```
s of yellow camomile reaching out on either hand. Further awa
                                                                                                                                                                                  more feminine and matronly figure. The charm of Edna P
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             e wore a cool muslin that morning--white, with a waving vertical line of brown running through it; also a white linen collar and the big straw hat which she had taken from the peging heavy, and clung close to her head. Madame Ratignolle, more careful of her complexion, had twined a gauze veil about her head. She wore dogskin gloves, with gauntlets that prote peries and fluttering things which she wore suited her rich, luxuriant beauty as a greater severity of line could not have done. There were a number of bath-houses along the beach, of rough
ty of poise and movement, which made Edna Pontellier different from the crow
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        d. Sh
outside the door. The hat rested any way on her yellow-brown hair, that waved a little, was
cted her wrists. She was dressed in pu ´re white, with a fluffiness of ruffles that became her. The dra
                                                                  , protecting galleries facing the water. Each house consisted of two compart f bathing; they had just strolled down to the beach for a walk and to be alone and near the water. Th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 araphernalia of the bath and whatever other conveniences the owners migli
but solid construction, built with small
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       ments, and each family at Lebrun's possessed a compartment for itself, fitted out with all the essential p
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          ontellier had brought down her key through force of habit. U
he building. The two seated themselves there in the shade of t
desire. The two women had no intention o
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e Pontellier and Ratignolle compartments adjoined one another under the same roof. Mrs. P
                                                                                nt inside, and soon emerged, bringing a rug, which she spread upon the floor of the gallery, and two ainst the pillows and their feet extended. Madame Ratignolle removed her veil, wiped her face with a moved her collar and opened her dress at the throat. She took the fan from Madame Ratignoll
  nlocking the door of her bath-room she we
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            huge hair pillows covered with crash, which she placed against the front of t
        he porch, side by side, with their backs ag
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    rather delicate handkerchief, and fanned herself with th
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     e fan which she always carried s uspended somewhere about he
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         f and her companion. It was very warm, and for a while they did not ater into froth. It fluttered the skirt s of the two women and kept them for e beach was very still of human sou nd at that hour. The lady in black was read
              r person by a long, narrow ribbon. Edna re
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e and began to fan both hersel
                                                                                                            he sun, the glare. But there was a breeze blowing, a choppy, stiff wind that whipped the w
ing in, securing hair-pins and hat-pins. A few persons were sporting some distance away in t
he water. Th
ighboring bathhouse. Two young lovers were exchanging their hearts' yearnings beneath the children's tent, which they had found u noccupied. Edna Pontellier, casting her e
                      hing but exchange remarks about the heat, t
                             a while engaged in adjusting, readjusting, tuck
ing her morning devotions on the porch of a ne
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 yes about, had finally kept them at r est upon the sea. The day was clear and carried
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      e far distance. "Of whom--of what are you thinking?" asked Adele of her companion, whose s. Pontellier, with a start, adding at once: "How stupid! But it seems to me it is the reply we
                                                  the gaze out as far as the blue sky went; there
                                                                                                                                                       were a few white clouds suspended idly over the horizon. A lateen sail was visible in the direction of Cat Island, and others to the south seemed almost motionless in the
                                                              countenance she had been watching with a lit
                                                                                                                                                                    tle amused attention, arrested by the absorbed expression which seemed to have seized and fixed every feature into a statuesque repose. "Nothing," returned M
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  rs. Pontellier, with a start, adding
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    ng; but perhaps I can retrace my thoughts." "Oh! never mind!" lau
f the water stretching so far away, those motionless sails against t
ce of a summer day in Kentucky, of a meadow that seemed as big as the oce
                                                                     make instinctively to such a question. Let me se
hed Madame Ratignolle. "I am not quite s
                                                                                                                                                                                   e," she went on, throwing back her head and narrowing her fine eyes till they shone like two vivid points of light. "Let me see. I was really not consciou I will let you off this time. It is really too hot to think, especially to think about thinking." "But for the fun of it," persisted Edna. "First of and look at. The hot wind beating in my face made me think--without any connection that I can tra
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  s of thinking of anything;
                                                                                                ime Ratignolle. "I am not quite so exacting.
