPHANY OF SOUND

The story is a dream and a reflection of the life of Alfred Russel Wallace

Deep in the heart of the Malay jungle is a small camp set up by the naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace. He lies on a camp bed, sheltered by a muslin net, half drawn. He is surrounded by specimens in jars and items to trap insects and small animals.

We hear the voice of his mother - Mary Wallace singing a gentle folksong - The Water is Wide

MARY WALLACE

The Water is wide I Cannot get over Nor have I wings

With which to-o-o fly O-o-h give me a boat That can carry two

We both shall row, My love and I

As we are drawn closer, Wallace is sick in his bed with malaria and we hear the voice inside his head...

WALLACE

Why do some things die and some survive? Why do some things die and some

survive?...

Why do some things die and some survive? Why do some things die and some

survive?...

V/O MARY WALLACE

Alfred!

Suddenly larger than life specimens come to life e.g a bird of paradise, a flying frog and a Golden Birdwing butterfly as part of his fevered dream, but slowly they transform into his mother, Mary Wallace and his father, Thomas Wallace.

Apart from Wallace all other characters should have insect qualities symbolised by costume.

WALLACE

Why do some things die and some survive?

V/O MARY ANN

Alfred!

Thomas Wallace, Wallace's father appears, a jovial victorian gent, with clothes showing a past affluence. He is a gifted storyteller

THOMAS WALLACE

Once upon a time there was a gangly boy ...

WALLACE

Why do some things die?...

THOMAS WALLACE

Once upon a time there was a gangly boy who dreamed...

WALLACE

...and some survive?

THOMAS WALLACE

dreamed of walking into a dark dark forest to find the answer to one of life's great mysteries...

We are taken from the jungle to his home life in Usk

THOMAS WALLACE (CONT’D)

He ventured further and further to lands and oceans where no other boy had been before... He was an an adventurer, an explorer who discovered creatures never seen by man before...in a dark, dark forest where the trees covered the sky...

CONTINUED: (2)

MARY ANN

Alfred! John!

Your supper will be cold, and there's nowt else for ye. Come on now!

Thomas sees Mary and sees an opportunity

THOMAS

...and strange noises can be heard from deep, deep within the canopy...arrck

(makes a bird noise) Mary Wallace jumps Thomas Wallace laughs.

MARY ANN

Stop this foolery, Thomas Wallace you will be the death of me. Baby Edward has finally gone off to sleep, and I need our children in bed by dusk. More fitter if you found a position as a lawyer instead of telling the children stories all day long....

THOMAS WALLACE

Now my dear wife, you know how dreary I find office life.

MARY ANN

But we have no money, we have five children, and our eldest has had to go out to find work and...

THOMAS WALLACE

We may be poor but we are rich in our hearts!

MARY ANN

Stories don't pay the rent

THOMAS WALLACE

Aah that's where you may be wrong my dear wife, you will be pleased to know I have found a new venture

MARY ANN

What is it this time?

THOMAS WALLACE (HOLDING UP A NEWSPAPER)

This my dear wife will make our fortune Our

fortune.

CONTINUED: (3)

(MARY ANN (reading the title of the newspaper) De Vere Tribune.

THOMAS WALLACE

My new venture. My newspaper.

MARY ANN

Why would anyone need another newspaper?

THOMAS WALLACE

Stories, my dear. Stories. Now everyone needs stories...

MARY ANN

Stories don't feed you...

THOMAS WALLACE

Of course they do they feed the soul and that is what separates us from the beasts!

Thomas Wallace hands Wallace, who has been observing his mother and father, a newspaper. Thomas Wallace takes his wife into his arms and dances with her.

THOMAS WALLACE (CONT’D)

May I have this dance with you Miss...

MARY WALLACE

Stop this silliness, Thomas Wallace...

He carries on regardless.

THOMAS WALLACE

Let us dance and forget our troubles for a little while... They dance

MARY WALLACE

I must hurry our young ones in. It'll soon be night, and they will catch their death up there in the ferns.

THOMAS WALLACE

You are like a mother hen, leave them be to discover the wonders of their world...

MARY WALLACE

The wonders of the world can wait. Now I want them in for their supper...

They look to one another.

Aah,

THOMAS WALLACE

(clearly avoiding seeing to the baby)

Now then, farewell, I am off out to make our fortune.

MARY WALLACE (SHE CALLS AFTER HIM)

Don't you forget, the rent is needed....

Mary turns to rock the baby to sleep.

She starts to sing a gentle folksong - The Water is Wide

MARY WALLACE (CONT’D)

The Water is Wide I Cannot get over

Nor have I Wings With which to-o-o fly O-o-h give me a boat

That can carry Two We both shall Row My love and I

As the song is sung we see Wallace and John as young children, his brother, playing in the river Usk, catching fish.

As we watch the brothers catch the fish. We use puppets to see the fish swim, as Wallace is mesmerized by them. We create the River Usk in front of their little cottage in the Usk.

JOHN

Now take it slowly...quietly, Alfred you can be

far too clumsy to catch anything...

WALLACE

What if I drown?

JOHN

Drown! How can you drown in a foot of water. Now Ssh Whispering

WALLACE

There's the chub, dace, roach and the bullhead....

JOHN

...and the lampreys too...

WALLACE

...Or stone suckers...

JOHN

They Look like eels...

WALLACE

And like fish too, scary looking ~~things, instead~~ of jaws they have suckers, With rows and rows of really sharp teeth it helps them to stick to other fish...

JOHN

and suck their sustenance...

WALLACE

 they suck blood!

JOHN

... Like vampire bats!

Pause as they observe the fish

WALLACE

When do you think father will be home?

JOHN

Don't know.

WALLACE

Are we poor?

JOHN

Yes...

WALLACE AND JOHN

But rich in our hearts!

WALLACE

I wish our brother William was here with us

JOHN

He needed to work. We'll see him soon, I'm sure of it.

WALLACE

If father's business does well, then we will all be together again. I like it when we are all together.

John is too busy trying to catch a fish.

JOHN

Got one!

WALLACE

Have you?

JOHN

Yes, this one wasn't swift enough to get away!

He holds the fish aloft! They catch the fish and bring them home.

MARY WALLACE

Alfred...John!

They run to her

JOHN

We have supper !

Brought home by your intrepid explorers

MARY WALLACE

You've been in that river again?

John and Alfred look at one another. Obviously they have

JOHN

Ah yes!

MARY WALLACE

How many times do I have to say...

WALLACE

Why do some things die and some survive?...

JOHN

Why do some get away, and some don't?

MARY WALLACE

Go and get washed!

JOHN

Is father home?

WALLACE

Will we have one of his stories tonight?

MARY WALLACE

No, we shall not. If you want stories then I suggest you come home when I call you. You'll need to take those trousers off I need to dry them out...

WALLACE

No need Mother they are nearly dry, I took them off and put them on the wall near the church to dry in the sun...

