

THE SHADOW-LINE: A CONFESSION

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The shadow-line: a confession by Joseph Conrad

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JOSEPH CONRAD

**THE SHADOW-LINE:
A CONFESSION**

THE SHADOW-LINE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

'TWIXT LAND AND
SEA.

WITHIN THE TIDES.

LORD JIM. A Romance.

YOUTH and Other Tales.

NOSTROMO. A Tale
of the Seaboard.

*For a description of these books see
the end of this volume.*

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JOSEPH CONRAD

THE
SHADOW-LINE
A CONFESSION

"Worthy of my undying regard"



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TO
BORYS AND ALL OTHERS
WHO LIKE HIMSELF HAVE CROSSED
IN EARLY YOUTH THE SHADOW-LINE
OF THEIR GENERATION
WITH LOVE

(12)

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THE SHADOW-LINE

. . . — *D'autre fois, calme plat, grand miroir
De mon désespoir.*

BAUDELAIRE.

I

ONLY the young have such moments. I don't mean the very young. No. The very young have, properly speaking, no moments. It is the privilege of early youth to live in advance of its days in all the beautiful continuity of hope which knows no pauses and no introspection.

One closes behind one the little gate of mere boyishness—and enters an enchanted garden. Its very shades glow with promise. Every turn of the path has its seduction. And it isn't because it is an undiscovered country. One knows well enough that all mankind had streamed that way. It is the charm of universal experience from which one expects an uncommon or personal sensation—a bit of one's own.

One goes on recognising the landmarks of the