

THE CHILD MUSICIAN.

He had played for his lordship's levee. He had played for his ladyship's whim. Till the poor little head was heavy. And the poor little brain would swim.

THE BROKEN WATER.

We had come for ducks—that is Larrabee and I had; Gaines had come because of work-wracked, city-wracked nerves. The little thirty-foot power-boat had brought us through the inland passage all the way from Larchmont to the south-eastern part of South Carolina, and here at last we were, sniffing through deep, muddy, tide-washed lagoons with, on either side of us, high yellow sedge in which the mud-hens and the poor-joes fed, or disturbed by the puffing of the engine, rose with protesting, raucous cries, to circle away through the soft, silent blue.

Larrabee was steering from the bow. Gaines, out on the stern overhang, sat loosely, gun across knees, hoping that he might get a shot at something; and also hoping that if that shot should be his, it would be a miss; for Gaines liked to shoot, but did not like to kill or wound; which is an anomaly that some understand, and some will not.

It was a day of early March—a gentle, friendly, sweet-smelling day. Came to us the tang of the sea, the unfragrant odor of the overgrown, seeping banks, and sometimes, from the islands that we skirted, the scent of jasmine. From time to time a silver-flecked mullet, or a glittering carp, would leap out of water before us, with a shimmer of iridescent drops. A heavy, sombre-looking buzzard, high, high above us, clove great circles against the sky. Gaines and I sat smoking our pipes, looking . . . Larrabee, at the wheel, daintily picked a course through the narrow channels, now skirting the bank closely, now holding to the centre of the lagoon. . . . It was quiet—very quiet—and restful. The sound of the engine seemed like the beating of a heart, and did not offend. . . .

We rounded a sharp bend; three ducks, feeding by the sedge edge, rose spatteringly from the water. At first, then gathering the momentum that enabled them to attain full flight. They were within easy shot. Gaines, though he saw, laid not even a hand upon his hammerless. . . . We watched them, wings flashing, disappear into the eye of the sun. . . .

Another turn, and we faced the open sea—shimmering blue water stretching to where it met the soft blue sky. "Where are you taking us, Tom?" queried Gaines at length, lazily. Larrabee answered: "Spade Island. Nobody ever goes there. Good water, shade, and a bully camping place, generally. . . . It's well out of the way of everything—even the niggers haven't found it yet, and it's a grand feeding-ground." "How far is it, Larrabee?" "Only a mile or so," returned Larrabee. "Be there inside of ten minutes."

We were skirting the shore, now, at perhaps an eighth of a mile to sea. It was a flat shore, with a wide, white beach whereon hundreds of gulls were feeding. Beyond was the tangle of the wilderness with here and there a palmetto-tree rising amid the green. Came to our ears the gentle whispering of the breaking waves. Larrabee at length spoke. "Look," he said; "isn't that a cabin?" "Where?" I asked, bending my gaze in the direction in which he was looking. "There," he said. "Between those two tallest palmettos."

Gaines was looking, too. "Doggone it all!" he exclaimed. "Some one else is here ahead of us. And I thought we'd have the place to ourselves. . . . Funny-looking sort of a hut, though isn't it? Doesn't look like a tent; and it isn't a nigger cabin. . . . Now what the devil—" I saw it now. It was a little, square, white thing, nestled in the shrubbery between two stolid-looking trees. There were a door and two round windows in the side facing us. . . .

Larrabee gave a quick turn to the wheel; the boat responded; her bow swung swiftly around. When it pointed directly at the little cabin, Larrabee swung the wheel back again. "I'm going in to have a look," he said. "If we're going to have neighbors, I want to see what they're like, for if we don't like 'em, we can go on. The day's still young, and there's a lot of coast between here and Florida. . . . All three of us kept our eyes on the little cabin over the bow. . . . "It's a deck-house," said Larrabee at length. "The deck-house of a yacht. . . . Isn't it?"

