

**THE THICKET: A  
NOVEL**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649720323

The Thicket: A Novel by Alice Woods

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ALICE WOODS**

**THE THICKET: A  
NOVEL**



## THE THICKET

*BY ALICE WOODS*

FAME-SEEKERS

EDGHS

# THE THICKET

A NOVEL BY

<sup>D.C.</sup>  
ALICE WOODS

+

*To Henry D. Murray,  
Yours truly,  
Alice Woods Allen*



1913.  
NEW YORK  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY

D  
46

NEW YORK  
MITCHELL KENNERLEY  
MCMXIII

AD

# THE THICKET

## *Chapter One*

"Milly wants me to come over and play under the big tree. May I, mama?" and Cathie Hiller, taking consent for granted, slipped down from her chair at table, stood for a moment to fold and pat her napkin and tuck it into her silver ring, and then, with a flirtatious glance at her father, she was off like a shot.

"Don't go anywhere else, dear," Mrs. Hiller called after her.

"All right, mama," and the front gate slammed.

Judge Hiller went to the bay-window, and laughed to watch Cathie, bonnet strings and curls flying, fat legs twinkling, across the glaring, dusty street, and on through a break in the Eastmans' fence.

The Eastman home, with Doctor Eastman's office standing at one side of the big corner lot,



domesticity and profession upon friendly terms, was one of the prides of Galesburg. Both home and office were built of yellow brick, were fenced, corniced and blinded with wood painted brown and toned with the varying weather of many seasons. The two principal streets of Galesburg crossed at the Eastmans' corner: Market street, edged by business, the post office, the court-house square, all sorts of shops, the drug-store, the newspaper offices and a commercial hotel; and Lincoln street, lined with the homes of about all of Galesburg's best families, and a splendid row of maples that deepened the look of concord and decorated the necessity of moderation that comes with a mild standard of income. Nothing great in architects having been born to Galesburg, the trees made good till art should have come.

The Eastmans' home rambled over nearly a quarter of their big lot, and close to the corner where streets crossed an octagonal tower rose above the tree-tops. All about and over the tower, windows scarcely respected, clambered a great vine, fine in summer with scarlet trumpet and feathery green, in winter with decorative stalk, white snow and gleaming icicle. Upon either side of the short brick walk between the gate and

the porch a tall cedar stood on guard, spoiling the lawn but making shade and breaking wind, and about the six pillars of the long front porch twined clematis and more trumpet-vine. In the front yard, from cedar to office wall, and as far back as the brick path that mapped the way from the kitchen door to the back door of the office, the grass was thick and thrifty, and was kept trimmed all the summer long. For the Doctor liked to throw off his coat, to get free of cuffs and collar, and with a great boyish 'Brrrrrah,' to ply the lawn-mower for a half-hour before supper, to fill his lungs with the sweetness of the flying, fresh-cut grass. The action and the sweetness made him forget his patients, made his hour after supper, with Mrs. Eastman and Milly, a big palm-leaf fan, and a wooden rocker on the porch, a compensation for his fatigue and the sick world's troubles. In the back yard, where the big tree grew, where Milly and Catherine liked to play, all the way from the barn to the picket fence along Lincoln street, things ran riot. Red clover, ox-eyed daisies, dog-fennel and wild sun-flowers mixed in giddy anarchy with the bronze-topped grasses and the wild morning-glory. Now and then there'd come the rustling, the startling glimpse even, of a slim green snake playing about

in the jungle of stems. There were toads and katydids, crickets and grasshoppers, and all the myriad design of small-mannered life that chirps, or blinks, or blooms itself out in one rapturous season. Just beneath the big tree where the children always played, the Doctor kept the weeds back and the grass trimmed, and the two friendly pairs of small feet attended to the path through the weeds to where, oddly if accidentally, three pickets were off the fence in bee-line with the Hillers' front gate.

Catherine found Milly there before her, but not the gay, reckless tomboy that she was used to finding. Milly's long blue-stockinged legs and flat-heel slippered pup-like feet were sprawled, limp, over the grass; she was lying face down, and she turned a look upon Catherine that had risen above the vanity of hiding tear-stains.

"What you been up to now?" demanded Catherine with a little grin. Milly groaned and buried her face again. Evidently this was serious. Cathie dropped upon the grass and stared at her friend with a concern too deep for tact. "What'n the world's the matter? Milly, *please* don't cry so! Tell me."

Mildred Eastman was Catherine Hiller's best friend, and that, in a narrow, dull community