

# Storm Country Polly

by Grace Miller White  
Illustrated by R.H. Livingstone  
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**"YOU DARLING!"**

**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. 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, 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 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 MacKenzie 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 freedom. She and MacKenzie avow their love. At the arranged meeting that night Bennett threatens Evelyn with exposure unless she gives him money. Polly meets Robert Percival, and they are mutually attracted. Oscar kills Polly's lamb and Percival thrashes Oscar.

**CHAPTER VII—Continued.**

A sound of boots moving on boards was his only answer. Polly coughed nervously.

"Now this is what I'm going to offer," went on MacKenzie. "No one can make me raise the price one cent. I'll give you men twenty-five dollars apiece; you sign over to me your squatter rights; then take your women and kids and go."

There was not a word in answer to this. Only Wee Jerry felt Daddy Hopkins clasp him tighter.

Realizing that the stony silence that met his offer was practically a refusal, MacKenzie got to his feet.

"You can take it, or—or go to h—l for all I care!" he exclaimed.

He turned toward the door; and then Pollyop got back her breath, and while the squatter men watched sullenly, she stepped in front of him.

"You're in wrong, mister," she flared.

"You're d—d generous, ain't you? Twenty-five dollars wouldn't take us anywhere, an' where would we go, anyhow? This ain't movin' day in the Silent City. You've made your talk, now scoot along."

Marcus fixed her with eyes angry beyond description. Her own blazed back at him as she pointed toward the door.

"Scoot out," she repeated, "an' don't be comin' again."

MacKenzie lifted his riding whip threateningly, and every man with a whip fell back to his side, they sank down again.

Then it was that he shifted the whip to his left hand and took from his pocket a shining pistol; and although Polly whitened, she held her ground.

"And you, you impudent huzzy," snapped MacKenzie, "what have you got to do with it? What are you, anyway?"

In spite of the deadly thing held in the white, strong fingers, Polly's head went up a bit.

"I'm the littlest mammy in the world," she said simply. "I'm mammy to this hull settlement. An' us squatters stays in the Silent City—see?"

The pistol came up with a click, and MacKenzie, enraged beyond control, struck Pollyop two stinging blows with the riding whip. Then he strode out into the open, and holding high the weapon, passed through the frowning line of watching women. He gave them but a flashing disdainful glance, and when he turned around, Polly Hopkins was standing in the door, motioning the women into the shack. He came to a direct halt and shouted at her:

"I'll never offer money again, but out you'll all go, if I have to burn your huts about your heads."

As if he had not spoken, Polly gave him no heed but ushered woman after woman into the shanty.

"I'd rather he'd 'a' hit me than any one of you," she said, her flesh tingling with pain. "If you'd 'a' pounced on 'im, Daddy, or you, Larry, he'd 'a' popped one of you dead. Now listen to me."

Then she told them that Robert Percival had said the squatters should stay in the settlement. She said she had had a promise from a man better

than Old Marc that he would help them. And thus she brought smiles back to the faces of her miserable friends; and as they went away, each woman kissed her, and each man reverently placed his hand on her curly head in blessing.

**CHAPTER VIII.**

Then came the days through which the inhabitants of the Silent City lived with nothing to comfort them but Polly Hopkins. Scarcely an hour passed without strangers walking over the rough road through the settlement and every one knew that these men, so curious and yet so unwilling to speak even a "good-day," were doing service for Marcus MacKenzie.

At last one day, crushed with apprehension and despair, Jeremiah Hopkins decided that one of them should go to Robert Percival to ask his aid in keeping the settlement together. Polly was so sure he would keep his word to her—now they would give him the chance.

"It's a choice of the three of you, Poll," said Lye Braeger, "you or your daddy or Larry Bishop."

"He wouldn't listen to me, lassie," Hopkins mourned. "Mebbe he would to you. I dunno, but mebbe."

Before the girl's sensitive mind flashed the face of Robert, and she hid her red cheeks against the speaker's knee.

