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# THE SCHOOLGIRL

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INCORPORATING  
"SCHOOLDAYS."

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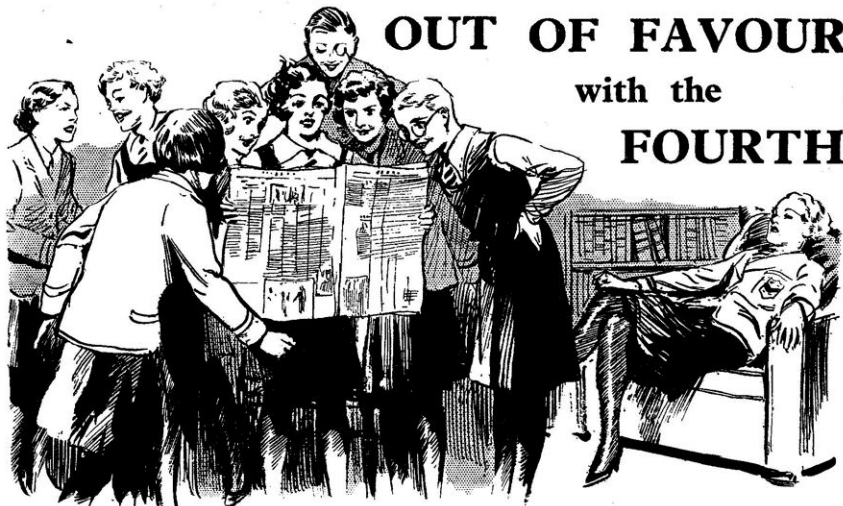


"SO YOU'RE PLAYING  
AGAINST YOUR OWN  
SCHOOL!"

See this week's powerful  
long complete Cliff  
House School story

# A Brilliant Complete Tale of the Girls of Cliff House School, Telling What Happens Now That Diana Is—

## OUT OF FAVOUR with the FOURTH



### Tense Moments

"CLARA!" breathed Barbara Redfern. "The boy with the papers has come!"

The voice of the captain of the Fourth Form at Cliff House School just reached the ears of Tomboy Clara Trevlyn, who was sitting at the next desk.

Clara gave a start. Then she shot a glance at the back view of Miss Bullivant, who was doing quite a pretty drawing of angles and lines on the blackboard. At the moment the Maths' mistress seemed absorbed, and Clara, risking it, got up and leaning over Barbara's shoulder, peered into the quad.

"Good!" she muttered. "You're sure the next round of the Hockey Cup will be in?" whispered Babs.

"Positive!" nodded Clara. "Wonder who we're playing?"

The majority of the class were wondering the same thing, for they all guessed the reason of the sudden agitation on the part of Barbara Redfern and Clara Trevlyn, the hockey captain.

Last week they had beaten Courtfield in the second round. This week they would be down to play—

Which of the half-dozen remaining teams?

Bother it! They wouldn't find that out until class was over. Sickening, having to wait!

Miss Bullivant suddenly intervened. "Barbara!" came her sharp voice.

"Y-yes, Miss Bullivant?"

"Pay attention!"

"Oh, yes, Miss Bullivant!"

"And you, Clara Trevlyn," continued the mistress, eyeing the girls grimly.

"You also, Rosa Rodworth— Bessie Bunter: Take fifty lines for dozing in class.

"Oh kik-crums!" gasped fat Bessie,

opening her eyes with a start. "Bib-bub I wasn't dozing, you know. I just closed my eyes. I always think better when I close my eyes."

"Indeed?" rapped out Miss Bullivant. "And what were you thinking of?"

"What those crossword puzzles are about?" explained Bessie. "T-those things you're drawing on the board."

"This," said Miss Bullivant coldly,

By

HILDA RICHARDS

"does not happen to be a crossword puzzle. It is a parallelogram. You will take a further fifty lines for inattention. Diana!"

Miss Bullivant's gaze concentrated on a strikingly handsome girl with a glorious mass of blonde hair brushed thickly back from her forehead.

Diana Royston-Clarke looked up languidly.

DIANAROYSTON-CLARKE has got herself into the bad books of the Fourth; and she has quarrelled with her one-time friend, Margot Lantham. But Diana is still undaunted. She is determined, by hook or by crook, to show Cliff House School that she is still someone to be reckoned with!

"Were you speaking to me, Miss Bullivant?" she drawled.

"Certainly! I'm speaking to you! What are you doing under the desk?"

"Nothing," returned Diana, with a great assumption of surprise.

"You are not paying attention!"

"Oh, but I am!" Diana denied. "I've been watching you with great interest, Miss Bullivant. I love the way you draw parallels; but, of course"—critically—"that one's not quite finished yet. It's a parallel illustrated by rotation, isn't it?"

"I did not say it was finished," Miss Bullivant said, rather mollified to find that Diana was alert. "Of course, it it not finished. Very well, Diana. Do not fidget."

She turned her back to the class again.

Diana grinned easily. One or two of the girls looked at her. They were looks of envy. Some of undisguised admiration. Some of wonder.

Diana smiled again. Diana was rarely, if ever, caught off her guard, and had she taken the trouble, which she did not, she could easily have been the best scholar in the class.

She chuckled.

Under the cover of her desk Diana was engaged in a most engrossing hobby. She was, indeed, making a catapult, the catapult being composed of two crossed pencils and an elastic band.

The catapult itself was finished now, and Diana, having chipped another pencil into small portions with a pen-knife, had stored up quite a quantity of ammunition.

With a glitter in her eyes she looked up, wondering whom she could aim at. There was Clara, or that fat duffer Bessie. But then Diana's roving gaze alighted on the dark head of a girl who sat across the aisle.

Margot Lantham—the daughter of Lord and Lady Lantham.

Diana looked suddenly fierce. Margot, the girl who had come to Cliff House as her friend, and who was now her deadly rival, Margot, who had outshone her in so many things, who had repeatedly humbled Diana's false pride!

As she watched the other girl Diana felt a sudden wave of anger and resentment against Margot. If Margot had not come to Cliff House this term, how different things might have been. She—Diana—would have been the idol of the Fourth, the dazzling heroine on the hockey field, admired, respected.

But now—  
Margot had changed all that. It was Margot who was the Form's idol—Margot who dazzled them all by her brilliant play on the hockey field—Margot who—

But there it was. Margot had ousted her. Diana suddenly felt *revengeful*. It was petty, perhaps—childish spite—but Diana didn't think of that. She just wanted to get one back at Margot.

Carefully placing one of the pieces of chipped pencil into the catapult, she pulled back the elastic.

Whizz! And straight for Margot's head the little pellet flew. Had Margot at that moment not unconsciously shifted, it would have hit her right in the nape of the neck. As it was it missed, and went flying on.

Smack!  
Miss Bullivant suddenly jumped.

"Oh!"  
Quick as a flash her hand smacked at the back of her neck. Quick as a flash Diana held the catapult between her knees, and assumed an expression of intense concentration.

On one swift heel Miss Bullivant spun, her gaze darting at once towards Nancy Bell who, unconscious of what had happened, was grinningly unrolling something she had drawn in order to display it to Lydia Crossendale across the class.

Miss Bullivant's voice rapped out:  
"Nancy!"  
Nancy started as if she had been shot. Down at once, with the swift guilt of one who realises she is caught, went the drawing. She turned.

"Oh, yes, Miss Bullivant?"  
"You had the impertinence—the extreme impertinence—to hurl some missile at me!"

Nancy's face was the picture of bewilderment.

"But I didn't, Miss Bullivant!"  
"Don't tell stories, girl! Didn't I see you with my own eyes? I presume"—bitterly—"that you blew the missile through the paper tube I saw you holding up. Bring it to me, Nancy!"

Nancy sat still, utterly dismayed.  
"But I—I didn't, Miss Bullivant."  
"Bring it to me!" Miss Bullivant raved.

"But I assure you—"  
Miss Bullivant gritted her teeth. She was losing her temper now. Nancy's guilty movement convinced her that the sneak of the Fourth was the culprit, and when Miss Bullivant was convinced she did not stand upon ceremony. She started forward. One hand caught Nancy by the shoulder, and the sneak of the Form, almost whimpering, was dragged to her feet. As she did so the paper tube dropped to her feet.

In a moment Miss Bullivant had pounced upon it. Nancy turned quite white.

"Miss Bullivant, please—"  
"Thank you! I will take charge of this!" Miss Bullivant's frown was

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ferocious. "Diana, what are you standing up for? Sit down!"

"But, Miss Bullivant, I want to say that—"

"Sit down!" Miss Bullivant rapped out. "Nancy, come this way!"

"But, Miss Bullivant—" Diana cried.

"Diana, if you do not sit down this very instant, I will detain you!"

Diana gave a sigh. She sat down. Nancy, shaking in terror, was dragged before the class.

"Now!" breathed Miss Bullivant, and unrolled the paper tube, preparatory to tearing it up. "I will see, Nancy, if you—"

Then suddenly she stopped, staring fiercely at the sheet before her. "Nancy!" she ground out. "I—I presume this is a caricature of me?"

"Oh, my only giddy aunt!" muttered Clara Trevlyn.

For it became obvious then what had happened. Nancy had a gift for caricaturing. It was a gift which had more than once landed the sneak of the Form into trouble, for Nancy's caricatures were neither funny nor kind.

This particular specimen represented Miss Bullivant as a full-faced, wild woman, with gleaming eyes, and breathing fire from her nostrils. Clever it was in its way; for though Nancy had taken gross liberties, the likeness was unmistakable.

Miss Bullivant?" Diana called out. "Diana, I have told you to sit down!"

"Well, I am sitting down," Diana calmly told her. "But I've got to speak, you know! It wasn't Nancy who did that."

"What? You mean this insulting caricature?"

"No, not that. I mean it wasn't Nancy who hit you with a pellet," Diana went on.

"Indeed! Then who—"  
"It was I! It wasn't meant for you, of course; it was meant for Margot Lantham. But accidents will happen, you know, and one happened then. I'm just telling you this because I don't want Nancy blamed."

There was a little gasp from the class. It was a gasp of admiration. Diana was being a sport!

And it was characteristic of Diana, when she could easily have evaded responsibility for that action, to own up to save the girl who was getting the blame. But it was too late to save Nancy.

"Thank you!" Miss Bullivant said. "Your confession, at least, does you credit, Diana! You will take a hundred lines! But that—with a frown at the quivering Nancy—does not excuse this offence, Nancy Bell! This caricature is an impudent libel! I shall report you to the headmistress!"

"But—"  
"Go to your place!"  
And Nancy, white-faced, went to her place—not, however, without casting Diana a venomous glance as she took her seat.

The lesson proceeded. But it continued in an atmosphere of impatience, of tensi. Most of the girls' thoughts were now in the Fourth Form Common-room, where the latest editions of the local papers would have been placed.

