

A SPECIAL "DOLLY JOBLING" NUMBER!

No. 163. Vol. 7.

Week Ending June 24th, 1922.

The School Friend

Every

2^d

Thursday



Given Free

THEY SEARCHED IN VAIN!

An incident from the magnificent new long complete story of the girls of Cliff House School, contained in this issue.



COLOURED ART CARD.

Dolly Jobling.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

TWO SPLENDID SERIALS OF SCHOOL LIFE AND MYSTERY.

Your Editor's Corner.

MY DEAR READERS.—During the last few months I have had the pleasure of announcing many grand new features for the SCHOOL FRIEND—features that have met with vast appreciation from you all. But we have not finished with them yet! The next grand new attraction that is to add to the brightness and popularity of your favourite paper will be in the form of a

POWERFUL NEW SERIAL!

This is splendid news, you will agree, and must set you wondering as to what kind of story it is to be. Well, it is of a kind which I know cannot help making a strong appeal to you. Nothing to equal it has ever before been printed within the pages of the SCHOOL FRIEND. Under the title of

"NO JOY IN HER RICHES!"

By Joan Inglesant,

the first superb long instalment of this grand new serial will appear before you in A FORTNIGHT'S TIME, and it is a story which must make a stronger appeal to you than any other has ever done before. It is full of human interest, and deals with characters that will live in your mind. Its author, Miss

Joan Inglesant, has written many powerful serials before, though not for the SCHOOL FRIEND, but she has simply surpassed herself with this appealing story. It is of the kind which will grip you from the very first paragraph, and will demand your keenest interest more and more strongly all the way through. When,

IN A FORTNIGHT'S TIME,

you have read the opening instalment of "No Joy in Her Riches!" you will not only offer your warmest congratulations to Miss Inglesant for supplying you with such splendid reading, but you will look eagerly forward to the next instalment.

Next Thursday a

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is to make the ninth of the ten superb cards the SCHOOL FRIEND is presenting. Sport-loving Phyllis is an established favourite with you all, and I can rely on you not to miss this beautiful portrait.

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"PHYLLIS HOWELL'S CHANCE!"

By Hilda Richards,

you will see Phyllis at her very best. What is her chance? It is the kind of chance that comes the way of very, very few girls, and you will not be surprised to learn that this great chance of Phyllis' is chiefly connected with sport. Phyllis' keenness for sport is fully equalled by her excellence at every branch of it, and this chance of hers is one she accepts eagerly. But there are obstacles in her path, and what is the nature of these obstacles, and how Phyllis faces them, you will learn when you read our next fine story of the girls of Cliff House. And I can promise you that your admiration for Phyllis Howell will increase by leaps and bounds.

There will, as usual, be another absorbing new long instalment of

"FRIENDSHIP FORBIDDEN!"

By Ida Melbourne,

which you will find as full of excitement and interest as those you have read, and the next instalment of our other popular serial,

"THE SIGNALMAN'S DAUGHTER!"

By Gertrude Nelson,

will be as delightful and enthralling as ever you could possibly wish.

As a last word I would ask all of you to tell all your friends about our forthcoming serial. Any girl who fails to read this story will be missing a great treat.

Your sincere friend,

YOUR EDITOR.



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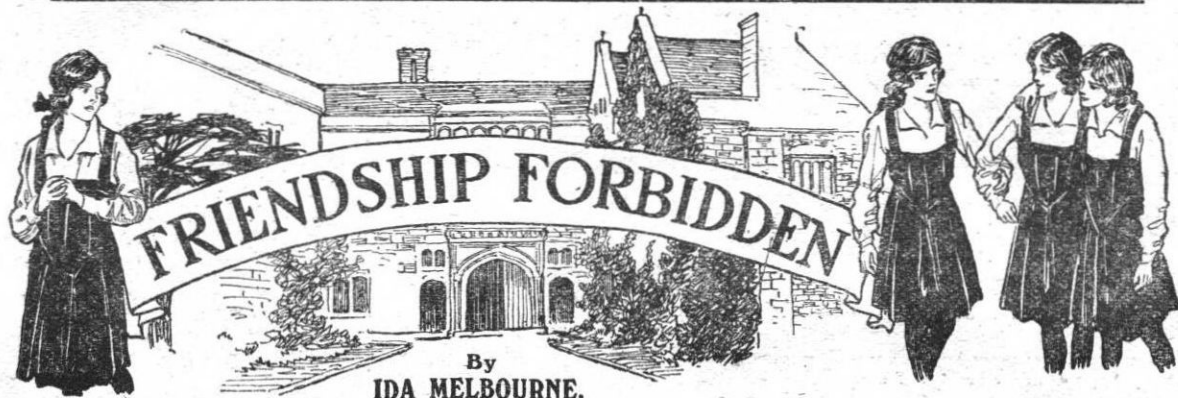
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OUR FINE NEW SCHOOL AND MYSTERY SERIAL.



By
IDA MELBOURNE.

CHARACTERS IN THIS STORY.

DOLORES KALENZI, a dark-eyed, olive-complexioned, and very attractive Eastern girl, who, by the orders of her aunt, is forbidden the friendship of

KITTY CRICHTON, PEARL HARDY & CO. the upright and light-hearted Fourth-Formers at Limmershaw High School.

YELMA KALENZI, the aunt of Dolores, who is really not at all an unkindly woman, but is under the strict orders of Dolores' uncle.

None of the happy freedom of the Limmershaw High School girls was allowed Dolores Kalenzi. Twice a day, at the finish of her lessons, her aunt called at the school to take her home, and on account of this the Eastern girl naturally became an object of ridicule amongst most of the High School girls. She was there to study—nothing more, said her aunt, and she was to make no friends with Kitty Crichton & Co.

Later, a mysterious chalked sign was noticed both by the Eastern people and by the Limmershaw girls on a certain tree in the woods. It caused Dolores' aunt great alarm, and she kept the Eastern schoolgirl in even closer captivity.

The Limmershaw girls had the great fortune to discover a vast treasure in a cave among the cliffs. Dolores' aunt was invited to inspect the treasure, but she seemed as mystified by it as anyone else. Just after this Aunt Yelma astounded Dolores by allowing her to invite her school friends to the house. Jane Prestwich, a sly sort of girl who was no friend of Dolores, practically invited herself, and, after arriving at the mysterious house, Jane disappeared. Where had she got to?

(Read on from here.)

Ordered Out of the House!

THE girls exchanged despairing looks, and Dolores clenched her hands with helpless rage.

Where could Jane Prestwich be?

Only too well Dolores knew that the girl must be in the house—searching, satiating her curiosity.

And what would Aunt Yelma say to that? What Aunt Yelma thought was made obvious by her expression.

Kitty Crichton frowned, and Pearl Hardy shrugged her shoulders.

"Might have expected it!" growled Pearl. "Just the sort of thing Jane would do! Oh, why didn't we keep an eye on her?"

Yelma Kalenzi came forward. She had noted the whisper, although she had not heard what Pearl had said.

"This girl, where is she?" she asked angrily. "You know, you are parties to this—to this amazing conduct. Is it not possible to ask girls to the house without having them prying?"

"We have not been prying, Madame Kalenzi!" Pearl retorted rather heatedly. "And we do not know where Jane is."

"It is true, aunt!" interposed Dolores quickly. She was anxious to shield her friends. About Jane it did not matter. But for Jane there would have been no unpleasantness.

But now Dolores could not help wondering what action her aunt would take. It did not seem improbable that her aunt would include Kitty, Julia, and Pearl in the blame. That it would be grossly unfair was not likely to affect her aunt's decision.

"We must find the girl," said Aunt Yelma tersely.

She wheeled about and made towards the house, Chileen following close as her shadow.

For some minutes Kitty and the others paused. Dolores hesitated, too, between a desire to follow her aunt and a duty to remain by her guests.

"Come along," she said. "We must find her."

She led the way to the house, and Kitty, after a look at Pearl, followed. Pearl and Julia brought up the rear.

Aunt Yelma and Chileen could be heard walking ahead, and it was not many seconds later that they caught them up.

The woman walked quickly on and spoke rapidly to Chileen. The servant nodded.

Kitty Crichton looked at Pearl, who simply stared as they heard the strange

language. It was like no language that they knew; it was certainly not European.

But the thought was dismissed from their minds as they saw Yelma Kalenzi hurry forward.

They followed, and reached the end of a long passage. Dolores caught her breath and stopped.

That passage, she knew, led to the cabinet. Where was Jane? Had she discovered the secret of the cabinet? Was she in the small dungeon?

At the top of the passage Aunt Yelma had halted. In wonderment the girls gathered round her and saw at the end of the passage Jane Prestwich crouching back.

She was near the cabinet, her back to it. And she was stepping back inch by inch.

"Stop!" Yelma Kalenzi shouted the warning with such anxiety—that the girls around her drew back.

Only Dolores knew the reason for it, and the others imagined for the moment that the woman was over-excited.

Even if Jane stepped back on to the cabinet she would not hurt herself. To the cabinet they gave not a second's thought. There was no real reason why they should.

But Dolores knew that at any moment Jane might step back into the cabinet, knock off the leaden weight, and release the spring.

Then the secret would be out. Chileen was running forward and gesticulating to Jane Prestwich, who, white-faced, stared at him.

She backed, and, in alarm, Chileen stopped, but waved still more.

"Come here, girl—foolish girl!" shouted Aunt Yelma.

A moment's hesitation, then Jane obeyed the harsh command fearfully, yet knowing that there was nothing else to do. She had done wrong in spying, and she must face the consequences.

She looked appealingly at Kitty, but there was only contempt in the glance Kitty gave her.

Dolores seemed imploring as well as angry. For Dolores saw disaster in the unfortunate incident.

"How dare you!" exclaimed Aunt Yelma heatedly. "I did not ask you here to spy! What right have you to search these passages, to inquire into that which does not concern you!"

"I—I was looking for a way out into the fields," stammered Jane. "I didn't think there was any harm in coming along this passage."

Yelma Kalenzi breathed deeply. "There is no harm," she retorted, with



"Stop!" Yelma Kalenzi shouted the word in alarm as Jane Prestwich backed towards the cabinet.

an effort. "No harm at all. But I object to you spying. There is no reason why you should spy; there is nothing I am hiding—"

"I'm sorry!" murmured Jane Prestwich penitently.

But she did not look sorry. Her eyes cunningly roved about. She glanced keenly at Dolores' aunt and at Chileen. For the servant was watching her closely.

Jane knew that there was something hidden. Yelma Kalenzi's manner told that. Her extreme caution had spoken eloquently of alarm.

Kitty and Pearl saw it, too. The look they exchanged showed how they realised that Madame Kalenzi had not spoken the strict truth.

What the secret was they did not pretend to know; they did not wish to discover. But that there was one was quite evident now.

Dolores saw the look and sighed. For she knew that her aunt had seen it.

"You are inquisitive—all of you!" exclaimed Yelma Kalenzi suddenly. "I might have known it. You would search here, even as you searched the smuggler's cave. You are taught to pry at school and—"

"That is hardly fair, Madame Kalenzi," said Kitty Crichton coldly. "We had no intention of prying."

"No, aunt," said Dolores quickly and anxiously. "Kitty, Pearl, and Julia have done nothing wrong. It isn't fair to blame them just because Jane took liberties."

"Silence, Dolores! I am the judge of what is best to be done. They are in league about this. I have told you. Friends are valueless. These girls care nothing for you; they merely use you as a lever to aid their curiosity. They only came to look over the house!"

"That is not true, Madame Kalenzi!" retorted Pearl Hardy angrily. "We came at your invitation."

"You did not spy at my invitation. Oh, it's all very well for you three to pretend that you were not party to this girl's deceit! But you shielded her. You knew that she was in the house, and strove to shield her."

"We did not know," argued Pearl, ignoring the nudge that Kitty gave her.

Kitty Crichton, more level-headed than her chum, realised that argument would serve them no good purpose. It was obvious that Madame Kalenzi did not wish to be fair.

"I am satisfied that you did know," the woman said curtly. "And I request you not to prolong your visit beyond the time required to put on your hats. I am ashamed of you! It is hardly creditable to your school. And I may say it is the last time I shall allow Dolores to have friends in to tea."

Pearl would have made a reply, but Kitty gripped her arm in time. Whether Madame Kalenzi were right, or whether she were grossly unfair, it was not Pearl's duty to correct her.

"Very well, Madame Kalenzi," said Kitty.

She turned, but Dolores stayed her. "Wait!" the girl exclaimed hoarsely. "You are not to go. Aunt, it isn't fair. They sha'n't be sent away."

And Dolores' eyes blazed angrily. "Dolores," exclaimed her aunt in scandalised tones, "how dare you! You are forgetting yourself. Go to your room at once, and remain there."

Dolores did not move. For once she stood her ground. Her aunt's unfairness had roused her to an unusual extent.

Perhaps it was the realisation that her friendship was gone. Never again would she be able to ask her friends home. For was it likely that girls

would come to the house to be insulted as Kitty and the others had been insulted?

And the news of that insult would spread. Even if Kitty, Pearl, and Julia said nothing, Jane's tongue would add colour to the already unpleasant incident.

Kitty Crichton looked anxiously from aunt to niece. She saw the stormclouds rising, and whispered to Dolores.

"Please go," she whispered. "Dolores, you can do no good."

Dolores tried to set her lips. But they were trembling. Her eyes were moist. She wanted to speak, but she could not for the lump in her throat.

Kitty could be relied on. Kitty would advise her well, and, trusting the girl she called friend, she turned on her heel, and they heard her mounting the stairs, "Good-bye!" Kitty called to her. "We shall see you to-morrow." And her farewell was echoed by the others.

"I have asked you to go!" said Madame Kalenzi. "That is your way."

Her hand pointed to the door.

"We are going!" said Pearl Hardy contemptuously.

Without a word the girls departed, their rackets under their arms.

And when they looked round from the doorway they saw Madame Kalenzi gesticulating.

From her window above, Dolores waved a tear-stained handkerchief.

"I—I'm sorry!" she called chokingly.

"Ever—ever so sorry!"

"It's not your fault, dear!" Kitty answered. "Cheerio! Don't worry. We're not blaming you."

And they went down the path.

"Poor kid!" murmured Kitty Crichton sympathetically.

"Yes, rather! But her aunt!"

And Pearl Hardy left her opinion of Madame Kalenzi to be guessed.

"It was Jane's fault," said Julia Parson, with quite unusual crossness. "If she hadn't posed about it would have been all right."

"Oh, of course, it was my fault!" returned Jane, with a slight laugh. "But I wonder why she was so worried about that passage—"

"If you'd worry more about your own affairs you'd cause less bother!" snapped Pearl Hardy. "If there is a mystery in the house, it's not our business."

But Jane Prestwich smiled. What Pearl Hardy said or thought did not matter a great deal to her, and no word, contemptuous or appealing, was likely to alter Jane's prying nature.

From Madame Kalenzi's view; there could have been no worse guest than Jane Prestwich.

But, on the whole, Madame Kalenzi was not dissatisfied with the girls' visit. Indeed, as she spoke to Chileen she smiled and nodded in a way that would have puzzled Dolores.

The reason for her satisfaction might have astounded Dolores. But Dolores remained in blissful ignorance of her aunt's motives or ambitions.

The Noise in the Night!

Dolores could not sleep. From side to side in her bed she turned restlessly.

It seemed impossible for her to take her mind from the events of the afternoon.

If she had not wanted them, why had her aunt asked the girls to come? Far, far rather would Dolores that they had not come than that they should have been insulted.

What would Kitty think of her now? What could she think? Never again

could she ask a girl to tea! Everyone at the school would know from Jane what had happened.

Jane was a nuisance. But for Jane it would never have happened.

Although she told herself that time and time again, Dolores felt in her heart that, Jane or no Jane, her friends would have been ordered from the house.

Jane was the direct cause; but the indirect cause was not anyone's fault. Her aunt did not like the girls. She had never wanted her to have friends.

Yet was it not strange that she should have allowed them to tea? And at tea-time her aunt had kept the conversation up. She had talked quite chattily about the school, and about the treasure they had found.

It was not for some time that Dolores realised that it was mainly about the treasure her aunt had talked; in fact, that had been the sole topic of conversation.

Had there been a reason in it?

Dolores dismissed the thought from her mind, although she had an uneasy doubt that perhaps her aunt had wanted to talk of the treasure—had asked them to tea for that special purpose.

Now she could remember clearly how her aunt had turned the conversation back to the treasure and the school when it chanced to branch off in different directions.

Had there been reason in it?

Surely not. Why should there be? It was a question that Dolores could not answer. There was no reason known to her. Never before had her aunt been interested in the school.

Perhaps it was merely that she was for once attempting to be hospitable. After all, it was a little disheartening to discover a guest in the act of spying.

Yet Dolores knew that there was a secret. No ordinary hostess would have shown such palpable alarm, unless there were some good reason for so doing.

A faint wind rustled the trees without, and it seemed sinister music to the girl who tossed sleeplessly in her bed.

With the night sounds she had become familiar—a creaking window, an outdoor door that banged slightly.

So accustomed she became to the sounds that she failed to notice them.

She was just dozing into fretful sleep when a rather loud bang awakened her. It sounded like a slamming door, and her heart thumped.

Her first thought was of burglars. In this peculiar house anything was probable. What more natural than burglars if her aunt had some secret?

She listened for the sound of footsteps below, and heard them; but they were soft and padded.

Softly she crept from her bed and stole across the dark room to the window.

Automatically she avoided the furniture, and quietly moved the catch and opened the windows.

Forgetful that she wore only her nightdress, and that the night air was cold, she stepped out on to the stone balcony. Listening intently, she leaned over.

She drew back slightly as a beam of light shot out from the side of the house. For the moment she imagined it to be the light of a torch.

Then she knew that she was mistaken. By leaning farther over she could see that the light came from the house.

Surely no burglar in his senses would use the lights! As she turned her head she heard voices, and then she drew back.

It was not burglars!

The voices she had heard were her aunt's and Chileen's. What they said she did not know, for they spoke in that strange language.

It was curious that they should be up so late—very strange. As a rule, bedtime was an early hour in the Kalenzi household, and no lights burned much after ten o'clock.

Now it was past midnight by half an hour.

Standing by the door of her room she heard bolts move—squeaky bolts. The only heavy squeaky bolts, the withdrawing or shooting home of which would be audible from her room, were on the front door.

Was her aunt going out?

The subsequent sound belied that surmise. Her aunt, or someone, had just come in.

She heard footsteps in a distant part of the house, then the sound of her aunt coming upstairs.

Wondering, she returned to her bed. Now her previous meditation was forgotten, and she fell to surmising on the cause for this evening's adventure.

Yet actually there was nothing to show that her aunt had been out, and she decided that she was over-nervous and over-suspicious.

She was letting her imagination run riot, colouring the already abnormal characteristics of the house, fantastically.

And, assuring herself that nothing was amiss, she fell asleep.

Heavy-eyed she awoke in the morning to find her aunt at the door with her breakfast.

"You have overslept yourself," the woman said. "Here is your breakfast."

Dolores yawned, and then remembered the sounds she had heard in the night.

"I couldn't get to sleep, aunt," she said, looking at Yelma Kalenzi in the mirror. "Were you downstairs in the night? I thought I heard something!"

"Downstairs!" Her aunt's expression changed, and Dolores could see in the mirror the keen glance her aunt was giving her. "You must have imagined it. I was in bed early."

Dolores frowned slightly. Her aunt was not speaking the truth.

"But I saw a light—I looked out of the window. Besides, I heard your voice, and Chileen's, about half-past twelve!"

"Oh, yes! I—I came down. Chileen had a—touch of malaria!"

For a moment Dolores did not make comment. It was unusual for her aunt to hesitate, and she was suspicious of that explanation.

It was impossible that her aunt could have forgotten the fact that Chileen had had a touch of malaria.

"Poor Chileen!" murmured Dolores slowly. "Is he better now?"

"Yes," returned her aunt briefly. "Eat all that you can, Dolores. But you must hurry. It is late."

Dolores nodded and commenced eating her breakfast.

She hurried, but it was not from a desire to get to school in time. She was anxious to see Chileen.

In an amazingly short space of time she was dressed and downstairs.

Chileen was waiting for her, and opened the door.

"Lovely weather," she said casually. Chileen nodded.

"The weather is most beautiful," he murmured.

"Are you better this morning?"

"Better?" He looked at her keenly. "I no savvy!"

"Your malaria!"

"Ah, yes!" he said quickly, with a side-glance at her. "I am well this morning. It was—just a spasm last night—nothing much. I am well, Miss Dolores, now."

Dolores almost groaned aloud. She could not be sure whether Chileen were telling the truth or merely saying what he had been instructed to say. Aunt

Yelma was clever, and it was not likely that, having invented a story, she would fail to tell Chileen, who would have to support it.

It was annoying to Dolores, for she did not believe the story, and had hoped to trap the truth from the servant. It was hardly likely that he had suffered from a touch of malaria. The weather was too good, and Chileen looked too well.

What had happened was for the present a mystery.

At the school gates he left her, and Dolores went inside alone.

For a moment she stared about her in amazement. She was late—only a few minutes late, but that was enough. Yet the quadrangle was crowded with girls, and they all seemed to be talking at once.

Most of them seemed to be gathered outside the School House doorway, and were talking loudly and vehemently.

That something was amiss was obvious, and Dolores hurried forward. She espied Kitty Crichton and Pearl Hardy in one group, and joined it.

jewels. She had hoped that when an examination was made something interesting might be heard.

Now they would never know. It was only natural that the jewels should have been stolen. But it was a shame. Never could they learn now if they had been the crown jewels of Boralia. They would be divided, and sent abroad for sale.

"We ought to have insured them!" laughed Julia Parsons. "After all, as treasure trove, a certain percentage of them belongs to us!"

"Unless they were the crown jewels, as Miss Bowden suggested," pointed out Kitty Crichton. "Anyway, whatever they were they are gone now, and it's no use crying over spilt milk!"

It was good advice, but not heeded. That morning there was any amount of groaning over spilt milk, and the interest taken in lessons was small compared with interest taken in the police examination of the scene of the burglary.

But the police offered little hope of recovery, and the spirits of the Fourth Formers fell to zero.



