

Storm Country Polly

by Grace Miller White

Copyright by Little, Brown & Co.

THE FRAMEUP.

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 of Bennett and induce him to leave the country, giving her 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. Polly's feeling being adoration. Oscar kills Polly's lamb and Percival thrashes Oscar. MacKenzie orders the squatters to leave. Evelyn plans to marry MacKenzie. Percival and Polly confess their love.

CHAPTER IX—Continued.

Then while Robert was telling her of his hopes and plans, rehearsing his love for her and his desire to help her read and study, they walked slowly back along the ragged rocks in the direction of the shanty.

They were almost at Polly's home before he left her. She watched him stride up the hill, and after he had disappeared, she threw herself flat upon the earth; and mingled with the bird's song in the willow trees, and the rippling of the waves upon the shore, came her cry:

"Oh, God dear, I can't marry Oscar, I can't! You'll have to help the squatters some other way, darlin'."

The days that followed, bringing with the spring flowers flocks of summer birds, seemed an eternity to Polly Hopkins. She went about her duties as one in a dream. In spite of Robert's efforts, several of the fishermen had been sent to the Ithaca jail for petty crimes.

Two men had been trapped in the Bad Man's ravine and taken off to the jail without so much as a farewell to their families. Polly had groaned with their women and wept over their babies. She was quite sure Percival was doing everything anybody could do; but sometimes the thought of Evelyn's demand intruded on her mind, and she wondered if she were doing right in refusing it.

One morning at daybreak Polly saw her father lift his gun from the wall and sit down to clean it. Now, why was he doing that, when he knew very well he could not use it? She stood looking down upon him, her heart beating rapidly.

"You ain't goin' to hunt yet, honey," she protested, squatting down beside him.

"Yep," returned Hopkins glancing up. "There ain't no one astrir so early, an' I'll bring back something, mebbe a woodchuck or a skunk. We ain't had enough to keep a mess of flies alive since Old Marc got back."

That was true! No one knew better than Polly how they had missed the little she had received from Bennett. Sick at heart, she snatched at his hand.

"We might best be without grub, Daddy," she said passionately. "Aw! Don't start rubbin' it up agin! You'll get pinched, if you hunt out of season, no matter what you shoot. For less than carryin' a gun, Old Marc's got a bunch of our men. You shant do it, Daddy. You shant, I say!"

If only she could persuade him not to hunt until Robert had come to an understanding with MacKenzie. If he didn't succeed—then she knew another way.

"Mebbe in a little while you can hunt all you like, Daddy," she ventured softly.

"What do you mean by that, brat?" asked Jeremiah, centering his keen eyes upon her.

She leaned forward and slipped both arms about his big waist.

"I don't want you to go today, Daddy," she returned noncommittally. "Why don't you just stay at home, an'—"

"Nope, I'm goin'," interrupted Hopkins. "An' Jerry's a-goin' with me. I'll be back before any of Old Marc's spies turn over for another nap."

Polly knew her father well enough not to make another appeal. She

ressed Wee Jerry at Jeremiah's command, and then, troubled in spirit, watched him stride away in the keen morning air.

It had been decided among the squatter men that to keep the breath of life in their women and children they must hunt and fish, but that nothing should be caught that the law forbade. It was this thought that was running through the squatter's mind as he crept up to see if a woodchuck had ventured out. One was sitting up, taking a survey of the neighborhood, when Hopkins lifted his gun; and with one sharp crack and a belch of smoke the furry fellow tumbled over.

The squatter strode forward and was in the act of picking it up when three men appeared as if they had sprung from the earth and with raised pistols closed in upon him.

Jeremiah's huge jaw dropped at the sight of them, and Wee Jerry's fingers caught tight hold of his shaggy hair.

"Drop that gun," cried one man, and the still smoking rifle fell to the earth.

