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APPENDIX

Synopsys of *Cloud Atlas*

The novel comprises six different stories, with six different main characters, which are integrated in terms of storyline as a whole. The six different stories are progressively set from the remote South Pacific in the nineteenth century to a distant future of a post-apocalyptic world. Each character's story is read (or observed) by the next main character from their legacies (journal, letters, novel, memoir, recording, oral storytelling). The following are the summary of the stories contained in these legacies.

The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing

The first story begins in the Chatham Islands (one of the islands of New Zealand), in 1850. Adam Ewing, a guileless American notary from San Francisco during the California Gold Rush, awaits repairs to his ship. Adam witnesses a Moriori slave being flogged by a Maori man. During the punishment, the victim, Autua, makes a strangely fond eye contact with Adam. The next few days, Adam ascends a high hill called Conical Tor, covered in jungle which enables very little line of sight. There he stumbles on the lip of the crater, falls in, and injures himself. His wounds are later tended to by Dr. Henry Goose, an Englishman Adam meets in the Chathams.

On the journey home aboard *Prophetess*, Adam continues to undergo his treatment from Dr. Goose who diagnoses that he is suffering from a fatal parasite. The doctor says that the treatment which might save Adam's life will make him

feel worse before he gets better. Meanwhile, Autua has stowed away aboard the ship and hidden himself in Adam's cabin because he judged Adam to be a compassionate soul. Adam then agrees to peacefully break this news to the Captain and to request that Autua be given a chance to prove his worth as a sailor. After a dramatic change of mind, the Captain puts Autua to work to pay for his passage to Hawaii.

As the time goes by, Adam falls further ill, realizing in the last minute that Dr. Goose is poisoning him to steal his possessions. However, the doctor's scheme fails because Autua comes to Adam's rescue. Having been saved by a slave, Adam resolves to devote his life to the abolitionist movement. He imagines his father-in-law's response to his becoming an abolitionist: he would warn Adam that his life would amount to no more than one drop in a limitless ocean. Adam's proposed reply is "Yet what is any ocean but a multitude of drops?"

Letters from Zedelghem

The next story is set in Zedelghem, near Bruges, Belgium, in 1931. It is told in the form of letters from Robert Frobisher (a recently disinherited and penniless, bisexual young English musician) to his old friend and lover, Rufus Sixsmith, back in Cambridge. Robert escapes from a hotel without settling his bill and journeys to Zedelghem to offer his services as an amanuensis to the famous but reclusive English composer Vyvyan Ayrs, who is dying of syphilis and nearly blind.

Once in Zedelghem, Robert auditions and gains the grudging acceptance of Vyvyan for his services. Soon, Robert and Vyvyan bear fruit with the creation of

Der Todtenvogel ("The Death Bird"), performed nightly in Kraków, where it becomes the talk of the town. At this moment, Robert says he has begun composing his own music again. Settling quite well in the residence, he begins taking rare books from Vyvyan's collection and selling them. One of the books he has found is titled *The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing*. Upon reading it, he is amused that the author seems unaware that Dr. Goose is poisoning him.

Robert continues to pursue his work with Vyvyan while developing his own *Cloud Atlas Sextet*. However, as he realizes that Vyvyan has been stealing his musical ideas, Robert is ready to leave. Before sneaking out, he steals Vyvyan's Luger (handgun). He then secludes himself in a hotel to finish the *Sextet*, and ultimately decides to kill himself. He is content with this decision as he believes he has completed his best work, but mourns the loss of his one true love, Rufus Sixsmith. Before committing suicide by shooting himself in a bathtub, he writes a last letter to Rufus, and includes his *Sextet* and *The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing*.

Half-Lives – The First Luisa Rey Mystery

The third story is written in the style of an action/thriller novel, set in the fictional city of Buenas Yervas, California, in 1975. Luisa Rey, a young columnist, investigates reports that a new nuclear power plant is unsafe. This kind of endeavor begins when Luisa meets Rufus Sixsmith in an elevator as they are stuck between floors during a power-outage. Rufus then decides that he can trust Luisa with his concern that the Seaboard HYDRA nuclear power plant is not as safe as they advertise it to be. However, before he can tell anything about it, the

power goes back on and they have to part. Before going separate ways, Rufus makes a promise that he will contact Luisa.

Shortly after this admission, Rufus is murdered. Then Luisa learns that the businessmen in charge of the plant are conspiring to cover up the dangers and are assassinating potential whistleblowers. From Rufus' hotel room, Luisa manages to get hold of Robert's letters and becomes so enthralled by the composer that she orders his only published work, *Cloud Atlas Sextet*. Before Luisa can report her findings on the nuclear power plant or Rufus' murder, a Seaboard-hired assassin who has been following her forces her—along with Rufus's incriminating report—off a bridge while driving.

Luisa escapes from the sinking car, but is still pursued by Bill Smoke, the assassin working for Seaboard. She picks up her copy of Robert Frobisher's obscure *Cloud Atlas Sextet* and is astonished to find that she recognizes it, even though it is a very rare piece. Bill lures her with a copy of Rufus Sixsmith's report about the power plant, but Joe Napier comes to her assistance, and Bill and Joe kill each other. Luisa is left to expose the corrupt corporate leaders.

