

IDLE ISLAND

By ETHEL HUESTON

WNU Service

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STORY FROM THE START

On the verge of nervous collapse, due to overwork, Gay Delane, successful New York artist, seeks rest at Idle Island. She rents a cottage, the "Lone Pine," from an island character, the "Captain," and his sister, Alice Andover, "administrator." Gay finds the cottage is tenanted by an elderly lady, "Auntalmiry," who consents to move to another abode, the "Apple Tree." Awakening from sleep, Gay imagines she sees the face of a Chinaman peering in the window. On an exploration of the island, Gay, standing on the seashore, is horrified by the appearance of the drifting body of a drowned man, which she serves herself to bring to the shore. A bullet wound in the temple shows the man to have been murdered. Gay makes her way to the "Captain" with the story. Returning with him to the shore, they find no body there, and Gay's story of the incident is set down to an attack of "nerves," Gay, unable to convince her neighbors of the truth, draws a picture of the face of the dead man, intending to send it to the authorities. She meets a stranger, apparently another visitor, to whom she tells the story and shows the picture. He asks her to let him take it, but Gay refuses. Next day, after a night spent with "Auntalmiry," Gay finds the picture has been taken from the cottage.

CHAPTER IV—Continued

"There you have me in a nutshell. The island dynamite, burner and bomber. Got anybody you want blown up? Rand's home."

"Rand who?" she asked. Gay was amazed, that having heard the words a hundred times, "What Rand comes home," she had never felt sufficient interest to inquire, "And who is Rand?" Many times again would Gay Delane hear those words, but never again without a thrill of personal interest, hope and joy.

"Rand Wallace."
"Oh, you're another Wallace."
"I am not only another Wallace, I am a whole section of them. The Wallaces run in branches. I'm the third branch. All the other branches dwindle off into uncles and aunts, and nephews, sons and cousins. But I'm a whole series all by myself. It's quite a distinction."

Gay laughed as she pressed the electric button that turned the heat into her tea kettle.

"We'll have a party," she said. "We're so glad Rand's home. And while we are waiting for the water to boil—tell me, where does your series fit into the tout ensemble of House Wallace?"

Randolph Wallace's version of the family history, a very factious, hip-pity and slangy version, began with the first Captain Wallace who was his great-grandfather. The present Captain, he explained carefully, was really his great-uncle, although he called him Gramp, because, as he explained, "all the other Wallaces call him Gramp, and it avoids confusion." The administrator, Mrs. Alice Andover, was his great-aunt.

"Your voice, except that it has some expressiveness, is rather state of Maine," Gay said thoughtfully. "But you do not seem like the others. You are different."

"My father committed a faux pas," he confessed. "He married an actress from New York who was up here with the actors' summer colony one year. I," he said slowly, "I am the combustion that results from the union of Manhattan and the state of Maine.—It has been a warning to the whole state," he added modestly.

"Your parents—" Gay prompted, enthralled with his flippant tale.
"We were all out in a boat together. I am sort of remember it, though I was a baby. Sudden squall.—boat went over.—Strange, isn't it? They were both strong, able-bodied, good swimmers, used to the sea. I was a baby. But I floated ashore in my mother's arms. She was dead, my father was dead. But Rand came home."

"Oh, that is very sad." Gay's eyes had darkened with her ready sympathy, her slim hands twisted together. He smiled at her. To hide her sudden emotion, Gay turned quickly to the serving of tea.

But her desire for information about this surprising person was limitless. She wanted to know about his education, where he had gone to school.

"The grammar grades in the island schoolhouse, it seemed, he had persisted doggedly through, and took a great deal of quiet satisfaction in explaining that the three missing bricks beneath the window on the southeast corner had been removed by his own hands at the age of nine years, to facilitate his departure from the seat of learning when the teacher reached for the well-known educational birch branch, he entire high school course he had encompassed, if not with honor, at least without serious mishap, in the city of Portland."

"And then, darned if I didn't go to college," he told her. "But don't

blame me. I had to go. My late lamented Grandfather Wallace put it into his will that I couldn't inherit until I went to college. Left me an infant in arms, as you might say, the arms of a guardian. Guess who? The administrator, darn her. That's what got her so stuck on administrating, she did such a good job with me."