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  all, the sight o
g
he bl
                                                                                          ue sky, made a delicious picture that I just wanted to sit
                                                                                                                                                                                                           igher than her waist. Sh e threw out her arms as if swim
u going that da y in Kentucky, walking through th
he view. I could see only the stretch of green before me, and I felt as if I must walk on forever, without coming to the
an to the
                                                                                                       very little girl walking through the grass, which was h
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     ming when she walked, beating the tall grass as one strikes out in the water. Oh, I s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              e grass?" "I don't remem ber now. I was just walking dia gonally across a big field. My su lon't remembe r whether I was frightene d or pleased. I must have been en er that chills me y et to think of." "And have you been
ee the connect
                                                                                                                                                                                                          u going that da
n-bonnet obstructed t
tertained. "Likely as not it
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           end of it. I don't rememb
                                                                                                                                                                                                                    was Sunday," she laughed; "and I was running away from prayers, from the Presbyterian service, read in a spirit of gloom by my fath chere?" asked Madame Ratignolle, amused. "No! oh, no!" Edna hastened to say. "I was a little unthin
running away from prayers ever
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           king child in those days, just follow
ing a misleading impulse without questi
until--why, I suppose until now, though I never
turning her quick eyes upon Madame Ratignolle and lea
                                                                                                               on. On the contrary, during one thought much about it--just driven a
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  hold upon me; after I was twelve an
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               period of my life religion took a firm
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               d until-
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         long by habit. But do you know," s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     he broke off,
                                                                                                                                            ning forward a little so as to
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     face quite close to that of her
                                                                                                                                                                                                                  again; idly, aimlessly, unthinking and unguided she clas ped it firmly and warmly. She even stroked it a little, fondly, with the other dily to the Creole's gentle caress. She was not accustomed to an outward and spoken expression of affection, either in herself or in others. She and her youn
mes I feel this summer as if I were walking through the green mea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     " Madame Ratignolle la
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  id her hand over that of M
rs. Pontellier, which was near her. Seeing that the hand was not withdrawn, herie." The action was at first a little confusing to Edna, but she soon lent herself rea
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    hand, murmu
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         ring in an undertone, "Pauvre c
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              ger sister, Janet, had quarreled a good
deal through force of unfortunate habit. Her older sister, Margaret, was matronly and dignified, pro
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  aret was not effusive; she was practical. Edna
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  bably from having assumed matronly and housewifely responsibilities too early in life, their mother having died when they were quite young, Marg
had had an occasional girl friend, but whether accidentally or not, they seemed to have been all of one type--the self-co

ntained. She never realized that the reserve of her own character had much, perhaps everything, to do with this. Her most intimate frie lassics, and sometimes held religious and political controversies. Edna often wondered at one propensity which so lassics, and sometimes held religious and political controversies. Edna often wondered at one propensity which so how or manifestation on her part. At a very early age--perhaps it was when she traversed the ocean of waving grass--she remembered that she had been passionately enamored of a dignified and sad-eyed cavalry officer who visited her father in Kentucky. She could not leave
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   nd at school had been one of rather exceptional intellec-
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  metimes had inwardly disturbed her without causing any outward s
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               his presence when he was there, nor remove her eyes from his face, which was
       ething like Napoleon's, with a lock o f black hair failing across the forehead. But the cavalry officer melted imperceptibly out of her existence. At another time her affections were deeply engaged by a young gentleman who visited a lady on a neighboring planta tion. It was after they went to Mississippi to live. The young man was engaged to be to the young lady, and they sometimes c alled upon Margaret, driving over of afternoons in a buggy. Edna was a little miss, just merging into her teens; and the realization that she herself was nothing, nothing, nothing to the engaged young man was a bitter affliction to her. But he, too, went the way of dreams. She was a grown young woman
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           tion. It was after they went to Mississippi to live. The young man was engaged to be ma
```

ried to the young lady, and they sometimes c