Gaines laid his gun down upon the cockpit seat. "Yes," he agreed. "That's strange. I wonder how it got there. . . . We were not far from the shore now. A not inconsiderable swell was running. "Better not try to beach her," counseled Gaines. "Isn't that a creek—there—alongside that third tree?" Larrabee nodded, and swung the wheel over a little. "Stop her," commanded Larrabee. I threw the switch. The engine, sputtering remonstrance, turned over a few times and became still. Through the placid, yellow water we drifted, and at length the nose of the boat slid gently up on the muddy bank. . . .

Larrabee caught up the anchor, and with it jumped to the mud. "Tide's going out," he said; "we're all right for half an hour or so." He stuck the prong of the anchor into the harder soil of the higher bank. "Come on, boys. Better bring the gun, Jim. Some of these beach-combers are hard nuts. Bring yours, too, old man." This to me. Gaines picked up his hammerless; I drew mine from its case and fitted barrel to stock. Tossing Gaines a half a dozen buckshot cartridges and taking as many more for myself, I followed him to shore and up the bank. . . .

It was but a short distance to the cabin that we sought. We walked carefully, avoiding the sticky pebbles, and, pouncing a little sandhill, we came in full view of the cabin. . . .

It was a deck-house—and one that had come apparently from a valuable craft. We came upon it from the left side; and upon us gazed two round, brass-fitted portholes, heavy windows swung wide open to the air and sun. The side was painted a glowing white, and was unscathed except that around the bottom the wood was torn and splintered. "Hello!" hailed Larrabee. "Anybody home?"

There was no answer. "I say!" he called again. "Cabin, ahoy!" Again there came no answer to his cry. "Come on," he said. We advanced; rounding the corner of the cabin, we came at length before the open door. . . .

Larrabee, who had taken Gaines's gun, was first. Approaching the threshold of trodden sand, he leaned forward and he jerked into the cabin—then started back with a little cry of surprise. "What is it?" I asked, excitedly. "Sssh!" he whispered. "She's asleep." Gaines and I were not beside him, peering in through the door. . . .

The place was perhaps twenty feet long by ten wide. It held no furniture except an empty cracker-box upended in the centre of the floor. Around the edge ran a seat that had been a part of the structure—a seat perhaps two feet from the floor and eighteen inches in width. And on this, across from the door, lay the figure of a girl, resting upon a heavy bed of dried grasses. . . .

She lay still, inert. She might have been dead, except that one could see the gentle rise and fall of the rounded breast and the little play of the delicately chiselled nostrils. Her rich brown hair lay in a great mass about her head, falling in a rippling cascade of glowing color over seat and floor. Her extended body, lithe and beautifully formed, was clad in white waist and duck skirt. Rubber-soled yachting shoes were on her tiny feet. . . .

She looked as though, tired, exhausted, she had sunk into middy rest. . . . And yet her face did not look tired. There were no hollows or dark arcs beneath the wide, blue-veined lids. There was a rich color on the rounded cheeks and on the perfectly moulded lips that were parted as in a smile. . . . She was beautiful. . . . More beautiful, far, than any woman I had ever seen. . . . It seemed to us that we were doing a sacrilege. . . . Simultaneously, all three of us turned to go. . . .

He came leaping in at the door, a great, huge, bearded man, and fell upon us with a veracity that was more than human. His white teeth were bare as his hairy arms, bisecting his face with a hideous grin of animal rage. . . . Gaines fell in a heap in the corner, striking his head against the wall of the house. I, half prepared and bracing for the shock, was as a leaf in a whirlwind. I spun around and fell full length upon the trodden sand. Larrabee's gun was struck from his grip; he was picked up in great, hairy hands and thrown bodily through the air against the far wall. . . .

Larrabee was champion all-round athlete of the Seventh, you know, and weighs one hundred and ninety, stripped. . . . And then followed a battle that I think of, sometimes, in my sleep, and wake, shivering. . . . And I was at San Juan—but that was different. It is confused in my mind. I saw the huge, hairy thing leaping upon me. I thrust up my arm. Larrabee, from his corner, sprang forward, foot extended; and the man fell upon me, his white-circled savagery, blood-lusting eyes right at mine, his hot, foetid breath in my face. . . .

