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THE SCHOOLGIRL

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INCORPORATING
"SCHOOLDAYS."

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"I'M DONE
WITH CLIFF HOUSE—
BUT . . ."

A dramatic moment in this week's
brilliant long complete school story

NEW SERIES of Long Complete Cliff House School Stories



WHEN BABS & CO. WERE BAFFLED

Gail Goes Too Far

By

HILDA RICHARDS

CRASH! The door of the Fourth Form Common-room at Cliff House School swung open violently.

"What on earth—"
"I sus-say, you know—"
"Steady on, clumsy!"
"Come right in—don't knock!"

Four heads were raised to regard the flaming-eyed girl who entered with a rush.

"What on earth—" repeated Barbara Redfern, captain of the Fourth, as she regarded the newcomer. "Oh, it's you Gail!"

"Have a care!" grumbled Tomboy Ciara Trevelyn. She was having a quiet game of draughts with gentle Marjorie Hazeldean, and the stormy entry of Gail Greeves Gregory had caused her to upset three kings. "Do you usually come into a room like that?"

Gail was seething. "I've been sent down!" she exclaimed furiously.

"I guess you'll soon be sent out!" chimed in Leila Carroll, who came from New York. "Making all that row! Guess you've made me blot this album. Shall I tear the page out, Babs?"

Gail seethed. It was very evident that she was in one of her stormiest moods, spoiling for a fight. The fact that mere notice was not being taken of her now angered her still further.

"It's a conspiracy!" she hooted. "Oh, dry up!" muttered Rosa Rodworth; and Jemima Carstairs, looking gravely through her monocle, added: "Cheer up, old Spartan! Surely the jolly old Fifth are not tired of you?"

Gail flared. "I won't stand it!" she exclaimed. "Then buzz off!"

"Go back to your own Common-room!"

"Yes, rather! You know it's a bit thick!" came fat Bessie Bunter's plaint. "Here I am, writing a lovely p-ooem for the Cliff House magazine, and this noisy Fifth Form cat bursts in and spoils everything! I've done the first line, you know—"

"My hat! Have you got as far as that?" chuckled golden-haired Mabel Lynn, who was Babs' best chum. "You ought to have it finished for the next Christmas Number!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Look here—" interrupted Gail.

But Gail Gregory did not run away. She stood there in the centre of the Common-room, her eyes burning, her

whole expression one of fury and bitterness.

Gail had come here with a grievance—and now these kids of Fourth Formers were paying no heed to her. She, who had until to-day, been a lovely Fifth Former, was being calmly ignored by a set of noisy juniors.

That angered Gail. She had wanted to create a sensation; she had brought news which she had hoped would bring the girls flocking round her—and now they were taking no notice of her.

Passionately she stamped a foot. "I'm being picked on!" she declared bitterly. "She's got her knife into me!"

Babs sighed. "Would you mind," she asked wearily, "telling us all about it, and then buzzing? We're busy."

"I've been sent down!" "Well, you've said that, whatever it might mean."

"I'm in the Fourth!" "What?"

"I'm in the Fourth!" Gail showed her teeth. "That cat, Miss Wright, has reported me to Primmy, and Primmy put me down from the Lower Fifth to the Fourth!"

"Oh, my hat!" Girls did look up then. They looked up in consternation. The news, if one was to judge by their expression, did not fill them with pleasure.

Not, as a matter of fact, that it was entirely unexpected. Gail Greeves Gregory and the Fourth Form were by no means unknown to each other.

When Gail had first entered the school, she had, for a time, formed one of their number. Strife in consequences, had been fierce.

For Gail had arrived direct from India, and in India she had had far more of her own way than was good for a girl of sixteen. There she had had

THIS is the exciting story of a girl who works in secret to disgrace Janet Jordan. And although Babs & Co. have every reason to believe that the girl is Gail Greeves Gregory, they know for a fact that Gail is no longer at Cliff House! What an intriguing mystery for the famous chums to unravel!

