

Storm Country

Polly

by Grace Miller White
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"A ANGEL"

SYNOPSIS.—Occupying a dilapidated shack in the Silent City, a squatter settlement near Ithaca, New York, Polly Hopkins lives with her father, small Jerry, and an old woman, Granny Hope. On an adjacent farm, Oscar Bennett, prosperous farmer, is a neighbor. He is secretly married to Evelyn Robertson, supposedly wealthy girl of the neighborhood. Polly alone knows their secret. Marcus MacKenzie, who owns the ground the squatters occupy, is their determined enemy. Polly overhears a conversation between MacKenzie and a stranger, in which the former avows his intention of driving the squatters from his land. The stranger sympathizes with the squatters, and earns Polly's gratitude. Evelyn Robertson discovers from her mother that they are not rich, as she supposed, but practically living on the bounty of Robert Percival, Evelyn's cousin. Polly learns from Evelyn that the sympathetic stranger is Robert Percival. Evelyn charges Polly with a message to Bennett, telling him she can give him no more money, and urging him to be patient. She already bitterly regrets her infatuation with and marriage to the ignorant farmer.

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

Polly hesitated a moment, coughed and cleared her throat.

"A little milk for Jerry, please," she suggested, extending her can.

Bennett snatched it from her hand.

"Good God, you squatters're nothing but beggars," he grumbled, but because he was eager to get her message, he filled the pail full. Smilingly Polly took it back.

"I'm thankin' you, Oscar," she gurgled, "an' now mebbe a fresh egg for Granny Hope?"

He made an angry motion with his hand.

"Up in that box," he snapped. "Then tell what you came for! What'd Eve say?"

"Your woman sent word by me," she began.

"Tell it, and don't be all day about it," ordered the farmer.

Polly took a couple of steps backward toward the door, ready to fly if Oscar showed any signs of unusual wrath.

"She said you wasn't to write her any more letters," she replied. "She's awful scared. She trembled all over when she told me."

"What did she say about money?" Bennett demanded gruffly.

Through the dim light of the lantern, Polly looked at him pleadingly.

"She just can't get another cent," she returned, "an' she's feelin' terrible bad about it."

Although he had not finished his task, Bennett jumped up from his stool, and one step took him very close to the nervous young speaker.

"She can't, eh?" he cried. "She means she won't, I guess. By God, she will, or I'll come out with the whole thing. You go and tell her so. She's got rich folks, and I didn't marry her to keep quiet all my life. Tell her either she comes home here to me, or she pays up. If she pays—" he paused, then laughed. "Oh, you needn't look as if I was goin' to swat you one, Pollyop," he went on, "but as I was sayin', if she pays up and I get rid of her, then—me for you, Polly Hopkins."

His voice was harsh, and his manners rough. Polly retreated to the threshold.

"The time's here," Oscar went on, "when both you women will be leaping to my aid. There! Get home and say to my lady just what I said—" again he broke off, only to continue, "leaving out the part about you. See, Pollyop?"

Dumb with dread, Polly sagged weakly against the door casing. No wonder Evelyn Robertson didn't want to live with such a man!

"And you can tell her to come tonight at nine o'clock, to Granny Hope's old shack," he proceeded. "I want to talk to her. Now get along and don't come around after any more milk, or I'll throw you out of the barn."

Glad to be gone, Polly passed out to the lane. In a little ravine at her left a noisy stream rumbled down the hill. With wistful eyes she watched it through the fast gathering dusk flow away to the lake. It was then she saw something moving about in a small pool of water in a rock basin. Carefully she put the milk and eggs on a bit of smooth turf. Down the bank she slipped, and there in the falling gloom, struggling in the water, was a baby lamb. Pollyop tucked her skirts up about her waist and waded into the water. Several times she fell, and, dripping wet, scrambled up again. When she pulled the lamb to the bank, she dropped to the ground, gasping for breath.

"Poor little duffer," she murmured. "You was 'most gone, wasn't you? Come on home with Pollyop an' get loved up a bit!"

