Storm Country Polly by Grace Miller White

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THE "ANGEL"

SYNOPSIS .- Occupying a dilapidated shack in the Silent City, a squatter settlement near Ithaca, 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. Marcus Mac-Kenzie, 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, but prac-tically 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. She already bitterly regrets her marriage to the ignorant farmer. Polly conveys her message and Oscar makes threats. He insists Evelyn meet him that night. Polly has her father and Larry Bishop a squatter, take an oath to do Mac-Kenzie no injury. Evelyn unsuccessfully tries to get money from her mother with which to buy off Bennett and induce him to leave the country, giving her her freedom. She and MacKenzie avow their

CHAPTER V-Continued.

"I wanted to 'fess up to you this morning, Poll," Oscar ran on. "It's a funny thing, but I reckon I care her. more for your little finger than for Eve's whole body. Maybe some day after I get all her cash ---"

Polly coughed down a lump that persisted in coming up in her throat.

"You needn't spiel lovin's to me, Oscar," she gulped, "an' I believe in bein' honest. So, before your woman comes, I might as well give you a bit of my mind. If I owned you from your cap to your boots, I wouldn't use you for a doormat in front of Daddy's shanty!"

He shot a look of amazement. The confident smile faded from his face, and his lips sagged at the corners. Then he arose to his feet.

"I been thinking about you all day, he broke forth. "You've got everything-looks, action and brains. I want you, Pollyop and I'm going to kiss you this time, so help me God!"

He took a step toward her and Polly scrambled up. Just at that moment Evelyn Robertson entered. Oscar Bennett turned swiftly, and Polly, very pale, placed herself at Eve's side. And as the wind foamed the lake to fury and shook Granny Hope's forsaken little hut, the man and two girls stood silent a long, tense minute.

Then Oscar smiled at Evelyn, a triumphant, insulting smile.

"So you thought it best to mind me. my lady," he laughed. "I guess after a while you'll come to know I mean what I say."

Eve tried to speak but could not. Polly squeezed her arm encouragingly. "You're a mean duffer, Oscar," she thrust in. "Your woman's scared of you, that's ali. Try bein' better, an' see how she likes it"

"She's got a good right to be d-d scared," grunted Bennett. "Now out with it, Eve. What's the rumpus? You haven't sent me a cent for a month." With shaking fingers Evelyn pushed back her wind-blown hair.

"I couldn't get any money, Oscar." she wailed. "My allowance is all gone. I gave every cent of it to you. You know very well mother won't give me any more." She had one card left to play, and

she hoped it would take the trick. "I might as well tell you," she continued, the steel in her eyes wiping

away the blue. "Mother hasn't any money. All I thought we had belongs to Cousin Bob." She ceased speaking and waited an instant to note how her news struck

her husband. He flung up a clenched "The devil take you, Eve!" he cried. "Don't try to put anything over on me

like that. You're the biggest liar in Tompkins county."

That he partly believed her showed in his manner.

"I'd never 'a' married you if I'd a known that two years ago," Oscar asserted hoarsely. "You can be dead certain of that, my lady. You were pretty careful to keep your money troubles to yourself. Sit down, both of you! You're shivering like two cats."

"Oh, Oscar, listen, listen to me," she lamb. said, trying to steady her voice. "I want to be free. I can't, I can't live this way any longer."

A coarse oath fell from Bennett's

"You don't need to," he shouted. "You got a home to come to-my home. You can do the work my old mother's doing. It's your job, not hers. You're my wife, by ginger, and as I said to Pollyop here, you live with me, or you pay up. I don't give a tinker's d-n which you do."

His voice grew deep as he finished, and an evil, taunting smile drew up his lips. Evelyn shuddered and swayed, her girl's heart ached for their dumb mother to every hurt boy and brings ham Age-Herald.

and Polly slipped one arm

"You want to be free from me, eh? That's it, is it?" he sneered. "Some Well, I don't mind who gets my leavings if you make it worth my while. But if not---'

Evelyn's pale, beseeching face lifted to his. She could not quit him without his promise that she should have that, whenever people fought and were her freedom. Neither must be think that she could get him a large sum of money.

"I can't get another dollar," she repeated hoarsely. "I simply can't, And -and I must be free."

A frown drew the man's heavy brows together until they touched, and he lifted his fist to strike; but Polly Hopkins, by one swift movement, upraised arm and crowded in between he had the right to beat her if he pleased, Polly thought, but he would not dare to strike Polly.