THE "FRESHER"

It seems so strange, this
school of mine—
So big and grey;
With ivy-covered walls
and tower—
And every day
The sparrows in the ivy
chirp:
"You've come to
stay!"

I'll never leave this
school of mine—
Oh, not for years!
And when I'm old, and
time has wrought
its joys and fears,
I'll still look back and
see my school—
Tho' veiled by tears.

I'm going to love this
school of mine—
It's simply grand!
There's something fresh
to see and hear,
On every hand;
And I've a chum—the
dearest girl—
You'll understand.

her father's plantation and ruled her father's native servants with a rod of iron.

Gail had come to Cliff House with the firm intention of doing the same thing there. The Fourth, in particular, had not seen eye to eye with her on this point; thus the strife.

For a while she had had her own way, but only for a time, and that was mainly because Miss Primrose, the just, if strict, headmistress, had been absent.

Duffer, Gail was, in everything except her own ruthless determination to get to the top of the tree; but, because of her age, she had finally been put in the Lower Fifth, with the grave warning that if she did not improve she would be relegated again.

Apparently the warning had not been heeded.

"You mean," Clara Trevlyn asked, "that we've got to put up with you?" Gail's eyes gleamed.

"It's not a matter of you putting up with me! It's me putting up with you!" she retorted insultingly. "Nice thing for me, isn't it, to be slung among you kids?"

Clara sighed.
"Will somebody change the record?" she asked. "Anyway, it serves you jolly well right! Hope it'll bring you to your senses! Marjorie, your move!"

"But I want to say," Gail hooted, "Barbara Redfern—"
"I'm busy!" Babs said.
"Leila Carroll!"

"Oh, go and swim the Atlantic!" Leila advised, bending to her work again. "Or go and learn good behaviour now that you're in a decent Form!"

Some of the girls grinned. Gail looked furious. Nothing hurt Gail more than to be ignored, a weakness with which the Fourth was thoroughly conversant, and which, in spite of their curiosity, they exploited now.

"Look here—"
"Gail, please! Can't you go?" It was Janet Jordan's quiet voice, and Janet, looking from a table in the corner, gazed at her impatiently. "I'm trying to study."

"Yes, rather! Old Janet is swotting for the school," Jemima put in. "Why she should swot in the Common-room is, like Bessie Bunter's appetite, a deep and puzzling mystery. But let her swot in peace!"

Janet Jordan smiled. It was a quiet and rather tired smile. Janet was

swotting—a new and surprising departure for her—but she was doing her best.

It was by no means easy, for Janet, if not one of the dullards of the Form, was by no means its most scintillating scholar. Janet Jordan believed more in open air sports and swimming than in lessons. She was rather regretting that now.

For disaster of the worst kind had come to the Jordan family. A sweeping fire at her father's circus, just at the time his insurance had lapsed, followed by a very indifferent but expensive Christmas season, had cut the family finances to bedrock.

Janet, to help her father and so save her fees at Cliff House next term, was swotting hard for one of the fifty scholarships presented to girls of the school by Miss Fielding, Cliff House's richest and oldest "old girl."

The time for those examinations loomed perilously near, and Janet, who preferred to study in company rather than in the solitary confines of Study No. 7, was working hard, backed by the sympathy of the whole Form.

She sat now in one corner, surrounded by a pile of books, with imput paper before her, a pen in her hand, and a bottle of ink in which she frequently dipped as she made notes.

But Gail glared. Janet Jordan, when she had been in the Fourth previously, had been one of her bitterest enemies.

Gail was in the mood at that moment to single out someone as a target, and the whole of her wrath immediately settled upon the girl with the olive skin. She walked over to her.

"Talking to me?" she asked unpleasantly.

Janet looked up. There was no fear in her hazel eyes.

"I was. Will you please stop making a row?"

"Who says I'm making a row, pauper?"

Janet flushed at the studied insult. A little murmur of anger came from the girls near by.

"Gail, I don't want to quarrel with you," Janet said quietly.