Diana smiled calmly, quietly, putting a slim, manicured hand to her mouth to restrain a yawn of boredom. Nancy Bell there, sulky, her mean little heart boiling with a bitter hate. Not so much against Miss Bullivant. Hate against Diana.

Nancy possessed one of those natures which could never blame itself. It mattered nothing to her that Diana had owned up. But it mattered heaps and heaps that Diana, however unthinkingly, and been the cause of her downfall with Miss Bullivant.

It was Diana's fault!  
So Nancy told herself. That cat! If it hadn't been for her, nothing would have happened. Now she was to be summoned before the Head. That meant a lecture, at least, a stiff detention probably, and a letter home to her parents in any case.

So Nancy glowered and sulked, while the class, with gathering impatience, watched the clock, and rose almost as one, with a profound sigh of relief, when the bell in the corridor announced that lessons were ended for the day.

And then—what a rush! What a whoop as, in one irresistible tide, they swept into the corridor, surged along it, and into the Common-room, where Clara Trevlyn excitedly made a grab at the copy of the "Courtfield Evening News," which lay upon the table. In a moment an excited, chattering mob of girls had surrounded her.

"Clara, is it in?"  
"Who have we drawn?"

"Hold on! How can I read, with all you chumps pushing my elbows?" Clara cried. "Where is it? Half a minute!"

"Stop Press. Stop Press! Whoops, I've found it! Everybody listen!"

"Third round of the Lantham Cup—"  
"Yes! Yes!"

"Pegg Wanderers versus Claremount."  
"Oh, I say!"

"Richmere Sports Club versus Sar-mouth girls."  
"Yes; but what about—"

"Courtfield Girl Guides—a bye. And—here it is! Clara's eyes gleamed.

"Lantham Town Juniors versus Cliff House School."  
"Who?" Diana cried.



"Lantham Town, on their ground this time, not ours." And Clara, flinging the paper in the air, added: "A new team, kiddlets! We've never played Lantham Town before. Here, Margot, you come from Lantham! What is the town like?"

"Hot stuff!" Margot Lantham laughed.

"No, I don't think so. But they'll give us a good game."

"All the better!" Clara chortled. Clara liked football worthy of her team's steel.

This was fun—fun! For in this competition, organised by Lord Lantham, Margot Lantham's own father, there was a thrill that was not to be gained from ordinary school matches.

Every hockey club in the district had entered, which meant that Cliff House had to be prepared to meet all sorts and conditions. It was, in fact, the first real test, out of the inter-schools games, that they had ever had.

"And what," Diana asked quietly, "about me?"

"Well, what about you?" Clara grinned.

"Do I get a look in this team now? Don't forget"—with a superior frown—"that I also come from Lantham. And, what's more, I've played against them, when I was a member of the Lantham Sports Club."

A silence fell. Everybody stared at Diana. Girls here and there exchanged glances.

On this occasion, at least, Diana had some support for her claim. She could play hockey—they all knew that—and her action in saving the team last match had put her in a rather better light since that regrettable day when she was believed to have lost her temper and struck Margot Lantham with a hockey stick.

Clara paused.  
"Well, I'm sorry—"

Diana stiffened.  
"Turning me down again?" she asked.

"No, not exactly." Clara shook her head. "But the team we've got, Diana, has played so jolly well together that it wouldn't be fair now to make changes. Every girl is doing her best and pulling her weight. Besides, you weren't too good when we played against Whitechester."

"That," Diana informed her, "was my first match of the term. You forget that I hadn't touched a hockey-stick for months before I played in it. I'll admit then that I was a bit stale. I'll own, if you like, that I was too anxious to show what I could do. Apart from that, I had terrific toothache. But I can play now—yes, as well and better than I ever did. So what about it?"

"I'm sorry," Clara reflected.  
The hint of a sneer curved Diana's red lips.

"You mean you're giving your friends first chance as usual?" Clara flushed.

"You know it isn't that, Diana," she replied, with unusual restraint. "I'd give you a chance like a shot if I could do it without hurting anyone else. But there's no one I should be justified in dropping at the moment. But I tell you what," she added, "I'll put you down as first reserve—"

"Thanks, I am flattered!" Clara glowered.

"It's the best I can do."  
"In which case," Diana retorted mutinously, "I don't think much of it. Either I play or I don't play. Receive, eh? No, thanks!"

"But look here—"

Diana, however, frowningly turned upon her heel—a scowl upon her handsome face.

Whatever Clara might think about her hockey, Diana had no doubt by this time that she could play the head off any member of the Fourth.

And she was right. At her best, there was no one who could touch Diana.

Before her return to Cliff House School, Diana had played with some of the best teams in the country. But Clara, alas, was never impressed with past brilliance. Clara, stolid, seeking always the best of talent, allowed her judgment to be guided only by what she saw at the moment.

The one match in which Diana had appeared, so far, had not, owing to her staleness and her toothache, by any means been the Firebrand's best performance. But since then she had practised; she had practised hard. She knew now that she was at the peak of her form once again.

Well, bother them! fumed Diana. If they didn't want her, she wasn't going to push herself forward.

Nettled, resentful, Diana flounced off along the corridor to Study No. 10. Rather savagely she pushed open the door and then stopped, blinking in surprise.

For another girl was in that study—a girl with a sallow, bitter face, her eyes gleaming.

It was Nancy Bell!



## Nancy Bell's Threat

"WELL, if it isn't little Nancy," Diana said. "And why am I honoured by this visit?"

Nancy Bell rose to her feet. It was obvious at once to Diana that she had come for a row. Fury burned in the sneak's face. Her eyes glowed spitefully.

Nancy Bell had come fresh from Miss Primrose's study. Reported by Miss Bullivant, she had listened to the most biting lecture of her life. Nancy cared little about lectures, but she did care very much about the five hundred lines with which she had been rewarded.

Nancy, burning with passion, faced her.

"I suppose," she gritted, "you're satisfied, Diana?"

"No, not very!" Diana's brows went up in arched surprise. "Not a little bit," she assured her. "You wouldn't be very satisfied, would you, if you'd just been turned down for the hockey team?"

"I suppose"—bitterly—"it doesn't matter to you that I've got five hundred lines?"

"Not a bit," Diana assured her lightly.

"And you don't care a button if my



IN A flash Diana sprang forward and pushed Margot clear—just as the great stone crashed to the ground. And not until she saw the other's face did Diana know that it was her rival, Margot, whose life she had saved!

pocket-money's stopped till the end of the term?"

"Why," Diana asked coolly, "should I?"

Nancy drew a deep breath.

"No, why should you?" Nancy's tone was bitter. "It doesn't matter to you, does it? It doesn't matter that you landed me in the soup! Oh, no! If it hadn't been for you, the Bull would never have caught me out! You made her catch me out!"

Diana shrugged.

"Don't be ridiculous, Nancy!"

"I'm not being ridiculous!" Nancy was quivering now. She had to work herself up into a passion. Without passion to aid her, she would have been afraid to face Diana. In her most spiteful and unreasonable mood, she went on:

"You jolly well knew what I was doing. You wanted to get me into a row. That was why, you beastly hypocrite, you flung that pellet at the Bull—so that she would turn round and accuse me! Then—then—Nancy's chest heaved—"just to make out that you were trying to do the decent thing, you owned up!"

Diana's eyes gleamed.

"Is this what you came to my study for?"

"Yes, it is! No, it isn't!" Nancy was so beside herself that she hardly knew what she was saying.

"Then," Diana said, between her teeth, "will you have the goodness to get out?"

"No, I won't! Not till I've told you what I think of you!"

"Right!" Diana's eyes glittered.

She took a step forward. Nancy, in sudden fear, gave back, her hand catching at the vase of flowers that stood upon the table. "Don't you dare to touch me!" she shrieked.

Diana resolutely came on. Nancy, seeing now that she had roused the other's anger, half-crazed with fear, hardly realised what she did. She saw Diana—her face like marble, her eyes burning. Her arm went back. Then—whizz!—went the vase, describing a circle across the room.

"You dangerous duffer!" Diana shouted.

Immediately she ducked. The vase, hurtling on, whizzed through the door and into the corridor, smashing to atoms against the wall.

Just in time Frances Barrett, the vice-captain of the school, who happened to be coming down the corridor at that moment, jumped back.

"Here—what's this!" the amazed Frances gasped; and then, with a sudden bound, she had jumped into Study No. 10. "Who threw that?" she rapped out sharply.

But there was hardly need for the question. The white, frightened face of Nancy told its own tale.

"I—I," she gasped. "I—I didn't mean it!"

"No!" Frances's eyes flashed from one to the other. "Well, mean it or not, you've done it!" she said harshly. "You might have hit somebody! What were you doing?"

"Nun-nothing!" Nancy stammered.

Frances looked her sternest.

"Very well," she nodded, "you will clear this mess up, Nancy Bell! Then you will go to your study. You will write a three-page essay upon the observance of discipline, and bring it to me before you go to bed!"

Nancy glared. She threw a bitter look at Diana. Again in that mean little heart of hers she blamed the Fire-brand of the Fourth, never realising that if Diana had told the truth her punishment would have been ten times worse.

Diana, however, met the look with a grin. Very pointedly she closed the door as Nancy went outside.

"Silly little idiot!" she thought.

And with that Diana dismissed Nancy Bell completely from her mind. No time had Diana to waste upon people of Nancy Bell's calibre.

She looked around the study. It was a comfortable apartment. The fire burned brightly and steadily in the grate, and Lily, the maid whom Diana secretly bribed to attend to her personal comforts, had laid the table for tea.

But Diana did not look happy.

Tea—tea again by herself! Since Margot Lantham had moved out of Study No. 10 Diana had had rather more than she liked of her own company. She was sick, she told herself, of eating alone, studying alone, doing everything alone! Though there were many girls in the Fourth Form who would have given a term's pocket-money to be on friendly terms with the dazzling Diana, she wanted none of them.

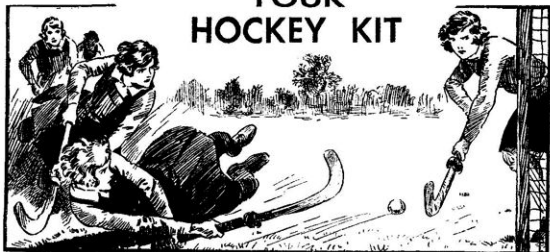
Diana, though she was so often adored, though girls tumbled over themselves to do things for her, was not good at making friends, partly because those friends could never fit in with her.

In her friendships, as in everything else, Diana had to be first.

She pouted. Her mind, for a fleeting second, went back to those happy days before the new term at Cliff House had opened.

Then she had had a friend. Margot Lantham, daughter of Lord and Lady

## YOUR HOCKEY KIT



*If you look your best you'll play your best! Here are some ideas and hints that will help you a lot.*

**F**IT and forget" is a splendid motto for every up-to-date schoolgirl to apply to her hockey outfit.

Feet foremost on the hockey field! They carry you nobly over fair pitch and foul, you depend on them utterly, and they deserve considerable treatment.

