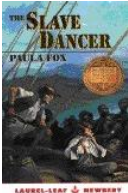


Passages

Reading Level 8



Title: Slave Dancer

Author: Paula Fox

Sample From The Book

Hours passed with nothing to mark them until in the east the sky paled ever so faintly as though a drop of daylight had touched the black. I wanted to stand up, to stretch. But when I started to my feet, Claudius' voice rang out so loud I was sure he would be heard on every shore. "Sit down, boy!"

We passed a small island, I saw the glimmer of a light in a window – only that solitary, flickering yellow beacon. I felt hopeless and sad as though everyone in the world had died save the three of us

and the unknown lamplighter on the shore. Then, as if daylight was being born inside the boat itself, I began to make out piles of rope, a wooden bucket, a heap of rusty looking net, the thick boots of my captors.

"There!" said the big-jawed man, pointing straight ahead.

And there was our destination, a sailing ship, its masts looking as high as the steeple of St. Louis cathedral, its deck empty, a shape as astonishing on the expanse of dawn gray water as a church would have been. Across its bow were painted the words: The Moonlight.



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Canada: 1 (352) 271-9720
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Postal Mail
Diarmuid, Inc.
P.O. Box 357580
Gainesville, FL 32635