

# The Shadow of the Sheltering Pines

by GRACE MILLER WHITE

A New Romance of the Storm Country

**"AFTER SHE'S MARRIED—"**

Synopsis. — Lonely and almost friendless, Tonibel Devon, living on a canal boat with a brutal father and a worn-out, discouraged mother, wanders into a Salvation army hall at Ithaca, N. Y. There she meets a young Salvation army captain, Phillip Mac-Cauley. She is almost afraid to enter, but Phillip assures her everyone is welcome and she hears from him, for the first time in her life, about God. She returns home and tells her mother about her visit.

**CHAPTER II.**

**-2-**

**The Master of the Dirty Mary.**

A week before this story opens, Uriah Devon had steamed the length of the lake, anchoring his boat as near Ithaca as he dared. Even to his wife, Edith, he had not confided why he had brought her to a town where jawning prison doors gaped for her every passing hour.

"I won't go, Riah," Mrs. Devon had cried when her husband had made the statement that he intended to visit Ithaca. "You couldn't get me near that place with a rope around my neck."

But the very fact that she now sat on a small bench against the boat rail, gazing moodily at the water, proved that Uriah Devon had contrived to have his way.

Occasionally Mrs. Devon lifted her head to listen and turned her eyes to the west where a narrow path zigzagged its length up the hill to the boulevard. Into her tortured soul had come a belief since the night before, that Tony's "Glorious God" would send her man home.

Suddenly the sound of heavy footsteps in the forest path brought her sharply around. At last he was coming, this man she loved, perhaps drunk, perhaps to beat her; but nevertheless he was coming, and that was all she cared about.

Uriah Devon slowly walked up the gangplank in silence. "Where you been?" the woman forced herself to say. But instead of replying, he demanded:

"Where's Tonibel?"

"I dunno," was the answer. "A minute ago she was over there not ten of your legs' jumps from here. . . . Where you been all this week?"

He'd been on a terrible spree, she decided. He looked as if he had been drunk for days. That he had something unusual on his mind, she knew, and she knew, too, it was about Tonibel, for hadn't he asked for the kid the moment he'd returned?

"It's about time we was doing things, Edie," he said, turning grimly. "I've waited as long as I dared. Reggie says 'Paul Pendlehaven hasn't an inch leeway before he's in his coffin.'"

Mrs. Devon's face grew deathly pale. "What do you mean, honey?" she faltered.

"We live like rats in a hole," took up the man, after a pause, "while if Tony was made to do her part, we'd be on easy street. That's what I mean. We've got to have money and lots of it. Reggie's willing to marry the kid if you mind your business afterward. His marryin' her ain't sayin' he'll stick to her. But we got to have boodle, and we can't get it only through her."

"He shan't have 'er," the woman said, with hard tones and flashing eyes. "How many times 've I got to say it over to you? If that's the way you've come to Ithaca, you might as well turn the old scow north and go back again. He's a bun," she went on. "A dude and a fool and everything else that's bad. He's a thief, too."

Devon laughed. "So am I, Edie," said he. "So 're you' for that matter. If Reggie knew that Tony was Paul Pendlehaven's kid, we wouldn't get one d—n cent of her money. He snatches from the Pendlehavens and his mother because he don't get cash enough other ways. A feller's got to have spendin' money."

"Pretty small pickin's," sneered Edith Devon. "Stealin' from folks almost in the grave ain't my style. Reggie's some second-story man, that young duffer is."

"You sneaked Paul's kid," taunted Devon. "He wouldn't be almost in his grave now if you'd kept your hands off'n Tony."

The woman turned on him savagely, paying no heed to his words. "Get your blasted Reggie to steal enough for us all from the Pendlehavens," she said. "God knows they've got it and to spare. It's better'n handin' Tony over to 'im. He lives at Pendlehaven's, don't he?"

"He won't do it," cut in Devon. "Reggie ain't got the nerve to burn his fingers too deep. Paul Pendlehaven'd send him up for that, if he caught him. My plan is to get Tony married to Regie, and before the lid's screwed down on Pendlehaven's face, shove

the girl in between John Pendlehaven and his precious cousin, Reggie's mother, and then Regie and me gets Tony's money, see?"

Edith shivered. "I hear what you say," she muttered, "and I 'spose I'll do it if you promise not to let that pup hurt Tony when he gets her. . . . Best let's wait another year before talkin' marriage to her, though."

