

# Periwinkle House

By Opie Read

Illustrated by R. H. Livingston

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## CHAPTER XII

Drace was far too disturbed in mind to sleep, and before the sun was high he walked out alone in the garden, to muse upon his situation. Slowly he paced his way along the path. Someone spoke, and he turned to face the man Hatoche.

"Monsieur, a note."

Drace took the paper and hastened into the summer house.

The note was brief, but full in the expression of what had befallen Nadine, something to thrill with the telling of it: "As soon as you can, my love, you must come to me to take me from the man I thought my father, but who is the awful brute. Yesterday he called me a she-wolf and told me I am not his daughter; and when he told me, my heart was light, for then I have not within me the murderer's blood. Come not alone, Virgil, for Tony will be here, and both of them watch. I am locked a prisoner in my room, and tomorrow they take me to Memphis to make me marry Monsieur Boyce. But I fear not so long as I know you come."

Quickly Drace slipped up to his room, buckled on his pistol, found a rope, looped it with a hangman's noose and tucked it beneath his coat. Nadine was not Stepho's daughter; now he was free to act! Swift was he to answer the appeal, but he was set against her caution, the advice to bring someone with him. It was his fight alone, the execution of his oath, which was not dead like the autumn leaf, but fresh like the new leaf in the spring. He would shoot Tony, the dog, and then string up his master.

No one saw him, not even the watchful Tylee, and he hastened toward Willow Bend, not having found a boat at the landing. Never had the river seemed so broad, the current so swift. At last his canoe touched in among the cane roots at the island's edge. He leaped ashore, but was cautious in the cane, an Indian in stealth as he approached the house. He heard not a sound, saw no smoke issue from the chimney. Perhaps the wolves were to wait for him, to snap him, but he was now in full view, and he ran at the top of his speed. But near the house he halted, peering about, looked in at the door of the main room, found it deserted, then walked softly around to the barred window. Nadine spoke before he recognized her, standing in the twilight of her prison.

"My heart was loud to tell me you would come, Virgil. And you brought no one with you. But of that there was no need now."

He stood in silence looking at her, his strength exerted against a bar at the window, to tear it loose, but the wrought-iron nails were too long, and he could not budge them.

"The ax, Virgil! Is it lying there?" Acting upon her suggestion, and with no caution now against making a noise, he cut the bars away and helped her through the window.

"Nadine, he said, 'my oath must now be kept.'"

His arms about her, he stood pressing her close, and never had he felt so strong, and surely never so determined. Her eyes half closed, her head on his arm, she did not speak. She looked as if she were at rest, and dreaming. He kissed her, and her eyes flashed wide.

"I have come to hang the monster that called you a she-wolf."

"When I have told you, yes. And now you will listen. Early I thought I heard Tony and my—I mean Stepho la Vitte, go out. But Stepho was not walking with Tony, the strong man, but was dragged out in the rocking-chair; for some time in the night come the strange stroke, and Stepho was paralyzed."

"Nadine! What are you saying?"

"I am saying that you must listen, Tony came to the window and told me what was happen'. I ask him to let me out, but he would not, for he wants to please Stepho till the last, on account of the money that may be somewhere hid. He went for the doctor, and he came but has gone away again, for I hear him say he can do no good. The old man was out in his chair where he so often sit; and we will go see him, for it will not be for long. Let us forget all and be kind when death was come, Virgil."

"Yes, but where is Tony now?"

"I think he is looking for the money. Let us go now to the poor old man."

"You forgive easily, Nadine."

She looked at him in wonderment.

"How can we not forgive when the heart say we must, Virgil? He use me for the trap, which I will explain all to you, but he give me the chance to be with you, and for that I thank him—and for not being my sure-enough father. Come with me."

Old Stepho sat in his chair asleep, but as they approached him, he opened his eyes, looked at Nadine, then at Drace.

"Monsieur was very strong. An' I kill you if I be not struck down like the beef. An' Tony kill you if he here, but I send him off for something. Ah, the leetle gel, she hate me now?"

"Monsieur," she said, "I cannot find it in my heart to hate. It is the poison. Many times you were kind, and I remember them."

He bowed his head, and through his tangled lashes looked up at Drace, fire gleaming through brushwood. But he spoke to Nadine, turning upon her a less malignant glance.

"The paralyze—it begin down here an' creep up. When it touch the heart, I was go. I say just now that Tony, he would kill the strong monster. He would not. He be scared when I was done."