"Oh, I couldn't never go to 'im, Daddy honey," she murmured. "Please, Daddy."

"We ain't got a chance without some one's help, Poll," insisted Braeger. "You go along, an' do your d—d for the squatters!"

"All right, Lye," she managed to say. "I'll go after Jerry's in bed, an' the supper's over."

So it came to pass that nightfall found Polly Hopkins struggling up the hill to the railroad tracks. She turned south on the boulevard and stole cautiously along the edge of the road. She had no desire to meet Old Marc or Evelyn. As she went on she murmured to herself some of the love words Granny Hope had planted in her memory, and when she turned into the carriage-way leading to the Robertson home, she held her head a little higher and walked with less nervousness.

Around and around the house she crept, until with trepidation she mounted the steps leading to the front porch and tiptoed to a long French window. It was partly open, and there, seated before a table, was the man she sought.

Polly knocked once, but the sound was so faint Robert did not hear it.

"Hist," came from between Polly's lips, and the young man glanced up. At the sight of her he got to his feet slowly. Then Polly shoved the window open a crack and squeezed into the room.

A strange mixture of conflicting expressions swept over his face, but pleasure at the sight of her predominated them all.

"Pollyop!" he exclaimed. "Polly Hopkins, what's the matter?"

"Old Marc's goin' to turn us all out, mister," she whispered huskily, searching his face, "an' Daddy sent me to ask you to help us."

Robert drew one hand across his brow helplessly.

"I've said everything I could to make him understand the crime of it all," he apologized. "He's like a crazy man! I can't see how he can think of such a thing, even though your people were willing to go, Polly."

"We ain't; we can't go," she replied, quivering. "There ain't a place in the world for squatters but the Silent City."

"I know it," he returned gloomily.

"And can't Love do nothin' for us?" implored the girl. "Granny Hope says it can, an' once I—I heard you say 'twas the—"

Just at that moment the sound of footsteps was heard outside in the hall. Robert thrust out his hand, grasped Polly by the shoulders, and in another moment she found herself behind the thick curtain hanging in heavy folds over rows of books which rose to the ceiling.

The door opened; and Percival spun around to meet Marcus MacKenzie. He crushed down his embarrassment and offered his visitor a chair.

"Evelyn sent me for a book," Marcus explained. "Pardon me for disturbing you, old chap."

"Sit down," Robert requested with an effort.

Marcus shook his head.

"I can't," he replied. "Eve and I are confabing over something. I told her I'd get a book and come right back."

He made a movement to walk toward the bookshelves; but Robert stopped him.

"You've got to sit down," he said gruffly. "I want to talk to you."

"In a minute, then," returned Marcus. "I'll get the book first."

Very white, Robert walked before MacKenzie to the bookcase. Then with one sweep of his arm he moved aside the curtain and with it—Polly Hopkins. He could feel beneath the thick material the slender, quivering body. And there, as the two men stood facing the shelves laden with the masterpieces of the world, and Marcus was running his eye up and down, Robert felt that first wonderful protective love that comes to a man when he is shielding a woman.

"Evelyn said it was here," observed MacKenzie carelessly. "Let me look! A—B—C—Here's D. It ought to be on this shelf."

He read aloud the names of the books under his eye while still the strong hand of his companion held up the curtain and the girl.

"Ah, here it is," came in exclamation. "There! Thanks, Bob! Now I'll sit down a minute."

He walked back to the table, and Percival carefully dropped the draperies. Keeping his eye on the other man's back, he ran his fingers over the curtain until he came to the curly head of Polly Hopkins. Two crossed pats fell upon it. Then he, too, crossed to the center of the room.

"You're a hospitable chap, Bob," laughed Marcus. "Heigh-ho! but today I've been some busy. I'll bet you a quarter of a dollar it won't be three months before I get every squatter off that shore. The fact of it is, I've only got to catch Hopkins, and the rest'll be easy. He's a bad actor; and that girl of his is a saucy baggage."