"It wouldn't hurt you to go to college."
"Going to college would be simple enough. I had to go through.—I did.—Bowdoin. I hated to go there, I was afraid I'd turn out a poet, I thought it was required for graduation. But Gramp was dead set on Bowdoin. Well, I went. It did me no harm. I've never even written vers libre. Though sometimes I feel it come over me all of a sudden—I feel it now when I look at you."

Gay frowned at him, but he smiled disarmingly. His was a pleasant smile. His lips were thin, their curve half-cynical, half-humorous, very sensitive. The vaulted mustache was but a shadowy outlining fringe. His skin had been fair no doubt, save for the rich coat of tan that covered him. His hands were hard and brown, small for their strength, smaller than her own, she noticed quickly.

When he said at last, reluctantly, that he must go and see Auntalmiry she went with him to the door.

"Come again," she told him pleasantly; "come often."
"I feel myself slipping," he said sadly. "slipping. However, I am no coward. I'll come."

Later in the evening, Gay went down to the Mr. grocery store. On every lip was the laughing word, "Rand's home." But whereas before she had taken no notice, now she experienced acute interest, paused breathless at the name, and drank in every word that fell from native lips on the subject of Randolph Wallace. The combustion of the union between Manhattan and the state of Maine was not entirely approved on the island, she gathered, but altogether loved, although the island never openly acknowledges its loves.

As the dusk fell she went out, alone, unafraid into the little whispering forest, and walked up and down, slowly, deep in thought. The island seemed changed to her, warmer, softer. She felt vaguely troubled, vaguely pleased, strangely stirred. When her thoughts turned to the amazing young man and her surprising encounter with him her lips curved into tremulous smiles and her eyes brightened with pleased expectancy. She shook her head at herself warningly. She was not deceived. She knew these symptoms. She liked but feared them also.

For the first time, the practical boyishness of her costume was distasteful to her, and when she got up on the morning after Rand's return, for the first time since she came to the island she discarded her knickers and silken shirt. Half ashamed of the instinct that prompted her, but none the less obedient to its guiding, she took from her trunk a costume that was one of her chief treasures, a studio pajama suit, patterned after an improved Japanese style, all in black and fairly blue, the trousers long and wide, the coat, which was really an over-bonuse reaching to the knees, richly embroidered, all soft lines and delicate curves. With dainty blue and gold slippers and sheer silken hose, it was a delectable studio concoction, designed for theatrical effect, inspired for the enravishment of an audience.

Gay changed her easel, considering now not so much the allowance of good light for her work as unobstructed view for herself, and sat where by the slightest turn of her eyes she could command the entire slope to the orchard below, and the lane that led from the pier to the Captain's house. Whoever ventured forth, must pass that way.

At ten minutes to eleven he came down jauntily and crossed into the orchard. Gay leaned forward. Did he turn left to the Apple Tree? No, straight toward the Lone Pine he made his way. Once he stopped to pick and taste and toss away a little green apple. Again he paused, to answer the eager calls of the boys at the pier. But he came on.

He came to a sudden halt outside the window, and stood a moment, spellbound. She looked up, then, and smiled.

"You are blotting out my sunshine," she said.
"I fondly hoped that I was bringing it," he returned impudently. "Don't get up. I always come right in."

He suited action to his words, and came and sat in the window-seat close to her elbow. Gay turned about in her chair and regarded him pleasantly.

"Is Auntalmiry here?" he asked apologetically.

"No, she isn't. Isn't she at the Apple Tree?"

"Well, I didn't really step to see, I thought I'd better inquire here first. So she isn't here. Dear, dear, all that long walk for nothing."

"Not for nothing. I am just going

to have my breakfast, and you shall have coffee with me."

Without moving from her chair, Gay swung up a wide tray that hung to the wall, and connected the electric toaster.

As she gave him a cup of coffee their fingers touched, and their eyes met lingeringly. Rand's speculatively smiling, Gay's a little cloudy.

As they drank their coffee slowly, she studied him furtively, noted his easy slouch in the comfortable window-seat, marked the brown arm on the window-seat. But she avoided meeting the merry gray eyes beneath the dark up-curling lashes.

"Do you flirt, Mr. Wallace?" she asked suddenly.

