



Hawk in the Wind

BY HELEN TOPPING MILLER

© D. APPLETON-CENTURY CO.
W. N. U. Service



CHAPTER VIII—Continued

Wills came back and Marian drove away without a word. She sat, stiffly erect, behind the wheel, looking straight ahead, the stern line of her lips and the guarded chill of her eyes hiding the aching tumult that seethed in her heart.

She was hating herself for being so vulnerable, for the mad desire she had now to swing into a lonely side road and let the engine die, while she cried helplessly and pitifully in this man's arms.

He was sitting straight. He hadn't cared, of course. That had been fever, the foolishness of illness, that had made him look at her adoringly and clutch at her fingers and say things about gipsy tambourines and her face burning behind his eyelids all night long.

But she, Marian Morgan, who all her life had been so fiercely individualistic, her mind as coolly practical as a well-made watch, always sure, always self-contained, was no longer sure. If this was being in love, it was white pain and torment and cruelty past belief. She stared at the damp road, scudding under, and at the leafless bushes slipping by, and fought for the grim pride she had from her father, and with it the sharp tonic of anger that made it easier to be frigid and not to look around at this man, sitting so near to her, who, even remote and unconsidering as he appeared, could make tingling flashes of awareness tremble along her arms and hands so that the steering-wheel quivered.

She fixed her mind on old Tom. Remembering fathers, remembering days when her father lay slowly dying, when the house was heavy with the tragic air of sorrow, when people walked on tiptoe somberly and telephones were muffled with wads of paper. She had been very young then, practically a child, but old enough to be frightened and to suffer keenly. She had been summoned home from school into an atmosphere of doom, and her one comfort had been old Tom.

Many times, when her mother was busy and harassed at the mill, and the incoherent mumblings of the paralyzed sick man made Marian's young flesh creep and her throat cramp horribly, old Tom had appeared in the drive, steering a rickety old truck.

"Got to go up toward Little Fork to fetch them boys in. You come along and go with me. Woods is too lonesome when you get as old as I be. Feller gets to talking to himself and next thing you know they'll be telling round town that old Tom Pruitt has gone crazy."

On those trips Tom had taught her all he knew. The ways of the woods creatures, how to tell poison-oak from the harmless five-leaved creeper, how to keep silent and observe while a snake shed its skin. He had told her stories of early days before the highways penetrated the mountains, when a trip to Waynesville was a day's journey, when wagons had to be taken apart and carried over the mountains, and what dim roads there were followed the beds of streams and were practical only for men on horseback.

He had taught her a little of the odd reserve of the mountain people, the friendliness that met an advance half-way but never presumed, never was forward, that rested always on a stony base of elemental pride. The scrawling sons of mountain men who ran liquor, set fires, and poached deer on the game reserves, he despised and disowned. "Country trash," he dismissed them. Braggarts and liars avoided him.

Gentle, mild, and kind—how could old Tom have done this incredible thing? What temporary madness had possessed him? Whatever the impulse, Tom had believed himself fundamentally justified. It was an old law. In the mountains a man defended his own. Now, he accepted the penalty with a dignified grace. She could not desert him.

Virgie would hire the best lawyer available, but a lawyer could do little with Tom and nothing at all for him till it was known whether the man, Cragg, would live or die.

At a little store on the edge of the county-seat, Marian stopped and bought a bag of little cakes, a package of raisins. Always on her trips in the old truck, Tom had carried raisins loose in the pocket of his denim coat. She had seen him many times, luring a mountain jay or a squirrel near-by, scattering raisins on the moss at the foot of a tree.

The deputy jailer was a man she did not know, but he let them in when he heard her name. The jailer's wife looked in her purse, ran her fat hands over Marian's body, automatically, looked in the paper bag.

"I don't reckon you fetched Pruitt any back-saws"—the deputy showed broken teeth in a grin—"but them's the rules."

Tom was pitifully glad to see her and he shook hands with Wills with a grave and pathetic dignity.

