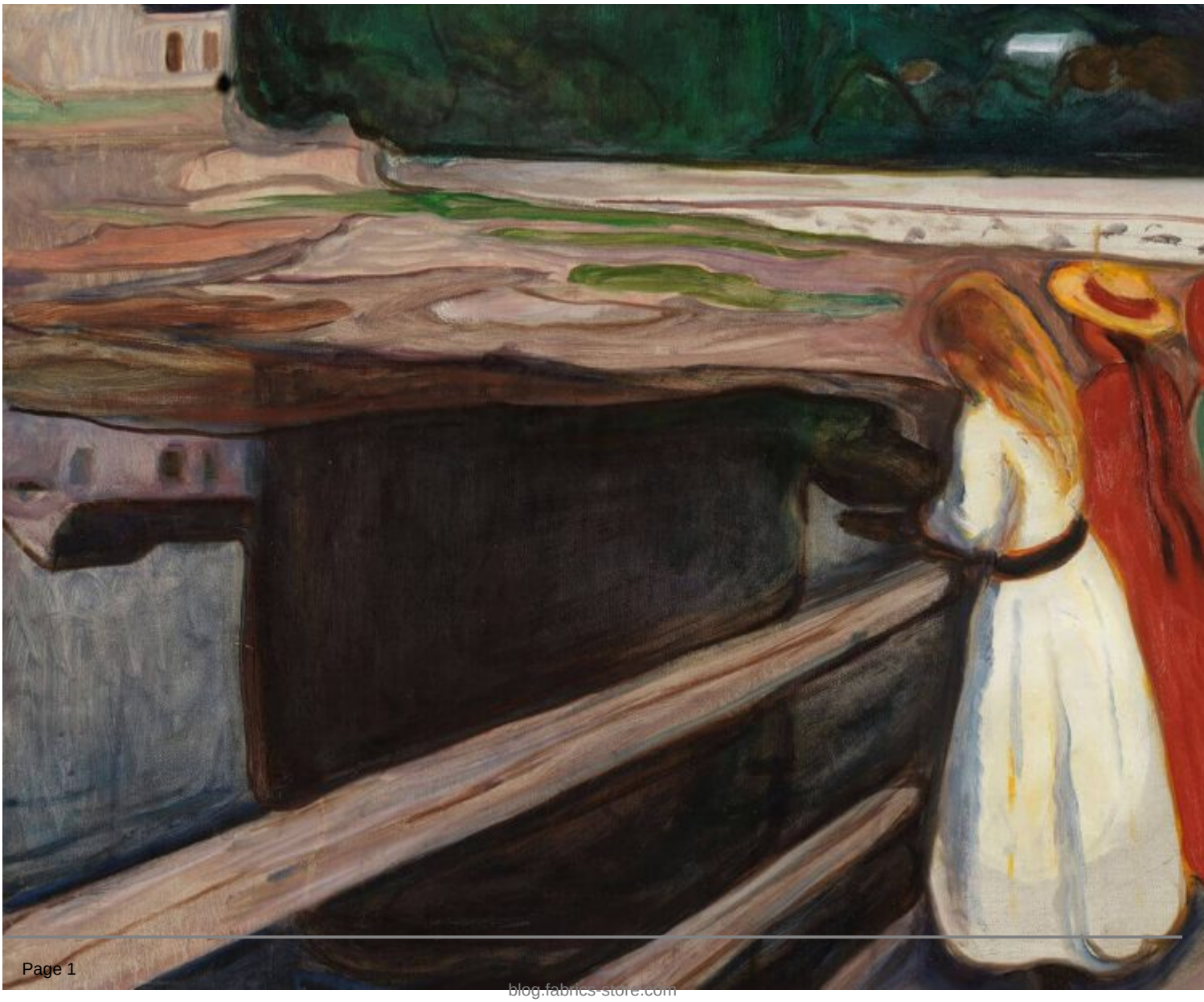


FS Colour Series: Coffee Bean Linen Inspired by Edvard Munchâ??s Deep Shadows

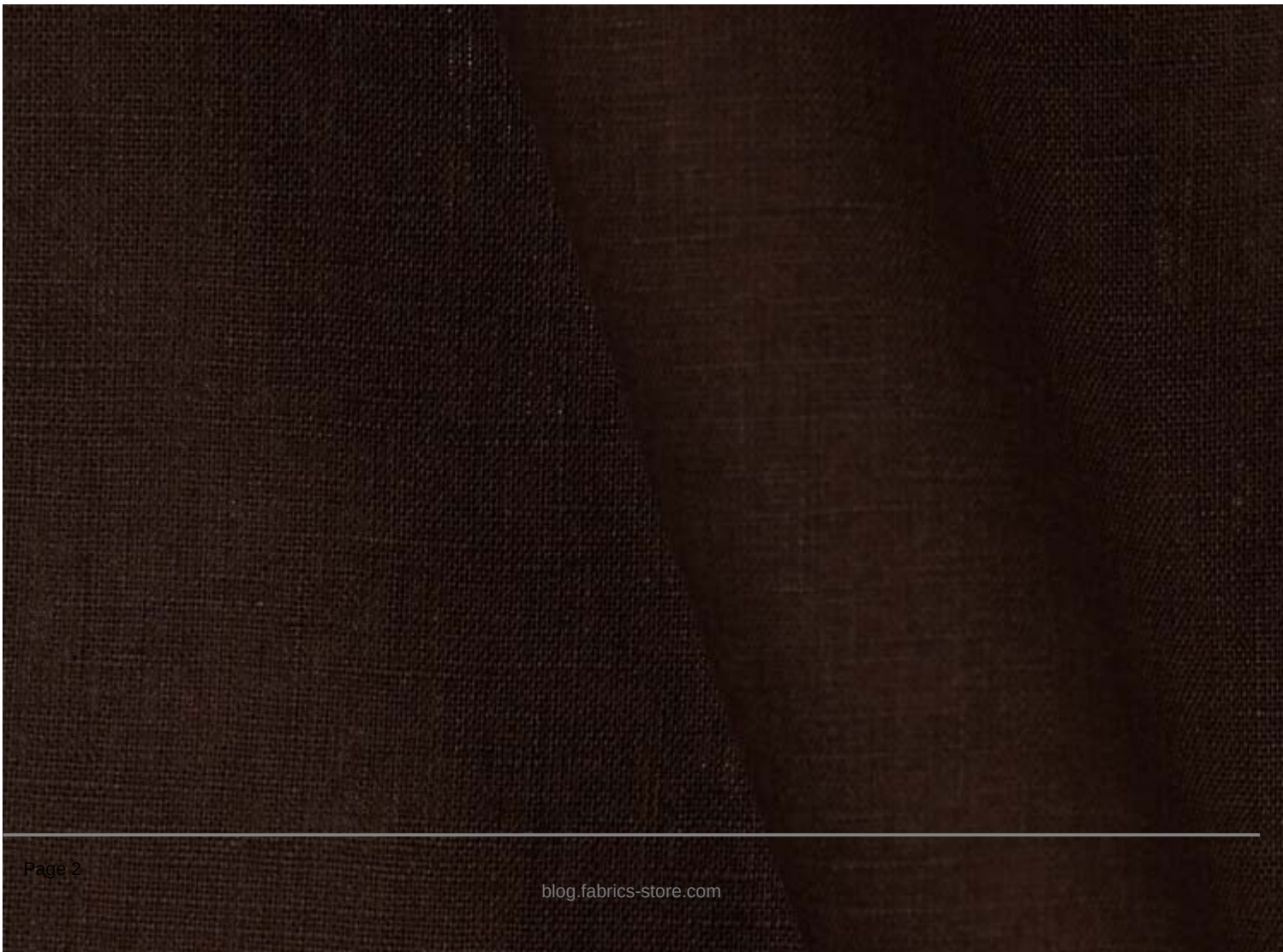
Description



Girls on a Pier, 1901

The early 20th century Norwegian Expressionist painter Edvard Munch saw art as a tool for expressing his innermost thoughts, feelings and desires, and the colours he worked with were a vital tool for expressing these intimate moments from his life. Deep shades of brown like Coffee Bean often played a key role, forming dark tree branches, shadowy reflections, or the solid clothing of brooding figures gazing into the Norwegian wilderness. Made from memory rather than real life, he explained of his process, â??I do not paint what I see, but what I saw.â?•