"She's a very good girl," Robert interposed in deep tones, "and very pretty, too."

The bookcase draperies moved ever so little. Polly Hopkins almost burst with joy when she heard those words.

"Pretty enough, I suppose," Marcus conceded, "but not good. She's like the rest—bad clean through."

The curtains moved a little more; and Robert caught the sway of them out of the tail of his eye. He felt that if MacKenzie did not go soon, he would throw him out. What the girl would do if Marc started a tirade against her father, Robert did not dare contemplate.

"Look here, Marc," he burst forth, "you're all wrong about those people, all dead wrong. They don't harm any one, as I can see. Why can't you live and let live?"

His eyes flashing, Marcus stood up. "No harm, no harm, you say," he flared. "Why, they steal everything in sight, and in a few more years there won't be a fish left in the lake. There

Robert drew one hand across his brow helplessly.



Robert Drew One Hand Across His Brow Helplessly.

won't be anything to catch in season or out, if the squatters keep up their infernal poaching. Hunting and fishing are for gentlemen, my dear Bob! Don't forget that!"

"Gentlemen be d—d!" ejaculated Robert, and then the curtains swayed so that he got to his feet and started toward the door.

"Marc," he continued, "perhaps we can't agree on this matter at all, but I really do want a heart-to-heart talk with you about it. But not now! The fact is I was busy when you came in—"

"Thinking up a few more pleas for the squatters, eh?" the other man teased. "Well, old fellow, just remember this. I've got at least twenty-five men watching everything that scamp of a Hopkins does, and when I get something on him, there won't be twenty-four hours between that time and his arrest."

Robert almost shoved the speaker out of the door; but Marcus only chuckled good-naturedly as he went away. When Robert turned the key in the lock, he stood quite still, breathing hard.

From behind the curtain, Polly thrust out her head, her small face wrinkled and tears standing thick in her eyes.

"I'm a-goin' after that pup an' swat him," she hissed stormily. "He lies when he says my daddy's a scamp."

Percival lifted a precautionary hand. "Not too loud," he warned. "Come here." She went slowly forward, her head hanging; but when he held out his hands she snatched them and bent her curly head over the strong fingers and kissed them passionately.

"Poor little girl, poor little Polly," murmured Robert, brokenly. Then as she swayed toward him, his arms went around her, and for a moment he pressed her head against his breast.

"Polly, Pollyop," he whispered, kissing her hair. "Oh, God, if I owned that lake property I'd—"

A certain deep tone in his voice brought up Pollyop's head, and she saw in his eyes an expression that made her struggle from his arms. Fleeing to the porch window, she was gone before Robert could stop her.

"Bob's a queer fish, Eve," laughed MacKenzie, as he came into the music room where Evelyn Robertson was waiting for him. "If I hadn't kept my temper just now, we should have parted bad friends."

"That's like you, dear," she smiled. "But then, of course, you wouldn't let him bother you. Fussing about the squatters again, I suppose."

Evelyn took his big fingers in her hand and occupied herself in examining the white spots on one of the polished nails.

"My big man mustn't mind Bob's," she exclaimed persuasively, noting the frowning lines that had come in his face. "He's sentimental, Robert is, full of half-baked notions about brotherly love and helping the downtrodden, and that sort of thing."

The man laughed indulgently. It delighted him to have the girl of his choice express his own sentiments so well.

"You precious!" he murmured. "They can't fool my Eve much, can they?" By a simple twist of his wrist he captured her hand. Then he took up a favorite topic with new zest.

"I want to improve my property, dear. The Silent City's an eyesore! If I could get the squatters off the lake-side and buy the Bennett farm, I could make my place the handsomest in the county."

At the suggestion about Oscar's farm, a different light flashed into the girl's eyes. Her hand twitched in his.

"That would be wonderful, dear," she ejaculated. "If—if the squatters weren't there, you could make a very lovely drive right along where their road runs, couldn't you?"