"Nothin' doin'," rasped the man. "Tony's almost a woman, and she's eatin' her head off. After she's married—"

"You two men'll rag the kid to death or do something worse to her," gritted the woman. "Well, you won't! Rather'n have that I'll tell her she ain't ours. I'll go right bold to Paul Pendlehaven and blurt him the truth. I'll do it today if you keep naggin' at me."

Devon studied her face, his own distorted with rage. "You'll do no such a thing, mad woman," he returned, running his tongue over his dry, cracked lips. "If you get me in a temper you'd better look out. Reggie knows Tonibel's got rich folks, but he don't know who they are. You spill the beans, by G—d, and the lake for yours."

The woman's gaze sought the sheet of blue water. "She'll grow a beard a mile long before I tell 'er," she said finally, bringing her eyes back to his face. "Tell 'er yourself, and see how you like it!"

There was a ring of revolt in her tones that brought an expression of surprise to the man's face, leaving it angrily, frowningly red. But the sound of a girl's voice on the hill brought him suddenly to his feet.

"There she is, by G—d," he cried abruptly. "Now if you want any more lovin' from me—more'n that, if you want to stay where I live, you got to do my will!"

"Uriah, honey, darlin'," cried Edith, "don't say that. I've always stuck by you."

"Then keep a stickin'," growled Devon. "For God's sake, if the brat ain't



"Go On and Finish Me."

lugged that pig clean up that pine tree!"

Above them a giant pine tree lifted its head far above its fellows. Among its branches the man and woman could plainly see the upper part of a girl's figure settled in the crotch of an outspreading limb, and clasped in two slender arms was the small guinea pig. She bobbed her head gravely, held up the animal and shook it at them.

Tony, herself, little knew why in times of strife she sought refuge among these forest giants and came always to happiness. They were animated beings in her mean little world and because she had showered idolatrous love on them they, from their primeval grandeur, sent an answering spark of life to her starved little soul. The sight of Tony further enraged Uriah. He waved her in.

"Now tell her outright, and get it over, Edie," he said, sitting down again. Reaching the canal boat, Tony stood looking at her parents.

"Set down," growled Devon. Shifting the pig a little, she dropped down on the deck. She always dreaded these talks with her father and mother. It usually meant they must move on, or perhaps that a thrashing was coming her way. From under her long lashes she glimpsed first Devon with his frowning brow, then at length let her gaze settle on the woman.

"I s'pose I been doin' something hellish," she ventured presently in a low tone. "Have I, Edie?"

"Nope, not this time, Tony," thrust in Devon. "But we've got to tell you something. You're gettin' to be a woman, Tonibel, and you got to do something for your mother and me."

"I'm always wantin' to do something nice for you, Edie, darlin'," she said,

looking at her mother. "Tap it out quick, sweet, and I'll jump to do it!" The woman began to cry softly. "Go on, Edie," said Uriah. "Why in h—l are you blubberin' over a thing you can't help?"

"But I can help it," cried Edith. "And what's more I will. Run away, baby, and I'll have it out with your pop while you're gone."

Devon reached forward and laid a strong detaining hand on the girl's arm. "It's this," he got out between his teeth. "You got to get married. You been livin' on me long enough."

The girl stared at him blankly. "Get married," she repeated dully. "Who'd marry a brat like me? I'm nothin' but a kid yet, and I'm goin' to stay right here with my mother. See? I don't have to—do I, mummy darlin'?"

"Your ma's word ain't law on this boat," answered Uriah in an ugly tone. "Mine is, though. Fire ahead, Edie, and tell the kid my will."

Mrs. Devon coughed spasmodically and toyed with the fabric of her skirt. A slender brown hand went up and closed over her twitching fingers.

"I wouldn't marry any of the mutts you know, daddy," the girl burst out in desperation. "So get that notion clean out of your mind."

Her face settled sullenly into little lines that pursed up the lovely young mouth and Uriah Devon moved his feet nervously. Perhaps his task wasn't going to be so easy after all.

"Kid," he said huskily, "if you don't do what you're told, I'll make you. You ain't too old to gad yet. And you'll be missin' one of the best lickin's you ever got if you mind what I tell you."

The girl eyed him curiously, making a sidewise gesture with her head. "Who's the duffer you've chose out for me?" she asked at length. "You might as well tell me."

