Storm Country Polly

by Grace Miller White

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THE FIGHT

SYNOPSIS.—Occupying a dilapi-dated 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. Marcus Mac-Kenzie, who owns the ground the squatters occupy, is their deter-mined 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 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. She already bitterly regrets her marriage to the ignorant farm-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 lock. At the arranged meeting that night Bennett threatens Evelyn with exposure unless she gives him money. Polly meets Robert Per-cival, and they are mutually attracted, Polly's feeling being adora-

CHAPTER VII.

To describe Oscar Bennett's rage when he left the two girls in Granny Hope's shack would indeed be a task.

Of late Evelyn had ceased to attract him. In the excitement of the courtand for a time after the marriage he and held the lamb aloft in the air, he hesitated, distressed as much by had found a great satisfaction in the high out of her reach. With a rough his own efforts as the blows he had thought that she was his. When the glamor of their secret honeymoontime had worn off, and the farmer's crude, cruel nature had been disclosed, Evelyn's mad infatuation had disappeared in terror-stricken horror.

As Evelyn was finding in Marcus MacKenzie a mate more to her taste, his face and her own in her curls. sister. Bennett's primitive passions had burst When she dared look up again, Oscar into a sudden flame for Polly Hopkins. had thrown the dead lamb on the and her answer was positively gleeful: The squatter girl's scorn of him, her drawling ridicule, only made him desire her the more.

A couple of days after the night scene with the girls, he left his house and took his way to the lake. He crossed his fodder lot and plunged into the MacKenzie forest which lay between the railroad tracks and the water. In his pocket he had a letter for Evelyn. He intended to kill two birds with one stone. If he could find Polly Hopkins alone, he would tell her the decision he had come to and give her the note to deliver.

Oscar did not relish entering the Silent City by the highway. The squatters hated him as much as he it, Percival checked his horse. Bay did them, more, in all probability; and it was his habit to give the settlement a wide berth. If he discovered any of them on his land, with the exception of Polly Hopkins, he drove them away furiously. Oscar was one of those who would rather have produced rot on his land than give it to the needy.

Before vaulting the MacKenzle fence, the sound of people talking on the other side halted him. Pollyop's voice came distinctly to him, and another voice, a man's, answered her. The deep well-bred tones Bennett was sure did not belong to a squatter. He listened carefully to pick up the import of the conversation. The bass woice mumbled something about a mother. In response, the squatter girl's tones fell upon his ear: "Some day you'll be the biggest an' most beautifulest daddy in the world." Then followed the rush of departing hoofs. Jealousy tore at the eavesdropper. It did not take him long to get to the top of the fence.

Some sound he made brought the squatter girl's head around sharply from her survey of the picture. "What do you want?" she asked suj-

lenly, frowning at him, Oscar jumped to the ground.

"I come down to see you, Pollyop," he rejoined, coming forward. "Who were you talking to?"

The only safe way to get along with the farmer, Polly had concluded, was to have nothing to do with him,

"Leave me be, Oscar Bennett!" she shrilled. "I don't want nothin' to do with you. I'm goin' home."

To cut off her retreat, Oscar needed take but a couple of strides, and he | the fence corner, he had been compoomptly took them.

"Jeminy crickets!" he expostulated. "Don't be so confounded short, Pollyop! You needn't be mad because I swatted you one. You aren't my woman yet, but you're going to be just as soon as I can get shut of my lady Robertson." "Say, where'd you get that lamb?"

lamb belonging to anyone but herself. vital purpose. He had decided that, thresholo, had not prevented her.

water and loved and fed him ever thing worth while, something to make since? She looked first at the man, then down at the lamb.

"He's mine, Oscar," she hesitated. "I've had him two hull days now." Oscar laughed.

"A likely story!" he jeered. "How long since squatters raised sheep?