"Mother has gone to see about getting you out, Tom," Marian said. "You must come home. Mother needs you."

Tom considered this, looking straight ahead, sitting on a bench holding Marian's hand tightly. Then he shook his head.

"I reckon I'll stay here. I shot that feller. He was fixing to steal my timber. I'd a shot them all if my gun hadn't jammed. Never knowed it to do that-a-way before."

"But you must come, Tom. He didn't die. He won't die. And the mill will go to ruin without you. It's your mill, Tom—part yours. You can't let the mill down."

"She's hired you, ain't she?" Tom looked levelly at Wills. "I figured she got put out at me when I stayed over there so long. I was waiting for them fellers to come back and it looked like they never was comin'. Then Lon told me Mis' Morgan had hired this feller, so I figure I'll just stay here a spell. Lon treats me all right."

They argued in vain. Wills strove to be convincing and caught a grateful look in Marian's eyes. But Tom was immovable. He tore the top from the box of raisins and poured some out into Marian's hand.

"Why did you do it, Tom?" Marian pleaded. "You could have scared them off. You didn't need to shoot."

"They was after my timber. I had a right to that piece of poplar—your ma said so. I reckon I better stay on here a spell."

He did not, she saw, look ahead. He was old and growing childish. He was not thinking of what might lie ahead, remorselessly, for him. He had an idea that by remaining here, patiently, behind bars, he was somehow paying his debt to an overzealous system of jurisprudence, the payment demanded for a private act of reasonable reprisal.

He was resigned to legal interference with his personal liberties, but it was obvious that he had no idea of having done a capital crime. There was a grim patience in his attitude that went back to codes older than America, went back as the mountain people's odd speech and ancient ballads went back to an Anglo-Saxon tradition, an older, sterner civilization of harquebus, land entailed and inviolate, and freemen responsible only to a preoccupied king or a silent Heaven.

Marian choked on the thought of what lay ahead for Tom, and flung her arms around him suddenly.

"Oh, Tom, why did you do it? Everything is so wrong! We can't get along without you."

Tom gulped, reddened, scrubbed his hand over his unshaven chin.

"What you worrying about? Mis' Morgan'll git along. She's enough for a whole pack of 'em. Nobody ain't never got the best of her yet."

They left him soon after that, left him calmly superintending the jailer's children, who were cracking walnuts in the corridor.

Wills, seeing the misting of tears on Marian's eyelids, said quietly, "Would you like me to drive?"

"No, I'll drive. I'm all right."

But he, Wills thought bitterly, as they flew along the curving mountain road, was not all right. Nothing was all right. He looked sidelong at Marian's delicate profile, at the sweet, strong curve of her lips, the dusting of golden freckles on her nose, the faint tinge of pink along her misted lashes, and ached fiercely to take her into his arms. He twisted his lips ironically, thinking of her scathing scorn if he tried it, missing entirely the desolation that dimmed every line of her face, and made her hands move dully.

Stiffly silent, eyes straight-ahead, they drove back to the mill—two young, angry, frustrated creatures, yearning for each other, braced against each other, rigidly correct—and stone-blind!

CHAPTER IX

In the early afternoon Virgie returned to the mill, spent and dispirited and rapped raw with irritation. She had hired the best lawyer to be found, she had arranged for bail for Tom, only to have him sit back stubbornly, refuse to leave the jail or to co-operate with the lawyer.

"I done it. I shot him," he said over and over.

There was, apparently, nothing to be done at present.

"Leave him set a while," advised Lon Hicks. "He's kind of numb right now, layin' up there on that ridge in the cold. He'll come to himself before long and git to thinking—and then you can talk sense to him."

So there was nothing to do but abandon her futile efforts, and go back to the mill. And once there she let her weariness and exasperation have their way with her.

"You'd think," she snapped at Lucy Fields, "that those men out there loading that car were building the pyramids and had six thousand years to finish the job! When did we start running this plant in slow motion?"

"They're short-handed, Mrs. Morgan—and with Tom gone—" Lucy faltered explanations.

"Where's Wills? Did he come to day?"

