



A Deadly Shade of Gold: A Travis McGee Novel

By John D. MacDonald

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From a beloved master of crime fiction, *A Deadly Shade of Gold* is one of many classic novels featuring Travis McGee, the hard-boiled detective who lives on a houseboat.

When Travis McGee picks up the phone and hears a voice from his past, he can't help it: He has to meddle. Especially when he has the chance to reunite Sam Taggart, a reckless, restless man like himself, with the woman who's still waiting for him. But what begins as a simple matchmaking scheme soon becomes a bloody chase that takes McGee to Mexico, a beautiful country from which he hopes to return alive.

“John D. MacDonald was *the* great entertainer of our age, and a mesmerizing storyteller.”—Stephen King

Deception. Betrayal. Heartbreak. When Sam left his girlfriend, Nora, and vanished from Fort Lauderdale, no one was surprised. But when he shows up three years later lying in a pool of his own blood, people start to ask questions. And his old friend Travis McGee is left to find answers.

But all he has to go on are a gold Aztec idol and a very angry ex-girlfriend. Is that enough to find his friend's killer? And when the truth is as terrifying as this, does he really want answers after all?

Features a new Introduction by Lee Child

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

MacDonald, whose 21 Travis McGee novels represent arguably the best U.S. mystery series of the past 50 years, died in 1986, leaving behind a legion of fans. Sadly, Travis McGee seems lost amid today's hip, violent, and politically correct private eyes and series detectives, so much so that most of today's younger mystery readers may never experience this National Book Award-winning series. Yet audio producers seem committed to keeping the series alive for a new generation of readers and audiobook fans, as this example proves. Bright Orange for the Shroud tells of a dangerous confidence scheme that traps one of McGee's friends. Soon, McGee infiltrates the group and takes on its sexy operative, with explosive results. In *A Deadly Shade of Gold*, McGee comes into possession of an evil-looking, solid gold Aztec icon that leads to a perilous fortune. Reader Darren McGavin, who narrates the entire series for Random Audio, employs a world-weary, laid-back voice that is perfect for the enigmatic McGee. Recommended wherever good mysteries circulate. Random Audio offers the entire Travis McGee line in abridged format; libraries seeking unabridged versions should look to Books on TapeR. ?Mark Annichiarico, "Library Journal" Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From [Booklist](#)

It tends to be later in the Travis McGee series when the tales turn significantly darker (say, after *The Tan* and *Sandy Silence*), but this early installment, number five, displays a strong hint of what is to come. It starts, as so many of the 21 novels do, with the appearance, on the deck of McGee's houseboat, *The Busted Flush*, of a friend in trouble. This time it's Sam Taggart, a fellow adventurer committed to living by his wits; unfortunately, Sam's wits aren't quite as quick as Travis', and he has landed in a serious jam south of the border. But if he can just peddle the Aztec idol he has lifted from serious bad guys, Sam should be able to start a new life in Ft. Lauderdale with Nora, the girl he foolishly dumped before leaving for Mexico. There are no new lives to be had. McGee and Nora find Sam dead on the floor of a sleazy motel, his throat professionally slashed from ear to ear. The two of them set off for Mexico to extract several pounds of flesh and, hopefully, salvage the profit that would have been Sam's from the sale of the idol. So far, so good. We're on familiar McGee ground here: the salvage operation is afoot; the wounded dove, Nora, is ensconced on a beach in Mexico, prime for some psychic and sexual healing, which Trav delivers with his usual aplomb. And, of course, MacDonald has ample opportunity to rail against the absurdities of American tourists on display in Mexico. But then the wind changes. The bad guys are hard to find, being both too numerous and too ambiguous; the wrong bodies start to pile up; and Travis begins to feel the most unlikely of emotions: intimations of vulnerability. And, finally, a very curious thing happens: our beach-bum hero transforms into the novel's real wounded dove, a teeth-chattering, head-hanging wreck of a man, in desperate need of rejuvenation. The Aztec idol plot gets a little messy, requiring too much explication to sort out who did what and stole what and from whom, but for committed series readers, this novel offers the first good look at just how shrewd MacDonald can be. Through four books, he has eased his readers into letting the comforts of formula fiction roll over us like a gentle wave: we're grown accustomed to the rhythms of watching McGee work and play; we've chuckled at MacDonald's sociopolitical commentary; and, best of all, we've found little bits of our fantasy selves in Travis' nonconformity and his unshakable savviness. Now, suddenly, the wave is no longer gentle, and we're tossed onto the rocks of ugly reality. We bounce free, of course, just as McGee's teeth eventually stop chattering, but the warning MacDonald has issued is clear: get comfortable, that's what formula fiction is for, but don't take comfort for granted. --Bill Ott

