

## APPENDICES

### **SYNOPSIS OF WIDE SARGASSO SEA**

Antoinette Cosway is a beautiful young daughter of a slave-owner father and a white Creole mother. She lives in Jamaica in 1830s, the era in which the Emancipation Act, which abolishes slavery, is passed. The fact that her father has passed away just after the Emancipation Act is such a trouble for little Antoinette. Her neighbourhood, which is mostly inhabited by black people who used to be enslaved, always sees her ex-slave owner family with a rage. Coupled with this, the Coulibri Estate, which used to be the plantation where her deceased father employs slaves, is now in a poor condition; this leads the blacks to reproach Antoinette and her family as they pass the place. The only exception is Christophine, a black Martinique woman who serves the family. She is faithfully devoted to Antoinette's family.

Amidst her neighbours, Antoinette feels unaccepted. She feels it more when she finds that her mother, Annette, prefers pacing alone to spending her time with her. Antoinette, who loves her mother very much, somehow, feels rejected by her mother's act.

Trouble comes when rather suddenly her mother marries an Englishman named Mr. Mason. He brings a lot of coolies from East Indies, which causes the blacks to fly into a rage. They attack Coulibri Estate, which ends up with their

setting Antoinette's house on fire. Little Antoinette, who does not exactly know what is happening, feels shocked. Not only does she see her disabled brother, Pierre, die in front of her eyes, but she also sees her mother go mad due to the tragedy. Not long after the incident, her mother also dies.

After Annette dies, Antoinette is sent to a convent school. Her stepfather, Mr. Mason, visits her quite often. One day, Mr. Mason tells Antoinette his willingness to present Antoinette to his friend's son. Antoinette finally marries a son of Mr. Mason's friend, a young Englishman whose name remains unmentioned till the end of the story.

Antoinette's love towards her husband and her hope to gain happiness by marrying him turns out to be a disaster. The differences between her and her husband become inevitable, which causes a crack in Antoinette's marriage. Antoinette, who is used to giving up her wants for the sake of making her husband happy, feels betrayed seeing the fact that her husband has an affair with her servant, Amélie. On top of that, the fact that her husband receives a letter saying that Antoinette comes from a mad family makes her husband think that what he sees and thinks so far is a sign of her madness. This makes the crack in Antoinette's marriage worse.

Antoinette, frustrated and uneasy, runs to Christophine, her maid, whom she has regarded as her own mother. She finds herself entrapped. On the one hand, her husband always reminds her not to believe black people; on the other, she finds that Christophine is the only one who keeps accompanying her amidst her troubles. Antoinette, seeing that her relationship with her husband is not getting better, becomes unstable.

Christophine, trying to help Antoinette, speaks to Antoinette's husband. However, instead of listening to what Christophine says, Antoinette's husband decides to take Antoinette to England with him. He then locks up Antoinette in the attic of his house. He also hires a woman named Grace Poole to watch her. At the end of the story, it is told that Antoinette dreams that she sets her husband's house on fire. Suddenly, she wakes up, takes the attic's key from Grace Poole secretly, and goes downstairs taking her candles.

### **SYNOPSIS OF LUCY**

On arriving in America, teenaged Lucy finds everything new; elevator, apartment, food in the fridge. She tries to make herself comfortable in the new place lest she might yearn for her motherland, West Indies.

As an au pair in America, Lucy finds the family with whom she works, the Lewis, very helpful and kind. Lewis and his wife, Mariah, help Lucy to adapt to their culture. On top of that, Mariah is so caring to Lucy as to find her time for giving Lucy a surprise. She spends her time planting daffodils, flowers which can give their most beauty in spring. Yet, instead of being thankful to Mariah, Lucy despises the flowers. Lucy remembers that when she was still at school in West Indies, she was made to memorize a poem about daffodils and recite it. She could do it very well as to make everyone applaud her. Nevertheless, she was not proud of it, she swore that she would get rid of the poem from her mind instead.