In the road she picked up the pail, slipped the eggs into the milk and

went swiftly down the lane, the lamb under one arm. Polly's heart sang with gladness. Out of the rigors of the Storm country, out of the cold ravine water, she had found another little thing to care for.

Jeremiah Hopkins and Larry Bishop were in the shack when Polly arrived with her burdens. With much pride she displayed the lamb; then she fed him a portion of the milk with a spoon. While she was preparing the evening meal, she invited her father's friend to take potluck with them.

After supper she settled her family. Wee Jerry she tucked into Daddy's bed, and Granny Hope was made comfortable in a chair by the stove, where she soon nodded off to sleep. Then, the lamb in her lap and the billy goat at her knee, Pollyop sat down on the edge of her cot, facing the two men. She knew by the dark expressions on their faces that a question of import had come up.

"Me an' Larry, brat, have been tryin' to think of some way of gettin' rid of Old Marc," began Hopkins grimly. Nervous brown fingers plucked at the lamb's wool as Polly, going white, stared at her father.

"You don't mean hurtin' him, Daddy dear, do you?" she broke out. "Oh, if that's what you're talkin' about, don't do it. Don't do it, Daddy! Something beautiful is goin' to happen to us squatters. God up in the sky sent a angel smack down from high heaven to help us."

The serious, lovely face turned pleadingly, truthfully up to his prevented Hopkins from indulging his desire to laugh. Polly turned and looked at Larry. His dark face was heavy with frown and deep, grief-cut lines.

"There ain't any angels anywhere but up there," muttered Larry Bishop, making an upward thrust with his thumb.

"Yep, there is, Larry," contradicted Polly impetuously. "I seen one. He's bigger'n you an' Daddy put together, I guess; an' his face looks like the sun, all shiny an' bright. He says the squatters has to have a place to live in just like other folks, an' he won't let Old Marc run us out of the Silent City. Mebbe after a while, when he gets to workin' for us, you can hunt an' fish just the same as ever!"

Hopkins looked at his daughter as if she had lost her mind.

"What's eatin' you, brat?" he grunted.

"Nothin'," replied Polly, "but I know what I heard."

"Spiel it out to us," put in Bishop eagerly.

Then Polly told them. Both men laughed.

"Why, he's got more money'n Old Marc, Poll," snapped Hopkins. "It's just because we don't happen to be settin' on his ground that he ain't watin' us off."

It was quite evident that both the fishermen were of one opinion. Polly



It Was Quite Evident That Both the Fishermen Were of One Opinion.

got up and placed the lamb in a corner of the wood-box.

"I bet a eel he helps us squatters, though," she nodded positively. "An' you both got to promise right now on this," she picked up Granny Hope's Bible, "that you won't use a gun on Marc MacKenzie, nor do nothin' harmful to him. Let the other man look after us. There! Kiss this here book, an' you'll both feel better."

There was something compelling about the girl. It may have been the tones of her voice, wonderfully sweet and tremendously earnest. It may

have been the brilliant smile she flashed upon her listeners. At any rate, the mayor of the Silent City and Larry Bishop, his henchman, repeated in dull apathy the oath she dictated to them, the words that made the Storm country a safe habitation for Marcus MacKenzie. Then both men reverently kissed the Bible and fell back limply in their chairs.

Polly kissed the ragged edges of the book too, then she turned to Hopkins. "Daddy, honey, I'm goin' out. Give your kid a lovin' smack. I'll be back quicker'n the billy goat can blink."

CHAPTER V.

The afternoon had been unpleasant for both Mrs. Robertson and her daughter. The lady was studiously icy to Evelyn, and the girl was utterly miserable. Robert Percival was away with MacKenzie. In his absence, although the two women ate dinner together and kept each other company afterward in the drawing room, their conversation was limited to the simplest commonplaces. The return of the men eased the tension. Percival excused himself almost at once to write some letters, and as MacKenzie made evident his eagerness to get Evelyn by herself, Mrs. Robertson seized a chance to steal away to her own room.

For some time after her departure the girl and the man were silent. This was the first time in Marc's life that his heart had been really touched by a woman, and in spite of his years and experience, he was almost as bashful as a young boy.

At length their eyes met, and the girl's lowered, while the color mounted in a flood to her hair.

