

# HAWK in the WIND

By  
Helen Topping Miller

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## CHAPTER XI

Marian Morgan had driven her little car up a twisting stretch of ridge road, without having any very definite idea of where she was going or why.

She drove slowly because she told herself that it was thrifty to spare tires on a rocky, boulder-edged track. She searched the hills above and below with her eyes, but not even to herself would she admit that she looked for anything. She had heard her mother telephoning instructions that morning, but she had kept her mind sternly on her breakfast grapefruit and adjured herself not to listen. What did it matter where the woods truck went or who went with it?

She slipped out of the car, dragged the cushion out and rummaged for the pump, set it up on the ground. With a nail-file from her purse she pressed down the valve of a front tire, let the air escape until the tire sagged loose and floppy, a discouraging flummox of limp rubber. Then she climbed back into the car, wrapped the rug around her knees and sat in a small, cold huddle waiting.

Instantly, now that the thing was done, a hundred accusing and condemning voices clamored in her ears. She was being cheap, she was doing the sort of shallow trick that a girl of Lossie's class might devise, she was forgetting that she was the daughter of Virgie Morgan of the Morgan mills. But drawing out all these self-reproaches was the thin, poignant cry that had trembled through her heart and beat in her blood since the night she had talked to her mother before the fire.

"I have to know!" she said, plaintively, aloud. "I know it isn't true—but I have to be sure."  
This contradictory patching up of her conscience helped her to be calm to wait, though her feet tingled with cold. A mountain jay came and shrieked at her from a sumac clump. A deer stood for an instant, tense and listening under some gnarled ancient apple-trees beside the ruin of a stone chimney. Then suddenly he bounded away. There was a metallic vibration through the woods. The truck was starting. She caught the backfire of a cold engine and the clank of shovels tossed aboard, and leaned her elbow on the button of her horn. The glare made the jays and the little pine sparrows and crossbills scatter with a whirring and snapping of twigs.

Then the rusty radiator appeared over the rise emitting steam. Joe had let the engine run hot on the grade. He was always doing that, too impatient to cool it out properly when they reached the top of a long climb.

Two men jumped down when they saw Marian's car, and came running. One was Joe. The other was Branford Wills. Swiftly Marian put every scruple out of her mind. She was a woman, using a woman's devious and often unfair weapons.

She said, "I'm stuck. That miserable old tire insists on going flat. And I left the key to the spare in my other purse. Isn't mother with you? I thought she came up here. There's a long-distance call for her—I came up to tell her."

"She didn't come with us. She must be at the mill," Wills said. "Let's have a look at that tire."  
"It's flat, all right," Joe gave the wheel a kick. "But there's still a little air in it. Maybe we can pump it up so you can get down to the road."

They pumped up the tire, and Joe studied it, testing the valve.

"Must be a pressure leak," he said. "Valve's all right. Can you turn around here without getting stuck?"

"I think so—I'll try."  
"You better do it," Joe said to Wills. "It's steep off there. She could turn over easy."

Marian slid along meekly. "I'm a lot of trouble," she said in a voice which would have amazed her mother, so humble was it.

"No trouble," Wills whipped the steering-wheel about. "This is a bad place to turn. Flag for me, Joe," he shouted.

"O. K. Cut deep," Joe semaphored his arms.

The car came about. Wills got out again to look at the tire.

"Standing up all right," he announced. "You'll make it."

Marian's throat cramped. But she fought its quivering, got the words out.

"Would you drive it down for me? The tire might go down again and I'm not much good at the pump."

"Of course." He resumed the wheel again, while Joe followed with the truck. "You shouldn't be driving on lonely mountain roads alone, you know," he said, as they bumped over a wooden bridge.

"No one would hurt me," she declared. "Everybody for miles around knows me—knows mother. And mother hasn't any enemies."  
"She has one, obviously," Wills said. "The fellow who kindled a fire in the oil house at the mill yesterday wasn't celebrating the Fourth of July. He was getting even."

Marian looked thoughtful. "Perhaps that wasn't mother's enemy."  
"That might be true." He drove the little car carefully around a slippery hair-pin turn. "But even without enemies there are dangers. This morning, for instance. Suppose you had had to walk back to the highway? Suppose the truck had not been on the ridge?"

"I knew the truck was on the ridge," Marian was truthful. "That's why I came. Does this catechism and fatherly admonition have to go on indefinitely? We could talk about other things. I'm fairly intelligent. I know all the tenses and that you shouldn't say ain't."