"No?" Gail sneered.

"So please," Janet added, bending her head to her books again, "leave me alone. I'm very busy!"

But Gail did not move. She wanted a quarrel. She wanted to hurt as she had been hurt. In those unpleasant moods Gail, who never yet had learned

to curb her temper or to control her feelings, just had to have an outlet. Those quietly spoken words—the utter refusal of Janet to be dragged into the row she wished to provoke—goaded her.

"Pauper!" she sneered viciously. Janet took no notice, though her lips quivered a little—with anger.

"Stuck-up prig!" Gail sneered again. Janet went on writing, just as if Gail Greeves Gregory had ceased to exist.

"Answer me!" rapped Gail. But Janet did not answer.

The eyes of Gail Greeves Gregory gleamed. She felt, at that moment, that all her hatred, concentrated on Janet Jordan—this girl who refused a quarrel when she was so determined to provoke one.

Temporarily she moved forward, and then, obeying an uncontrollable impulse, lifted a foot.

There was a crash—a sudden scattering of books and papers as they cascaded in a heap. The ink-bottle, spouting fluid, jumped, and cast a jet on Janet's blouse.

"You—you awful thing!" Janet cried. Up in a moment was Janet, her olive cheeks burning now with an anger equal to that of Gail's.

From the other girls went up a shout. Chairs scraped backward. Clara Trevlyn, her face dark, was on the scene. She caught the furious Fifth Former by the shoulder.

"Gail! How dare you!"
"Wait a minute!" Janet stood up. "I'll deal with her," she said quietly; while Gail, a little appalled at what she had done, stepped back. "Gail, you'll pick those papers up!" she said, in a low voice.

"I won't!"

"Yes, you will!" And Janet, darting forward, seized her arm. She pointed to the heap on the floor. "Pick them up!" she repeated insistently.

"Yes, rather!"
Gail gritted her teeth. Not for worlds would she have obeyed that order. She wrenched at the hand that held her arm.

But Janet, if she was slighter than Gail, was not the junior swimming champion for nothing. Janet had a grip that could be like iron when she cared to exert it, and her strong young fingers seemed to be made of steel. Gail's eyes flamed.

"Let me go!"

"Not until you've picked up those papers!"

"Yes, and we'll jolly well see that you do do it!" Rosa Rodworth supported.

The face of Gail turned livid. Once again fury burst its bounds. Her free hand swung back.

"Janet, look out!" shrieked Mabel Lynn.

But Janet was prepared. As the hand of the deposed Fifth Former swept round, Janet ducked, and Gail, carried forward by the impetus of the blow, went staggering forward.

Crash! A roar of laughter went up as she tripped over the pile and sat down on the floor.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Serves you jolly well right!"

Then, cutting short the din, a sudden whispered warning:

"Cave!"

But it was too late. Even as they swung round towards the door, Miss Valerie Charmant, the mistress of the Fourth Form, entered.

She entered with a stern look on her face. Something in her attitude seemed

to suggest that she had seen and heard everything. Straight up to Gail she walked, fixing that furious girl with a disapproving stare.

"Gail, get up!"
 "I—I—"
 "Get up!"
 Gail, breathing fury, got up.
 "Look here—"
 "And, please, Gail, moderate the tone of your voice!" Miss Charmant said severely.

"She—she pushed me!" Gail hooted, pointing at Janet.
 "Whys, you—?" Clara began.
 "Quiet, Clara, please!" Miss Charmant's face was stern. "Janet did not push you, Gail. I saw what happened. You behaved in a disgraceful manner! Your attack was unprovoked and utterly uncalled for!" Gail, you will pick those things up!"
 "I won't!" Gail said between her teeth.

"If you do not, Gail, I shall report you to the headmistress!"
 Gail's face flamed.

"Well, go on, report!" she cried bitterly; while even Miss Charmant stood appalled at the anger that blazed upon her face. "I don't care! I'm sick to death of this school, anyway! Why should I care if you report?"

"Gail, I demand that you withdraw those words!"