All feet love a present of the newest style lightweight boots, with specially designed grips on the soles; and when you put them on, your feet will never let you down—and that's worth a lot when you find yourself on a greasy pitch in a downpour, with your neighbours slithering about in all directions and wondering how on earth you manage to keep your feet!

### SMART AND SERVICEABLE

Stockings come next, and these can now be got of really thrilling length, so that no matter how snappily short your tunic, you can go triumphantly through a match knowing that you are a model of neatness.

And, while still on the subject, of course you never have to get out a darning-needle in the pavilion before a match, and you always use a clothes brush, unlike one or two of that visiting team last week, who brought Wednesday's mud out for an airing on Saturday!

Do you wear pads? They like to have their elastics renewed now and again. Nothing saddens a pad more than to break a strap and be discarded on the touchline, while his

mistress's shin goes unprotected through the fray.

Your tunic has a hard life, and an occasional visit to the ironing board cheers it up immensely, and makes it feel more worthy of wearing that school badge of which it is so justly proud.

### FOR UNRULY HAIR

If the wind plays tricks with your hair you can fix his saucy ways with a hair net—two for threepence, at the stores.

These nets can be got to match your own hair exactly, and are thus invisible in wear, and are the very thing for subduing that curl that insists on falling into your eye and blinding you just as you are about to score that all-important goal.

A few minutes given the night before to making sure that all the smaller details are perfect is time well spent. It will free your mind during the match from any little nagging fear that something may "give." Important games are a great strain, and you cannot do yourself justice if you are in the least nervous of any part of your equipment.

Now you are trim from top to toe, a credit to any team, and ready to tackle the most formidable opponent.

You can concentrate fully on the game, and your play will consequently improve so as to amaze your team-mates, your games mistress, and even yourself!

So be prepared for thrills!



"DIANA would have had a place in the team if it hadn't been for me," Margot startled them all by saying.  
 "So I want you to drop me on Saturday—and give her my place." Tensely the chums waited for Clara's reply to Margot's suggestion.

Lantham. That was a friendship which had pleased her, not only because of the social prestige which aristocratic Margot reflected upon herself, but because Margot was such a wonderful admirer. What times they had had together!

But, alas, those times were gone! That friendship was scaled. Bitterly Diana regretted that she had ever thought of the idea of proposing that Margot Lantham should come to Cliff House School.

Again, however, it was her vanity which had prompted her. She had so badly wanted to show off Margot, her aristocratic friend.

But Margot, most amazingly, instead of following her lead at Cliff House, had gone her own way.

Again Diana took a restless turn up and down the room. With distaste she gazed at the inviting table. She wanted tea, but she didn't want it alone. And she wouldn't have it alone!

Instantly making up her mind, Diana opened the door and stalked off to the prefects' room.

There was a telephone in that room, and had she obeyed the school rules Diana should have sought permission before using it. Diana did not ask permission, however. She had grown used to the idea of taking what she wanted when she wanted it. The thought never even crossed her mind. She asked for the Friarade Garage.

"Send me your best car—at once," she ordered. "I shall expect you at Cliff House in ten minutes."

"Yes, miss. What name, miss?" came the voice of the garage hand from the other end.

"Miss Royston-Clarke."

"Very well, Miss Clarke!"

"And not Miss Clarke!" Diana fumed over the wire. "Miss Royston-Clarke, you hear?"

"Y-yes, Miss Royston-Clarke," came the overwhelmed garage man's stammered reply.

Very languidly Diana left the prefects' room, caring not a whit that she allowed the door to slam to behind her, and, going up to the dormitory, arrayed herself in her new, thick tweed costume.

Very conscious that she was looking her best, she sauntered down the

dormitory stairs, carelessly pulling on her gloves as she did so. At the bottom she met Nancy Bell.  
 "Oh, hallo, Nancy!" she beamed. "Got over your nasty little temper, then? Hope you made a good job of clearing up that mess."

Nancy muttered something, and Diana, with a smile, walked on, unaware of the gleaming eyes which followed her, of the thin-lipped sneer which came to Nancy Bell's lips behind her back. But Nancy, watching her as she disappeared, clenched her hands.

"Stuck-up thing!" she told herself contemptuously. "Silly cat! In a new suit, too—another one." She paused as a sudden idea shot into her head, and her eyes narrowed. Then she grinned.

"Well, I'll jolly well spoil that for you, at all events," she muttered.

"What a shock for you, Miss Flighy Diana, when you come back!"  
 And with sudden purpose in her crafty face, Nancy Bell hurried away.

"CLARA!"

Clara Trevlyn looked up from the table in Study No. 7 with a frown. But the frown immediately disappeared when she found Margot Lantham standing in the doorway.

"Oh, yes! Hallo, Margot! Talk of angels, you know!" And Clara pointed to the slip of paper on which she had been industriously writing. "I'm just making out the team list for Saturday," she said, "and the very name I was writing as you came in was yours. But sit down a minute, will you? I want to get this finished before tea. By the way, you're going to tea, too—in Study No. 4, aren't you?"

"Yes!" Margot, however, hesitated. "Clara, I wanted to speak to you about the team—"

"Well, go ahead, old thing!"

"About Diana."

Clara frowned.

"Well, what about Diana?"

"I—I—" Margot bit her lip. "I know it's no place of mine to make suggestions," she said. "I'm not on the committee or anything. But, Clara, you've often said yourself what a top-

"Used to be—yes," Clara agreed. "But that was terms ago. What she was and what she is are two different things!"

"But—what she's improved, you know," Margot said anxiously. "I was talking to Flora Cann of the Lower Fifth just now. She said Diana joined them in hockey practice the other day, and she just made rings round everybody in the side."

Clara looked at her queerly.

"Well," she frowned.

"Well, I—I was just wondering if—it wouldn't be possible to make a place for her," Margot said hesitantly. "I don't want to butt in, of course—"

Clara grimaced.

"It's not a matter of butting-in, Margot. You know I'm always open to receive suggestions. But it isn't possible—not for this match at any rate. The team we had against Courtfield played so well together that it would be just unfair to drop anybody out of the side. Everybody in the side is pulling her weight. We know what to expect—"

Margot moved restlessly.

"But—"

"But," Clara took her up steadily, "with Diana you never know what to expect. On form, she's a jolly good player. But what the dickens is going to happen when she gets on the field—that's the question!"

And Clara bent to her task again. Margot stood still, biting her lip.

She could not forget that, whatever had happened since they had come to Cliff House, she and Diana had been very good friends in the past, and memories of that friendship were still stirring within her.

Hockey had been the chief cause of the breach. Diana had not hesitated to accuse her openly of stealing her place.

Again Margot sighed. If only—Oh, if only there was some way of getting Diana into the team! How much more cheerful, how much happier she would have felt!

Nettled and angry as she was with Diana, it was impossible still, at times, to refrain from being dazzled by her.

to feel that same old pride in her brilliance as she had felt in those long ago days when they had been such friends.

Certainly, the Diana she knew now was not the Diana of those old days. Yet the old good points were still there. Diana was still capable of fine actions, which was truly amazing in a character possessing so many complexities as hers.

She just didn't understand Diana. She was baffled, beaten by Diana. But she had urged to make it up—to be friends—was still there.

And she did truly feel guilty about having usurped Diana's place. But there was no arguing with Clara. As far as Lower School sports went, Clara had the first word and the last. Rightly or wrongly, Clara was excluding Diana, was sticking to the team which, so far, had done yeoman service in the Lantham Cup.

"Well, there you are!" that girl said, as she completed the team list. "Jolly good too! If Lantham can beat that side—well, I'll say they're the hottest stuff we've met this season. Margot, I'm just going to slip down to put this on the board. Will you trot along to Study No. 4? I'll join you later."

Margot nodded. Rather miserably she went out. She reached the door of Study No. 4 and went in, to find Mabs busily laying the table, Bessie, red-faced, but happy, cooking sausages over the fire, and Babs, with a look of dismay upon her pretty face, investigating the contents of a completely empty tea canister.

She looked up as Margot came in. "Oh, hello, Margot! Here's a nuisance!" she cried. "This is what comes of telling Bessie to keep an eye on things—no tea!"

Margot smiled. "Well, that's not very dreadful, is it? The tuckshop's open."

"No; but who the dickens wants to run down to the tuckshop now? Mabs is busy, Bessie is busy, and I've got to jolly well collect the afternoon exercise-books before I can even think of tea. Besides which—"

Margot laughed. "Well, I'm not busy. How much shall I get?"

"Oh, I say, you don't mean—"

"Of course. It won't take five minutes to run there and back. What do you have? Sevenpenny?"

"Yes."

"A quarter?"

"Yes."

"Right! Won't be long!" she called gaily.

And she tripped away.

"STOP here!" Diana ordered haughtily.

"Yes, miss!"

"I shall be half an hour. I expect," Diana told the driver, as she leisurely got out of the handsome car which had brought her to the Courtfield Restaurant. "You may be glad of some tea yourself during that time."

She dipped into her bag and produced half-a-crown, which she gave him.

"Oh, thanks, miss!"

Diana smiled carelessly, while the delighted driver enthusiastically pocketed the coin.

"A real toff, that girl!" he confided to the somewhat melancholy opener of doors who stood on the pavement. "Real generous, too—always gives me a tip!"

"Then," said Mr. Melanchoy, "you're lucky! I've been here all day and only earned threepence. I tried to get 'er door, but she was too quick for me. You blokes have all the luck!"

At which the driver grinned, and at which Diana, overhearing as she passed into the restaurant, instinctively turned. She came back.

"I did you out of a job?" she asked.

"Eh, miss? I didn't say—"

"By opening my own door," Diana explained. "I'm very sorry, you know, but I didn't see you. And it's too bad, isn't it, working all day for threepence? Ask my driver to take you somewhere, and have tea."

And, with a grandiloquent gesture, she pressed another half-a-crown into the melancholy one's hands.

"Oh crumbs! I say, thank you, miss!"

Diana smiled again. Diana, at least, was not stingy with her money, of which an indulgent father allowed her perhaps more than was good for a girl of her age.

And, strangely enough, she did not "chuck it about" to enhance her own good opinion of herself. Diana knew what it meant to have no money. Once in her very chequered career she had run away from home and found herself stranded in London.

She walked away. The commissionaire at the door held it open for her with respect.

Diana, conscious at once that every eye in the restaurant was upon her, walked serenely to a little table in the corner, took her seat, and then started as she heard her own name.

She turned. A girl at the end table was leaning across to her.

Diana frowned. She remembered the girl, but for a moment could not place her.

"You're Diana Royston-Clarke, aren't you?"

"Why—yes," Diana said puzzledly.

"But—"

"I'm Jane Stevens, captain of the Lantham Town Juniors."

"Oh!"

