

Storm Country Polly

by Grace Miller White
Illustrated by R.H. Livingstone

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Polly left the rest of his sentence. Back and yet further back she slipped over the roof. She had never heard anything so dreadful as this. In fact, she had always quite liked pigs, but she had never thought of comparing the shanty or Granny Hope and Daddy Hopkins to a barnyard and its occupants.

She heard the men ride away; and once more she sat up. By raising her body a little, she could see them walking their horses along the road that led its crooked way through the settlement.

MacKenzie's straight, thick-set figure made her shudder, but the slim, boyish one beside him brought a queer little thrill to her heart.

"He's a beautiful angel himself," she murmured, and taking up the air, she slipped down the tree and dropped to the wet ground. Granny Hope straightened up as Polly entered the kitchen. Swiftly the girl crawled out of her father's trousers and tossed back her curls.

"What's the matter, pretty brat?" queried the woman drowsily.

"I got to find Daddy," replied Polly, her voice shaking. "Old Marc's back an' he's after us squatters a flyin', an', Granny—"

She paused, her face softened, and she smiled.

"Yep, honey?" prompted Mrs. Hope. "Old Marc had a beautiful angel with him," went on the girl, "an' he likes us squatters. He stood right up to that rotten MacKenzie. I heard him, I did. She crossed to the old woman's side. "Love's able to send a angel slapping down to this old earth to help us, huh, Granny Hope?"

"Yep, sure—sure, honey-girl," murmured Granny, and once more her head bobbed forward, and she slept.

Polly Hopkins crept out of the hut and sped away along the shore toward Bad Man's ravine.

CHAPTER II.

About the time Polly Hopkins began to repair the shack roof, Evelyn Robertson came into the room where her mother sat reading. The girl was dressed to go out and was drawing a pair of gloves over her ringed fingers. "Where are you going, Eve?" inquired the lady. "It seems to me that you're running out altogether too much. There's your piano! You haven't practiced in months. Now don't blame me, Eve, if, when Marcus asks you to play, you fall flat."

A dull red ran into the girl's cheeks, but she made no reply as she smoothed the wrinkles from her gloves.

"The good Lord knows," continued the mother irritably, "that I've kept at you enough. Now Marc and Robert are home, how are you going to entertain them? Men demand so much."

The experience of the past two years had taught Evelyn that lesson. It had been demand, demand and more demanding ever since, on girlish impulse, she had secretly married Oscar Bennett.

"And you heard what Marcus said last night about the Silent City folks."



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went on Mrs. Robertson. "What you want of that Hopkins girl? I don't understand. Marcus says her father is the most dangerous man among the lot of them, and the girl herself is queer."

"Oh, don't talk about the squatters all the time," cried Evelyn. "I hate the very sound of the word. What's Polly Hopkins, anyway? . . . Now Marcus is home—"

eagerly, "it has always been my hope that you and Marc would grow to care for each other. He is so rich and so handsome! Now, isn't he?"

A groan almost leapt from Evelyn's lips. What a fool she had been! Here she was married to a man she loathed, a man she was ashamed of! The realization that another man, rich, good-looking and in every way desirable, had turned his serious eyes upon her, almost made her blurt out the whole story to her mother; but having kept silent so long, she dared not speak now. All through the night she had tossed and turned, hunting some way to get Oscar Bennett out of her life without Marcus MacKenzie knowing anything about it. She dared not go to Oscar himself; Polly Hopkins was the only hope she had. All Bennett cared for was money. He was as tired of her as she was of him. Perhaps he would go away quietly and set her free if she gave him money enough. Would her mother give it to her?

"Mother, do you honestly want me to marry Marc?" she asked, trembling.

Mrs. Robertson caught at the outflung hand.

"I do, I do indeed, darling," she answered. "And he'll ask you too, I'm sure. Perhaps not today or tomorrow, for he's just renewing his acquaintance with you. By the way he looked last night I could tell he was considering it."

A handkerchief dropped from Evelyn's fingers, and she stooped to pick it up.

"If I lead Marcus on," she suggested, rising, "and—and get him to ask me to marry him, will you give me any sum of money I want?"

Her voice shook with emotion, and her young face seemed suddenly old and haggard. Mrs. Robertson had never seen her daughter in such a state.

"Sit down a minute, Evelyn," she commanded. "Now tell me what you want money for. I know very well that you haven't spent what I've allowed you upon yourself. That's why I've refused you so much lately. No more secrets or mystery! I want the facts. Now tell me this minute."