"He's working with Jerry on the feeders. He went away with Marian—but they came back before noon. It was so cold in the yard—and he isn't really well yet—"

"So he went off with Marian? I suppose she wanted something for that Little Theater and if the whole mill happens to go 't pot, why, that's no consequence?"

"I think they went to the jail. Hobe said—"

"Answer that, will you? And if

anybody else wants to talk about that business on Hazel Fork, tell 'em I've been stricken stone-deaf! Tell Mildred when she gets all the town gossip off the wire she can put in a call to Baltimore for me. There's something funny about this Cragg business, something that doesn't add up."

"Yes, Mrs. Morgan. And when you have time Mr. Daniels would like to see you. He said it was important."

"I suppose he has another of his ideas. He's always finding something in a catalogue that saves a thousand dollars or so in production costs and only costs fifteen or twenty thousand to install!"

Virgie was very low in her mind as she opened the door of Stanley Daniels' laboratory.

"Well, what's on your mind?" she demanded.

Daniels looked up from his work, wiped his hands quickly.

"Oh, Mrs. Morgan—sorry I had to ask you to come over, but there was a risk that this stuff would solid-



"You mean—somebody could have ruined that whole digester of pulp—deliberately?"

ify if I left it—and I thought you should know about these tests. Something is going wrong with the solvents—I can't say just what till I finish running these. In the number three vat the fiber seems to be so weakened and destroyed that the whole run will be worthless. Would you like to look at this?" He wiped a tube swiftly, held it to the light, shook it.

Virgie crossed the room, studied the brown mixture. "What's wrong with it?" she asked.

"Watch." Daniels tilted the tube, let the solution spin out. Ignorant of processes as she was, Virgie saw enough to know that something was vitally wrong. This was not wood pulp in solution, but a sickening foamy brew that spun out on the filter paper Daniels spread beneath it.

"I have to believe you," Virgie said. "I don't know enough to know what's wrong—but something is, evidently. But—how could it have happened?"

"There could," Daniels said, "have been some chemical accident. Unlikely though, if you bought the stuff at the same place. Changes do occur—accidents in shipment, moisture, too much heat—but not often. But this seems to me too serious to be explained in that way. Something wrong has been added—my tests will show what it is when they're finished. Of course that may have been accidental, too—wrong label, something like that. There's always the human element, you know. Workmen make mistakes and hide them. And then of course we have to consider the possibility that it was deliberate."

Virgie sat down abruptly on a leather-covered stool. Her legs were weak, all the vague misgivings she had felt assumed a definite shape of menace.

"You mean—somebody could have ruined that whole digester of pulp—deliberately? Put in something to destroy the fiber? How could that have happened? You keep the keys. You test everything."

"I did not, unfortunately, test the solvents in this run," Daniels admitted. "I haven't been doing it lately—they come sealed and they've always been perfect before. We depended on the reputation of the manufacturer. Of course, hereafter I'll test everything thoroughly—but that doesn't help us now."

"And in the meantime we lose a batch of pulp and have all the trouble of cleaning the digester out?"

"I'm afraid this lot is useless. I'm running every sort of test to be certain but in the meantime it looks pretty dubious."

Virgie let her breath out slowly. All sorts of odd, wild ideas seethed in her mind. Someone had ruined an expensive run of pulp, someone had it in for her—but why?

Vague rumors she had heard of communists at work in industrial regions, of sabotage and labor troubles fomented, she disconcerted. Her men had worked in the Morgan mill all their lives. Some of them had helped David Morgan to build the

plant, some of them sons of men who had laid the first bricks.

Repeatedly she had called them into conferences, during the black years of the depression, laying the facts before them, speaking their language. She had made sacrifices to keep the mill in operation when there was no profit for her, no possible way to show a profit. If the mill closed there was no other employment for them—and yet here was suspicion, sabotage and ugly doubt that rested, till she had proof and certain knowledge, upon every man in the mill.

