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BLACK, MIXED OR GREEN

ROSE ISLAND

By Lilian Leveridge

CHAPTER VI. (Continued.)

All day long Brownie followed Robin around like a shadow, and, judging from the frequent peals of merry laughter that floated to June through the open window, Robin did not find the care of him a very serious task.

The next day June felt a little better, but was still tired, and found nothing so desirable as her couch. But the buoyancy of her nature was returning, and she plied her aunt with innumerable questions.

"Aunt Hilda," she asked once,
"where do you keep your books? I'd
like to read awhile."

"Over there in the corner shelf."
Hilda replied.

"Aunt Hilda! Is that all you've got?" June exclaimed with open-eyed astonishment. "Why, there's only the

Bible and the 'Saints' Everlasting Rest.'"

"And the Almanac and a Cook Book." added Hilda. "That's all the books I ever had any use for, and I don't see why anybody needs any more."

"Oh!" June exclaimed, her eyes growing wider, "we had ever so many books at home. I'm sure there was nearly five hundred. Only when Daddy lost his money he had to sell a lot of them. He felt awfully bad, and I cried. Daddy took some away, and I brought a few of my own that I like best; but I thought you'd have lots."

"Five hundred books!" Hilda cried, with a hard glint in her eyes. "That was always the way with Barry. He'd fairly starve himself to buy books. If he'd spent the time he's wasted readin' in some sensible, honest work, he and his children would be better off to-day."

June looked perplexed and troubled, but the idea was so new that she had

no answer ready, and Hilda went

"I've always found enough to do without wearin' up my eyes readin', and I guess I ain't very likely to run short o' work now. As soon as you get rested I'll have to find up somethin' for you to do. Idleness ain't no better for the health than it is for the pocketbook. Can you sew?"

"Just a little, Aunt Hilda, but not very well."

"Did you ever make a quilt?"
"Make a quilt? Oh, my, no!"

"I thought as much. That's what comes o' bein' brought up on a diet o' books. There'd be about as much sense in feedin' a baby on candy and popcorn. Why, when I was your age I had made four or five. I'll show you one I just finished. It's an easy pattern, and you can start one like it soon's ever I get the stuff."

Hilda went upstairs and brought down a print bed quilt made of innumerable small diamonds and squares of pink and lilac and blue. "What do you think of that, now?" she asked, proudly spreading it over a couple of chair backs.

June's heart sank within her, and a look of utter dismay came into her eyes. "Oh, Aunt Hilda!" she cried, "it makes me tired just to look at it. How many little bits did you sew together to make that?"

"'Just five hundred, and every stitch done by hand," Hilda replied, proudly.

"But what's the use of it all?"
June asked with a puzzled frown.
"The use! I s'pose you don't see

any use in bein' covered up warm in bed on winter nights."

"Oh, but Aunt Hilda, wouldn't it be just as well to have it all the same colour? Then you wouldn't need to cut it up into snips and sew it together again. And what a lot of time it would save!"

"Time! What's time for, I'd like to know, if it isn't to make use of! I'm goin' to send for some print the very first time anybody goes to Hillsdale; and just as soon as you get rested you can wade right into it. Thank goodness, there's no five hundred books to encourage idleness in this establishment!"

Hilda flounced out of the room to put away the vari-coloured monument of her superior industry, while with a little despairing sob and a real pang of homesickness June buried her face in the rainbow-hued cushion. "It will take me years and years and years to make a thing like that," she thought, rebelliously, "and it isn't a bit pretty anyhow,"

Her shoulders were still heaving convulsively when her aunt returned to the room. Hilda stood in the doorway for a moment without speaking, then turned and quietly withdrew. It was many a long day before June heard any more about the quilt.

In the afternoon Brownie came up to June's couch and took her by the hand. "June," he said peremptorily, "if you won't come out-doors, Robin and me's going to pull you out. I want to show you all the flowers I found; and there's the beautifullest place under the pine trees to sit down in when you're tired."

"You'd better go out, June," Hilda advised. "It'll do you more good than staying cooped up in the house."

June's strength was already returning, and she needed no further coaxing. Very proudly Brownie led her all over the island, and rejoiced in her delight in everything. The rose bushes all covered with baby buds were the first to be admired. There must have been a solid acre of them, only they were scattered here and there with the most bewitching carelessness, as if it had rained rose bushes and they grew wherever they fell.

"Oh, I just can't wait till they come out!" cried June, with a return of her old enthusiasm.

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