The girl dropped into a chair and buried her face in her hands.

"I can't," she whispered.

For some time she remained in the same attitude, while her mother studied her silently. At length the girl lifted herself erect.

"I can't explain," she broke out, "and I suppose you're thinking all kinds of things. I can't help it if you do. You'll have to give me the money I need, if you want me to marry Marc. There's no 'ifs' and 'ands' about that. If you'll give me the money"—she faltered, wiped her lips and concluded slowly, "I'll marry Marcus MacKenzie."

"You must be crazy, Eve," Mrs. Robertson said in a cold voice, "to talk to me like that. If you have any secrets from me, it's time you told them."

"Well?" shot from Evelyn sharply, "suppose I have? It's my secret, isn't it? Are you going to help me or not, that's the question."

It was evident to Mrs. Robertson that the situation was not to be trifled with. In a twinkling her daughter had changed from a meek and timid girl to an aggressive woman. To try to bully her any more would be a mere waste of effort.

"Heavens," she began, "this is a pretty how to do, I must say. I can't imagine why you should want money. It doesn't make much difference, anyway. There are more reasons than one why you can't get it from me."

"What are they?" fell from the girl's lips.

"The first is," returned the mother, tartly, "I don't like being held up in this high-handed manner by my own daughter."

She paused; and Evelyn caught her breath. If that were all, she would row and rage until she got what she wanted.

Mother and daughter were staring at one another, each demanding an explanation. Evelyn did not intend to make any! Mrs. Robertson weakened before the steely-blue in the girl's eyes.

thing out of me I haven't got." "Mother!" cried the girl, in agony. "I told you, Eve, that you should know the truth," Mrs. Robertson continued. "You've asked for it, and here it is. When Robert's father and mother died, I came here to take care of him. I had nothing then and have nothing now. You were only a baby, and I've always kept the facts from you. When Robert went to war, he arranged that if he didn't come back, I should have the home and enough money to keep us."

Evelyn's eyes widened. Of a surety this was the truth.

"Then we aren't rich?" she demanded huskily.

"No, that we're not!" responded the lady, "and what's more, we are dependent upon Robert for everything."

With a quick gesture Evelyn caught her mother's arm, despair changing the lines on her face.

"Oh, you needn't be so theatrical, my dear," said the woman. "Robert's never given me the slightest reason to feel he thought us a burden. I'm quite like his mother, as I should be. The only thing necessary is that you should feather your own nest before Bob makes up his mind to get married. I know very well you've turned down many a young man in Ithaca. Now your chance has come. Marc MacKenzie's rich. He loves you."

Without waiting to hear anything more, Evelyn ran out of the room. Mrs. Robertson sank back with a sigh, partly of relief that at last Evelyn knew just the situation they were in, partly of anxiety as to her daughter's secret.

(To be Continued.)

AFTER PINK BOLL WEEVIL.

Cotton Pest from Egypt Threatens Texas, Says Commissioner.

An investigation of the ravages of the pink cotton boll worm in the Laguna agricultural district of Mexico and the almost certain spread of the pest to Texas and other states of the South has been made by W. D. Farris of Ennis, vice president of the Texas farm bureau and member of the State Pink Boll Worm commission, and Lea Beaty of Lockhart, representing the Texas state department of agriculture. The Laguna district embraces the valley of the Nazas river, in the states of Durango and Coahuila, with Torreon as its commercial center.

"The people of Texas can hardly realize the enormity of the menace," Mr. Farris said. "Starting in the delta region of the Nile a few years ago the pink boll worm has spread over the cotton growing districts of the world with appalling rapidity."

"In spite of all we can do, the South will be invaded by this pest, and we must be prepared to fight it. Its appearance in four or five isolated districts of the state in the last three years must serve as a warning. Through quarantine measures and non-cotton zones, we have been able to hold the insect in check, but Texas has yet to feel the effects of a real invasion. When it comes it will cost the state millions of dollars, and we must be prepared to fight for our economic existence as a cotton growing section."

Mr. Farris described the Laguna district as an alluvial basin with an area of 2,000 square miles built up through the ages by the Nazas river which starts in the mountains and gradually disappears as it passes through the cotton district. Normally the production of the area is 600,000 bales of long staple cotton a year, but owing to the pink boll worm the crop last year was 50,000 bales. The entire crop was consumed in Mexico. The land is divided into tracts of 250 acres each, each tract surrounded by irrigation ditches bordered with cottonwood trees. The tract is planted every second year. In the rest period it is flooded with from five to six feet of water, which remains on the land five months, gradually soaking in. The one crop produced every two years averages a bale to the acre.