Where'd you get him?" "Found him," she answered, putting her hand on the little animal,

"Then he isn't yours," he retorted, "and he can't be anybody's but mine. I thought I was missing some lambs." Polly's eyes filled with alarm. She

was trying to frame an argument in favor of herself and the creature she loved. "When you find a thing dyin' in a creek, Oscar," she faltered at length,

"you can take him home an' love him, now can't you?" The man's loud guffaw brought a deep flush to the girl's face. She

placed herself directly between him and the lamb. "He's mine," she insisted. "He'd

drowned sure if I hadn't jumped into the drink an' pulled him out." Her words made the farmer certain

where the creature came from. "Dead or alive, he's mine!" he ex-

claimed. Besides coveting the lamb, he hated the squatter girl's way of fondling animals. When he got her, he determined, he would take all of that kind of nonsense out of her.

With one sweep of his mighty hand, he thrust her aside, and, whipping out his knife, he cut the rope that held Nanny Hopkins to Polly's arm. Then, in spite of the girl's frantic cries and her desperate fighting against it, Oscar picked up the lamb.

Pollyop screamed frantically, for from the look on his evil face, she saw instantly what he intended to do. He was going to kill Nannyop! Again she ters. But he could not; neither could flew at him, but he was tall and strong oath he pushed the girl from him so roughly that she fell. When Polly scrambled up, he had the lamb in one hand and a large stone in the other.

"Oscar!" she shricked. She dropped to her knees, clasped Wee Jerry in her arms, and shrouded

"There," he gritted, "that's to teach you a lesson, Miss Poll Hopkins. And now I'll open your eyes to something

struggle to her feet; but her legs were ering body there in the road. In an- again." other minute Oscar had snatched her, into his arms.

She shrieked again and again; and Jerry's loud cries followed, as she fought desperately with the burly

Once out of sight of the Red Cross poster and the little group in front of



"What Do You Want?" She Asked Sullenly, Frowning at Him.

Dexter shook his head and champed his bit in disapproval. He was accustomed to mad, harum-scarum gallops, and he loved them; but this morning, especially since the pause by pelled to mog along like a worn-out, old nag.

His master was thinking, really and seriously thinking. Happily born and the heir to an immense fortune, his | World. way through life so far had been marked out for him. He had gone to Observing no signs of softening in the war carelessly, in a mood of hot pa- ed by the stove. A sharp rap came on girl's face, he switched his attack, triotism and because it was the thing the door. When Polly opened it and to do. Over there he had done his recognized the caller, she would-have This query unfolded new terrors for share and gained, especially from his Polly. She had not thought of the French comrades, an inkling of life's man's heavy boot, thrust across the

Had she not found him dying in the | when he returned, he would do somethe world a little better because he had lived in it.

Now he was home; and almost the first day had come to him this appeal. He smiled ruefully at the recollection of Pollyop's plea. He had promised to help the squatters; and he meant to do it. Suppose it did bring him into conflict with Marcus MacKenzie! He knew how to fight, and a good fight was not bad fun.

Faintly from the direction he had ridden, the sound of cries came to his ears. Idly he wondered what the row was. Some squatter man disciplining his wife, he decided; but he could not

stand to have a woman beaten! He vaulted into the saddle and raced back over the road. It was not long before he located the place where the screams came from. Then Bay Dexter had an opportunity to show all the speed he had.

The sight of Pollyop writhing in the strong arms of a man he did not recognize made Percival see red. He was off his horse with one leap, and two long strides took him to Oscar's side.

One blow from his powerful knuckles in the farmer's face staggered Bennett and freed Polly so quickly that she fell to the ground. Instinctively she crawled out of the way of the battling men. The blow that had released her had done no damage to Bennett except to aggravate his rage. He recovered himself and confronted his assailant, dripping oaths like rain from a cloudburst.

Bennett took the offensive, his fists flying like flails. He wanted to get his arms around the other fellow, to trip him and make the fight a rough and tumble on the ground, but Percival avoided the rush, and struck as Bennett went by. Again and again Bennett tried to come to close quarhe hit his elusive opponent. At length received.