The man was by her side in an instant. He had read in the shy, retreating glance what he longed to see.

"Evelyn! I—I—believe you care for me, I really believe you do," he exclaimed. "You do, sweet?" he demanded, his voice trembling.

"Yes," whispered Evelyn.

"Now, isn't it strange," asked Marcus, after they took up their conversation again, "that while I was gone I always thought of you, but not just like this. Honey, girl, how long have you loved me? Before—before today?"

"I think always," confessed Evelyn, with a growing flush.

What a fortunate man Marcus MacKenzie considered himself just at that moment! He had won the prettiest girl in Ithaca; and she loved him.

"And to think I only came home last night," he exulted. "This time yesterday you were free, my Eve. At this moment no power can take you away from me."

Dreadful recollections of Oscar intruded upon Evelyn's new happiness. Oh, if she only had the courage to tell Marcus! Would he keep on loving her and help her to get free, or would he—

—She glanced into his face. There were upon it the marks of breeding, of pride in himself, his wealth, position and power. She knew how highly he regarded the conventions of society.

If he should disclose to him the secret of her marriage to the farmer, he would see nothing but the blot upon her and turn away in disgust. No, she couldn't tell him. Despair overwhelmed her and made MacKenzie's arms burdensome. With an effort she smiled faintly and withdrew from him.

"I don't want to let you go, darling," he laughed. "It seems like a beautiful dream!"

Eve wished passionately that she were at liberty to make the dream come true.

"You are my beloved," asserted Marcus, and with the girl's whispered "yes," he allowed her to leave the room.

Evelyn went immediately to her mother's apartment and, opening the door, slipped in and sank down upon the floor at Mrs. Robertson's side.

"I've told him I'd marry him," she said, with trembling lips. "Mother dear, oh, please, mother dear, don't you think you could borrow some money from Robert for me? I must have it. After I'm married to Marcus, I could get it all back for you. I know I could. I've just got to have a lot of money, and you can't expect me to ask Marcus."

Mrs. Robertson drew away with a shiver.

"If you so forgot yourself, your family and your name as to do such a thing, I should disown you, Evelyn," she said, finally in her tones.

Evelyn rose wearily. She could imagine the heights of her mother's scorn if she discovered the actual situation. She felt that she would rather tell MacKenzie than the unsympathetic, frowning woman in the chair.

"There's no use, mother, in trying to talk to you," she muttered. "I'll manage some way, though only God knows how."

Mrs. Robertson took up her book and gazed sternly at her daughter over the top of it.

"Very well, Evelyn," she said, ungraciously. "You're of age. If that's the way you feel about it, there's nothing more to be said."

Whereupon the speaker began to read, and a very hopeless girl crept out of the room.

When Evelyn was repairing the ravages made by her emotions, Polly Hopkins crept into the Robertson garden. Her fear of Mrs. Robertson was mingled with a thrilling happiness. She had seen Granny Hope and Wee Jerry eat the fresh eggs; Daddy's promise would keep him out of trouble with Old Marc; and the beautiful stranger would help them!

She gave a piercing little trill, the signal she had always used to call Evelyn from the house. Almost at once a figure stepped from the door to the porch directly in front of her, and terrified, she shrank back among the vines and clung there.

Silhouetted against the bright light

was Robert Percival. He stood gazing straight ahead of him at the dark driveway, but turned when Evelyn appeared beside him. Polly heard the murmur of their voices, that was all. They then disappeared into the house, Evelyn laughingly pushing the soldier ahead of her. Quickly the girl came out again; and Polly could hear her swift-coming breaths as she ran softly down the steps.

"Shush," hissed Polly Hopkins. "Lordy, I was scared to death some one'd catch me."

"Pollyop," questioned Evelyn anxiously. "What'd he say? Was he angry?"

Their heads were very close together, and Polly gave the message in a low tone.

"He wants you to come to Granny Hope's hut at nine o'clock tonight, an' I guess you best do it. He's as mad as ever a man can be."

"I'm afraid," Evelyn wailed. "I'm terribly afraid, Polly dear."

All the sympathy in Polly's heart came to sudden life.