JOHN

Yes and he showed his underwear to all and sundry!

MARY WALLACE

You did what?

JOHN

In the midday sun!

WALLACE (TO JOHN)

Thank you.

MARY WALLACE

Oh for heavens sake what will Father Price think of us!

JOHN

Feral Children - no doubt!

WALLACE

Mother, why do somethings die and some survive?

MARY WALLACE

Why do you always ask why?

WALLACE

What?

MARY WALLACE

Why do you always ask questions? Be silent, Alfred!

WALLACE

Father says "To question is to live. Poor is the man who never asks?"

MARY WALLACE

More fitter if he asked where next month’s rent was coming from.

She realises she has spoken out of turn. John exits

Silence

WALLACE

(referring to the fish)

We shall keep him one for supper.

Mary sits. Wallace enters and watches his mother read the newspaper. He takes it from her and he reads.

WALLACE (READING) (CONT’D)

Due to the fragile nature of the markets, the De Vere Tribune failed to secure a buyer, and so the illustrious newspaper will cease production as of today. Mr Thomas Wallace of Llanbadoc, Usk, proprietor of the newspaper regretted the failure of his recent venture but remained philosophical and optimistic ...

A solitary light picks up Thomas Wallace alone.

THOMAS WALLACE

One must not keel over at adversity, but charge forward with renewed vigour. That is how we survive.

Thomas Wallace enters. Mary Wallace is snivelling and clearly upset.

THOMAS WALLACE

Now then, we are about to embark on an adventure. As one door closes another one is opening, as we speak. My investment into my own newspaper was not successful, and so, we are unable to keep our lovely little cottage here on the banks of the Usk, we must move on...

WALLACE

But father this is our home...

THOMAS WALLACE

Not anymore Alfred, not anymore, your mother has had the misfortune of losing her stepmother.

WALLACE

Where did you leave her?

Mary Wallace gives out a cry.

THOMAS WALLACE

Not losing her, as in lost not found, losing her as in dead.

WALLACE

Oh...

Mary Wallace wails into her handkerchief.

THOMAS WALLACE

Oh, I'm so sorry dear. I did not mean to be so insensitive. But hey ho.

We have been left with a small endowment, which will keep us fed and watered.

Unfortunately, it is in Hertford...

WALLACE

Where's that?

THOMAS WALLACE

miles, and so we must pack up our belongings and head East, across the Bristol Channel.

The Family with all their belongings pack up and leave Wales, and we take the precarious journey across the large wide river on the smallest boat possible.

SCENE 3 THE JOURNEY TO ENGLAND

Music (possibly a version of the folk song) Bristol Channel crossing on a small ferry.

The waves are huge and the little boat is tossed around. We see the entire family, Thomas, Mary, Alfred, John, Frances and Baby Edward as puppets

Against the thundering sound of the waves

THOMAS WALLACE

Hold tight my children, hold tight! Alfred?

WALLACE

Yes.

THOMAS WALLACE

John?

JOHN

Yes.

THOMAS WALLACE

Frances?

FRANCES

Yes?

THOMAS WALLACE

Edward? The baby starts to cry

WALLACE

My hands are numb I am holding so tight!

JOHN

Look how huge the waves are!

WALLACE

Sit John, you will go overboard!

FRANCES

I am wet. I am wet!

MARY WALLACE

We are soaked father, soaked. Soaked to the skin.

WALLACE

What if we drown?

Sound of a baby crying!

MARY WALLACE

Ssh my little one

JOHN

Look how far land is?

WALLACE

I can't open my eyes.

FRANCES

I feel sick!

THOMAS WALLACE

Hold fast my little ones. Hold fast!

More baby cries

MARY WALLACE

Ssh. Nearly there, nearly there!

JOHN

How deep is the water? It is black as pitch!

WALLACE

Don't lean too far John, you will tip us all over The little boat lists Aaaaah.

THOMAS WALLACE

Hold fast my little ones hold fast!

Wallace goes overboard, but his father catches him and saves him.

WALLACE

Help!

THOMAS WALLACE

Lift him, quickly lift him.

WALLACE

I can't swim!

They lift Wallace back into the boat. The mother cwtshes him.

MARY WALLACE

Come close to me, come close to me As they reach dry land Baby has stopped crying.

THOMAS WALLACE

Safe and sound. A huge sigh of relief, and then...

Only another 130 miles!

They all groan

THOMAS WALLACE (CONT’D)

Why don't we have a sing-along.

Starts to sing - links to school

Wallace watches as his family disappears, he finds himself back in the Malay jungle. He starts to murmur Latin verbs.

A school bell rings

SCENE 4 HERTFORD

Latin verbs and the times table are recited in rhythm. As they are recited the words are animated on the set as if written by a teacher on a blackboard.

The class consists of Wallace and another child Freddie

ALL

video vides videt videmus videtis vident

One's nine is nine, two nines are eighteen three nines are twenty-seven, and four nines are thirty-six.

TEACHER

The school was built and founded in...? You boy?

(Teacher points to one of the teachers in the audience) Wrong! 1617. Wallace here! Read your work!

WALLACE

Hertford is very different to Wales. In Llanbadoc...

TEACHER

Clan What?

WALLACE

Llanbadoc, where I was born, we lived on the banks of the river, and me and my brothers...

TEACHER

My brothers and I!

WALLACE

We would climb the steep wooded bank and build dens in the ferns and light a fire, and roast potatoes in the embers..

TEACHER

Like feral children. You Celts are still to be civilised. Sit down...

WALLACE

What's feral?

FREDDIE

Like a wild animal.

WALLACE

Like a bat.

FREDDIE

Like a tiger

WALLACE

Like a boar...

FREDDIE

Like her.

WALLACE

Yeah she's a bore...

Freddie laughs

TEACHER

Pardon?

FREDDIE

He said you were a bore.

TEACHER

You said what?

WALLACE

I said boar, not bore.

TEACHER

Come here boy!

Wallace walks over to the teacher and she canes him.

TEACHER (CONT’D)

You will stay behind and write an essay on "My school..."

Wallace tries to sit but can't so he stands to write

WALLACE

"My school is rather tedious and irrelevant...

I would much rather escape and visit my father, who has given up his dreams of making his fortune and spends his days in working in the

...

THOMAS WALLACE

Ssh!

SCENE 5 IN THE LIBRARY

Thomas Wallace enters carrying a huge tower of books

WALLACE

Library.

THOMAS WALLACE

Ssh

WALLACE

(whispering)

My mother was pleased.

MARY WALLACE (WHISPERING)

Oh, I am pleased.

THOMAS WALLACE

Ssh!

WALLACE

I would go down to the library to be with him. The library was a world miniaturized in a room.

THOMAS WALLACE

Shouldn't you be in school Alfred?

WALLACE

Yes father.

THOMAS WALLACE

Well why aren't you?

