

I came to a bamboo pole which had been driven into the bottom of the bay the top of the pole was only a few inches under the surface of the water and the wire ran up to and over the top. Putting my hand down and grasping the end of the pole I was surprised to find that a small pulley had been fitted into the top of the pole, through which the wire ran and then dropped perpendicularly. I carefully drew up the wire and imagine my astonishment when I saw attached to its end an immense pearl oyster. I landed the oyster and broke off the wire and then returned to the shore. I was very curious to ascertain what the oyster contained and proceeded to open it, a feat I accomplished with the greatest difficulty. Carefully removing the meat of the oyster. I saw at a little distance from where the wire entered the shell a faint blue circle and in the circle, one enormous pearl and three small ones. My heart nearly ceased to beat. The great pearl was pear shaped and in beauty of tint and exquisite coloring, far exceeded any pearl which I had ever seen. I knew that it was worth a very large sum, but its size was so great that I was unable to estimate its market value. The three small pearls were very fine, but were completely overshadowed by their magnificent sister. In my exultation I forgot the fate of Chapman and my own immediate danger. I hurriedly went ashore and from the tangle of wire traced another wire, which ran into the water. This wire I followed with the same result, it terminated in an oyster. In the second oyster was the same blue ring, in which lay a great black pearl with two small pearls of the same color. These pearls differed from those first found in that they were perfectly round. Again I went ashore and once more I was rewarded with one immense pearl and two small ones, the largest being the most beautiful in my collection. A careful search proved that all of the remaining wires had been broken and I was not able to make any other finds.

Then a great fear fell upon me. I had intended to return to the perch and wait for a few days, but possessed of the treasures of the deep, I resolved to make my escape. I hoisted the sail and steered south. Five hours out I sighted a steamer and half an hour later I was on board one of the British India line bound for Brisbane. On my arrival at that port I immediately communicated with the authorities and the Colonial Secretary despatched a full account of the tragedy to the High Commissioner at Thursday Island.

Six months later I read in the Melbourne *Argus* that the murder of Captain Chapman had been avenged by sending