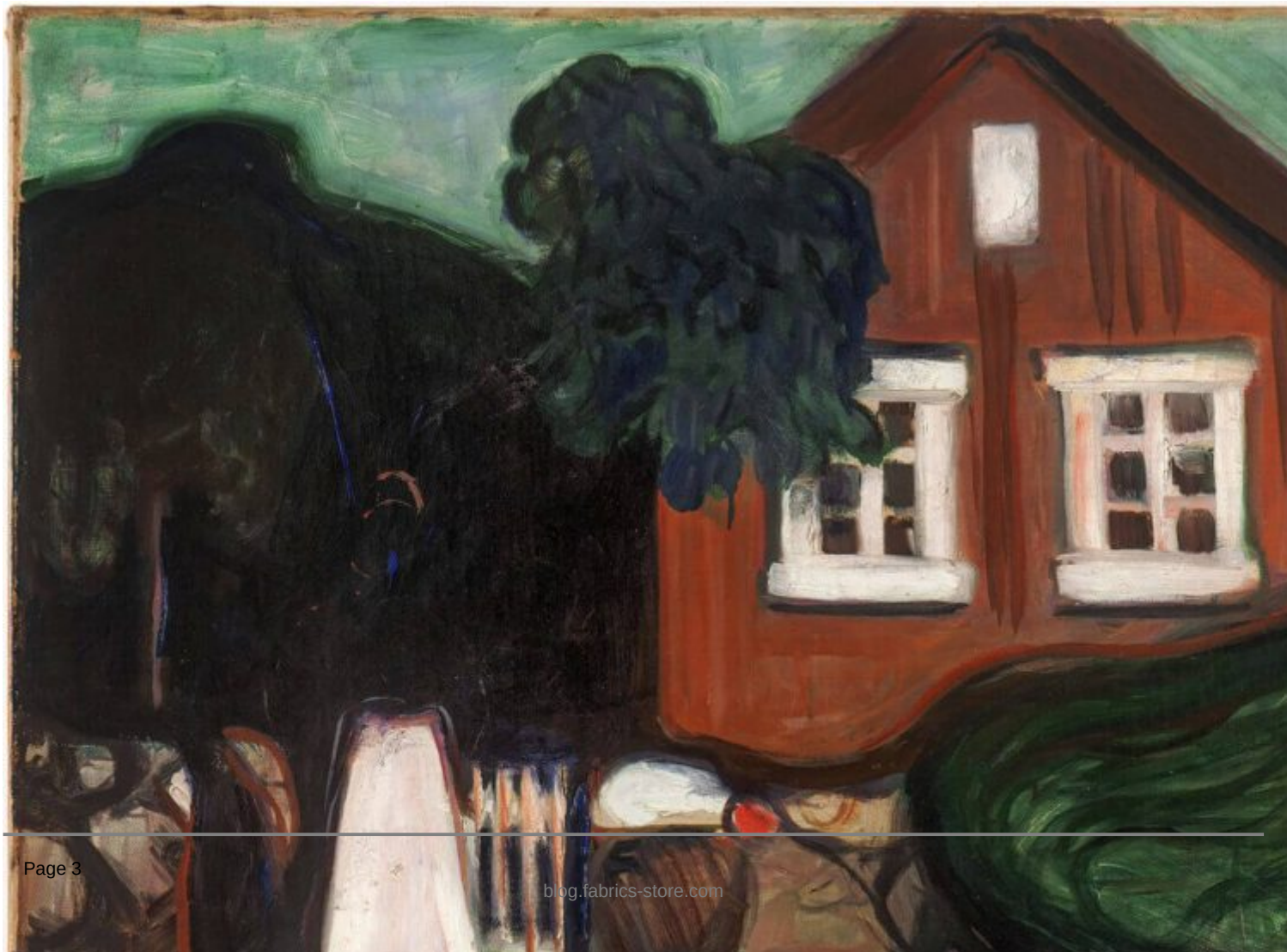
Munchâ??s childhood in Kristiania, Norway, was marked by the loss of loved ones (his mother and sister) and plagued by his own anxiety, a quality reinforced by the strict upbringing of his deeply religious father. He recalled, â??I learned early about the misery and dangers of life, and about the afterlife, about the external punishment which awaited the children of sin in Hell.â?•



FS Coffee Bean Signature Finish Midweight linen

Following on from his study at the Royal School of Art and Design in Kristiania, Munch was influenced by the Nihilist Han Jaeger to use art for expressing his troubling states of mind, and he came to see it as a potent outlet for releasing the inner turmoil that plagued him throughout much of his life. â??No longer shall I paint interiors with men reading and women knitting,â• wrote Munch. â??I will paint living people who breathe and feel and suffer and love.â•

In the following years Munch travelled widely throughout Europe, moving between Paris, Berlin, and Kristiania, soaking up influences from the Post-impressionist and Symbolist painters, particularly their expressive brush marks and vivid, heightened colours. He wrote in his notebook, â??Painting picture by picture, I followed the impressions my eye took in at heightened moments. I painted only memories, adding nothing, no details that I did not see. Hence the simplicity of the paintings, their emptiness.â•



House in Moonlight, 1893-95

Much like Vincent van Gogh, Munch saw art as a means of conveying inner, rather than outer, worlds, and he over time he accepted his anxiety as a powerful tool that could fuel his art. â??My fear of life is necessary to me,â?• he wrote, â??as is my illness. Without anxiety and illness, I am a ship without a rudder. My art is grounded in reflections over being different from others. My sufferings are part of my self and my art. They are indistinguishable from me, and their destruction would destroy my art. I want to keep those sufferings.â?•

In *Moonlight,* 1895, Munch conveys a brooding, coastal Norwegian landscape with striking simplicity, painting a slender, vertical stream of moonlight glistening like a beacon in the darkening evening water. This shape is echoed in the tall, slim tree trunks that frame the watery scene, painted in a rich and velvety shade of chocolate brown to form stark and totemic silhouettes. He said, â??Nature is not only all that is visible to the eyeâ?¦ it also includes the inner pictures of the soul.â?•



By the Shore, 1898-1904

Melancholy, 1896 is tinged throughout with warm, autumnal hues, from mustard brown and chestnut to deep green, and warm, rich brown that forms curved outlines across the shoreline, before deepening into the hair and clothing of the solemn and introspective man in the foreground.

In the slightly later *Girls on a Pier,* 1901, Munch paints a trio of young women from behind, gazing into still water over a bridge. Sweeping brushstrokes in a pale, sandy hue draw us along the bridge, while the bright vivid tones of the girlsâ?? clothing pull us back to the centre, and contrast sharply with the vast, curved tree shadow that fills the glassy water below, painted in near black brown to add an air of mystery, melancholy, and intrigue.

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1. COLOUR SERIES

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Date Created
March 6, 2026
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