WALLACE

They don't teach me anything I want to know.

THOMAS WALLACE

Well what do you want to know?

WALLACE

Everything.

THOMAS WALLACE

Come with me, let us mine for magic among the shelves.

WALLACE

What is this?

THOMAS WALLACE

Baron Alexander Von Humboldt's "A personal Narrative of Travels to South America"

WALLACE

The tropics?

Pointing to an image in the book

THOMAS WALLACE

That is the longest river in the world - The Amazon.

WALLACE (TO HIMSELF)

The amazing Amazon (to his dad) Longer than the Usk?

THOMAS WALLACE

Oh yes, and a lot more fish.

Thomas Wallace takes him to a book, which is full of insects and creatures. As he opens the book, butterflies fly out of the pages and surround him.

Music conveys the beauty and delicate nature of the butterfly but also the excitement that Wallace feels.

In enters a young boy - Henry Walter Bates

HENRY WALTER BATES

Can I borrow that book?

WALLACE

You can have it, I have read it a thousand times?

As they look at the butterflies Henry starts to name them

HENRY WALTER BATES

Lycaena phlaeas, Satyrium pruni, Lampides boeticus, Lycaena dispar

As he reads them out the words are projected onto the set, written as if written in a child's exercise book, or on a blackboard

HENRY WALTER BATES (CONT’D)

Henry Bates.

They shake hands

WALLACE

How do you know them all?

HENRY WALTER BATES

I collect them, and beetles

WALLACE

Collect?

HENRY WALTER BATES

Yes. Collect. Come home with me I will show you.

WALLACE

You live in a large house. You must be very rich.

Henry hands him a collection box

HENRY WALTER BATES

And I have hundreds upon hundreds of different species of beetle.

WALLACE

Where have they all come from?

HENRY WALTER BATES

The ground!

WALLACE

Oh? How many different types are there?

HENRY WALTER BATES

Well..

As Henry describes the beetle we should see the different types off beetle Music

COLEOPTERA – THE BEETLE SONG (words Phylip Harries) (Mainly sung in twelve syllables per line.

HENRY WALTER BATES (CONT’D)

In Britain we have three thousand and five hundred,

Of which you’ll find some pests that damage crops and grain.

The little weevils through timber they have plundered

WALLACE

And when the wood rots, these chafers are a pain.

BATES

The world of insects has no one who Is heavier Than these two beetles here who no one will they stop. And if Hercules can face another labour

I’m sure that this time, Goliath’ll come out on top.

Chorus

Coleoptera’s the Latin word for Beetle

It comes from koleos that’s Greek to you and me. It invades all known habitats and then it’ll Even make it down to swim beneath the sea!

BATES (CONT’D)

Well I have just hundreds of different types of species

Middle Eight:

And on the other hand

There’s Beetles on the land Who band together In filthy weather,

Recycling faeces From other species Getting down among All the farmyard dung

Where they dwell and burrow Like there’s no tomorrow They’ll save the world and then Recycle once again

BATES (CONT’D)

Recycles once again, recycle once again recycle once again... WALLACE: (spoken) what on earth are you doing?

(spoken) I’m recycling dear chap, recycling. Because you see... (Big Breath)

(MORE)

BATES (CONT’D)

CHORUS:

BATES (CONT’D)

Coleoptera’s the Latin word for Beetle

It comes from koleos that’s Greek to you and me. It invades all known habitats and then it’ll Even make it down to swim beneath the sea!

Coleoptera’s the Latin word for Beetle

It comes from koleos that’s Greek to you and me

(Slow build to big finish) And be it ladybird or weevil (pause)

The one who’ll cause the most upheaval

BATES (CONT’D)

It’s the fun beetle,...

WALLACE

...the down among beetle...

BATES

...The give it some beetle...

WALLACE

...The which one beetle...

BATES

...It’s the dung beetle!!!

WALLACE AND BATES

...the one for me!

WALLACE

But why are there so many different types?

HENRY WALTER BATES

Well I'm not sure.

This one is my favourite, because of the colours.

They both sit and stare at the beetles pondering the thought.

Thomas Wallace appears...

THOMAS WALLACE

What are you doing Alfred?

WALLACE

Just thinking...

THOMAS WALLACE

About what?

WALLACE

About the world and the things that live in it. I want to find out as much as I can.

THOMAS WALLACE

And you should.

WALLACE

Father, why are there so many different types?

THOMAS WALLACE

Ahh, thats the mystery that needs solving...

WALLACE

and I want to solve that mystery...

THOMAS WALLACE

Ask the question, poor is the man who never asks...

The teacher appears. The father disappears. He's about to answer but actually he can't because he doesn't know and so he is saved by the bell...

A school bell rings...

Latin verbs and the times table being recited in rhythm

ALL (V/O)

Colligo Colliges Colliget Colligemus Colligetis Colligent

Colligo Colliges Colliget Colligemus Colligetis

Colligent One's four is four, two fours are eight, three fours are twelve,four fours are sixteen.

Wallace puts his hand up.

WALLACE

Why are there so many different types of insects, sir?

TEACHER

Not now Wallace.

WALLACE

But, my father says poor is the man who never asks.

TEACHER

Wallace you have been excused for the day...

WALLACE

I have? But I only asked a question. I never meant anything by it.

TEACHER

You must go home at once.

WALLACE

Home?

TEACHER

Yes, home. To your mother.

Pause

Your father has died.

WALLACE

Why do some things die and some survive ...

*Wallace, gets a piece of paper and starts to write a letter... We hear his mother sing, and she appears.*

 MARY WALLACE

The Water is Wide I Cannot get over Nor have I wings

With which to-o-o fly O-o-h give me a boat That can carry two

We both shall row, My love and I

 MARY WALLACE (CONT’D)

I have made arrangements for you to join your brother William in Wales. He is surveying the land for the new railways. You will be his apprentice.

He has sent a ticket for your journey to Britton Ferry, in Neath.

 WALLACE

Ferry?

Remembering the last journey on the ferry across the channel

 MARY WALLACE

You'll be safe this time.

 WALLACE

I will write every day, and send money home each week.

 MARY WALLACE

You are a good boy Alfred. Take care.

SCENE 6 RETURN TO WALES

Wallace arrives at the dockside in Bristol

 FERRYMAN

You for the ferry across the channel

Wallace thinks for a moment. Remembers the last journey.

FERRYMAN (CONT’D)

4 hours by boat or 8 hours by coach Sound of a horse drawn carriage.

Wallace gets on a coach to Neath. A huge lady (bird) helps him up. Very red and jovial, she has three young boys with her, who she barks orders at as she speaks to Wallace.

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

(introduces herself, holding out) (her hand)

Hello. Mrs Jack.

Here are my little ones, Jedediah, Theodore, and Edward.

WALLACE

Hello. Alfred Wallace.

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

How far you be going? (to the boys)

Sit Ted!

WALLACE

To Neath

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

Nice?