Diana beamed as light broke upon her.

"You remember, you played against us last year when you were with the Lantham Sports."

"Why, of course!" Diana laughed. "I say, come and join me? Well, you know, I'd almost forgotten you," she said chattily. "Fancy, Jane Stevens!"

Jane laughed.

"It's jolly, meeting you like this," she said. "But perhaps—a little glumly—it won't be so jolly on Saturday. Oh, my goodness, when I think of you and those four goals you scored against us! The girls at the club still talk about them! I tell you, Diana, there's one girl in the Cliff House team we're afraid of."

Diana was flattered.

"Meaning me?"

"Yes, of course!"

"Well"—Diana smiled slowly—"you needn't be afraid, Jane. Because, you see, I'm not in the Cliff House team."

"What?"

"I'm not in it," Diana stated calmly.

"Shall I help you to tea?"

But Jane was staring at her incredulously.

"You mean—they've left you out?"

"Just that," Diana asserted calmly.

"Everybody, you see, hasn't got such a high idea of my capabilities as you have, Jane. Sugar?"

"Yes, please! Two. But—but—" Jane Stevens was still staring as if she could not believe her eyes. "But don't you want to play?"

"Of course. But I'm not skipper, you know."

"Oh! And—and—" Jane stuttered. "Well, I don't know. Fancy excluding you! I only wish—with a burst of enthusiasm—"we had you on our side!"

Diana laughed pleasantly.

"Why? Are you short?"

"Well, not at the moment. But our inside-left—that's a position which is giving us a bit of trouble at the moment"—Jane Stevens frowned.

"Still, what's the use?" she added wistfully. "Thank you!" she added, as Diana passed her cup. "You'll be at the match, of course?"

"If I've nothing else to do," Diana told her.

They talked. Diana was just a little bored. She had rather hoped to find some of the Courtfield girls in the restaurant, but of a Courtfield hat there was no sign. She finished her tea and rose.

"Well, have to be getting back now. Perhaps," she added, "I'll see you on Saturday. Good-night!"

"Good-night!"

Diana quitted the restaurant. She climbed back into her car. Rather moody she was, as she returned to Cliff House, thinking of that conversation.

Those girls adored her. Those girls in the Lantham Town Club assessed her at her true worth. The fact that she was not included in the team for Saturday had given them hope of victory.

Yet she was the girl Clara Trevlyn had turned down—the girl whose place had been given to another!

Just before gates closed, Diana was back at Cliff House. Haughtily she dismissed her car at the end of the drive, and, savagely resentful, strode on across the quadrangle. She had almost reached the school gates when:

"Look out, miss!"

The shriek came from the roof.

Diana looked up quickly. She saw and realised in a flash all that was happening.

A gang of workmen had been hastily engaged to do some urgent repairs to the stonework of the schoolhouse roof. They were still working by the aid of flares, in the hope of getting the job done, and it was one of the men who had uttered that warning shout.

Diana saw the reason for his cry. Just in front of her was a girl, on the point of entering the school.

She was walking slowly and thoughtfully, absorbed with her own thoughts, and obviously did not hear that shouted warning.

But Diana did, and Diana saw—all in the same moment. A huge coping-stone had somehow become dislodged from the roof. It was falling—falling directly on to the head of the heedless girl beneath. Diana saw it as it fell.

"Look out! Look out!" she shrieked.

But in a second she was galvanised into action. Desperately she jumped forward. Like a streak of lightning she covered the intervening distance, grabbed hold of the girl's shoulder, and twirled her back.

A packet of tea fell from the girl's hand as she twisted round, and then—came the coping-stone, flying into splinters and crashing to the asphalt surface of the quad in the very spot upon which a moment before the heedless one had stood.

"Margot!" Diana breathed.



Clara Won't Listen

"Di—?" And Margot, for a moment, stared wonderingly. Then she looked at the smashed stone. Realisation of her narrow escape seemed to rush upon her all at once, leaving her trembling in reaction. "Diana, you—you saved my life!"

Diana breathed stertorously. "You duffer, why didn't you look up when the man shouted?"

"But—how I never heard!" Margot gulped. "Oh, Diana—"

But Diana turned away with a shrug. Margot! She would have to do a good turn for Margot! The irony of it!

"Diana!" Margot choked.

Diana flung round impatiently.

"I—I want to thank you!"

"Don't bother!" the Firebrand said coldly.

"But, Diana," Margot panted, "you risked your life. You might have been—"

"For goodness' sake," Diana said impatiently, "don't let's make a song about it. I didn't know it was you, she added brutally.

Margot bit her lip.

"Diana, you know that isn't true," she said reproachfully. "Oh, my goodness, Diana, please—please, do listen to me!"

And she caught at the Firebrand's sleeve as she turned roughly away. "Diana, I've been thinking over things."

Diana shrugged.

"And—ah— Oh, it seems an awful shame," Margot went on, "that we should have parted like this. Di—"

Diana flushed as she heard the old familiar abbreviation of her name.

"I didn't see make it up and—and be friends again?"

She held out a hand. Very tender, very pleading, her face at that moment.

Diana paused, filled all at once with a tumult of emotions. Almost she was tempted to take that outstretched hand.

After all, in those happy days gone by— Then memory returned with a flood, bringing a flush of angry humiliation to her cheeks. She turned sharply.

"After," she said bitingly, "you robbed me of my place in the hockey team? No, thanks!"

She walked away. Margot stood looking after her, her cheeks suddenly very pale. Oh, foolish—foolish, proud Diana!

Rather sadly she picked up the packet of tea which had fallen and trailed up to Study No. 4.

Babs, teapot in hand, glanced sharply at Margot's white, worried-looking face when she came into the study.

"Why, Margot, what's the matter? You look as if you'd seen a ghost!"

Margot smiled faintly.

"Well, not exactly that," she said, "but I very nearly became one."

"Oh?"

"And if it hadn't been for Diana—"

And then, while they stood staring at her, she told them how Diana had saved her from the falling coping-stone.

"Jolly plucky!" Clara commented.

"Jolly plucky! I've always said that Diana had her good points. She certainly seems to have a knack of turning up at the right moment. Well, thank goodness you're all right, anyway! It must have shaken you up, though. Come and sit down and have some tea!"

They all sat down—Babs, Mabs, Clara, Bessie and Margot.

Certainly, the spread in Study No. 4 that day was enough to tempt anyone's appetite. A steaming plate of sausages, cooked to that gorgeous golden brown which only Bessie Bunter seemed to be able to achieve, stood in the centre of the table.

There was a lovely cake, which Babs had received from home that morning,

## BRIGHT HATS FOR DULL DAYS

*Ideas are really going to the head this season—as you can see from the picture here. And aren't they attractive?*



DEAR school hats! We all love, or have loved them! But even their most devoted admirer has to confess in her very secret heart that there are times when they are dull—yes, definitely uninteresting.

This confession is usually torn out of school-hat admirers on a bright Saturday in winter, when the school hat has been covering the head most satisfactorily all the week to go to school.

But, being Saturday, how can you help wishing that it would suddenly transform itself into a halo, or a postman's style—just for the day?

Impossible! Yes, I know. But I've thought of a nearly-as-good solution for you.

Purchase from your favourite threepenny and sixpenny stores, or borrow from big sister, or beg from mother, one fairly wide and definitely gay belt.

Never mind what material it is made of—leather or American cloth. Now try this around your hat—over your school band.

Did you ever see such a transformation? Almost an invitation to be taken to the cinema, isn't it?

Wear the coloured belt around your hat.

That's my secret—quite a tiny one—but what a difference it can make to Saturday's outlook!

You'll very likely have to cut the belt, since modern waists are by no means as narrow as fourteen-inch crowns! But if the belt is yours you won't mind doing that.

Buckle it in the front—and if the belt is so precious that you really feel 'twould be a sin to chop the long end off, just take this end around the crown again and fasten it there with a stitch, if you're made that way, or an invisible pin if you're not!

### THE EVER-POPULAR BERET

Other hats may come and go, but the beret lingers on. And no wonder, for it's hard to beat both for comfort and for attractiveness, you'll agree.

But to cut a dash in a beret fashion demands just a touch of originality.

So I suggest you try wearing two colourful yourself right on the top. You can make these yours by winding wool round and through a circle of cardboard, or you can buy them for a penny each.

Then, to complete a really vivacious fashion, decorate your handbag or pochette to match—particularly if it is made of material rather than leather.

Now you'll be able to go out, with your head held high, feeling that Saturday really is a very different day from all the others of a school-spent week!

Jam tarts, mince pies, a great dish of celery, and bread-and-butter cut as only Mabel Lynn could cut it.

A merry spread, in very truth, and hungrily the chums did justice to it.

They were in high feather, all of them. Except Margot. The forthcoming match had given them a lot to talk and think about. The fact that they had never met Lantham Town, and knew little about them, except their name, gave a thrill and a spice of speculation.

Only Margot, of them all, seemed quieter, more subdued, than usual. Suddenly she looked up.

"Clara!"

"Well, old thing?" Clara answered good-humouredly.

"You—you still mean what you said about Diana?"

Clara frowned.

"Now look here Margot, don't let's have that all over again," she said good-humouredly. "I know you must be feeling pretty rotten about Diana, especially after this good turn. But there just isn't a place in the team for her."

Margot bit her lip.

"But supposing—supposing somebody dropped out?"

"But who's going to drop out?"

"Well, supposing?" Margot pressed.

"In that case," Clara replied, "I might consider Diana. But don't talk rot, Margot, old thing!"

"Well, then," Margot pressed, "supposing I dropped out?"

Four pairs of eyes fastened upon her in consternation.

"You— Oh, don't talk silly, Margot!" Babs exclaimed. "You know the team just couldn't do without you."

"You might find Diana better than I am," Margot said quietly.

"Oh rabbits!"

"Well—Margot drew a deep breath—"Clara, please listen!" she said. "I—I don't think it—it is altogether fair.

After all, Diana would have had her place in the team if it hadn't been for me. I ask you now—will you drop me on Saturday and give her my place?"

Babs looked startled. Mabs frowned a little. Even Bessie Bunter forgot to eat.



Clara's brows lifted. She seemed surprised that Margot was so sticking to her point.

"I'm afraid I couldn't," she said at last. "I know Diana's jolly good—sometimes. But you're more reliable, old thing. And as the jolly old skipper, I've got to think of these things."

Margot looked almost hurt by Clara's firm attitude. It was very evident that she had hoped to sway the Tomboy—had reckoned on being able to persuade her to make the change.

But when Clara made up her mind it was quite useless to argue with her.

Margot laughed at last, rather ruefully.

"Sure you won't do it?" she made her last plea.

Clara shook her head. "Absolutely! It's jolly sporty of you—ripping, really! But I'm thinking of the team. And now forget about it, Margot, and have some more tea."

But Margot could not forget. Although the talk drifted to other subjects, her mind was far away; she was still brooding.