"Hope to tell you I do," he answered warmly.

"Oh! Then you need no warning. We have quite a wicked little flirt in the neighborhood, and I was going to warn you. But since you do, you can take care of yourself."

"Oh, I thought you meant yourself. I thought it was a sort of 'Help Wanted,' like the newspaper ads. I was willing to apply."

Again the friendly, smiling silence. To one like Gay, whose religion was work, whose god accomplishment, it came as a distinct shock to know that this one, with the strong hands, the ready wit and the smiling eyes,



The Present Captain, He Explained Carefully, Was Really His Great-Uncle.

was an idler, a dawdler on the face of the earth, that he had no profession and wanted none, no business and was glad of it, no ambition and delighted in its absence. He called himself a retired gentleman, and said it was a poor island that couldn't support at least one; in fact, he said, the entire state of Maine united to support him.

"But don't you do anything? You don't just loaf, do you?"
"Loaf! Certainly not. Bums loaf. Landed gentlemen—retire."

Gay scrutinized him gravely, remarked the muscular arms, the straight shoulders, the vigorous tan, the deep and understanding eyes. And he was an idler in this rugged land!

She shook her head regretfully. "A world full of things to be done," she said slowly. "And you do nothing."

He explained that for ten weeks he had been doing the coast of Canada with a photographer in a fishing schooner, getting pictures. He had returned to the island to finish up a little work he was doing on a motor launch, for Bemis, a lumber man at Bangor. He was to get the boat ready, and with a couple of men as

crew, take it to Miami in readiness for Bemis when he went down for the winter season later on. He had expected to finish the job on the island, he said, in three days, but now he was beginning to feel it would take him a week.

He said he had gone with MacMillan on one of his trips to the Arctic, had been to the Arctic circle twice, in fact, but he didn't like it. Said it was too cold. Wished somebody would plant the next pole in Florida or Mexico, nice warm, place to look for things. He had been in the World War, and served overseas seven months. He said he did not like that either.

"Why not?" Gay was a little bitter. "Were you afraid? Or are you a pacifist? Or perhaps you had to get up too early in the morning?"

"No. I didn't mind those things. It was the uniform. I couldn't stand the uniform. The collar made my neck itch. My neck itched for fifteen months without stopping. One gets tired of it, that's all."

Gay's eyes were dark. She felt saddened. This aimless, planless, hopeless, dear young man violated her finest feelings. He was utterly impossible, she told herself furiously. But when her eyes met his, involuntarily she smiled. Impossible, but how pleasant to have him there in the window-seat at her side, drinking her coffee, smiling at her with the dark gray eyes beneath those softly curling lashes.

Ridiculous, she said to herself, that a man should have gray eyes and curly lashes.

Ridiculous, but something very disturbing, rather sweet, about it when one caught the full bright friendly glance of them.

CHAPTER V

Randolph Wallace indeed stood for everything in the world of which Gay Delane professedly disapproved. It was not merely that he did not work, but he disapproved of it on principle. He objected vigorously to the enthronement of Doing, which was Gay's god. He declared stoutly that labor in itself was a childish, ineffective thing, that the need for it was a confession of inferiority, that joy in accomplishment was not merely the last word in selfishness, but was also the sure mark of a narrow nature, lacking vision.

He asked Gay why she had never married.

"Because there is so much to do," she cried intensely. "Because I want to accomplish something in the world, get something done. Because I want to work, work hard, and work well.—Why don't you?" she ended mildly.

"Because life is too rare and fine a thing to be devoted to the mere grimy physical effort of doing this or doing that. Soul is too frail and too delicate to be enslaved in the chains of daily toil for board and keep."

Half the time, she realized that he was only laughing at her, making fun. But always she felt an undertone of serious conviction in what he said, always she felt in him the inherent yearning of pure spirit for freedom, more freedom, always more. Work, he declared, was confining, success was pinning, ambition the sternest slave-driver in the universe. Only in thought, desire, the soul was free.