WALLACE

No, Neath. Aah,

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

(to the boys) Wipe it Jed

WALLACE

And you?

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

Merthyr Tydfil.

(to the boys) Don't pull that, Ted. (Back to Wallace)

(MORE)

GLOUCESTER WOMAN (CONT’D)

They call it Murder Tydfil, but I don’t pay any heed to that.

WALLACE

Oh.

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

Different to Stroud.

WALLACE

Yes.

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

My husband is already there. At the iron works. (to the boys) SIT!

(To Wallace)

Me and the little ones are joining him. (To the boys) Wipe it!

She hands a handkerchief to one of them

WALLACE

Oh. I'm joining my brother...

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

Had our farm taken from us see...

WALLACE

He's a surveyor for the....

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

These damn railways Jed, Ted, Ned SIT!

She has clearly scared Wallace

GLOUCESTER WOMAN (CONT’D)

What did you say your brother did?...

She doesn't wait for an answer.

GLOUCESTER WOMAN (CONT’D)

Once those railways arrive, our little island will never be the same. We'll probably run out of land, mark my words.

WALLACE

Run out of land?

GLOUCESTER WOMAN

We'll all be living in the sea! She turns round to where her children are

GLOUCESTER WOMAN (CONT’D)

Oh, look, sleeping like angels.

As the coach trundles along, she cosies up to Wallace, almost suffocating him. They arrive in Neath.

COACHMAN

Neath. Neath. All change for Murder Tydfil.

SCENE 7 SURVEYING

He gets out a paper and pen and starts to write.

WALLACE

Dear Mother, the lodging house is in Neath Abbey, with the Drymau Mountain behind, rising 700ft and....

A tram rattles pass,

Mary Wallace takes over from reading the letter. As she reads we see William and Alfred set about their work as surveyors.

MARY WALLACE/ WALLACE

...a tramway in front.

Wallace starts to itch

MARY WALLACE (READING HIS LETTER)

I have discovered an insect called

WALLACE

Cimex lectularius -

MARY WALLACE (READING HIS LETTER)

A bed bug.

WALLACE

I didn't sleep for a fortnight. I was bitten all over.

WILLIAM

Alfred! Alfred!

William Wallace, Alfred's older brother appears.

MARY WALLACE (READING)

William is very keen, and he is teaching me the ways of surveying..

WILLIAM

We have work to do... Bill hook, chain, flag rods and pegs!

He hands these things to Wallace, who awkwardly sets about surveying William has bundles of maps and starts to work, measuring and taking notes.

MARY WALLACE (READING)

"As soon as I get paid I will send my wage home to you. How are Frances and Edward? Has he started school yet?"

WILLIAM

Let’s get this business done. If you can draw up

the maps, I will set about writing up our notes Wallace sits to draw. We see his drawings projected on the set.

MARY WALLACE

"...William says I am good at drawing and so he has given me the task of mapping. The work here is ideal for me, out in the open air walking further and further deep into the Welsh countryside."

WALLACE (WRITING)

Mother, you and children would love it here. Once we have made enough money I will build you a cottage on the banks of the Nedd. I am still making collections, and I write to Henry every time I find a new species of beetle.

(MORE)

WALLACE (WRITING) (CONT'D)

As we are cutting up the land, beneath us a whole new universe teeming with life...

WILLIAM

Alfred, stop your daydreaming, and get those instruments packed away.

MARY WALLACE

"...Please don't mention this to William he doesn't approve..."

WILLIAM

I need you to follow the Hepste river.

WALLACE

Oh, right you are. Wallace puts his drawing away.

WILLIAM

What have you got there?

Oh this? Coleoptera...

WALLACE

WILLIAM

Colli what?

The music begins for the song. But stops abruptly...

WALLACE

It’s a beetle. I thought I would make detailed drawings so that I can identify it when I get back to our lodgings. I managed to get this book out of the library....

WILLIAM

We are here to draw maps not bugs!.

He crumples the drawing up and thrusts it back to Wallace.

WILLIAM (CONT’D)

Get to work Alfred, remember you are my apprentice, and I don't pay you to collect small things that have no value.

WALLACE

Never neglect the small things.

WILLIAM

What did you say?

WALLACE

Never...neglect..the ...small...things. Father used to say so...

WILLIAM

Never mind what Father used to say, he's gone, and we have to provide for Mother and the family.

WILLIAM (CONT’D)

Now they will be blasting through that rock there to create a link to transport coal, and iron to the port in Swansea.

WALLACE

But what about the creatures that live there?

WILLIAM

Will you stop harping on about the creatures. If they have to clear the land they will.

WALLACE

But it'll affect the balance.

WILLIAM

Of what?

WALLACE

Well if one home goes, then it'll affect another, and another, and surely it will finally affect us.

WILLIAM

They will need to adapt like we have had to.

WALLACE

Adapt?

WILLIAM

Change. Everything is changing, all the time. Nothing can stand in the way of commerce and development.

WALLACE

Change.

WILLIAM

Yes, change.

But first we have to finish off mapping the river

Then We have to collect rent for Mr Worthington, the landlord. There are some tenant farmers on his land who are slow in paying him, so we need to collect their rent.

 WALLACE

Will we go together

 WILLIAM

No I have to Leave to London.

 WALLACE

Why?

 WILLIAM

There is a reading of the railway bill at parliament and they have asked me to advised. I will return Tuesday

SCENE 9 GRUG

Wallace looks at the list and goes to the first home, a small holding. There are a few sheep and cattle grazing.

WALLACE

Hello! Do you always walk around with a jug on your head?

GRUG

Be ti moen?

WALLACE

I don’t Speak welsh only very tipyn bach.

GRUG

What do you want?

WALLACE

Oh...umm...well I am here on business for Mr Worthington.

GRUG

O y chwilen di-don Wallace looks none the wiser.

GRUG (CONT’D)

You can hear him murdering that poor violin all the way to Pont Nedd Fechan!

WALLACE

Oh I haven't had the pleasure yet. I believe you owe him the sum of...

GRUG

...My father isn't here.

WALLACE

Your mother perhaps?

GRUG

No. She passed away last Christmas.

Oh.

WALLACE

(he feels awkward - doesn't know what to say, so bluts out...) My

father is dead.

(Realises he has been insensitive) I am sorry. Please forgive me.

A baby is heard crying.

I better be going. I have to tend to the house and my brothers and sisters.

WALLACE (CONT’D)

How many are there?

GRUG

Eight.

WALLACE

Oh I have three brothers, William, John and Edward and a sister Frances.

GRUG

Like I said I'd better be going. If you need to see my father he will be home this evening, but leaves first thing tomorrow morning to get to the mart.

Wallace looks around at the livestock.

GRUG (CONT’D)

It’s very nice to meet you, Mr Wallace.

WALLACE

Alfred.

GRUG

Hwyl fawr.

