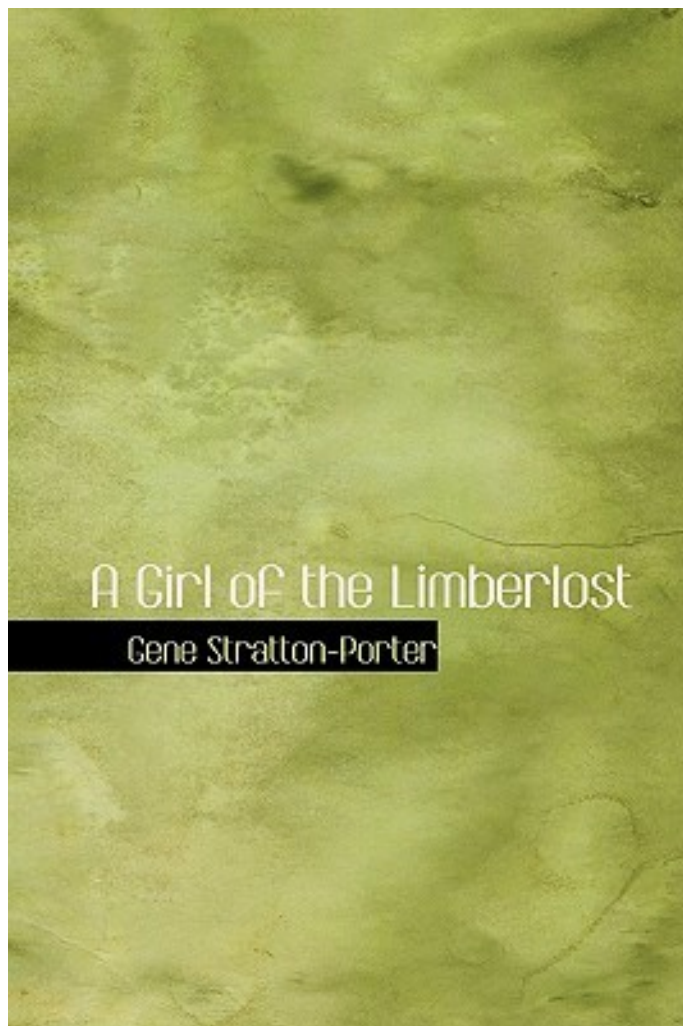

Gene Stratton-Porter

A Girl of the Limberlost (Limberlost #2)



Title: A Girl of the Limberlost (Limberlost #2)

Author: Gene Stratton-Porter

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Description

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Insightful reviews

Sparrow: Childrens' books like [A Girl of the Limberlost](#) remind me of the instruction manuals that come with furniture that you have to assemble yourself. They are assembly instructions for morality. Life is so easy, and there are little stick people on the pages to show you how it is all done successfully. I adored [Little Women](#) when I was a kid, for example, but in recent years I've tried to re-read it a couple of times, and I can't get past the part where Marmie makes the girls give up their Christmas breakfast so that the starving German children won't die of cold and hunger. It's so simple! If we give up a little of what is ours and have kind of a crappy Christmas but pretend it's fun, our parents (and God, by association) will love us. It's not that I disagree with the message that unselfishness makes us better (and even happier) people, and I know if I ever have a daughter I will read her Little Women. I just think that the delivery is too simplistic to be very honest, and it kind of gives me the creeps. I had that same creepy and confused feeling reading A Girl of the Limberlost. I would not say I'm appalled at anyone who loves this book, and the person who recommended it to me is a dear friend, but I can't let this reading pass without noting how uncomfortable it makes me.

This book was written 100 years ago - about a generation after Little Women. While Little Women is a quintessential example of American morality lessons, A Girl of the Limberlost is American capitalism through and through. The central struggle of the book is a basic Cinderella plot, wherein the beautiful Elnora has been caged in the Limberlost forest by her mother, who became bitter and mean after the death of Elnora's father. They own a huge amount of land and timber (note word choice), where Elnora catches moths and butterflies and communes with nature. Elnora, however, is basically a genius (on top of being the most naturally beautiful girl anyone has met), so she wants to go to high school in the nearby town, and her stingy mother will not buy her the clothes and books necessary to do so. All of this we know within the first few chapters of the book, and it's pretty obvious whose side we're on, right? Gotta go with Cinderella, not the evil mother.

[Stratton-Porter](#) makes it very obvious that the reader is intended to see how selfish and unreasonable the mother's argument is for not giving Elnora the fancy clothes she wants (no, sorry, *needs*), and Elnora is presented as a purely heroic character, without any intention of irony that I could detect. It was very conflicting, then to be 100% on the mother's side of the argument. I'll give you a selection of how the argument is characterized throughout the book to see if you agree. This is from a moment in which Elnora runs in a panic to her friend, the Bird Woman, because her mother didn't buy her a new dress for graduation:

"Elnora," she said, "Forgive me, but tell me truly. Is your mother so extremely poor as to make this necessary?"