It took but a moment to snap a pair of handcuffs about the dazed man's wrists. It was while Jeremiah's face was turned upward to quiet the screaming Jerry that one of the men quickly substituted a dead squirrel, and another went away with the dead woodchuck. Then the third slipped a chain around one of Daddy's wrists and led him down the hill to the ragged rocks, the child still clinging to his neck.

Polly was standing under a willow tree as her eyes caught sight of Daddy Hopkins and Wee Jerry between two men. One of them strode along, a little dead body dangling from one hand, while held in the other hand was her father's gun. She ran toward them, giving spasmodic cries of dismay.

"Daddy!" she screamed.

No answer came from the blinking squatter.

"We caught him with the goods on," one man sneered at her.

"But you're goin' to leave him with me," she shrieked, making her appeal to the man who stood close to Jeremiah.

"Daddy'll promise not to hunt no more, won't you, honey? Oh, God! You said you wouldn't shoot nobody!"

"I didn't, brat," grunted Hopkins.

Then his eye caught sight of the squirrel, and his jaw dropped. A hoarse groan fell from him.

"I didn't shoot no squirrel, Poll," he cried out to her. "I got that big chuck I were tellin' you about." Then, turning glaring, fury-filled eyes on the man who had sneered at the girl, he continued, "You planted that d—n little critter on me, mister. I never shot him."

Polly's lids widened in terror. She lifted one hand and caught the child's shoulder.

"Jerry, baby," she cried madly, "you was there! Tell Pollyop what Daddy shot!"

"Sure I was there," he sobbed, drawing his sleeve across his face. "'Twas a big woodchuck settin' up by his hole, an' my Daddy Hopkins—"

The officer who had the squirrel in his hand, put it into his pocket and

stant. She knew the planting system had been practiced on the squatters before. At last the law had her best beloved.

"Daddy never killed that squirrel," she raved. "He didn't; an' you d—n duifers know he didn't. You can't get by with nothin' like that. It's crooked! Here, you—you—you gimme my daddy!"

Like a wildcat unloosed upon them, Polly flew first at one, then at the other. She bit at them, tore at their clothes and kicked out with her strong bare feet; but it was like a small force attacking a mighty mountain. Strong hands pinioned her arms, and while she stood raging at them, she saw Wee Jerry snatched from his father's shoulders and set on the ground. Then they led Daddy Hopkins away. Dazed for a moment, Polly stood shaking from head to foot. Grasping Jerry by the hand, she ran swiftly after them, crying out in despair that Daddy must go home with her and the baby.

At the lane Hopkins turned and spoke to her.

"Brat," he choked, swallowing hard, "kiss your daddy, an' let me smack Wee Jerry too. Go on home. I'll be comin' back after a bit. Tell Larry they got me, an' that I said for Larry to look after you an' the kid!"

With her arms about his neck she gave the promise squatter women make their men when the majesty of the law steps into the Silent City.

"I'll keep the baby an' the shanty till you get back, Daddy darlin'," she sobbed. "Give your girl-brat kisses, an'—here's Wee Jerry!"

Even the officer who had the squirrel turned his head as the girl clung to the big squatter.

Afraid to lead their prisoner through the Silent City, the deputies marched him up the lane toward the railroad tracks. As they turned into the boulevard, Hopkins looked back down the hill. Pollyop was still in the road, and Wee Jerry was in her arms, his face pressed against her neck.

CHAPTER X.

As in a nightmare the squatter girl blundered along the path, back to the hut, carrying Wee Jerry in her arms.

Granny Hope was hobbling from the coop-hole when the girl stumbled over the threshold.

"Something awful's happened, hub, Pollyop?" the woman faltered, and limping across the floor, she bent and gathered the thin small boy to her. "Come to grandma, Jerry dear," she coaxed, "an' hear a wee bit about Love."

The crooning voice, choked with entreaty, touched the edge of Polly Hopkins' soul. She swayed forward to her knees, caught the one withered hand extended to her and clung there.

"I'll set, my bird," mumbled Mrs. Hope weakly, and she dropped into a chair with Jerry in her lap. "There! Aw! Don't cry that way, honey. Listen, dear heart, God's everywhere! An' His love too! Can't—"

Out of the shower of glistening curls appeared a man, fearful face.

