

BORNEO





THE HEADHUNTERS¹

OF BORNEO



PART ONE

THERE is a human head hanging³³ in the entrance³⁴ of the hut³⁵. It is very small, but it is definitely human. A string³⁶ is connected to the blond hair³⁷. The head sways³⁸ in the breeze. The eyes are closed, and the expression on the face is tranquil, as though³⁹ in a profound state of meditation. The head is different from the other ones in the village huts. The other heads have black hair and orien-

"Their custom of reducing human heads to the size² of an orange (and the spiritual beliefs³ related with this), has made the Dusun tribe of Borneo one of the most interesting subjects in the field⁴ of ethnology. The terrible reputation of the Dusuns began in 1799. In that year, the Dusuns killed⁵ 1.700 people in one day. They carried off⁶ many women, because women are always⁷ captured, especially the young⁸ ones. Today, you can rarely see a Dusun male⁹ walking without weapons¹⁰ in the jungle. The scars¹¹ on his body and face are the result of a headhunting expedition. If he is coming back¹² from a successful¹³ expedition, the person who meets¹⁴ him will see one or more heads suspended from a cord¹⁵ that hangs from his neck¹⁶."

The shrunken¹⁷ heads are a sign¹⁸ of bravery, and a sign of a responsible man. Each tribe in the area lives¹⁹ under the constant threat²⁰ of attack. Therefore²¹, a man is only respected, if he has captured one or more heads. Another reason²² for headhunting, is the desire²³ to possess a certain²⁴ spiritual power²⁵. This power cannot be acquired in any²⁶ other way. According²⁷ to their beliefs, it is necessary for each young man to acquire a soul²⁸. To do this, he goes into²⁹ the jungle to meditate, preferably underneath a waterfall³⁰. He drinks a hallucinogenic drug called maikoa. When he visualizes the soul of his enemy³¹, he must then kill him, and take over³² his soul. This is the fundamental reason for the headhunting expeditions.

-Primitive Tribes of Today, 1930

tal faces. This one looks European. In fact⁴⁰, it looks French.

Lester is sitting on a mat⁴¹. The only decoration in the hut, apart from the head, is an old machete. It hangs on the wall⁴² above Lester's head. Kunu sits in front of Lester. Kunu is young, strong and hot-headed⁴³. He is the son of the tribal chief, and speaks English quite well. "Kunu," asks Lester, while he drinks the rice⁴⁴ wine with the village elders⁴⁵, "Is the head at the entrance of

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my hut from that famous French explorer who was killed⁴⁶ in this jungle?"

Kunu does not respond. The question seems to make him angry⁴⁷, and he continues to drink from his wooden bowl⁴⁸.

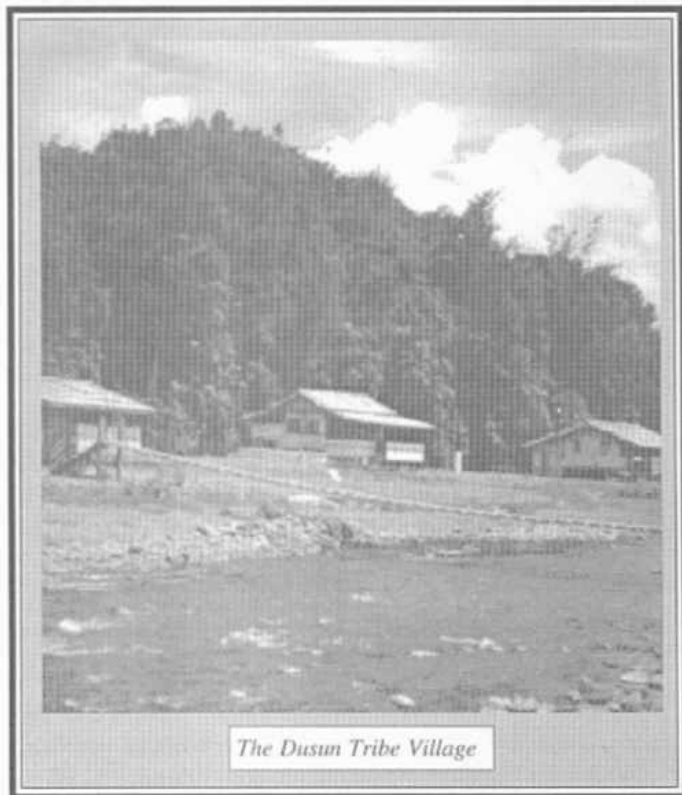
years with his wife, Soraya. Borneo is the third largest island⁵⁷ on earth, covering an area of 743,246 km². He has been sent by the United Nations Development Program to design and implement rural development projects⁵⁸ on the island. These projects