"I have asked you to go!" said Madame Kalenzi. "That is your way!"
"We're going!" said Pearl Hardy contemptuously.

"What is it?" she asked eagerly.

At the question everyone stopped talking, and then the voices broke loose again.

Dolores put her hands to her ears. "I can't hear you when you all talk at once!" she said.

Kitty Crichton clutched her arm.

"We're all so excited!" she said.

"There's been a burglary at the school, Dolores! The treasure—the jewels have been stolen!"

Dolores' Discovery!

"STOLEN!" exclaimed Dolores.

"Oh!"

"The burglars got in through a back window!"

"The one I cracked!" exclaimed Pearl.

"And took all the jewels. We thought they were safe there. Apparently they weren't!"

"The funny thing is, too, that they opened the sports box so easily. The lock looks as though it has been picked. Anyway, it's broken now. The policeman says it must have taken hours. In fact, he didn't think it possible!"

But Dolores did not hear all that Kitty said. She was disappointed about the

Even the mistresses were glad when lessons were over, for it was hard work trying to teach girls whose attention was focussed anywhere but in the school-room.

For some time after the bell had rung for dismissal the quadrangle was crowded with girls, who talked and talked of the sensational happening.

When Chileen arrived for Dolores she was loth to depart.

"Oh, Chileen!" she exclaimed.

"What do you think has happened? The treasure the girls found—you know, the jewels—have been stolen!"

"The jewels?" he asked. "What jewels?"

"You know! I told you that Pearl and one or two of the girls found some jewels in a cave. Now they've been stolen!"

Chileen held up his hands in horror.

"Burglars?" he questioned.

Dolores nodded.

"They got in through a back window," she explained. "But the police say that they haven't left a clue."

"That is strange. They are usually not careful."

"Oh, it was something worth stealing!" explained Pearl Hardy. "Clever burglars don't leave clues. They've got the size of the chap's hoof, I think. It's a pretty large one—about twelve inches long from toe to heel!"

"That's how he broke the lock," laughed Julia Parsons. "Probably trod on it! We shall have to look round for someone with big feet. Let's have a look at yours, Chileen. Oh, goodness! They're all right! Sixes?"

Chileen nodded. He was proud of his small feet. He was not very tall, and his feet did not look out of proportion compared with the rest of his body. Now he looked at them with a smile of satisfaction.

"Pearl's the only one under suspicion at present. She takes twelve," said Julia thoughtfully.

She backed away, and Dolores decided that, as serious discussion had ended, it was time for lunch.

As they hurried down the lane Chileen looked thoughtful, but he did not speak.

"Why so worried, Chileen?" asked Dolores.

"Worried?" he exclaimed. "I thinking. Burglar not stand much chance if they got size of feet. Not like to be in burglar's shoes!"

"Oh, well, there'd be plenty of room for you," said Dolores with a consoling smile.

And Chileen smiled too.

When she got home, Dolores told her aunt of the burglary, and she told every detail that she knew.

Some of the details had been enlarged, and altogether it made a convincing story.

"All those beautiful jewels stolen!" exclaimed her aunt. "But what a shame, Dolores! They were so splendid. What was it the mistress thought them?"

"The crown jewels of Bouralia," said Dolores, with a look at her aunt.

But at mention of the kingdom her aunt made no sign. Her expression did not alter at all.

Dolores was puzzled. She could have been certain that her aunt knew a great deal about Bouralia—yet she would never mention it.

"How strange that we should have been talking about burglars at tea yesterday, aunt," she said. "And that window, too. Fancy them getting in by that!"

"Ah! Had the girls been prepared—not so sure—then it might not have happened," said her aunt wisely.

"I—I suppose so. Still, the police will probably find the man, whoever it is."

Dolores finished her dinner and rose. She was anxious to get back to school in order to learn what fresh developments had taken place.

On that particular day the mistresses were surprised to find the quadrangle crowded with girls a full half-hour before school was due to commence.

But, despite their earliness, the girls learnt nothing.

The police had finished their investigation of the scene of the burglary; and the investigations they were making outside went on without the girls' knowledge.

No news of an arrest had been heard when lessons finished for the day, and the girls were getting a little impatient.

"They're jolly slow, our merry police!" frowned Julia Parsons.

"Neither of them are up to much—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dolores smiled. The local police were certainly not brilliant. One constable sufficed for the police force, except in

such an unusual case as this, when an inspector came in from a town.

"Well, suppose we take a hand?" suggested Pearl Hardy. "Let's go to the shoe-shop, and inquire who bought the last boots size twelve—that ought to help!"

"Or search the district for size twelve footprints—that'd be rather fun!" smiled Kitty Crichton. "It was a pretty sloppy night. Perhaps the footprints will have dried hard."

Very few took the suggestion seriously, least of all Kitty. But Pearl Hardy was all keenness.

"That's the idea!" she exclaimed. "We can follow the footprints from where they got back out of the window, and I'll bring my dog. Old Gypsy's jolly good at following things."

"Don't see that he'll be much help," said Julia. "He may be a comfort if he follows us—"

"Silly! I mean he'll follow the burglar's scent—"

"How do you know he used any?"

But Julia was silenced, and Pearl made plans. Kitty was willing to enter into the scheme, even though she thought it ridiculous.

"You'll come, Dolores?" asked Pearl. "It'll be awful fun, even if we don't catch anything."

"I—I'd like to," faltered Dolores.

"But auntie won't let her!" jeered Jane Prestwich. "We'd better not take her. We don't want her aunt chasing us."

Dolores flushed, and glared angrily at the girl.

"Oh, leave the kid alone!" said Pearl crossly. "We don't want you, Jane, that's certain. Dolores can ask her aunt. And if she can't come, she can't. I remember when your mother wouldn't let you come to a hockey-match, Jane."

And Jane decided then that least said was soonest mended.

The group broke up with an arrangement that all who could come should meet that evening at six o'clock.

With but little hope of being able to join the expedition, Dolores hurried home to her aunt.

Aunt Yelma was not in a good temper, and during tea Dolores formed the decision that it was better not to ask at all than to ask and be refused. She decided to take French-leave. For there was always the secret passage.

But leaving by that means was not so easy as she had anticipated. It was some time before she could be certain that no one would come along and discover her trying to escape.

When the coast was finally clear she ran along and removed the weight.

The cabinet opened, and, thanks to her previous attention, the electric-bell did not ring.

One or two tremendous efforts, and she was able to lift the great stone slab.

She turned it over, then flashed her electric torch into the opening.

Sitting on the side, she gradually lowered herself into the dungeon. She walked forward, then stumbled against something.

In surprise, she swivelled her torch round and looked.

Next minute she all but dropped the torch, for she found herself staring at a bound box, through the splits in which glittered brilliantly many jewels!

The treasure—the stolen treasure!

She stooped to examine it, but she had made no mistake. It was the treasure sure enough. Staring at it, she looked fearfully above.

The treasure here! What could it mean? How had it got here? Had it been taken along the cave, or put in from above?

But that would mean that her aunt had done it, or Chileen.

Surely they had not stolen it! Her aunt! It could not be!

Yet she knew that it was not so improbable as it first appeared. Had it not been taken from here? This must have been the place.

There was the secret passage. This was the place Kitty had described.

It was her aunt's, then, this treasure; and her aunt had stolen back her own property.

Her head was almost in a whirl as she tried to work things out. How could it be her aunt's property? Her aunt had denied knowledge of it at the school. Why should she do that if it were here? Why not claim it?

There was a reason why not, though. If it had not belonged to her aunt! If in the first place it had been stolen—from the kingdom of Bouralia, for instance!

But, anyway, Chileen must have stolen it last night from the school. Of course—that was where he had been! She had heard him come in.

Sudden light entered her mind. She saw now why her aunt had questioned Kitty so closely the other afternoon. The broken window—Aunt Yelma had elicited all that information. And by that window the school had been entered.

She looked round the dungeon, again examined the box, and rose, wondering what to do.

The thought that her aunt and Chileen were burglars overwhelmed her. And as she looked round the dungeon she espied a pair of large boots.

She touched them, and found that the mud on the soles was still moist. But the size of them—they were quite twelve inches long!

There was no doubt now! Chileen must have worn them to fool the police. To think that her companions were wandering the countryside, looking for footprints made by the boots that lay here!

Chileen a burglar! What should she do? Tell the police? It was impossible! No, no; she must shield them—both Chileen and her aunt, the latter being undoubtedly responsible for Chileen's venture.

She must hide their secret. She had discovered it by accident.

Besides, harsh though Aunt Yelma sometimes was, Dolores was fond of her, and never would she be able to turn against her.

Somehow she must put the girls off the scent. But how?

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What is the mystery of the treasure? If it is the property of Dolores' aunt, why did she not reclaim it when she was at the school, instead of regaining it by stealth?

Meanwhile, Kitty Crichton and Co. are making efforts to get on the track. Will they succeed? Will they manage to track the burglar to the mysterious house of the Kalenzi's? What can Dolores do to prevent such a happening? Next week's absorbing long instalment will show.

Remember that in a fortnight's time the first grand long instalment of "No Joy In Her Riches!" appears.

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DOLLY JOBLING'S DETERMINATION!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story of
the Girls of Cliff House School, featuring
Dolly Jobling of the Fourth Form.

By HILDA RICHARDS.



Birds of a Feather!

"HA, ha, ha!" That sound of merry laughter came from the Fourth Form passage at Cliff House School.

The Fourth-Formers were not rowdy, but they were certainly high-spirited, and the sound of laughter was not a strange or unusual one when coming from that quarter.

But that wave of laughter was immense; it was not the laughter of one, but the laughter of many. And it was repeated.

Round the doorway of Study No. 7 was gathered quite a crowd of girls. The cricket-bats that several carried spoke of summer.

"Just like Dolly," said Clara Trevlyn. "Burned again!" laughed Barbara Redfern.

Barbara was the Fourth Form captain, and as such was to the fore.

Her chum, Mabel Lynn, was standing next to her, smiling.

In fact, they were all smiling—and small wonder.

From Study No. 7 came the scent of burning. The atmosphere was heavy and hot—distinctly hot.

"Phew!" murmured Philippa Derwent, as she fanned herself with a Panama hat. "Dolly, Dolly, Dolly! On a day like this, too!"

"Why on earth did you make a bonfire?" asked Freda Foote innocently, though her eyes twinkled.

From the middle of the black-specked atmosphere of Study No. 7 came the sound of an angry grunt.

"And the furniture!" said Marjorie Hazeldene mildly. "Dolly, you're making all the cretonne black."

It was like Marjorie to think of the furniture. Of the three occupants of Study No. 7, Marjorie Hazeldene was the most domesticated—although that did not say much—for Clara Trevlyn was too much of a tomboy, and Dolly Jobling too clumsy.

But Dolly was keen on cooking—and it was that keenness that now caused so much amusement.

Dolly Jobling wiped the back of her hand across her red face, brushing back a wisp of hair that adhered to her cheek.

With the other hand she fanned the choking atmosphere.

"Bother the cretonne!" she said crossly. "I couldn't help it—"

"You never can!" chuckled Clara Trevlyn. "Why don't you give up cooking? Look at the sky! Look at the green fields! Come on, we've got a scratch match. A rattling game of cricket'll do you far more good than moppin' in here making bonfires!"

"I'm not making bonfires," retorted Dolly Jobling crossly. "You know per-

fectly well I'm making that new kind of toffee."

"Toffee—eh? My hat!" Clara Trevlyn held her sides and simply yelled with laughter.

Freda Foote leaned on Marjorie Hazeldene's shoulder and literally wept with mirth.

Dolly Jobling, her lips set, glared at them.

"You can make fun!" she said bitterly. "It isn't my fault that the frying-pan overturned! You'll eat the toffee quick enough when it's made!"

"When!" chuckled Clara. "I shall be toothless by that time—drawing my old age pension."

And in Clara's remark there was certainly an element of truth. Somehow or other Dolly Jobling, though she knew quite a great deal about cooking theoretically, was often unfortunate with the practical side of the delicate art.

She started well, but invariably upset the frying-pan.

"Oh, do go away!" she said crossly.

The others were far too busy laughing to notice the slight tremor in her tones. Dolly had to endure a great deal of chipping on account of her cookery—but there were limits.

And this afternoon she did not feel up to enduring much. The afternoon was hot—tremendously hot—but she had heroically endured the heat of the fire and the sun in order to make the very special toffee, the recipe of which she had just obtained.

"Poor old Dolly!" said Philippa Derwent. "It's too bad, really, to tease you so. But you are funny with your cooking!"

"He, he, he!" chimed in the fat, unmusical tones of Bessie Bunter. "I'll teach you how to cook, Dolly. Why, you can't boil water without burning it!"

"Oh, go away!" hissed Dolly angrily.

It was bad enough to endure the mockery of her friends, but Bessie, the fattest, the most obtuse of the Fourth—it was like unto the camel's last straw!

Bessie Bunter blinked through her large round spectacles and giggled.

"Who can't cook!" she jeered.

Dolly clenched her hand and glared. She knew only too well that Bessie, stupid though she was, could cook. And it was annoying to Dolly, whose practical efforts on account of her clumsiness, frequently ended in disaster.

She advanced towards Bessie, frowning angrily, and the fat girl bobbed back, taking cover behind Barbara Redfern. She deemed discretion the better part of valour.

"Get out, all of you!" said Dolly chokingly. "If you want to play cricket, why don't you, instead of jeering at me?"

Barbara Redfern's smile vanished.

"We're not jeering, Dolly," she said. "But you must admit that you're funny. Surely you can take a joke—"

"Not that sort of joke!"

Dolly's face was flushed and her eyes burned. She was near to tears—tears of mortification and rage. But the others did not realise, although they saw that something was very much amiss.

Dolly was clumsy, but she was invariably good-tempered. That she should show temper was surprising.

"I suppose it's the sun," said Clara, more wisely than she knew. "Poor old Dolly! You'll get roasted alive in here! Why don't you come out?"

But Dolly Jobling did not reply. She slammed the door, and Freda Foote, who had been about to express a joke she had gradually evolved, stopped short and stared.

"Well——" said Barbara Redfern.

"I say!" murmured Marjorie Hazeldene. "That—that's not like Dolly!"

And the girls, surprised, looked at one another.

Marjorie Hazeldene tapped lightly on the door. Marjorie was rather worried. She hated to think that her friend was offended or hurt, and she wanted to make amends.

But from the study a gruff, unfriendly answer came.

"Oh, leave me alone, can't you?"

For some minutes the girls remained; then, at Barbara Redfern's advice, they went off. As she wisely pointed out, no good purpose could be served by remaining, and every minute in the corridor meant a minute less to play before tea-time.

Truly it was a pity to waste such a splendid half-holiday indoors.

But to Dolly Jobling, inside the study, the half-holiday made no appeal.

Dolly sat gloomily in the armchair, her face plunged in her rather dirty hands. The frying-pan stood on the window-sill, its fumes blowing about, half out of the study, half in.

She hardly noticed the heat or the smell, both of which were decidedly noticeable.

The fire burned brightly, though rather outshone by the afternoon sun, and the burnt-sugar smell of smouldering toffee permeated the afternoon air.

How long she sat there Dolly did not know. She was trying hard to brace herself for a second and, she hoped, more successful attempt at the toffee.

Her reflections were bitter. They had always teased her about her cookery. But some day she would show them—some day she would prove to them that she could cook.

Just then she wished devoutly that she were not so careless, that she were not so clumsy. When mistresses complained she did not mind. She smiled at her own clumsiness.

But now it was galling indeed to be taunted by her friends, and to know, moreover, that what they said was right. She invariably burned things.

So deep was she in meditation that she

did not hear the timid tap at the study door.

It was repeated twice, followed by a cough, and Dolly, frowning, looked up.

Was this some other jester? she wondered.

She crossed the room and opened the door suddenly.

"Oh!"

Dolly Jobling had been prepared to say something angry and impolite, but she stopped short in amazement and stared.

The girl in the doorway smiled and coughed nervously. Dolly Jobling, displeased though she was with the world in general, could scarcely conceal a smile at the other's appearance.

She was a tall girl with long, thin legs and long, thin fingers.

As she coughed nervously she swayed her thick, black, bobbed hair that had grown again and not been trimmed. Then she moved her large horn-rimmed spectacles and blinked.

"Good-good-afternoon!" she said.

"Good-afternoon, Brenda!" answered Dolly, in amazement.

Brenda Borelli was a Sixth-Former, of retiring disposition and musical tendencies. In fact, she was reputed to be a genius, which may have accounted for her strange appearance.

Very few Sixth-Formers ever visited the Fourth Form passage. But Brenda, who was a friend of no one in particular, rarely went anywhere outside her study or the Form-room, unless it was to visit the music-room, where she spent a great deal of her time.

Juniors who had listened at the door said she was tuning the piano; but Sixth-Formers, who were in the know, said she was composing sonatas.

"Won't you come in?" said Dolly politely, as Brenda did not speak.

"Oh, thank you! So kind of you!"

Brenda stepped into the study and sniffed. Then she extracted a gaily coloured handkerchief and put it to her nose.

"I—er—I thought I was not mistaken," she said. "The smell seemed to come from this room. It proved—er—rather distracting. My room is below this, and the—er—fumes—"

"Oh!" said Dolly quickly, and for the first time she became aware of the fumes due to the frying-pan.

In the quadrangle smuts floated about, drifting into open windows in a manner that must certainly have annoyed the occupants.

"It is most distracting," went on Brenda, nervously polishing her spectacles. "Most distracting! And I am engaged in my great work. Doubtless you have read of it in the 'Musical Mail'?"

"Nunno, I don't think so," stammered Dolly, trying not to laugh.

She had never heard of the "Musical Mail," but she had heard of the great work—and in no very complimentary terms.

"Ah! But it is being discussed. Perhaps you would like a copy of the 'Musical Mail'? My great friend Madame Deauville edits it. Of course, you know her 'Prelude'?"

"Oh, Rachmaninoff?" asked Dolly, brightening up.

Dolly had heard of Rachmaninoff's "Prelude"—in fact, that was the sum total of her musical knowledge.

Brenda Borelli sniffed.

"No, no! Madame Deauville's 'Prelude.' Ah! But my great composition—I say great, for I know that when I play it a new era will start in the music world. The whole school of thought will be revolutionised—"

The girl waved her hand, and her eyes shone with the light of enthusiasm.

THE SCHOOL FRIEND.—No 163.

Dolly wanted to laugh. It seemed to her so absurd.

She was certain that Brenda could not play. What a fool the girl was to imagine that she could!

Perhaps the girl noticed the faint smile that played about the corners of Dolly's mouth, for she paused.

"You look tired—sad!" she exclaimed sympathetically. "What is it?"

Dolly, surprised, started. She had expected the girl to be angry.

"Nothing—" she stammered.

The girl wagged her finger.

"Tell me," she said. "I shall not laugh. I heard voices and laughter. You have been burning something here—papers? You are burning letters from a friend. A friendship has ended?"

"I have been cooking," Dolly said, flushing slightly.

"Cooking?"

"Yes. It's burnt sugar you can smell," explained Dolly bitterly. "I tried to make toffee. But I burn it; they always laugh at me. But I can cook—I can! I love it!"

The other stared, then smiled.

"And they laugh?" she said. "These others, they do not understand?"

She waved her hand again.

Dolly nodded and sighed.

"Ah! Only too well I understand," went on the strange girl. "Only too well! We are laughed at, you and I. We are not understood! My soul burns with wonderful, glorious tunes—wonderful symphonies that have yet to be written—inexpressible symphonies. And they laugh at me—even as they laugh at you!"

"I—I see!" said Dolly awkwardly.

She flushed as she realised that this girl, at whom she had been willing to laugh, was sympathising with her. Only now did she realise that she who had suffered from ridicule was ready to ridicule another.

She felt ashamed, and she wanted to sympathise. Brenda thought she could play, she wanted to play—and others laughed at her. Perhaps she could play. They laughed at Dolly for her cooking, yet she knew that she could cook.

"We are souls in sympathy, you and I," went on the girl rapturously. "And our hands, groping in the darkness, have found one another. Some day they will understand, some day we shall be appreciated."

"Y—yes," stammered Dolly, "I—I hope so."

"Hope? I am sure! Let us be friends. Let us stand against the mob. What matter their jeers? Do we care for their sticks and stones, for the ever-ready jeer? Flannelled fools they are. What do they know of Beethoven? What of Strauss, or—"

"Nothing!" mumbled Dolly, feeling that she must say something. And for the first time she felt ashamed that she had not paid the piano more attention.

"And you—your art is on a lower scale—but you love it. It is your life. Do not heed them!"

Her eyes shining, she rose and extended her hand emotionally.

"We are friends!" she asked. "Hand-in-hand together?"

Just for a second Dolly Jobling hesitated, and through her mind passed the memory of what had been said about Brenda—how she was laughed at for being "mad."

But Dolly's better feelings rose uppermost. This girl was sympathetic and wanted to be a friend.

Slowly yet sincerely Dolly gripped the outstretched hand and looked into the thoughtful, pale blue eyes of Brenda Borelli.

"Yes," she answered, "friends."

Brenda Borelli smiled.

"Then I will show you that my friendship is true. You shall hear my 'Symphony in G Sharp.' No one has heard it—not completely. I have played portions. But listening ears might copy it. You will be the first audience!"

She paused and looked at Dolly expressively.

"Oh, thanks! I shall be pleased to. I—I want to," mumbled Dolly.

Brenda Borelli smiled, and waved her hand airily.

"Don't say a word to anyone," she cautioned. "There is no one about now."

And she turned and preceded Dolly from the room.

The Masterpiece!

HARDLY knowing whether she stood on her head or on her heels, Dolly Jobling followed the musical genius through the corridors of Cliff House School.

She guessed that they were making for the music-room, and she guessed rightly.

"Wait here," said Brenda, as they reached the door. "I will get the manuscript."

And Dolly Jobling waited. If someone an hour previously had told her that she would be in the music-room, listening to Brenda "tuning the piano," she would have laughed.

She realised that fact, and smiled slightly. She had been magnetically compelled to fall in with the strange girl's wishes. And really Dolly Jobling did not regret having done so.

Brenda was a "good sort"—that much she decided. Whether or not she could play, Dolly did not know or care. Girls said that she could not cook, and that Brenda could not play. If they were wrong in one case, why should they be right in the other?