Review

Praise for John D. MacDonald and the Travis McGee novels

“*The* great entertainer of our age, and a mesmerizing storyteller.”—Stephen King

“My favorite novelist of all time . . . All I ever wanted was to touch readers as powerfully as John D. MacDonald touched me. No price could be placed on the enormous pleasure that his books have given me. He captured the mood and the spirit of his times more accurately, more hauntingly, than any ‘literature’ writer—yet managed always to tell a thunderingly good, intensely suspenseful tale.”—Dean Koontz

“To diggers a thousand years from now, the works of John D. MacDonald would be a treasure on the order of the tomb of Tutankhamen.”—Kurt Vonnegut

“A master storyteller, a masterful suspense writer . . . John D. MacDonald is a shining example for all of us in the field. Talk about *the best*.”—Mary Higgins Clark

“A dominant influence on writers crafting the continuing series character . . . I envy the generation of readers just discovering Travis McGee, and count myself among the many readers savoring his adventures again.”—Sue Grafton

“One of the great sagas in American fiction.”—Robert B. Parker

“Most readers loved MacDonald’s work because he told a rip-roaring yarn. I loved it because he was the first modern writer to nail Florida dead-center, to capture all its languid sleaze, racy sense of promise, and breath-grabbing beauty.”—Carl Hiaasen

“The *consummate* pro, a master storyteller and witty observer . . . John D. MacDonald created a staggering quantity of wonderful books, each rich with characterization, suspense, and an almost intoxicating sense of place. The Travis McGee novels are among the finest works of fiction ever penned by an American author and they retain a remarkable sense of freshness.”—Jonathan Kellerman

“What a joy that these timeless and treasured novels are available again.”—Ed McBain

“Travis McGee is the last of the great knights-errant: honorable, sensual, skillful, and tough. I can’t think of anyone who has replaced him. I can’t think of anyone who would dare.”—Donald Westlake

“There’s only one thing as good as reading a John D. MacDonald novel: reading it again. A writer way ahead of his time, his Travis McGee books are as entertaining, insightful, and suspenseful today as the moment I first read them. He is the all-time master of the American mystery novel.”—John Saul

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bobby Blade:

Often the book *A Deadly Shade of Gold: A Travis McGee Novel* has a lot of information on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was compiled by the very famous author. The writer makes some research prior to write this book. This specific book very easy to read you can get the point easily after reading this article book.

Nathan Lawhorn:

Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because if you are reading a book specifically book entitled A Deadly Shade of Gold: A Travis McGee Novel your brain will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unfamiliar for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging just about every word written in a book then become one application form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get just before. The A Deadly Shade of Gold: A Travis McGee Novel giving you another experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful information for your better life with this era. So now let us demonstrate the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary paying spare time activity?

Aubrey Newsome:

In this particular era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more important than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time very little but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. One of many books in the top collection in your reading list is actually A Deadly Shade of Gold: A Travis McGee Novel. This book and that is qualified as The Hungry Hillside can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking upwards and review this guide you can get many advantages.

Enola Hudson:

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