"Daddy's been took to jail, Granny Hope," Pollyop burst out. "God can't go in a dirty jail, God can't! Old Marc—"

Mrs. Hope's sudden trembling broke off the girl's words; and Polly wept again in hopeless misery as the woman repeated almost dully:

"God can't go in a dirty jail."

Then her face, lighted by a radiant thought, lost its drabness; and for a time she stroked the bowed young head. Then:

"Be your daddy lovin' you an' the baby?" she queried softly.

That question had never been put to Polly Hopkins before. Had Granny Hope gone crazy to ask such a thing? Every squatter in the settlement marveled at Jeremiah's devotion to his children!

"Hub, brat dear?" came more forcibly from Granny Hope, as if she were determined to have an answer.

Pollyop lifted her head wearily.

"Please, sure, Granny," she moaned. "He'll love us till he dies."

"Then my lass ain't believin' any longer that the God is love, like once she was, huh? If Daddy Hopkins has went to prison like you said, then ain't God there? An', dear lassie-child, love's love, an' God's God behind the bars just the same as in this here beautiful shanty!"

The girl, still on her knees, edged closer to the old woman's side and put her arms around him.

"Listen to what Granny Hope says, baby dear," she sobbed. "Love's went right along to jail with our daddy. Jesus'll help 'im. He can, can't he, Granny dear?"

"He can, an' He will, poor brats," answered Mrs. Hope. And then through the quietude of the early morning she voiced in tremulous words the promises that had been food and drink to her during all the lonely years that had passed over her head. "Ask, an' you'll get it, dear lambs. Seek your daddy, an' you'll find 'im, little dears."

One of Pollyop's arms went about the woman's neck in a trice. The

shimmering chestnut curls mingled with thready locks of gray; and then two quivering wizened lips fell upon a trembling rosy mouth.

"Say something more, little Granny," whispered Pollyop. "Oh, God'll do what you say He will—mebbe, huh?"

Wearily with unusual emotion, the woman's head bobbed forward.

"With God, Pollyop," she whispered faintly, "there ain't no mebbe. When you get a swat from a hand like Old Marc's, then an angel from Heaven—"

Instantly Polly Hopkins was on her feet. An angel from Heaven! A blessed angel would help Daddy Hopkins!

"Darlin'," she murmured, bending over Mrs. Hope, "get on my bed an' take Wee Jerry. I'm goin' out."

Polly Hopkins was in the Robertson grape arbor before she fully realized the task which she had undertaken. To thrust herself into the presence of Robert Percival was not so easy as she had anticipated.

"Just let Pollyop find 'im alone, Jesus dear," she prayed, and then stepped out from among the vines.

It was a cozy scene that met her eyes when she ventured into the house. The family were at breakfast; and Marcus MacKenzie in his riding suit was drinking coffee. At the sight of her he put down the cup and rose to



"He Can, an' He Will, Poor Brats," Answered Mrs. Hope.

his feet; and instantly Percival got up too. Evelyn went white; and an ejaculation fell from Mrs. Robertson's lips.

Throwing a questioning glance from one to the other, the girl's eyes settled at last on Robert's face.

"They've took my Daddy Hopkins to jail," she faltered, "an' I've come to get 'im back."

The loud laugh that burst from MacKenzie's lips brought a glare from Robert.

"Thank God, we've got him at last," Marcus exulted.

The expression of woe died in the squatter girl's eyes as Robert Percival came toward her.

"What!" he ejaculated, and then as though conscious of the hate that was directed at the newcomer by Marcus MacKenzie, he added in a lower tone: "Poor little girl! Come into my study, Polly, and tell me about it."

"Nonsense, Bob," interrupted MacKenzie rudely. "Let her tell her lies here. I'd like to hear what she has to say."

A flush mounted to Robert's face as he turned angrily on the speaker. During the moment he was struggling for composure, Mrs. Robertson and her daughter hung on the scene with bated breaths.

