

The Devil To Pay

Contributed by Admin
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"I'm a citizen, dammit," Sven hissed as he squinted down the barrel of the borrowed .45 and into the muzzle of the 9mm. "And I'm gettin' awful tired of you tryin' to kill me for 'national security' reasons too precious for me to know about!"

Sven Olafson and Matt Blair, a yacht delivery crew, pick up a client's boat at an isolated anchorage in the Bahamas. Even before they board, they find the body of GULL's boat keeper in her dinghy. Menacing Cubans board GULL at midnight, threatening to tow her away to be dismantled in search of a mysterious canister that's hidden aboard.

The crew outsmarts the aggressors and escapes with their charge intact, but the pursuit is immediately joined by a second boatload of shadowy American operatives, forcing a series of encounters. Adding to the crew's burdens, a derelict boat surrenders a mysterious trapped woman who appears to be a victim of the same group of pursuers…or not. Only the superior seamanship of the sailing crew keeps the much faster power cruisers at bay.

Damaged in a deadly predawn skirmish, GULL is barely kept afloat as she limps across the Gulf Stream to safety. But safety for the boat is not safety for the crew, for now they know too much….

Navigating the dark world of Miami political high rollers, trophy wives, and spooks, the crew's pivotal confrontation takes place in the burning bowels of a casino ship and the final one back at sea--a mono, a mono.

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The Author's Notes

The title of this novel comes from an expression prevalent on sailing ships during the Great Age of Sail: "The devil to pay and only half a bucket of pitch." The 'devil' was the longest seam between two planks on the ship's hull. To 'pay' it meant to pour pitch in the seam to make it watertight. Hot pitch could only be meted out half a bucket at a time because larger quantities would cool and not run into the seam. This meant frequent trips back and forth to the caldron on deck. Hence the saying came to mean any large task without sufficient resources to accomplish it.

Thus I use it as a metaphor for the circumstances in which my characters find themselves in THE DEVIL TO PAY.

Gene J. Parola

Reviews

"An absorbing tale of hidden motivations that keeps the reader guessing until the end, The Devil To Pay is enthusiastically recommended for those mystery buffs who appreciate a well crafted tale of intrigue and suspense."

- Midwest Book Review

Billed as a "sailing adventure mystery," this novel delivers on all counts. The diehard sailor will love the nautical language and technical details supplied throughout the text. Lovers of action-adventure mysteries will find The Devil to Pay a satisfying read. Characters are well-developed and readers care about the good guys winning over the bad guys.

I was immediately captivated by the rich language used in setting descriptions in the book., THE DEVIL TO PAY, such as the engine noise shown on page 2. Dialogue is natural and adds an extra dimension to the story. The pacing is quick, making this book a page turner. The scene on page 45 is an excellent example of using varied sentence structure to affect pace. Mr. Parola uses an interesting device of placing narrative, quotes, and subtitles at the beginning of each chapter, offering the reader a glimpse ahead and providing a deeper understanding of the story. Mr. Parola is extremely

skilled with dialog…

- Writers Digest