



Polly of the Circus

BY MARGARET MAYO

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(Continued.)

Synopsis Chapter I—Polly, a child of the circus, is brought up by Toby, a clown, and by a boss canvasman called "Muvver Jim." She learns to ride Bingo, a circus horse, and grows to womanhood knowing no life except that of the circus.

Chapter II—A church near the circus lot interests Polly. Jim reproves her for her reckless riding.

Chapter III—Polly urges Bingo to unprecedented speed and falls. Toby and Jim carry the injured girl to the parsonage nearby.

Chapter IV—The Rev. John Douglas, much to Deacon Elverson's disgust, takes Polly into the parsonage. Toby and "Muvver Jim" are received kindly by Douglas, who has placed Polly in charge of his colored servant, Mandy. Douglas promises to care for the girl until she is well.

Chapter V—When Polly becomes conscious she declares that she must rejoin the circus at once. "Are you a sky pilot?" she asks the minister. Her mother was killed riding a circus horse, and her father "got his'n in a lion's cage." The minister reads to her about Ruth and Naomi, and Polly says "I guess I'd like to hear you spiel."

Chapter VI—Douglas offends Deacon Strong by defending boys who play baseball on Sunday.

Chapter VII—Polly recovers her health, but is saddened by the death of Toby. Jim sends the news and promises to keep in touch with her.

Chapter VIII—Polly recovers from the blow dealt her by Toby's death. She has ceased using slang and is educating herself under Douglas's guidance. She endeavors to improve Mandy's grammar.

Chapter IX—Deacons Strong and Elverson reprove the pastor for harboring the circus girl. Douglas declares that he is merely doing his duty. Strong declares that the girl must go. Douglas defies him.

Chapter X—Douglas suggests to Polly that she go to a seminary. Her quotation "And Ruth said, 'Entreat me not to leave thee,'" reveals to both the fact that they love each other. Douglas takes her in his arms and tells her that she is never to leave him.

Chapter XI—"Muvver Jim" calls and notes the change in Polly's speech. Polly tells him she has abandoned the circus business. Deacons Strong and Elverson inform Polly that she can save the minister trouble by returning to the circus. Learning that the deacons contemplate discharging Douglas, she rebuffs Douglas, declares that she yearns for the circus and rushes away sobbing.

Chapter XII—Douglas is very unhappy. A month passes, and the circus plays a return engagement. Hastily, Mandy's husband, ascertains that Polly is not riding. Douglas believes she is ill and starts for the circus.

CHAPTER XIII.

Jim was slow tonight. The big show was nearly over, yet many of the props used in the early part of the bill were still unloaded.

He was tinkering absentmindedly with one of the wagons in the back lot, and the men were standing about idly waiting for orders when Barker came out of the main tent and called to him sharply:

"Hey, there, Jim! What's your excuse tonight?"

"Excuse for what?" Jim crossed slowly to Barker.

"The cook tent was started half an hour late, and the sideshow top ain't loaded yet."

"Your wagons is on the bum; that's what! No. 38 carries the cook tent, an' the blacksmith has been tinkerin' with it all day. Ask him what shape it's in."

"You're always stallin'," was Barker's sullen complaint. "It's the wagons or the blacksmiths or anything but the truth. I know what's the matter, all right."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Jim sharply.

"I mean that all your time's took up

a-carryin' and a-fetchin' for that girl what calls you 'Muvver Jim.'"

"What have you got to say about her?" Jim eyed him with a threatening look.

"I got a plenty," said Barker as he turned to snap his whip at the small boys who had stolen into the back lot to peek under the rear edge of the big top. "She's been about as much good as a sick cat since she come back. You saw her act last night."

"Yes," answered Jim doggedly.

"Wasn't it punk? She didn't show at all this afternoon; said she was sick. And me with all them people inside what knowed her waitin' to see her!"

"Give her a little time," Jim pleaded. "She ain't rode for a year."

"Time!" shouted Barker. "How much does she want? She's been back a month, and instead of bracin' up she's a-gettin' worse. There's only one thing for me to do."

"What's that?" asked Jim uneasily.

"I'm goin' to call her, and call her hard."

"Look here, Barker," and Jim squared his shoulders as he looked steadily at the other man, "you're boss here, and I takes orders from you, but if I catches you abusin' Poll your bein' boss won't make no difference."

"You can't bluff me!" shouted Barker. "I ain't bluffin'. I'm only tellin' you."

"Well, you tell her to get on to her job. If she don't, she quits; that's all." He hurried into the ring.

Jim took one step to follow him, then stopped and gazed at the ground with thoughtful eyes. He, too, had seen the change in Polly. He had tried to rouse her. It was no use. She had

seen, and her eyes wandered to the distant church steeple. The moonlight seemed to shun it tonight. It looked cold and grim and dark. She wondered whether the seteman bell that once called its flock to worship had become as mute as her own dead heart. She did not hear the whir of the great machine inside the tent as it plunged through space with its girl occupant. These things were a part of the daily routine, part of the strange, vague dream through which she must stumble for the rest of her life.

Jim watched her in silence. Her face was turned from him. She had forgotten his presence.

"Star gazin', Poll?" he asked at length, dreading to disturb her reverie.

"I guess I was, Jim." She turned to him with a little, forced smile. He longed to save her from Barker's threatened rebuke.

"How you feelin' tonight?"

"I'm all right," she answered cheerfully.