"I'd better take another look, at that tire," Wills stopped on a wide bit of road, waved the truck past. It roared down grade, flinging mud cheerfully.

Marian sat, looking straight ahead, her cameo profile a trifle grim, her chin squared.

"There's nothing the matter with the tire," she said. "I wanted to talk to you."

He looked at her quickly, searchingly. She was so near—and so dear! Even with her chin set at a resolute angle, even with her eyes cool and distant and her lashes evasive. He made an impulsive move, then drew back as her aloof manner did not change.

"I'm listening," he said quietly.

She twisted her fingers together, but kept her eyes straight ahead—on the thickets where the jays quarreled and the frozen slopes where icicles made a diamond passermerterie on every rock and twig.

"I don't like fighting," she began with a little difficulty. "We seem to clash. And it's rather silly, don't you think?"

"Very silly. Especially when—"

"Especially when we could arrange things sensibly. I—this isn't easy for me to say. But—I thought if I talked to you—alone—if I appealed to you—"

He stiffened a little. Only the day before Lucy Fields had used those same words. "I've appealed to you!" For a moment eagerness, tenderness had rushed through his blood like flame. He had looked at Marian and seen only her young sweetness, the golden curve of her throat where kisses were born to lie, the yielding curve of her lips. But now the pride in him, that verged so close to a high, fine fury, the terrible, blind, masculine pride, that through a thousand centuries has gone flaunting banners and waving swords and trampling small tender things underfoot, had him again.

He could not see the pulse that quivered where a gold shadow lay upon her throat, he did not see the uncertainty of her fingers and her eyelids quivering. He saw only her profile, set against him, the chin that was like David Morgan's. He was blind and savage with hurt and frozen with disappointment. He was a very stupid young man.

He drew back and swung the car wide on a curve, not looking at her.

"I think I know what you're going to say. I've heard it all, already. I only have one answer. I'm not leaving town. I'm not leaving the mill. I'm not going to be driven out—nor wheedled out. I'm in this to stay. So—it's too bad you want to so much trouble to let the air out of that tire!"

She turned, as though she had been struck, but he did not see. Her face was as white and stiff as his own. Her voice snickered like steel on ice.

"You're a very famous egotist, aren't you?" she said, brutally.

"You couldn't possibly think beyond yourself for a moment. It wouldn't occur to you that I might not want to talk about the mill. That I might be thinking—of myself a little. I won't say it now. I won't let you gloat over the kind of a fool that I was. I see—how hopeless I recovered her control, gave a savage drag at the brake, turned the key.

Wills said, "Marian! Good God!" But she was not listening. Her eyes were black and blazing. She reached across his knees as the car lurched to a stop, and opened the door.

"Get out, will you?" she said hoarsely. "I can't stand any more."

He said "Marian!" again, in a husky, stricken voice, but she was like a woman on fire.

"Get out! I hate you! Get out!"

She snatched at the wheel, whirled away with frosty mud flying, almost before he was on the ground. Down the winding road she swung past the truck, grazing a hemlock tree, careening on two wheels.

"You'd better wait for him," she shouted at the startled Joe. "He isn't riding with me."

Down the mountain she tore blindly, shame and a white, torturing pain burning her. Once she laughed and the laugh was bitter.

So—she was in love with her, was he? She was a song sung to a gipsy tambourine.

Cheap—cheap—to have surrendered even a little! She hated him! She hated him!

As for Branford Wills, he sat thoughtfully in the jolting truck and hated himself for a blundering fool.

Now—with his crass stupidity he had ruined what life with its ruthless distinctions had not made intolerable before.



She snatched at the wheel, whirled away with frosty mud flying.

At the mill gate the truck halted. "Something's busted again," announced Joe grimly.

Somewhat, the spur track had been undermined. A car, heavily loaded with pulp, had gone off the rails, swung sidewise, and turned over, tearing up a hundred yards of track.

"This here," declared Joe, "is gittin' so it ain't even funny!"

(Next week Chapter XIII)

The regulations say beer cannot be served at a picnic. You can sit in a beverage room and drink it, but you can't sit under a tree and do the same thing. That's law—Peterboro Examiner.