"No," answered Elnora. "Next year I am heir to my share of over three hundred acres of land covered with almost as valuable timber as was in the Liberlost. We adjoin it. There could be dozens of oil wells drilled that would yield to us the thousands our neighbors are draining from under us, and the bare land is worth over one hundred dollars an acre for farming. She is not poor, she is - I don't know what she is. A great trouble soured and warped her..."

Kind of creepy, no? If you love your kids, you'll kill the forest. And this "Drill, baby, drill!" theme runs through the whole book. Elnora denudes the Limberlost of moths because she can sell them to pay for school. At the same time, she represents nature within the book because she loves the forest and knows everything about animals and plants. So, we learn, if we really love and understand nature, we use it to get us the stuff we want. I think there's a cartoon version of this story on Fox News starring Sarah Palin. It kind of makes me mad that a tree died to print this book. It was also a reality check for my own behavior (in the opposite way of what was intended) because it always seems vague to me when people talk about the ramifications of our behavior on people 100 years from now. This made it much more real because I kept wanting to get in my time machine (patent pending) and fly back to get this ridiculous girl not to replace the forest with farms and oil wells. I hope no one feels like that about me in 2109.

Aside from my problems with all of the basic messages of the book (and my problem with a side story that makes me *very* uncomfortable about a very Dickensian street urchin and his family), it had a fairly engaging plot. I'm a sucker for love stories to the point that even if I really dislike everything else, I still want to see the love story play out in a book. This one also had the bonus of every woman in the story learning that if she devoted her entire existence to her husband and kids, she would find true happiness. *shudder*

Lily: This is one of the books that I have read probably 100 times. It is the story of Elnora Comstock, a poor farm girl that loved the outdoors, mainly the Liberlost swamp beside her home. All Elnora wants is to go to high school, but her mother disagrees and makes life incredibly difficult for Elnora. Through the story you see Elnora go from a socially sheltered girl to a confident and beautiful lady. Everytime I read this book, I want to visit Indiana to see if anything is left of the Limberlost swamp and the butterflies and night moths that used to call it home.

Emily: Thank you, Carrie for recommending this book to me last winter. I haven't stopped thinking about it since. I hope my girls will have half of the curiosity for natural science as the heroine of this book.

I must admit that I felt pangs of loss and mourning at the descriptions of the Limberlost forest and its wonders--knowing that so much of the nature around us has turned to parking lots. Good thing I'll be able to read this story with my girls someday in case they never experience such a world for themselves.

Amy Anderson: Joseph's grandma gave this e-book to Diana since it was once certainly one of her favorites. I needed to learn it to be in the direction of her! The publication jogged my memory of Anne of eco-friendly Gables kind story. during this booklet a woman whose mom resents her, learns to thrive within the world. And at a crossroads her mom learns what she mourns is anything that betrayed her and he or she reconciles together with her daughter. the woman additionally unearths love and that i love how she stands up for what's right. She does not fall far and wide herself over a tender guy with face. She waits till he's unfastened to be hers and proves it to her. She is patient, kind, and long-suffering. this can be a excellent coming of age story! Favorite quotes: "The wages of sin are the toughest money owed on the earth to pay, and they're continually amassed at inconvenient occasions and unforeseen places." p.161 "I have no idea why it's the destiny of the area continuously to need anything diversified from what lifestyles supplies them." p.221

Kathryn Bundy: on the grounds that i used to be in a position to obtain this adolescence vintage for free, I reread it for the 1st time considering that i used to be a girl. i've got lengthy held that it was once one in all my favorites from concerning the age of ten. It appeared mysterious and magical to me then. As I learn it with the eyes of an grownup 5 many years later, it jogged my memory of the way many books from my grandparents' cabinets have been the morality stories that formed my analyzing existence and my worldview. it's a publication of its time, in many ways extra complex than one could expect, yet choked with admonitions towards not easy work, plucky individualism, and charity. i am certain i didn't take pleasure in it to the measure that I did in 1960, yet i am very pleased I learn it again, and that i nonetheless want I had the unique variation that used to be on my Grandma's shelf for thus many years.

Nina: there's a line during this publication that I stick with it a card in my purse. "If you're Lazy and settle for your lot, you'll reside in it. when you are keen to paintings you could write your identify anywhere" Gene Stratton-Porter is a gifted author that writes of her liked Limberlost swamp and the folk that round it. As together with her different books, there are characters that experience severe trouble and upward thrust above them to develop into larger individuals. Elnora Comstock is an impoverished younger lady that feels unloved, and earns a lot of her dwelling through amassing infrequent moths from the Limberlost. you'll want to begin trying out books at the fantastic thing about the swamp and the entire common assets therein. an awesome booklet that makes you need for whatever extra from this life, and a go back to quaint values.

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