Dolly had laughed many times at Brenda, but realised, rather shamefacedly, that she was not a judge, any more than the others were judges of cookery, save from the practical and rather natural standpoint of eating what had been cooked.

Possibly Brenda's theory was better than her practice. On second thoughts, Dolly decided that it was probable.

Brenda was not long in returning, and she waved her manuscript excitedly.

Proudly she led the way to the piano, and Dolly sat down rather heavily in a chair.

Brenda seated herself on the stool, coughed, shook her hair, and arranged the music.

Dolly's expression changed from one of attention to one of surprise. She leaned forward in her chair as Brenda, with many a raising of shoulder and throwing up of head, allowed her hands to wander along the keyboard mercilessly, sometimes hitting the correct notes.

Dolly shifted uncomfortably in her chair, and sighed. But Brenda did not stop. It was obviously agony to her when she had a second's pause to turn over a page.

On she went again, rushing along like an express train.

Dolly looked nervously at the door, alarmed lest a mistress might at any minute appear and complain.

Suddenly—so suddenly that Dolly jumped—the noise ceased.

"Splendid!" she managed to murmur.

But Brenda had not finished. She went on again, swaying and rocking on the music-stool, until Dolly expected that it would collapse.

But, unfortunately from her viewpoint, it did not. It squeaked, adding

discord to discord in a most alarming manner.

The sound died away, and Brenda, her eyes shining, her face flushed, wheeled round.

"There!" she exclaimed, breathing heavily. "Ah, if I could but play it—"

"Ah!" murmured Dolly unconsciously. "If I could but bring to life those chords, those gorgeous, wonderful sounds that run through my brain! They are there on paper, but I cannot get them."

"Oh!"

"But you like it? You can see how it should sound?"

"It's wonderful!" said Dolly kindly. "Really, I—"

"Yes; it appeals even to your untrained ear. Even to the ignoramus it makes appeal! Ahem! I mean, only in the musical sense. It is possible that I might not appreciate your culinary efforts, excellent though they may be," she added, with doubtful tact.

Dolly sat mute, not knowing what to say.

"When the world is raving over that symphony, then you may say you heard it first. But, mind, be careful! There is someone who would steal. If the air haunts you, try not to whistle it!"

"I won't," stammered Dolly, wondering how she could possibly whistle those weird combinations of sound.

"Very well. And—when you want help and solace, come to me. I can sympathise. Our arts are not allied, but what of that?"

"What of it?" mumbled Dolly mechanically, hoping that her toffee did not taste as Brenda's music sounded.

"Exactly!"

Brenda gathered her masterpiece, and putting her arm round Dolly's shoulder, walked with her to the door.

She opened the door suddenly, then stopped.

"What was that?" she exclaimed sharply. "A girl—listening!"

In her tone there was so much alarm that Dolly stared at her in bewilderment. Surely Brenda did not imagine that anyone would willingly listen to that awful noise? she asked herself.

But that apparently was just what Brenda did imagine, for she hurried down the passage, and looked over the banisters.

Dolly stood beside her, and Brenda Borelli pointed down the stairs.

"There is the girl," she said. "Spying again!"

Dolly watched the girl on the staircase, saw her look back furtively, and wondered.

Could Brenda be right? It was amazing that anyone should listen; yet that girl's movements were suspicious. And Brenda had said "again."

Dolly turned, and saw the frown on her companion's face. At any rate, Brenda believed in the accusation she made.

Perhaps—was it possible that the composition was a clever piece of work, and that someone was trying to steal it?

Certainly, it might be clever, for Dolly had no appreciation of reputedly good pieces she had heard by celebrated pianists.

It was probable that the fault lay with her, and not with Brenda. She was ignorant regarding music, and it was not fair of her to sit in judgment on one who professed to know.

"She will not get it; I shall take care of that," said Brenda, interrupting her companion's thoughts. "Linda Hope may think she's clever, but I shall be careful."

She walked on, and Dolly accompanied her, without realising that they were making for the Sixth Form passage.

Brenda opened the door of her study, and Dolly followed her in.

The Sixth-Formers each had a study, in which they slept.

And Dolly, looking round the study, vowed mentally that she had never seen one more untidy.

The bed had been made, but the room was dusty, and papers lay about everywhere.

"Ah, it is not just so!" smiled Brenda. "The housemaid makes the bed, but I have ordered her not to dust. She may be honest; but suppose she saw my manuscripts? She might play the piano, and realise their worth!"

"Yes, of course," agreed Dolly. "I say, but the room is untidy. Ours isn't very neat. But Miss Primrose would be annoyed. May I clear it up for you?"

Brenda took off her spectacles and wiped them.

"It's very kind of you," she said thoughtfully. "But this evening I must work—to-morrow?"

Clara Trevlyn could be heard down the passage, and Dolly jumped up.

"Here we are!" said Clara, bumping open the door with her bat. "Hallo! Tea ready? How's the toffee?"

"The same as before," said Dolly, rather curtly, as she made the tea.

Clara grinned.

"Great Scott!" she exclaimed, in amazement. "You mean that you haven't been making any more?"

Dolly nodded, and Clara waved her bat about, just missing the lamp-shade by inches.

"Hurrah!" she cried. "We shall get the study free from burnt sugar yet!"

Dolly did not reply, and Marjorie frowned at her boisterous chum.

"Perhaps Dolly has been knitting," she said gently.

"I haven't," said Dolly, and then added, more with the object of surprising them than anything else: "I've been in the music-room listening to Brenda Borelli's playing."



PULLING DOLLY'S LEG! "I'm not making bonfires!" retorted Dolly jolting crossly. "You know perfectly well I'm making that new kind of toffee!" "Toffee—oh, my hat!" Clara simply yelled with laughter.

"Yes, certainly," said Dolly, eager to show this girl that she was not laughing at her.

"Excellent. You are very kind, Dolly. You will call me Brenda, of course."

"Yes."

They shook hands and parted. Dolly closed the door quietly, then stopped and took in a deep breath.

It was nearly tea-time, and she walked quickly towards the study. She had just remembered the state in which she had left it. Study No. 7 would not compare favourably with Brenda's study, unless it were rapidly cleaned.

The smell still remained—as she quickly discovered on opening the door. The air was smoky, and smuts were everywhere on Marjorie's dainty summer cretonne covers.

Dolly brushed them industriously, and opened the window and door while she waved a cloth about.

The fire had died right down, and cooking for the afternoon was quite finished.

She got the table ready for the others, and relighted the fire to boil the kettle.

Then she settled down in an armchair to read a discourse on artistic cookery.

"What?"

"Oh, my hat!"

Clara and Marjorie stared at their chum, and Dolly gave a little smile of satisfaction.

"Listening to Brenda's playing," she repeated.

"What! Did she make you?" asked Clara. "Did she offer you a toffee recipe to hear her play? I know she gave Ida Jackson sixpence to stay there and listen; but Ida gave it back, saying she'd rather do without the sixpence."

Dolly smiled.

"Well, it was awful," she admitted, in a moment of candour. Then she flushed as she realised how she had unwittingly betrayed the new friendship. "At—at least, it sounded so to me," she added, somewhat confusedly. "But I'm not a judge. You see, we've become friends, because we've got things in common."

"You have?" asked the amazed Clara.

"What things? Does she go in for bonfires, too?"

"No," said Dolly, rather crossly. "But—but we're both—both misunderstood—er—and—well, I went to listen to her playing, and—"

THE SCHOOL FRIEND.—No 165.

"You don't mean to say she ate some of your toffee!" exclaimed Clara, in mingled horror and amazement.

Dolly flushed.

"She didn't!" she snapped. "You may think it funny, Clara. But some day—"

Dolly broke off. Somehow away from Brenda's company the words that girl had used with such enthusiasm seemed flat and unreal; yet Brenda, in her moments of oratory, had seemed convincing.

It was hard in Clara's company for Dolly to imagine herself a genius—or imagine Brenda one. And she felt silly ever to have believed her strange new friend.

She looked at Marjorie, and saw that she, too, was smiling.

And Dolly said no more about Brenda or the new friendship. But from Clara's occasional chuckles it seemed that that young lady was thinking of both—and, judging by those chuckles, the knowledge of the friendship might become public in the near future.

Clara could never keep a good joke to herself; and Dolly, realising that, shifted uncomfortably in her chair, and wished again and again that she had not mentioned the friendly compact, or that she had never made it.

But it was done now, and the committed cause was to have varied effects, as Dolly was to learn later.

Dolly Helps!

"HALLO! Where's Dolly?"

Barbara Redfern looked amongst the crowd of girls outside the Fourth Form-room as she asked that question.

Morning lessons were over, and the girls, as usual, had hurried from the Form-room. But to-day Dolly had been first out. In fact, so quickly had she escaped, that Miss Steel, lightning-like though she was, had been unable to give the command to stop her.

Miss Steel did not approve of rushing from the Form-room the moment lessons were finished; but she had been unable to stop Dolly.

"She's gone!" said Clara Trevlyn, in disappointment. "I was going to ask her about Brenda—"

"Yes; perhaps she would sing us the masterpiece, or give a demonstration with the aid of a few brooms, and kettles. The matron's cat would oblige with the high notes."

But Barbara Redfern frowned.

"Bother Brenda," she said. "I want to see Dolly about cricket—she's been slacking lately. If she's going to play in the match on Saturday, she'll have to come down to the nets."

"Oh, rather!" agreed Phyllis Howell, the cricket enthusiast. "She can leave the piano stunt till afterwards. My word! If Dolly takes to music as well as cookery—"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"And does it as well!" chuckled Freda.

"Quite so," said Barbara Redfern. "But where is she now—in the music-room, or in the kitchen?"

"Music-room," said Clara. "She's rushed off to hear the Sonata in K."

"G is the highest note in the octave," corrected Peggy Preston, herself a pianist of no small merit.

"Oh, well, G, then!" amended Clara Trevlyn obligingly.

Barbara Redfern hurried off to the music-room in search of the missing Dolly. But she did not find her—nor was she to be found in the kitchen.

Which was not surprising in view of the fact that Dolly was in Brenda

Borelli's study on the Sixth Form passage.

Dolly had kept her word. Although she was being laughed at in the Form on account of her friendship with the strange composer, Dolly intended to carry out her promise to clean up her new friend's study.

She hardly knew where to begin. Brenda was seated at the table, and she frowned as Dolly entered.

"One moment," she said, waving a blot from her pen on to the table-cover.

Then tapping the table with one hand, she waved the other in circles above her head in a paroxysm of thought.

"Don't interrupt! Ah, I have it—yes!"

She scribbled away, breaking off occasionally to hum, and tap the table. Then she jumped up and smiled.

"Finished," she said. "A marvellous end. Better than before. I thought of it last night, and wrote most of it out. I will just put this away, then you can clean the room. It is very kind of you. Are you sure you are not too busy?"

"No; I want to," said Dolly determinedly. "It—it won't take me long."

Brenda patted her on the head affectionately.

"Shall I help?" she asked.

"No; it's all right," smiled Dolly. "I'd much rather do it alone."

She realised that Brenda, however excellent she might be as a composer of sonatas, preludes, and symphonies, was not likely to be much of a help at clearing up a room.

As soon as the door had closed, Dolly started work with a duster. The room had been swept and the bed made, but a duster had not apparently been used for a great length of time.

She coughed at the dust she raised, but the cleanness was gratifying. Each piece of paper she dusted and replaced. An old screen stood in the corner, and she set to work on it. The dust was upon it in layers, and she removed it in handfuls.

In helping Brenda she felt that she was doing good work. Brenda had helped her mentally, or, at least, she had tried to be comforting.

To clean the study was not difficult, yet it would repay Brenda a little, and help her, and that was what Dolly wanted to do.

She was behind the screen, and did not at first hear the door open. But she heard the footstep inside the study, and peered through the screen, wondering why Brenda should make such a cautious entrance.

But one glance sufficed to tell her that it was not Brenda. She could not see the face of the entrant, but the hands were stubby, the fingers were short.

Quickly Dolly stepped from behind the screen, and then stopped.

For the girl who had entered the study stared at her blankly, obviously dumbfounded at finding the study had an occupant.

"Brenda—Brenda's not here?" she asked, rather stiffly.

"No, Linda," Dolly answered coldly. "She went out only a moment ago."

"Oh!"

Linda Hope paused, and stared at Dolly.

"What are you doing here?" she asked. "Fourth Form girls are not allowed in these studies."

"I'm dusting the study for Brenda."

"Rubbish!" snapped Linda crossly. "Fourth Form girls do not fag. And from what I know of you, you're not the sort to fag."

Dolly made no reply.

Fourth-Formers did not fag, and under ordinary circumstances Dolly would have thought it degrading to dust out a Sixth-Former's study.

Third-Formers acted as "odd-jobbers" for the seniors, fetched their errands and made their tea, and did any little task that the Sixth-Former cared to set, but Fourth-Formers were above it.

It was only Dolly's good nature that allowed her to clean the study.

Brenda should have had a fag, but with such a fagmistress it was probable that the "fag" had not put in attendance for months: in fact, it was doubtful if Brenda would remember her name.

"Nosing around!" said Linda Hope, who still remained in the doorway.

"I don't see why anyone should nose round here!" said Dolly, rather cleverly.

Linda Hope laughed sneeringly.

"Pretending you don't know that Brenda leaves her compositions lying about!" she jeered. "Well, I shall report you to her. You'd better run off now. Go on!"

But Dolly did not move.

"I haven't finished yet," she replied. "When Brenda wants me to go, I will. You can fetch her if you like."

Linda Hope scowled, but, as she did not move, it was apparent that she had no intention of fetching Brenda. It was "like Dolly's cheek," really, to suggest it. But when necessity arose Dolly could be quite cheeky.

And just now Dolly felt cheeky. She did not approve of Linda, and Brenda's suspicions of the girl seemed to have some foundation. Why was Linda so keen to get Dolly from the room?

That ready suggestion of a motive for Dolly's presence in the study—was not that a case of judging others by oneself?

Dolly kept her eyes upon Linda, and that girl, after a second's more pause, went from the study, closing the door noisily.

Shrugging her shoulders, Dolly went on with her work.

But she was destined to have another interruption. This time it was heralded by many footsteps and a tap at the door.

"Hallo!" she cried. "Come in!"

The door opened, and she jumped up as she saw four familiar faces staring at her.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Clara Trevlyn. "Dolly dusting!"

Barbara Redfern, Mabel Lynn, and Marjorie Hazeldene simply blinked.

"What do you want?" asked Dolly gruffly.

"You," said Barbara Redfern. "But what on earth are you doing? Fagging?"

Dolly shook her head.

"I'm just dusting the study for Brenda," she explained. "She's—she's just a little untidy. Worse than Clara even."

"But what's that but fagging?" asked Babs. "Fourth-Formers mustn't fag."

"I'm not fagging," explained Dolly, rather wearily. "I offered to do this."

"Oh!"

Apparently that explanation completely took away the breath of all four, and they gaped at their chum in wonderment.

"You—you asked to be allowed to dust out her study?" ejaculated Clara, to make sure that they had heard the facts correctly.

"Yes. Why not?"

"Oh, no reason," said Clara, quite overcome. "Is she going to let you cook in here or something?"

"I don't know."

Barbara Redfern rubbed her chin musingly.

"Well, I suppose you can please yourself what you do," she said slowly.

"But if you get any spare time when you're not cooking, listening to piano-forte recitals, or dusting, how about cricket? That hasn't had a look in lately."

"Oh, blow cricket!" said Dolly crossly.

Barbara Redfern blinked, and Clara chuckled.

"Dolly's music mad!" she said.

"I'm not!" retorted Dolly, rather flushed of face. "I don't see that there's any reason to cackle like a lot of hens!"

"Well, wherefore this sudden affection for Brenda?" asked the greatly puzzled Clara. "You've never had it before that I can remember."

Dolly did not reply, but went on industriously. She was quite aware of the peculiarity of her conduct. But she was doing nothing wrong, and she didn't see that it was their business.

"Well, I think you're a fathend!" remarked Clara candidly.

"Thank you! The feeling is mutual. You can laugh if you like. Brenda may be a—bit queer, but she does understand people. She doesn't only—only jeer."

"Oh, that's it!" said Mabel Lynn. "I say, Dolly, you mustn't take our remarks about your cooking seriously, you know. We—we—"

"We don't mind you cooking," explained Clara, "as long as you don't expect us to eat it. Friendship has limits."

"I suppose so," said Dolly distantly.

She had no intention of quarrelling with her old friends, but she was still feeling a little annoyed with them for their chipping.

As she realised now, there were limits to what a girl would endure in that direction, and she thought quite suddenly that a lesson might do them good.

"My cooking may be funny to you, but it isn't to me," she said. "I—I can stand a certain amount of chipping, but—but—"

"Oh, don't be such a goose!" said Clara, rather crossly. "You know we don't mean it seriously—"

"Better not argue," exclaimed Barbara Redfern, rather shortly. "Dolly doesn't want to understand. But I don't think she ought to let her personal feelings interfere with Form cricket—"

Dolly would have replied to that—she had no intention of dropping cricket—but Brenda came into sight, and Clara nudged Barbara Redfern's arm.

"Ware!" she warned.

The juniors drew back, and made for the passage. Brenda, deep in thought, hardly noticed them.

"Ah!" she murmured, as she entered the study, and surveyed it. "What a difference! Dear friend, you are a wonder-worker! Really, as a cook and housemaid, you are surprisingly efficient. It is an art—an art, a domestic art, but an art nevertheless, for it can be performed with artistry."

"Well, I've made it as clean as I can," said Dolly, rubbing her nose where the dust tickled.

"Yes, yes; splendid. Thank you so much! I should have a fag, but I've forgotten her name. However, I sacked her—she lost some of my manuscripts. But you will be late for dinner," she added quickly. "I heard the bell going."

"Gracious, yes!" murmured Dolly, with a hasty look at the clock.

She threw down the duster, and with a nod at Brenda hurried from the study—and that girl, having deposited a book on the table, followed a minute later.

Miss Steel fixed a glittering eye upon Dolly as she entered the Hall.

"Where have you been, Dolly?" she demanded.

"In the Sixth Form passage, Miss Steel," answered Dolly, hoping that the mistress would not question her further.

"Indeed! And what were you doing in the Sixth Form passage?"

Further fencing was useless, as Dolly saw.

"I—I was tidying up for Brenda Borelli, Miss Steel."

"Brenda has no right to make use of you in that way—only Third Form act as fags. I must speak to Brenda—"

All eyes were upon Dolly, and there was a buzz of talk in the Fourth.

"It was not Brenda's fault," she explained. "I—I offered."

"Oh!"

Miss Steel stared at her, then curtly ordered her to be seated. It was so unusual for a Fourth Form girl to "fag" when there was no occasion for her to that the mistress could not understand it at all.

That there was a friendship between the two did not occur to her, and for a moment she wondered if Brenda had been bullying. But the idea of Brenda bullying was too ludicrous for words. And she surmised that perhaps Brenda had made some payment for the service rendered.



CLARA'S ENTHUSIASM! Clara waved her bat, just missing the lamp shade by inches. "Hooray!" she cried. "We shall get the study free from burnt sugar, yet!"

Dolly glanced towards the Sixth Form table, then stared in surprise. Brenda Borelli was not present. Nor did Brenda arrive during the meal. For Dolly kept an eye upon the door.

Wondering if the girl had absently-mindedly forgotten the meal, Dolly decided to visit the study and tell her before it was too late to get something to eat.

But she was only half-way towards the door when it opened with a wild swing, and an excited figure burst in.

It was Brenda, with her hair bobbing about, and her spectacles almost sliding from her nose.

"Dolly!" she exclaimed excitedly. "Dolly Jobling— Ah!"

She ran towards the Fourth-Former, and gripped her by the shoulder.

"My masterpiece!" she exclaimed. "My symphony! Where did you put it? I have searched everything, but it has gone!"

"Gone!" echoed Dolly. "I haven't seen it—"

"Oh!" moaned Brenda, clasping her hands. "Stolen!"

Suspicion!

"STOLEN?" The word was taken up by a dozen voices in amazement. "What has been stolen?"

"Where?"

In less than no time Brenda found herself surrounded by a crowd of girls, each member of which plied her with questions. But she only waved her hand distractedly, and groaned again and again:

"Stolen!"

"She's mad!" said Clara Trovlyn hopelessly. "What's stolen—which?"

But the group of girls parted suddenly as Miss Primrose, frowning, came across the Hall.

Such a crowd could hardly fail to draw the mistress' attention, and she angrily demanded to know the reason for it.

All eyes were turned upon Brenda, and Miss Primrose, for the first time, became aware of the girl's presence.

She fixed Brenda with a stare, critically noting her excited appearance.

"Brenda," she exclaimed, "what is the meaning of this? You were not at dinner!"

"No, Miss Primrose. Something has happened—disaster—"

Brenda's tone was tragic, and the mistress raised her eyebrows. For a moment Miss Primrose wondered if anything had happened, her safe robbed, or the school ransacked. But Brenda quickly enlightened her.

"My masterpiece!" wailed the girl. "Gone! Stolen! All those hours of work, the gem, the symphony that would shake the world, stolen!"

Miss Primrose frowned, and held up her hand.

"Brenda," she exclaimed, "calm yourself! Please explain what you have lost."

Brenda nearly choked, and several girls laughed until checked by Miss Primrose's sternness. The crowd had assumed alarming proportions now, and the doorway was completely blocked.

Brenda, the central figure, was perhaps flattered at the attention she received, but Dolly Jobling was looking anxious on her friend's account. She knew that to Brenda the loss of the manuscript was not amusing—that it was in fact a tragedy, however much the others might laugh.

"It—it was some music I had composed. A symphony, Miss Primrose," explained Brenda, more soberly. "I put it in my study. But it has gone—it has been stolen."

"Nonsense, girl," said Miss Primrose, rather angrily. "Why, do you imagine, should anyone wish to steal such—such—er—composition?"

She had been about to say "rubbish," but realising that Brenda was seriously distressed, she refrained.

"Why?" ejaculated Brenda, and looked round at the girls. "Because it is a masterpiece! I am serious!" she added fiercely, as several girls giggled. "It is a masterpiece! I have had an offer for it; it would make my fortune. But—but it is stolen!"