She leaves. Wallace stands alone. A Violin starts to play

SCENE 10 MR WORTHINGTON

Mr Worthington enters he has the persona of a garish beetle. Full of glossy colour. Knows his own worth and hails from Devonshire

MR WORTHINGTON

Welcome to my home. Isn't it grand.

He looks past Wallace

Oh, your brother not with you?

WALLACE

No.

MR WORTHINGTON

Are you having any joy collecting?

WALLACE

(misunderstands)

Oh yes i found this rare species of beetle up near the falls.

MR WORTHINGTON

What you blethering on about? The rent.

WALLACE

Oh, a little.

MR WORTHINGTON

Sitting on a gold mine they are.

WALLACE

I don't think they see it like that Mr Worthington, they barely have enough land to survive.

Mr Worthington fetches his violin

MR WORTHINGTON

Do you play Mr Wallace?

WALLACE

No, I'm afraid I don't.

MR WORTHINGTON

Well I shall play for you. I really am very good.

Mr Worthington begins to play the most god awful music

WALLACE

Its awful...

MR WORTHINGTON

Your are right there, Yes, these farmers are awful. Deary, deary me,

They may turn violent.

I hope you are not soft on them. Those celts.

MR WORTHINGTON (CONT’D)

They have no money to buy that land, all they use it for is growing few veg, graze their meagre livestock, and for what? A few pennies at market...when we all know the potential for that land to make money is huge.

Was that not fine, Master Wallace? (referring to his playing)

WALLACE

Umm yes.

MR WORTHINGTON

There are not many amateurs who could play in that style, are there? - Professionals either!

WALLACE

Mmm.

MR WORTHINGTON

Don't I deserve praise for that Mr Wallace?

WALLACE

Yes, you do.

MR WORTHINGTON

Well?

WALLACE

That was good.

MR WORTHINGTON

It was wasn't it. I thank you.

Wallace turns to leave

Don't be fooled by those Welsh farmers, speaking that god forsaken dead lingo -ycha mycha, dycha. Now you get that rent from them, or I will have to release you and your brother from our contract.

The awful violin starts up again!

SCENE 11 ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE

Wallace goes back to Grug's farm. It is all quiet and still.

WALLACE

Hello!

He looks around no one is there. He sits down, and sees a butterfly.

He catches it, and lets it settle on his hand, as he studies it. Grug appears

WALLACE (CONT’D)

They are truly wonderful creatures.

GRUG

Pilia Pala.

WALLACE

Is that what you call them?

GRUG

That's the welsh name or Iar Fach yr Haf, little chicken of summer.

WALLACE

Boloria euphrosyne.

The Latin name, or common name, Pearl- bordered Fritillary. With its orange and black spots on the upper side of its wing, and on the underside there is a row of silver pearly markings along the edge, which gives it its name. The female has both darker markings and rounder wings than the male.

GRUG

So that he will notice her?

WALLACE

Possibly...

GRUG

It is beautiful.

WALLACE

Yes. It is. He changes the subject

WALLACE (CONT’D)

Oh yes, and the caterpillars are black with white or yellow spines along their backs.

GRUG

To be noticed but not eaten...

The thought strikes a chord with Wallace The butterfly flies off. (All the best with that!)

GRUG (CONT’D)

You know a lot about little things.

WALLACE

I collect them.

GRUG

What else can you collect?

WALLACE

Well, anything...

GRUG

Acorns?

WALLACE

Feathers.

GRUG

Leaves?

WALLACE

Stamps.

Coins?

He flips a coin

GRUG

WALLACE

Heads

GRUG (SHOCKED)

Heads?!

WALLACE

No I don’t collect heads. Coins. That reminds me. Mr Worthington has sent me to...

GRUG (INTERRUPTING)

Do you collect butterflies?

WALLACE

Yes I do.

She has managed to change the subject. He mimes the way he catches butterflies

As he reaches for his net, she takes it and starts to violently try and catch a butterfly.

WALLACE (CONT’D)

You have to be careful not to make too vigorous or excessively frequent sweeps of the net because the butterfly inside may be injured or its wings damaged.

GRUG

Oh. What do you do when you've caught it?

WALLACE

Well, you kill it!

GRUG

What for?

WALLACE

To study it.

He remebers why he is there, to collect rent for Mr Worthington Miss, as I was saying, Mr Worthington has

asked me to...

GRUG

How do you kill it...

He takes a deep breath and starts to explain how

WALLACE

One way of killing the captured butterfly is to carefully compress the thorax from below taking care to maintain the wings in a resting position ie the upper sides together.

The most robust butterflies and some moths such as the hawk moths, tiger moths etc may be killed by placing them in a killing jar...

GRUG

What?

WALLACE

It’s a jar filled with pressed cotton wool soaked in chloroform or ethyl acetate. So they just go to sleep...

GRUG

Why do you do this?

WALLACE

To learn about them, to find out more about them.

GRUG

You are a Butterfly Hunter.

WALLACE

Yes, I suppose I am.

GRUG

Once you have killed it, what then?

WALLACE

You give it a name

A bee buzzes by drunk on nectar. Wallace notices it

WALLACE (CONT’D)

ApIs meliflora,

or the common name if not -

GRUG

Gwenynen mel?

WALLACE

Gwenynen Mel. Mel- mellis

GRUG

Melys - sweet. Honey.

WALLACE

Apis meliflora - Honey bee.

GRUG

How do you know all of this?

WALLACE

I have a friend, Henry, who collects insects of all types and he taught me, and I suppose I read it in books. I go to the library.

GRUG

I can't read or write.

She moves away.

WALLACE

Me and Henry are planning on going on an expedition.

GRUG

What’s that?

WALLACE

An adventure. You see I have collected a fair number of beetles and butterflies here, but I think in places like the Amazon northern Brazil.

GRUG

Brazil?

WALLACE

It’s a country in south America. Across the ocean. The Atlantic ocean. You see we are here...

He begins to draw the map out. Silence.

GRUG

That looks a long, long way away.

WALLACE

In Brazil there are so many different species, and the variety, of the different types would be overwhelming.

You see you can make a livelihood from collecting animals, and insects and sell them to museums.

If I have to work for a living I am going to make sure I enjoy it.

GRUG

Enjoy work?

You are funny Alfred.

WALLACE

Then I will get enough money for my mother and brother and sister to come and live with us. So we can be a family again.

Pause

WALLACE (CONT’D)

What was your mother like?

GRUG

Well, she was beautiful, but fragile, like glass. Not strong, and to live like we have to here, you need to be strong, and my mother wasn't. She died giving birth to my youngest sister.

GRUG (CONT’D)

You see we depend on the land for our food, our livelihood, and when that fails or is taken away from us we have nothing, no food to keep us strong and healthy. That year food was scarce, so my mother was very weak. Now the land will be taken from us...

WALLACE

What will you do?