"I won't!"
 "Very well!" Miss Charmant turned on her heel. "In that case, I shall fetch the headmistress to you!"

She went out, her head just a little higher than usual, leaving Gail shaking her chest heaving. Babs glanced at her contemptuously.

"Now you've done it, you idiot!"
 "You'll probably be expelled!"
 Gail laughed harshly.

"I will," she asked, "will I? I don't think, Miss Clever-Barbara Redfern. I won't wait to be expelled, thanks. I'm not wanted here, and I don't want to stop here. If you think I'd stop in this Form with you and that cat there—she glared venomously at Janet Jordan—"you're making a mistake. You're all against me. I hate the Fourth! I hate the beastly school!"
 "Then get out," Rosa Rodworth put in.

"I will!" Gail's face was fiery. "I'll get out now—right away!" she cried. "If there's going to be expelling for me, I'll do it. I'll go, but—her eyes, laden with glittering hate, fastened upon Janet again. "Don't you think you're getting away with it," she declared violently. "I haven't finished with you yet—not by a long way."

Then contemptuously she strode towards the door. It closed with a vibrating slam as she went out.

Clara breathed deeply.

"Well, my hat, there's a spitfire for you!"

"Serves her jolly well right!"
 "And that," Elsie Effingham said with a sigh, "is the girl we've got to put up with. Oh, Jehoshaphat, if only she meant what she said!"
 "About going, you mean?"
 "Yes."

But there was a shaking of heads at that. Nobody believed for a moment that Gail Greaves Gregory was serious in that threat. Girls just didn't walk out of school of their own accord, though everyone admitted that Gail, in one of her "moods" was quite equal to

It seemed, however, that trouble awaited the new girl, and Babs, who as captain of the Form, was rather proud of its record, had an uneasy foreboding of trouble to come.

Five minutes later the bell for preparation rang.

"Well, all over," Babs announced, with a sigh. Babs was hoping to finish her sketch before prep. "Out of the Common-room, everybody!"

Together the Fourth strolled out of the Common-room in ones and twos and threes. As Babs and Clara, Janet, and Bessie went out, however, a girl came along the corridor. It was a girl fully dressed, a bag in her hand, a proud, haughty, imperious look upon her dark features.

It was Gail Greaves Gregory!

Babs blinked.
 "Here, I say, where are you going? Didn't you hear the bell?"

"I heard the bell," Gail said bitingly, "but I'm not heeding it. I told you, Barbara Redfern, that I'd finish with Cliff House. Well, I have. Only I haven't finished with you, Janet Jordan! I'm going!"

"But what—here, stop, you duffer!"
 But Gail did not stop. She made a jab at Babs with her bag as Babs threw out an arm to detain her, and then at a run she set off down the corridor and down the stairs.

The last they saw of her was disappearing through the doorway of Big Hall.



Tell-Tale Initials

NOBODY cared very much. Nobody worried. The general impression was that Gail Greaves Gregory was just showing-off. Gail would be back before call-over, it was confidently prophesied.



"GAIL, pick up those papers, please!" Janet commanded sternly.
 Gail looked mocking. "No fear!" she returned, delighting in the way in which she had at last provoked a quarrel with the girl she so disliked.

But when call-over came, Gail Greaves Gregory was not in Big Hall to answer her name. When supper-time appeared she was not in the dining-hall. Bed-time arrived. Still no Gail.

Conviction then was far less certain. "Silly idiot!" Clara Trevlyn sniffed in the dormitory. "My hat, she'll catch it when she does come back! Serve the huffy chump right, too!"

That was the general opinion. Apparently Gail was keeping it up. Just trying, Phyllis Howell said, to get everybody guessing. Ten to one she would walk in as bold as brass tomorrow morning. The odds were that she had gone home to her uncle's home, Gregory Grange, which was situated near Courtfield, and was spending the night there.

But in her study Miss Primrose was frowning worriedly at Miss Charmant. For Miss Primrose had already phoned up Gail's uncle, Sir Willis Gregory, only to be informed that he was utterly unaware of his niece's whereabouts.