help the people of tribes become⁵⁹ self-sufficient⁶⁰. RTC's (Rural Training Centers) are built⁶¹ in certain⁶² villages. An RTC is a building that is used as a training center. The centers train⁶³ the villagers, especially the women, how to make bee⁶⁴ hives, how to sow⁶⁵ rice fields, how to make baskets⁶⁶, or how to plant⁶⁷ banana trees in the jungle. The theory is that if a woman can become self-sufficient and not dependent on a man, then the whole village will evolve⁶⁸.

Lester was especially happy to hear that an

RTC had to be built⁶⁹ in the Dusun tribal village. He has studied the history of this unique⁷⁰ tribe, because he has always been fascinated with their traditions. Most notably with their main⁷¹ tradition; the collection and shrinking⁷² of human heads.

That same night, he sits in the U.N. guest⁷³ hut, with Kunu, drinking more



The Dusun Tribe Village

"Well, never mind⁴⁹," mumbles⁵⁰ Lester, who worries⁵¹ that he has offended his host⁵². It is certainly not courteous to talk about human heads at dinner, he thinks. It is said⁵³ that the Dusun tribe has not cut⁵⁴ off a head since 1935. But anyway⁵⁵, it is better to be careful, just in case⁵⁶.

Lester has been in Borneo for two

of the colorless⁷⁴ rice wine. Lester reaches⁷⁵ for his backpack⁷⁶.

"Kunu, I have a present⁷⁷ for you." Kunu looks up.

"It comes from Spain," adds⁷⁸ Lester. "Spain. Is that a place?"

Lester smiles⁷⁹.

"It is a country⁸⁰.

My wife is from Spain." Lester opens⁸¹ his wallet and takes out⁸² a photo. He gives it to Kunu.

"Ah, she is beautiful!" remarks⁸³ Kunu.

Lester laughs.

"She is in Kota Kinabalu, the capital of Saba, at the moment, but she will come and meet me in the village next week. There are many more women like her in Spain. In fact, Spanish women are the most beautiful women in the world."

"Then I would like to go to Spain," says

Kunu. "I would also like a wife from this country."

"Well," replies Lester, "first I will give you your present." He opens his backpack. There are bottles⁸⁴ inside it.

Lester takes one⁸⁵ out and gives it to Kunu. He reads the label⁸⁶.

"Rioja wine," he says. "This is delicious; better⁸⁷ than rice wine."

"If you like this wine, then you will like the women too," says Lester. "They

are both the same⁸⁸; rich⁸⁹, smooth, full-bodied⁹⁰ and heady⁹¹."

Kunu looks at Lester, but says nothing. Lester pours⁹² the wine into Kunu's bowl. Kunu picks⁹³ it up. He examines it in the light.

He smells⁹⁴ it and puts his finger into the bowl.

"Red," he says, "like human blood⁹⁵."

"Red," echoes⁹⁶ Lester.

