



The Doom of Ravenswood

Archibald Rutledge

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Archibald Rutledge's story "The Doom of Ravenswood" is a harrowing account of the power of the natural world and of the dangers for humans and animals alike to be found in the ominous swamps of the South Carolina lowcountry. As the narrator of this cautionary tale is riding home astride his faithful horse, Redbird, to Ravenswood Plantation, he is compelled to stop along the isolated road to pick wildflowers. But the untamed wilderness has laid a trap for the traveler, and he quickly finds himself sinking helplessly into the inescapable pull of the morass. With Redbird his only ally in this deadly predicament and with fate and nature set squarely against him, the narrator must use his wits if he is to survive.

The short story "The Doom of Ravenswood" was written for publication in an early twentieth-century boy's magazine and was first collected in the privately printed Eddy Press edition of *Old Plantation Days* (c. 1913). Limited to just a few hundred copies, the Eddy Press edition is highly prized by Rutledge collectors and includes five stories—"Claws," "The Doom of Ravenswood," "The Egret's Plumes," "The Heart of Regal," and "The Ocean's Menace"—not found in the more widely available 1921 Stokes edition of *Old Plantation Days*.

A project of the Humanities Council SC benefiting the South Carolina Book Festival, this new edition of *The Doom of Ravenswood* is illustrated in handsome charcoal etchings by southern artist Stephen Chesley. Award-winning outdoors writer and noted Rutledge scholar Jim Casada provides the volume's introduction and Lillian Smith Award-winning writer William Baldwin offers an afterword.

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