GRUG

Move to where we can live, survive. Only the strong survive in this life Alfred. I best be going. He thinks quickly

WALLACE

I have brought you this, its a painting of you on the first day we met. He gives her the drawing

GRUG

Merch yn cario dwfr

WALLACE

Is that right?

GRUG

Ydy Alfred ma fe'n berffaith.

WALLACE

Perfect.

GRUG

Diolch Alfred.

She kisses him on the cheek.

Grug leaves. He realises he still hasn't got the rent.

WALLACE

I still need to collect the rent for Mr Worth...

Lights down Music

SCENE 12

William sits, reading a letter from his mother by candlelight. Wallace enters and takes of his coat and sits by William...

WILLIAM

My dearest Alfred and William. I hope this letter finds you in good health. Many thanks for the money. I have been able to buy new shoes and a jacket for Edward to attend school. I am so grateful to you both. William, I hope you are not tiring yourself out with your many visits to London.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (CONT’D)

I read recently that you were speaking in the Houses of Parliament your father would be very proud of you. Please take care of each other.

Gives the letter to Alfred

WALLACE

I hope Alfred that your story about an expedition to the Amazon is just that, a story to entertain me and Frances and Edward on cold dark nights. You are so like your father for telling fantastical stories of a land far away...Please take care of eachother your loving mother.

WILLIAM

I have one last meeting in London. Did you finish collecting the rent?

WALLACE

There is one last family, I need to visit tomorrow.

Music

WILLIAM

Well make sure you get the money. He is talking of releasing us from the contract, if that happens we will have to get work elsewhere.

WALLACE

William, I have been thinking of going on an expedition to make a collection to learn more about why creatures are the way they are.

WILLIAM

And how do you propose to get the money to go on this expedition?

WALLACE

Well, I was thinking of an advance...

WILLIAM

Get the money from the farmer and then when I return we will discuss it. Goodnight.

Wallace goes to visit Grug's farm. There is no sign of anyone. The family have gone.

WALLACE

Hello? Hello? Grug?

The wind picks up and leaves and papers are blown to his feet. He picks up the piece of paper. Its his drawing of the girl carrying a jug of water on her head

It starts to rain.

Sound of a steam train coming into the station. Wallace rushes to meet his brother from the train.

Wallace meets his brother, who is ill. He settles him down on a bed.

Lights fade on both Wallace and William, and we see their mother, reading a letter.

MARY WALLACE

"Dear mother, William did return that night - sick. He had been travelling up to London in 3rd class, which as we know is open to the elements.

He caught a cold, which quickly developed into pneumonia. He passed away early hours of this morning. John will join me in Neath to arrange the funeral. I am so sorry mother."

She turns and goes

WALLACE

I will stay on in Neath to get some surveying work and I have also loaned my beetle collection to Mr Lewis Dillwyn to present at the Swansea Philosophical Society. I had tried to become a member of the society but because of my situation, it was not possible, but now they have been impressed by my collection, I thought that perhaps they would make me a member and they would possibly sponsor my trip. William was a lo

We see Wallace meeting Lewis Dillwyn.

LEWIS DILLWYN

Aah Mr Wallace thank you ever so much for the loan of your collection. Please take a seat.

Wallace sits on the smallest chair possibly. Which makes Lewis Dillwyn look far superior to him.

WALLACE

Oh please the pleasure is mine. I am grateful that you felt it was worthy for presentation at the Royal Institution here in Swansea.

LEWIS DILLWYN

Yes indeed. Take a seat

WALLACE

Mr Llewellyn, I was wondering, I am about to embark on a journey to make a collection of species....

LEWIS DILLWYN

Take a seat.

WALLACE

...in the hope of discovering their origin..

LEWIS DILLWYN

Oh yes? Take a seat. I hear Mr Charles Darwin is quietly searching to resolve that mystery.

WALLACE

Yes indeed, the mystery of all mysteries, and I was wondering...

LEWIS DILLWYN

Sit...

Wallace sits uncomfortably.

WALLACE

..if it would be appropriate for me to ask if the Philosophical Society would possibly fund my trip.

Lewis laughs uncontrollably. Once he has composed himself.

LEWIS DILLWYN

Mr Wallace, although I am impressed by your enthusiasm and passion for collecting. I do not feel it would suitable for me to present this notion to the other members.

WALLACE

Oh.

LEWIS DILLWYN

Your situation both intellectually and financially unfortunately is not worthy of consideration.

But I must thank you once again for your beetles.

He hands him his collection box.

LEWIS DILWYN

Mr Wallace, did you make the case?

Wallace misunderstands and thinks he has another chance.

WALLACE

I beg your pardon.

LEWIS DILWYN

((pointing to the wooden case) The case.

WALLACE

Yes I did.

LEWIS DILWYN

You have a few fair talents there Mr Wallace. Its very good. Have you ever thought of being a carpenter? Goodbye.

Lights fade on Lewis Dillwyn.

Wallace sits near the waterfall. He is throwing stones into the water. We hear the voices of his past.

GRUG V/O

You're a Butterfly hunter, Alfred!

THOMAS WALLACE V/O

The amazon, the longest river in the world. Longer than the Usk and a lot more fish...

WALLACE

Why do some things die and some survive?

HENRY WALTER BATES

I'm going to go on an expedition.

Henry Walter Bates appears

HENRY WALTER BATES (CONT’D)

I'm going to go on an expedition. Do you want to come?

Wallace turns round to see him.

WALLACE

Henry. Good to see you. You got my letter then.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Yes.

WALLACE

I'm sorry I would love to come with you, but its impossible. I have no money.

HENRY WALTER BATES

We mustn't give up hope Alfred. I have spoken to Mr Spencer in London, who is an agent

for the British Museum, and he will advance us

£500, as long as we return with collections worthy of the loan. But we must collect species which no man has seen before.

WALLACE

Can you imagine finding something no one else has ever seen before?

HENRY WALTER BATES

Like the first one to discover something?

WALLACE

Yes. Like Columbus.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Like Magellan.

WALLACE

Like Cook.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Something new for ourselves.

WALLACE

Something new.

HENRY WALTER BATES

But where?

They both look at one another then look out

WALLACE & BATES

The Amazon

WALLACE

Amazing Amazon

HENRY WALTER BATES

Let’s get ready. We must study tropical vegetation. What we can eat and what we can't.

They each go to their trunk and start searching through them.

WALLACE

Book?

Bates throws a book to him.

HENRY WALTER BATES

We must prepare thoroughly. We must practice shooting and skinning birds.

WALLACE

Gun.

Henry throws him a gun.

HENRY WALTER BATES

We must collect to get our money. Net.

Wallace throws him a net.

HENRY WALTER BATES (CONT’D)

Glass Jar

Wallace is about to throw it to him but passes it to him instead

HENRY WALTER BATES (CONT’D)

We’ll have to get our immunisations.

WALLACE

And I'll need a spare pair of spectacles.