"It's extraordinary—extraordinary," Miss Primrose said. "Where can the girl have got to? Miss Charmant, will you go down to Friardale Station? Perhaps they can give you some information there."

Miss Charmant went. She returned an hour later.

"It appears," she added, "that Gail booked a ticket for London."

"London? But where can she be going in London?" Miss Primrose wanted to know. "She has no friends or relatives there, Miss Charmant."

Miss Charmant shook her head.

"That is the information I received," she replied.

Thus far, and no farther, was the mystery of Gail Greaves Gregory cleared up. Later that night Miss Primrose put a call through to the

stationmaster at Claring Cross who, however, could give her no information. In the morning, when rising-bell rang, Gail was still absent.

"My hat, she really meant it, then," Mabs said to Babs.

"Looks like it."
"Well, it's her affair." And Mabs shrugged. "Can't say I'm sorry," she said. "I only hope to goodness she stays away. All the same—" And she frowned a little, for if the absence of Gail Greaves Gregory was not a cause for regret, it was certainly a matter for speculation.

By breakfast-time the whole school was buzzing with the news. Gail Greaves Gregory had not returned. Some there were now who said that she would never come back; others who, not readily willing to relinquish their first idea, said that she was just playing a trick.

It was well-known that Gail had neither friends nor relatives in England, apart from old Sir Willis—and she was not exactly popular with him. It was also known that Gail had not had a great deal of money in her possession.

"She'll have spent all she had by the time she got to London," Jean Cartwright stated. "Which means to say

them, she steered a straight course in their direction.

Babs frowned.

"Who is she?" she asked.

"But nobody knew. Nobody had ever seen this girl before. They eyed her as she came up, flashing a rather uncertain smile at them. A striking-looking girl she was, dressed from head to foot in sombre black, with a pair of compelling dark eyes that glimmered at them from behind a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles, and crowned by a mass of blonde hair.

Diana Royston-Clarke, who prided herself upon her own blonde tresses, hobbling on the stick which she still used to get about, winked knowingly at her friend, Margot Lantham.

"Three cheers for peroxide," she grinned. "Yoicks! Is she made up?"

Made-up the girl certainly was. There was powder on her face. Also her eyebrows had been thinned. Yet, for all that, there was something shy, something very winsome about her as she halted in front of the juniors, gazing beseechingly at Barbara Redfern. Babs found herself involuntarily smiling.

that the new maid should single the Fourth Former out as her own special protector.

"And now are you going to work here?" Janet asked.

"Yes," Ida Walsh said shyly. "But—but I don't know very much about it, you know. It must be gorgeous—wistfully—" to be a schoolgirl at a big place like this. I bet you have lovely times. I—I wonder if you'd tell me where I can find the matron?"

Janet smiled again, as the girl picked up her bag.

"I'll take you to her," she offered generously. "Babs, excuse me." And, falling into step by the new maid's side, she walked on up the drive. "Well, it's funny meeting you," she said. "I do hope, Ida, you'll get on all right. But why did you leave father's circus?"

Ida hesitated.

"My eyes," she said.

"Oh!"

"Yes; I—I had something the matter with them. That's why," Ida confessed.

"I have to wear these glasses, you know. I spent weeks and weeks in hospital, and when I was quite well again, your father's circus had gone. Then I was offered a job by someone who was going to London, and took it. I stayed with them until last week, when they went abroad. After that I put my name on the books of a domestic service agency—"

"And you were sent here?" Janet asked.

"Yes."

"And how are your eyes now?"

"Oh, they're better—much better!" Ida replied. "I can't see as well as I used to see, of course—that is why I still have to wear these glasses. But what about you, Miss Jordan? How is your father and Sheila?"

Janet smiled. Quite naturally, she found herself talking to this girl. Janet had no false pride. She told the new maid exactly what had happened, and exactly what it meant to herself.