Then Percival stepped in, and quickly it was all over. Two well-planted thumps laid Bennett like a log on the ground.

Robert dusted off his hands, picked Wee Jerry up, and handed him to his

"Did he hurt you, Polly?" he queried, "Nary a bit, sir, an' I reckon the big lummox's got a plenty this time."

Robert brushed off his clothes slowly. The farmer still lay on the ground. "Get up," ordered Percival scornful-As he crossed to her, she tried to ly, touching the prostrate man with the toe of his boot. "Get up and make weak, and she was sick over the quiv- off if you don't want me to lick you

> Oscar rolled over and crawled slowly to his hands and knees.

"The ground's kinda wabbly, ain't it, Oscar?" Polly gibed. "Get out," commanded Robert, once

Bennett scrambled to his feet, shook his fist at Polly, snatched up the little dead lamb, and in another moment had climbed the fence and was gone. "What were you fighting about?" began Robert, looking keenly at Pol-

Tears hung on the girl's lashes, and the sensitive underlip quivered.

"Oscar said as how Nannyop were his," she murmured. "Weren't it awful for him to swat it with that stone that way?"

"Did you-" He broke off the question abruptly. He was going to ask her if she had stolen the lamb; but an expression in the pleading, misty eyes stopped him. "I found the little feller drownin' in

the creek, sir," she explained with bowed head. "I just took him home to love him, that was all." The strange, thrilling emotion that

had overcome Robert but a short time ago in the presence of this squatter girl attacked him again.

"What can I do to help you, child?" he demanded sharply. Polly flung out her hand. Help that was what the squatters wanted.

The little lamb was dead. Nothing

could ever hurt it any more. But there were her people-"Just help Daddy Hopkins"-she choked and went on-"an' all the poor folks in the Silent City, an'-all-I'll love you forever and forever!"

After that the "littlest mother" made large strides upward toward the "greatest mother." Every little worried thing in the woods, every heavy heart in the squatter settlement felt the difference in Polly Hopkins. She smiled more, she talked more; and, when she found a group of her womenfolks wondering how their absent laddies were, she led them in smiling assurance to Old Marc's fence and there repeated what Robert Percival had said about the Greatest Mother in the

One morning Pollyop was cleaning the shanty and Granny Hope was seatcfosed the door and barred it, if a

There in his riding clothes, hau ty and frowning, stood Marcus MacKen-

"Where's Jeremiah Hopkins?" he demanded, eyeing Pollyop sternly. She fidgeted with the edge of her pron. Had MacKenzie come to harm

her best beloved? "My daddy's gone out," she returned finally, in a low tone. "Then I'll wait," said Marcus. "I'll

sit down and wait.' Polly set out a chair for him, her legs trembling so she could scarcely stand. Granny Hope grunted out a word of greeting, but the man gave her no answer; and, after blinking at him a few times, the old woman fell

asleep. "This is a rotten hole," spat out MacKenzie presently, looking at the

This scornful comment on the quarters Daddy Hopkins worked so hard to the quick. She kept the hut as clean as broom and lake water could make it!

"It's our home, mister; all we got," she replied, and she straightened her shoulders with dignity.

Marcus, "Say, you! Come and stand here before me."

He touched a spot on the floor with

Polly's face brightened a little. Then | ment. it was not real harm coming to Daddy Hopkins today. She wished now that he would come in; and, almost as if in answer to the throbbing of her nerves, Hopkins passed through the doorway with Wee Jerry clinging to his neck.



"Now You Listen to Me," He Said Sternly."

The trembling girl saw his face grow gray at the sight of his powerful

Jeremiah made an awkward bob of his head to Marcus, slipped Jerry into his arms and without a word sat down. And Pollyop, full of curiosity and anxiety, sat down too, her brilliant eyes steadily leveled upon Mac-Kenzie.