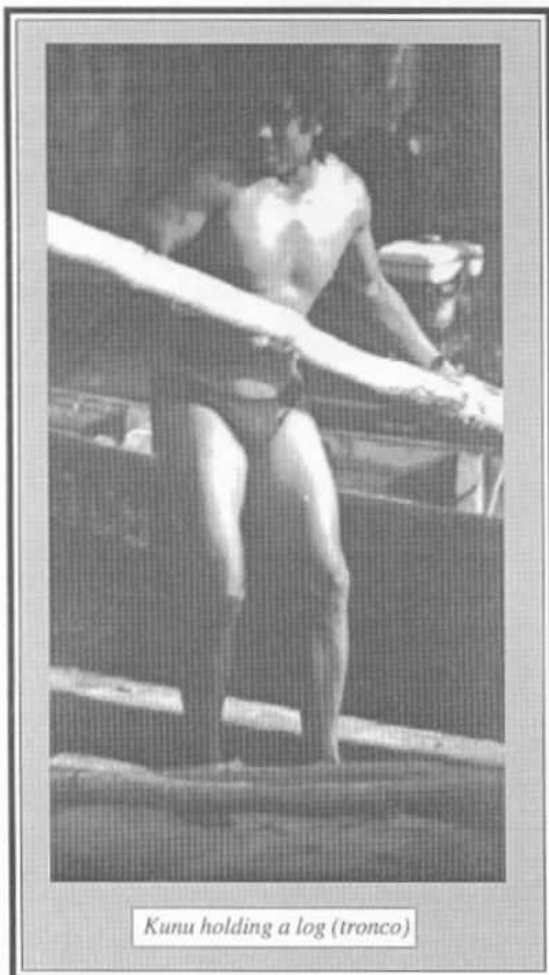
Kunu lifts⁹⁷ the bowl to his lips⁹⁸ and drinks the wine.

"It is good," he admits.

"Of course⁹⁹," replies Lester.

"Then I will be happy with a woman from the country of this wine."

"Yes," responds Lester, "Soraya is my second wife. She is marvelous."



Kunu holding a log (tranco)



"Give me her photo," says Kunu, "and I will tell you about the Frenchman." Lester is quiet for a few moments. Finally, he reaches for his wallet, opens

woman leaning¹⁰² against a rail¹⁰³ on the deck¹⁰⁴ of 'The Marques,' an old sailing ship¹⁰⁵. Her hair reflects¹⁰⁶ the sun. She is radiant. He finally places¹⁰⁷ it against his heart¹⁰⁸. Kunu rests¹⁰⁹ against the bamboo wall and begins the story.



PART TWO

"In 1935, a Frenchman was found unconscious near our village with a machete in his hand. Our people had never seen a white man before. My grandfather found him. He carried him back to his hut. He put him on the floor, over there¹¹⁰." Kunu points¹¹¹ to where Lester's sleeping¹¹² mat is. "Everyone in our village thought he was a god¹¹³. The villagers brought presents of women to love, monkeys¹¹⁴ to eat, and rice wine to drink. He consumed everything. Then one evening, he drank too many¹¹⁵ bowls of rice wine. He staggered¹¹⁶ through the village and fell¹¹⁷ down on top of¹¹⁸ a sharp stone¹¹⁹. He cut his hand and dropped¹²⁰ the machete that he was carrying. My grandfather saw his left hand bleeding¹²¹, and realized¹²² he was not a god. My grandfather ran¹²³ towards him and picked¹²⁴ up the sharp machete. He screamed¹²⁵ the tribal battle scream, and cut the Frenchman's head off. He is still here!" Kunu points to the head of the Frenchman. Its shadow¹²⁶ crosses the floor of the hut, and finally stops at Lester's kneecap¹²⁷. Lester picks up the bottle of wine, lifts it to his lips and drinks. A monkey screams, and



*Species of monkey found
in Borneo's jungles*

it and throws¹⁰⁰ the photo to Kunu. "Here! It is yours." Kunu looks at the dark-haired¹⁰¹



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shadows dance across the face of Kunu. He smiles and Lester relaxes, now feeling¹²⁸ intoxicated. He consumes more of the blood red wine and looks at Kunu. Their eyes meet¹²⁹. Lester lifts his left hand and closes it.

"Kunu!" he suddenly¹³⁰ says in a slurred¹³¹ voice, "Teach me how to shrink¹³² a human head down to the size of this fist¹³³!"

There is a long silence. Kunu's face is red and hot. A breeze moves the blond head hanging in the entrance. The silence continues. The head swings¹³⁴ hypnotically. Backwards¹³⁵ and forwards¹³⁶, left and right, right and left.