In the district Messrs. Farris and Beaty witnessed six tests of a machine invented recently to exterminate the pink boll worm by subjecting infested seed to a high temperature thus destroying the worm, but not the germinating power of the seed. Mr. Farris gave it as his opinion that the machine was a preventative only, and that non-cotton areas were the only cure. In the tests seeds were subjected for five minutes to a heat of from 133 to 145 degrees. At the lower temperature but one out of every 100 worms survived. At 145 degrees not a live worm was found. Seed from the district was taken at random for the tests, and afterward each seed was cut open. This showed 100 worms to every 215 seeds. In germination tests the treated seed sprouted and grew better than non-treated seeds.

The machine consists of a revolving drum ten feet long, containing pipes carrying 135 pounds of steam pressure. Seed is put in at one end and after a five-minute interval comes out sterilized at the other end.

CLAIMS VAGRANCY TROPHY

Man at Lynn, Mass., Is Sentenced for Fiftieth Time.

Arthur P. Wetherbee claims the championship of being the "vag," so far as appearance in the District Court in Lynn, Mass., is concerned.

Three times during the last week he had applied to Police Headquarters for lodging and today Judge Ralph W. Reeves sentenced him to two months in the house of correction. It is cold weather and I would like a place to sleep," said Wetherbee. "I have not been able to get any work."

Judge Reeves said: "I do not think that you would work if you had the opportunity. I will give you a chance to work in the House of Correction and you may begin today your fiftieth commitment service as a vagrant."

SHEEP FOR HORSES.

Team of Former a Common Sight on Streets of Washington Town.

A common sight on the streets in Dayton, Wash., is a team of four sheep which Horace DeLong, an 11-year-old farmer lad, drives to town for supplies.

Horace started to train the sheep for the harness last summer when they were playful lambs.

He succeeded well, for the animals obediently respond to the command of their youthful master whether hitched as a four sheep tandem singly or side by side. They are good travelers and made the two-mile trip to town in half an hour, mostly fast walking and a continual bleat.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

Sunday School Lesson

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)
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LESSON FOR MARCH 5

JEHOVAH'S MERCY TO A HEATHEN CITY

LESSON TEXT—Jonah 3:1-11.
GOLDEN TEXT—Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.—Isa. 55:7.

REFERENCE MATERIAL—Isa. 45:20-25; 49:8-7; Jonah 1:1-2:10; Mat. 1:10, 11; John 3:16.

PRIMARY TOPIC—God Sends Jonah on an Errand.
JUNIOR TOPIC—How God Spared a Wicked City.

INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—Jonah's Missionary Adventure.
YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—The Missionary Teaching of the Book of Jonah.

That the book of Jonah is historical we believe for the following reasons: First, its record and use in the Scriptures. That the writers of the Bible intended the impression of its historicity is without the shadow of a doubt. The suggestion that it is a parable is absolutely gratuitous. Second, the unbroken testimony of tradition among the Jews is that it is historic. Third, the testimony of Jesus Christ (Matt. 12:39-41). The words of Jesus Christ are final.

1. Jonah's Second Commission (vv. 1, 2).

When called the first time to go to Nineveh, he found the task too great for him. For his unfaithfulness, he was chastised. He repented and God restored his commission. The Lord said to him, "Preach the preaching that I-bid thee" (v. 2). God knows how he wants His work done. Happy is the missionary, minister, Sunday-school teacher, who preaches God's Word just as He gave it.

2. Jonah's Preaching (vv. 3, 4).

1. His field (v. 8). "Nineveh was an exceeding great city." Not only was the city large, but its inhabitants were noted for their cruelty.

2. His message (v. 4). "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." This means that forty days were given by God for repentance ere the judgment would fall. God is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should repent (II Pet. 3:9). Though He is merciful, yet there is a limitation to it. He says, "Yet forty days."

3. The Repentance of Nineveh (vv. 5-10).

1. They believed God (v. 5). They believed that God was speaking to them through the prophet about their sins and impending judgment.

2. They proclaimed a fast (v. 5-8). The king and people joined sincerely in this movement. The call was for them to turn away from their sins. Their penitence was genuine, for they not merely put on sackcloth, the visible sign of mourning, but they cried to God (v. 8).