I closed my eyes, within them the vision of his face and a vague picture of Larrabee, lying on his belly across our head, and Gaines, with the blood running down into his eyes from a great gash on his brow, beating with the stock of a gun the hideous, hairy head so close to my own. . . . They were pouring water on my face when next I knew anything. . . . It ran down my neck, and felt most unpleasant. . . . Then I realized. . . . I sat up. I was outside the cabin, in the open. My eyes were pointed toward the door. . . . Just inside, prone upon the floor, was he who had attacked us. His matted black hair was wet with blood. His white teeth still showed like those of a panther in anger. . . .

Larrabee, pale of cheek and of lip, was tying a wet, reddened handkerchief around Gaines's head, while Gaines himself, with weak fingers was wiping off, as they fell, the drops of blood that trickled from beneath the bandage. . . . Larrabee sat erect. "Good God!" he cried. "The woman." We looked. There at the far side of the cabin she still lay—still slept peacefully—rounded breast still rising and falling evenly, chiselled nostrils moving in almost imperceptible rhythm. . . .

"If that didn't wake her—" began Larrabee. He did not finish the thought. He rose to his feet and went to the door. The glaring eyes of the man upon the floor followed his every move. Larrabee wheeled suddenly. "Do you talk English?" he demanded. "Do you talk English?" he asked, again. "Do you mean no harm to you or to her. We are hunting; we saw the cabin and came merely to investigate. . . . Do you talk English?"

The eyes still glared. "Yes," came plainly, in rumbling guttural, from beneath the bared white teeth. "We don't wish to do you harm," said Larrabee, "or any one. You are beaten. Will you behave?" The glare was gone a little from the eyes. Speculation, reason, were beginning to replace it. . . . "Will you promise to behave?" asked Larrabee, again. . . .

There was a long pause. At length from the hairy lips came a slow, muttered assent. Then, after another pause, "She must be fed." His eyes had turned toward the doorway. On the sand, fifteen feet or so plain from the entrance, lay a coat. Knobs had been tied in the sleeves; a piece of rope tightly bound the collar; and from it there had been strewn forth upon the sand a dozen or so muddy, clustered oysters. . . .

"Who are you?" asked Larrabee. He answered, gruffly, "I was on the yacht." "What yacht?" "I don't know." "You do. . . . What yacht?"

"I don't know," evenly. "Don't lie. . . . Tell me the name on the yacht." "I don't know, I tell yer." He spoke still evenly, and without resentment. "I can't read. I didn't have time to find out. We was wrecked right after I shipped." "From where did you ship?"

"I don't know. I was drunk—drunk as hell. I'd been drunk for a month. The water sobered me up—when we struck." "Who is she—inside?" "She was on the yacht, too." "Her name?" "I don't know." "You must know." "No. . . . What th' hell difference does it make, anyhow?" He asked the question with neither anger nor interest. "Where are the rest of them?" "Dead." "All of them?" "Yes. Except us." "Where did she go down, this yacht?" "And when?"

"Long time ago. Month or two—mebbe be three. Struck on the reef out there." He jerked his head a little backward. "Hell of a night. Wind blowin' an' a heavy sea runnin'. She struck hard—tore a big hole in the port bow. Then the breakers sent her over on her beam ends." "Where were you?"

"The place was perhaps twenty feet long by ten wide. I run out on deck. She, nodding his head in the direction of the sleeping girl, "and all the rest of 'em was on the bridge. They was all yellin' like hell—'cept her. She was smilin'—like she is now, she's still drunk—the water helped some, an' a big wave chucked me into the scuppers. . . . I clawed out an' got to the bridge. They was all hangin' on to each other an' yellin'—all 'cept her. . . . She was the only one worth savin'—see that. . . . I grabbed her around the neck. The boat slid off'n the reef, into deep water, an' went down. . . . They was all holdin' on to each other an' yellin' like hell. . . . He stopped. "And then?" prompted Larrabee. "Notin' much. I clawed my way to shore, draggin' her. When I got there she was like she is now—asleep. I worked over her for four days. But it didn't do no good. . . . The deck-house come in, an' some other wreckage. I rigged up a tackle an' some rollers, an' got the house up here. . . . That's all." "There was a long pause. He spoke again. . . .