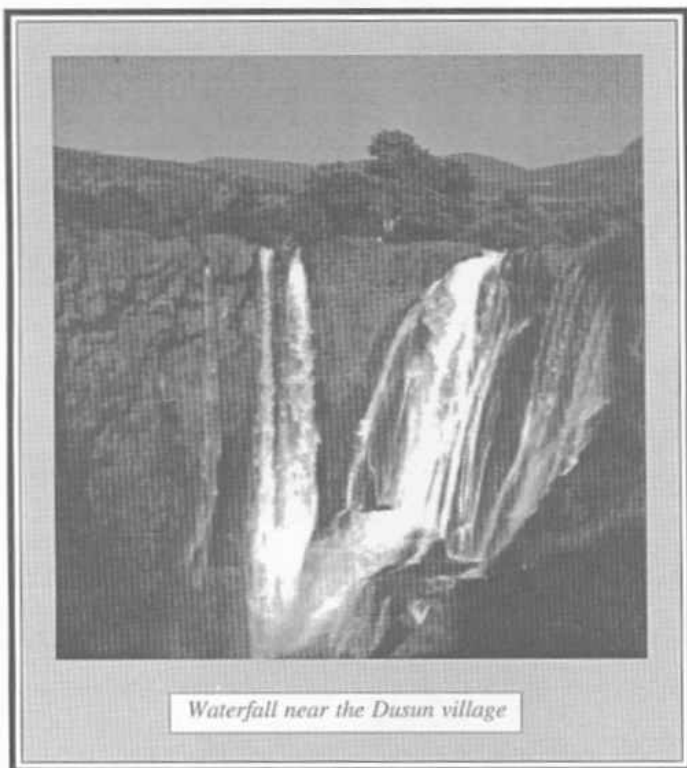
"Damn it¹³⁷!" shouts Kunu, and strikes¹³⁸ his fist on the mat. The red wine spills¹³⁹ and forms¹⁴⁰ a pool between the two. Lester's eyes widen¹⁴¹, as the red liquid glistens¹⁴² in the lamplight. "Alright¹⁴³!" shouts Kunu, pointing violently at the unsmiling¹⁴⁴ head, "I'll show¹⁴⁵ you how to shrink a head the size of yours, down to one the size of the Frenchman's, if you give me your wife!"

The next morning a hand¹⁴⁶ wakes Lester. Kunu throws a pail¹⁴⁷ of black sand¹⁴⁸ onto the floor next to the

sleeping mat. One bloody¹⁴⁹ eye looks at Lester. It doesn't blink¹⁵⁰. "Oh my God!" Lester shouts, still half asleep. "You've killed someone!"

"Ha," said Kunu, "our generation is not so lucky¹⁵¹!" He looks at the old machete above the sleeping mat. "This is a monkey's head, but it will do¹⁵²."

"Do," says Lester, mystified, "Do for what?"



Waterfall near the Dusun village

CHAPTER FOUR

"Listen," Kunu says not answering Lester and pointing to the pail, "This black sand comes from a thermal cave¹⁵³ under the Laka waterfall. I have spent part of the morning in meditation, and the other part collecting the necessary objects."



"Meditating. Is that why your eyes are so red?" asks Lester. "You look terrible!" "I took a little maikoa. It helps me think." Lester did not respond, and Kunu continues, "First I separated the scalp¹⁵⁴ of the monkey from the cranium. I then pulled the scalp off the cranium. It comes off like a rubber¹⁵⁵ glove from your hand. The cranium is thrown away¹⁵⁶, and the flesh¹⁵⁷ is cooked in a pot. Then, to shrink the skin, three stones¹⁵⁸ are heated¹⁵⁹ up. They are put inside the skin¹⁶⁰ of the head."

At this, Lester looks up, wondering¹⁶¹ why Kunu is telling him a tribal secret. He tries to remember what they had talked about the night before. When he drinks a lot, he forgets everything. Usually, during the next morning, he remembers. Lester takes out¹⁶² his note pad¹⁶³ and writes down¹⁶⁴ what Kunu is telling him. There is no book that describes the process used by the Dusun tribe. He has looked for many years. It is a secret of the headhunters. And now, he is learning their secret. This is unusual, though¹⁶⁵, he thinks. What did we talk about last night? He looks at the sleeping mat. There are two bowls, and an empty¹⁶⁶ bottle of wine. Wine, yes, I gave him the Rioja wine, he remembers. Suddenly Lester reaches for his wallet and opens it. The picture of Soraya is gone. His face grows¹⁶⁷ pale. "Kunu! Do not tell me any more", Lester says urgently. But it is impossible. Kunu continues the explanation. "The hot sand that has been heated in the black pan¹⁶⁸ over there, is poured¹⁶⁹ into the scalp until it is half filled¹⁷⁰.