"Your name, leetle gel," pursued Stepho. "was Walton—the daughter of a northern man who live in the same town with Mr. Drace's father near Cincinnati. You an' your mother were carried off by my men; but your mother, she fall from the horse just as we come to our camp and she die. About her neck was a purse with money and papers—one that tell where more money is buried. After the war I go back and dig up this money, but I keep it for you, for your dowry. It is here—buried under the hearthstone."

Now—now I beg you to go for Father Tahan. You know where he live. Quick, for it creep up."

"Yes, I will go. Virgil will stay to keep you company."

"Let me go with you," Drace pleaded, fearful that some harm might befall her.

"No, my love, one," she gently opposed him. "You must stay here for no harm can come to me now. Stay here and be kind to him, for kindness is the will of the One above. You will, yes?"

She kissed him fondly, and the old wolf-eyes closed, that they might not see. Now she was ready to go. Virgil staided the canoe for her and gently shoved it off. She threw him a kiss, and rounding a green cape, raised her paddle into the sunlight and flashed him adieu.

Drace returned to Stepho's chair, the old man shagging his brows at him. Then thinking of the rope still buttoned tightly beneath his coat, he tore it out and threw it away. Nature, he reflected, had usurped his task, and he could safely turn over to her his claims. A slight noise behind him; he looked quickly about, and there a few feet behind him at the edge of the cane stood Tony. Upon him the vision of Drace's countenance came, it seemed, with a startling flash. Instantly he fell back, through the cane fringe, into the bayou. Loudly he cried for help.

"Oh, monsieur," implored the old man, "please he'p heem queek. He can no swim. An' he die befo' hees sins they was forgive. He'p the po' wretch monsieur. Queek, monsieur."

Virgil threw off his coat and his pistol-belt, and leaped into the water. A moment before, he would have shot the beast; now he would save him.

Tony was not in sight. But soon he arose, swimming, and Drace saw a knife in his hand. In the water Tony was as much at home as a beaver! He dived, and Virgil knew now that it was his aim to dart beneath him and with the knife to rip him as a skillful swimmer rips a crocodile. But in the water the strong man, young Drace, was at home, too, and turning about with a quick swif, he waited. Tony came up; and now they came toward each other, like rival otters—grappled and struggled, treading water, shoulders up. Virgil caught Tony's left wrist, wrenched his arm limp and helpless, seized him by the throat, his left hand steel-gripped about the murderous right wrist, the knife hand.

No mercy now! Fire and water, their game! Down, gasping, down!

"No Mercy Now!"

The head beneath the surface, the hand still out, striving to stab. Slowly the hand opened; the knife dropped; the hand closed—half opened, was limp. Drace turned loose his grip. The body sank.

Virgil swam ashore and came dripping out of the cane. The old man spoke: "Tony! Whar he?"

"I have drowned him."

"Monsieur was ver' strong!"

"If I had brought him to the shore, he would have sneaked a chance to murder me."

"He was the bad man, yes. He ought be dead, yes. I was to keel heem blamey. He keel the man here not long 'go. Twice he go keel you, an' once he snap the pistol. I set the trap for you to be stabbed in the water. Then there be no blood to tell the tale. Now I am so sor'. Will monsieur pull me into the house?"

"No. You would reach for a pistol to shoot me. Stay where you are."

"Monsieur have still suspicion. We wait."

Virgil put on his coat, his belt, and sat down on the grass. The old man was silent, his eyes closed. He might be dead, but no matter. More than an hour dragged by, the breeze moaning in the cane. Virgil arose and stood near the chair. Stepho opened his eyes, but was silent. Virgil sat down

again and waited the wind tangling the tops of the cane.

He heard the canoe coming. Father Tahan was kindly and soft of voice. For many a despairing wretch he had held the Cross. At sight of him old Stepho's eyes were still hard. Time wears granite away, but does not mellow it. Not yet had he granted mercy, and for no pity could he hope.

"Father, this is the man I would keel. I hate heem, the carpetbagger."

"It is not true," said Virgil, standing near. "I fought against the carpet-baggers in June, in New Orleans, when they were hanging a man. I cut him down."

How great can be an instant change! The old wolf-eyes dewed soft.

"Oh, monsieur, I was that man! They hang me. I hear of the brave man, but I not know it you, Please forgive me. Tek the leetle gel, an' I know you be kind to her. She love you. For you she would die. Monsieur, I beg you not to think so hard of me. No, my leetle gel, you must not cry."

"I did not know you," said Drace. "A cloth was about your features. Think not of it now. Listen to the one who has come with a message of peace and forgiveness."