"Must I remind you whose house this is, MacKenzie?" demanded Percival finally; and Marcus sank down into his chair with a muttered apology.

"I didn't come to tell lies, Mr. MacKenzie," Polly broke out impetuously. "I've come to tell God's truth." Then the recollection of her father's desperate need overwhelmed her, and she wailed: "Your men planted a squirrel on 'im, sir; Daddy said so, an' Jerry saw 'em."

To Percival, watching the man and girl, came the conviction that she had told the truth, and that MacKenzie knew she had. Before he could break in, Polly spoke again.

"Please, sir," she begged, "please, Mr. MacKenzie, give 'im back to me. You can. Do it, an', an', oh, God, I'll die for you."

She fell forward on her knees; and then Marcus MacKenzie laughed again. Lower and lower fell the curly head, for the sarcastic sound told her more plainly than any words could have done that she would get no aid from him.

Robert stooped and lifted her up.

"D—n you, Marc! Stop it!" he demanded. "It's wicked, downright wicked!" And to her he murmured: "Poor little girl! Poor little Polly."

He tried to lead her away; but how could she go without making another effort? She turned to Evelyn.

"Something struck Oscar and he's dead in the road!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

An Englishman has invented a horse-drawn plow to remove snow from street gutters, rollers guiding it along the curb.

IN NEW LINGERIE

Clumsy, Starchy Cambrics Only
Memories of the Past.

Undergarments Have Grown More
Sheer—Matching to Shade of
Gown is Latest Whim.

Lingerie of crepes de chine and georgettes has wiped the sisterhood of the red flannels off the map. For no article in feminine apparel has undergone the rapid change in recent years as has the undergarment. From clumsy, burrified, starchy cambrics they have grown more sheer each season until now one could easily hold a week-end's supply in the palm of one's hand. In fact, one New York house which specializes in lingerie has a tiny, patent leather suitcase about eight inches long called "le petit trousseau," which holds a nightgown, undervest and a combination set for the bride. Imagine a bride of a few years back trying to crowd her nightgown!

The rise of the crepe de chine and georgette in the making of undergarments has been interesting to watch. How shyly we put aside our white linens and hainsooks as we gently stepped into our first pink crepe de chine! Pinks have given way to more vivid colors. Rather venturesome colors of former days are now cast aside as passe.

Matching underwear to the shades of one's gown is fashion's latest whim and no shade can be too colorful for the lingerie of this season. Hose of gray fade into bloomers and petticoats of the same tone. For the navy blue costumes there are lovely shades of lavenders and purples.

The envelope chemise seems to have been discarded for the present and the chemise with bloomers or step-in drawers is the favorite sort of lingerie for just now. This combination is extremely practical, for the chemise can be made long enough to take the place of a petticoat or short enough to be worn with the heavier gowns and suits. And as all gowns are made on straight body-fitting lines, these garments do away with all unnecessary waistbands. These chemises are all made with the short empire yokes with straps over the shoulders; the straps are made of the same material as the garment rather than of ribbon. They are made in gold and silver cloths to match the evening gowns as well as in the practical black.

Most of the American made lingerie is made of crepe de chine, georgette or radium silk. From Paris we have the triple voile which closely resembles chiffon, but has body enough to give it wearing qualities. Another imported material is printed linen in colors, the printing being placed as a border in a black silhouette design.

ORGANDIE HELPS MAKE HAT



Organdie makes the flowers and grapes that bloom so conspicuously on this charming picture hat. The colors used are orchid and green.

tion is extremely practical, for the chemise can be made long enough to take the place of a petticoat or short enough to be worn with the heavier gowns and suits. And as all gowns are made on straight body-fitting lines, these garments do away with all unnecessary waistbands. These chemises are all made with the short empire yokes with straps over the shoulders; the straps are made of the same material as the garment rather than of ribbon. They are made in gold and silver cloths to match the evening gowns as well as in the practical black.