So tragic was her tone, so forlorn, that the girls forgot to laugh, and Miss Primrose was obviously in doubt as to what course she had best take.

If Brenda spoke the truth, if the music were valuable, there was the possibility that it had been stolen by some unscrupulous person; but it was far more probable that Brenda had mislaid it. Brenda's reputation was more for eccentricity than for carefulness.

"You are quite sure that your search was thorough?" she asked the girl. "It has not been mislaid?"

"I have searched everywhere! Besides, I know it has been stolen!"

Dolly Jobling looked round for Linda Hope, but the girl was not to be seen, and she hardly noticed the silence that had fallen.

"But who has been in your study?" asked the headmistress.

Brenda did not reply. She had been almost sure of her ground in asserting that her manuscript had been stolen, but she was not willing to accuse another girl without definite proof.

But Dolly, who knew that, was astonished to find herself the centre of attraction. Everyone was looking at her and whispering. Miss Steel, too, was watching her.

Then Dolly's face flushed, and she stared wide-eyed at them all. They were accusing her; she heard whispers, she could see it in their faces.

She had been in Brenda's study. They all knew it. Surely they could not think that she was guilty!

"I do not accuse anyone," murmured Brenda haltingly.

"This is really most unfortunate," said Miss Primrose, rather crossly. "Really, Brenda, if the manuscript is so valuable, why did you not take greater care of it—keep it in some safe place?"

Brenda sighed, and shook her head. "Your study must be searched. There is no time now," said the headmistress; "lessons are overdue as it is. You will lock your study, Brenda, and bring me the key. A thorough search must be made afterwards."

"Very well, Miss Primrose," said the Sixth-Former resignedly.

Slowly the crowd dispersed. But Dolly Jobling remained, returning the suspicious looks she received. Marcia Loftus laughed unpleasantly, and several girls gave her curious stares.

Marcia Loftus! Dolly did not care what Marcia thought. Marcia was the meanest-minded girl in the Fourth Form, and simply jumped at a chance to think ill of anyone.

THE SCHOOL FRIEND.—No 163.

But the others—somehow she felt that they, too, were accusing her. They, too, thought that she might be guilty!

Why should she want to steal the manuscript? She asked herself the question fiercely, and realised that she had as much reason as anyone else, and in view of the fact that Brenda had explained its importance to her, more.

But the girls had drifted away now; not all of them, however. Brenda, in a corner, was explaining excitedly the value of the symphony.

That group broke up slowly, and soon Dolly was left alone with Brenda.

The Sixth-Former, noting her worried look, came across to her, and patted her shoulder.

"I say, Dolly," murmured the eccentric Brenda, "don't imagine I'm blaming you in any way. These fools"—she waved her arms—"they think that either I have mislaid it or you have taken it for a joke. I know you would not do that—"

"Of course I wouldn't!" said Dolly. "As if I would do it, when I know how you value it. It would be cruel. I had nothing to do with it, Brenda. It—it may have been moved when I was tidying up, though I tried to be careful."

"Yes, of course you did," nodded Brenda. "It was not your fault, Linda, she is the one. But do not tell anyone. I must watch her, though how, I do not know."

"I will help," offered Dolly. "Let me, please. I feel that I—I may be to blame. She came to the study when you were out. I ought to have warned you. But I hurried off to dinner."

"Oh, then it seems clear. Though she had not time, unless she stole it before. But"—she shrugged her shoulders—"I must lock the study, and let Miss Primrose have the key. And you must get to lessons."

She patted Dolly's shoulder kindly, and they parted.

Dolly simply raced along the passage. A hasty look at the clock told her that she was late. Miss Steel did not approve of lateness. She had been late for dinner, and now she was late for lessons.

There would be trouble, she told herself; and she was right.

"Late again," said Miss Steel tartly. "You are getting troublesome, Dolly Jobling. You hurried from morning lessons, were late for dinner, and now are late for lessons. Kindly remember that rules are made to be observed, not to be neglected. A hundred lines! And hurry up and get out your books!"

As Dolly made for her seat there was a suppressed buzz of talk; but Miss Steel quelled it with an angry glance.

But though the murmurs were quelled, the girls were still looking at her; and Dolly lowered her eyes. She was angry, yet she knew that they had a certain amount of reason.

There was no definite accusation on the part of the girls, but rather curiosity.

Half-way through the lesson, when Dolly thought that the affair had been forgotten, a screwed-up ball of paper landed on her desk.

She started and picked it up, looking round to see whence it had come.

Miss Steel's attention was focused upon the blackboard, an occasion when the girls' attention was directed away from that useful piece of Form-room furniture. Several girls were looking at Dolly, but one girl winked—Marcia Loftus.

Dolly straightened the paper, and wondered what message Marcia had written.

She expected to see some taunt—the word "Thief," perhaps, or something equally insulting.

But she stared as she saw the word "Halves" printed carefully. She flushed,

and screwed up the paper, glaring at Marcia, who giggled.

"Halves! Marcia thought, then, that she had the music; and Marcia, in her queer, would-be funny way, had asked for a share in the subsequent profits.

Dolly bit her lip angrily, and fixed her eyes upon Miss Steel's back. She knew that the girls were looking at her—that some of them were smiling—but she heeded them not.

As far as she was concerned, they could think just what they liked.

But her conscience told her that she was careless—that she might have mislaid that valuable manuscript. But Dolly dismissed the thought from her head. Linda had taken it. Linda had acted so suspiciously that morning. She had been so eager to get the study empty.

Linda had it. She must have hidden it somewhere in her study.

For a second Dolly thought rather wildly of searching that Sixth-Former's study. But she knew that that would place her in a worse position than before, and probably it would serve no good purpose.

Brenda's study had yet to be searched. The manuscript might be found. Brenda was careless enough to have overlooked it.

And Dolly tried to concentrate upon lessons. The symphony which had hitherto been a subject for jesting, had now assumed a new importance.

French was the last lesson of the afternoon, and Miss Steel departed to make way for the French mistress.

The Form was left in Barbara's charge, pending the time when Mademoiselle Lupin, the French mistress, should arrive.

"When are you going to publish the great symphony, Dolly?" jeered Marcia Loftus. "Sending it to London to get it published? If I stole something, I'd choose something better than that—"

"Oh, dry up!" snapped Clara Trevlyn. "We don't want your tongue wagging, Marcia! Dolly's a bit of a chump, she probably mislaid the rubbish. But she didn't steal it!"

"Thank you!" said Dolly, with a sarcastic smile. "That is good of you, Clara. I'm glad you think that I didn't steal it."

Marjorie Hazeldene sighed. When Dolly and Clara got at "loggerheads" there was no stopping them. Both were as obstinate as mules.

"Of course we don't think you took it, dear," said Marjorie soothingly. "But it may have been mislaid by—by someone."

"Perhaps Dolly cleaned out her frying-pan with it," chuckled Freda Foote. "That's about all it's fit for!"

"You know nothing about it!" exclaimed Dolly loyally. "You've never heard it. It's—it's very good—"

"Why, you said it was awful yesterday!" said the amazed Clara.

"Well—I mean, I didn't appreciate it properly. But Brenda says it's good—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, if Brenda says that it's good—it must be," laughed Phyllis Howell. "You ought to hear her 'all out' on the baby grand in the music-room."

"Oh, rats!" said Dolly Jobling crossly. "You know nothing about her!"

There was silence for a few minutes in expectation of the French mistress' arrival. But Mademoiselle Lupin was late.

"What amazes me," said Marcia Loftus, "is Dolly's sudden affection for Brenda—"

"Yes; there's more in it than she'd have us imagine," sneered Nancy, Marcia's crony. "Why should anyone be friendly with Brenda—"

"Oh, well," explained Marcia loudly,

(Continued on page 213.)



THE CLIFF HOUSE WEEKLY



No. 13. (New Series).

Week ending June 24th, 1922.

CLUMSY Dolly Jobling! That, more or less, is how she is known at Cliff House. And, to a casual observer, that is all she seems — just clumsy. But those of us who have her for a chum know her to be a sterling, lovable girl with a heart of gold, and as plucky as needs be on occasions.



General Information Concerning DOLLY JOBLING.

By
BARBARA REDFERN (The Editress).

Dolly, who shares Study No. 7 with Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn, is quite a pretty girl, with nice brown eyes and small, ruby-lipped mouth, and is well supplied with luxuriant, light-brown hair. This she has bobbed in the style of her chum and study-mate, Clara Trevlyn, whom she resembles not a little in both appearance and in ways. The resemblance does not bear more than a passing glance, however, for Dolly, besides being rather smaller in stature, has a rounder face, a smaller and redder mouth, and, of course, different coloured eyes.

Dolly is subject to a good deal of chaff from the girls owing to her weakness for cookery—weakness of cookery, the girls call it! A pet saying of Bessie Bunter's is that Dolly "can't boil water without burning it!" The truth of the matter is, when Dolly takes great care, she can cook quite well. She is a good cook theoretically, but not practically. Hence her good recipes, but poor results!

Dolly is clumsy! Clara Trevlyn is clumsy, but Dolly, it must be admitted, is worse. She has an unhappy facility for knocking over, and bumping into anything that is remotely in her path. She can knock ornaments off the mantelpiece almost without touching them, and she has an unfortunate way of spilling hot toffee about the carpets.

Marjorie and Clara declare that they live in continual danger in Study No. 7. They don't submit to it meekly, however, for arguments are ever in progress there. The tenor of life in No. 7 is by no means even; its course is by no means smooth. It is, in fact, about the most argumentative study in the Fourth Form passage.

All this does not alter the fundamental fact that Dolly is a very clever cook indeed. Some of her recipes, as those who have tried such as we have published in the "Weekly" will agree, are simply great. She may not be quite such a genius at the art as Bessie Bunter, for Bessie appears to make up in cookery and ventriloquism, what she lacks in every other direction. But Dolly is, nevertheless, quite an adept at her favourite pastime, and may do something great in this line later on.

Her gift is only spoilt by her tendency to be clumsy and careless. She will leave her compounds cooking or baking a little too long, or let a flame be too high, or be careless as regards the amount of each ingredient she uses.

Considering the many troubles that befall Dolly day by day, a surprising characteristic of hers is her steady good-temperedness and urbanity. We never see Dolly really angry; she is never even cross for more than

a few seconds at a time. This is indeed surprising, for of all the misfortunes that befall her during her cookery exploits, Dolly nearly always gets the worst of them. If she bumps into one when carrying a pau of toffee, it is usually she who suffers, both from the sticky toffee and scathing censure. If she knocks the clock off the mantelpiece, it is usually her own toe upon which it descends. So this untruffed temper of hers shows a very nice disposition indeed.

Dolly is not at all bad at cricket and hockey, but, as usual, she is prone to be clumsy and careless!

As a needlewoman Dolly could hardly be described as a second Marjorie Hazeldene. One jumper of hers we thought she would never finish; but she did at last—with unfortunate results described in her "Brief History."

Amongst other things, Dolly can recite quite nicely, and has a few handsome books which she has earned as prizes. And she is more fond of reading than the average Fourth-Former—a habit, as I believe she explains, she has got whilst waiting for her various edibles to cook.

If I stopped here I would not be giving you a faithful picture of Dolly Jobling, for her finest qualities have yet to be mentioned. These she showed prominently during our visit to South America, and when she was helping to vindicate her brother from a wrongful charge of theft, as well as on certain other occasions. And they are the sterling qualities of pluck, loyalty, generosity, self-sacrifice, and an indomitable hope for better times when everything seems black!



MISS JOBLING AS WE SEE HER!

The Opinions of the Servants, collected by Philippa Derwent.

MRS. TOWLE (Matron).—There is only one Fourth-Former who takes less care with her clothes, Miss Derwent, and that is Miss Trevlyn. But in some ways Miss Jobling is even worse. She is far more clumsy, and will often put her foot through the side of her stocking, and allow her frocks to get splashed with grease from her cooking. But she is good at heart, I know, for if I mention the extra work it throws on to my shoulders she begins to take care instantly—for a time!

MRS. PICKLES (Cook).—Miss Jobling isn't a bad sort, in my opinion, my dear, but I do wish she wouldn't come down here and attempt to teach me how to cook. Deary me, here have I been cook here for over thirty years, and I'm to be taught how it should be done by a young beginner of fourteen summers! Still, I suppose she means well.

WINNIE ROGERS (Maid).—Miss Jobling is a very nice girl indeed, and nothing of a serious nature could ever be said against her. At the same time she is inclined to be clumsy, and more than once, when I have been on my way to Miss Primrose's room with a tray of tea-things, Miss Jobling has come along and bumped into me, smashing up nearly everything. But no one here in the servants' quarters has a really bad word for her!

JANE LORD (Maid).—As often as not it's my business to tidy up the Fourth Form studies, and when I begin on Study No. 7—my! There's grease on this, and toffee on that, and pastry on the other, and butter spilt here, and treacle spilt there, and—well, the room's always in a regular state, I can tell you! What makes Miss Jobling so clumsy I don't know; but, what with Miss Trevlyn sharing the study as well, it takes me longer to put this one to rights than any of the others put together!

HERBERT BOKER (School Page).—In the ordinary way I wouldn't have a word to say against Miss Jobling. She allies reekiness a man's services when he runs a errand for her, or anything like that. But what I do detest is a—having to clean out the carpet toffee that she's spilt there. Horders is horders, o' course, as Gus Piper says, and it's all part of the day's work. But if there's one thing that makes a man's blood boil it's having to do a job that's beneath him. And cleaning toffee out carpets—ugh!

AUGUSTUS PIPER (School Porter).—There's one thing as I must say against Miss Jobling, even though she gave me a shillin for fetching her a frying-pan from the village, and that is—Miss Jobling's most awful clumsy. I was passing along the inside o' the gates the other day, a-carrying two buckets of whitewash, when who should come dashing in but Miss Jobling! Well, I jumps one way, and o' course she jumps the same way, w' the result that hardly a part of me clothes was not covered with whitewash, and Miss Jobling's shoes and stockings was coated with it, too! Clumsy ain't the word for Miss Jobling, Miss Derwent; but, all said an' done, there ain't much worse I could say agin her!

EPHRAIM PENNYFARTHING (Gardener).—Oi bain't got no very strong opinion about Miss Jobling, Miss Darwint, but 'ee might tell her from me that O'd be very much obliged if she'd kindly not throw her old pans into my gadding; loikwise as consarns old pieces o' burnt toffee, and meat, and sich loike!



BRIEF HISTORY OF DOLLY JOBLING.

DOLLY JOBLING and her cooking proclivities are a byword at Cliff House. She has, in a manner of speaking, cooked her way through the school, and made herself famous thereby. She was fond of cookery when she came to Cliff House and entered the Second Form, and she is fonder of it than ever now.

Somewhat or other, Dolly's cookery exploits have ever been prone to bring misfortunes in their trail. Such occurrences are chiefly due to Dolly's clumsiness, and partly due to sheer hard luck. Sometimes people sit on her confectionery left to set, sometimes she spills it over the hearthrug; invariably she burns any pastries she makes; sometimes she sets the chimney on fire, and she has been known to set the study on fire!

On one early, but still memorable, occasion, Miss Bullivant sat down upon a pan of Dolly's "setting" toffee, and then walked out, with the frying-pan adhering to her skirt, and the handle clanging against the wall of the passage!

Dolly first came into real prominence when she found the second part of that ancient chart drawn up by the old Royalist, Jno Ogilvie. The old Royalist had, in those far-back times of stress, hidden all his wealth in the vaults of Cliff House, and given the clue to the recovery of it in three separate documents, each one useless without the other. Though there was also a first and a third part, it was solely on account of Dolly being in possession of this one that the Cliff House treasures came to be discovered by the Cliff House girls.

Dolly Jobling has faults, but, like all other worthy girls, she is not given naturally to suspicion. Given sufficient provocation, though, there is no doubt that, compared with her study-mate, Marjorie Hazeldene, Dolly is more prone to suspicion. Nancy Bell realised that when, caught by Marjorie tormenting the latter's squirrel, she resolved somehow to obtain revenge.

Dolly had at last completed her famous jumper—in red and blue wool! Marjorie did not like that jumper, and declared jokingly that she would not go out with Dolly if she wore it! Dolly took it seriously, however, and there Nancy Bell saw her chance—and took it! She maliciously unpicked the hopeless jumper, of which Dolly was so proud, and so contrived things that it appeared to be Marjorie's doing. Dolly, though not a suspicious girl, had nothing for it but to believe her chum jumper, after what she had said against the jumper.

And then, when Marjorie found some of

her needlework spoilt, what could she believe but that Dolly was the guilty girl? In spite of the obviousness of each other's guilt, the pair of deceived chums treated each other with remarkable forbearance. Dolly was particularly surprising in this respect, for she might have been excused for showing bitterness of temper. Marjorie, we know, could never be angry with a girl she has regarded all along as a chum, but one would hardly have expected Dolly to show the same forbearance. But she did! And at length, as mentioned in Marjorie's "Brief History," Clara Trevlyn restored harmony by exposing Nancy Bell.

The great test of Dolly Jobling's life befell her immediately after her adventures with the rest of the Fourth-Formers in South America. Dolly spent a few days at her home before journeying on to Cliff House to begin the fresh term. Her brother Arthur, whom she has always been devoted to, was in grave trouble. He had just previously picked up a letter which outlined a plot for burgling a wealthy house near by. Rather aspiringly, Arthur attempted to catch the burglar single-handed. The burglar was surprised, and escaped, but Arthur was caught with banknotes in his hand by the owner of the house. Arthur was allowed to depart for the moment, full of the knowledge that the harsh owner of the property would obtain a warrant for his arrest straightaway.

This was what Dolly learnt from her brother in the garden of their home, with the policeman even then arrived at the house to arrest him. There was only one possible way of proving his innocence, and that would have to be through recovering the burglar's letter which he had found. And this, thinking he would never again need it, he had torn into fragments and thrown away!

That was as much as the distracted boy could say, for at that moment his father came seeking him in the garden, and he fled—poor Dolly knew not whither! There was nothing Dolly would not do for her brother. But how to find that torn letter? How could she help him?

What a chanced Dolly it was who arrived at Cliff House for the opening of the term! Her chums were astounded and dismayed. So bright, cheerful, and hopeful when she had parted from them after the South American voyage; now so haggard, worried, and distressed! And her behaviour puzzled and dismayed them more and more. With her she brought to the school a capacious bag of torn-up papers from her brother's room—fragments among which, she tried to

hope, she would be able to find the vital letter and piece it together!

And then her task began. Locking herself in Study No. 7, heedless of the fact that her studymates might want to drop in occasionally, Dolly set to work upon the long and heart-breaking task of trying to piece together the vital letter from the mass of fragments. Well into the night, too, she continued her task, numbed with the cold of early autumn. Somehow she felt she dared not tell her chums the truth, and gave them to understand that she was engaged upon "a competition."

Cheery-tempered as Dolly is as a rule, she felt maddened by her chums' efforts at friendliness, and a general quarrel arose. The result was a "split" in No. 7, Clara and Marjorie going off to "dig in" with Phyllis Howell and Philippa Derwent in Study No. 5, refusing to return until poor Dolly was more reasonable. And then, with the Fourth-Formers sparing no efforts to "smooth things over" with the chums of No. 7, and Arthur Jobling arriving near Cliff House with a circus which he had joined under an assumed name, Dolly's worries thickened more and more.

At length good fortune came to the rescue of Dolly, and she found all the pieces of the letter—except four! These four were in her brother's possession, but when she sought him, the circus was gone, and Arthur—his identity had been discovered, and he had flown again! But Arthur came back to Friar-dale, saw Dolly, and the four fragments were pinned on the sheet with the rest of the fragments. The letter complete! And then, like two great blows—the letter blew away, and a policeman burst upon them and arrested Arthur!

It seemed that all Dolly's work had been for naught. In the midst of a raging thunderstorm went Dolly, searching for the elusive letter, growing weaker and weaker, until a falling tree, struck by lightning, glanced off her head, and she dropped unconscious. She was found, and carried to the sanatorium, only to disappear shortly after her recovery, and her chums knew not whither she had gone!

Then came that dramatic scene in court. Arthur Jobling was before the magistrate, and many of the sympathetic Fourth-Formers were there. The man whose property Arthur was supposed to have attempted to steal was represented as witness by his butler, who, in reality, had been in league with the real would-be burglar. Judgment was just about to be passed upon poor Arthur, when Dolly burst into the court. She had found the letter! The butler tried to bluster for a few seconds, and then quailed before the magistrate, and gave way, confessing his part in the plot. So Arthur Jobling was absolved from all blame—more than that, he received credit for his brave attempt to stop the burglar—and Dolly had triumphed in the end!

This is the only great part, until now, that Dolly has had to play. But it has been sufficient to show that, with all her clumsiness and carelessness, Dolly Jobling has a heart of gold and a spirit that does not waver!

DOLLY JOBLERLING— A KRITTIKAL SURVEY.

By Bessie Bunter.



SHOULD you pass along the Forth Fourm passidge at Cliff Howse, deer reeders, and approach a studdy baring the number seven, your eyes will be arrested by a strange, but strong smell. You will gess kwite correctly that there is something burning somewhere, and when your eyes alite again on the somewhat battered door of the studdy menshuned, you will perseve smoke—thick, poisonous smoke—belching through the craks.

And what is the eksplanayshun, deer reeders? It is only too simple. Inside that studdy a gurl of the name of Dolly Jobberling is engaged in "cookary"!

Yes, deer reeders, no wunder I kwote the werd "cookary." Dolly Jobberling is a nice gurl in many ways, but she suffers from one grate dilloushun. She thinks she can cook! It is a very sad thing, for it appears to be a dilloushun which has attended her from her earliest days, judging from the artikals of hers in this ishew.

I have orphan tride to give her advice and tips. Time and again I tell her that she can't boyie worter without barning it, THE SCHOOL FRIEND.—No 163.

and then I have to dodge owt of the way, for, like all bad cooks, she loozes her temper when krittisized. Still, I must admit she has improved lately, and lots of things she has cooked are not bad. She may make quite a good cook in sentewries to come!