The priest devoted himself to his sacred offices. The wind moaned softly in the cane.

The priest spoke presently to Virgil. "She must not stay here. Take her away, and I will see that everything shall be done."

Nadine stood with Virgil's coat pulled close about her face. And into his heart she spoke: "The sun is low, Virgil. But you leave me now no more."

[THE END.]

## WILLAMETTE

Beulah Snidow

Twenty-five dollars were cleared at the Epworth League bazaar, last Friday evening. This included the money taken in at the fish-pond and side shows, as well as that made at the booths. The program, which was free, started at eight o'clock and included: A violin solo by Miss Nettie Paterson, accompanied by Miss Letha Shadi; a vocal solo by Miss Anna Matlaski; a reading, "The One-Legged Goose," by Miss Beulah Snidow; a vocal solo by Miss Ethel Emerson; reading, "The Widdy O'Shane," by Miss Helen Wallis; vocal solo by Miss Nettie Paterson. After the program the side shows were opened and the booth selling was continued. Hot coffee and cake were on sale.

Mr. and Mrs. John Gerber, Joseph Gerber and son Francis, and Aric Gerber, were guests of Mrs. Frank Adeock, Sunday.

Burns Britton is suffering with a crushed foot, received while working at the Crown-Willamette mill. An X-ray was taken at the Oregon City hospital, Sunday, to determine the extent of the injury.

Miss Harriet Snidow returned Saturday evening from O. A. C., to spend a two-weeks' Christmas vacation at her home in this place.

Misses Eunice and Marion Carlson visited their sister, Mrs. Thacker, in Portland, Sunday.

Among those doing Christmas shopping in Portland, Saturday, were: Mrs. Dibblee, Miss Elsie Fellows, Miss Mary Larson, Mrs. H. Lelsman, Miss Mary Lelsmann and Mrs. McLean.

The Misses Mildred and Bertha McKillican of Bolton, and Misses Ruth

Miller and Jessie Babcock of Willamette, enjoyed a hiking and coasting party, Sunday. At noon a bonfire was built and buns, wafers, hot chocolate and cookies were enjoyed.

Mrs. George Batdorf spent a portion of last week in Albany at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Batdorf.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Adamson were guests of relatives in Portland, last Wednesday evening. While there they attended the circus given by the Shriner, at the municipal auditorium.

Mrs. John Beuck has been on the sick list this week but is somewhat better at the present writing.

Miss Dora Oldenstadt has returned to her home after having spent nearly a month working for Ralph Parker's in Portland.

Miss Lola Jennsen, the new teacher, arrived on Saturday and school was resumed after a week's vacation. Miss Jennsen is from eastern Oregon and was a Junior at O. A. C.

Ed Sharp spent Monday in Oregon City.

Saturday, December 16th about sixty friends and relatives met with Mrs. Béda Sharp to help her celebrate her eighty-eighth birthday. The ladies circle at Stafford was also present.

The morning was spent in talking over old times, as Mrs. Sharp is a pioneer having crossed the plains many years ago. At noon a sumptuous dinner was served, and in the afternoon a short program was enjoyed. After the program everyone partook of the annual Christmas pie, a custom enjoyed by the ladies circle. Following this the birth-

day cake was cut and served. The cake was made by Mrs. Fred Alligsen, and was decorated with eighty-eight tiny pink candles. Everyone went home happy, and wishing Mrs. Sharp many more happy birthdays.

Those attending the dance at Willamette, given by the Odd Fellows and Rebecca Lodge, Saturday night were: Mrs. Ed Sharp, Irvin Sharp, Gilbert Sharp, Harold Sharp, Aura Robbins, Erma Robbins, Otis Robbins, George Oldenstadt, Myrtle Aden, Lola Jennsen, M. and Mrs. Smith Turner, Norman Turner, Nola Turner, John Beuck, Victor and Theodore Bruck, and Mr. and Mrs. Homer Kruse and son Adolphus.

Norman Turner spent Sunday with Clarence Kollerier of Advance.

Mrs. Dick Oldenstadt and George Oldenstadt were Oregon City visitors Saturday afternoon.

Howard Turner spent Saturday night and Sunday with Millard Sharp. Mr. George Aden was a Wilsonville visitor Saturday.

Norman Turner spent Saturday in Oregon City.

Baker—Plans made for operation of one of biggest cement works in west on Snake river near Home.

Rather than miss a football game at Coaldale, Pa., 10,000 persons remained in their seats and refused to desert the game to fight a fire which destroyed a house on the outskirts of the town. Appeals were made for firemen to respond, but not one moved. Coaldale tied Shenandoah 6 to 6, and the insurance companies paid for the fire.