3. They reasoned that God would repent (v. 9). Though they had no assurance that God would have mercy, yet they reasoned that the sending of a prophet and the giving of a time before the fall of doom implied that God would be merciful if they repented. They were wise in so doing. We today know that God will have mercy if we repent (Acts 3:19). What utterly to go on in sin in the face of the assurance that God will judge.

5. God's mercy shown (v. 10). "God saw their works that they turned from their evil way." God's eye is omniscient. Wherever there is a soul who is turning from sin in penitence, He sees. No one has ever wept over sin unnoticed by God. God rejoices when a sinner repents (Luke 15:10).

In the Book of Jonah we have portrayed the typical history of Israel:

"1. Jonah was called to a world mission, and so was Israel. (2) Jonah at first refused compliance with the divine purpose and plan, and so did Israel. (3) Jonah was punished by being cast into the sea, and so was Israel by being dispersed among the nations. (4) Jonah was not lost, but rather especially preserved during this part of his experience, and Israel is not being assimilated by the nations, but being kept for God. (5) Jonah, repentant and cast out by the fish, is restored to life and action again, and Israel, repentant and cast out by her former national position. (6) Jonah, obedient, goes upon his mission to Nineveh, and Israel obedient, shall ultimately engage in her original mission to the world. (7) Jonah is successful in that his message is acted upon to the salvation of Nineveh, so Israel shall be blessed in that she shall be used to the conversion of the whole world."—Dr. Gray's Commentary.

OLD SI IS DEAD

He Never Did Any Work and Yet He Never Missed a Meal.

The recent death of Si Lewis in his house on Loyalsock Creek in this (Sullivan) county, caused neither great sorrow nor undue gratification among his relatives and neighbors, says a LaPorte, Pa., dispatch to the New York World. There was little in his gaudy personality to inspire affection, yet to one who knows the Loyalsock the passing of this quaint figure is a real loss. "In a country where 'queer sticks' as a 'character,' and he died reverently to be possibly to merit this role."

Early in life Si decided that work was both distasteful and unnecessary. Beyond cutting firewood, repairing his shingle roof when the leaks became really bad, and milking his cow, he never stirred a finger so far as his own place was concerned. He raised bumper crops of weeds on his farm, which he inherited from his father, and which was once the finest along the creek. His fences fell down, so did his barn and the kitchen roof. He never even bothered with the wreckage, except to move the kitchen stove into the sitting room.

Cooking was as abhorrent to him as any other form of work. Making coffee was as far as he ever got in the culinary line. He poured the coffee into a bowl and sipped it up with bread. He very seldom had any other food in the house.

Tall, Thin and Gaunt.

Any one who ever saw Si will never forget him. He was unbelievably tall, and, despite an excellent appetite, thin as a reed. His straggling, brownish-gray beard and peaked face gave him the appearance of an ancient faun, strayed far from the scenes of forest revelry and getting rather out at elbows in the process. He walked with a shambling, awkward stride which seemed slow until you tried to keep up with him for an hour or two. Brown overalls, hickory shirt and an antique felt hat of uncertain shape and color represented his wardrobe, with the addition of a coat in cold weather.

Sitting up until 9 o'clock or 9:30, he regarded as a rank extravagance, and he often deplored the fact that his neighbors wasted money on coal oil.

"When it gets dark I go to bed," he said.

An Always Welcome "Graftee."

His custom was to get up at day-break and stare off either up or down the creek, according to his schedule. He always contrived to arrive at the house of a neighbor shortly before break and start off either up or down could do some work to pay for a meal. The task set for him was usually a mere pretext, such as picking up some chips, cutting a few sticks of wood or milking a cow. He was then ready to do ample justice to the hot cakes and fried eggs of the housewife.

Breakfast over, he would take the road again, and obtain his dinner and supper by similar tactics. He always carried a small tin bucket in case scraps were given him. Sometimes he started out with this filled with milk to swap for a meal.

Year after year, he, in the country phrase, "walked the roads." Yet the fact that he lived off his neighbors stirred no rancor, and no one ever thought of refusing to feed him. The most any one ever said was that "it was Si's way," and let it go at that.

The real secret of the man's success lay deeper than the good natured tolerance of his neighbors, and possibly they never realized it themselves. Si was a perfect storehouse of gossip. He never missed a tid bit in his journeys, and he never failed to outline the latest happenings after he had eaten. In the sparsely settled country he was a newspaper with an infinite number of daily editions. He formed a link between the scattered farms and hamlets, and he carried messages and the mail. He helped along many a budding romance in his day, and he always turned up for the wedding whether invited or not.