"If you've got to swat some one, Oscar," she gritted between her teeth, "swat me!"

The beautiful white face came close to Bennett's, and the challenge in the squatter girl's flashing eyes stirred a feeling within him that he never had always believed that a woman must respect him meant to love him. He Lamb Hopkins. did not want Evelyn Robertson in the farmhouse, but he did want money and Polly Hopkins. If he could master her as he had Eve, she would come to him willingly when he was ready for Marcus MacKenzle had erected to

Working on that principle, he struck out. As the huge fist came in contact with Pollyop's shoulder, she staggered backward. Her low cry was followed by Evelyn's scream. The squatter girl sank to the floor limply. No one had ever struck her before.

"You've killed her," cried Evelyn; and Oscar Bennett, fearful that the girls' clamor would summon some inquisitive squatter, turned swiftly to

"Both of you keep mum about this," my lady," he ordered. "I'm off! See?" With that he tore open the shanty door; and Evelyn stood panting with her hand on her heart until the sound of his running footsteps was lost in the windstorm.

Then Evelyn led Polly Hopkins home. One arm hung at the squatter girl's side; and the pain in her shoulder, where Oscar's fist had landed, was terrific. On nearing the shack, Polly whispered:

"Mebbe he'll be quiet a while now. You'd best scoot home, huh?"

A small box passed from Evelyn's handbag to the squatter girl's pocket. "I brought them for Jerry," said Evelyn softly, "and oh, Polly, what-

ever can I do for you to even up things? Perhaps-" "Scoot home," interrupted Polly,

"I'm goin' in."

Pollyop stole into the shanty in the greatest torment she had ever known. Granny Hope and Daddy Hopkins had gone to bed, and she could hear her father's loud breathing from the back room. She was glad of that, for if he were to learn how she had been hurt, his rage would know no bounds. She lighted a candle and looked about dazedly. The billy goat was snuggled against the wood-box; and Nannie Lamb poked her head up and blinked at the light. Polly put down the candle and slipped the dress from her shoulder. How dreadfully it hurt her! Oh, how she wanted something to make her misery less! But squatters did not have money to spend on drugstore remedies.

From an old can she poured a little coal oil on a rag and bathed the injured flesh. Then she took up the lamb and dropped into a chair by the table. In sheer exhaustion her head sank down upon it. After a while she and raised the lamb's face to hers, a wry smile flitting across her lips,

"It's goin' to be a hard job lovin' Oscar and' Old Marc like Jesus loved wicked folk, Nannyop," she said under her breath, "but mebbe now I been

almost instantly she arose, and with the lamb in her right arm like a baby, moved to the side of the bed. Then she snuggled the lamb under the blankets and put Granny Hope's Bible beneath her pillow. Carefully she slipped off her clothes and put on a pened to her "angel?" He looked difcoarse nightrobe. Then, having snuffed ferent; more like the other men she Impulsively Evelyn went toward him. the candle, she crawled in beside the occasionally saw on horseback. That

CHAPTER VI.

welter of splendid colors behind face saddening. West hill, and twice had the warmth of his rising scattered the mists from little girl," he said, and he smiled the lakeside since the encounter in the again. hut, and Polly Hopkins was making ready for her daily walk through the Silent City.

It was her custom to go among the squatters and give them courage, to war, mister?" tell them that they had a right to their homes, to food, and warmth. How

fered in the past year! Many a boy needs help." had been taken from his home and sent to France, and many a mother other guy looming up to love, I s'pose. had crept about the settlement with grief-worn face, waiting for news from

over the sea. Pollyop understood what war meant. The squatters were always at war! Granny Hope had explained to her cruel to one another, that was war. Hadn't she warred but two nights ago with Oscar Bennett?

pain and humiliation he had dealt her had been lightened by Granny Hope's broadcast over the hopeless ones in thrust Evelyn from under the man's the settlement and promptly put Oscar Bennett's cruelty out of her mind. them. Because Evelyn was his wife, She did not even remember sometimes how much the milk Oscar had begrudgingly given her was missed in the shack. To offset that deprivation, she was free from him and the ugly quarrels she had had to settle almost daily between him and Evelyn.

This morning, while Daddy Hopkins was in Ithaca, Pollyop started out with her many loves for a walk. On her shoulder perched Wee Jerry; at had for Evelyn Robertson. Oscar had her side, in stately dignity, stalked the billy goat, and tied to one of her arms fear a man to respect him, and that to by a small rope gamboled Nannie

Through the Silent City she wandered, helping people here and there to see the sunny side of things. Beyond the row of shacks was the fence keep the squatters from trespassing on his woodland, and in front of it fogs shrouded the world in gray; how had passed and left on the fence a picture that caught her attention.

