DOLLY of the CIRCUS

BY MARGARET MAYO

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CHAPTER V.

THE church bells were ringing their first warning for the morning service when Mandy peeped into the spare bedroom for the second time and glanced cautiously at the wisp of hair that bespoke a feminine head somewhere between the covers and the little white pillow on the four poster bed. There was no sound from the sleeper, so Mandy ventured across the room on tiptoe and raised the shades. The drooping boughs of autumn foliage lay shimmering against the window panes, and through them might be seen the gray outline of the church. Mandy glanced again toward the bed to make sure that the burst of sunlight had not wakened the invalid, then crossed to a small, rickety chair laden with the discarded finery of the little circus rider.

"Lawdy sakes!" she cried, holding up a spangled dress admiringly. "Ain't dat beautiful!" She drew near the mirror, attempting to see the reflection of the tinsel and chiffon against her very ample background of gingham and avoirdupois. "You'd sure be a swell nigger wid dat on, honey!" she chuckled to herself. "Wouldn't dem deacons holler if dey done see dat?"

The picture of the deacons' astonishment at such a spectacle so grew upon Mandy that she was obliged to cover her generous mouth to shut in her convulsive laughter lest it awaken the little girl in the bed. She crossed to the old fashioned bureau which for many months had stood unused against the wall. The drawer creaked as she opened it to lay away the gay, spangled gown.

"It'll be a mighty long time afore she puts on dem t'ings ag'in," she said, with a doubtful shake of her large, round head.

Then she went back to the chair and picked up Polly's sandals and examined the beadwork with a great deal of interest "Lawdy, lawdy!" she cried as she compared the size of the sandals to that of her own rough, worn shoes. She was again upon the point of exploding with laughter as the church bell added a few final and more emphatic clangs to its warning.

She turned, with a start, motioning a vain warning out of the window for the bell to be silent, but the little sleeper was already stirring uneasily on her pillow. One soft arm was thrown languidly over her head. The large blue eyes opened and closed

"You'd sure be a swell nigger wid dat on, honey!" she chuckled.

dreamily as she murmured the words of the clown song that Jim and Toby had taught her years ago:

"Ting ling,
That's what the bells sing"—

Mandy reached the side of the bed as the girl's eyes opened a second time and met hers with a blank stare of astonishment. A tiny frown came into the small white forehead.

"What's the matter?" she asked faintly, trying to find something familiar in the black face before her.

"Hush, child, hush," Mandy whispered. "Jes' you lay pufflckly still. Dat's only de furs' bell a-ringin'."

"First bell?" the girl repeated as her eyes traveled quickly about the strange walls and the unfamiliar fittings of the room. "This ain't the show!" she cried suddenly.

"Lor' bless you, no! Dis ain't no show!" Mandy answered, and she laughed reassuringly.

"Then where am I?" Polly asked, half breathless with bewilderment.

"Nebber you mind 'bout dat," was Mandy's unsatisfactory reply.

"But I do mind," protested Polly, trying to raise herself to a sitting position. "Where's the bunch?"

"De wat?" asked Mandy in surprise.

"The bunch—Jim and Toby an' the rest of the push!"

"Lor' bless you," Mandy exclaimed, "dey's done gone 'long wid de circus hours ago."

"Gone! Show gone!" Polly cried in amazement. "Then what am I doin' here?"

"Hol' on dar, honey! Hol' on!" Mandy cautioned. "Don't you 'cite yo'se'f."

"Let me alone!" Polly put aside the arm that was trying to place a shawl around her. "I got to get out of here."

"Youse got plenty o' time for dat," Mandy answered. "Jes' yo' wait awhile."

"I can't wait, an' I won't!" Polly shrieked, almost beside herself with anxiety. "I got to get to the next burg—Wakefield, ain't it? What time is it? Let me alone! Let me go!" she cried, struggling desperately.

The door opened softly, and the young pastor stood looking down at the picture of the frail, white faced child and her black, determined captor.

"Here, here! What's all this about?" he asked in a firm tone, though evidently amused.

"Who are you?" returned the girl as she shoved herself quickly back against the pillows and drew the covers close under her chin, looking at him oddly over their top.

"She done been cuttin' up somefin awful!" Mandy explained as she tried to regain enough breath for a new encounter.

"Cutting up? You surprise me, Miss Polly," he said, with mock seriousness.

"How do you know I'm Polly?" the little rebel asked, her eyes gleaming large and desperate above the friendly covers.

"If you will be very good and keep very quiet, I will try to tell you," he said as he crossed to the bed.