Gay chafed restlessly at his easy indolence, his serene and apparently imperturbable calm. She knew that he could work, that, on occasion, he did work, desperately, both hard and well, with mind, with soul, with body. And more than that, he liked it. It was only the compulsion to work that he detested.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Special Folding of Bills Prevents Loss

With many men it is a common habit to carry a few odd bills in convenient pockets to save themselves the trouble of pulling out their wallets to pay for small articles purchased. Frequently these bills are folded in indifferent fashion and stuffed into pockets where other bills, folded with equal carelessness, may be reposing.

Bankers point out that this is apt to be a costly habit, as a bill may be dropped when some of them are withdrawn from the pocket. They point out that there is one proper way to handle bills thus carried; that is, by smoothing out the bills, placing them together, preferably with the smaller denominations on top and larger below, although that is entirely a matter of preference. Then one end of the little pile of bills is turned inward to the depth of about an inch or so and folded down, after which the bills are creased lengthwise down the center and folded over. Finally the narrow strip of bills is folded from end to end in the most convenient little wad.

In this way the bills are all locked together and there is no danger of any being separated and lost, while

the owner can readily unfold them and extract what he wants at any time, re-folding the balance securely and returning them to his pocket.

To End Church Debt

Amos Skinner had never done any real work; instead, he had tried to invent something that would bring him a fortune.

Meeting an old friend, he rushed up to him, greatly excited.
"I've got it at last!" he shrieked "Made my fortune, sure as eggs!"
"What is it this time?" asked his friend.

"Just a little device," said Skinner, "but it will bring me millions. Every church in the country'll buy one. You see, it's a collecting box with different slots for different coins. All silver money falls on velvet, while copper drop on a big bell!"

Play or Get Off Stage

Shakespeare says, "All the world's a stage and men and women are but actors on it." But he failed to say there's an understudy ready and waiting to take the conceit out of most of us. Let us play our parts well.—Graft

The Cream of the Tobacco Crop



"I Appreciate Lucky Strike" Says George M. Cohan
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"It's toasted"

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Scapgoat Used to Carry Off Smallpox

The ancient Hebrew custom of loading the sins of the people on a scapegoat, which bore them off into the wilderness, has a modern parallel in a certain district in central India. It is not sins, however, which the modern scapegoat is required to carry off, but smallpox. When an outbreak of smallpox occurs in a village, the inhabitants resort to the ceremony of "Niensi." A female goat is bought by public subscription, and is adorned with the particular type of ornaments usually affixed to the image of a goddess. The goat is then apparently looked upon as an incarnation of the goddess of the disease. The animal is supposed to remove the epidemic as she is passed on from village to village until she reaches her own temple, or is devoured by wild beasts on the way.

When You Feel a Cold Coming On, Take Laxative BROMO QUININE Tablets to work off the cold and to fortify the system against an attack of Grip or Influenza, 30c.—Adv.

Touched Trapper's Heart

A trapper at Orange, Texas, placed a trap in what he thought was a mink trail, but one morning he found a big muskrat fastened in it. After the animal had been killed, the trapper observed a nest which had been prepared by the mother rat while fast in the trap, as she had three feet free. Within the nest was a new-born litter of rats. "I'd give the price of a good many furs if I had seen the young muskrats before I killed their mother for her hide," said the trapper.

An Early Start

First Millionaire—Do you remember making your first money?
Second Millionaire—Yes, had a fairly good income as a child by taking my castor oil without a fuss.

Music Typewriter

A musician of Milan, Italy, has just devised a novel form of typewriter that turns a blank sheet of paper into a complete musical score, says Popular Science. It writes the lines of the staff, the musical notes themselves with all accidentals and marks and even the accompanying words.

Maybe This Contains a Hint for You!

Los Angeles, Calif.—"It was my good fortune to get one of Dr. Pierce's books several years ago and it has been a wonderful help to me while bringing up my family. The plain advice given is invaluable to mothers."

"The use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription during expectancy and afterward was to me the greatest help. I have also used the 'Golden Medical Discovery' for a bad cough and biliousness, and it has entirely rid me of these troubles."—Mrs. Noemie Keyner, 150 N. Ditman St. Dealers Write Dr. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y. for free medical advice.



It's There

Jane—I just came from the drawing room.

Helen—There's no drawing room in that building.

Jane—Yes, there is. My dentist has an office in that building.—Toronto Globe.

The muse does not allow the praise deserving hero to die; she enthrones him in the heavens.—Horace.

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