It was a beautiful woman, her eyes straight out of exquisite coloring at the wide-eyed squatter girl. In her arms was a withered, sick, little man, and Pollyop knew that somewhere over the ocean an enemy, perhaps a man like Old Marc, had hurt him. The woman held him close as she looked at Polly, and for a moment the girl's eyes stung with tears. Then she went needed.



Then She Went Closer to the Fence and Spelled Out the Words Under the Picture: "The Greatest Mother in the World."

closer to the fence and spelled out the words under the picture: "The Greatest Mother in the World."

Ah! So she was, this protector of the hurt and the sick! The Red Cross straightened up, threw back her curls, poster carried its wondrous message to the very bottom of the squatter girl's heart.

A sound, close at hand, caused her to turn swiftly. A man on horseback had drawn up on the side of the road. The blood came in swift leaps to face to face with a angel, I can do it." Polly's face. There was the "beauti-Again her head fell forward; but ful angel" looking down upon her! What could she do but stare back at him? In another instant he had dis-

mounted and was coming toward her. Jerry slid from her shoulders to the ground. Pollyop's hand clasped his; but she did not speak. What had hapwas it! He was not wearing the olivedrab uniform! To add to her confusion Robert Percival was smiling at her in the most friendly way. Then Twice had the golden sun sunk in he glanced up at the picture, his fine

"The Greatest Mother in the World,

"The Greatest Mother in the World," repeated Pollyop, in awed tones 'Does that mean she's mother to the squatter kids what was hurt in the

"Yes," he replied after a short pause,

A by 1 misery! Surely the squatters had suf-1 comfort to every one on earth that

"Golly, she's some mother, ain't she?" breathed Polly soberly. "She's beautiful too. Squatter mammies has too many kids to stay handsome like her." She made a backward motion with her thumb toward the fence and searched his face gravely.

A choking sensation in Robert's throat made him cough. The girl's statement was like a charcoal drawing in which a few broad lines tell the whole story. He felt his interest in She had not seen him since, and the her increase. She was the quaintest, prettiest and most solemn child he had ever seen. Yes, he knew she was an assurances that love was the leveler inhabitant of the Silent City by the of hate. So Polly, having quantities clothes she wore, and the thin, bowof love and sympathy to spare, sent it legged child, to say nothing of the bewhiskered goat and woolly lamb that were with her.

"What's your name?" he inquired." "Just Pollyop," was the answer. "Polly Hopkins. My daddy is Jeremiah Hopkins, the mayor of this settlement.'

Surely! Robert remembered very well MacKenzie speaking of Hopkins. and he remembered too the painted invitation over a hut door as if it were before his eyes. Looking Pollyop over from the top of her curly head to the tips of her bare feet, he decided that she had written it.

Question after question he flung at her, and answer after answer came from Polly's lips. She told him where she lived, and how she cooked the beans, bacon and fish Daddy Hopkins provided; how cold it was in the shanty when the cruel north wind swept up the lake; and how wet it was when the rain fell and clammy Polly Hopkins stood. A bill poster Granny Hope was sick with pains. She gave him an inside view of life in the Silent City. Long before she had finished her recital, Percival's courtesy saddened with tears, and she looked had put her at her ease, and she was chattering like a magpie.

"Can I do something for you, Polly Hopkins?" queried Robert, as she finished telling about life in the squatters' city.

She flung out both hands in a comprehensive gesture as much as to say he could see for himself how much she "Sure, sure you can," she said with

Marc leave us squatters be. You're bigger'n he is! The squatters need you awful bad." Her voice broke. Robert took a long

breath. Of course he could help this girl and her people. He would, too! As far as money gave power, he could equal and surpass Marcus MacKenzie. "I did try to talk sense into Mr.

MacKenzie's head," he returned presently, "but now I will make him leave you alone." In spite of the curved lips about which a smile lurked, there was appre-

hension in her voice when she asked: "Can you lick 'Im to a finish, mis-"Yes, I think I could," laughed Robert: "but it won't be necessary."

"Then I see us Silent City folks bein' happy again," sighed Polly. "We got a awful lot of things an' folks to take care of here." Robert made a sweep with his arm

that encompassed the group before

"You have, evidently!" he laughed. "An' I got more home," interjected Polly. "I got Daddy Hopkins an' Granny Hope-an' this brat is my brother, an' this goat is Billy Hopkins an' this lamb's Nannyop. Oh, sure. sir, I've got a hull lot to love in this good old city."