"Hopkins," began Marcus, "I've ome with a proposal to you. If you've got any sense, you'll impress its value on the rest of your fellows here, for by hook or by crook, I intend to break up this settlement and burn these shacks."

One long gasp came from Polly, Her father said nothing but looked back at the speaker as if he had not heard. "Daddy ain't got the hull right to say what's what," she interrupted sud-

denly. "There's lots of squatters." "Then call in some of the others," MacKenzie snapped. "And don't be long about it. I want to know what's going to be done before I go."

Polly flashed a glance at her father. "Go get 'em, brat," he directed, "An'

bring Larry." Out into the settlement she went, and when she came back into the shanty, there followed her an angry set of illy-clothed men; and outside a sullen group of women waited to hear what Old Marc had to offer.

One by one the men sflently ranged themselves in a row around the hut wall while Polly stood at her father's shoulder, one hand resting upon it, and the other on Wee Jerry's head.

Marcus MacKenzle knew the group of men he had to deal with. He knew their wicked ways, how they thieved, onyx. In fact, jewelry is worn to a how they used their nets against the law, and how they shot game out of season. He remembered, too, how girdles, all adding a barbaric note of many had been sent to prison with his aid, but this day he hoped to get rid of them all at once.

"I want to pay you fellows to go away from Ithaca." He plumped the proposition at them baldly. "If it hadn't been the easiest way out, I wouldn't have considered it a minute. But after talking it over with my lawyer, I've decided to give you all a sum of money if you'll leave peacea-

"Out you'll all go, if I have to burn your huts about your

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

JET IN HEADDRESS SUIT FOR BUSINESS WOMAN

Pearls Also Used to Add to Decorations for the Hair.

Bracelet Encircles Arm at Wrist and Above Elbow, Connected by String of Beads.

Jet used singly or combined with pearls makes up some of the most striking combs and headdresses, either seen in the shops or worn by smart Parisiennes, observes a fashion writer. A jet comb noticed recently was set with two rows of pearls, the upper row two sizes larger than the lower. The touch of chic, however, lay in the fact that the comb reached almost from ear to ear, giving a wonderful effect to support touched the squatter girl against the dark red hair on which it

A headdress made entirely from jet consists of a narrow band worn low on the forehead and having three circular brnaments overlapping each other at the front. At either side are jet rings, "Rotten, just the same," repeated which are as large as bracelets and which give the effect of mammoth earrings. Accompanying this headdress is a pair of jet bracelets, one encircling his riding whip; and Polly stepped the arm at the wrist and the other above the elbow, and both connected by "Now you listen to me," he said a string of jet beads. The prematuresternly. "I've come with a proposition ly white-haired woman who wore these to your father, and if you've any influ- affected a one-piece dress of white velence with him, you'd better talk him vet, the slight gathers across the front held in at either side with a jet orna-

A new bracelet made large enough te wear just below the shoulder is of pearls strung on silver and has a fringe of pearl beads which falls over the arm. This fringe is sometimes of uniform length and at other times has A becoming hat of wool and straw pointed scallops. This fringe idea is with colored embroidery adds a touch carried out in bracelets of pearls com- of refinement. bined with onyx, thus making a much more striking and really smarter bracelet than the pearls alone.

THE STRIKING WHITE SERGE



This winsome costume of white the other, some are long back and serge is trimmed with black and white front and short at sides, while more, braid and black wool fringe. The perhaps, are long at the sides, with ever ready cape which reaches al. shorter back and front widths, and most to the hem of the skirt is popu- not a few, even of the separate skirts, lar at Southern resorts. The white are arranged in draped panels so that hat completes the outfit.

Vogue for Homespun and Tweed Mate-

rial; Spring Hosiery, Shoes

and Gloves.