In other ways, though, Dolly Jobberling has shoan herself to be an admirabul gurl. Look how she strove to help her brother, for instance, and saived him just as he was abowt to be sent to prison on a charge of theft! She did it orfully clumsily, of course—nothing like I'd have done it myself; but it shows she has a jolly fine naicher, so there! She isn't had at sports, either, and is really very good-harted when you know her.

But when she begins to cook, Dolly is a seeryous danger to the commoonity. She ort to have a speshal fire-proof room to herself! It says something for the nerves of Marjery Hazledene and Clarer Treverlin that they are able to stand it. We don't know how the pore old studdy itself can stand it, either! Studdy number seven, deer reeders, is doomed! It can't stand the strain much longer! I don't know whether it will be through an explosion, or through fire—it will probaberly be through both; but studdy number seven is doomed!

Clarer says that Dolly is warse at a piknik than she is in the studdy. Last time they had one, Dolly upset the lighted spirit stove over the grass, and started a woodland fire. There wasn't much fire, but there was clouds of smoke, and by the time they had stamped out the flames the villdige fire brigadd roled up! My werd! The things the firemen said to those three gurls!

What a pity it is for Marjery and Clarer, deer reeders, that Dolly should think she can cook!



WHY I AM FOND OF—

COOKERY.

I can't explain either what first made me so keen on cookery or when I first took to it. I've heard that my first walk was between a cupboard and a gas-range, and I can quite believe it! At home I was always drawn down into the kitchen as if by some magnetic force, and the heroine of my early life was—the cook! I could watch her for hours busying herself with the pots and pans and dishes, and making dinners and pastries of all kinds. I regarded her as a magician, and I wanted to become such another myself!

There seemed to be nothing she didn't know about the subject—or so I thought—and I picked up lots of useful tips from her. Long before I came to Cliff House I knew how to make various kinds of dinners and ever so many different varieties of cakes and deserts.

My earliest chance to show what I could do came when all the servants in the neighbourhood went on strike! Mother was ill at the time, and father knows just enough about cookery to cook a steak badly! So they wondered whatever they would do—until I got to work! I had the time of my life in sole charge of the gas-range, and the unanimous opinion of my mother, father, and brother—but I believe they said it to flatter me!—was that my results were more tasty than cook's! That was the proudest moment of my life, I can assure you, and I was sorry when the short strike ended!

READING.

I first formed the habit of reading by way of filling in time when I have been waiting for things to cook. But I found that I had a greater appetite for reading than I bargained for, for time and again I have allowed milk-puddings to boil over or meat

to become badly burnt before flinging aside the book and jumping up! Nowadays I have grown wise, and if I have anything like a while to wait whilst something is roasting, boiling, or frying I set the alarm to warn me! I have found this device quite successful, but a good deal of a bother!

RECITING.

Strange to say, the first time I was told I could recite rather well I was quite insulted! I was at home, and in the kitchen as usual, and was trying to memorise the ingredients of a few kinds of sweets from a new book of recipes I had obtained. Perhaps I had taken a somewhat dramatic posture by the gas-range, and I was repeating the recipes aloud in order to remember them better.

I paused at last, and suddenly heard a slight clap of applause from near the doorway. I jumped round, of course, and in the doorway I saw the cook and the scullery-maid, and beside them my mother and a lady friend of hers. It was cook who had clapped, and both she and the maid were grinning broadly, whilst mother and her friend were beaming with approval.

"Splendid, Dolly!" exclaimed mother quite warmly.

"Very good indeed!" concurred our visitor approvingly.

"Do you think she will do, Mrs. Weston?" my mother asked her.

"I do, indeed!" assented Mrs. Weston.

"Your reciting is really good, Dolly!" said mother to my astonished self. "You shouldn't keep such gifts a secret, my dear!"

"Reciting, mother!" I cried indignantly. "I was repeating these recipes!"

"Yes, you might have chosen something better to recite!" agreed mother. "Thank you, cook, for asking us down!"

"Don't mention it, marm!" said cook, hiding a broad grin.

My mother and her friend went away, discussing myself and my "reciting," and I glared at cook, and then had a few heated words with her. It appeared that the cook, being a bit of an old joker in her way, had told my mother that I was reciting, and this brought them down. Our visitor happened to be a lady organising a local concert for charity, and was in need of "turns." Thus it came about that I delivered my first recitation at this charity concert, and, to my great surprise, I was a success! I didn't recite a list of recipes, needless to say!

SPORT.

Next to holding a frying-pan, give me the handle of a bat! There's little I like better—except cookery!—than standing at the wicket, trying to knock up the runs which will spell victory! I say "trying" because I don't often get much further!

Next to cricket I like hockey. In some respects I like hockey better, for in this game a mistake is usually not so serious as it is in cricket. If you miss an open goal in hockey—well, anybody might do that, and you try not to miss the next! But if you miss a straight one in cricket and a ball is flicked off, you don't get another chance! And as to missing anything like an easy catch in the field, that's almost a crime!

I like tennis moderately well; but I am, unfortunately, at my clumsiest here, and usually finish by having a war of words with my partner—especially if my partner happens to be Clara Trevlyn, who is almost as clumsy as myself! I like cycling for miles through the country around, and feeling the fresh-scented breeze against my face! The atmosphere I like best, I must admit, is the not so fresh but much more scented one created by cookery; but one must have a change, and I get this by going to the other extreme—cycling!

Taking into consideration all things that are popular with the girls here—sports, acting, needlework, music, dancing, and others—I should say I am just as fond of them as is the average girl.

SOME OF MY TRIALS.

By Dolly Jobling.



WALKING OUT WITH CLARA.

I regard this as one of the great trials of my existence. Walking out with Clara is not the simple matter that it seems. It isn't simply that she takes strides twice as long as the average girl, though this in itself is bad enough. But Clara, as everybody knows, insists on carrying a walking-stick! It is this stick that spoils every walk, and makes her a serious menace to her unlucky companions. She trips me up with it about once every four minutes, and I'm positive one of these days I'll be sent toppling over the Cliffs! She also uses it to point out the landscape, and has more than once knocked off the hat of a passer-by in so doing. And this is no more than skinning over what a trial it is walking out with Clara!

COOKERY UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

My cookery aspirations are not appreciated in Study No. 7. My path is beset with difficulties. Sometimes, when a half holiday turns out wet, Marjorie and Clara might want to spend the time until tea in the study. The idea of cookery practice going on at the same time does not appeal to them, and as often as not I arrive to find that all my utensils have vanished, and Marjorie

and Clara—particularly Clara, are looking remarkably innocent. Clara has always some stupid yarn to account for the disappearance of my things. The other week she had the cheek to say with the gravity of an owl that she had overheard the following conversation, take place between some of my missing cookery utensils:

Frying-pan: "Look here, I'm fed up with this life! That awful Dolly Jobling has been at me again, and burnt another hole in me!"

Saucepan: "Same here! I vote we go on strike so far as this afternoon goes."

Boiling Pan: "Hear, hear! Let's have the afternoon off!"

Gas Range: "Well spoken, my children! Take the afternoon off, and recover from your cruel treatment. I wish I could come with you!"

Clara would have kept on with this rubbish if I had not placed a cushion against her face. But you see how a schoolgirl cook can be worried. What I want is a huge kitchen to myself!

ADVICE AND CRITICISMS.

I have received advice and criticisms—particularly criticisms—from practically every girl in the school. The final opinion of each girl appears to be that I can't cook, and the equally fixed opinion of each girl is that she can. I have received all manner of advice—usually worthless. Clara once advised me to blow up my gas range and pawn my pots and pans, but when by accident, immediately after, I almost blew up the range. Clara was sorry she had given the advice!

HOW TO MAKE BURNT ALMONDS.

By DOLLY JOBLING.

IT was simply pelting cats and dogs, and a half-holiday, too! No cricket, no chance of getting out of doors.

The others were all grumbling, but personally I'd made up my mind to light the fire, and have a shot at making a new kind of sweet that no one in Cliff House had been known to make.

Bessie came wandering along to Study No. 7 to ask Marjorie's advice about a weird and wonderful coat she was knitting for Polly, her parrot. Clara was banging on the table, and whistling at the top of her voice, when I found the recipe, and in my excitement I must have said the name of it out aloud.

"Burnt almonds!"

"What, again?" Clara stopped whistling to say. "How strange that you should burn anything!"

I glared at her; then, since she wouldn't look at me, decided it might be best to ignore her, after all.

I was determined to show the girls this time that I could make a success of cooking if I tried.

I put a gill of water and a pound of Demerara sugar into a saucepan, and brought it to the boil. It was when I was busy skinning the almonds that I noticed a slight smell of burning sugar; but it was only a little I had spilt—the main portion of the saucepan's contents were all right.

Clara, of course, started making remarks, but I noticed that she

left the articles she was writing for the "Weekly," and came over to see what I was doing.

I stirred in the half-pound of almonds, and watched anxiously as I stirred the mixture until the almonds were all quite thickly coated, and the syrupy mixture began to granulate round them.

I took the pot off the fire, and was going to turn the almonds out on to a sieve; but I stopped to ask Clara why ever she was backing away like that, and as I did so, my foot caught in the edge of the rug. It was by a miracle that I saved myself from going headlong, saucepan and all; but as it was, fortunately, only a little of the mixture went on to the carpet as I lurched forward, and I recovered my balance just in time. It was Clara's fault, though. If she had not been so silly as to back away with that alarmed expression, I should have been looking where I was going.

At any rate, I turned the remainder of the almonds on to the sieve, taking great care that they did not stick to one another. They were supposed to remain there until they were cold; but by the time everyone, including Bessie, had sampled them, just to make sure that for once they weren't too burnt, I can assure you there weren't many left!

Clara says this is my most successful recipe, because it was the only one I was supposed to burn!



DOLLY'S DAILY PROGRAMME.

By FRED A FOOTE.
(Fourth Form.)

7.15.—Gets up. Accidentally falls down and rolls under the bed. Rescued with difficulty by heroic Fourth-Formers. Difficulty due to one party of heroines pulling her arms one way, and another party pulling her legs the other.

7.20.—Dressing.

7.25.—Still dressing. Tangle somewhere.

7.30.—Still dressing—with assistance.

7.40.—Still dressing—with an accompaniment of bearing sounds.

7.45.—Everybody dressed but Dolly. Desperate assistance given, as it is but five minutes to breakfast-time.

7.50.—Dolly dressed.

7.54.—Dolly washed—or, rather, splashed—whilst we've hunted for her soap, sponge, towel, comb, brush, and hair-slide. Leave dormitory at the double.

7.54 plus 3 seconds.—In breakfast-room five minutes late—bar the odd seconds. Interchange of remarks 'twixt Miss Steel and ourselves. Less audible but more vigorous interchange 'twixt ourselves and Dolly.

8.0.—Dolly eats her breakfast with a wry face—assumed or natural—and criticises Mrs. Pickles with every mouthful.

8.20.—Practising at the nets. Dolly accidentally shatters her own wicket. Finally breaks the splice of Phyllis Howell's new bat by swiping the turf instead of the ball.

8.50.—Dolly has a little cookery practice—she needs it!—in her study. Sets a pan of toffee on fire, and starts a sort of Burning Lake in the middle of the carpet. Poetic and inspiring; but not appreciated by Marjorie and Clara. The three galvanize themselves into amateur firemen, and extinguish the conflagration. No damage done, fortunately, as that part of the carpet had already been burnt away by the last Burning Lake.

9.5.—Three amateur firemen arrive in the Form-rooms for morning lessons—five minutes late! Fifty lines apiece given them in lieu of medals for fire-extinguishing!

12.0.—Lessons over, cookery recommences.

4.30.—Tea-time. Marjorie and Dolly, like the valiant heroines they are, manage to masticate a tea cooked by Dolly.

5.40.—Dolly again at the wicket, in the same light as before.

6.30.—Dolly suggests cookery practice again. Marjorie and Clara suggest not. In the ensuing struggle Marjorie and Clara come on top—literally, as it usually happens, the two sitting on top of Dolly until she agrees that sufficient for the day is the cookery thereof!



MY CLUMSIEST DAY.

By
DOLLY JOBLING.

I'VE read what Freda has to say about my daily programme in the other column, and you can take my word for it that it is "greatly exaggerated!"

At the same time, I am inclined to be clumsy, I don't mind admitting that. But it's nothing like to the extent that that silly goose Freda tries to make out!

My clumsiest day I can remember is worse even than the one Freda tries to make out is my usual kind! I started blackly in the morning, in the dormitory, by bumping into Agnes White, who was carrying a jug full of water. Agnes had forgotten what she wanted the jug for, and where she was carrying it, and everything else connected with it, as usual, and she came wandering towards my bed with it.

Well, it wasn't my fault there was a collision. My mind was occupied with something else. I had an uneasy, but very forcible idea that I had left on one of the gas-taps of my range! If so, a tremendous amount of gas would have escaped during the night! And, on top of that, I had lost one of my shoes! So what with having my head down looking for the shoe, and having my mind full of the other business, I bumped into Agnes violently.

Crash! went the laden jug on to the floor; and a huge piece of the bottom detached itself, and water streamed across the floor and under half the beds. In came Miss Bullivant, passed opinions, and lined me heavily.

Surely enough, when I had hurried down to the Fourth Form studies, there was Miss Bullivant sniffing vigorously outside No. 7, and as I came up the smell of gas was unmistakable. Luckily, we had had the window wide open on account of the heat during the day, and had left it so. Thus the atmosphere was not as bad as it might have been. But it was bad enough, and so I was told by Miss Bullivant, who lined me and threatened to forbid me the use of the range!

Returning to the study after lessons, we were frightfully dismayed to find the room once more reeking with gas! I realised at once how it had happened. Dodging out of the way of Clara just before lessons, I remembered knocking against something. It must have been the tap—and with this result! Miss Bullivant came on the scene again, and went off to the headmistress, saying she would give me the decision later.

As a fitting finish to that day, Miss Bullivant came with the headmistress' order that I was not to use the stove for a month! And it proved the dullest month of my life!



SELECTIONS FROM MY DIARY.

By
DOLLY JOBLING.

(I am resuming where Freda Foote has left off in her article below. Freda—with her own adornments and exaggerations—has described how I fared during last week. Here are the remaining days.—D. J.)

THURSDAY.—Was properly japed to-day—and by Marcia Loftus! Marcia, with a crafty smile on her face, popped her head into Study No. 7, and said that Mabel Lynn, disguised as Miss Primrose, was just going to come along to take me in. Marcia hurried out, and in came "Miss Primrose." I thought the disguise was undoubtedly good, but I was fool enough to slang the visitor, and then found that it was the real Miss Primrose! She had called to ask me to do a bit of delicate cookery for her, and, of course, I lost my chance. But I've seen Marcia about it, take my word!

FRIDAY.—I got into trouble with Miss Bullivant for bumping into her, and, as it happened to be about the eighth time I had done it that day, she ordered me to go upstairs to her room. As it happened, she came along not far behind me, and when I was near the top of the flight I kicked out a stair-rod. This clattered down, and hit the Bull on the shin! In the Bull's room I had, for once in a way, to receive a hundred lines and a lecture, and I must admit I both expected and deserved more!

SATURDAY.—The stupidity of a some people is simply astounding! I had been black enamelling my bike on this day, and Frances Barrett came along to borrow the pot of enamel to do the same to her old rib-shaker. Shortly afterwards she came back, and loudly declared that I had caused her to coat her machine with—syrup! This is what the duffer had taken in mistake for the enamel! I admit that my home-made syrup had not come out very well, but to have it mistaken for black enamel—

SUNDAY.—Bumped into a poor little girl carrying a covered dish of meat in Friar-dale, and ruined the meal. The poor kid, crying, told me how ill her mother was, and how poor they were, and that she had had to buy their Sunday meal from a cheap eating-house with their few coppers. I soon had her here, chose the tastiest and most nourishing things we had in the cupboard, and hurried back to their poor home. I cooked as carefully and well as I had never cooked before at their gas-range, and the mother told me, with moist eyes, that it was the best meal she had ever tasted. Each day this week I have called there and cooked for them, taking with me the best things I have been able to lay my hands on, and the mother now is almost a different woman. There's nothing like well-cooked, nourishing food for giving and sustaining health!



EXTRACTS FROM DOLLY'S "DIARY OF CLUMSY DOINGS!"

Imagined by FRED A FOOTE.

MONDAY.—Came dashing through the gates, having suddenly remembered that a cricket match was in progress, and I was picked for it! Bumped into Piper, who was carrying two buckets of whitewash. Down went Piper, with one of the buckets swamping its contents over him. With great presence of mind I saved one bucket from overturning, and dragged it out of the way of his legs. A sudden rasping voice made me jump. I staggered back with the shock, and bumped into the owner of the voice—Miss Bullivant! Dropped the bucket on one of her toes, and the whitewash gushed over her feet. Explained that it was an accident. Heated argument. Five hundred lines.

(Greatly exaggerated. Dolly bumped into Piper all right, as Piper remarks elsewhere; but when she bumped into Miss Bullivant the whitewash did not go over the Bull's feet. It only just missed them. I must admit!—Ed.)

THE SCHOOL FRIEND.—No 163.

TUESDAY.—Electric bulbs in our study needed cleaning, so I thought I would give them a polish myself, as the light evenings will soon be closing in! More bad luck! Unscrewed the bulb all right, but it slipped! It dropped upon Clara Trevlyn's head, and went off with a loud pop—the bulb did, that is, not Clara's head! Was not allowed to touch the others!

(Exaggerating, as usual! Dolly did not cause the bulb to burst upon my head. It dropped into Marjorie's plate, and burst there!—Clara Trevlyn.)

WEDNESDAY.—Out cycling. Commenced by running into the school gatepost. Next saw a broken bottle in the road in front of me, and ran straight over it, for I have a theory that broken glass is good for tyres. Astounding! Front wheel appeared to be punctured. Saw P.-c. Tozer in front of me, keeping to the side of the wedge. Made for him, and ran him down. Mistress came up, and managed to beg me off.

(Hopelessly exaggerated! I did not run into gatepost. I just missed! And as to deliberately running over broken glass, my tyre was punctured before I set off—that's why I came in just afterwards with the puncture, as Freda jolly well knows! And so far as P.-c. Tozer goes, I rode along in a straight line, and then turned as I found my tyre was punctured. Tozer admitted that he thought it was Frances Barrett on the bike. Blessed if I see, how he got the idea, though! And that's what made him excited, and leap into my path! And now I'll go and see Freda on the subject of an explanation!—Dolly Jobling.)

DOLLY JOBLING'S DETERMINATION!

(Continued from page 208.)

"She knew that Brenda had a famous symphony that would make her fortune! You can't tell me anyone would suddenly pal up with Brenda for any ordinary reason."

Dolly knew that they were attempting to "draw her out," and purposely took no notice of their remarks.

"Besides," pointed out Marcia, "she actually listened to Brenda playing the piano—without being paid for it! That's rather suspicious."

"Oh, dry up!" roared Clara.

But much though she disliked hearing her chum jeered at in that way, Clara could not help feeling rather uncomfortable as she found herself agreeing rather with Marcia's remarks.

It was strange that Dolly should so suddenly make friends with the eccentric musician. Hitherto Dolly had shown no signs of friendship.

And what excuse had she given, save that they were alike? Clara puzzled her brains to recall some resemblance, but she saw none.

Dolly and Brenda were as unlike as chalk and cheese.

Was there anything in what Marcia said?

Clara was not the only one who wondered that, much though they all assured themselves that Dolly was innocent.

But they had yet to learn definitely that the marvellous symphony was missing.

Making Certain!

"YOU juniors keep back!"

Stella Stone, the captain of the school, waved back the Fourth-Formers who crowded round the door of Brenda Borelli's study.

Brenda, her hair all fuzzy, her spectacles at a slight angle, sat on the study table, her expression morose and hopeless.

Stella Stone, Isabel Drake, Pauline Wilson, and Linda Hope were in the study looking about them.

"You careless gollywog!" said Stella rather angrily to the mournful Brenda. "Why don't you look after your things? You're always losing things!"

"Losing?"

Brenda laughed harshly.

"My dear Stella, 'stolen' is a better word. But you may search. Miss Primrose's will must be done."

Stella sighed, wondering where to begin.

The study was dustless now, but the papers were still littered about, and in one corner was a pile of the "Music Mail," in another a few tattered volumes of operas.

Dolly Jobling stood in the doorway of the study, anxiously watching the proceedings, hoping that the missing masterpiece would come to light.

"Who was the last person in here, Brenda?" asked Stella. "It may have been moved by accident. We don't want to move all this litter out if there's no need."

Brenda looked up, and frowned.

"I don't see that it matters," she said, looking at Dolly Jobling.

"I can tell you that, Stella," said Linda Hope quickly. "I came in here just before dinner to find Brenda, and that girl was here—behind the screen."

She pointed accusingly at Dolly, and Stella pursed her lips.

"What were you doing in a Sixth-Former's study, Dolly?" she asked.

"I was tidying up for Brenda."

"Tidying up! But Fourth-Formers don't fag. My goodness, I'd like to know what you'd say if we asked you to do any tidying up—"

"She offered," interrupted Brenda. "Dolly and I are friends. In the kindness of her heart she volunteered to tidy my room."

"Oh!"

Stella gave the red-faced Dolly a keen glance, and then turned back to the study.

"I suppose you didn't move any of these papers?" she asked Dolly, over her shoulder. "You're as careless as Brenda. You may have moved it."

"I didn't. At least, I don't remember moving it," qualified Dolly.

"H'm!"

Dolly half-opened her mouth as though to speak, then changed her mind. She had been about to tell Stella of Linda's suspicious behaviour.

But it would have sounded feeble—more like a weak excuse.

No; she could watch Linda.

Stella shrugged her shoulders, and commenced the search. The books were brought out, and opened, lest the manuscript of the symphony should have slipped somehow between the pages.

It looked like being a long task, and Stella had other engagements for the evening.

She looked round at the girls in the doorway.

"Barbara, Mabel, Clara—one or two of you—come and help here. Be careful, but search everything—if Brenda has no objection."

"None," said Brenda dejectedly. "First glance through these papers, then put them on the table. They are all the important things. You will recognise the symphony. It is on creamy yellow paper, tied with a piece of black ribbon."