American banks are after the issue of bonds which Belgium is putting out for public works in the Congo. Fifteen or twenty millions of dollars are being raised for this purpose. Why not push the sale of American utility and municipal securities?

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  - Eversharp Pencils, Conklin, Wahl, Dollar, Priced..... 35c to \$3.00
  - Box Candy, 1/2, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 lb. boxes
  - Vogans, Whitmans, Thomases, Lowney's and Krauses. Priced 50c to \$5.00
  - Bottle Perfume..... 25c to \$5.00
  - Perfume Atomizer..... 50c to \$4.00
  - Ivory Toilet Set..... \$3.00 to \$5.00
  - Shell Toilet Set..... \$2.00 to \$15.00
  - Shell and Ivory Manicuring Sets... \$2 to \$20
  - Serving Trays..... \$1.00 to \$4.00
  - Bud Vases..... 25c to 75c
  - Flower Vases..... 25c to \$3.00
  - Vanity Boxes in leather..... \$1.00 to \$10.00
  - Ivory in Separate Pieces..... 25c to \$10.00
  - Dresser Alarm Clocks in Metal and Ivory. Priced..... \$1.50 to \$6.00
  - Leather Lap pads..... \$1.00 to \$4.00
  - Combination Perfume Sets..... \$1.00 to \$5.00
  - Bottle Toilet Water..... 35c to \$1.50
  - Work Baskets..... 50c to \$4.00
  - Shopping Baskets..... 75c to \$2.00
  - Fruit Baskets..... \$1.50
  - Flower Baskets..... 75c to \$2.00
  - Incense Burners..... 35c to \$6.00
  - Incense in boxes..... 10c to \$1.00
  - Kodaks..... \$1.50 to \$50.00
  - Anso Memory Kits..... \$15.00 and \$20.00
  - Photo Album..... 25c to \$5.00
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  - Leather Hand Bags..... \$1.00 to \$10.00
  - Leather Coin Purses..... 25c to \$1.00
  - Leather Bridge Sets..... \$1.00 to \$3.00

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- Dolls at ..... 1/2 price
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  - Tilly Tinker..... 75c
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  - Toys..... 10c to \$8.50
  - Gilbert Toy Wagon..... \$5.00 to \$8.00
  - Eversharp Pencils..... 50c to \$2.50
  - Children's Stationery..... 85c to \$1.50
  - Dominoes..... 50c
  - Card Games..... 50c to 75c
  - Lotto..... 25c to 40c
  - Watches..... \$1.50 to \$5.00
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- Don't forget a chance on a \$10 Cedar Chest with each \$1.00 box of candy.
- Christmas Cards..... 1c to 50c
  - Seals..... 10c
  - Tags..... 10c
  - Post Cards..... 1c to 10c
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  - Highway Framed Pictures 50c and 75c
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- Tree Ornaments, Candles, Candle Holders, Tinsels, Balls, Cornacopias. Priced from 1c to 15c

- ### For Him
- Box Cigars..... 50c to \$12.00
  - Pipe..... 25c to \$5.00
  - Tobacco Pouches..... 25c to \$3.00
  - Cigar Holders..... \$1.00 to \$3.00
  - Cigarette Holders..... 25c to \$3.00
  - Fountain Pens..... \$2.50 to \$10.00
  - Eversharp Pencils..... 35c to \$3.00
  - Watches..... \$1.50 to \$6.00
  - Alarm Clocks..... \$1.50 to \$6.00
  - Razors, Old Fashion..... \$1.50 to \$3.00
  - Razors, Safety, all makes..... 25c to \$5.00
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  - Leather Bill Folds..... 50c to \$6.00
  - Leather Coin Purses..... 25c to \$1.50
  - Leather Card Cases..... 50c to \$3.00
  - Leather Money Belts..... \$1.50 to \$3.00
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  - Poker Chips..... \$1.25 to \$1.50
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  - Brush Sets..... \$2.50 to \$13.00
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  - Collar Box..... \$2.00 to \$4.50
  - Fishing Rods..... \$1.50 to \$12.00
  - Reels..... \$1.25 to \$15.00
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  - Fishing Tackle Books..... \$1.25 to \$5.50
  - Lunch Kits..... \$2.75 to \$3.50
  - Stationery..... 75c to \$3.50
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Christmas Tree Ornaments, Tinsel, Seals, Cards, Toys, Boxes and all the "Makings."

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