Virgie hated the thought with the frightened hate of the innately kind and candid woman. She hated looking at Jerry and Hobe and the Spain boys, with speculation in her eyes. She loathed the feeling that hostile looks might be following her. Every man in the mill owed something to her—and yet people were funny!

She went home at night, lost in a heavy, ruminative gloom.

She changed her clothes and went down to her big chair that faced David Morgan's picture and still had the print of David Morgan's head in the leather of the back. David looked tired, too, she thought. David was out of it all. He was lucky.

Marian sat, moodily, in front of the fire staring into the blaze.

"You," sighed Virgie, sinking into the cushions with a groan, "are a cheerful sight for tired eyes! In a merry laugh or a song ever sounded in this room I suppose I'd drop dead from shock. What were you doing over at the jail?"

"I went over to bring Tom back. He wouldn't come."

"Being locked up on a criminal charge, that is kind of odd."

"You were going to arrange bail for him. Lon Hicks said so. But Tom wouldn't come."

"I suppose you had to take young Wills along in case you needed somebody to carry Tom's baggage—his other bandana! Did Wills mention that he's working for me? Not that it matters, but now and then we do run off a batch of pulp when we can get a little co-operation from the gentlemen I employ."

"Mother, don't be so prickly! I took Mr. Wills over there because Lossie said the people in town were saying you had fired Tom and given Wills Tom's job. I thought perhaps Tom might have heard it. I hope you don't think I took him because I enjoyed his company?"

Virgie looked at her daughter levelly. Her heart gave a little jerk. Like every other mother she had postponed stubbornly admitting to herself her child's maturity; she had put off the inevitable hour of change when some man should desire her child for his own. For days she had been seeing through Branford Wills clearly and she had not been displeased. She liked his straightforwardness, the trace of iron in him, the strong and gentle way he had with women. But there was no seeing through Marian. Virgie admitted to herself that her child was a dark-eyed enigma to her mother. And in her present state of mind, nerve-taut and weary, puzzles were irritating.

"Do you mean to tell me that you don't know that that chap is in love with you?" she demanded.

"Have I raised up a daughter with no more feminine intuition than a ground turtle? Why—Lossie knows more than that! Or am I supposed to be just a nice stupid old mother, blind as a bat?"

Marian's eyes darkened and her face changed queerly. There was a little convulsion of her lips that was a tremor of pain, but Virgie was too spent and too exasperated to see.

"So that," Marian's voice crackled like ice, "is the cute little plot. He's in love with me so you give him a job in the mill. It's a Rollo book—the nice young man works his way up from sweeping the store and the mill owner's daughter is supposed to be all of a twitter because she gets a kind look. Unfortunately, Mother dear, you've been reading Dorothy Dix or seeing too many movies. Mr. Branford Wills happens not to be in love with me—a v observer can see with half an eye. Either half. And I happen not to be in love with him."

"That," Virgie mumbled aloud, when Marian had done, "is what you could call a dramatic exit. Very satisfying—to the actor."

CHAPTER X

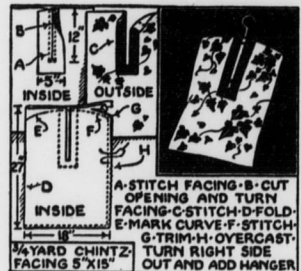
Branford Wills went to his work at the mill in the morning like a young man riding to a crusade. There was about him, as he entered the gate, a feeling of going into battle. No tangible opposition presented itself, no definite hostility. The men were not friendly, but they were heavily polite and reserved, as he knew all mountain men to be until they were won over. Daniels was curt and indifferent but their work did not coincide and Wills, following the milling of the product through the plant, from the first removal of the bark to the warm brown rolls of wood-pulp rolled into storage, saw the chemist but seldom.

But on the snowy morning following his visit to the jail, Daniels emerged from his laboratory, his hands in the pockets of a stained jacket, and came to stand beside Wills who was watching a new couch blanket being spread on one of the big presses.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

HOW TO SEW

by Ruth Wyeth Spears



with a pattern showing all kinds of rope knots. A boy would like that. Each step in making the bag is shown in the sketch.