## Reforestation for Muskoka

Reforestation in the North has long been considered. It has been left for the realistic minds that have been "forest conscious" to try the schemes suggested by the Department of Reforestation in the province of Ontario, even as far north as Fazy Sound. I personally know that good results are obtaining in an area around Huntsville for a radius of twenty miles. A few friends of mine have planned to acquire at least 1000 acres for reforestation. At the time of this writing we have 785 acres planted in three townships and doubtless there are acres more scattered about in small plantations. All of this has been brought about by some enterprising individuals—some dwelling in the districts and some coming (as I do) from towns and villages in Southern Ontario. Inasmuch as pine is a native timber in Muskoka, I see no reason to doubt that reforestation should become a great and profitable agricultural enterprise in the districts of Fazy Sound and Muskoka, for Mr. E. J. Zavitz, Provincial Forester, is credited with saying that pine trees planted 28 years ago, and the crop thinned from 1100 to around 700 per acre—that quantity, thus removed, when sold at prices paid for local fuel in 1940, brought \$31.50 per acre.

For enlightening information concerning the figures given above, I herewith attach the enclosed published remarks of Mr. J. R. Hale, Editor of the Orillia Packet and Times.

Mr. Hale's remarks:  
I was hardly on the grounds at the Angus Reforestation grounds where Warden Barr's picnic was last Friday, when Mr. E. C. Drury set eyes on me, and he could not wait till I got to where he was sitting, so he came to meet me. He had some great news and as soon as he welcomed me he said he was so glad to see me. He had been talking to Mr. E. J. Zavitz, Provincial Forester, and he had been telling him something which would

make a great article. I must be sure to meet Mr. Zavitz.

"So later in the evening we cornered Mr. Zavitz and he told me what he had given to Mr. Drury. At one of the plots in the Norfolk reforestation area, which had been planted 28 years ago, in 1940 some thinning had been done on 15 acres. This particular acreage had had all the trees which could or would not develop, and were a hindrance to the other trees taken out. This had been sold, mostly for local fuel for the summer. These thinnings had brought a profit of \$31.50 per acre.

"This did not mean a profit on the original work of planting, but on the work of thinning out the 15 acres. This rejoiced the heart of Mr. Drury, and he felt it justified his faith in reforestation, and assured a good profit on the plot, when the whole of the trees would be harvested. Say after 50 or 60 years from time of planting. "These pine trees had been planted at about 1200 to the acre, and 300 to 400 had been taken out. A good plot of red or white pine, when full grown, should give 40,000 to 50,000 board feet per acre.

"But a new phase has developed. There is often something new developed as schemes such as reforestation develop. And a new one has now appeared in Ontario. The trees on the older plots are now a pretty fair size, though nothing like what they will be in 20 or 30 years. But they are just about the size of a nice pole for electric wires. And the Hydro Electric Commission is eager to get some of these trees as they are as straight as a die and sound. Good pine trees make the best of poles when they are well treated.

"Now the question to be decided is whether to sell them for poles, at half their growth, or whether to wait till they are full grown, and make them into lumber.

But the point proved by the sale of these thinnings is that the reforestation will bring good returns."

In the north lands of Muskoka and Fazy Sound what is much needed is leadership in the matter of exploiting, for all it is worth, the reclaiming of barren and waste land. Enabling

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legislation procured from the Provincial Legislature is something that the local member of parliament should look-to for the good of his farming-constituents. First the Councils of interested municipalities should be convened, and discussion of the problem be entered upon. Your humble servant is also eager to have Muskoka and Fazy Sound Districts become part of Zone 4 for the purpose of the education that can come from that source, so far as reforestation is concerned.

—Rev. A. L. Howard, in the Huntsville Forester.  
Mr. Howard is a former minister of Knox Presbyterian Church, Georgetown.

## EVERY MOTORIST SHOULD CLIP THIS

# 17 easy ways towards a 50% GASOLINE SAVING

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- Reduce driving speed from 60 to 40 on the open road.
  - Avoid jack-rabbit starts.
  - Avoid useless or non-essential driving.
  - Turn motor off when not in use, do not leave idling.
  - Don't race your engine; let it warm up slowly.
  - Don't strain your engine; change gears.
  - Keep carburetor cleaned and properly adjusted.
  - Tune up motor, timing, etc.
  - Keep spark plugs and valves clean.
  - Check cooling system; overheating wastes gasoline.
  - Maintain tires at right pressure.
  - Lubricate efficiently; worn engines waste gasoline.
  - Drive in groups to and from work, using cars alternate days.
  - For golf, picnics and other outings, use one car instead of four.
  - Take those short shopping trips ON FOOT and carry parcels home.
  - Walk to and from the movies.
  - Boat owners, too, can help by reducing speed.

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