She felt, rightly or wrongly, that Diana had some justification for her grudge against her. That, added to the old yearning for the Firebrand's friendship and the debt of gratitude which she felt now that she owed Diana, was not calculated to make her happy.

Her only chance of making it up to Diana, she felt, was to restore to that girl the place which Diana accused her of having usurped.

But how could she do that and remain loyal to her school, when Clara would not listen to a word about it?



### Her Chance—at Last

"TURN out, the hockey team!" Clara Trevlyn cried boisterously. "No slacking, you cripples! Brenda Fallace—" "Hallo!" growled Brenda, as the Tomboy banged on the door of Study No. 2.

"Hockey sticks to the fore! Practice on Junior Side in five minutes!"

"But look here—" protested Brenda.

"No looking anywhere! That goes for you, too, June Merritt!" Clara cried warningly, and thundered on the door of Study No. 1. "Rosa Rodworth!"

"Oh, coming!" Rosa cried. Thud! went Clara's stick on the door of Study No. 3.

"Leila, time to turn out." "I'm ready, I guess!" answered Leila Carroll's voice.

"Babs!"—as she hit the door of Study No. 4.

"Coming!" came Babs' cheery hail. "Don't knock the door down!"

Clara Trevlyn grinned. Clara was feeling boisterously keyed up. Clara usually was when hockey practice was in the offing, and Clara allowed no slacking. She banged at the door of Study No. 6.

"Margot!"

"Margot's not here, Noisebag!" Peggy Preston's voice answered her.

"Well, where is she?"

"How the dickens should I know?" Clara breathed cheerfully. Right—she'd rouse Margot afterwards.

She went on to her own study to inform Janet Jordan that she was required. From there to Study No. 8,

## HILDA RICHARDS REPLIES



Iris Varney (Walsall).—Here is your reply in print, as you asked. The name of the **SCHOOLGIRL FRIEND ANNUAL** is "THE SCHOOL FRIEND ANNUAL." I should advise you to hurry to order your copy, if you have not already done so, for newsagents are already almost sold out. And what a disappointment if you missed this lovely book! Yes, Juno is very fit at present, thank you. She has just grown a lovely thick winter coat!

"Tommy" (Torquay).—What a beautifully typed letter, my dear! I only wish I could write one with so few mistakes! Yes, there is a commercial side at Cliff House. Lucy Farraday is considered the cleverest girl in the Fourth, and usually heads the form list. Congratulations on obtaining such a fine position! I spent a day in Torquay this summer, and went for a sail on the schooner "Bluenose"—I expect you remember her visit. You certainly have chosen a lovely place to live in. How sweet of you to call your puppy Juno! I'm sure my Juno and yours would be great chums!

"Jewel—an Enthusiastic Reader" (Rugby).—I thought your little poem was quite good, my dear. By all means send one of your stories for me to criticise. But I'm afraid I can't tell you what tune your poem would go to. A very difficult question to decide, Jewel!

Joan Lovegrove—a New Reader.—I'm sure you'll see your reply, Joan, as you have put your full name. Thank you for all the nice things you say about my stories. I'm so glad you enjoy them. Juno sends you a kiss in return for your pat. I shall hope for a much, much longer letter from you next time, Joan!

"Girl Guide—Schoolgirl Admirer" (Salford).—The best dress for hockey is an ordinary school gym tunic, my dear. You can buy a stick at all prices from about 7s. 6d. upwards. I'm sure you'll love the game, too. By the way, don't let another five years go by before writing again, will you? I shall hope to hear from you soon.

"Betty" (East Finchley).—So Juno is to have a daily pat from you, is she? Well, I'm afraid the spoilt darling gets a good many already, but I'll try to remember to give her one extra from you! A nice long letter next time you write, please!

where Jean Cartwright was busy doing up her pads. Amy Jones from Study No. 9, came out just as she prepared for a vigorous thump upon the door.

Study No. 10, since it did not contain a player, she passed over, looking into Study No. 11, where Joan Sheldon (Channan), the Fourth Form mistress' younger sister, was in the act of routing out her stick.

"All here!" Clara cried, as she joined the team in the corridor. "Hold on, though, Margot's not. Where's Margot? Anybody seen her?" "I saw her ten minutes ago," Amy Jones volunteered.

"Where?"

"Going into Diana's study." "Oh!" Clara frowned. The news did not seem to please her. Since that little brush at the tea-table in Study No. 4, yesterday, a subtle change seemed to have come over Margot. She had been neither as cheerful nor as frank as usual with Clara Trevlyn. "If she's in with Diana, better go and fetch her out," she advised Babs. "If Diana likes to join in the practice, she can."

Babs nodded. She was also disturbed by this new attitude of Margot's. Babs, more understanding and more reasonable than Clara, who was always too busy living in the present to be able to see into the future, and too impatient to look back into the past, felt sympathetic.

After all, Diana, in her own way, had been rather decent to Margot lately. And, obviously, Margot was a girl with whom sentiment weighed. She tapped at the door of Study No. 10.

"Come in!" a stifled voice answered her.

Babs peered in. She stared as she saw Margot sitting alone.

"What? I thought—" Her eyes roved the room. "Why, Margot, what are you doing?"

"I'm waiting for Diana," Margot said constrainedly.

"But practice—" "Oh, please! Ask Clara to excuse me. I—I don't feel up to it at the moment."

Babs gave her a searching look.

"Not seedy?" "No, no, of course not!" Margot's voice was a little impatient. "Please don't bother me, Babs!"

Babs closed the door, wondering. She went back to Clara, who was standing at the end of the passage, surrounded by the team. The Tomboy glared when the message was delivered.

"But bother it! Here, wait a minute. I'll go and dig her out!"

"Clara—no!" Babs laid a restraining hand upon the Tomboy's arm.

"Not now—not at this moment," she said. "Give her a chance. If she doesn't feel up to it, it's no use forcing her against her will. We want her to do her best on Saturday, remember."

Clara hesitated a moment, and then ruffled her unruly hair.

"Oh, come on, then!"

They went out in a body.

But in Diana's study Margot still sat. She had made up her mind. She would feel beastly churlish if she did not make some real attempt to get an understanding with Diana. All day she had been trying to get a word with the Firebrand; but Diana, as if guessing her intention, had on every occasion eluded her.

But Margot couldn't go on like this, especially after what had just happened. She was determined to make one last effort to revive the old friendship. She went along to Diana's quarters.

Diana wasn't there, so Margot took a seat and waited.

Presently the door opened and Diana came in.

"Hallo?" she queried sharply.

"I've come to talk, Di," said Margot. Diana snickered.

"Surely you have enough girls to talk to without bothering me," she sneered. "You don't make it easy for me!" protested Margot.

"Why ever should I?" shrugged Diana. "I'm getting on perfectly well without your company. I've just met your hockey crowd downstairs. Why aren't you with them?"

"Because I want to talk to you. I want to say again that I'm terribly sorry if I've done anything to upset you."

Diana's lips curled.

"Rather late in the day to pitch that yarn, isn't it?" she asked.

"Diana, you know—"

"Yes, I know!"

Diana eyed her with hard indifference. But inwardly she was battling with herself—fighting back the longing to take the hand that Margot held outstretched.

"Yes, I know," continued Diana. "And what I know is this. You've wormed your way into Babs' & Co.'s favour, and they've given you a place in the team which by rights should be mine. I'm not boasting when I say I'm a better player than you."

"I think you are," cut in Margot. "Certainly you are when you're in training. But the others don't think so."

"Shall I tell you why they don't think so?" cried Diana.

"Yes—why?"

"Because you're the daughter of Lord Lantham. The snobs can't resist a title. Don't pretend you don't realise this—don't kid yourself that it's your wonderful play that has put me in a back seat. Oh, no!"

And Diana gave a shrill laugh of contempt.

"That's a very ungenerous thing to say!" retorted Margot warmly.

"Hurts your pride—eh?" jeered Diana.

"Diana!"

"We came here as friends—friends!" The Firebrand repeated the word with a bitter sneer. "The first thing you did was to turn on me. You went over from me on to Babs' side. You flung out of this study. You tried to show me up—

in the swimming bath—on the hockey field. Then, having got thick with Babs & Co., you went and pinched my place in the hockey team."

"Diana, you know that's not true!"

"No?" Diana flashed round. "Well, what is?" she demanded. "Supposing you weren't playing in the team. Should I, or shouldn't I, be playing in your place?" A sense of her own wrongs swept over her, causing her eyes to flash.

"And now you have the cheek to come here to profess friendship. Do you think"—bitterly—"I could ever be friends with you, Margot Lantham, while you still stick to the position you've cheated me out of?"

Margot felt a wave of temper shaking her. Remembering her mission, she fought it down.

"Diana, supposing I told you I'd asked Clara to drop me and give you my place?"

"I shouldn't believe it!" Diana sneered.

"Very well!" Margot looked her straight in the face. "Since you won't believe me, will you ask Clara yourself?" she asked.

Diana stared.

"You mean—?" Then suddenly she broke off, wheeling round as there came

a tap on the door. The door opened, and the glittering eyes of Nancy Bell, alight with interest, peered in.

"What do you want?" she snapped.

"Nothing!" Nancy sneered. Her eyes went quickly from Margot's pale face to the tense one of the Firebrand. "I just came with a message," she said. "Stella Stone told me to find you and tell you that you're wanted on the phone."

"Oh!" Diana said.

She turned on her heel then. Not a second glance did she give towards Margot. But as she stamped off down the corridor she was thinking of that interview.

She felt worried suddenly. Margot did want to make it up. She, too,

qualified to play for Lantham Town? You are a Lantham girl, and as Cliff House doesn't want you, we—we thought perhaps you might like to help us out."

Diana jumped.

"You mean—you'd like me to play for Lantham Town against Cliff House on Saturday?"

"Well, if you wouldn't mind."

"Oh!" Diana felt her head suddenly spinning.

Play for Lantham Town against her own school! Could she? Dare she?

But she could, and as for daring, who was to stop her? Of course, she was within her rights, and what—with a gleam in her eyes—a smack in the eye for Cliff House!

She had offered to play hockey for the



"YOU want me to play for Lantham Town against Cliff House?"

Diana said. She hardly waited for the other's answer. What a surprise for Cliff House when she turned out for the opposing team! That would show them!

wanted to make it up—or did she? Anyway—

But here she was in the prefects' room. She picked up the receiver, frowning at the sound of the unfamiliar voice which came over from the other end of the wire.

"Who? Jane Stevens? Who?" And then suddenly her face cleared. "Oh, yes, of course, the captain of the Lantham Town team!"

She did not see the sudden, curious, sallow face which peered in at the door. Nor did she guess that Nancy Bell, who had followed her, was listening to every word.

"You remember, Diana, I told you we weren't sure about our inside-left for Saturday?"

"Well?" Diana frowned.