"I won't be quiet, not for nobody," Polly objected, with a bold disregard of double negatives. "I got to get a move. If you ain't goin' to help me you needn't butt in."

"I am afraid I can't help you to go just yet," Douglas replied. He was beginning to perceive that there were tasks before him other than the shaping of Polly's character.

"What are you tryin' to do to me, anyhow?" she asked as she shot a glance of suspicion from the pastor to Mandy. "What am I up against?"

"Don't you be scared, honey," Mandy reassured her. "Youse jes' as safe here as you done been in de circus."

"Safer, we hope," Douglas added, with a smile.

"Are you two bug?" Polly questioned as she turned her head from one side to the other and studied them with a new idea. "Well, you can't get none the best of me. I can get away all right, an' I will too."

She made a desperate effort to put one foot to the floor, but fell back with a cry of pain.

"Dar, dar," Mandy murmured, putting the pillow under the poor, cramped neck and smoothing the tangled hair from Polly's forehead. "You done hurt yo'sef for suah dis time."

The pastor had taken a step toward the bed. His look of amusement had changed to one of pity.

"You see, Miss Polly, you have had a very bad fall, and you can't get away just yet nor see your friends until you are better."

"It's only a scratch," Polly whimpered. "I can do my work; I got to." One more feeble effort and she succumbed, with a faint "jiminy crickets!"

"Uncle Toby told me that you were a very good little girl," Douglas said as he drew up a chair and sat down by her side, confident by the expression on her face that at last he was master of the situation. "Do you think he would like you to behave like this?"

"I sure am on the blink," she sighed as she settled back wearily upon the pillow.

"You'll be all right soon," Douglas answered cheerily. "Mandy and I will help the time to go."

"I recollect now," Polly faltered without hearing him. "It was the last hoop. Jim seemed to have a hunch I was goin' to be in for trouble when I went into the ring. Bingo must 'a' felt it too. He kept a-pullin' and a-jerkin' from the start. I got myself together to make the last jump, an'—I can't remember no more." Her head drooped, and her eyes closed.

"I wouldn't try just now if I were you," Douglas answered tenderly.

"It's my wheel, ain't it?" Polly questioned after a pause.

"Yoah what, chile?" Mandy exclaimed as she turned from the table, where she had been rolling up the unused bandages left from the doctor's call the night before.

"I say it's my creeper, my paddle," Polly explained, trying to locate a few of her many pains. "Gee, but that hurts!" She tried to bend her ankle. "Is it punctured?"

"Only sprained," Douglas answered, striving to control his amusement at the expression on Mandy's puzzled face. "Better not talk any more about it."

"Ain't anything the matter with my tongue, is there?" she asked, turning her head to one side and studying him quizzically.

"I don't think there is," he replied good naturedly.

"How did I come to fall in here anyhow?" she asked as she studied the walls of the unfamiliar room.

"We brought you here."

"It's a swell place," she conceded grudgingly.

"We are comfortable," he admitted as a telltale smile again hovered about his lips. He was thinking of the changes that he must presently make in Miss Polly's vocabulary.

"Is this the big top?" she asked.

"The—what?" he stammered.

"The main tent," she explained.

"Well, no; not exactly. It's going to be your room now, Miss Polly."

"My room! Gee! Think of that!" she gasped as the possibility of her actually having a room all of her own took hold of her mind. "Much obliged," she said, with a nod, feeling actually readjust herself to a new order of things. Her eyes again roved about the room. It was a cheerful place in which to be imprisoned. Even Polly could not deny that. The broad window at the back, with its white and pink chintz curtains on the inside and its frame of ivy on the outside, spoke of singing birds and sunshine all day long. Everything from the white ceiling to the sweet smelling matting that covered the floor was spotlessly clean. The cane bottomed rocker near the curved window seat with its pretty pillows told of days when a convalescent might look in comfort at the garden beneath. The counterpane, with its old fashioned rose pattern; the little white tidies on the back of each chair and Mandy crooning beside the window all helped to make a homelike picture.

"SHE DONE BEEN CUTTIN' UP SOMEFIN AWFUL!"

She wondered what Jim and Toby would say if they could see her now, sitting like a queen in the midst of her soft coverlets, with no need to raise even a finger to wait upon herself.

"Ain't it the limit?" she sighed, and with that Jim and Toby seemed to drift farther away. She began to see their life apart from hers. She could picture Jim with his head in his hands. She could hear his sharp orders to the men. He was always short with the others when anything went wrong with her.