Most of the American made lingerie is made of crepe de chine, georgette or radium silk. From Paris we have the triple voile which closely resembles chiffon, but has body enough to give it wearing qualities. Another imported material is printed linen in colors, the printing being placed as a border in a black silhouette design.

A REGULAR "PUSS IN BOOTS"



This winsome outfit is donned by a prominent "movie" star in her modified Russian boots. The dress, her own creation, is of tan jersey, with embroidered silk dots.

LININGS COME READY-MADE

Convenience Offers Encouragement to Many Women to Construct Their Dresses at Home.

That the jobber will be a more valuable outlet for wash goods than the cutter-up is the contention of a professional shopper, who bases this theory on the growing trend toward home dressmaking. The observations of this shopper are that women are giving more attention to home dressmaking than ever—and that indications for the coming spring and summer season point to an increase of this vogue.

There are several reasons given for the greater interest in home dressmaking. In the first place, the styles are simple. Secondly, many of the department stores are giving much attention to home dressmaking. Practically all the large retail stores in New York now have regular dressmaking classes for amateurs. These are taught by professionals. The present method is for a woman to go to the pattern department. Here she is measured by saleswomen, in order to get the correct size. The cost of the pattern depends upon the style of the garment, ranging from 35 cents up to about \$1.50. Having the correct size pattern, it really is not necessary for a woman to have much fitting for the garment she is to make.

However, figuring extremes—a woman buys her material—and attends one of the dressmaking classes in a department store. In one lesson, she can cut the material; and, in the second lesson, she can have it all put together—and then fitted in a third lesson.

THE CAPE COAT FOR SPRING

Garment May Be Developed Effectively in One of the Soft Lightweight Velours Fabrics.

Capes of every type are sponsored for early spring. The cape coat is one of the most highly favored types. It appears in sports lines as well as in regulation wraps. It may be developed effectively in one of the soft lightweight velours fabrics, with the cape lined in crepe de chine or other silk in contrasting color.

There is a very wide fabric range. The color listing is equally generous. For sports high shades such as jockey green, tomato red and dahlia are popular, while for the regulation wraps the staple shades such as browns, tan, navy and several gray tones lead.

Some of the wraps show wide sleeves, others are sleeveless, and a universally approved feature is the low waist line. Sometimes a new slightly bloused effect is featured, and again the low waist line is indicated merely by the placing of the belt or girdle.

Small Boy's Coat.

For the small boy's spring overcoat covert cloth is to be a popular fabric. One coat recently seen was a mannish style, plain except for two bias pieces stitched down the back, one at about the shoulder on either side. The straps were about an inch wide. The coat had tailored collar and revers and buttoned double-breasted fashion in front. The regulation navy chevrons will be smart also, and, no matter what the fabric or color, a hat to match is an excellent recommendation. In addition to the many plain fabrics approved for coats for boys, some smart little plaid velours are being featured.

Amateurs do not like to bother with

linings, hooks and eyes, etc. But this is no longer necessary today, because one can buy ready-made linings, with all of the required attachments—and it is a simple matter to sew the lining into the dress.

Based on observations in several of the large retail stores, women are paying much more attention to cottons than to silks.

Season's Top Coats.

The wing or cape sleeve is featured in a good many of the season's topcoats. One smart model, made of plaid wool material in a heavy weave, had sleeves cut to flare from shoulder to lower edge and much longer than the arm. These sleeves were seamed together on the under arm to wrist length and below this they fell away from the arm to form a decided cape. The coat was full length, belted and finished at the front with a Tuxedo revers.

To Clean White Wool Jersey.

To clean a white wool jersey the following method is splendid: Buy a small quantity of calcium magnesium from your druggist and mix it with water till it is of the thickness of cream. Apply this to the jersey with a clean rag, and let it remain on for a couple of days. Then brush out thoroughly and the jersey should be quite clean and fresh.

Footwear Styles.

Strap shoes and slippers are to continue popular for spring and summer and there is an increasing leaning to sensible, low heel models for general wear.