



The Day is a White Tablet

Jill Fletcher Pelaez

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In this gripping Southern saga, America is in the final days of the Civil War, the bloodiest conflict ever waged on her soil. Tench Traymore, a free black teen, has been following his older white cousin, Lance Traymore, as his cook. The two young men, who grew up together, are inseparable as they fight under the command of General Pickett.

But when Lance dies in battle, Tench is left alone. With a few of his cousin's possessions — a horse called Night, his boots, and his journals—Tench travels home to Georgia. Discovering the Traymores have moved to Florida, he heads south in search of them. On this treacherous journey and encountering those who would stop him, Tench gains courage as he faces this changed world on his own.

The Day is a White Tablet Details

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From Reader Review The Day is a White Tablet for online ebook

Barbara says

3 1/2 to 4 -- The story behind the author writing and publishing this book is beautiful; be sure to read her story before reading the book. I enjoyed this book and Pelaez's beautiful, descriptive writing style. Settings and people came alive through her fresh way of writing. It is too bad this is the only book we will have of hers. Trench is 15 when the story opens at the end of the Civil War; his confederate "master" (friend/companion) was killed in the opening pages in one of the final battles of the war. Trench is left to find his way through a disintegrating South to his family (both his mother and the white matriarch his mother worked for) who have been burned out during Sherman's march and have relocated. He has been fully educated right along with the young man he grew up with, so Trench took the journal his friend had kept and continued it. Therefore, the story is told through Trench's eyes as daily journal entries as he journeys with the very real General who was Jefferson Davis' vice-president and other fictional confederate leaders escaping the Northern bounty hunters.

Susan says

This was a book set towards the end of the American civil war with the hero being a young black lad who went to war with his white 'brother'.

He survives while the brother dies and he is making his way back to his family on the brother's horse. he meets all kinds of adventures along the way and grows as a person as well as learning a lot about self survival.

The young lad was art of his white family and well educated and kept a journal of his experiences.

It was very different from the usual Civil War reads and looked at things in a very unusual way.

I enjoyed it and found it very interesting.

Patsy says

This was a different view of the Civil War, usually books are written about the war not the aftermath of it. It was interesting to read about the black and white soldiers. It was harder on the black people because they could not read, or write or count money and with no education. Maybe a few were educated in the south but they had to hide it for years. It was hard for all the soldiers to locate their families and their friends everyone was moving around trying to find food and shelter. Stop and think how far they must have travelled with no home to go to, just lie down under the stars of heaven. How tired they must have been, starved with very little food. For five long years their lives were in danger of getting killed every day. During this time period it was common for people to write in journals every day. This was a very moving story and very interesting. The story makes you think of all the wars that have been fought. There were also some happy times in the story when the war was over and the men found their families and their wives and children was there for them.

Judy says

I think the background story of how this book came to be published is as interesting as the book, which is really a 3 1/2 star book. Jill Pelaez was 88 when she learned her dream to have a book about the Civil War was to come true. Her hospice nurses made it happen and I found that to be a very endearing tribute to her and to her caregivers. Mrs. Pelaez had a passion for the Civil War because a great-grandfather had been a Confederate soldier, so there is a forgotten slant towards the confederacy in the story. I was reminded of stories my grandmother told me about the injustices the South suffered at the end of that war.

This is the story of Tench, a 'southern' black youth trying to get home to his people at the end of the war. He is a green-eyed mixed race young man and had accompanied his cousin to war. The cousin is dead and Tench wants to get home with his cousin's journal and horse. He is literate and well spoken and seems to have no real desire to run off and enjoy his freedom. At times I found his devotion to his white family a bit hard to believe and felt this in part was just another 'run away' slave story. He does encounter danger and goodness from different people on the road south to Florida. I did look up the General Breckinridge and found him to be a real person who had actually been James Buchanan's Vice President. This knowledge made the story more interesting because I found to point of all these various people going to Florida and on to Cuba.

Tench does come of age on his ride and is a wiser young man by the end of the narrative and has put his relationship to his 'white' ancestors into context. Breckinridge did get to Cuba and was pardoned by Andrew Johnson and returned to Kentucky in 1868. If you're a Civil War buff, this little piece of forgotten history will interest you. The book is a quick read.

Sheila Carsins says

Brilliantly Written! A Look into the Personal Life of a Soldier and His Family During the Civil War.

I enjoyed reading this book about the lives and the times during the Civil War, from the personal viewpoint and diaries of a fictional character, and his family members and friends. It seems to be a fairly accurate portrayal of the war, and the lives that it touched. I thought that it was particularly interesting to learn what kinds of foods were available during this time period, and how they survived by their wits and ingenuity every day.

I particularly liked the viewpoints and stories about Tench, young boy of mixed heritage who followed his older half-brother, Lance, who was Caucasian, into battle, and how they provided, protected, and comforted one another throughout the war. After Tench inherited Lance's diary, Tench got a better sense of what a major contribution he had made in helping Lance day and night throughout the war, and gained a greater sense of his various talents, skills, and abilities. When Tench was left to carry on, and to take over his brother's diary, it was fascinating to follow his escapades and see how much he naturally adapted and changed to rise to each tribulation, as each adventure carried him closer to manhood and self reliance, a better sense of self, and a greater knowledge of how to handle adult situations, especially when he started protecting and assisting the renegade leaders of the South who were on the run, and helped them escape capture and trials at the hands of the Northern victors of the Civil War.