"I'll bet 'Muvver Jim's' in the dumps," she murmured as a cloud stole across the flowerlike face; then the tired muscles relaxed, and she ceased to rebel.

"Muvver Jim?" Douglas repeated, feeling that he must recall her to a knowledge of his presence.

"That's what I call him," Polly explained, "but the fellows call him 'Big Jim.' You might not think Jim could be a good mother just to look at him,

"Lordy, no, chile. He ain't nebber seed none ob dem t'ings."

but he is, only sometimes you can't tell him things you could a real mother," she added, half sadly.

"And your real mother went away when you were very young?"

"No, she didn't go away."

"No?" There was a puzzled note in the pastor's voice.

"She went out," Polly corrected.

"Out!" he echoed blankly.

"Yes; finished—lights out."

"Oh, an accident." Douglas understood at last.

"I don't like to talk about it." Polly raised herself on her elbow and looked at him solemnly, as though about to impart a bit of forbidden family history. It was this look in the round eyes that had made Jim so often declare that the kid knew everything

"Why, mother 'd 'a' been ashamed if she'd 'a' knowed how she wound up. She was the best rider of her time—everybody says so—but she cashed in by fallin' off a skate what didn't have no more ginger 'an a kitten. If you can beat that!" She gazed at him with her lips pressed tightly together, evidently expecting some startling expression of wonder.

"And your father?" Douglas asked rather lamely, being at a loss for any adequate comment upon a tragedy which the child before him was too desolate even to understand.

"Oh, dad's finish was all right. He got his'n in a lions' cage where he worked. There was nothin' slow about his end." She looked up for his approval.

"For de Lord's sake!" Mandy groaned as the wonder of the child's conversation grew upon her.

"An' now I'm down an' out," Polly concluded, with a sigh.

"But this is nothing serious," said the pastor, trying to cheer her.

"It's serious enough with a whole show a-dependin' on you. Maybe you don't know how it feels to have to knock off work."

"Oh, yes, I do," Douglas answered quickly. "I was ill a while ago myself. I had to be in bed day after day, thinking of dozens of things that I ought to be doing."

"Was you ever floored?" Polly asked with a touch of unbelief as she studied the fine, healthy physique at the side of her bed.

"'Deed, he was, chile," Mandy cried, feeling that her opportunity had now arrived, "an' I had the wors' time a-keepin' him in bed. He act jes' like you did."

"Did he?" Polly was delighted to find that the pastor had "nothin' on her," as she would have put it.

"You ought to have heard him," continued Mandy, made eloquent by Polly's show of interest. "'What will dose poor folks do?' he kept a-sayin'. 'Jes' yo' lay where yo' is,' I tole him. 'Dem poor folks will be better off dan dey would be a-comin' to yoah funeral.'"

"Poor folks?" Polly questioned. "Do you give money to folks? We are always itchin' to get it away from 'em."

Before Douglas could think of words with which to defend his disapproved methods Mandy had continued eagerly:

"An' den on Sunday, when he can't go to church an' preach"— She got no further. A sharp exclamation brought both Mandy and Douglas to attention.

"Preach!" Polly almost shouted. She looked at him with genuine alarm this time.

"That will do, Mandy," Douglas commanded, feeling an unwelcome drama gathering about his head.

"Great Barnum and Bailey!" Polly exclaimed, looking at him as though he were the very last thing in the world she had ever expected to see. "Are you a sky pilot?"

"That's what he am, chile," Mandy slipped the words in slyly, for she knew that they were against the pastor's wishes, but she was unable to restrain her mischievous impulse to sow the seeds of curiosity that would soon bear fruit in the inquisitive mind of the little invalid.

"Will you get on to me a-landin' into a mixup like this?" She continued to study the uncomfortable man at her side. "I never thought I'd be a-talkin' to one of you guys. What's your name?"

"Douglas." He spoke shortly.

"Ain't you got no handle to it?"

"If you mean my Christian name, it's John."

"Well, that sounds like a sky pilot all right. But you don't look like I s'posed they did."

"Why not?"

"I always s'posed sky pilots was old an' grouchy-like. You're a'most as good lookin' as our strong man."

"I done tole him he was too good lookin' to be an unmarried parson," Mandy chuckled, more and more amused at the pastor's discomfort.

"Looks don't play a very important part in my work," Douglas answered curtly. Mandy's confidential snickers made him doubly anxious to get to a less personal topic.

"Well, they count for a whole lot with us." She nodded her head decidedly. "How long you been showin' in this town, anyhow?"