The Fourth-Formers entered the study eagerly. A search was in their line.

Freda Foote pounced on a "Life of Wagner," and opened it, shaking the pages.

Katie Smith picked up a book, and shook it, then she sat down, and looked at the pictures.

Being a book-lover, and a reader of adventures in particular, Katie was not going to let the opportunity slide, and she commenced the book right away.

Clara Trevlyn banged and bumped things about. Marjorie Hazeldene gently went through book after book, carefully and daintily dusting them with her handkerchief when she had satisfied herself that they did not contain the missing masterpiece.

Freda Foote was roaming round the study, searching in the most unlikely places—to the amusement of those in the corridor.

She searched minutely in an eggcup, and approached a slipper with caution that suggested she expected the missing masterpiece to rush from the slipper and bite her.

And all the while Brenda Borelli sat on the table, her arms folded; like Rachel of old, she mourned and would not be comforted.

Never once did she take her eyes from Linda Hope, although it was obvious that she entertained no hope that the missing treasure would be found.

The room was turned absolutely inside out. The drawers were opened and searched; and the drawers that Clara searched were left in a far less tidy condition than before.

At last Stella stood in the centre of

the study, and placed her hand on her back, which ached from stooping.

"Well, I'm blessed if I can find it!" she said. "It's missing—gone! You're sure it was here, Brenda?"

"Sure, yes—of course, I am! I put it here directly after lessons; I was working on it. I put it away when Dolly came in—"

"Um! And when couldn't you find it?"

"Just before dinner!"

"Where was Dolly when you got back?"

"In the study."

"Oh!"

Stella Stone fixed Dolly Jobling with a keen look.

"Well, Dolly," she asked, "have you hidden this for a joke? If you have, I may tell you I can see nothing amusing in it. Nor does Brenda seem to find it comical."

"I haven't touched it," replied Dolly, wishing the manuscript had never been written.

"But that's absurd. You must have moved it—if only by accident! Where exactly did you put it, Brenda?"

"I can't remember," said the girl with a very puzzled frown. "But I'm quite sure that Dolly didn't touch it!"

"Then what on earth's happened to it?" almost shrieked Stella. "It must be somewhere. The point is did you put it away?"

"Yes, of course. I didn't take it with me!" answered the musician rather petulantly.

"No? All right, then. Dolly was here when you put it away. Did you see where she put it, Dolly?"

"No, Stella. I wasn't looking!"

"Um! Well, according to Brenda, it was here when she left you in the study, and not here when she came back! I suppose you didn't leave the study, or anyone else come in?"

"Linda Hope came just inside!"

Linda Hope started, as she noted the accent of accusation in Dolly's tone.

"I!" she exclaimed. "You needn't try to get out of it like that. I found you behind the screen. You looked rather confused. It's pretty clear to me what happened. You were listening to it in the music-room. You know how valuable it is. Brenda's probably told you that Madam Deauville wants to buy it!"

"How do you know that?" ejaculated Brenda Borelli quickly. "I've told you nothing about it!"

"I—I know Madam Deauville," said Linda Hope, after a slight pause.

Stella Stone made a gesture of impatience.

"Oh, don't let's quarrel about the silly thing!" she said. "Since I've known her, Brenda's written thousands of symphonies. She can write another. Dolly and she had better settle it between them!"

"You don't understand, Stella!" Brenda rebuked her. "This symphony is important, really! I am not joking. I have been offered a very large sum of money for it!"

"I am sorry, Brenda," murmured Stella, trying hard not to smile.

The droop of Brenda's mouth was sufficiently expressive to show how real was her grief at the loss. Whatever anyone else thought about the symphony the loss was very real to Brenda.

Absence is said to make the heart grow fonder, and now that it was lost, Dolly Jobling felt that the symphony was probably something very great. And she looked almost as worried as her musical and mournful companion.

"Perhaps—perhaps it will turn up!" suggested Dolly.

"It may have melted," suggested Freda Foote. "I've heard that symphonies melt in hot weather. It would seem funny to find it melted!"

At that carefully thought out remark there was a groan from the fed-up searchers.

"It isn't funny!" said Brenda quite crossly. "You are unsympathetic, all of you! Does not the losing of a masterpiece bring tears from your souls? Would you have laughed when Carlyle's manuscript was accidentally destroyed?"

"I should!" agreed Clara Trevlyn. "So would you if you'd ever been kept in to read it!"

Clara Trevlyn had never forgotten the unfortunate time when she had been compelled to peruse portions of the "French Revolution" in detention.

"Oh, bother the symphony!" exclaimed Isabel Drake. "What about cricket?"

"Ah, what about it!" smiled Freda Foote, as yet undaunted. "Now if the laws of music writing are like cricket, Brenda scores six for her lost manuscript."

"Oh, go away!" almost shouted Brenda, as she jumped down from the table. "If you must laugh, go miles away and do it!"

And she hustled the remaining girls from the room and shut the door. Only Dolly was left inside, and the two exchanged glances.

"I—I suppose you remember putting it in here?" murmured Dolly hesitatingly.

"Yes! And—and you are sure you didn't clear it up, or put it away somewhere?"

"I think so," answered Dolly, rather miserably. "But—but I can't be sure, really. I'm sorry it's lost, Brenda, really I am!"

"So am I!" exclaimed the Sixth Form girl dependently, as she flung herself into the armchair. "Lost—or stolen? Stolen!"

Her brow darkened and she glared at the carpet. Then she leaned forward suddenly and took off her spectacles.

"It must be found!" she exclaimed. "It must! I can never write that again. I can remember parts, but not all. The end made it, and, as yet, I have not played the end!"

"Poor old thing," murmured Dolly, and she stroked the other's tousled hair. "I—I'm awfully sorry, really. I suppose it's no good searching again?"

Brenda shook her head and sighed. "A hundred pounds!" she murmured. "A hundred pounds! And I have practically nothing—nothing but what is here. The piano arrives to-day."

"The what?" asked Dolly in amazement.

"The piano—my piano!" Brenda answered proudly. "I am buying a baby grand. It arrives to-day, but I haven't the money! Oh goodness, what will happen! If the manuscript can only be found! I have been offered a hundred pounds for it!"

"A hundred pounds!" echoed Dolly Jobling almost incredulously.

Brenda nodded calmly and impressively.

"Madame Deauville has offered me that amount if I will sell it to her outright—no royalties on sales, of course!"

"Oh, goodness!" exclaimed Dolly, and she stared at the strange girl, wondering if she were romancing. "A hundred pounds! Why it would buy a model kitchen!"

But Brenda was thinking of the piano, as her smile showed.

"We must get the manuscript then," said Dolly worriedly. "You must pay

the bill. There'll be the carriage to pay, too. A hundred pounds is a large sum of money to find, really."

Brenda shrugged her shoulders. "Something must be done," she agreed. "Linda must be brought to justice. I am sure she has the manuscript. But how?"

"How did she get into the room?" asked Dolly. "Wait, though. You left the room unoccupied, Brenda, for a short time after dinner. She had time then. For you may have overlooked it in your first search."

"Yes, I suppose so. Well, it isn't here, and it must be somewhere!" she added with great wisdom.

"Shall I watch Linda?" offered Dolly. "If I can get access to her study—I am sure she is the culprit!"

"Ah! If you could!" Brenda brightened.

"Thank you, Dolly," she said, pressing the other's hand. "You're a good friend. We're both a bit careless. But then, what of that?"

Dolly smiled, and with a word of encouragement to the forlorn Brenda, went from the study. In the passage she paused. Linda Hope's study was farther down; but it would not do to approach Linda first.

She did not want that girl to become suspicious. The thing to do was to find Linda's "fag," and offer to take over the duties.

And Dolly Jobling, with some misgivings, decided to become "fag."

Infra Dig!

"MY hat!"

"What rubbish!"

"It can't be true!"

Bessie Bunter blinked excitedly through her round spectacles, and chuckled.

"I've seen her," she sniggered. "It's true! He, he, he! Fancy Dolly fagging. I wouldn't fag for anyone. Not me!"

"But it can't be true, you fat chump!" exclaimed Clara. "You don't mean to tell me that Dolly—that anyone from Study No. 7 would lower themselves by fagging?"

Clara's voice was incredulous, and all the girls who had now gathered round Bessie wore similar expressions of amazement. Bessie Bunter was known for her wild and garbled statements.

If Bessie's statements were exciting or sensational, they were generally untrue or greatly exaggerated. Bessie's imagination was fertile, and quick working. It was nothing for her to convert a trivial mishap into an alarming accident—mentally.

But Bessie was seldom believed. Like the boy who cried "Wolf!" she was not trusted.

"Oh, really!" exclaimed the fat girl, much on her dignity. "I tell you I've seen her—making toast for Linda Hope!"

"Linda!" exclaimed Clara. "It was Brenda last time. You must have been mistaken, Bessie!"

"I wasn't! I ought to know—I was there!"

"What were you doing on the Sixth Form passage?" asked Clara suspiciously. Clara believed in discrediting off-hand any statement that Bessie made until it was proved correct.

"Ahem! I was just taking a little musical composition of mine to Brenda—a syncope I composed—"

"A whatter?" ejaculated Freda Foote. "Is that a new kind of baking powder—"

"Oh, really, Freda, don't be so ignorant! It's a sort of—or—music—"

"Oh, blow your syncope!" said Clara. "You mean symphony, anyway. Where did you see Dolly?"

"In Linda Hope's study. If you don't believe me—go and find out!" finished Bessie, with much dignity and a sniff.

"But it can't be!" exclaimed Phyllis Howell. "Surely Dolly wouldn't fag for Linda! Why should she?"

"Why?"

Barbara Redfern shrugged her shoulders.

"Because she's a silly young goose!" she said. "Why did she fag for Brenda? Dolly's a mystery to me—a complete mystery!"

"Yes! But a mystery or not," said Clara Trevlyn angrily, "we're not going to have her fagging—and lowering the prestige of our study—"

"Not to mention the Form," added Barbara Redfern, who was not so much concerned on behalf of Study No. 7.

And the juniors looked very serious. It was possible that Bessie's story bore a grain of truth. If it did, then it was an affair for the Form. By fagging for Linda, Dolly was creating a precedent—other Fourth-Formers might be expected to fag.

Time had been when Fourth-Formers had been expected to act as fags. Fagging was a time-honoured custom, and taught the younger girls discipline and respect for the senior girls, both of which, as had been explained to them, were desirable.

But the Fourth Form had won their freedom, and fagging was a thing of the past as far as they were concerned. But who knew what might happen if Dolly took it into her head to fall back into the old ways?

Connie Jackson might decide that she wanted a fag, and then she could point to Dolly, and show that Fourth-Formers did fag.

Besides, it lowered the prestige of the Form. Only Third and Second-Formers—mere infants from the Fourth-Formers' lofty view—were fags.

Dolly must be stopped.

"We'll jolly well tie her up, if it's the only way of stopping her," growled Clara. "Fancy anyone fagging willingly!"

"There's one consolation," smiled Freda. "Linda won't keep her long if Dolly starts cooking. Suppose we put her up to cooking for Linda? Linda'll sack her like a shot after she's had bacon that looks like a ciuder, and an egg that's like steel!"

"My hat, yes! That's the way! That'll stop her!" grinned Clara.

And the meeting made hasty plans—plans that would have worried Dolly Jobling could she but have heard them.

But Dolly was not thinking of her Form companions. She was very busy in Linda's study.

Linda Hope, smiling to herself, sat at the table and ate the tea that Dolly had prepared.

Never had Linda had such a willing fag. Linda was rather cruel by nature, and she enjoyed taunting her fags. She would find out their secrets—home secrets—and taunt them.

She never raised a finger to hit them, but used her tongue, and brought tears to the eyes of many girls who, not for worlds, would have cried at a blow.

She enjoyed seeing Dolly busying herself in the study, and smiled joyously all the while.

But Dolly, though she did not enjoy fagging for the Sixth-Former, kept her eyes opened, as she made fresh toast.

She was certain that somewhere in the study the missing masterpiece was hidden—but where? That was what she intended to discover.

Where had Linda hidden it?—and for

how long would it remain hidden? Would the girl sell it?

Since it was undoubtedly valuable—for Dolly saw no reason why Brenda's statement should be disbelieved—it was probable that the girl would sell it with all haste.

There was no time then for Dolly to look about, and she placed the toast on the table.

Suddenly Linda rose, and crossed the room. She opened the door, then shut it with a click.

"Thought I heard someone," she said. But Dolly, whose keen ears had detected the click, knew that the girl had locked the study door—and wondered why.

"I want to have a talk with you," said Linda Hope suddenly.

"With me?" asked Dolly, fencing. "Yes—about that thing of Brenda's. Are you going to try to sell it? Don't be afraid! I shan't split! But I warn you, it's halves! If you don't share, I'll denounce you!"

"What do you mean?" stammered Dolly, quite amazed. "I haven't got it!" "Rubbish!" snapped Linda impatiently. "Don't tell me that tale. I know you have it! If you don't produce it, I shall expose you! It's in your study! Own up, and I'll tell you where to sell it, at a good price!"

Dolly stared at her fixedly. What could it mean? Surely Linda had the missing masterpiece—surely she did not imagine that it was in her new fag's possession.

Dolly wondered, and tried to pierce the other's thoughts. But she could not. Possibly Linda was acting!

Had she the manuscript, and was now attempting to throw the blame on Dolly? But, if that were so, why implicate herself by offering to go halves?

Her attitude was mysterious, and Dolly frowned wonderingly.

"Come on! You can't deceive me!" exclaimed Linda angrily. "Where is it? Don't pretend you know nothing about it!"

"You shall not have it!" retorted Dolly. "Why should you have it?"

Her plan of action had come to her now. She could find out whether Linda had the music, or whether she were really under the impression that Dolly had it.

"Oh!" Linda paused. "You won't give it up, then?" she asked harshly. "Halves, mind you! And if you are exposed it is expulsion. I shall have no mercy—"

Her tone was hard, and there was intensity in her expression. Dolly could not believe that she was acting. If she were not, where was the missing masterpiece?

Brenda's room had been turned topsyturvy, but it was not there. And now it seemed that Linda had not got the missing manuscript.

Where, then, could it be?

Linda stepped forward and caught Dolly's arm.

"Don't do anything silly," she pleaded. "Now, just bring that to me, and we'll go halves. I know just where to send it. I can get a hundred pounds for it."

She paused and drew in a deep breath while she watched Dolly's face anxiously.

"I—I'll think about it," said Dolly. "I won't promise."

"Not a word to anyone, of course!" added the prefect.

She opened the door, and Dolly Jobling rather dazedly went from the room. Brenda was in her room, and she looked up as Dolly entered.

"I have it!" she said.

"What, the missing manuscript?"

"Eh? No! I am going to sell my

things here by auction. That ought to raise something—"

Dolly nodded, then told her friend what had happened in Linda's study.

"Strange!" murmured Brenda. "Very strange! I wonder! Can it be here, after all?"

"The manuscript in this study? Oh, no! It was searched so very thoroughly!" Brenda frowned.

"I seem to remember putting it down on the table," she said, "just before you started work here. You must have moved it. Accidentally, of course!"

"Yes, I—I'm afraid I must have," admitted Dolly. "I am stupid; I wish I weren't so careless!"

Brenda sighed.

"True, it is trying. But never mind! If it is mislaid it will reappear. I had feared Linda had stolen it. She stole a small sonata once and published it under an assumed name."

"She did?" exclaimed Dolly, aghast at such base conduct.

"Yes. I didn't want to get her expelled, though. You see, there is reason in my suspicion."

junior's hand and kissed her gently and affectionately.

"You're a real dear!" she said. "You're the only one really who understands what the loss of this means to me. It—it isn't only the money, it's—oh, a thousand things!"

"I know!" murmured Dolly. "That's how I feel when I lose a recipe of something is spoiled—"

"I understand," nodded her companion. "You are helping me wonderfully, Dolly. Keep watch on Linda still, in case she is acting. Though it does not seem possible."

"I'll watch her," said Dolly; "and I'll make arrangements for the sale. When shall we have it—to-morrow?"

"Yes. In the evening. I will wire for Madame Deauville; perhaps she will buy some of these small compositions."

"I hope so. I—I can sell a lot of my things," said Dolly.

And, trying to smile, she left her new friend.

The Fourth-Formers were in the Common-room, and Dolly found Study No. 7 deserted.



SURPRISING HER CHUMS! "Great Scott!" exclaimed Clara Trevlyn. "Dolly—dusting!" Barbara Redfern, Mabel Lynn and Marjorie Hazeldene, standing in the doorway, simply blinked.

Brenda shook her hair and went on scribbling.

"There!" she exclaimed, rising. "A list of all my possessions for sale. Quite a list. I shall hold an auction."

"But—but—" stammered Dolly. "It isn't fair, Brenda. It isn't your fault that the sil—the manuscript's lost. I ought to pay something. I haven't got much money. But there are some things I can sell."

"No, no!"

Brenda waved her hand and shook her head.

"This is my affair!" she said definitely. "But, please!" urged Dolly. "I—I shall feel so mean. It was my carelessness; it must have been that. Let me help—"

Brenda smiled.

"You're a good sort, Dolly," she said. "A jolly good sort! I'll accept. Really, I shall need all the money I can get. Of course, when the manuscript turns up you shall be paid back. I don't like accepting—"

"But you must, please, Brenda!"

"Very well!" the tall girl gripped the

It was still daylight, and she looked about the study.

An auction sale. It had been easily arranged. But now she realised for the first time what it would entail.

She would have to sell the things she liked best. For a moment she thought of selling some of the oddments that she did not want.

But they, she knew, would bring in little revenue. It was the things she liked that would sell—her cookery things, her cricket bat, her pads, the large picture—a present from her mother—the hockey-stick—a present from her brother.

A lump rose in her throat as she thought of parting with her treasures. She could not; she must tell Brenda.

But she checked the thought almost immediately. It would not be fair. It was her fault most likely that the manuscript was lost. Many girls in Brenda's position would have accused her.

After all, perhaps the manuscript would be found, and she could buy back her sold treasures.

Perhaps the manuscript would be found before the sale.

She picked up the bat and held it tenderly. It had been a faithful friend. She would have to use the old club bats again!

A heavy sigh escaped her lips, and she plunged down in the armchair amidst the comfortable cushions.

It was a splendid armchair, and she realised for the first time, with regrets, her own. For she must sell that as well.

And Dolly Jobling, for almost the first time in her life, regretted her carelessness. She had called the tune, and she must pay the piper.

But, although the sale saved Brenda from a certain amount of debt, it did not find the manuscript.

Where was it?

For Brenda's Sake!

"Oh, here you are!" Dolly wheeled round as Clara Trevlyn opened the door of Study No. 7.

Dolly had just finished making a list of articles she had to sell, and the list lay on the table.

"We want a word with you, Dolly," said Clara seriously. "Bessie says that you've been fagging for Linda Hope—"

"Yes, I have!" said Dolly, with a touch of defiance in her tone.

Clara drew in a deep breath.

"Well, what do you mean by it?" she demanded truculently. "You know that Fourth-Formers aren't supposed to fag. You'll make this study the laughing-stock of the Form. Besides, the Sixth may take it as a precedent and get us to fag—"

"That's your look-out!" said Dolly, adding something else to her list. "Let me see! Four and five, that's nine, and seven—"

"Listen!" said Clara, thumping the table. "You're not going to fag for the Sixth. That's flat! We won't have it. If you want to do any tidying-up and cooking, there's plenty to be done here."

"Rats!" answered Dolly rather impolitely. "I shall do as I like!"

"You won't!"

The silence that fell was ominous, and Marjorie coughed nervously. Marjorie Hazeldene disliked "scenes" in the study

—but "scenes" were rather frequent between Dolly and Clara, excellent friends though they were on the whole.

Dolly shrugged her shoulders, and went on with her list. Clara Trevlyn growled, and went nearer to the table.

"You've acted like a silly chump lately!" explained Clara. "You're making this study appear idiotic. First you make friends with Brenda, and fag for her. Now you fag for Linda. You know she leads her fags a dance."

"Wonder what I'd get for my cricket-bat?"

"Wh-what?" explained Clara. "Listen to me. Bother your cricket-bat! You'll want that."

"I'm holding an auction sale," explained Dolly.

"An—an auction sale?"

"Yes. Brenda wants some money. She would have got it for her masterpiece; but someone has stolen that, or mislaid it. I—I may have mislaid it, you see. So I'm bound to help, aren't I?"

"Oh, you mislaid it!" smiled Marjorie.

"Well, I suppose you ought to help, then, if it is valuable. But we can lend you a little money, Dolly, if you like."

Dolly smiled, and shook her head.

"It's very kind of you, Marjorie," she said. "But—but I've decided to do this. It's better. Perhaps I can buy some of the things back later. You see, Brenda is holding an auction."

"Oh!"

Clara Trevlyn, lost for words, simply stared, and Marjorie frowned slightly.

"What are you going to sell?" Clara asked, at length.

"Everything!"

"Oh!"

Dolly went on with her list, and the other two girls stared at one another. The announcement she had made had simply dumfounded them. Auction sales at Cliff House were not numerous, and at any time would be surprising, but that Dolly Jobling should be the holder of one was nothing short of amazing.

"Surely there is some other way?"

Marjorie said. "Would you sell your bat and your cookery things?"

Dolly nodded.

"I shall have to," she replied briefly.

"I don't want to, of course; but I have promised Brenda, and it wouldn't be fair to leave out the things that are most likely to sell, even though they are my favourites."

"I suppose not," agreed Marjorie.

She looked at Dolly, and saw her friend was distressed at the sale she was morally compelled to hold.

The view Dolly had taken was an honourable one, and the only one, if she believed she were guilty. Her carelessness was to blame, and she must be responsible.

But that it was her carelessness to blame had not been proved, and it was sporting of her to presume that it had, and to act accordingly.

"You're not really going to sell those cookery things?" asked Clara, more softly than hitherto.

"Yes; I'll have to. They'll fetch quite a great deal."

Clara nodded, and looked at Marjorie.

Marjorie nodded, and looked at Clara, who nodded back.

"We'll leave you to it," said Marjorie; and they left the study.

But outside the door they paused, and the abrupt exit was explained.

"We must," said Clara mystically.