Polly, made an upward motion with her hand toward the picture on the fence.

"She's got a bunch to love, too," she said softly. "Ain't she?"

He walked to her side and contemplated with her the pictured woman, making her silent appeal to them for the wounded boy in her arms.

"Of course she has," answered Percival reverently. "She's the Greatest Mother in the World, Polly Hopkins, and-and-" his gaze dropped upon her, and he continued, "and you're the littlest mother in the world,"

A glad smile widened the girl's lips. All the fear that had been as a ton weight upon her had fallen away. She wanted to pay him the highest compliment she knew. When he had mounted, she told him gently:

"Some day you'll be the biggest an' most beautifulest daddy in the world. Good-by."

"Then Percival stepped in Two well-planted thumps laid Bennett like a log on the

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Sporting Judge. "Thirty days in the workhouse. That

ought to cure you of speeding." "It certainly will, your honor. Would you like to use my car while I'm in durance vile?"

"No, thanks. I've seen you riding in that old bus of yours. It couldn't do "Yes, it means that, and more. She's over forty miles an hour."-Birming-

GENERAL SPARROW'S ADDRESS

"Gather around me, friends and enemies," said General Sparrow, "and I'll give you an address.'

No sooner had he said this than all the sparrows around began to ask each other what the word address meant. Some of them pretended they knew and yet when they were asked they couldn't tell. Of course what they said was that they wouldn't tell.

"An address," yelled General Sparrow, in a louder and crosser tone than any of them had used-and they all had been pretty cross-"means a speech or a talk. And I'm giving a talk to you today."

There was another interruption when the other sparrows all shouted and argued and scolded about knowing how to talk, themselves, perfectly well. But General Sparrow was decided. "I shall give an address," he said,

and because they were rather curious to know what he was going to say they listened.

They all perched about him and he looked this way and that and shrieked and chirped in a very noisy voice.

"Come, everyone, come to the lecture which is to be given by General Sparrow. It is to be a fine lecture, a most noble address. That is, it may not be noble but it will be very fine and it will be by your General. "Come, birds, and listen."

So more came and gathered about

"I have become a general," he said, "because I have told everyone else was going to be a general and that they must not try to take my place. "When they have tried I have had

a quarrel with them and I have won. "I have been much pleased to have these quarrels, for not only have I won, but I have had the great joy of quarrelling. All the sparrows know what a joy that is." "Hear, hear," shouted the sparrows

"Chirp, chirp, what he says is so true." Another time they might have fought with him about what he said but he was praising up the whole family of sparrows when he spoke about quarrelling and they liked to hear that. "I have grabbed bread which was

thrown to another bird and I have shoved other birds aside when I wanted to eat my dinner. "So I have become a general, a

self-made general, a mighty general. flerce emphasis. "You can make Old I have won my way to being a general and I deserve to be a general. "I have always felt that way about

myself. Nothing is too good for me. Nothing is too good for others to give up for me. "I am General Sparrow, as you all

know," he continued. "To be the Pine St. general of the most quarrelsome birds is a rare and great honor. Some generals are generals only of armles



"Perched About Him."

which fight for freedom and fine things like that. But we fight for the sake

of fighting." Loud cheers came from all the spar-

"But, friends and enemies, there is a very great enemy who has come up in recent years. They're great fighters. They're strong, they've decided. They're not fussy. They will eat anything and live anywhere-just as we will do.

"These enemies are the Starlings. Don't let them get the better of you. Don't let it be said that no longer are the sparrows the greatest villains known, or at least the most objectionable and crossest birds. Keep to our fine record of being the worst fighters. Don't let the Starlings get the better of you.

"Fight, fight, little sparrows, for the great joy of fighting. Disagree and quarrel and be cross. Grab your food and never say 'please.' It's a foolish word, a word such as General Sparrow, your general, has no use for. "Take away one another's food. That shows a delightfully selfish spirit. But before all, remember that you mustn't let the Starlings, the young upstarts, get the better of you. You don't want to be second best. Or second worst! Be the worst. That

for-to be the worst." And all the sparrows nodded and said. "His words are so true. We must never allow any others to be worse than we are!"

must be the thing for all of us to work

A Youthful Mind. "Mama, why has papa no hair?" Because he thinks so much?" "But why have you so much?" "Because . . . Go away and do your lessons, you naughty boy !"-London Telegraph,

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