"Turn me loose," he muttered. "She's got to be fed." "Will you promise to behave?" "Yes. . . . Turn me loose." "Understand. . . . We've got two guns, an' we've got two loads of buckshot in it. The first move you make—" "Hell! Turn me loose. She's got to be fed, I tell yer!" Larrabee handed a gun to me and one to Gaines. Then, stooping, he cut the rope that bound the great form upon the sand. . . .

He stretched his great limbs, and stood for a moment, gently rubbing his left wrist with his right hand. . . . He said no word; he noticed us not at all. Going to the corner of the house, he took from a heap of things that we had not noticed a tin pot and a heavy knife with a short blade. We held our guns full on him. . . .

Taking the coatful of oysters, he carried them down to the edge of the water and there washed them clean. He came back. Sitting cross-legged on the sand before the door, he opened a box of more, dropping them into a pot. This done, he walked around the corner of the cabin. . . .

Anon he returned; there was water in the pot. He set it down and, gathering some dried grass and a few sticks of wood, drew out his pocket a dozen of matches. He fed the fire in silence; and when at length there were coals, he set the pot upon them. Going into the cabin he got out pepper and salt in little paper bags. Larrabee asked: "When did you get those things—matches—pepper—salt?" He answered, laconically, "Jim Island." "James Island!" cried Gaines. "Sixty miles!"

"Fifty," grunted the big man. "You have no boat," I said, half in question. He shook his head. "Fifty miles of mud and marsh and water!" exclaimed Gaines. "I can walk, an' I can swim," said the man. "Hell!" "But why not other food?" questioned Larrabee. "No money," returned the man. "Be-sides, there ain't nothin' better'n oyster stew."

We waited and watched. The stew at length was done. He added pepper and salt. He poured some of the liquid into a cup. Then he went inside the cabin. We followed and watched. Passing his arm beneath the head of the girl, he raised her shoulders a little from the couch. Then, parting her lips as gently as a mother might those of a child, he held the cup to them, pouring slowly and with infinite care. It took a long time. The movements of her throat were slow and irregular and infrequent. . . . At length, after a good twenty minutes, the cup was empty. He filled it again. And again he fed her its fullness. We watched and said no word. Nor did he say a word. . . . It was an hour ere he was quite done. . . .

Then he opened the rest of the oysters and ate them himself, gulping them down raw with neither salt nor pepper. Going again to the spring, he got clean water; this he heated, and with it he washed the cup and knife that he had used, drying them on a clean bit of sacking. . . . It was while he was so engaged that Larrabee again spoke to him. "You say you've been to James Island?" He nodded. "How many times?" "Twice." "Then why didn't you get a doctor for her—get some one to come for her?" "I didn't want to." "But it's her duty." "I don't give a damn." "Don't you want to get her well?" "No." "None of your dam' business."

"But it ain't right," protested Larrabee. "It isn't fair. She may have friends—the family; she might be restored to health again. Her life is hers. She has a right to it. Who are you to stand between her and that right?" He was polishing his oyster knife by thrusting it in the sand and drawing it out again. He stopped. Dangling the knife in the palm of a great hand, he turned scowling eyes and truculent brows upon his questioner. . . .

At length he said, slowly, almost savagely: "She's mine! She b'longs to me, I tell yer! . . . Where'd she be now if it wasn't for me? Out there with the rest of 'em." He jerked his head toward where we could see, a mile out over the blue water, the soft gleam of broken billiard tables, the soft gleam of broken billiard tables, the soft gleam of broken billiard tables. . . .

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Larrabee was lying, spread sickeningly upon the floor, motionless. Gaines, face contorted in agony, was holding his left shoulder with his right hand. Even as I looked he sank gently to his knees, then toppled sideways, across the prostrate Larrabee. . . .

He turned, fearfully. There, ten feet away, stood our enemy. A quarter of his scalp hung drippingly over his right ear; the blood from the wound had reddened that side of his face and his shoulder. From the great ragged hole in his thigh the red blood bubbled. There was another gaping gun-shot tear in his shoulder. And there were other wounds too horrible to tell of—of which it were too horrible even to think. I recall wondering, vaguely, how a man so hurt might stand upon his feet and live. . . .

