DIDLS: Heart of Darkness, Paragraphs 22-25 Annotations & Analysis Prompt:

**Group 1:** Diction - the connotation of the word choice. What words does the author choose? Consider his/her word choice compared to another. Why did the author choose that particular word? What are the connotations of that word choice?

**Groups 2 & 3:** Images - vivid appeals to understanding through the senses - concrete language. What images does the author use? What does he/she focus on in a sensory (sight, touch, taste, smell, etc.) way? The kinds of images the author puts in or leaves out reflect his/her style? Are they vibrant? Prominent? Plain? NOTE: Images differ from detail in the degree to which they appeal to the senses.

**Group 4:** Details - facts that are included or those that are omitted. What details are does the author choose to include? What do they imply? What does the author choose to exclude? What are the connotations of their choice of details? PLEASE NOTE: Details are facts or fact-lets. They differ from images in that they don't have a strong sensory appeal.

**Group 5:** Language - the overall use of language, such as formal, clinical, jargon. What is the overall impression of the language the author uses? Does it reflect education? A particular profession? Intelligence? Is it plain? Ornate? Simple? Clear? Figurative? Poetic?

**Group 6:** Sentence Structure - how structure affects the reader's attitude. What are the sentences like? Are they simple with one or two clauses? Do they have multiple phrases? Are they choppy? Flowing? Sinuous like a snake? Is there antithesis, chiasmus, parallel construction? What emotional impression do they leave? If we are talking about poetry, what is the meter? Is there a rhyme scheme?

**PROMPTS FOR WHOLE CLASS DISCUSSION:**

- Why do the two women who guard the doors of the Company office remind Marlow of the greeting gladiators offered to the Roman Caesar, “Ave! Morituri te salutant” (Hail! We who are about to die salute you)? What literary allusion is Conrad making here?

- How does this passage’s tone and literary allusions reveal Marlow’s attitude towards his job and life in general? And, if the effect of the diction, imagery, details, language, and syntax here to develop not only tone, but also foreshadowing, then what is the effect of foreshadowing in relation to how we the audience will approach this work?

---

**From Heart of Darkness, paragraphs 22-25, by Joseph Conrad**

```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
```
to think of getting out of her way, as you would for a somnambulist, stood still, and looked up. Her dress was as plain
as an umbrella-cover, and she turned round without a word and preceded me into a waiting-room. I gave my name, and
looked about. Deal table in the middle, plain chairs all round the walls, on one end a large shining map, marked with all
the colours of a rainbow. There was a vast amount of red -- good to see at any time, because one knows that some real
work is done in there, a deuce of a lot of blue, a little green, smears of orange, and, on the East Coast, a purple patch, to
show where the jolly pioneers of progress drink the jolly lager-beer. However, I wasn't going into any of these. I was
going into the yellow. Dead in the centre. And the river was there -- fascinating -- deadly -- like a snake. Ough! A door
opened, a white-haired secretarial head, but wearing a compassionate expression, appeared, and a skinny forefinger
beckoned me into the sanctuary. Its light was dim, and a heavy writing-desk squatted in the middle. From behind that
structure came out an impression of pale plumpness in a frock-coat. The great man himself. He was five feet six, I
should judge, and had his grip on the handle-end of ever so many millions. He shook hands, I fancy, murmured vaguely,
Was satisfied with my French. Bon voyage.

``In about forty-five seconds I found myself again in the waiting-room with the compassionate secretary, who,
full of desolation and sympathy, made me sign some document. I believe I undertook amongst other things not to
disclose any trade secrets. Well, I am not going to.

``I began to feel slightly uneasy. You know I am not used to such ceremonies, and there was something ominous
in the atmosphere. It was just as though I had been let into some conspiracy -- I don't know -- something not quite
right; and I was glad to get out. In the outer room the two women knitted black wool feverishly. People were arriving,
and the younger one was walking back and forth introducing them. The old one sat on her chair. Her flat cloth slippers
were propped up on a foot-warmer, and a cat reposed on her lap. She wore a starched white affair on her head, had a
wart on one cheek, and silver-rimmed spectacles hung on the tip of her nose. She glanced at me above the glasses. The
swift and indifferent placidity of that look troubled me. Two youths with foolish and cheery countenances were being
piloted over, and she threw at them the same quick glance of unconcerned wisdom. She seemed to know all about them
and about me, too. An eerie feeling came over me. She seemed uncanny and fateful. Often far away there I thought of
these two, guarding the door of Darkness, knitting black wool as for a warm pall, one introducing, introducing
continuously to the unknown, the other scrutinizing the cheery and foolish faces with unconcerned old eyes. Ave! Old
knitter of black wool. {Morituri te salutant.} Not many of those she looked at ever saw her again -- not half, by a long way.