The sand is changed a few times. The face must be molded¹⁷¹ to keep¹⁷² its original form. It gets smaller each time the sand is changed, until¹⁷³ it is the size of an orange. Finally, the head is tinted¹⁷⁴ black with vegetable¹⁷⁵ coal. It is then smoked¹⁷⁶ and polished¹⁷⁷ like leather¹⁷⁸, until it becomes very hard. It will be a perfect miniature of the original head!"

Lester puts his hands on the ground to get up¹⁷⁹. He does not notice the sharp stone that cuts his left hand. He stands up¹⁸⁰, and looks at Kunu. "Give me back¹⁸¹ the picture¹⁸² of my wife!" he shouts. Kunu looks up, his two hands are in the black sand underneath the monkey head. He replies, "You are a guest in this tribe. You have given me a picture of this woman. It is my picture. It is my woman."

Lester takes one step¹⁸³ backwards¹⁸⁴ and pulls out¹⁸⁵ an enormous¹⁸⁶ knife from his trousers¹⁸⁷. Kunu pulls his hands out of the wet black sand. He turns around quickly and takes the old machete from the bamboo wall behind him. As Lester holds up the knife to defend himself, Kunu steps towards him with the sharp¹⁸⁸ machete, and all that can be heard in the village is a terrible, terrible tribal scream¹⁸⁹, that has not been heard since 1935.



Richard Clarke



Lester Moores

EVERYONE, ALL, EVERY AND WHOLE

EVERYONE/ EVERYBODY AND ALL

SECTION ONE

1. **Everyone = Everybody = Todo el mundo**
Everyone is exactly the same as **everybody**.
2. **All of us/them/you = Todos** (nosotros, ellos, vosotros)
All must be accompanied by **of us, of you, of them**, etc.

Common mistakes:

- **Everybody of us** are going = X (incorrect)
- **Everybody** is going = (correct)
(todo el mundo va).
- **All us** are going = X (incorrect).
- **All** are going = X (incorrect).
- **All of + us, the people, them**, etc. are going = (correct).

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ALL/ EVERYTHING

SECTION TWO

1. **All (of) and Everything = todo** (cosas)
1A. **Of** is not necessary in this case, although it is also correct.

EVERYONE, ALL, EVERY AND WHOLE

- Kunu has brought **all** (of) the necessary objects.
(Kunu ha traído **todos** los objetos necesarios).
- Kunu has brought **everything**.
(Kunu ha traído todo).

1B. We also use the expression **all about** which means **todo sobre**.

- Kunu knows **all about** the shrinking of heads.
(Kunu sabe **todo sobre** la reducción de cabezas).



Common Mistakes:

- He's brought **all** = X (incorrect).
- He's brought **everything of** the necessary objects = X (incorrect).

ALL (OF) THE/ WHOLE

SECTION THREE

1. All (of) the/Whole = Todo

1A. **Whole** is generally used for singular countable nouns.

- I've visited the **whole** village = (correct).
- I've visited the **whole** villages = X (incorrect)
- I've drunk the **whole** wine = X (incorrect, wine is not countable).

1B. **All (of) + the** is used for singular + plural nouns (countable + uncountable). **Of** is not necessary, although is also correct.

- I've visited **all (of)** the village.
- I've visited **all (of)** the villages.
- I've drunk **all (of)** the wine.

1C. **All** is also used to mean **the only thing** = **la única cosa**.

- **All** Kunu has said is that he has drunk some maikoa.
(**Todo lo que** ha dicho Kunu es que ha tomado maikoa).

THE WHOLE/ ALL/EVERY

SECTION FOUR

1. The whole/All/Every + period of time

1A. **The whole** and **all** + period of time = **todo** + **un** periodo de tiempo.

1B. They are used to indicate a **period of time** from start to finish. They are **not** used to indicate **frequency**.

- We've drunk rice wine **all night/the whole night**.
(Hemos bebido vino de arroz **toda la noche**).

1C. Note that with periods of time, **all** is not accompanied by **of** or **the**.

- **All of** the day = X (incorrect).
- **All the** day = X (incorrect).
- **All day, month, year, summer, etc.** = (correct).

1D. We do say **all the time** (an exception).