"And you told me you weren't playing for Cliff House—"

"Well?"

"Well"—Jane paused—"Diana, have you thought," she asked, "that you are

school, and they had turned her down! Well, why shouldn't she play for Lantham? Why not?"

What revenge!

Diana could have laughed in her glee. Oh, what a surprise Cliff House were going to have! They wouldn't give her a chance to play for them. Right, then she'd jolly well play against them, and wouldn't she play a game! The best game of her life!

Serve Clara Trevlyn right if Cliff House did lose!

"Of course," she gasped—"of course I'll play!"

A sign of relief from the other end.

"Oh, that's awfully nice of you! But"—Jane paused again—"you know the rules of the competition?" she asked. "You must be a registered player of the Lantham Town Hockey Club before you're eligible to take part in a game. That means, of course, that you must sign a registration form right away."

Diana frowned. Some of her

enthusiasm disappeared. Hopeless to get to Lantham and get back before gates closed. It was five o'clock now. Gates closed at six, and it would take her two hours, at least, to make the return journey.

But—supposing she didn't. The match was to-morrow. That meant she would not, after all, be able to play.

Only the tiniest fraction of time did Diana debate that point. Reckless by nature, Diana never hesitated to break rules if by breaking them she stood to gain thereby. Quick as a flash her answer came.

"I'll be in Lantham in an hour's time."

Then down went the receiver, leaving Diana flushed and almost dancing in her glee.

What a joke, what a perfect scream! Couldn't she just imagine the faces of the Fourth when she stepped out upon the pitch for the match to-morrow!

Diana hugged herself. She'd keep that up her sleeve, of course. That should be her little secret.

She did not guess, however, that that secret was already shared by someone else—a girl who, with hurrying steps, was now silently running down the corridor towards the Fourth Form.

That girl was Nancy Bell. Nancy, burning to do Diana a bad turn, thought at last she saw her chance.

**I**N DIANA'S study, Margot Lantham waited in vain. From half-past five to six the clock ticked on, from six to half-past. At last Margot, with a weary sigh, arose.

Where was Diana?



Someone Knows Her Secret

**D**IANA, at that very moment, was creeping through the gap in the hedge which separated the Cliff House grounds from Lane's Field.

Diana was well pleased with herself. She had been to Lantham, had signed the necessary registration form, and making good time back, felt that she had done well.

Nobody, she told herself, could possibly have missed her, for call-over was not until half-past seven, and seeing that to-morrow was a whole holiday there was no preparation to-night.

Chuckling quietly she crept into the quadrangle, darted across into the servants' entrance.

So far so good!

Nobody was about. Again Diana gleeed. Up the stairs she went, two at a time, and still without having been seen she burst into the cloak-room. Then, with a little gasp, she recoiled.

A tall, forbidding figure stood before her.

It was Miss Keys, the gym expert of Cliff House School, and duty mistress for the day.

"So," she said, through her thin lips, "I was not misinformed, Diana. You have been out-breaking bounds. Please hang up your clothes and come to my study."

Diana's face was the picture of dismay.

"But I haven't—"

"Do not lie to me, please," Miss Keys' frown was merciless. "You do

not mean to tell me, surely, that you came in here dressed in your outdoor things especially to hang them up. Besides which," Miss Keys went on her eyes gleaming, "they are wet. I can see the frost shining upon them quite plainly. It is enough, Diana, come!"

Diana gritted her teeth. What rotten luck! How had Miss Keys got on her track? And what did the mistress mean by saying that about not being misinformed? Had somebody then seen her go out? Had somebody sneaked on her?

Savagely she hung up her clothes. Savagely she followed the mistress as she led the way to her room.

Very primly Miss Keys took her seat before her desk, pushing aside a pile of books so that she could see Diana better. In doing so she revealed a piece of blue notepaper, upon which Diana's startled eyes suddenly riveted. For upon that paper, printed in black capitals, were the words:

"DIANA ROYSTON-CLARKE HAS BROKEN BOUNDS."

Diana drew in a quick breath. So same awful sneak had given her away. And then, staring still at the paper which confronted her, she caught her breath in a sharp hiss.

For she recognised at once the paper, the distinctive pale blue stationery with the gilt edges, used by nobody else in the Fourth Form but Margot Lantham.

Margot! Margot had given her away!

In this despicable manner! The eyes of Diana Royston-Clarke glinted. Her face hardened. She had been almost ready to forgive Margot, to forget the past. But this—

She thought she saw Margot, bitter, humiliated by her treatment of her in Study No. 10, had sought a mean revenge. She had given her away.

If she had only guessed, however! For Margot, of course, was as innocent of that crime as Miss Keys herself! It was Nancy—piteous Nancy—who had purloined that sheet of notepaper from Margot Lantham's study—who had written that betraying message on it.

Diana's eyes gleamed. She hardly heard what Miss Keys was saying. Miss Keys was lecturing her—scathingly, bitterly.

She wanted to know where she had been.

Diana found herself answering—mechanically, the words having no meaning in her own ears.

"I went to Lantham. Had an urgent call from a friend," she vaguely replied.

"Very well, Diana," the mistress said, "I will not punish you as heavily as you deserve this time. I warn you, however, that if I catch you again I shall detain you. Consider yourself lucky to escape with a hundred lines."

"Thank you!" Diana answered, in a stifled voice.

She went out, lips hard, head high, a glint of bitterness in her eyes.

At the end of the Fourth Form corridor she almost ran into Margot.

"Diana!" that girl began.

And then she fell back, for Diana, with one freezing, penetrating stare—a stare which seemed to go right through Margot, which made her wit in the deadly hate it expressed—swept on without a word.



If Only She Suspected!

**M**ARGOT was still standing in the corridor, when the door of Study No. 4 came open and Babs and Clara emerged into the passage.

They stared as they saw Margot.

"Margot!" Margot came to herself with a start. A sudden tide of crimson flooded into her cheeks. To both Babs and Clara it looked exactly as if Margot had just come out of Study No. 10, and they exchanged a quick, brief glance of significance.

They had been talking rather uneasily about Margot, wondering what she was doing, where she was.

Margot saw their looks upon her, and shrugged.

"Oh, hallo, Margot!" Babs said awkwardly. "Where have you been hiding yourself?"

Margot smiled.

"Been with Diana?"

Again Margot smiled. It was a smile which was intended to be vague. She wasn't going to let them know that Diana had spurned her, that Diana had cut her.

She felt a little angry with herself at allowing herself to be so humiliated, but again that conscience which had so tortured her recently, told her that she could not blame Diana. Diana still thought that she was in the wrong, still looked upon her as a usurper.

And yet was not Diana justified? After all, what had she done to ask for the return of the old friendship? Nothing practical. Diana was not a girl satisfied with words, she required deeds.

"Practice go off all right?" she asked lightly.

"All right," Clara grinned. "It wasn't the same without you, Margot."

Margot flushed again.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but—" She paused. "Clara, you refused to drop me. Do you still refuse?"

Clara's eyes gleamed.

"So that I can give Diana your place?"

"Yes!"

"Don't be a duffer!" was the Tomboy's uncompromising retort.

Margot bit her lip. She was rather touchy at that moment.

"I'm not a duffer!" she said. "Oh, Clara, why don't you realise? Can't you see—I want Diana to play in my place?"

"Why?"

"Well, because I do."

"A good reason," Clara replied.

"Well, I'm fed-up with this question," she said. "I thought you'd made up your mind, Margot. Got keen on Diana again all at once, haven't you?"

Margot, however, ignored the question.

"If," she asked, and gulped—"if I don't play, you'd have to play Diana then, wouldn't you?"

Clara started.

"What?"

"Wouldn't you?" Margot pressed.

"Well, yes, I suppose we should. But you're jolly well going to play!" Clara said. "You wouldn't let the team down, would you? And that is what it would amount to. But what is this funny game?" she asked exasperatedly.

"Why have you suddenly got so thick with Diana? Margot?"—her eyes glinted

a little—"Diana's not egging you on to this, is she?"

But again Margot did not reply. She was baffled, foiled. Which ever way she turned, it seemed, Clara would have none of her suggestions.

The suspicious, quick, almost threatening look which accompanied the Tomboy's last suggestion, annoyed her. Let the team down, indeed! As if she would ever dream of doing that! Diana egging her on!

"Margot!"

"Oh, be quiet!" And Margot walked away.

"Well, my hat!" Clara looked dazed. "What's come over that chump? Margot!"

But Margot did not turn.

"Come on!" Babs advised anxiously. And Clara, with a wondering, rather dubious stare after the retreating figure of the rebel of the team, turned.

She was uneasy. Babs was uneasy, too. Decidedly neither of them liked this sudden strange Margot who had so astonishingly dropped up.

It was one thing to be grateful to Diana, of course, but this strange persistence was quite another thing. Clara was openly suspicious. Never very good at hiding her feelings, she looked queerly at her chum.

"Babs, you—you don't think that—that there's any sort of conspiracy in this? You don't think Diana and—and Margot—"

She could not finish. But Babs read into the unuttered suggestion exactly what the Tomboy meant.

She flushed a little, annoyed with herself for finding that her thoughts were wandering on the same line.

"Oh, rabbits! Oh, no, no!" she cried. "Come on!"

Not until bed-time did they see Margot again; then she hardly looked at them. Nancy Bell, from the other side of the dormitory, grinned.

Nancy was not finished with Diana yet, and Nancy, having kept her ears alert, was pretty well posted in the turn things had taken.

To be sure, the sneak of the Fourth had no cause to hate Margot. Already, through Margot, she had hurt Diana, and that should have been sufficient.

But Nancy's hate, once started, went far. If she could strike at the Firebrand through Margot, then she was going to do it. What Diana now treated as a secret was her secret, too; but, for her own reasons, crafty Nancy had not broadcast the fact. She had her own ideas as to how to make the best use of that knowledge.

Saturday morning—the morning of the match—dawned dull and misty.

The Fourth was naturally in a state of great excitement. All the talk was of the Lantham match and its possible outcome and coachload after coachload of excited and enthusiastic juniors left the quadrangle during the morning, to lunch in Lantham before the match.

In the pavilion Clara Trevlyn, Janet Jordan, and three other members of the team were busy collecting the necessary "gear" for the match. Babs was in Miss Charmant's room, helping that young and adorable mistress to sort out the week's test papers.

Margot, rather worried, was in her study, going through an old snap album.

She threw it down suddenly and restlessly rose. Down the corridor a girl was sauntering—a girl whose glorious blonde hair was pushed back from her forehead, who carried a long bag in her hand.

"Diana!" Margot cried.

Diana, however, gave her one contemptuous glance and walked right past her.

Margot bit her lip. So that was it! Diana still thought— And then suddenly rebellion came. Bother it! Why should she go on humiliating herself before Diana? Why should she? She had done her best. Diana would have none of her. Well, bother Diana! She turned, her eyes gleaming now.