"And so, you see," she added, "if I don't get this scholarship, I shall have to leave Cliff House."

"Oh, Miss Jordan!" Ida said, in dismay. "But you will get it, won't you?"

"I shall do my best," Janet replied.

"Oh, goodness! You know, I had no idea things were as bad as that," the girl said. "I wish I could help you, Miss Jordan. You know, I suppose it's rather rude of me, just a maid, to say it to you, but I like you. You remind me so much of your sister Sheila, somehow. She was nice, Miss Jordan."

"Sheila," Janet warmly affirmed, "is one of the best girls alive. Well, here we are—at the matron's house." She smiled frankly, extending her hand.

"And—and I like you, Ida," she said. "If I can do anything to help you, please don't hesitate to ask."

"Thank you, Miss Jordan," the maid said.

Janet left her then, with new warmth at her heart.

Preliminary bell for lessons was ringing now, however, and instead of going back to the gates she turned into the school.

Meeting Ida had once again brought her father and her sister vividly to mind, giving her own troubles a closer poignancy than ever.

She went to her own study—No. 7— which she shared with Tomboy Clara and Marjorie Hazeldene. There for a moment she stood at the window, wistfully watching Babs & Co., as they ambled up the drive.

FREE NEXT SATURDAY

MORE famous film stars' autographs for you next week!

Here are the names:

NOVA PILBEAM, MAE WEST,
STAN LAUREL, GINGER ROGERS,
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CAROLE LOMBARD, JEAN
HARLOW

Make sure of securing these important autographs by placing an order for next Saturday's SCHOOLGIRL at once!

she'll be back on the first train in this morning. That was due in at Friarvale a quarter of an hour ago. So that she'll be here any minute now."

"Oh, I sus-say, let's go and meet her as she comes in," Bessie Bunter beamed. "It'll be a ripping idea to have a snack at the tuckshop while we're waiting."

"Why, you've only just had breakfast," Clara glared.

"Oh, really, Clara! If you're going to throw that in my face, I won't let you treat me!" Bessie said indignantly.

Not that there was any danger of that, however. Clara, like most of the Fourth Form, was "broke," on that particular morning.

Still, it was a good idea. Babs & Co. were interested now. It still required half an hour for lessons, and as nobody had anything in particular to do, Bessie's suggestion was acted upon.

Quite a crowd of girls, in fact, strolled down with Babs & Co., missing, to Bessie's great disgust, the tuckshop.

In a group they gathered at the gates.

But no Gail Greaves Gregory was in sight. The lane, in fact, was deserted, except for one solitary figure. That was a girl who was toiling over the summit of the hill near Friarvale Woods.

A girl slightly taller and older than an average Fourth Former, who carried a bag in her hand. She was not a Cliff House girl, though, upon seeing

"Is—is this Cliff House School?" the girl asked.

"Why, yes," Babs agreed.

"Oh!" The girl dropped her bag. She smiled round, as if in relief. "I'm Ida Walsh," she explained, "the new maid—from London." Her eyes roved the group anxiously. "Is—is there a girl—a Miss Janet Jordan here?"

"Why, that's me!" Janet cried in surprise.

"Oh, is it?" The new maid's eyes sparkled. "D-don't think it's cheeky of me to introduce myself, but—but I've heard about you, Miss Jordan! I know your father, and your sister Sheila. They were always talking about you. But I suppose—" wistfully—"you never heard of me?"

Janet shook her head.

"Ida Walsh? No, I never heard the name," she replied. "You used to work for my father?"

"Yes," Ida answered. "I—I was one of the canteen girls. I left your father's circus about twelve months ago, though. When—when it was in the Midlands," she added vaguely.

There was a buzz of interest.

It was, everybody, felt, a pleasant if not a startling coincidence. That Janet's father's old servant should now turn up to do service in his daughter's school.

It seemed natural, in consequence.