At present, there is a great vogue

most attractive suits in alluring col-

ors, perfwinkle, apple blossom, ver-

valn and adobe. Undoubtedly these

suits will make a strong appeal to the

Flowing sleeves continue to be worn

jeweled bracelets, or bands of jet or

marked degree just at present; neck-

laces, earrings, bracelets and fancy

richness to many an otherwise undec-

orated costume. The fan, too, con-

tinues to occupy a prominent place in

the affections of the debutante as

well as in the matron's, and even the

flat nosegay often accompanies frocks

which simulate the quaint modes of

Looking back in retrospect to a

year ago one realizes that skirts after

all are much longer, though whether,

three-piece suits.

the Thirties.

a "raggedy" hem line is in evidence. SPORT TOGS; OTHER APPAREL sucn as gray, beige, sand and taupe are favored. It is expected that these delicate shades will be worn with black as well as with matching shoes. The white stocking also will be to the fore if the vogue for the light-colored

cotton dress materializes, and they are

MODLTEX (C.

This diagonal tweed suit of gray

promises to win favor with the busi-

ness woman who has no time for frills.

AFTERNOON GOWNS OF CREPE

Embroidered in Matching Silk; Design

Recalls That Used for

Spanish Shawls.

Afternoon gowns are frequently of

crepe; almost éntirely embroidered in

matching silk, in a design which re-

calls that used for Spanish shawls.

A delightful combination shown con-

sists of a cape of black crepe marocain,

with a great square let into the back,

of embroidered putty-colored crepe,

while the gown is of the lighter crepe,

entirely embroidered. Many of these

gowns have long, tight sleeves, but the

great square chiffon sleeve still per-

mal afternoon occasions, or for infor-

mal evening affairs, sometimes have

the entire bodice made of a finely pat-

terned silk lace, rather bloused at the

waist, and cut with long, tight sleeves,

while the skirt is of matching crepe

de chine, often entirely embroidered.

Mauve and periwinkle blue are two

Hats of Felt.

ribbon and pressed into ridges or folds

around the top of the crown, are par-

ticularly smart. They come in all

shades of tan and brown and in black

and dark blue. There are two ways

of trimming them. One is to use

ostrich and one is to use a cocarde,

bow or band of ribbon. The ribbon,

of course, preserves the tailored ef-

fect of the hat. The ostrich makes

it into a more elaborate hat for aft-

Raggedy Hem Line.

that are longer on one side than on

Some of the new frocks show skirts

ernoon dress wear.

Hats of felt, bound with a cire

colors favored for these gowns.

Models which might be worn for for-

for sport garments of homespun and shown in fancy weaves as well as tweed. These materials fashion the with colored stripes. . The light shades in gloves, both kid and suede, are also preferred to black -French gray, sand, mode and even white being offered for street wear. business woman next spring, as they These spring gloves will be long, the possess excellent wearing qualities and gauntlet and the 12 and 16-button are reasonable in price. Garments of length being the choice. As to footknit fabrics are also most popular, wear, it is still too early to say whethlittle straightline dresses, capes which er the strap slipper will retain its fall in graceful folds, sweaters and popularity or not. Some exceedingly attractive low-heeled sport oxfords are already shown, while patent leathbut are now often attached to the er in combination with gray or beige wrist by the use of ribbons, or of suede are very good looking.

Streamers Flutter on Spring Frocks. Lacquered ribbons will flutter their shiny lengths from the waistline of many a frock this spring. Shading from red to orange to orange brown, and from rose to red to canna, fluttering through all the shades of purple and violet, they finally run to that lovely periwinkle blue, the season's newest shade, running the entire gamut of the season's colorings.

Use Buttonhole Instead of Loop. A buttonhole instead of a loop of they will attain the ankle length of tape is a good method of hanging a those worn by our Parisian sisters dishcloth or duster on a nail. If the remains to be seen. With these long buttonhole is worked on both sides of skirts come the large flat-trimmed the fabric a strong support will be afforded, which will not tear away in In the new spring hosiery, colors the course of time, as is the case continue to rival black, and light tones where loops are used.