"I reckon you be," she returned. "But you've got to get up your spunk an' go. Oscar'd just as soon come bustin' right in your house here, I guess, if you don't. You come along, an' at nine o'clock I'll hike over an' get in the hut too. Say, why can't you talk just a little nicer to him? Granny Hope's got a Bible, an' it says when a feller hurts you, speak kind of soft back, an' he won't have nothin' more to say. Hist! What's that noise? Scoot."

Before Evelyn could say another word, the squatter girl slipped away among the shadows. The other, al-



When Oscar Bennett Stepped into the Hut, He Uttered an Oath.

though surrounded with every luxury, went wretchedly up the steps and, forcing a smile to her lips, passed into the music room.

Billy-goat Hopkins had blinked many times before his little mistress came home. Larry Bishop had gone to his lonely hut, and Daddy Hopkins and Granny Hope were dozing in front of the stove.

In nervous tension Polly watched the clock crawl along toward the hour of the meeting between Oscar and Evelyn. About a quarter to nine, she stole out of doors.

By familiar paths, slipping past a shanty here and there, Pollyop came at length upon a lonely shack set on a point by itself. She went around to the back, opened the door, and once within the room touched a match to a small candle which she had taken from her pocket, and sat down quietly.

When Oscar Bennett stepped into the hut, he uttered an oath. He was not expecting to see Polly Hopkins.

"My lady won't come, eh?" he demanded gruffly.

"Oh, she's comin' all right," answered Polly, "but she was afraid. So I came along to see she got home safe."

A loud laugh fell from Bennett's lips.

"You're a clever kid, Pollyop," he said, more affably. "Cunning as a weasel, d—d if you ain't! Sit down. I won't bite you!"

Polly squatted on the floor by the old table; and Oscar eased himself gingerly down onto a rickety bench.

"I bet she was scared pink at what I told you to tell 'er," he burst out after a while. "She's about the most lily-livered woman I ever saw."

For the space of a few seconds Polly looked at the speaker. Then:

"I'm thinkin' she ain't lovin' you no more, Oscar, an' a woman without love in her ain't worth nothin'."

There was no smile on the lovely face when the words were finished. She had spoken the truth, and Oscar Bennett knew it.

"I've been a fool, I guess," he ejaculated, "a perfect fool! I might better 'n' married you, Pollyop. Since you was knee high to a grasshopper, I've had a leenin' toward you. By now I'd had a home and some comfort."

His glowing eyes were upon her, and for an instant Polly lost her breath.

"If you get to swat someone, Oscar, swat me!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Aid to Prayer.

Prayer is always most effective when mixed with equal parts of sweat.—Baltimore Sun.

USE TWO FABRICS

Double Effect in Dresses Is Emphasized by Paris Makers.

Results Are Widely Different From the Slender Draperies; Embroideries Are Absent.

A feature now much in evidence in dress is the development of models in two fabrics, writes a fashion correspondent in the New York Tribune. Callot is one of the foremost makers to emphasize the new double effect seen in so many dresses which appear to be made of one material over another.

These clothes are particularly interesting because they are so different from the usual Callot styles. Here effects are achieved widely different from the slender draperies so typical of this house. Even the wonderful Callot embroideries are absent, but, as of yore, this famous couturiere depends on the fabric for her results, and upon wonderful color combinations for rich effects.

To show that suits are no exception to the mode of uniting two colors in one model a typical tailored suit is of black cloth with bands of black lamb's wool bordering the jacket and forming cuffs and a collar. A

RUSSIAN BOOTS LATEST FAD



The latest style in footwear for milady is the Russian boot, which seems likely to replace the galoshes for popularity. These boots are made in many styles and colors, ranging from black to a bright red, and are marked with many fancy designs. The picture shows one of the late spring styles, including the Russian boots.

FABRICS FOR THE LINGERIES

Radium Silk Ranks Well With Crepe de Chine—Chiffon and Georgette Are Popular.

