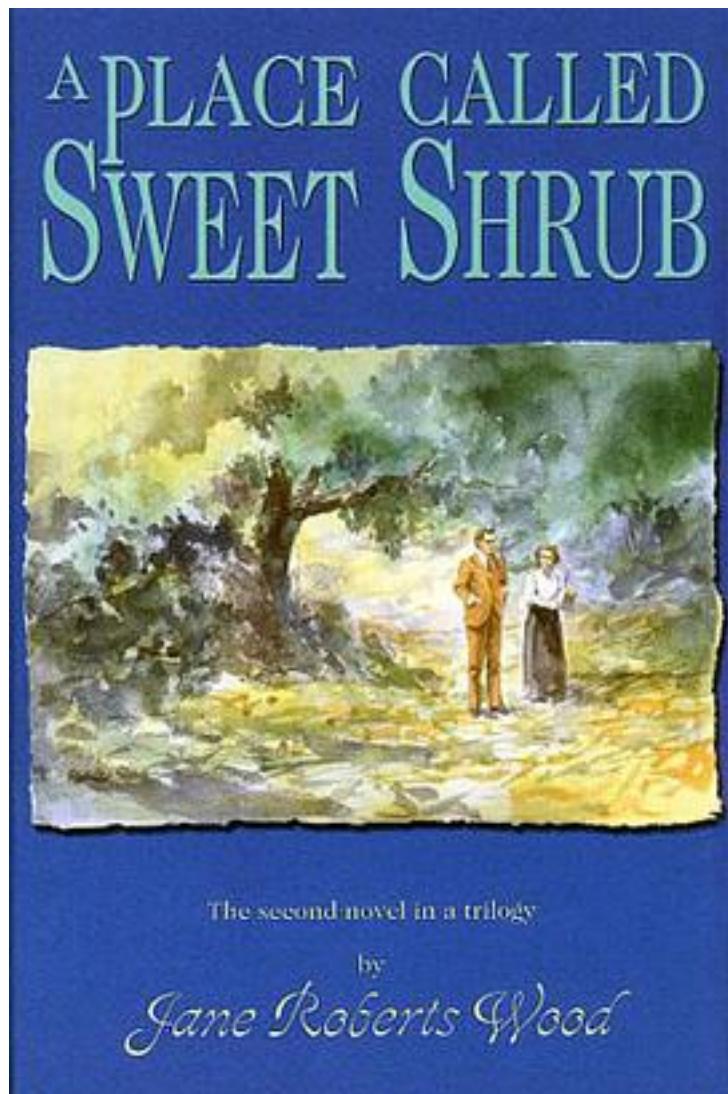


A Place Called Sweet Shrub



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The Lucinda 'Lucy' Richards trilogy, spanning the years from 1911 to the 1930s, has everything good books should have: a variety of landscapes, characters of all ages and social classes, an overall tenderness that never lapses into sentimentality, and a sense of the comic amidst the tragic. Lucy is feisty, funny, and completely open-armed about life. Josh passionately confronts danger and greed and prejudice with courage and humor and, sometimes, with bare fists. Even the minor characters are so rife with color that you first turn the pages quickly to see what they will do next, and then you turn them slowly so as to savor each page of this remarkable trilogy. In 1915 it has been three years since Lucy Richards left her teaching post in West Texas and returned home where she is busy being indispensable to her eccentric mother, keeping her Aunt Catherine comfortable, and taking on many of the chores her very pregnant sister no longer feels up to. She decides to choose a husband from the local beaus, but none of them stand a chance when handsome, irreverent Josh Arnold comes to town. The newlyweds move to the sleepy hamlet of Sweet Shrub, Arkansas, where they are soon caught up in the lives of their neighbors and discover that the surface tranquility of the town hides simmering tensions and unrest that will inevitably result in tragedy.

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