"My friend, Reggie," said Devon, blushing over and staring at her. Tonibel's mouth widened until two rows of teeth gleamed through the red of her lips. She made a wry face. "Nothin' like that for me—eh, Edie?"

Edith Devon was coming to a resolution that meant trouble for herself and for Tonibel. "I ain't fought it all out with your daddy, kid," she sniffled weakly. "You get to the cabin and mend them old clothes."

Uriah Devon laid his pipe beside him and uttered an oath. "You'll stay right here, brat," he gritted, "and pay heed to me."

"Uriah," screamed the woman, "if you go on with this, I'll tell 'er all I know. I swear I will, Tony, honey, Tony, baby, I—I ain't—"

With a roar the man sprang forward and in his effort to reach his wife knocked the girl flat on the deck. When Tonibel rolled over and sat up, her mother was stretched along the boat rail, and Devon was standing over her. She lay so dreadfully still and limp that the girl scrambled to her feet.

It wasn't the same Tony who had come fearfully to them but a short period before with the little pig in her arms; nor the same girl who had swung in the treetops making play fellows of the squirrels and answering the shrill calls of the forest birds. She seemed suddenly to have grown taller, and as she flung herself on Devon, the very strength of her little body sent him sprawling against the side of the cabin. "Now you killed her, d—n you," she screamed. "If you kick 'er—I'll—I'll—"

She dropped at the side of her mother, her throat broken in two by the awful pallor on the woman's face. "Oh, God, mummy darlin', mummy darlin'," she ended in a bitter cry.

Growling in rage, Devon turned on her. "Mebbe I have killed 'er," said he. "If so, I'll make a good job of it and finish you too."

The girl rose before him, her eyes blazing into his, her little fists clenched together.

"Folks that murder other people, Pappy Devon," she shot back, "get strapped in a chair, and they get lightning run through 'em. Go on and finish up! Go on and finish me! I'd ruther have you kill me than make me marry that old Reggie."

As if his name had brought him out of the forest, Reginald Brown walked down the Heghole path.

**"My baby, Caroline Pendlehaven, aged six months."**

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**United States' Bad Lands.**

This is the translation of "Mauvais Terres," the term used by the French-Canadian trappers to describe these regions of unconsolidated rocks that have been extensively eroded. Bad lands occur on arid plateaus formed by horizontal strata of loosely cemented sands and gravels. The best examples of such regions are found in the upper portion of the Missouri drainage basin, in the vicinity of the Black Hills. Some are to be found also in Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

**Baptism in Cyprus.**

A baptism in Cyprus is a curious ceremony. The infant is rubbed with oil by his godfather, blown upon by the priest and waved in the air, then dipped several times in the font, and again anointed with oil on various parts of the body.

**To Their Discredit.**

Those who are the most accomplished do not always accomplish the most.—Boston Transcript.

British shipyards are constructing nearly fifteen times as much tonnage today as they did a year ago.



## TO SANTA CLAUS

By James Whitcomb Riley

*Most tangible of all the gods that be,  
O Santa Claus — our own since infancy! —  
As first we scampered to thee — now, as then,  
Take us as children to thy heart again.*

*Be wholly good to us, just as of old;  
As a pleased father, let thine arms enfold  
Us, homed within the haven of thy love,  
And all the cheer and wholesomeness thereof.*

*Thou lone reality, when O, so long  
Life's unrealities have wrought us wrong;  
Ambition hath allured us, fame likewise,  
And all that promised honor in men's eyes.*

*Throughout the world's evasions, wiles and shifts,  
Thou only bidest stable as thy gifts: —  
A grateful king re-rueth from thy lap,  
Crowned with a little soldier-cap:*

*A mighty general — a nation's pride —  
Thou givest again a rocking-horse to ride,  
And wildly glad he gloweth as the grim  
Old jurist with the dram thou givest him:*

*The sculptor's chisel, at thy mirth's command,  
Is as a whistle in his boyish hand;  
The painter's model fadeth utterly,  
And there thou standest, and he painteth thee: —*

*Most like a winter pippin, sound and fine  
And tingling-red that ripe old face of thine,  
Set in thy frosty beard of cheek and chin  
As midst the snows the thaws of spring set in.*

*Ho! Santa Claus — our own since infancy —  
Most tangible of all the gods that be! —  
As first we scampered to thee — now, as then,  
Take us as children to thy heart again.*

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