In SEWING Book 3 there are directions for still another type of bag on a hanger; also a pocket for the pantry door. This book contains directions for the spool shelves; stocking cat; "The rug that grew up with the family," and many other of your favorites among articles that have appeared in the paper. Send order to:

MRS. RUTH WYETH SPEARS
Drawer 10
Bedford Hills New York
Enclose 10 cents for Book No. 3.
Name
Address

Insignia of Officers

The insignia of the 12 ranking officers of the U. S. army are as follows: Corporal, double chevron on arm; Sergeant, triple chevron; 2nd Lieut., gold bar on shoulder; 1st Lieut., silver bar; Captain, two silver bars; Major, gold oak leaf; Lieut. Col., silver oak leaf; Colonel, silver eagle; Brig. Gen., one star; Lieut. Gen., two stars; Maj. Gen., three stars; General, four stars.

Beware Coughs from common colds That Hang On

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to sell you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly allays the cough or you are to have your money back.

CREOMULSION
for Coughs, Chest Colds, Bronchitis

Man's Will

The commander of the forces of a large State may be carried off, but the will of even a common man cannot be taken from him.—Confucius.

DON'T BE BOSSED

BY YOUR LAXATIVE—RELIEVE CONSTIPATION THIS MODERN WAY

When you feel gassy, headachy, lousy due to clogged-up bowels, do as millions do—take Feen-A-Mint at bedtime. Next morning—thorough, comfortable relief, helping you start the day full of your normal energy and pep, feeling like a million! Feen-A-Mint doesn't disturb your night's rest or interfere with work the next day. Try Feen-A-Mint, the chewing gum laxative, yourself! It tastes good, it's handy and economical... a family supply costs only

FEEN-A-MINT 10¢

What Matters

It is not what you have that matters, it is what you do with what you have.—Grenfell.

KENT BLADES 10 Double Edge or 7 Single Edge to Package 10c

Place for Money

A wise man should have money in his head, but not in his heart.—Swift.

HELP PREVENT

many colds from developing
Colds may be prevented—often—by the early use of Penetro Nose Drops. Assure provision of "stitch-in-time" aid. And the large supply costs only, 25¢.

PENETRO NOSE DROPS

Romance Is Poetry

Romance is the poetry of literature.—Madame Necker.

ARE you planning things that will sell well at a Fair or Bazaar? Or is this the season that you catch up on odds and ends of sewing for the house? In either case you will like to stitch up a bag like this one. Everyone seems to have a special use for one of these bags on a hanger. I have one that I use for laundry when I go traveling. Men and boys like them for closet laundry bags too, as they are plenty big enough for shirts. A little girl I know has a small version of one of these in which she keeps doll clothes scraps. I have also seen them used for everything from dress patterns to dust rags.

This green and white ivy patterned chintz with green facing makes a good looking bag. Pictorial chintz will amuse a youngster—something with animals or toys or a landscape in the design. I saw a material the other day

Make Warm Slippers For the Little Folks



WILL the little tots be proud of these warm slippers! They come in three sizes. You can use angora or another wool for the dots that are embroidered on.

Pattern 2693 contains directions for making slippers in 2, 4 and 6-year size; illustrations of them and stitches; materials required; photo of pattern stitch. Send orders to:

Sewing Circle Needlecraft Dept.
82 Eighth Ave. New York
Enclose 15 cents in coins for Pattern No.....
Name
Address

Contentment

And we shall be made truly wise if we be made content; content, too, not only with what we can understand, but content with what we do not understand—the habit of mind which theologians call—and rightly—faith in God.—Kingsley.

A CYCLE OF HUMAN BETTERMENT

ADVERTISING gives you new ideas, and also makes them available to you at economical cost. As these new ideas become more accepted, prices go down. As prices go down, more persons enjoy new ideas. It is a cycle of human betterment, and it starts with the printed words of a newspaper advertisement.

JOIN THE CIRCLE READ THE ADS