The Ghastly Ordeal of Timothy Cavendish

The fourth story is comic in tone, and set in Britain in the present day. Timothy Cavendish, a 65-year-old vanity press publisher, flees the brothers of his gangster client who publishes his own autobiography called *Knuckle Sandwich*. Timothy's brother, exasperated by his endless pleas for financial aid, books him into a remote hotel, which turns out to be a nursing home from which Timothy cannot escape. After suffering harassment at the hands of Nurse Noakes, he

attempts to run out the door, but is stopped by a security guard and brought back to Aurora House, the the nursing home. Then, he is told he will be punished if he makes any more attempts to flee. In the course of his adventures, Timothy mentions that he is reading a manuscript from a prospective author entitled *Half-Lives – The First Luisa Rey Mystery*, which at this moment does not impress him. Timothy settles into his new surroundings, while still trying to plot a way out.

One day, Timothy is struck by some sort of a seizure due to stroke. It takes him a month to recover, so is not yet to leave Aurora House. He spends much of the time going over the Luisa Rey manuscript. While searching the grounds for a way out, Timothy meets a small group of residents who spend their time in the boiler room. Later, with Timothy, the dissidents in the boiler room plan to escape. The plan, as Timothy says, is a “high-risk sequences of dominoes.” Although risky, they still execute the plan and therefore manage to escape from Aurora House.

During Timothy’s absence in London, the gangster brothers ransacked his office. Fortunately, Cavendish's secretary, Mrs. Latham, captured the vandalism on video. She told them to steer clear of Timothy, or that the footage would end up on the Internet, causing their probation to become prison sentences. The gangster brothers are forced to accept a cut of future royalties on *Knuckle Sandwich, the Movie*.

An Orison of Sonmi~451

The fifth story is set in Nea So Copros, a dystopian futuristic state that is gradually revealed to be in Korea. It is told in the form of an interview between

Sonmi~451 and an Archivist who is recording her story. Sonmi is a genetically engineered fabricant (clone), one of many grown to work at, among other places, a fast-food restaurant called Papa Song's. Generally, fabricants are slaves used by 'pureblood' society which controls the fabricants' consciousness through genetic and chemical manipulation.

Sonmi encounters individuals from a rebel underground, who draw her out of the cloistered fabricant world and allow her to become self-aware, or 'ascended.' Sonmi describes watching with Hae-Joo a pre-Skirmishes film called *The Ghastly Ordeal of Timothy Cavendish* and that she is utterly captivated by how it immersed her in an earlier time. At this point, Sonmi and Hae-Joo are told that Professor Mephi, one of Hae-Joo's professors and handler, has been arrested, and that 40 or 50 enforcers are looking for them with orders to interrogate Hae-Joo and kill Sonmi on sight.

Sonmi learns the truth about Nea So Copros: that the fabricants are not released after serving their time at work, but are killed and recycled into food and more fabricants. After some considerations, she writes an abolitionist *Declarations* that tells the truth about their society and calls for rebellion. She is then arrested, and finds herself telling her tale to the Archivist. She reveals that she knows everything that happened to her was in fact instigated by the government, to create an artificial enemy figure to encourage the oppression of fabricants by purebloods. But she believes her *Declarations* will be inspirational nonetheless. After ending the interview, Sonmi is executed.

Sloosha's Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After

Zachry, an old man, tells a story from his youth. It is gradually revealed that he lives in a post-apocalyptic society on the Big Island of Hawaii. His people, the Valleymen, are peaceful farmers, but are often raided by the violent Kona tribe from the other side of the island. Zachry's people worship a goddess called Sonmi, and know that there was an event called 'The Fall', in which the civilized peoples of Earth—known as the 'Old Uns'—collapsed, and the surviving humans have been reduced to primitivism. They have relatively short lifespans.

Big Island is occasionally visited and studied by a technologically sophisticated people known as the Prescients who arrive in ocean-colored boats and trade with the Valleymen. A Prescient woman called Meronym comes to stay with the villagers. She observes their technology, culture, and practices. Zachry becomes suspicious, and sneaks into her room, where he finds an 'orison' and sees from it the holographic image of a young woman talking and talking.

Later, Zachry's sister Catkin is poisoned by a scorpion fish; but Meronym is reluctant to give her medicine when Zachry comes asking for her help. Yet, after listening to Zachry's plea, Meronym settles with a bargain that Zachry guides her to the top of Mauna Kea volcano in return of her breaking the rules of her people and heal Catkin. On the journey, Meronym shocks Zachry by telling him that their god Sonmi was in fact a human being, and explains the workings of the orison. The device can replay Sonmi telling her story to the people.

Upon their return, they go with most of the Valleymen to trade at Honokaa. But then the event is raided by Kona tribesmen who enslave the villagers. Zachry

and Meronym eventually escape, and she takes him to a safer island. The story ends with Zachry's child recalling that his father told many unbelievable tales. The child admits that part of this one may be true because he has inherited Zachry's copy of Sonmi's orison, which he often watches, even though he does not understand her language.