It's like walking into a living snapshot of a moment in time, that gives you enough knowledge of the era to

make it feel like you're along for the journey. That requires major skill and talent to immerse the reader so completely, as to bring the distant past to life. Fantastic story!

Elaine says

It was interesting to read about the aftermath of the Civil War through the eyes of several defeated Confederate officers trying to avoid being captured and put to death for treason. The book tells of their struggles to get to Cuba and freedom through the Everglades, avoiding pirates and deserters, and the treacherous waters of the Gulf waters.

Sally Beaudean says

Interesting, intriguing, and introspective

The Day is a White Tablet probably deserves a higher rating because it is a well-written book with a unique historical perspective. It gives a detailed description of the trials of a few Confederates during the last days of the Civil War and beyond, as well as an action-packed tale of their journey to safety in Cuba. Yes, it's a good book -- just not my "cup of tea."

Autumn says

I have only read the sample that Amazon provides.

I enjoyed this sample. An interesting, character-driven, historical fiction piece. While I question whether or not white families of that era would have been as willing to acknowledge their relations that were products of an owner/slave rape (sorry, I cannot call that a relationship), it is a fictional piece and the relationship that Tench has with the family who had owned him is something I would be willing to let stand how the author presented it.

It wouldn't be something I would sit down and read at once- the over-reliance on dialect within the story was starting to wear thin at the sample's end (beginning of the eighth chapter- chapters were short). I give this sample 3 stars and will put it on my possible purchase list.

Caroline says

Towards the end of the Civil War, Tench Traymore finds himself alone, in the middle of a battlefield, having just buried his white cousin, Lance Traymore. Alone, with his journal and with Lance's horse, Night, Tench decides to try and make his way home to Georgia, but when he gets there, he finds the Traymore house burned to the ground and the family gone. They appear to have moved down to Florida and he begins his trek to find them. His journey is rife with danger as rebel and Fed soldiers continue to hunt and fight. He tries to travel by night to avoid being caught.

His treacherous journey brings him into contact with slaves taking advantage of the war to escape as well as freed slaves who aren't sure what directions their lives will take now they are emancipated. Some people along his travels help him and yet others will steal from or hurt him.

It's a moving story of a young man who has to learn to live on his wits and not lose hope for the future

Chaplain Stanleigh Chapin says

A different perspective

I have in past read a number of books about the Civil War, this was certainly a much different look at the aftermath

J. A. Lewis says

A story about post Civil War told through the eyes of a freed slave boy, Tench. When Tench loses his "cousin" in the Civil War, he makes his way back home only to find it burned to the ground. On his journey, he meets up with a number of people, good, evil and famous. The real journey begins after that as he eventually travels with General John Breckinridge and Naval Officer John Taylor Wood through the swamps of Florida. After Tench finally finds his family, he makes the decision to continue traveling with the General and Officer Wood to Cuba. A very descriptive and vivid story that allows you to see and feel everything that Tench was experiencing. If any complaint, it was a tad long and parts seemed repetitive. Overall, however, a very good read.

Marie says

The book was a lot better than I expected it to be. Tench's narrative grabbed my attention right away. He displayed so much sensitivity, courage and insight, among other traits. What a great character. From Night to Captain John, and everyone in between, all contributed to quite an adventure. I don't remember much of the Civil War history but now, I'm anxious to read about it.

I'm sorry that the author wasn't able to see her dream fulfilled. At the same time, it's so moving that her daughter did it for her.

Sonja Bristow says

Pretty good. It went on a little too long, but good none the less.

Jan says

Excellent, compelling story of the pillage and destruction of the Confederate states at and directly after the end of the Civil War. From the civilians ripped from their burning homes, robbed of everything within and more, beaten and murdered and left with nothing they'd known before the war, to the displaced Negro slaves who were left to live in forests and burned out towns, starving and unlikely to find employment, or even a home. The children who fought or served in the military camps on both sides was a particularly poignant tragedy that occurs in far too many wars. The book, which is written through the trials, triumphs and strength of a young former Negro teen slave, who followed his white cousin into the war against the Union army, then was left on his own after his cousin was killed. What a tragic and graphic portrayal of the immediate aftermath of one of the final battles in the Civil War. Tench's saga is profoundly diverse, which is crucial in portraying the wide and wild aftermath of the era.

The tragedy and drama throughout this historical fiction piece, although heart breaking, were mixed with many light moments and bright spots of successes and heart warming reunions in the trials of the southern citizens and 'freed' Negroes alike. Many men and women whose strength and endurance were tested and proven, determined to rebuild their lives, either elsewhere in the U.S., or in other countries who welcomed the refugees from the south. I found the expatriate underground very interesting, in recalling the extensive underground railroad that provided heroic tales of 'slave saving' (my nomenclature).

The book was quite the eye-opener for this 62 year-old Northern Granny. Well written and, from what I could discern, extensively researched. The author presents passionate and compassionate feelings held within the pages of this book told a very real-feeling experience that many people would enjoy. North, South, East or West, I highly recommend this book.

I was thinking it would make a great reading recommendation for high school students as a post-Civil war look at the South (and North) at the very end of and immediately after the war, if a companion book could be found to similarly represent the experiences of the Union army and its citizens.

Eileen E Cartwright says

Fascinating story.

I was fascinated by this story. I have read many books about times before, during and after the Civil War but nothing that really dealt with how really awful it was for for many of the Southern people after the war in as much detail as this one did. Also it was interesting to learn what Florida was like in those days. Great read.