He had forgotten us, I think. At any rate, he gave to us no notice. His battered lips were parted. He was muttering to himself, his eyes the while upon the figure of the girl whose salvation we had made such sorry work—of the girl who lay there even now almost as though in sleep—no less wonderful of beauty. . . .

"She's dead," he muttered. Again and again he repeated it. "She's dead," he said. "She's dead." He said it dully, monotonously. Then there came to his face a different expression. He mumbled slowly: "I got her from the sea. By God! I'll take her back." He went across the room. Stooping, he placed his arms beneath her body. He swayed a little as he lifted her. . . .

He held her to his breast gently, he turned. To us he paid no heed. . . . Just as I was in my mind I do not know. Perhaps I saved at least her body for those she loved. . . . I tried to stagger to my feet—to reach club or gun-barrel, I was but little more than half conscious at the time. . . .

He stopped. He waited, still holding her against his breast. . . . Things grew dark again. . . . When again the light came I was alone in the cabin save for Larrabee and Gaines, who were as I had last seen them. My face was toward the door now. I suppose I had fallen that way. My eyes awoke to look over the broad reaches of blue water. . . .

For a long time I sought him. . . . At length I saw his head, far out toward the broken water. He was swimming. I saw his arm rise from the water and fall again. Behind him the sun, for an instant, flashed as from a mass of burnished gold. . . . Her hair was of gold, you know. . . .

The strokes seemed less even now. But he was not far from the broken water. . . . The air was very clear that day. One could see far and distinctly. The tide had gone down, and in one spot the reef lay bare. . . . It was for that spot that he was making, apparently. . . . At length I saw him throw his head back a little. . . . Then he found his feet. He turned. He rose erect. He held her body in his arms, and again the sun gleamed from the gold of her hair. . . .

For a moment, still holding her, he stood erect, plainly outlined against the blue of the sky and the white of the broken water. Then, slowly, carrying her, he walked onward. . . . That was a tiny . . . that was bare—it looked no bigger than the palm of one's hand. And it was scarce above the surface of the water. . . . The water rose about him now—now to ankles—now to knees. . . .

I found his waist. . . . Still he walked onward. . . . Now it was about his breast. . . . Now to his neck. He did not hesitate or stop. . . . On he went, slowly. . . . It was above his chin now; yet he went on. . . . Then for a brief second I saw his head—then the sun gleam again on gold. . . . And that was all. . . .

Just before sundown I succeeded in bringing Larrabee back to consciousness. Together we worked over Gaines, resuscitating him—patching up his shattered shoulder as best we were able. Somehow we got our boat started—somehow we made our way back to civilization. . . . To all those who should be told—to all those who might care to know—to all those who could be of assistance in search—we reported that which had happened. . . .

We sought of yachts that had been lost, and found those who had known their owners and the friends of those owners. Yet we learned nothing. . . . Sometimes I wonder if, in it all, we did wisely. Sometimes I am sure that we did unwisely. If only—Ah, but that were useless. For the "ifs" of all this world belong to God. . . . By Porter Emerson Browne, in Harper's Weekly.

Paris Fashions for Americans. Special Number of The North American Comes on September 18. The American woman has now reached the pass where she never buys her outfit for the season without first being sure what Paris has decided upon as the fashionable thing. . . .

And then the darkness came. . . . I don't know how long that darkness lasted. . . . I know only that when I opened my eyes the pain made me close them again for a moment. . . . At length I opened them once more. I managed to rise on my elbow. . . .

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FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

To harbor fretful and discontented thoughts is to do yourself more injury than it is in the power of your greatest enemy to do you.—Mason.

There are many things which can be embroidered or entirely made by the clever aunt or best friend of the new arrival's mother. Usually they should be in white, though pink for a boy and blue for a girl are also sanctioned.

One of the best gifts is a carriage cover of union linen, embroidered in a flower design and with a huge bow of ribbon at one side.

Then there are carriage parasols of finer linen or batiste, with scalloped ruffles and ribbon bindings.

And little linen booties, washable, with an edging of valenciennes lace and a ribbon bow below the embroidered strap.

