

DOMINOES

Series Editors: Bill Bowler and Sue Parminter

Pollyanna

Eleanor H. Porter

Text adaptation by Bill Bowler

Illustrated by Victor Tavares

Eleanor Hodgman Porter was born in 1868 in New Hampshire, the United States. She was a singer when she was young, but later began writing. In 1892 she married John Lyman Porter, and moved to Massachusetts. Porter wrote short stories for magazines, lots of children's books, and a number of books for adults. The most famous of her children's books is *Pollyanna* (1913). It sold one million copies in its first year. Two years later, Porter wrote *Pollyanna Grows Up* – a book about Pollyanna when she is older. Porter died in Massachusetts in 1920.

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Chapter 1

Miss Polly

Miss Polly Harrington came quickly into her kitchen that June morning. 'Nancy, please stop your work for a minute and listen to me,' she said.

Nancy stopped at once. Miss Polly wasn't easy to please. Usually she wanted Nancy to work more quickly.

Nancy's father was dead, her mother was ill, and she had two younger sisters and a brother at home. So she came to work for Miss Harrington, one of the richest women in town. But Miss Polly was always angry when she did things badly, and never smiled when she did them right.

'Later today,' said Miss Polly, 'you can make the little back **attic** ready for a visitor. My **niece**, Miss Pollyanna Whittier, is coming to stay. She's eleven years old.'

'Is a little girl coming here? That's nice!' cried Nancy. She thought of her two happy little sisters at home.

'Nice?' said Miss Polly coldly. 'I don't know about that!' Nancy's face was suddenly hot and red.

attic a little room at the top of a house

niece your sister's (or brother's) daughter



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‘But she’s your sister’s child, Miss. Of course you want her here.’

‘Nancy, my **silly** sister **married** young, had children early, and couldn’t **care for** them. I don’t want to care for this child, but I must. Now don’t forget that attic.’ And with that, she left the kitchen.



Back in her room, Miss Polly opened the letter from a far away town in the west and read it again:

Miss Harrington,

*I have **sad news** for you. Your sister’s husband, John Whittier, died two weeks ago. He leaves a girl – eleven years old – behind him.*

*John was the **Minister** in the **church** here, and wasn’t very rich. His child has nobody to care for her now, only you – her family in the east. John spoke of this before he died.*

Can you take her? We can put Pollyanna on the train to come to you. When I get your answer – and please say ‘yes’ – I can write and tell you the day and time of the train.

Jeremiah O. White

silly not thinking well

marry to make someone your husband or wife

care for to do things for someone or something when they need it

sad not happy

news when someone tells you something that is new

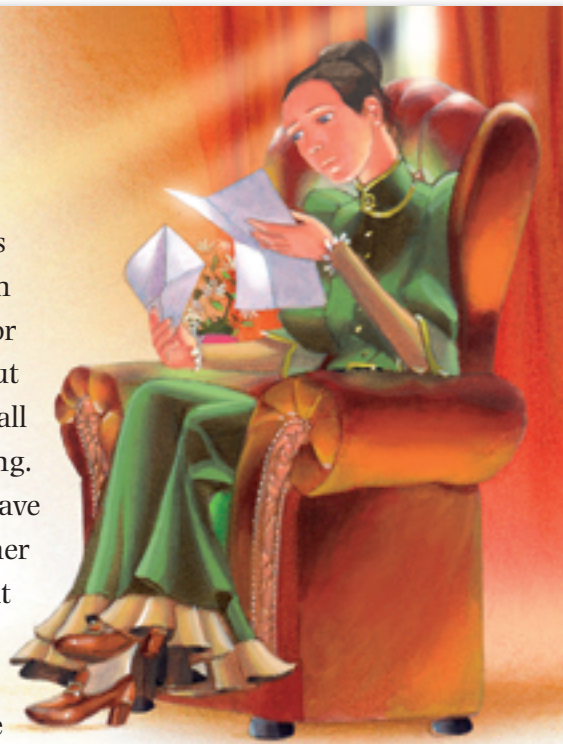
minister a man who works for the church

church Christian people go here to pray

Miss Polly sat with the letter in her hand and thought of her sister Jennie, the girl’s mother. When Jennie was twenty, a rich older man from the town wanted to marry her. But she wasn’t interested in him or his money. She wanted to marry young John Whittier for love. Her parents weren’t happy about it, but she didn’t listen to them. She married, left home, and went west with her new husband.