Radium silk is vying with crepe de chine for the place of greatest popularity in the making of lingerie. It has much to recommend it in the way of its wearing ability. Then it has that crisp softness of surface which is so excellent a foundation of the sort about which we have just been talking. And it has a quality of making handwork, even the smallest portion of it, look so much more than it really is. Hand stitching upon the surface of radium stands out most effectively, and any one who has ever done any of it has the extreme satisfaction of seeing her efforts show forth in a strong lincelint.

Chiffon and georgette crepe have by no means been slighted in the designing and making of lingerie this season. They have not that quality of making a firm foundation, but for other sorts of frocks and for certain types of wear they have nothing to equal them. Then there is just this about the chiffon undergarments—they slip into the easily washed class remarkably well. The ironing necessary to put them into shape after washing is almost nil. They press or pull into place with the greatest ease. And, while they have every appearance of luxury and extravagance even, they still hold in reserve that ability to adapt themselves to frequent cleaning in a way that the heavier silks cannot do.

Girls' Eweed Suits.

Tweed in heather and various other mixtures has been found desirable material for dresses and suits for girls of six to ten or twelve years. The dresses are often trimmed with pipings of applied motifs of bright-colored broadcloth. Vestee, collar and cuffs of the plain material in vivid tones complete the little two-piece suits.



Black Cloth Suit; Green Crepe Braid.

bright touch of color is given through the use of broad bands of bright green crepe braid.

With this is worn a Reboux strap hat with upturned brim and fabrics of the material passing through a jade ring to make a wing-like ornament. The hat is especially appropriate to wear with this suit, as the jade combines pleasingly with the green trimming on the jacket.

Cretonne on Repp Background.

Included in the cretonne family is a new arrival—a cretonne pattern on a repp background. This idea of using repp in place of chintz is a clever one, for it produces a material quite as effective as cretonne, but of considerably lighter weight. A great many women have stressed their desire for a dress of cretonne, but refrained from buying one on account of its warmth and heavy texture. This new fabric is more supple than its older sister.

BEADED BLOUSE FOR THE MATRON

Styling Along Domestic Lines, Strictly Cut; Softened by Embroidery Combinations.

In the collection of blouses, beads play the largest share in making up the decorations. It is pointed out that the waists are made up, not with the young woman principally in mind, but with the thought of the matron, and for this reason the styling is along quite domestic lines, strictly cut, rather than in the French spirit usually associated with the beaded model.

The use of beads is softened in many cases by embroidery combinations, while there are likewise plain embroideries, with the more extreme novelty registered in one or two models worked out in wool instead of silk floss. One of these shows a color combination of canna with a great plaque of gray embroidered on with the wool.

Canna and similar reddish tones, ranging down through peachbloom to mirabella, are lavishly spread throughout this collection. The canna is perhaps the most notable, either used alone with head trimming or made the principal tone in part-colored treatments, combining with the gray as mentioned above, or with bisque.

On such a model the lower part of both the body of the waist and the peasant sleeves is of the bisque, with the majesty of the beading placed thereon. Ribbonzine braiding figures in a similar style in canna and gray, with the sleeves made wide at the bottom.

The lighter colors go into the making of some of the allover beaded numbers, such as mauve beaded in-

black and steel or mirabella dotted with pointed ovals made of the jet beads.

Sport Suits.

Silk and wool sport suits almost invariably show all their color in the sleeves; for example, orange sleeves in a white woolen suit are embroidered in green wool, while a black kasha cloth tennis dress has apricot sleeves covered with black leaping goats. By the way, all the animals in creation seem to be disporting themselves on the new silks. All the smart sport hats, queer to say, are white.

Combinations of Colors.

Lately, on the Paris stage, a rather startling combination of color was introduced: dark violet and lacquer red. Some time ago Paul Poiret exploited this idea with his evening mantles, dark purple, lined with brighter red; red, embroidered with purple silks and beads. But now this curious mixture has become common property. One sees it in millinery studios, as well as in the showrooms of dressmakers whose clients welcome eccentricity.

Collars Are Fiat.

Regardless of the elaborate intent of the suit, the favored collar finish—and one that is borrowed from the models of more simple and tailored conception—is the convertible design that stands erect in unpretentious fashion, and lies flat much in the outline of a gentleman's tennis shirt collar.