HENRY WALTER BATES

And we'll be off ...

WALLACE

...on the 20th of April 1848...

HENRY WALTER BATES

...on a sailing barge, aptly named...

WALLACE

...Mischief .

CAPTAIN V/O

All aboard!

WALLACE

I hate boats...

SCENE 13

Sound of the big waves on the open ocean. Henry and Alfred set off on board a ship

WALLACE

Five weeks on board, and we still haven't found our sealegs.

Both he and Henry are seasick.

The sea quietens down and we are on the vast ocean at night with a huge moon reflecting on the ocean. Bates sleeps, as Wallace looks out. Suddenly his father appears as The Shell song gently begins

The Shell Song – words by Phylip Harries

WALLACE

When I was small my father Gave me a shell so bright I Its lustrous rainbow colours Would lighten up the night

THOMAS WALLACE

Once upon a time, there was a gangly boy who dreamed of walking into a dark dark forest to find the answer to one of life's great mysteries..

 WALLACE

This shell was iridescent This shell was quite serene This shell was as translucent As any shell you’d seen

THOMAS WALLACE

He ventured further and further to lands and oceans where no other boy had been before.

The oceans hold the answers.

CHORUS (TWICE, SUNG)

The oceans hold the answers To secrets ‘neath the waves The oceans hold the truth boy, To that which mankind craves The oceans hold the answers To secrets ‘neath the waves The oceans hold the truth boy, To that which mankind craves.

Wallace settles to sleep as his father disappears.

V/O

Land ahoy Atmos changes.

They arrive in Brazil.

Complete change of scenery Wallace begins writing in his journal.

WALLACE

The massive dark crowns of shady

mangoes were seen everywhere amongst the dwellings amidst fragrant blossoming orange, lemon and many other tropical fruit trees, some in flower others in fruit at varying stages of ripeness. Musa paradisiaca - The superb banana, of which I had always read as forming one of the charms of tropical vegetation, here grew with great luxuriance: its glossy velvety green leaves, twelve feet in length, curving over the roofs of the verandas in the rear of every house.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Look at this....

WALLACE

Strange forms of vegetation...

HENRY WALTER BATES

Look at this!

WALLACE

...drew our attention at almost every step...

HENRY WALTER BATES

How does a plant with little or no sunlight grow, but this does?

HENRY WALTER BATES (CONT’D)

...I have never in my life seen anything like this before.

WALLACE

We are not in Neath anymore.

Wallace and Bates start to collect.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Look at the size of these ants...

Montage sequence

We see Wallace chasing insects with his net, some rare butterflies, huge and brightly coloured, are high in the canopy and so we see them either climbing a tree to get to the butterflies, or they get a huge pole and leave the net up in the tree so that it has a better chance of getting the elusive insect.

Suddenly, he hits a wasp nest and he is set upon by a swarm of very angry wasps. He drops his glasses. Then treads on them and breaks them. The wasps attack, and Wallace is stung all over.

Wallace and Henry are back in camp pinning. Wallace can't sit down, because he was stung.

HENRY WALTER BATES

We had been in Brazil for 9 months . Do you think this collection will get us home?

WALLACE

I don't know. I thought we would have found more than we have.

HENRY WALTER BATES

There are so many hunters out here. You cannot move for the sight of collectors!

WALLACE

Perhaps we should go further into the jungle.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Perhaps we should work separately

WALLACE

What, alone?

HENRY WALTER BATES

We would collect more, to get more money.

WALLACE

And perhaps get closer to solving the mystery.

HENRY WALTER BATES

Yes, but more importantly, a collection worthy of money. Remember Wallace, this is our return ticket, we have to get home.

WALLACE

Of course.

HENRY WALTER BATES

I will leave tomorrow at first light.

They bid farewell to each other.

SCENE 14

Wallace writes in his journal by candlelight.

WALLACE

I am drawing detailed maps, because the varieties of plant life and creatures are extraordinary, and it is important that I record every detail for future explorers. As I draw the specimens I know that some have never been seen by Man before.

I am heading further into the jungle, further than any other white man has ever been. I travel by canoe, up rivers which are as black as ink.

(MORE)

Rustling is heard. Suddenly we see a jaguar prowling towards Wallace. Wallace keeps his eyes on the stunning cat and reaches slowly for his gun. He is about to shoot. But it’s as if the beauty of the animal transfixes Wallace. He cannot move. The jaguar moves slowly away.

WALLACE (CONT’D)

Tonight as I lay on my bed, the most stunning animal, a jaguar, came right up close to me. Even though my gun was aimed and I could have shot him at once. It was as if I was mesmerised by this creature. In that moment deep down I knew he wouldn’t hurt me.

Pause

WALLACE (CONT’D)

Tomorrow I set sail for home. But tonight I will sleep with my gun by my side. Just in case.

Goodnight my dear mother.

SCENE 15

Lights change we see Wallace packing the specimens and drawings into a trunk. He is making a list of everything he has collected.

CAPTAIN

All Aboard

WALLACE

(making a note in his notebook) 553 species of Lepidoptera,

which includes 400 butterflies;

beetles, 1300 different species in all, and a total of 3635 specimens in total.

A toucan flies over and falls into the sea

CAPTAIN

Ooh that's not a good omen!

WALLACE

What's not a good omen?

CAPTAIN

The toucan. Dive bombing into the sea. No luck

will come to us.

Changes the subject when he sees Wallace's concern.

My name is Captain Turner. We are sailing on the good ship Helen and should reach London in three months. You need a hand with that (pointing to trunk)

WALLACE

Yes please.

CAPTAIN (IGNORING HIM)

Just up this ramp there. That'll be your cabin. Shame about that Toucan mind. Doomed.

WALLACE

We are 3 weeks out at sea...

CAPTAIN

Excuse me Mr Wallace..The ships on fire. Come and see what you think?

As they do this, all the vegetation, the oxygen sets it alight and Whoosh! Fire blasts

CAPTAIN (CONT'D) (CONT’D)

Ooh, watch yourselves... Get to the lifeboats

WALLACE

I think we should launch the boats...

CAPTAIN

Do you? Oh good idea Mr Wallace. Launch the boats. I blame that toucan.

WALLACE

My collections. I need to get to my cabin and get my things. A couple of shirts, a few drawings and my watch.

CAPTAIN

Abandon Ship! Abandon ship! Abandon ship!

WALLACE

My journals, my drawings are all gone.

CAPTAIN

Save yourself Mr. Wallace. Get TO the lifeboats.

They get into the small life boat

CAPTAIN (CONT'D) (CONT’D)

Www, we are taking on water.

WALLACE

My collection of insects and

birds. There were hundreds of new and beautiful species.

CAPTAIN

I'm sorry about all of this Mr Wallace.

WALLACE

Probably one of the finest collections in Europe.

And my drawings and my journals which told of the 3 most interesting years of my life, all gone.