Miss Polly remembered it well. She was only fifteen, the youngest, at the time. Her parents wanted nothing more to do with Jennie. Of course Jennie wrote for a time. Her letters told them about her different children, but they all died when they were very young. Only the last child lived. Jennie gave her the name Pollyanna after her two sisters, Polly and Anna. That was their last news from her. Some years later, a letter came for them from a small town in the west. It was from John Whittier, and brought sad news: Jennie was dead.



Miss Polly thought about the past twenty-five years. She was forty years old. Her father, mother and sisters were all dead. The big family house, and all her father's money, were now in her name. Some people said to her, 'Why don't you live with a friend?' But she didn't want a friend in the house. She liked living quietly. And now...

Miss Polly stood up. She was happy, of course, to do the right thing and to take the girl into her home. But – *Pollyanna!* – what a silly name!

Later that morning Nancy made the back attic ready.

'Why is she putting the child here when she has lots of nicer rooms in the house to give her?' she thought.

That afternoon she went out into the garden to speak to Old Tom. He worked for Miss Polly there.

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‘Mr Tom, a little girl’s coming to live here.’ she said.

‘Not with Miss Polly!’ laughed Tom.

‘Yes. She told me earlier today,’ answered Nancy. ‘It’s her niece. She’s eleven years old.’

‘That’s Miss Jennie’s little girl then,’ the old man said. ‘And now she’s coming to stay. That’s wonderful.’

‘She’s going to sleep in the attic,’ said Nancy. ‘For me that’s not right.’

Old Tom didn’t look happy at this, but then he gave a big smile. ‘Say, what’s Miss Polly going to do with a child in the house?’ he said.

‘More important, what’s a child going to do with Miss Polly in the house?’ answered Nancy.

The old man laughed. ‘You don’t like Miss Polly,’ he said.

‘Nobody does,’ answered Nancy.

‘Ah, but you didn’t know her when she was in love.’

‘In love!’ cried Nancy. ‘Nobody loved her back, of course.’

‘Oh, yes, they did,’ said Old Tom. ‘And the man’s living here in the town today.’

‘Who is he?’

‘It’s not right to tell you,’ he said, and he looked up at the house. He was a true friend to the Harrington family. You could see it in his old blue eyes.

‘So Miss Polly had a lover. I can’t **believe** it,’ said Nancy.

‘Well, when she was younger, she was beautiful – and she can be again,’ said old Tom.

‘Beautiful! Miss Polly!’

‘Yes. She needs to wear hats with flowers on them, to have her hair different, and to wear nice dresses again. Miss Polly’s not old, Nancy.’

believe to think
that something
is true

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‘Well, she’s never happy,’ said Nancy. ‘And one of these days I’m going to leave. Goodbye Nancy!’

‘It’s not easy for you, I know,’ said Old Tom. ‘But don’t leave.’ And with that, he went back to his work.

‘Nancy!’ called a cold voice from the house.

‘Y-yes, Miss,’ cried Nancy, and she ran in at once.

buggy an old kind of car that horses pull

fair yellow

sure when you feel that something is true

Some days later, Miss Polly told Nancy, ‘My niece is arriving by train tomorrow at four. You can go with Timothy in the **buggy** and meet her. The letter says “**fair** hair, red dress, and a summer hat”. You can find her with that, I’m **sure**.’

The next afternoon Nancy and Timothy, Old Tom’s son, went to meet the train.

‘Is she a good, quiet child, do you think?’ asked Nancy.

‘Who knows?’ smiled Timothy. ‘But a bad, noisy child isn’t going to make things easy at the house for any of us, you can be sure of that!’

When the train arrived, a little girl with long fair hair, a red dress, and a summer hat got off. It was Pollyanna!



YOU HAVE REACHED THE END OF THE SAMPLE.

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