

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. Hasty, Mandy's husband, ascertains that Polly is not riding. Douglas believes she is ill and starts for the circus.

Chapter XIII—Barker, manager of the show, reproves Jim because Polly will not ride in the minister's town. Polly admits to Jim that she loves the minister, but declares that he does not love her. She makes Jim promise to keep her secret.

"Polly!" She turned quickly. She could not answer. Douglas came toward her. He gazed at her in amazement. She drew her cape about her slightly clad figure. She seemed older to him, more unapproachable with her hair heaped high and sparkling with jewels.

She found strength at last to open her lips, but still no sound came from them. She and the pastor looked at each other strangely, like spirits newly met from far apart worlds. She too, thought her companion changed. He was older; the circles beneath his eyes were deeper, the look in their depths more grave.

"We were such close neighbors to-day I—I rather thought you'd call," he stammered. He was uncertain what he was saying. It did not matter—he was there with her.

"When you're in a circus there isn't much time for calling."

"That's why I've come to call on you." They might have been shepherd and shepherdess on a May day wooing for the halting way in which their words came.

"You're all right?" he went on. "You're happy?"

"Yes, very," she said. Her eyes were downcast. He did not believe her. The effort in her voice, her drawn, white face, belied her words. How could he get the truth from her?

"Jim said you might not want to see me."

She started. "Has Jim been talking to you?"

"Yes, but I didn't let him stop me, for you told me the day you left that you'd never change—toward me. Have you, Polly?" He studied her anxiously.

"Why, no, of course not," she said evasively.

"And you'll be quite frank when I ask you something?"

"Yes, of course." She was growing more and more uneasy. She glanced about for a way of escape.

"Why did you leave me as you did?" "I told you then." She tried to cross toward the dressing tent.

He seized her small wrists and forced her to look at him.

"And I am not happy without you, and I never, never can be." The floodgates were open. His eyes were aglow. He bent toward her eagerly.

"Oh, you mustn't!" she begged. "You've grown so close," he cried, "so close!" She struggled to be free. He did not heed her. "You know, you must know, what I mean." He drew her toward him and forced her into his arms. "You're more precious to me than all else on this earth."

For the first time he saw the extreme pallor on her face. He felt her growing limp and lifeless in his arms. A doubt crossed his mind. "If I am wrong in thinking you feel as I do, if you honestly care for all this," he glanced about at the tents, "more than for any life that I can give you, I



"Never mind, Bingo."

shan't interfere. You'll be going on your way in an hour. I'll say good-by and God bless you, but if you do care for me, Polly," he was pleading now, "if you're not happy here, won't you come back to me? Won't you, Polly?"

She dared not meet his eyes nor yet to send him away. She stood irresolute. The voice of Deacon Strong answered for her.

"So you're here, are you?" "Yes, Deacon Strong, I'm here," answered the pastor as he turned to meet the accusing eyes of the deacon.

"As for you, miss," continued Strong, with an insolent nod toward Polly, "I might have known how you'd keep your part of the bargain."

"Bargain!" echoed Douglas. "What bargain?"

"Oh, please, Deacon Strong, please. I didn't mean to see him—I didn't truly." She hardly knew what she was saying.

"What bargain?" demanded Douglas. "She told me that you and her wasn't ever goin' to see each other ag'in!" roared Strong. "If I'd known she was goin' to keep on with this kind of thing you wouldn't have got off so easy."

"So that's it!" cried Douglas. It was all clear to him now. He recalled everything—her hysterical behavior, her laughter, her tears. "It was you who drove that child back to this." He glanced at Polly. The narrow shoulders were bent forward. The nervous little fingers were clasping and unclasping each other. Never before had she seemed so small and helpless.

"Oh, please, Mr. John, please don't make him any worse!"

"Why didn't you tell me?" he demanded.

"It would have done no good," she sobbed. "Oh, why—why won't you leave me alone?"

"It would have done all the good in the world. What right had he to send you back to this?"

"I had every right," said Strong stubbornly.

"What?" cried Douglas.

"It was my duty."

"Your duty? Your narrow minded bigotry?"

"I don't allow no man to talk to me like that, not even my parson."

"I'm not your parson any longer," declared Douglas. He faced Strong squarely. He was master of his own affairs at last. Polly clung to him, begging and beseeching.

"Oh, Mr. John, Mr. John!"

"What do you mean by that?" shouted Strong.

"I mean that I stayed with you and your narrow minded congregation before because I believed you needed me. But now this girl needs me more. She needs me to protect her from just such injustice as yours."

"You'd better be protectin' yourself. That's my advice to you."

"I can do that without your advice," declared Douglas. He was master of his own affairs at last. Polly clung to him, begging and beseeching.

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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.

ROBT. W. TELFER. 162



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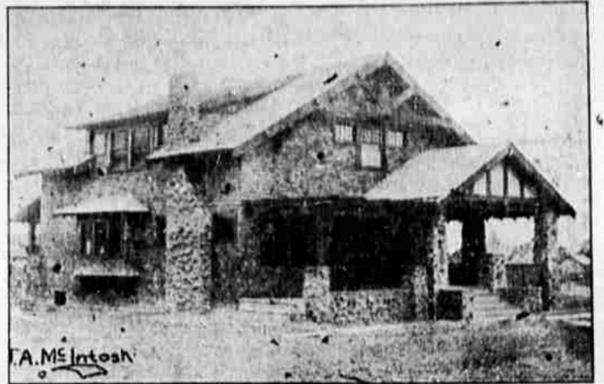
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