Time goes by, due to Mariah's kindness and love towards her, Lucy regards Mariah as her own mother. Lucy herself wants to erase all things related to her mother, who presently lives in West Indies, because of her disappointment

and anger at her mother during her childhood. She even drops her education to be a nurse, a profession that Lucy's mother wants her to be.

Living in America, Lucy conducts a free life-style. She often goes out from night till morning with Peggy, her only friend in America, to flirt with men. She has also a lot of affairs with men and it is her own amusement to choose the right guy for her and to leave him at once. She never takes it seriously. During her life in America, Lucy, indeed, has made lots of changes. She is no longer an obedient daughter she used to be as she was in her homeland.

One day her relative, Maude Quick, comes to the Lewises' house unexpectedly. She informs Lucy that Lucy's father died months ago. Maude tells Lucy that Lucy's mother has sent letters to let her know the news, but all letters remain unanswered. Indeed, Lucy does not answer the letters and she does not even open any of them. Lucy feels shocked to hear the news. She soon sends all her money to her mother in West Indies. However, her anger and disappointment at her mother remain.

Lucy gets depressed. After nearly one year working with the Lewis, Lucy decides to quit her job. She moves into an apartment with her friend, Peggy. She earns her own living by working as secretary for a photographer. The novel closes with Lucy's writing her full name, Lucy Josephine Potter, on her diary. She then bursts into tears as to let her teardrops wipe away her name and make it one great big blur.

## **BIOGRAPHY OF JEAN RHYS**

Jean Rhys, whose original name was Ella Gwendolyn Rhys Williams, was born and brought up in Roseau, on the Windward Island of Dominica in 1890. Her father was a Welshman whereas her mother was a white Creole. In 1907, she left for London to have her education at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Not until her father had passed away did she travel around England and shift from one work to another.

Rhys started writing in her thirties, when her marriage broke up. She was living in Paris by that time. The Left Bank, Rhys's first book, which contains a collection of stories, was written in 1927. It was followed by Postures (1928), After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie (1931), Voyage in the Dark (1934), and Good Morning, Midnight (1939). Those five take their setting in Paris and London, the places in which she spent most of her life. Nevertheless, the books were not successful.

After 1939, no one heard about Rhys. Most people thought that she was dead until a writer named Francis Wyndham found her in Cornwall nearly twenty years after her disappearance. In 1966, she made a beautiful comeback by publishing Wide Sargasso Sea, the story which is rewritten based on Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. Rhys revised the story, made it told by Bertha Mason, the mad woman confined in the attic in Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. The book brought her to win Royal Society of Literature Award and W.H. Smith Award. Rhys, who was appointed Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1966, departed her life in 1979.

Adapted from:

Rhys, Jean. Wide Sargasso Sea. England: Clays Ltd, St Ives plc, 1966.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women. United States of America: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1996.

## **BIOGRAPHY OF JAMAICA KINCAID**

Jamaica Kincaid, who was originally named Elaine Potter Richardson, was born in St. John's, Antigua, in 1949. Kincaid, who is the eldest child in the family, has three younger brothers. Her parents are very fond of her as she is their only daughter. At the age of three, little Kincaid learnt to read as well as attending several schools.

In 1966, Kincaid went to the United States to have her education. From 1966 till 1973, she not only studied photography at The New School, but also attended Franconia College in New Hampshire and got her diploma.

She has been a staff writer of the New Yorker since 1976 and starting from the mid-1970s, she has published fiction and non-fiction. Her first book, entitled At the Bottom of the River, was awarded the Morton Dauwen Zabel Award of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. The success of the book was followed by her next published book, Annie John. Even though the book was not awarded like the previous one, Annie John also got a lot of praises.

Kincaid, who presently lives with her husband and two children in Vermont, is still productive until now. Her books include Lucy (1996), The Autobiography of My Mother (1996), My Brother (1997), My Garden (1999). In 2000 she was awarded the Prix Fémina Étranger for My Brother.

Adapted from:

Chapter 1 of *My Brother* (1997) and the *Denver Post* Book Review, October 6

2006 <<http://www.denverpost.com/books/chap6.htm>>