This had been MacKenzie's idea, also. What a capable girl Eve was! He took her pretty face between his hands and kissed her once and then again and again.

"You darling!" he murmured. "You're the wisest little woman in the world! My whole ambition is to make our home just to suit you. I was talking to one of those landscape chaps up at the college the other day, and he said the lake section could be made charming. We can build our house on the hill just above there!"

"And the farm," Evelyn interposed, "that would just round out your place perfectly. Oh, honey, do that right away. Mr. Bennett will ask more for it as soon as you get rid of the squatters."

Marcus lighted a cigarette thoughtfully.

"The Bennett farm wouldn't be of any use to me," he explained slowly. "Unless I can make a clean sweep of the whole thing. It's a crime, I tell you, Evelyn. Think of it! I had to send out of the county to get my men to watch those fellows down there. Ithaca makes me tired. It's a good thing I came back to put some snap into the fight against the squatters."

The girl's white lids made a curtain between his shining eyes and her own. Evelyn was wishing, oh, how very much she desired that Marcus would buy the farm. Then Oscar could leave the country, and in another state he would set her free! She studied MacKenzie's face covertly through half-closed eyes, considering what to say and how to say it.

MacKenzie flung his cigarette into the grate. He found the suggestion of her veiled look so alluring that he gathered her into his arms and rained kisses upon her face.

"I love you so, sweet, I could almost eat you," he panted.

A happy sigh, like the perfumed breath of a rose, slipped from her parted lips, and when she laughed again, his deep chuckles joined hers.

"Look at me, dearie. I love you, little girl."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Traded Pipes for Land.**  
The clay pipe industry of Bristol, Eng., which is now entirely closed down, dates back to the Seventeenth century, when large quantities of Bristol-made pipes were exported to the American colonies. English clays were so much preferred by the Indians to their own rudely fashioned pipes that they became valuable as objects of barter or part purchase value in exchange for land. Three hundred pipes figure in the list of articles given by William Penn in exchange for a tract of land in what is now Pennsylvania, and another record of early colonial days shows that in 1677 120 pipes and 100 Jews' harps were exchanged for a plot near Timber Town, N. J.

**Webster's Work on Dictionary.**  
Nath Webster began his preparation for his American dictionary of the English language in 1807 and published it in 1828. Previous to 1807 he had published a speller and "A Compendious Dictionary" both of which were probably helpful in the new undertaking. The American dictionary contained 12,000 more words and about 40,000 more definitions than had appeared in any English dictionary published before his.

## BLOUSE HAS CALL

**Favoritism Shown Suits Means Demand for Waists.**

Colored Batiste, Dimity and Gingham Are Used—Tiny Pin Tucks Are Featured.

With the marked favoritism which is being shown the tweed and homespun suit for spring, blouse manufacturers specializing in cotton waists are anticipating a big business, states a fashion writer.

Among the fabrics stressed is colored batiste, blouses of this medium having hand-made collars and cuffs of white. The contrast of the rose or sky blue blouse proper with the white collar and cuffs is most springlike. Some of the collars feature hand-drawn work and hand blocking, while the bodice sections are both plain and tucked.

With color a prime factor in spring developments, it is only fitting that blouses should be offered in equally gay shades. Colored dimities are given a place of importance in this collection, and are accorded varied treatments. Bosom front effects are well liked, the yoke defined with hem-stitched lines. Plated edges are employed for embellishment, and outline collars of dog's ear and regulation type as well as smartly tailored turn-back cuffs. An orchid color blouse treated in this manner is most attractive.

Gingham is a medium also chosen for trimming purposes, and is effective combined with dimity. The gingham is seen in such color combinations as black and white, red and white, green and white and black and white.

The gingham forms edgings for collars and cuffs, and also serves as a finish for tucks decorating the front sections of the blouse. An all-dimity blouse, done in white, has collar and cuffs of contrasting color, showing plin-tucked treatments, the finest of pin tucks being chosen for this purpose.