CAPTAIN

It must be a great disappointment to you. How much was it worth to you?

WALLACE

About £500.

CAPTAIN

Oh I am sorry.

Time passes. They change position on the little boat

CAPTAIN (CONT'D) (CONT’D)

It's a light Easterly wind Mr. Wallace

WALLACE

How far until land?

CAPTAIN

About 700 miles Raw pork & biscuits Mr

Wallace?

WALLACE

Thank you.

CAPTAIN

It's a great luxury, sir. And your small allowance of water.

He gives him the smallest amount of water ever. CAPTAIN (CONT'D) Thats enough!

Time passes. They change position on the little boat again

WALLACE

It has been ten days and ten nights at sea. How far to land now?

CAPTAIN

About 200 miles.

Suddenly Wallace sees something on the horizon

WALLACE

A ship.

CAPTAIN

Ahoy! A ship. We have escaped death on the wide ocean whence none would have ever come to tell the tale.

The Jordeson.

CAPTAIN (CONT’D)

The Jordeson! One of the slowest old ships going. But beggars can't be choosers.

The waves drop and the sound of gulls fill the sky. Music

CAPTAIN (CONT’D)

Oh! glorious day! On shore at

Deal with the ship at anchor. Such a dinner! Beef steaks & damson tart, a paradise for hungry sinners, hey Mr Wallace! I bid you farewell.

CAPTAIN

Well that 'll be the end of your adventures then?

WALLACE

 No. I don't think so.

CAPTAIN

 Really?

WALLACE

 No because I haven't found the answer to my question.

CAPTAIN

 Question?

WALLACE

 Why do some things die and some survive?

CAPTAIN

Well, all I know is that I have seen a many disaster, but I somehow get away with it... My cunning perhaps and a good mind. Eh, Mr Wallace?

I bid you farewell. Lang may yer lum reek. Wherever your next adventure takes ye.

WALLACE

 My next expedition will be to the East.

CAPTAIN

 Oh aye?

WALLACE

 Yes to the Malay Archipelago

WALLACE

1856 I have landed in Ternate, and I have never experienced such incessant rain, and I have lived in Neath... it is very difficult to collect when the weather is so wet, the species cannot dry out in time for me to pin them...

He writes in his journal. Suddenly his train of thought is broken by the appearance of Charles Allen, a young boy from London has been sent out by Wallace's sister to help him. He is like Jimmy Cricket. He cannot keep still and his energy annoys Wallace.

CHARLES

Mr Wallace...? Mr Wallace...?

CHARLES (CONT'D) (CONT’D)

Writing a letter Mr Wallace... wish you were here?

WALLACE

Not really.

You must be Charles Allen?

CHARLES

Yes. Sir. How did you know?

WALLACE

My sister is very good at descriptive writing.

CHARLES

Handsome, keen, well bred ?

WALLACE

Well there is lots to do. We get up at half past five, bath, and coffee. Coffee is very important.. We then sit down to arrange and put away the insects from the day before, and set them in a safe place to dry.

CHARLES

Oh wonderful. I like insects.

WALLACE

Good, you can mend the nets for now.

CHARLES

I can mend nets. Did your sister tell you that I used to mend things in London, lots of different things...

WALLACE

Yes. And you can fill the pin cushions, and get ready for the day.

CHARLES

When do we have breakfast?

WALLACE

At 8, and then out in the jungle at nine. We will work until 2 or 3 and then return. Change, and start to kill and pin insects.

CHARLES

Oh. That's sad.

WALLACE

Its what we do, so that we can study them.

CHARLES

Oh. Of course. Shall I do the beetles then.

WALLACE

No, you can do flies.

CHARLES

What time is dinner?

WALLACE

Four, then we shall work until 6.

CHARLES

Did I tell you what happened to me the time I went to Fulham... well its was late and I don't think the lamps had been lit, or had they

(He thinks)

No, no they had, but only the ones on the left hand side of the street. I remember now, because the lampsman was there. Yes, that's right because.

WALLACE

Goodnight Charles.

Charles is still talking through the night. Much to Wallace's annoyance. As they settle. Silence - then a tiger roar -

CHARLES

What do you think that is?

WALLACE

I think it is a tiger

CHARLES

Oh. Will he attack?

WALLACE

Yes, Unless you bore him to death.

CHARLES

I see. No talking. Schtumm. Quiet.

The tiger roars close by!

WALLACE (CONT’D)

Why do some things die and some survive?

V/O MARY ANN

Alfred!

THOMAS WALLACE

Once upon a time there was a gangly boy ...

WALLACE

Why do some things die?...

THOMAS WALLACE

Once upon a time there was a gangly boy who dreamed...

WALLACE

...and some survive?

THOMAS WALLACE

dreamed of walking into a dark dark forest to find the answer to one of life's great mysteries...

WILLIAM

Adapt....change ...survive...

GRUG

Only the strong survive...

JOHN

Got one!

WALLACE

Have you?

JOHN

Yes, this one wasn't swift enough to get away!

WALLACE

On the whole the best fitted

live. From the effects of disease the most healthy escaped; from enemies the strongest, the swiftest or the most cunning;

(MORE)

WALLACE (CONT’D)

from famine, the best hunters or those with the best digestion...and so on and then this self acting process would necessarily improve the race.

Therefore when changes of land and sea or of climate or of food supply or of enemies occurred, then all the necessary changes of the adaptation of the species to the changing conditions can be brought about.

The more I thought about it the more I became convinced that I had at length found the long sought law of nature that solved the problem of the origin of species. Mystery of mysteries.

Music

Charles Allen enters

CHARLES

Mr Wallace a letter, a letter from England has arrived.

WALLACE

Is it from my family?

CHARLES

No, no, its from Down House in Kent.

It's from Mr Darwin, he says he agrees with almost every word of your paper.

He is now preparing his great work on “Species and varieties" for which he has been collecting materials for twenty years. You and his paper will be presented at the Linnean Society.

Congratulations Mr Wallace.

WALLACE

Thank you Charles.

Wallace goes over and takes the paper.

CHARLES

You'll be associated with that great man now for evermore, when people mention Darwin they will mention Wallace in the same breath.

Charles shakes his hand with vigor

It is truly a privilege to work with you Mr Wallace. A true privilege. When we return home they will be cheering in the streets!

WALLACE

Let's get back to work. It is important for us to collect for future generations. And also it pays our way home.

CHARLES

Oh yes, yes, it will be good to be home.

Charles picks up his net and goes into the forest. Wallace turns and sits and looks at the letter again. We hear the folk song and his mother singing. Wallace's father appears -

THOMAS WALLACE

Poor is the man who never asks.

I am proud of you my boy, very well done, very well done indeed...

Music starts

Once upon a time there was a man who walked into the forest and found the answer to one of life's great mysteries...

Wallace picks up his net and continues to collect insects that surround him.

... and then he shared it with the world.

Music swells Blackout The end.

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