"Yes, of course. It will break poor Dolly's heart to part with those treasures. But she's a good sort. Not many girls would sell out like that. But she's a good pal."

"Yes, she is," agreed Clara fervently.

"I don't see much in Brenda myself. But

Dolly and she seem to get on all right. Shouldn't be surprised if it is Dolly's fault that the manuscript is lost. She's careless enough for anything."

Marjorie nodded, and her eyes became thoughtful.

"We must buy the things," she mused. "But she'd smell a rat if we bought them. We shall have to bring in the others, really, if they'll come in."

And Clara hurried off to tell the others. There were very few who were reluctant to come into the scheme. And it was arranged that they should buy up all they could, and return them to Dolly.

"We've got a little cash," said Barbara Redfern. "We'll buy up all that we can. How are you going to return them to Dolly?"

"Oh, leave them in the study. She won't remember who's bought them. After all, the money's in a good cause really, if Brenda's hard up through the loss of her manuscript."

Barbara nodded.

"We're in," she said.

And Marjorie found that they were most of them willing to assist. Dolly Jobling, despite her many faults and peculiarities, was quite popular in the Form, and it was fully realised how deeply she would feel the parting with her treasures.

When bedtime arrived the scheme had been completed, and at the auction on the morrow there was likely to be quite a crowd of Fourth Form buyers.

But Dolly did not know the plans that had been made for the morrow, and she sat alone and miserable in her study.

Before her lay the treasures she was to sell. Her cookery set—brilliant saucepans, frying-pans, casseroles, and fire-proof glass utensils.

It was a splendid collection, and would doubtless bring in a great deal of revenue. But just then Dolly wished that it need not be sold.

She picked up each utensil and examined it. What a great deal she had planned to do with those things! How gloriously she would have been able to pass away long winter evenings!

But all that was finished now. She had longed for those cookery utensils, and on her last birthday her mother had sent her them.

What she was to say to her mother she could not think. After the way in which she had begged for them, how could she say that she had sold them? Yet sell them she must. It was up to her.

What use sighing?

With a last look of regret at her treasures—the last look, perhaps, that she would be able to give them, she slowly went from the study.

It was bedtime, and she went mournfully upstairs, hardly noticing that the corridors were deserted—that the others were already in the dormitory.

As she opened the dormitory door the babel of talk within stopped, and she received looks of amazement and annoyance.

"Here she is!" said twenty voices in unnecessary chorus.

Dolly nodded.

"Here I am," she agreed.

Gwendoline Cook, with frowning brow, stepped up to her.

"I understand that you're fagging for Linda Hope?" she said.

"I am. Why? Do you mind?" Dolly asked, with a slight sarcastic inflection.

Gwen frowned portentously.

"I do mind," she said. "If Barbara Redfern won't take the matter up, I will, and quickly, too. Perhaps she doesn't think much of the honour of the Form, nor do you, apparently. But we won't have it!"

? Have You Seen
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"Won't you?" asked Dolly. "Well, don't!"

She crossed to her, and Freda Foote chuckled. But Gwen Cook was not amused. She was, in point of fact, very serious.

"This isn't a laughing matter," she said sternly. "Do you realise, Dolly, that fagging is not allowed in the Fourth—that we do not fag? For goodness sake, think of the dignity of the Form—think of others! If you fag for Linda, we shall have Connie Jackson, or someone, asking for a fag!"

"Oh, bother the dignity of the Form!" said Dolly crossly. She was not in quite the mood for argument.

"Ah! That is the sentiment!" sniffed Gwen. "Bother the dignity of the Form! And bother us, I suppose? It doesn't matter if we have to fag because of your folly—oh-dear, no!"

"Well, to be candid, no!" said Dolly, agreeing for the sake of politeness. "I'm glad you don't mind."

"Don't be a chump!" broke in Clara, rather crossly. "I do think you might stop fagging for Linda when you know it's against the wish of the Form, Dolly—"

"I can't help it," said Dolly determinedly.

"But why do you want to fag?" almost shrieked Clara. "Why should anyone want to fag? You can't be fond of Linda as well as Brenda!"

Dolly shrugged her shoulders, and Clara gave her an exasperated glare.

"I must say I think it's a bit thick!" said Philippa Derwent. "If there's no need to start fagging for people. If Stella Stone, for instance, wanted a fag for an evening, we might oblige. But Linda—"

"I suppose Linda has something Dolly wants," suggested Marcia, with more truth than she realised. "She did well out of Brenda—provided she can sell the symphony."

"Hear, hear!" chuckled Nancy Bell. "I've heard that Linda's got a valuable picture in her study."

But at that suggestion there were angry murmurs, and Clara Trevlyn, who a minute ago had been arguing with Dolly, now turned upon Nancy.

"You dry up!" she exclaimed crossly. "We don't want to know what you think. Dolly may be a silly fathead, but she isn't a thief, and I'll jolly well box the ears of anyone who says she is."

Clara looked about her challengingly, but there were no signs on the part of Nancy or Marcia for an ear-boxing display.

With Clara one could never be too certain. She might put her alarming threats into operation. And Clara's wrists were like steel, and her hands rather like mallets when closed fist-wise.

So Marcia and Nancy remained scowlingly silent, leaving Dolly to the mercy of her friends.

"We don't think you've got any motive, Dolly," explained the tactful Clara. "But we know what a silly ass you are. If you must fag for someone, you can fag for me—"

"Or for me," offered half a dozen prospective fag-mistresses.

But Dolly only granted. She did not speak again—not even to answer questions; and eventually the one-sided discussion was abandoned.

Whatever they thought of her did not matter. She must keep on as Linda's fag; for there was the possibility of Linda having the music—and, another possibility, of her finding it.

If Linda had not it now, it must be somewhere in the school—somewhere in Brenda's study. Was it not likely that

Linda would try to find it? Was it not likely that she might succeed?

Clearly Dolly, lying awake, saw the probability of it; she realised that she must not relax her watch on the Sixth-Former. Linda had not it now—of that Dolly was sure.

But she could not be sure that the girl would not get it, and before she fell asleep that night, Dolly determined that she would keep Linda and her study under so keen a watch that she would be able to ascertain definitely where the music was hidden, should Linda get it.

And if it were humanly possible, Linda would get it—the scene in the study had told Dolly that.

An Unexpected Climax!

TAP! Dolly Jobling tapped on the door of Linda Hope's study. Breakfast had only just finished, and Dolly was certainly the earliest fag.

angry Linda, dressed, and obviously just returned from breakfast.

"Spying?" repeated Dolly, with a frown. "I don't understand. I—I've come to fag—"

"Well, you needn't," retorted Linda quickly. "I don't want you nosing about my room. You're too clumsy. Brenda could probably do with you. You could steal a few more of her manuscripts."

Dolly's eyes blazed, but she made no retort. Instead she gave Linda a look that was keen and searching.

"Very well," she said, and stepped back a pace.

Linda placed a key in the lock, and turned it, opening the study door. She looked back at Dolly, and that girl, after a second's pause, hurried off.

She met Brenda half-way down the passage, and the musician, whose eyes were worried and anxious, buttonholed her.

"No news," she announced dolefully. "The sale will come off. I'm sorry. On second thoughts, Dolly, I can't agree to



ACCUSED! "I came in here to find Brenda just before dinner," said Linda Hope quickly. "And that girl was here—behind the screen!" And the Sixth Former pointed accusingly at Dolly Jobling.

There was really no reason for fags to put in such an early appearance.

But Dolly had her reasons. She wanted to be in Linda's study that morning. To-day was the day of the auction. To-morrow would be too late.

If Linda had the manuscript now was the time to find it.

As there was no reply to her knock, Dolly turned the handle of the door. She pushed, but the door did not open.

Thinking that perhaps Linda might be in bed, she tapped again. Meal-times in the Sixth Form were not strictly enforced, and Sixth-Form girls were frequently late for meals, or often, did not put in an appearance at all.

So she tapped again. But still there was no reply. If Linda were in the study, it was quite obvious that she was asleep.

Again Dolly tapped, this time more loudly, and she listened at the door.

She was in the act of tapping again, when a hand was placed roughly upon her shoulder, and an angry voice exclaimed near to her ear:

"Spying? What do you want?" She wheeled, to find herself facing the

your selling up as well. It isn't fair." Dolly grimaced.

"I must," she said. "Please let me. I've made all the arrangements, you know."

Brenda looked aside, then smiled wistfully, and took Dolly's hand.

"You're a good kid," she said, rather huskily. "Do you know, you're about the only one in the school who hasn't laughed at me. You're the only friend."

"Am I?" asked Dolly, rather shamefacedly. And she hoped that Brenda would never learn how, many times, she had laughed not so very long ago.

"If I ever find that manuscript, and sell it, I sha'n't forget your friendship."

"I—I don't want any reward."

"I know you don't. But—well, you're such a good friend!"

And Brenda suddenly hurried on. Dolly looked after her sadly. She had noted the wistfulness of the other's tone.

How lonely Brenda's life at the school must have been! No friends! And everyone laughing at her.

And now, to crown everything, the symphony was lost—the symphony that THE SCHOOL FRIEND.—No 163.

had cost her hours of work, upon which she had staked so much.

Dolly could sympathise with such a loss, and her eyes softened as she looked after the receding figure. Then she became suddenly alert.

When she reached the Fourth Form passage she was smiling; and Marjorie and Clara were amazed.

"You look pretty happy," remarked Clara. "Been fagging?"

"No."

Dolly's answer was brief, and Clara's frown intensified. Clara was not pleased with the attitude her friend had taken. Not for the life of her could Clara understand her chum's sudden keenness for "fagging."

It was difficult to get the girls to help Dolly when she was in such a mood. After all, when she saw that the Form did not want her to fag why didn't she stop?

That was the way Clara looked at it. Although, had Clara been in Dolly's place, it is morally certain that Clara would have told the Form to "go and eat coke!"

But the point was that Clara and Marjorie were trying to get the Form to attend the auction to buy the treasures that Dolly was selling and give them back to her.

The scheme was excellent, and before bed-time last evening had found many supporters.

But the bed-time incident had not tended to increase Dolly's popularity.

This morning several Third-Formers had commented on Fourth Form fags, to the great rage of the Fourth-Formers, and Dolly fell right down in their estimation.

A girl who let down her Form was surely not worth consideration. If Dolly wanted to sell out, then let her. That was the way they looked at it.

And Clara felt that in all conscience she could not induce them to change that opinion, since it was the one she held herself.

Nor did Dolly's conduct that day tend to change the view the Form held.

She went out of the Form-room during lessons with the excuse that she had left her book behind, and stayed away so long that she received a stern rebuke.

But the next girl who had forgotten a book received lines for forgetfulness. And Dolly received dark, sour looks. Had she not been so long the other girl would not have suffered.

And when, during the recess, they told her what they thought, she smiled and laughed happily.

"Bother the Form," she said to Gwen Cook. "I've never known you to worry about it so much before. If the Form ever has a ghost you'll see it."

At which remark there was a chuckle. For Gwen was a specialist in the supernatural, and favoured ghosts.

But although she had made some temporary enemies, Dolly found that her old friends were still loyal.

Clara and Marjorie, Barbara Redfern, Mabel Lynn and Peggy Preston, and others came across to her and chatted about the arrangements for the sale.

"It's all arranged," Dolly explained to them. "Brenda's got the use of the Hall. It's at two o'clock sharp, and Madame Deauville is coming down. Brenda is going to sell her some of her music."

"She's the woman who was going to

buy the great symphony, isn't she?" Marjorie asked.

"Yes. That's right."

"Well, I hope she buys something. Perhaps she'll buy Bessie's syncopy, or offer her a cure for it," suggested Freda Foote.

"Oh, really, Freda. My sus-syncopy's worth a lot of money. I shouldn't be surprised if she does buy it, after all."

"Shall I give it to Madame Deauville?" asked Dolly quickly.

"Eh? I mean, yes, rather, Dolly."

Bessie blinked at the girl suspiciously through her spectacles.

"You're joking," she said suspiciously. "I'm perfectly serious," avowed Dolly, and she looked it. "Give it to me, and I'll hand it to Madame Deauville."

Bessie Bunter beamed, and ran off to her study. A minute later she returned with a messy-looking screed that was all but illegible.

"How does it go?" asked Dolly.

Bessie made a choking noise in her throat, and Dolly nodded, hiding a smile—which the others could not do.

"Right ho!" she said. "I'll make a note of that, in case she overlooks it."

The bell rang then, and they went back to lessons. But Dolly was not paying much heed to lessons, she was looking up at the ceiling and smiling.

Upon what her thoughts were centred it was impossible to tell; but, at any rate, she was amused.

Before dinner and after lessons she was occupied with piling up her treasures in the Hall, beside those of Brenda's. She had many helpers, and they made light work of the task.

Stella Stone, who had agreed to act as auctioneer, came in and gave the collection a smiling glance.

"Nearly ready?" she asked. "I want to get it through quickly. The match starts at three-thirty."

"Oh, it won't take long," Dolly assured her, with a smile.

Stella nodded and departed. Then, satisfied that everything was in order, they, too, left the Hall, and went in to dinner.

Directly after the meal there was a rush for the Hall, and in less than no time it was packed with girls from all Forms, prefects, juniors, and fags. Even the "babies" from the Second Form were present.

Stella took her position on the platform, and wielded a mallet in preparation.

The piano, which stood in the corner, had been pushed back to allow for the crowd which now waited for Brenda and Dolly.

Brenda was the first to appear, and there was a craning of necks as it was noticed that she had a female companion.

"Let me introduce you to my friend, Madame Deauville—Miss Stone, our captain. Miss Stone is conducting the auction. I have asked Miss Deauville if she will buy the original music, Stella."

"Oh, right-ho! I'll get on with auctioneering."

And Stella got busy amidst excitement.

Madame Deauville took several pieces of music into the corner by the piano, and settled herself there.

Her fingers strummed the keys thoughtfully, and as she played each piece she nodded or shook her head, according to her opinion of it. And she nodded her head more often than she shook it.

She had finished the fifth piece when a hand was placed lightly upon her shoulder, and she turned.

"Excuse me," smiled Dolly Jobling. "Would you just play this, with a view to sale—"

She looked over her shoulder to where stood a group of grinning girls.

But the central figure of that group was not grinning. The central figure was fat, and the spectacles on the snub nose gleamed with excitement. Bessie Bunter was thrilled.

Her "Syncopy" was to be played.

Brenda was plainly amazed, and Madame Deauville, apparently hardened to eccentricity in all forms, took the music and placed it on the piano.

She glanced at it, then stared closer, adjusting her spectacles.

Then she commenced to play.

Bessie Bunter blinked. The smiles faded from the faces of the Fourth-Formers, and Stella Stone, with her hammer half-raised, turned and glanced at the pianist.

In the large hall, crowded with girls, there was a silence strange and impressive.

But most amazed of all was the girl who stood beside the piano. Brenda Borelli listened and stared, and stared and listened.

In that rendering of the piece Dolly Jobling had handed her Madame Deauville utilised all her technique, all the art and soul of playing.

Out of the apparently inanimate piano she brought life. The instrument that the girls had thumped and tinkered on gave forth sounds impressive and inspiring.

They had none of them heard playing to match it; they had never heard such music.

All eyes were turned on Dolly—a few on Bessie.

"It—it's not mine!" piped Bessie excitedly and rather angrily.

"No; it—it's mine!"

Brenda Borelli stepped forward, and nervously flung her strange hair about.

"That—that is my symphony—the symphony that was lost!" she gasped.

At that there was a buzz, and Madame Deauville smiled.

"I knew it," she said, "the moment I set eyes upon it!"

"But where did it come from? Where did Bessie get it?" exclaimed a dozen voices; and Bessie Bunter, completely bewildered, stammered and shook her head.

Not until silence had been restored was Dolly able to explain.

"It was not Bessie's," she smiled. "Here is Bessie's. I found the symphony this morning—"

"Found it!" cried Brenda. "Where?"

"Under the carpet—in Linda Hope's room."

"Great Scott!"

"Linda's room!"

At that the buzz of talk broke forth, and a girl in the middle of the hall suddenly made a vain effort to move. A dozen hands held her, and, struggle though she did, she could not escape. Her white face was lined with fear, her eyes dilated with hate as she stared at Dolly Jobling.

"How it came there I don't know," went on Dolly. "But it was because I suspected Linda that I fagged for her."

But Linda had no explanations to make, and Dolly was occupied with Brenda. Brenda Borelli, her eyes shining, was grasping her hand.

"Oh, you pal!" exclaimed Brenda.

"You've saved me! You've saved me! My word, we shall be friends for ever! All next term—"

But Madame Deauville intervened.

"There will be no next term," she smiled. "I am taking you in hand, Brenda. You are coming to University—to become a Doctor of Music—and you are going to write such wonderful—"

"University—"

Brenda smiled, but could not speak.

"Yes. Some day you will be great.

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"I know—I know," nodded Brenda. "Oh, Dolly, thank goodness you found it! If you hadn't—"

"But I did find it," smiled Dolly, "and that's all that matters."

Brenda, in her happy-go-lucky way, celebrated her fortune in the best manner—in the way that was appreciated by all.

She sent round invitations to girls she thought would like to come, and then had a really merry feast, at which she made Dolly the guest of honour.

It was a laughing crowd that gathered round the table, and Brenda as hostess excelled herself.

"Here's to Dolly Jobling!" she said. "The best friend a girl can have! She saved me; and from what I've heard she wouldn't have done if some of you had had your way and stopped her fagging for Linda."

"But how did Linda get the music?" asked Clara. "We haven't heard that yet."

Brenda coughed. "It was my fault, really," she said. "I must have put the manuscript in my atlas and taken it into the Form-room. For that's where Linda said she found it—after she searched almost everywhere in the school. I never look at my atlas, you see."

At that there was laughter, and one and all decided that, eccentric though she was, Brenda was a good sort.

But the attention was focussed on Dolly Jobling, round whose waist Brenda placed an affectionate arm.

"You've all laughed at me on and off," said Brenda. "But Dolly didn't. You laugh at her, but take my tip and don't. She's a jolly good friend, and it's thanks to her that I am going to University. I'm sorry I'm going. I shouldn't have been a month ago. But I'm sorry, because it means leaving Dolly."

And Brenda, as she looked at Dolly, seemed almost tearful.

"When I'm at University you'll send me some toffee?" she asked. "And I'll send you symphonies and sonatas."

Dolly, amidst laughter, agreed that she would—even, as she added herself, if it broke their friendship. But although, according to Clara, it could be guaranteed to break anything, the friendship was not severed, and the strangely-mated "geniuses" were still the best of friends.

(Next Thursday's issue of the "School Friend" will contain "Phyllis Howell's Chance!" a magnificent new long complete story of the girls of Cliff House School, a beautiful art card of Phyllis Howell, free, a special "Phyllis Howell" number of the "Cliff House Weekly," and further long, absorbing instalments of "Friendship Forbidden!" and the "The Signalman's Daughter." Order your copy of the "School Friend" in advance.)



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THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

OLIVE WALTERS, a pretty, golden-haired girl of fourteen, who attends St. Mildred's School as a day boarder.

TOM WALTERS, Olive's father, a signalman who was on duty at "Gosbridge Box."

MR. THEODORE DUKE, a big financier, and the father of

SYBIL DUKE, who, with Olive, is a member of the Fifth Form at St. Mildred's.

Through an enemy of Mr. Duke tampering with the levers in Tom Walters' box, a special train, bearing the financier, was derailed, and Mr. Duke was injured. From that moment his daughter Sybil, at St. Mildred's, was the bitter enemy of Olive, and took every opportunity for scheming against her.

Tom Walters was discharged by the railway company, and, on top of that, the bank which held his small savings suspended payment.

Meanwhile, Olive won an important examination, but the headmistress' paper containing the answers, which she had previously missed, was discovered in a book of Olive's. Upon the paper, however, was a thumbprint, and before Olive could be accused of purloining the paper Miss Symes announced that she would take an impression of each girl's thumb.

Sybil Duke, who was really the guilty girl, took fright and fled the school, and waited at the railway station for the London express.

(Read on from here.)

To Save the Express!

And now it behoves us to return to Olive and Winnie Norris.

At the moment when Sybil was entering the station, the search-party, led by the careless and easy-going Dora Finch, had reached a wood some ten miles from St. Mildred's.

Here the sky was black and menacing, and once or twice, fearing a soaking, Dora had debated the advisability of giving up the search and turning back towards the nearest village, where there would be shelter.

"Well, I suppose we had better separate and look for the kid in this beasty wood," Dora drawled, as she stood in the road and gazed into the darker gloom beneath the trees. "She may have hidden in here like the Babes in the Wood did, and, whilst she sleeps the sleep of the unjust, the jolly old robins might have covered her with leaves—might! For my part, I don't expect they would take the trouble. Search away, girls! I'll join you again here when you are through!"

With which, the stout and indolent Dora seated herself upon the bank at the roadside, produced some chocolate cream

she had bought, and began to enjoy life according to her lights.

Some of the girls with her hesitated, but as Dora did not offer them a share of her confectionery, they thought they might as well search the wood as remain and watch her dispatch it. So, separating up into twos and threes, they made their way into the wood in the wake of Olive and Winnie, who had already disappeared amongst the tree-trunks.

Winnie and Olive naturally came upon no signs of Sybil Duke, and together they passed right through the wood and gained a road on the farther side.

They saw that, on the road's opposite side was a fence, which shut it off from a bank overlooking the railway-line. It was just then that there came a reverberating crash of thunder, and this was swiftly followed by great warm drops of rain.

"Bother!" Winnie exclaimed. "I thought we should get it before long. We shall get soaked to the skin, Olive!"

The storm raged with unabating fury.

Thunder rumbled and crashed above and around them. The gloom deepened, enhancing the vividness of the lightning, and, though it was spasmodic, the rain ever and again sounded like the beating of distant muffled drums, as it pelted on to the road and amongst the foliage of the wood.

"What a dreadful storm!" Winnie cried. Then a half-stifled scream broke from her, as there came one of the most formidable and dazzling flashes of lightning yet, which seemed to dart across their very eyes and leave them dazed and, for the moment, blinded. "Oh, what was that?"

It seemed to the girls that from no great distance away they heard a splintering crash, which seemed to come from the direction of the railway-line.