"Anything you want?"

"Want?" She turned upon him with startled eyes. There was so much that she wanted that the mere mention of the word had opened a well of pain in her heart.

"I mean can I do anything for you?"

"Oh, of course not." She remembered how little any one could do.

"What is it, Poll?" he begged, but she only turned away and shook her head with a sigh. He followed her with anxious eyes. "What made you cut out the show today? Was it because you didn't want to ride afore folks what knowed you—ride afore him mebbe?"

"Him?" Her face was white. Jim feared she might swoon. "You don't mean that he was—"

"Oh, no," he answered quickly, "of course not. Parsons don't come to places like this one. I was only figurin' that you didn't want other folks to see an' to tell him how you was ridin'." She did not answer.

"Was that it, Poll?" he urged.

"I don't know." She stared into space.

"Was it?"

"I guess it was," she said after a long time.

"I knowed it!" he cried. "I was a fool to 'a' brung you back! You don't belong with us no more."

"Oh, don't, Jim! Don't! Don't make me feel I'm in the way here too!"

"Here too?" He looked at her in astonishment. "You wasn't in his way, was you, Poll?"

"Yes, Jim." She saw his look of unbelief and continued hurriedly: "Oh, I tried not to be! I tried so hard. He used to read me verses out of a Bible about my way being his way and my people his people, but it ain't so, Jim. Your way is the way you are born, and your people are the people you are born with, and you can't change it, Jim, no matter how hard you try."

"You was changin' it," he answered savagely. "You was gettin' jes' like them people. It was me what took you away an' spoiled it all. You oughtn't to 'a' come. What made you after you said you wouldn't?"

She did not answer. Strange things were going through the mind of the slow witted Jim. He braced himself for a difficult question.

"Will you answer me somethin' straight?" he asked.

"Why, of course," she said as she met his gaze.

"Do you love the parson, Poll?"

She started.

"Is that it?"

Her lids fluttered and closed; she caught her breath quickly, her lips apart, then looked far into the distance.

"Ain't that h—?"

It seemed such a short time to Jim since he had picked her up, a cooling babe, at her dead mother's side. He watched the tender, averted face. Things had turned out so differently from what he had planned.

"An' he don't care about you—like that?" he asked after a pause.

"No, not in that way." She was anxious to defend the pastor from even the thought of such a thing. "He was good and kind always, but he didn't care that way. He's not like that."

"I guess I'll have a talk with him," said Jim, and he turned to go.

"Talk!" she cried.

He stopped and looked at her in astonishment. It was the first time that he had ever heard that sharp note in her voice. Her tiny figure was stiffened with decision. Her eyes were blazing.

"If you ever dare to speak to him

about me, you'll never see me again."

Jim was perplexed.

"I mean it, Jim. I've made my choice, and I've come back to you. If you ever try to fix up things between him and me, I'll run away—really and truly a way—and you'll never, never get me back."

He shuffled awkwardly to her side and reached apologetically for the little clinched fist. He held it in his big rough hand, toying nervously with the tiny fingers.

"I wouldn't do nothin' that you wasn't a-wantin'. Poll, I was just a-tryin' to help you, only I—I never seem to know how."

She turned to him with tear dimmed eyes and rested her hands on his great, broad shoulders, and he saw the place where he dwelt in her heart.

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(To be continued.)

CITY NOTICES.

\$54,250.00 CITY OF MEDFORD, OREGON, IMPROVEMENT BONDS.

Medford, Oregon, September 16th, 1909.

The City Council of Medford, Oregon, will receive sealed bids up to 6 o'clock p. m., September 30th, 1909, for the sale of \$54,250.00 6 per cent 10-year improvement bonds, bids to be accompanied by a certified check equal to 5 per cent of the amount bid for. The right to reject any and all bids is reserved.

Bids to be addressed to Robt. W. Telfer, City Recorder, Certified check to be made payable to the City of Medford.

ROBT. W. TELFER, City Recorder.

Dated Medford, Oregon, September 16th, 1909. 161

NOTICE TO CEMENT AND PAVING CONTRACTORS.

Notice is hereby given that the city council of the city of Medford, Oregon, will receive sealed proposals for the paving of Orange street from Main street to Fourth street, and West Tenth street from Oakdale avenue to Hamilton street, with bitulithic pavement, and for the placing of concrete or cement curbing on both sides of said streets.

All bids must be submitted on forms to be furnished by the city engineer, and filed with the city recorder on or before 4:30 p. m. on the 27th day of September, 1909.

All bids must be accompanied by a certified check payable to the city treasurer equal to 10 per cent of the estimated amount bid for, to assure good faith to enter into contract, and to be forfeited to the city of Medford if the successful bidder defaults in contracting.

Plans and specifications may be had by calling on the city engineer.

Dated at Medford, Oregon, this 15th day of September, 1909.

162 ROBT. W. TELFER.

MEDFORD, Or., Aug. 5, 1909

Hall's Texas Wonder, of St. Louis, cured my daughter of a severe kidney and bladder trouble after doctors failed to give any relief, and I can cheerfully recommend it. Mrs. L. L. Wilson, 135 Bartlett St. Sold by Haskins' Drug Store.

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\$2200

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The owner has made the price low in order to sell quickly, and the property will be on the market but a short time at this price.

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SALEM BREWERY ASSOCIATION,

Medford Depot: Medford Ice & Storage Co.



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