When You're

## INVITED OUT TO TEA—

MAKE sure of the day on which you're expected, and be quite clear about the time.

WEAR a pretty, but not a party frock. You don't want to spoil a frilly frock; and your chum's little brothers and sisters may be on the boisterous side, you know.

TAKE a light pair of shoes with you, if the day is wet, and change into them there. It's silly to risk colds by travelling in slippers, and not very kind to your hostess's home to trot around in shoes that are well and truly muddied.

ARRIVE on time. Much as your chum and her mother may love you, they won't like to be caught still in the middle of dressing. Nor will they be delighted if the toast is getting cold.

AFTER greeting your friend, if she opens the door, remember your next duty is to say "Hallo!" to her mother. Then wait for the next suggestion, whether it is to sit down for a little while to allow tea to be made, or to start on the good things to eat right away.

WHEN you are asked how many sugars you have, don't be confused. If you like four, just say so—with a laugh, if you like. Your friends' happiness is yours, remember, and they want you to enjoy your tea.

OF COURSE, you won't leave your spoon standing in your cup, even if you are interrupted in the middle of stirring your tea, will you?

LIFTING your cup and saucer in your hand is definitely not done when sitting down to table. This is only for what is called "drawing-room tea," when cups are passed round to guests seated in armchairs, and so on.

YOU'LL not help yourself to jam straight on to your bread-and-butter.

Firebrand wanted friendship, let her seek it. No more humiliation for her! "Hallo!" a voice said at her side. "You look angry, Margot." The voice was that of Nancy Bell—who, in spite of the fact that she was detained, had on her hat and coat, dressed as if for going out.

will you? Not even if you do so at home sometimes. Place a spoonful on the edge of your plate, and then spread it with your own knife.

EVEN if pastry forks are provided—supposing you're out to a rather special tea—it is not necessary to use them, except for rather "messy" cakes. Cut fruit and plain cakes and buns may be eaten with the fingers, and forks reserved for cream cakes, or rich French pastries.

SHOULD fruit salad and cream or some other party-like delicacy follow, you'll very likely be passed the cream jug in order to help yourself. Much as you may like cream, you won't nearly empty the jug, naturally. On the other hand, give yourself sufficient to make the "sweet" really perfect. Nothing looks more unnatural than a schoolgirl giving herself just a tiny drip!

IF paper or linen serviettes are on the table, make use of yours. But don't wipe your face vigorously with it. Just a gentle dab at your mouth after drinking tea, or after creamy goodies.

TALKING with the mouth full is not polite, we all know, so I advise small, but not mincing, mouthfuls. Then, when a sudden answer is expected of you, you needn't keep everyone waiting amid a dead, tense silence until your chewing process is over!

LET all the ideas for entertainment come from your hostess, and these you must try to fall in with enthusiastically.

WHEN the time comes for you to go, remember to say good-bye to your friend's mother, as well as to your friend herself, and to tell them BOTH how much you have enjoyed yourself. Then, when they say: "We've loved having you, and you must come again—soon!" you'll know they really do mean it!

"Do I?" Margot laughed. "Well, I am," she said, "just a little." "Diana?" Nancy asked her, eyes narrowing a little. "No. Yes. Oh, bother! Why should I tell you?" And Margot flung back into the study.

Margot had her pride. She had done everything possible, she felt, to close the gulf. It was not her fault that she had failed.

Well, that was the end of it, as far as she was concerned. She wasn't going to force herself upon Diana. If the



Nancy grinned. There was a queer look in her eyes. She did not follow; she went on, and hung about the main entrance until she had watched Diana safely pass through the gates and turn into the road.

Then Nancy moved, walking quickly and hurriedly until she got to the road. There was a telephone booth there. With a swift glance round, Nancy slipped into it.

A minute later at Cliff House School, Mary Buller, the Sixth Form prefect, came in search of Margot Lantham. She found her in her study.

"Urgent call for you on the phone; something about your father. Better go," she said laconically.

Margot flew. Agitatedly entering the room, she picked up the receiver.

"Miss Margot, is that you?" came a voice.

"Yes."  
"Then will you come to Lantham Hall at once—at once? Your father—he is seriously ill. Please, please don't waste a second!"

"But—but—" Margot panted.

"What is the matter? Who are you?"  
There was no reply, however, from the other end. White-faced, Margot listened a moment, and then hung up the receiver.

Her father seriously ill!  
"Don't waste a second!"  
Margot flew like the wind to get in touch with Clara Trevlyn. The school was strangely deserted, however. She could waste no time, and the few girls she encountered seemed to have no idea of Clara's whereabouts.

In her study she dashed off a feverish message on a piece of paper, and, hastily slipping it beneath the door of Study No. 7, rushed off to the cloak-room, ramming on her hat, slipped on her coat, and was off like a shot.

It was as she was flying down the steps in the quadrangle that Nancy Bell came in.

And Nancy, turning to follow her fleeting figure as she sped down the drive, chuckled to herself.

She wondered, with a grin, what Margot Lantham would say if she guessed that the telephone message had come, not from anyone at Lantham Hall, but from herself in the telephone-box outside the school gates.

Meanwhile, however, she thought of the note which Margot might have left. Not like Margot, even in her frantic distress, to rush off without leaving a message.

Nancy hurried on to Study No. 7, opened the door, and, finding the note, coolly confiscated it.

Now if her plan worked out, Diana should find herself really and truly in disgrace!



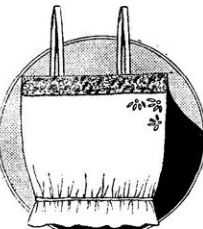
Diana's Great Moment

"MARGOT! Margot! Where on earth is the girl? Margot!"

Clara Trevlyn it was who called. She called almost frantically as, surrounded by the rest of her team, she stood in the drive outside the pavilion, where the coach that was to convey the Cliff House team to Lantham Town stood.

But of Margot there was no sign.  
"Oh, my hat! Babs, go in and tell her to buck up!" she cried. "She was warned, wasn't she?"  
"Yes, rather! But I'll go and see." And Babs flew off.

## A CAMISOLE-FROM HANKIES



*A dainty little cami like this can be so useful on numberless occasions. And to think it is made from only two hankies!*

I DON'T suppose for a moment that you already own a camisole of your very own, but there must have been many times when you could have made use of one.

When you're wearing a very special silk or muslin blouse, for example, you must have wished that a neat and dainty something showed through rather than a very ribby vest or a sensible but not exactly fancy-looking "bodice."

So that's where my little camisole comes in, and it's a special one for schoolgirls. Being made of just two hankies it's not going to fit many grown-ups, you see!

In addition to the hankies, you'll require a yard of baby ribbon—one penny a yard, this!

There's only one thing you must be a little careful about, and that is, selecting the hankies. Most of you will choose white ones from the collection you very likely had given you for Christmas.

Coloured ones, too, would look very pretty if you have in mind wearing them under a coloured blouse. But it is the size that is important. Nine-inch hankies will fit small schoolgirls, but plumper girls will naturally require bigger hankies.

Join the two hankies down each side with small over-stitching—this saves turnings, and so, material.

Then round the bottom hem a piece of tape. This is to take a length of elastic, which will keep your cami fitting snugly to your waist, and prevent any "riding up."

Now for the ribbon shoulder straps. These you must measure for yourself—or perhaps mother will do it for you. Just sew them back and front of your hanki-cami, remembering to place them closer together at the back than at the front.

That's all. Now you can try it on. And if you're really delighted with it, you might try embroidering your initials in a top corner, or doing any other little piece of embroidery if the cami is plain.

Her heart was thudding anxiously as she dashed into the Fourth Form corridor. Babs, in common with everyone else at Cliff House, had formed a tremendous attachment for the sporty new girl. But Babs, like everyone else, was rather puzzled by her these days.

"Margot!" she cried, as she burst into Study No. 6.

But Study No. 6 was empty!  
Biting her lip, she withdrew. Then she stopped as, coming down the corridor, she saw Nancy Bell. Nancy eyed her.

"Looking for anyone?"

"Yes—Margot Lantham. Nancy, have you seen her?"

"I saw her half an hour ago," Nancy replied, "with her hat and coat on, flying out of the school."

"She didn't say where she was going?"

"No."

Babs bit her lip. She stared rather hard at Nancy. Nancy, she knew, was not above telling malicious fibs, but just to make sure she went to the cloak-room. Sure enough, Margot's hat and coat were missing from the peg.

Oh, my hat! Where, then?

Obviously Margot had gone. Really, Babs thought, she might have left some sort of message. Already it was late.

Clara's eyes gleamed when, unceasingly, Babs told her the news.

"I see!" The Touboy hit her lip. "I might have expected something like this," she added bitterly. "This is a frame-up. Margot wanted Diana to have her place, and I jolly well wouldn't give it to her. Well!"—Clara's eyes gleamed—"Diana shan't have her place. Fetch Beatrice Beverley, would you, Babs!"

Unhappily, Babs fetched Beatrice Beverley.

And, in a somewhat impatient and subdued frame of mind, the team climbed up into the coach.

It was not a happy team. Whatever Clara might say, there was no doubt that Margot Lantham was its pillar of strength; no doubt whatever that it was her influence which inspired that team. With Margot, the goal-getter, in their midst, Cliff House played with inspired confidence.

Now—  
Somewhat gloomy was the Cliff House eleven. Lantham, they had been told, were hot stuff. Beatrice Beverley, the reserve, was good, but Beatrice at her best was not nearly so good as Margot.

There were many in the coach who thought that Clara, at least, might have stretched a point. That Margot had pleaded for Diana's inclusion was known now; that Diana had improved out of all recognition since her first match was also known. Some said, indeed, that if Diana were at the top of her form, she was even better than Margot.

Clara, feeling the criticism in the air, glowered. She knew herself that she had done wrong. Having failed to find Margot, she should have invited Diana, not realising, however, that Diana was already at Lantham. Her one hope was that Margot had gone on ahead.

It was a hope speedily dispelled when they reached the ground. Margot had not been seen.

"Oh, well, better get dressed!" Clara cried, indicating the visitors' pavilion, to which the Lantham secretary was showing them. "If Margot's not here, she's not here! I don't pretend to know what her game is, but I think she's jolly well let us down! Anyway, do your best! Remember," she added warningly, "if we win this match, we're in the semi-final!"

The team cheered at that. Purposefulness was in every face. They wanted to win! They meant to win! They would win! But no noise in sighing after Margot, they told themselves.

They dressed. Outside a huge crowd was waiting. They heard the yells, the shouts. Half Cliff House was there, and several thousand of the Lantham town-folk as well.

They were ready at last. Clara grabbed up her stick.

"Right!" she said. "Let's go! And remember, Cliff House—do or die!"

They went out, to be greeted by a terrific shout from the waiting spectators. It was misty still—a thin mist which was rather cheerless, and which looked any moment as if it might develop into a fog. Very slowly the Cliff House party walked across the field. Then another roar:

"Lantham! Lantham! Good old Lantham! Hurrah!"