"About a year," Douglas answered, with something of a sigh.

"A year!" she gasped. "In a burg like this! You must have an awful lot of laughs in your act to keep 'em a-comin' that long." She was wise in the ways of professional success.

"Not many, I'm afraid." He wondered for the first time if this might be the reason for his rather indifferent success.

"Do you give them the same stuff, or have you got a rep?"

"A rep?" he repeated in surprise.

"Sure, repertory, different acts—entries, some calls 'em. Uncle Toby's got twenty-seven entries. It makes a heap of difference in the big towns where you have a run."

"Oh, I understand!" Douglas answered in a tone of relief. "Well, I try to say something new each Sunday."

"What kind of spiels do you give 'em?" she inquired, with growing interest.

"I try to help my people to get on better terms with themselves and to forget their week day troubles." He had never had occasion to define his efforts so minutely.

"Well, that's jes' the same as us," Polly told him, with an air of condescension, "only circuses draws more people 'an churches."

[To be Continued.]

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SUMMONS.

IN the Superior Court of the State of Washington, for Thurston County.

Bridges Timber Company, a corporation, and Samuel C. Knowles, Plaintiffs, v. Sumner E. Sibley and Jane Doe Sibley, his wife, Defendants.

The State of Washington to the said defendants, Sumner E. Sibley and Jane Doe Sibley, his wife:

You are hereby summoned to appear within sixty days after the date of the first publication of this summons, to-wit: Within sixty days after the 30th day of April, 1909, and defend the above entitled action in the above entitled court, and answer the complaint of the plaintiffs, and serve a copy of your answer upon the undersigned attorneys for plaintiffs, at their office below stated, and in case of your failure so to do judgment will be rendered against you according to the demand of the complaint, which has been filed with the clerk of said Court The object of this action is to quiet title in the plaintiffs to all the timber on the following described property, to-wit:

On five acres in the form of a square situated in the southeast corner of the southwest quarter (SW¼) of the southeast quarter (SE¼), and five acres in the form of a square situated in the southwest corner of the southeast quarter (SE¼) of the southeast quarter (SE¼), all in Section Twenty three (23), Township Seventeen (T 17) North, Range 1 (1) West, in Thurston County, Washington.

TROY & STURDEVANT,
and
A. J. FALKNOR,
Attorneys for Plaintiffs.

Post Office address: Olympia, Washington; office address, Suite 4, Byrne Bldg., Olympia, Washington.

Date of first publication, April 30, 1909. 7t.

SUMMONS.

IN the Superior Court of the State of Washington in and for the county of Thurston.

Donald K. Smith, plaintiff, vs. Jesse Smith and all persons unknown, if any, claiming or having any right, title or interest in and to the hereinafter described property and the unknown heirs of Jeremiah K. Smith, deceased, if any, defendants.

State of Washington, to the said Jesse Smith and to the unknown heirs of Jeremiah K. Smith, deceased, if any, and to all persons unknown, having or claiming any interest or lien in the hereinafter described real estate, defendants.

You are hereby summoned to appear within sixty days after the date of the first publication of this Summons, to wit, within sixty days after the 30th day of April, 1909, and defend the above entitled action in the above entitled court, and answer the complaint of the plaintiff and serve a copy of your answer upon the undersigned attorneys for plaintiff, at their office below stated, and in case of your failure so to do, judgment will be rendered against you according to the demand of the complaint which has been filed with the Clerk of the above entitled Court.

This is an action to quiet title and decree the right in the plaintiff to sell and convey the following described real estate, to-wit:

The southeast quarter of the northeast quarter and the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section 23, township 15, north range 2 west, and the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter and the west half of the southwest quarter of section 24, township 15, north of range 2 west, containing two hundred acres, more or less. All situate, lying and being in the County of Thurston, State of Washington.

TROY & STURDEVANT,
Attorneys for Plaintiff.

P. O address, Olympia, Thurston county, Washington.

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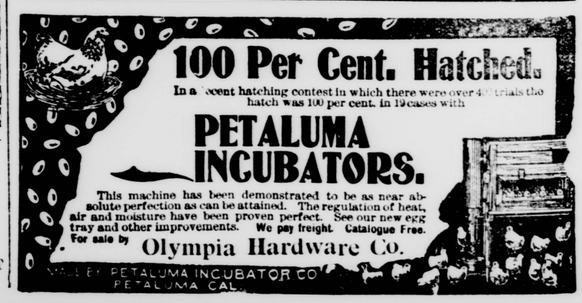

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