A Walking Newspaper.

Here are a few of the gems which fell from Si's lips and they are a fair sample of his daily output:

"Sallie Barbour went to Montoursville this morning by the stage to stay for a spell with her brother and his folks."

"There's a party campin' along Sandy Bottom. One man got a fourteen-inch bass Wednesday, and the women got in the creek with 'most nothin' on at all."

"Victor Bedford, over to Proctor, got a Ford tractor last week."

"Sam Schafte cut his leg peelin' bark up in the mountain back of his place. If Susan hadn't heard him holler, he might of bled to death. She had an awful time getting him back to the house, do you know it?"

A Reporter's "Nose for News."

Si fairly revelled in rattlesnake bites, death-beds and interments. No city-trained reporter ever had a keener nose for news, or had greater persistence in getting a story, and his bulletins will be sorely missed in the lonely farm houses along the creek.

Si lived alone until the last few years of his life. When he found himself at last unable "to walk the roads" he decided his farm to his niece and her husband on the agreement that they were to provide a home for him as long as he lived. The husband came very near repenting his bargain when he first tried to raise crops of the long-neglected fields, but they stuck and carried out their side of the agreement faithfully.

Beginning of the End.

"Yes, Si has left us," Jim Davis, the nephew—who reminds one of a drawing by A. B. Frost—drawn to a camper of many seasons who had stopped to "pass the time of day" one evening a few weeks after Si's death.

There was just a little regret in Jim's tone. "The trouble with Si," he continued reflectively, "was that he was always a hearty eater and never did enough work 'to let off steam.' It was like keeping a horse in the barn all the time and feedin' him oats three times a day. Last July Si told me he thought he'd hoe a row of potatoes every day. Said he believed it would do him good. And every day he did hoe a row, some days two. He didn't do it very well, but the funny thing was his doin' it at all. It wasn't like him, and I thought at the time he was breakin' up. Sure enough, it wasn't long before he took to his bed, and the end soon came. Yes, if he hadn't of eat so much and had done some work he might have lived longer and he'd have been a heap better off," Jim concluded.

But Jim ignored two important facts—that Si got along very well without doing any real work, and was just short of eighty when he died.

JAPS HAVE OIL SUPPLY

Enough for 300 Years While American Supply is Very Small.

Japan's oil resources are vastly greater than she has led the world to believe, according to reports prepared after months of exhaustive study for presentation before the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers.

The conclusion reached by the American engineers is that "Japan has three centuries of supply at the present rate of consumption, while the United States has only twenty years of probable oil reserve."

The engineers are urging the adoption of an international mineral policy by congress to meet the situation with which America is threatened.

Oil has been known in Japan since 668 A. D., when the Emperor Tenchi was presented with "burning water" by his subjects in Echigo Province. From that day to this considerable oil has been obtained from hand-dug wells. In 1891 American "standard" drilling machinery and drillers were imported. Production then rapidly climbed from insignificant amounts to over 2,000,000 barrels in 1903. After this a slight decline set in, but in 1912 rotary tools were introduced, raising the production to 2,942,722 barrels in 1916. Since that time there has been another small decline to approximately 2,200,000 barrels in 1921.

This production satisfies about two-thirds of the demand of Japan, the remainder being imported. The produc-

HAMBONE'S MEDITATIONS

MAH DAWG TRED A WILD-CAT LAS' NIGHT, EN KUN! BOB WAXTER KNOW HOW COME AH AIN' FETCH 'IM HOME WID ME -- HUH! AH'S JES' MO' FAS'ERN HE WUZ ON MAH FEET!



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tion of the United States satisfies roughly four-fifths of our needs, the remainder coming from Mexico.

J. Morgan Clements, mining engineer and geologist of New York, has recently investigated the Japanese oil fields. He is probably the best informed foreign geologist on the oil fields of that country. Mr. Clements estimates the future oil reserves of Japan in barrels as follows: Oil from "proven" ground, 90,000,000; oil from "probable" ground, 300,000,000; oil from "possible" ground, 700,000,000; interpreting these figures in terms of present annual consumption, which is around 4,000,000 per year, it is evident that the "proven" and "probable" oil lands of Japan alone will provide her with future requirements at present rate of consumption for nearly 100 years. If Mr. Clements' guess of "possible" oil lands proves correct, Japan has three centuries of supply at present rate of consumption. In contrast to this, the United States has only twenty years of probable oil reserves, measured at present rates of consumption.

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