And out from their pavilion trooped Cliff House's opponents.

"Well, here we are!" Clara muttered to Babs, and then gave a jump. "My hat, what—"

She stared. Babs, too, was staring. The whole of the Cliff House team was staring—staring with stupefied, goggling eyes at the smiling girl who strode proudly and imperiously at the head of Lantham Town; a girl whose eyes were sparkling, whose handsome face was flushed, whose curving lips were parted in a smile.

Out she came, swinging across the field with careless grace, swinging her hockey stick as though she, and not Jane Stevens, who followed her in the rear, was the captain of the team.

Clara almost fell down.

"It's Diana!" she stuttered. "Diana!" And that girl halted before them.

"Well, well, fancy seeing you all here!" she cried. "Hope it's going to be a good match!"

Clara felt stupefied.

"But you—what are you doing here?"

"I"—Diana smiled coolly—"am playing," she announced, "for Lantham Town, Clara dear! You wouldn't have me in the Cliff House team, would you? Since my school didn't want me, and my town asked for me, I gave my services to the town. Oh, it's all perfectly above-board!" she added, with a dazzling smile. "I'm a registered player for Lantham Town, you know!"

And she laughed.

In that moment Diana did not remember when she had enjoyed herself more. She was fond of causing sensations, and most certainly she had caused a sensation on this occasion. The Cliff House team looked utterly flabbergasted. Diana, their own schoolmate, playing against them!

And the irony of it—that they had turned Diana down! Diana, for once, was supremely within her rights. She meant now to show them exactly what they had missed:



### In Danger of Defeat

AND didn't she! Never before, it is safe to say, had Diana felt fitter, brighter, more eager, more full of zest for any game.

Her last match had been for Cliff House, when they had howled her down. They had refused to give her any place. Now they should see what it was like to have her against them!

Diana's eyes glittered with satisfaction at that thought. There was just one little fly in her ointment of satisfaction as her eyes roved over the team. Where was Margot Lantham?

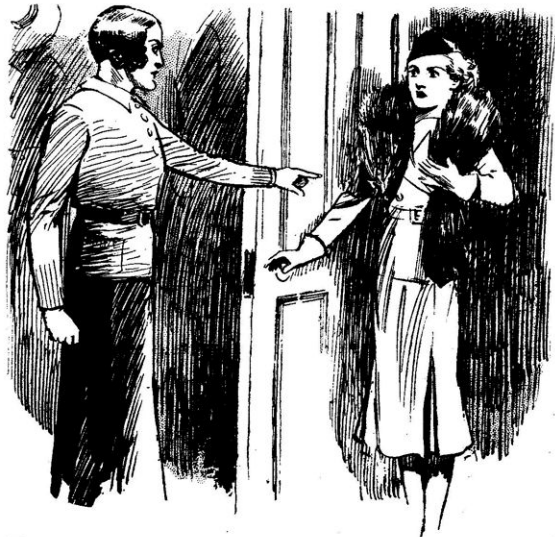
For Margot, of course, was not there. Diana felt disappointed at that. She wanted Margot to be on the opposing side. She wanted to show Cliff House, who had put Margot in her place, exactly what sort of a player she could make Margot Lantham look when it came to an exhibition of real prowess. That little sneak!

But Margot, unfortunately, was absent. Beatrice Beverley was playing in her place.

She frowned.

"Where's Margot?" she asked Clara, as they crossed the line for bully-off. Clara gave her a bitter stare.

"Don't you know?" she asked shortly.



DIANA found herself confronting the forbidding figure of Miss Keys. "So," exclaimed the mistress, "I was not misinformed. You have been bounds-breaking." Diana's heart leapt. So someone had given her away.

That was all! Clara at that moment was not in a good temper.

Losing Margot was bad enough. The suspicion that Margot had deliberately dropped out to give Diana her place added to her aggravation.

But it dawned even on the unimaginative Tomboy that this now could hardly have been the case. Whatever she might think of Margot's sudden affection for Diana, Margot would never have agreed to this.

That Diana should play on the opposing side!

Still, no time to think over that now. Game—game! The umpire was blowing her whistle. The two centres, Jane Stevens and Barbara Redfern, were crossing sticks. Clash, clash, clash! A roar went up from the crowd, a shout as Babs, securing the ball, flashed Clara a pass. Grimly Clara ran for it.

Then:

"Oh, my hat, look!" Clara blinked. What was this? Even

as she touched the ball another stick intruded. She turned to see Diana, a gay laugh upon her lips, gaily racing away, propelling the ball before her with a series of snicks and taps which made a difficult dribble look almost contemptuously easy.

Now Beatrice Beverley was upon her. Snick! And away went the ball to Jane Stevens at centre-forward, just as the baffled Beatrice's stick touched it.

Up the field, a gay laugh on Diana's lips as, rushing forward, she took the pass Jane sent back, and circled round Leila Carroll, leaving that girl standing in utter bewilderment.

Now she was on the edge of the striking circle. Brenda Fallace, in goal, came out. Diana lifted her stick. Then—swish! Brenda dived. The spectators gasped, and the back of the

net billowed out. First goal to Lantham!

"Oh, my hat!"

"Diana!"

"Diana's scored!"

Diana had.

She laughed. It was easy. She was going to show them something in this match. The team lined up again, Cliff House determined, desperate now.

Then at it again. In, out. Where was Diana? There—there! How the girl could run! See that? She was walking all over the Cliff House team.

She had them in the hollow of her hand.

Like an eel she slipped between the half-backs, passing as she did so, Jane Stevens had the ball. Look, she was passing back. Di—Diana—Diana—and crash! Oh, great goodness, there was the ball in the net again!

The crowd rubbed their eyes.

Two goals down. The match now! Ten minutes old. Oh, for Margot now!

Cliff House braced itself. There was

a dour look upon the face of Clara Trevlyn. She was directing attention to the left wing. Diana, obviously, was the danger spot. Diana was playing hockey that was good enough for an international. She seemed to be everywhere and yet nowhere. She seemed at times simply to be toying with the Cliff House backs.

A quarter of an hour, Cliff House fighting desperately. Lantham, elated with success, lined up. Clara saw her chance—a quick pass through to Babs. Babs was there. Smack!

Two—one! But three minutes after—there was Diana! How had the girl got into the striking circle? And there was Brenda Fallace, a look of fury upon her stolid face, fishing the ball out of the Cliff House net for the third time. The crowd shrieked.

"Diana! Diana!"  
And this was the girl they had turned down!

No doubt Diana was brilliant! No doubt she was playing on top of her form. Questionable, indeed, if Margot could have outshone her that afternoon.

Fourth goal—smack!—just before half-time. And then the whistle pheepped.

Half-time!  
The mist had thickened then. It was, in fact, deepening into a fog.

The umpire looked anxious.  
"Hope it doesn't get any thicker," she said to Clara. "If it does we shall have to abandon the game."

Clara grunted. For once in her life Clara did not care. She was thinking bitterly. Four—one, and all four of those goals scored by a girl who should have been playing for her own team! If Margot had been in the Cliff House side there might have been a different tale to tell.

Glumly the team trooped after her. It seemed that they were in for the defeat of the season! They said nothing, but Clara, reading aright the glances they flashed at her, felt that trouble was coming. No sense in calling Diana a traitor. After all, Diana was perfectly within her rights. If anybody was a traitor, it was Margot Lantham.

Why had Margot not turned up? Where had she gone?

And then Clara, pushing open the pavilion door, gave a jump. There was Margot, her face white, her whole frame tense. She started forward.

"Clara, did you get my note?"

"Your what?"

"My note. I left it under your door."

"I did not," Clara said between her teeth. "And a fine thing you've done, haven't you, letting us down without a word of warning. I suppose you did it to let Diana have your place?"

"But—but— Oh, good gracious!" Margot looked almost bewildered. "Oh, wait a minute!" she added, as she saw the furious glances fastened upon her.

"Let me explain. I didn't! I wouldn't let the team down like that—not even for Diana! Clara, I received a message—an urgent telephone message from home. It said my father was dreadfully ill. I was wanted at once."

Clara's eyes gleamed.  
"And—and I went off. But I left a note for you. I got home—to discover the telephone message was a fake. Father was there, as well as ever."

"What?"  
The girls exchanged looks of startled surprise.

"Wait a minute." It was Babs who came forward. "You say that you received this message, Margot. When?"

"This morning. Just—just after Diana went out."

"Diana?"  
Suspicion, swift and sharp, stabbed into every mind there.

"How long after Diana went out?" Rosa Godworth questioned.

"Oh, about five minutes!"

"So!" Clara's face was grim. "I see it!" she cried. "Diana stopped at the telephone booth, gave you the message knowing that it would make you too late to turn up. Diana wanted you out of the side. She was playing for Lantham. You were the one girl who might have shown her up." Clara's eyes flashed. "My hat, the awful traitress!"

Margot looked alarmed.  
"But, Clara, you don't think Diana—"

"Who else?" Clara said. "Who else? Who else would have thought of a trick like that? Diana meant to cripple us before she got going for our opponents. How better could she cripple us than by getting our best player out of the side? Besides, you showed her up once in a hockey match, didn't you? It would be like her to show you up again. Nobody else in Cliff House would think of playing such a trick. Nobody even had reason to. And now—bitterly—here we are, the match as good as lost."

There was a knock on the door. The groundsman poked his head in at the door.

"Miss Trevlyn."

"Well!"

"The fog's getting thicker."

"Well?" Clara glared.

"The umpire told me to tell you that in view of the fog she's decided to abandon the game. It will be replayed next Wednesday."

"Saved!" cried June Merrett.

Saved, yes! But it was not exactly with joy that that announcement was received. For once in its life the Cliff House juniors had been on their way to receiving a first-class beating.

Had the match continued they most certainly would have received that beating, and all hope of winning the Lantham Cup would have been in vain. The humiliation they had received was at the hands of one of their own girls!

Bitter that reflection. Bitter to realise that only an accident had saved them. But still more bitter the reflection that that girl could have played such a trick as this—that Diana could have descended to such utter treachery.

And that Diana had done this thing there seemed no further room for doubt. Diana all along had been against Margot, even though Margot had tried so desperately to be friends with her. Diana had deliberately contrived to get her out of the team!

Clara's face set.  
"I think," she said quietly, "you'd better get dressed, kiddies. We'll get back to Cliff House before the fog gets worse. And when we meet Miss Diana Royston-Clarke—when we meet her—" she repeated between her teeth.

She did not say more. But the tone of voice in which those words were repeated held a threat all their own.

It was a threat which was confirmed on the grim, humiliated faces which surrounded her.

Diana had played traitress. Diana had tricked them. Diana had inflicted upon them the greatest humiliation of the season!

Very well, Diana should pay!

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.



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