In the silk numbers which this house is showing radium silks and pongee are the mediums stressed, and it is stated that pongee is in particularly high favor with buyers. The

**CHARMING FOR SPRING WEAR**



A pearl gray gown or robe de chine is decorated with steel beads. The hat is of brightly colored straw with festooned balloons. Note the slashed sleeves and how they are joined at the wrist.

## SOME "DON'TS" FOR STOUT WOMEN

**Suggestions for Matrons Who Desire to Avoid Drawing Attention to Avoirduois.**

- If you are plump:
- Don't go without a corset.
- Don't wear figured or patterned materials.
- Don't wear materials that have a nap, are woolly, or have a sheen.
- Don't wear light colors.
- Don't show your waistline.
- Don't wear broad panels—use narrow ones.
- Don't wear kimono sleeves.
- Don't wear long-haired furs.
- Don't wear wide-brim hats.
- Don't try to look youthful and forget your style.
- Don't wear fluffy dresses.
- Don't wear colored shoes and stockings.
- Don't worry.
- Don't wear round neck lines.
- Don't wear round hats.

## THE EVER CHIC WAISTCOAT

**Garment Adds Smartness as Well as Warmth to Outfit—Many Desirable Materials.**

When the spring breezes blow back the graceful folds of one's cape, the gay waistcoat disclosed to view beneath is not only smartness but desirable warmth.

The white flannel suit for resort wear is smarter with a brilliantly colored waistcoat and the tweed suit gains an added chic for a glimpse of a smart stripe. The more formal suit

introduction of a shell edge is noteworthy, and adds a good touch to these models. The radium numbers often show magpie combinations, the shell edge effected through the black couching.

## THE ORIENTAL SPORT SMOCK



Velette, a new and interesting material with the luster of silk, is used to great advantage in the creation of this sport suit. The wide sleeves lend a bit of the oriental to it. A hat of wool and straw completes the outfit.

## PINK SHADES, SPRING MODE

**Coquille One of the New Tints Promised for Season of the Early Blossoms.**

Pink shades promise to be much in the mode for spring, and among these coquille pink is spoken of as one of the new ones. Some French lingerie dresses shown in handkerchief linen and batiste are made in a deep rose shade of pink that is vastly becoming to the out-of-door complexion of the summer girl.

At the moment red is good for evening and the little semi-sport dresses that are shown in silks in various weaves have a leaning toward reds and vivid pinks.

The deep fuchsia tones have faded into heliotropes and orchids for spring and these colors are used in all types of dresses from the plain frock made of homespun, to evening modes, in pale orchid beaded in darker beads of the same tone.

## Soft Fabrics for Coats.

The use of pile fabrics for spring coats, once launched as a hazard, has now developed into a certainty. Day coats, fashioned in the elaborate modes that are designed for formal wear, especially adopt these lovely soft textures, while many sport models, striking out for a new means of expression, also enlist these fabrics. Taking the place of an altogether new coat fabric is spongee, better known as an interpreter of suits and dresses.

## The Hat Matches the Wrap.

One of the pretty features of spring apparel for children, whether the material used is cotton or wool, is a hat or cap to match every dress or wrap.

The same rule holds in regard to coats and hats. It is quite the thing to have a hat or cap to match every wrap. For example, a smart little coat of bright green velours is accompanied by a hat made of the same fabric trimmed simply with a fabric band about the crown and with a smart little upstanding feather at the back. The hat had a four-section crown and a stitched brim that rolled a trifle. The popular polo cloth must have its clever little tam or hat with brim. English prints will be accompanied by matching sun-bonnets of one style or another, or gaudy frocks will have ruffled-brimmed chapeaux of the same fabric, and so on.

## Overblouses Are Long.

The newest overblouse development is a little less than three-quarters length, quite full and gathered at the waistline, with tailored or split peasant sleeves.