Battles may be crocheted around with thick silk, to keep them from hurting baby when they fall. Be sure the color is absolutely fast, as babies put everything in their mouths.

Soft towels for the bath have a line of drawwork or hemstitched and the baby's own initial embroidered above.

Baby armbands or sock garters of ribbon elastic edged with gathered lace are easily made and very pretty.

Pincushions galore will suggest themselves to auntie as she looks over her scraps of silk and lace and velvet.

And, of course, there are always dresses and caps and underskirts and bibs, of which no baby and no mother can have too many or too pretty examples.

How few women there are of whom one can say "her glory is in her hair." The hair of a woman can be so beautiful, and yet it rarely is. The woman whose hair is well cared for and glossy presents a more attractive appearance than the woman whose tresses of gorgeous Titian red, blonde cendre or chestnut are dull and unkempt.

It is most necessary that the hair be kept free from dust. To this end it should be washed at least once a fortnight in summer and once every three weeks in winter. Soap should never be rubbed directly onto the hair in washing it.

A good way to shampoo the hair is as follows: Have plenty of warm water ready, not hot. Put about a quart into a bowl with half a teaspoonful of borax; add enough soap jelly to make a good lather; then plunge the head in and thoroughly rub the scalp. Use a second lot of this mixture, and rinse the hair in lukewarm water to which a pinch of borax has been added. This prevents the hair from getting harsh, as it slightly softens the water. Rinse, rinse, rinse and rinse again.

Dry the head and hair thoroughly, but not before a fire—in the open air when the sun is shining is best.

The furry felts are already appearing with knots of fur or fur formed into twisted bows upon the front or side as sole trimming. Others have a cravate and twist of ermine, petit gris, or seal skin; and bearskin and skunk's border the high Russian toques that will again be worn this winter. Some of these toques are entirely made of the breast feathers of various birds, of the pretty speckled plumage of the pea hen being largely employed. Furs are making their appearance, and broad scarfs of breitchanz or seal or edged with skunks or Russian bear are handsome.

The large flat muff has a turnover or V point in front. The assemblage of the astrachan and the deep brown of the skunks is very agreeable and rich-looking, employed side by side. Seal and chin-chilla and sable and ermine are most elegant, and will probably be much worn by our wealthy elegants.

The fur scarf will be the novelty of the coming winter, and will replace the satin scarfs lined and tasseled, that are the rage at present. The fur scarfs will have square or pointed ends, and possibly passementerie motifs and tassels will be employed.

There can be no two opinions regarding the coming of the bolero, both with and without sleeves. It is never seen to greater advantage than when in alliance with a jacket of lace and high collar band. In its most novel guise it may be described as similar to a man's morning-coat, as it is provided with a basque which is of so elaborate a character that it partakes of the nature of a tunic.

Sleeves at the moment may be divided into two distinct classes—those reminiscent of the Renaissance period extending in a point well-nigh to the knuckles and those finished with a gauntlet cuff just below the elbow, with under-sleeves of brocade or other fabric to harmonize with the waistcoat.

As for dress wear the modes are about the same, voile over soft silk being a rival to the heavier goods. Party dresses are likely to be of mousseline, or kindred fabric over soft silk of a delicate shade. To wear under them there's a princess slip (comprising petticoat and drawers) all in one of the soft-tinted silk, fussily trimmed with lace.

Mothers are more than busy just now buying or making fall and winter clothes for little daughters. Just now one must give precedence to the school frock. A pleasing model for a girl of from 8 to 10 years of age is in the skirt and long bodice design, and though cut separately, they are united by a narrow band of the material, provided with little straps at the side for the leather belt to be passed through.

It will be remarked how artistically the tucks over the shoulder of these dresses take up the line of the box-pleated front of the skirt, a movement that is repeated at the back, leaving the figure at the sides plain. Serge, as goes without saying, is the ideal material.

If a porch is to be furnished cheaply buy furniture which is oil-filled or painted. Jute rugs are serviceable.

Bilious people who have found no relief in ordinary medicines should try Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. They are wonderfully successful in curing and preventing that discouraging complaint.