

UNIVERSITÉ DE TOULON ET DU VAR
FACULTÉ DES LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES

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DÉPARTEMENT	: LLCE ANGLAIS
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ENSEIGNANT	: M. Heinrich
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The single chestnut horse who pulls the gig¹ along trips dainty as a cat on hot stones upon the rutted earth. The master of the plantation named Amity, Mr John Howarth, sits holding the reins of this vehicle. His firm legs are spread apart to brace himself as he rides, while the brim of his wide white hat flaps with the bumpy progress of the gig. His passenger is his sister, Mrs Caroline Mortimer. With one hand she struggles to hold up a parasol with which to protect her delicate English skin from the vicious morning sun, all the while pleading with her brother, 'Please go slower ... please be careful ... please stop showing off, John,' while her other hand grips, fearful, at the side of the gig to steady herself.

Caroline Mortimer has been residing at the great house of the plantation with her brother and his young wife, Agnes, for two weeks, yet already the heat from the Jamaican sun only makes her floppy as a kitten for the hottest part of the day. Twenty-three summers Caroline has lived upon this earth, all of them, until now, spent in the dappled shade of an apple tree by the edge of an English lawn, where the hottest part of the day brought small beads of fragrant sweat to trespass upon her forehead. The ship she travelled in to Jamaica had bucked and rolled her across the ocean so cruelly that, upon her arrival, she had complained to her brother that being strapped to a whale's back would have been no less arduous a journey. In fact, she repeated this lamentation so often that although at first it raised mirth in her brother, after its considerable tellings it merely caused him to exclaim loudly, 'Yes, well, you're here now'

Her appetite, which she had feared she would never regain after the ravaging voyage-where no food man prepared could stay in her stomach long enough to give any of the required sustenance-was now returning.

Andrea Levy, *The Long Song*, Headline 2010

¹ cabriolet