The storm continued, the rain beating through the leaves of the trees beneath which they stood, and quickly making them seriously wet. Then a sudden cry broke from Olive, and she pointed across the road and away along the railway company's bank.

"Look!" she breathed sharply.

Winnie turned her eyes in the direction her friend's outflung hand indicated, and she saw that, from the railway embankment some two hundred yards distant, there came a lurid glare, which lit up the lowering sky.

"Some building has been struck by the lightning, and is on fire, Winnie!" Olive declared, making a guess at the truth. "I hope no one was in it and injured."

Winnie nodded, and for the next ten minutes the two girls stood in silence, watching the glare, which seemed to

increase. Then, just as suddenly as it had commenced, the rain ceased, though thunder still rumbled in the distance, and the sky continued from time to time to be illuminated by vicious flashes of lightning.

Olive moved from beneath the dripping tree.

"Let us come and find out what is on fire, dear," she suggested. "I feel curious to know; and—who knows?—we might be able to do some good if anyone has been hurt."

Without demur, Winnie followed her. The sky remained overcast, and, though the hour was round about one o'clock in the day, the road was so dark that it might have been midnight.

The fire ahead, whatever its cause, showed no signs of dying out. Indeed, if anything, the fierce red glow it sent skywards was more lurid.

Winnie and Olive quickened their steps as they drew nearer. They passed over a rise in the road, and then came in view of the structure that was ablaze.

And what a sight it was that met their eyes!

It was a signal-box that was burning, the rear part of which rested upon the high, sloping embankment, and the front of which was supported by wooden struts.

Olive and Winnie pulled up, staring, spellbound, at the burning building. The two wooden struts and the base of the box were hopelessly enveloped in flame, and it was plain to the girls that ere long, when the struts burned entirely through and snapped, the signal-box would collapse and go hurtling down on to the permanent way a dozen feet below.

"I—I suppose the signalman has escaped, dear?" Winnie said anxiously, as, in her excitement, she gripped convulsively at Olive's arm.

"Oh, yes," Olive began, "he must have done, I should think; but—"

Her words ended in a horrified gasp. The door of the signal-box had been thrust open, and in the doorway had appeared the figure of a white-faced, wild-eyed boy, who was making efforts to drag from the blazing box a man who seemed to be unconscious.

"It's the signalman, and he is hurt, perhaps badly!" Olive cried, running forward to the low fence which enclosed the railway company's property, and beginning to climb over it. "Quick, Winnie—oh, quick—quick! The box may collapse, and bury them both in its wreckage, at any moment! We must help the boy drag the signalman out."

As she finished speaking Olive had swung her lissom young figure to the other side of the fence. Winnie followed,

and was at her heels, as Olive began to run towards the doomed box.

The boy saw them, and frantically shouted to them to aid him. He was, apparently, the signalman's assistant. He was a weedy youth, who looked none too strong, and the dead weight of the senseless signalman, who was on the burly side, was proving more than he could manage.

Olive and Winnie raced down the sloping bank, and gained the foot of the short flight of steps which led up to the entrance to the box.

"Help me get him out, miss!" the boy gasped breathlessly to Olive. "The lightning struck the box, and the shock stunned us both. When I came to I found him still knocked out, and the box on fire, as you see it now. I don't know what to do. It will fall on the line for a certainty, and there's the London express from Fullingham due in less than ten minutes, if she's on time!"

The two girls listened in growing horror. They made haste to assist the lad carry his superior from the box.

They half-dragged, half-slid the signalman down the flight of steps; then, panting and gasping under his weight, contrived to lift him out of danger, and lay him upon the grass.

He seemed to have struck his temple heavily, but was, apparently, not gravely injured, though stunned.

Olive shot a glance at the signals, and saw that the lamps, which were illuminated because of the darkness of the day, showed a clear line.

The signalman's boy seemed scared out of his wits, and the girl seized his arm and tried to shake him into activity.

"You must alter the signals—put them at 'Danger!'" she said sharply.

But the boy gave a shake of his head.

"It can't be done, miss," he said, helplessly. "The box was like a furnace when I began to drag him out, and it must be even worse now. No living person could reach the levers!"

"Where's the express now?" Olive asked. "Perhaps it would be possible to ring through to the next box back on the route it is taking, and have it stopped."

"I tried to do that, miss," the boy answered, a little sullenly; "but the wires were too damaged by the fire, and I couldn't get any answer from the other box. I've done my best; but it's useless; nothing can be done!"

Olive regarded him aghast. There came a crack like the report of a gun. One of the supports of the signal-box had given way, and the whole blazing structure was lurching ominously over the line.

The second support was glowing, charred, and blazing, and in a matter of minutes it would almost certainly give way, and allow the box, with its heavy ironwork and furniture, to pitch upon the permanent way, blocking the line over which the express would presently come thundering.

The lives and limbs of hundreds of souls were in peril!

"But something must be done!" Olive cried, her girlish face deathly white but determined.

She tore the hem from her frock, which was saturated with the recent rain. Knotting it about her face so that it covered her mouth and nostrils, the girl moved sharply towards the steps of the lurching box.

"Oh, Olive, what are you going to do?" Winnie cried, in frantic alarm. "It may fall at any moment, and—"

"I must try to save the train!" Olive mumbled through the wet bandage about her face. "I must, Winnie—I must!"

Up the steps ran Olive, recoiling for a

moment in the heat and thick, choking smoke that belched from the doorway of the signal-box. Then, with a blind rush, the courageous girl was reeling through the suffocating fumes, in an attempt to reach the levers.

But it was useless. That part of the box where they were placed was a mass of roaring fire, and, plucky though she was, careless of her own welfare, Olive, as she staggered back, had to realise that to reach them was impossible.

Above the roaring and hissing of the flames, the girl heard Winnie crying for her to come out in accents of terror, and she felt the box swaying more dangerously forward over the permanent way. The second strut was on the point of collapse!

Almost overcome by the terrific heat, Olive reeled back towards the doorway. Then, standing just inside, she espied a hand-lamp. She snatched it up, and half-threw herself, half-fell through the doorway on to the steps, as she felt the signal-box give yet another sickening lurch.

She jumped to the grass, and was only just in the very nick of time. The second strut collapsed, and the blazing signal-box went toppling down the sloping bank, to fall upon the line with a deafening crash.

Olive snatched the smoke-blackened bandage from about her face, and fell dizzily to the grass upon her knees. Her brain was whirling, her eyes almost blinded, and streaming from contact with the fumes.

On the line the wrecked box continued to blaze. The fact might have been calculated to form a signal of danger, which would, in the ordinary course of events, cause a driver to pull up his train. But in the present instance, it was doubtful if the men in the cab of the express, which was now almost due, would see the blazing obstruction in time.

For the line, prior to passing the spot where the signal-box had stood, took a sweeping curve, and the express would surely dash round it, and be upon the blockage before the driver had a chance even to jam on his brakes. For the signals, which stood just where the track began to bend, remained at "safety."

With an effort of will-power, Olive shook off the faintness that had been gripping her.

The signalman still lay, with closed eyes, upon the grass, and the boy and Winnie stood staring helplessly at Olive, seeing the lamp she held clutched in her fingers, and wondering what she intended to do.

The girl arose unsteadily to her feet. She pressed the back of her hand to her throbbing forehead, then blinked her smarting eyes, and took a final grip upon herself.

"Quicker!" she said, pointing to a blazing ember which lay upon the grass. "Give me that. The train must be saved!"

Mechanically Winnie picked up the flaring brand and handed it to Olive, as the girl snapped open the glass of the lamp.

To Olive's satisfaction, she found that the wick was trimmed, that there seemed a good supply of oil in the hand-lamp, and that it was, apparently, unaffected by the fierce heat in which it had stood.

She ignited the wick, made sure it had fully caught, adjusted it, and closed the glass. Then, carrying the lamp in her hand, the girl started to run along between the lines in the direction in which the express would come.

As she rounded the bend in the permanent way, to her dismay, Olive found the dark, uninviting mouth of what appeared to be a long tunnel looming before her. It needed pluck to enter its almost total darkness, with the express due to thunder over one line, and with no knowledge as to when a train might roar into the tunnel from the opposite direction.

But the lives of hundreds of unsuspecting and innocent people were in jeopardy, and Olive set her teeth and went forward into the tunnel's blackness.

She felt certain that if the express was allowed to crash into the ruined signal-box, the engine and many of the coaches would be derailed and wrecked. That must not happen if she could avert it. What was the risk of one life—her own—compared with a hundred lives, perhaps?

Olive found herself blundering on to the line over which the express would pass. She tripped over one of the sleepers, and measured her length between the metals, the lamp almost flying from her hand.

She heard a distant rumbling, and, with a thrill of horror, hastily scrambled



"Look!" breathed Olive, sharply. Winnie turned her eyes in the direction her friend's outflung hand indicated, and she saw that, from the railway embankment, there came a vivid glare.



Olive's heart beat hard as she stood beside the metals, waving the lamp, as the train thundered into the tunnel. Would her signal be seen and the train stopped in time?

up and jumped from between the rails. The rumbling grew louder. The express from Fullingham was about to enter the farther end of the tunnel.

Olive went forward at a run, waving the lamp in her hand. The noise from ahead became a pounding, terrifying roar, as the train, which might be rushing to destruction, swept into the tunnel and tore forward through its darkness.

Next moment its lights and the reflection from its carriages had flashed into view. Olive stood beside the metals. Her heart was beating hard, her pulses racing, and, in her excitement, she shouted hoarsely, not realising that her voice must be drowned by the roar and rattle of the onrushing train.

Frantically she waved the lamp as the lights of the express swept nearer. In an agony of doubt, she asked herself if the driver or his fireman would see the waving light and stop the train in time.

In that moment of breathless suspense, all thoughts of the misguided girl she and the other girls of her search-party had set out to find were dashed from Olive's mind.

How surprised she would have been could she have guessed that Sybil Duke was in the imperilled train she had risked all to attempt to save!

A Narrow Escape!

NEARER and nearer thundered the onrushing express.

Olive continued to wave her lamp and to shout in her excitement. A sinking sensation was at her heart. There was no sign of the train slowing down. Neither the driver nor fireman had seen her light, she told herself, and the express would go rushing from the tunnel and meet disaster when it swept on round the bend in the line.

In another moment its engine was rushing abreast of her, its illuminated carriages rattling past. But then, suddenly, to her relief, Olive heard the grinding of brakes.

Her lamp had been glimpsed, after all! The express was being slowed down, though, to bring it to anything in the nature of an immediate halt at the terrific rate at which it had been travelling, was proving impossible.

Anxious to be free of the tunnel, in

case a train bore down upon her from the opposite direction, Olive, who had been almost whirled from her feet by the rush of air as the express began to tear by, swung round and ran along beside its rear coaches.

Out of the tunnel the express rattled, its wheels grinding and groaning as if in protest beneath the check of the brakes. As the girl also emerged from the darkness and ran on, she saw that the train had come to a standstill just around the bend.

It had been pulled up only just in time. Its engine was within a few feet of where the wreckage of the signal-box still blazed luridly upon the permanent-way.

The driver and fireman, and also the guard were in the act of springing down beside the line. As Olive hurried up, they had approached the spot where the signalman lay on the grass, with Winnie and the boy beside him.

The man was just recovering consciousness. With a dazed look in his eyes, and a hand pressed to his head, he struggled to a sitting posture, and, with many gesticulations, his boy hurriedly acquainted him with what had happened.

From every window of the train excited and, in cases, alarmed passengers were craning their heads. The driver, who was white under the grime that was upon his face, turned to Olive. He realised it was she who had been waving the light in the tunnel by seeing the lamp in her hand.

"By jupiter, you are a plucky girl, missy!" he cried. "But for you, there would have been a terrible smash!"

"Plucky! I should think she is!" exclaimed a voice at Olive's back; and, turning upon her heel, the girl found herself confronted by an elderly, grey-headed, well-dressed gentleman, who must have emerged from one of the compartments of the express.

The driver, fireman, and guard seemed to know him.

They addressed him as "Sir George," and touched their caps respectfully as they responded to the crisp questions he put to them.

"Yes, Sir George, this young lady saved the train—and a good many lives into the bargain, I expect, if the truth's known," declared the driver. "The signals showed us a clear line. I noticed that as we came out of the tunnel, and

I was doing my best to pull up just as sharp as possible. If she hadn't come into the tunnel and warned us by waving the lamp you see she holds we should have dashed into the wreckage, and the engine would have been flung off the rails and a good many of the coaches telescoped for a certainty."

The grey-headed man nodded. He held out a hand to Olive, and as she extended hers, smiling modestly and flushing in confusion, he shook it warmly.

"I happen to be the chairman of the board of directors of the railway company," he said. "Let me congratulate you here and now upon your wonderful presence of mind and sterling courage. I agree with the driver, and think that many of the passengers, including myself, for I was in the front part of the train, owe their lives and safety to you. Please give me your name and address. I shall see that some token of gratitude is shown you."

As is usually the way with those possessed of courage, Olive felt awkward and ill-at-ease as the high official of the railway company showered praise upon her for the brave thing she had done. It was in a faltering voice that she supplied her name and address, which Sir George Freeman—that was his full name—scribbled upon his cuff.

"Walters? Walters? The name seems somewhat familiar to me," he said, and he did not notice how the blood suddenly rushed from Olive's face, or how she opened her lips as if to speak. For, with a smile and a nod, he turned away to address the signalman, who had now risen to his feet and was standing by his boy.

Sir George Freeman learned from the signalman how the disaster to his box had occurred, and realised that neither he nor his boy were in any way to blame for the danger that had threatened the express. To set their minds at rest he said as much, for he was both fair and just.

He was also a man of action in emergency, a fact that he proved now.

After a moment's thought he decided that it would not take long to clear the wreckage from the line so that the express could continue on its journey, and, as well as setting the signalman and his boy, the fireman, driver, and guard at work, Sir George called for volunteers from amongst the male passengers.

Soon a scene of activity was in progress before the delayed engine.

With water from the latter the worst of the flames were extinguished, and then the railway employees and the many passengers, who had left their compartments to help, began to drag the smoking wreckage from off the line.

The next signal-box was some miles farther on, but Sir George had planned for the express to pull up abreast of it, when it was able to continue along the metals, so that what had happened could be reported, and arrangements made to ensure the safety of other trains.

Olive and Winnie would have aided in the work necessary to clear the line, but Sir George would not hear of this.

"No, young ladies, it is no task for you," he objected. "Besides, one of you has already rendered us a service for which the other passengers and myself will never cease to be grateful. And you both look to be wet. I think it would be advisable for you to hurry to your homes or your school, whichever you come from, to change into dry clothes."

He lit a cigar, waved his hand to them, and hurried away, himself to take a share of the heavy labour now in progress before the engine.

For a moment or two Olive and Winnie remained standing by the side of the

line near the train, and Winnie's hand sought that of her friend and pressed it hard.

"Oh, Olive, I was so frightened!" she said. "I ran after you for a little way when you dashed over the line with the lamp in your hand. I was terrified when I saw you going into the tunnel. I am so glad you managed to come out again safely after saving the train."

"It wanted all the nerve I could pluck up to go on into the darkness of the tunnel's arch, I can assure you, dear," Olive answered, smiling. "But you must not think me a sort of heroine. I was dreadfully frightened myself, and I am sure that when I heard the express coming towards me I shook from head to foot and was a terrible coward."

But Winnie shook her head.

"I do not believe that," she protested.

"It is like you, Olive, to be modest and belittle your own doings when you have done something jolly plucky. The railway company ought to make you some substantial reward—and I think they will."

"I hope they will, so that I can refuse it," Olive replied quietly. "There is something the railway company could do for me which I should value far more than a gift of money, however large."

"I think," Winnie began, "that it is certain—"

She broke off with a surprised exclamation.

"Oh, look, Olive! Look, look!" she cried; and as Olive turned she found that her friend was pointing towards one of the foremost carriages of the stationary train. "There's Sybil Duke!"

Winnie was right.

As Olive glanced towards the window of the compartment to which her friend was pointing she was just in time to glimpse a white, startled face. Though

its owner almost instantly drew back into the carriage and wheeled about, it was not before Olive had recognised her as the missing Sybil.

Olive started forward, Winnie following hard at her heels.

The daughter of the ex-signalman sprang on to the footboard and opened the door of the compartment. But even as she stepped into the carriage Sybil Duke had reached the door on the opposite side and flung it open.

"Sybil! Sybil, stop!" Olive cried. "We have been sent from the school to find you, and—"

Her words were checked as she drew a sharp, concerned breath. Sybil Duke had been filled with something very like terror as she had caught sight of the two girls from St. Mildred's outside her carriage, in which she had by then been alone, and she had seemed to lose her head and to have but one aim in life—escape. The thought of being taken back to St. Mildred's was more than hateful to her.

And as Olive had entered the carriage Sybil had made to spring through the farther door and down between the two sets of metals. Then somehow she had caught her foot against one of the door supports, had lost her balance, and, with a frightened cry, pitched headlong from the compartment.

As she saw her disappear Olive leapt across the carriage. Winnie, who by this time had also climbed into it, hurried to the open door also. The two girls looked out and beheld Sybil half sitting, half lying between the train and the next set of metals, one of her legs doubled awkwardly beneath her, and her white face twitching with mingled apprehension and pain.

Olive stepped down on to the footboard, then jumped to the ground.

Winnie followed, and both stooped over the fallen Sybil.

"Are you hurt, Sybil?" Olive asked, as she stretched out her hand to help her enemy, should she be capable of rising.

"Don't touch me! I hate you—I hate you!" Sybil Duke cried, avoiding her outstretched fingers. "I think I have broken my ankle!" she said, suppressing a groan. "And it is all through you—just as are all my other troubles!"

Winnie reddened with indignation.

"You are very ungrateful—not to mention stupid, Sybil Duke!" she said tartly. "Do you know that the express, just before it was stopped, was rushing to destruction?"

"I heard someone say so," Sybil returned, with a shrug of her shoulders. "It was stopped in time, though, and that is all that matters, as far as I can see."

"Do you know who stopped it—stopped it at the risk of her life?" Winnie demanded, still hot and angry.

Sybil shrugged again and shook her head.

"I will tell you!" Winnie snapped. "It was Olive Walters, the girl you have done so much to wrong! She went into the tunnel and—"

"Never mind that, Winnie," Olive begged quickly. But Winnie was not so easily silenced.

"I shall let this stupid girl know the truth, dear!" she persisted.

"Olive went into the tunnel and waved a railway lamp to warn the driver of danger, and managed to cause him to stop the express just in time," she continued, again addressing Sybil Duke. "Do you realise what would have happened to the fore part of the train, at least—the part you were in—if it had not been for

(Continued on page 224.)

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THE SIGNALMAN'S DAUGHTER!

(Continued from page 223.)

Olive? It would have been smashed—telescoped—and, if you had suffered no worse, you would almost certainly have been badly injured. And you say you hate this girl—to whom you owe the soundness of your limbs, probably your life!

Sybil was thoroughly miserable. The thought of returning to her mother, Miss Symes, and perhaps some of her school-fellows, before whom she had always carried herself with such haughty pride, appalled her.

She dropped her face into her hands and sobbed bitterly and convulsively.

"I—I wish something had happened to me!" she wailed. "What are you going to do?"

"Take you back to school," Winnie said, with no great show of pity, for she was disgusted with her. "We have been sent out with others to find you, and you must return with us."

"I cannot walk!" Sybil protested, as she looked up and almost fiercely dashed the tears from her eyes. "I tell you I have broken my ankle! Oh, this pain! It is dreadful—dreadful!"

"Let me see!" Winnie urged, falling upon her knees beside her and gently but firmly drawing her leg from under her. "Your ankle is not broken, though it may be sprained," she said a trifle contemptuously. "We must help you up, and you will have to hop across the lines to the road over yonder. We

can wait there until some conveyance which is going towards the school comes along, and we can induce whoever is in charge of it to give you a lift."

"Help me back into the train!" I have a ticket, and I want to go to London to an aunt I have there!" Sybil urged. "I can manage to get out of the train at the other end, somehow, and can get a porter or someone to help me to a cab."

"We shall do nothing of the sort!" Winnie assured her. "Olive has been under a cloud through you long enough, and I mean to get you back to the school so that she is unquestionably cleared—and I'll do it, if I have to put you on my back and carry you there, Sybil Duke!"

Sybil broke into fresh and violent weeping.

"It was I who took the scholarship paper—I who put it in Olive's desk!" she said. "You can tell Miss Symes that you have seen me and that I have said so! Let me travel on to London? Will it do you any good to see me humiliated further than I have already been—to make me almost die of shame?"

Olive's tender heart made it possible for her to be sorry for her foe now, badly though Sybil had behaved towards her. She was half inclined to urge Winnie to allow Sybil to travel on with the express.

Then she realised that what Winnie said was true. It was her right to demand to have her name cleansed absolutely from the stain that had rested upon it, and it was only justice for Sybil Duke to be taken back to the school and forced either to repeat her confes-

sion, or to allow the impression of her thumb to be taken, so that her guilt was established.

So Olive remained mute, and helped Winnie to get Sybil across the metals and over a fence at the far side of the track, which enclosed it from the road.

There they assisted Sybil to where lay a felled tree trunk. They helped her off with a coat she was wearing and spread this over the wet bark, so that she might sit down and await the coming of some vehicle going towards St. Mildred's.

The road, however, was a very lonely and little frequented one, and, although they waited for half an hour, during which time the line was cleared and the express departed on its belated journey, no kind of vehicle hove in sight.

Winnie remembered that there was a small post-office and general store some quarter of a mile in the opposite direction to the school. She mentioned it to Olive.

"They have a telephone, dear," she said. "It looks as though we might wait a month of Sundays before any sort of conveyance comes along, and it would not be a bad idea if you ran along there and communicated with Miss Symes. If you told her what had happened, she would be bound to arrange to send Parker in the trap to fetch us."

Olive nodded.

"Very well, Winnie," she agreed. "Perhaps that would be the best plan, and I will do as you say."

(Another magnificent long instalment of this grand story will appear in next Thursday's issue of the SCHOOL FRIEND. Do not forget that "No Joy in Her Riches" commences in a fortnight's time.)



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