What a shadow had so suddenly fallen over her happy life at Cliff House! What a desperate battle she felt was in front of her, to maintain her stay at the school! Her one hope was Miss Fielding's scholarship. If she lost that—

But she daren't lose it—she daren't! The whole of her school career, her friendship with Clara and Babs and the rest, depended upon it. She must get through with it! She must keep on getting through with it until such time, at least, as her father had got upon his feet again.

She turned from the window, her eyes travelling to the pile of new books which stood on the table. Her books, those—books she had been forced to buy in order to help with her swotting for the scholarship.

Every penny she had saved up had those books cost her. For most of them had been very expensive indeed. She must take care of those, treasure them. She felt suddenly that they were her best friends.

For if she won her scholarship—then at least there was no need to worry for a term. If she did not—

Janet shuddered.

She took the books, carefully shutting them up in the cupboard. Second lesson bell was ringing, then, and she trailed off towards the class-room, where most of the Form had already gathered.

After lessons—she knew an inward groan—she must get down to her books again. Swot, swot, swot—for the examination was due to take place a week from now, and so very much depended upon her. Would she pass?

For the thousandth time Janet Jordan found herself anxiously contemplating that. She had worked hard. She believed she had a reasonable chance, though nobody could be too sure in an examination of this nature. Pass or not, the exam was not going to be easy. She knew that, and there were still one or two subjects which rather distressed her. She must work at those—hard.

But, oh, the toil of it! The heart-break of it! The suspense!

Yearningly she gazed out of the class-room window. A bright, sunny morning. What a morning for a brisk game of rounders during break, or a merry scamper round the cinder-track!

Marjorie Hazeldene, in the next desk, caught her eye, and, as if reading her thoughts, smiled back sympathetically.

She caught Clara's glance, and Clara shook her head, grinning at the same time as though telling her to be of good cheer. A splendid friend! How she would miss them if she were forced to leave the old school!

At break, in the corridor, Clara grabbed her arm.

"What about it, Janet—rounders?"

Janet smiled faintly.

"No, thanks, old thing; I've got to swot."

"Oh, too rotten!" Clara grimaced her sympathy. "In the study?" she asked.

"Yes!"

"Well—"

Clara paused. She knew how Janet hated to be alone. Janet seemed to be able to work better when surrounded by company. She liked, she said, to hear noise—which, perhaps, was not surprising, seeing that her early childhood had been spent in the bustle and din of a travelling circus. Being alone—studying alone—seemed to depress her.

Clara knew that, of course, and, only too anxious to be helpful and back her



KNITTED FROM

ODDMENTS OF WOOL

What could be cosier than this attractive set of collar and scarf to match? And it's colourful, too!

Slip the collar around your frock, tie the bow prettily, and you'll certainly add several shillings to the frock's value.

I hope that hasn't used up all the scraps of wool—for now I want you to make a scarf to match. You must cast on 21 inches as for the collar, but this time knit for 28 inches. Cast off, and sew two big, bold buttons on the end—and that's finished, too.

FOR BEGINNERS ONLY

Now just a sort of postscript for you who haven't been knitting very long. Experts should skip this!

You may be wondering how often you should use a different colour wool. There's no rule about this at all. But the more varied the oddments, the smarter, as I said at the beginning.

So if you have a scrap that's only two or three yards in length, don't hesitate to use it, thinking it's too short, and will mean too many joins. It'll add to the knitting's charm, if it only makes two rows of knitting. But use longer pieces as well—naturally.

You must, if you use many short pieces, remember to do your joining and fastening off neatly—for you're going to have plenty of this to do.

For preference, make your joins come at the end of a row—even if it means wasting a stitch or two. Then—although it's not the way that knitting is taught, you can make quite sure of the joins being fast, by tying the ends in a knot. Unless you're very good at neat joins—in which case the two different colour wools knitted together for five or six stitches will add to the riotous colour scheme.

All clear now?

Another thought comes to me. How beautifully easy to wash! And no ironing required, either!

I KNOW you're always finding scraps of wool about the house—left over from the pullover aunty made father, or from the rompers mother made baby. And don't you often wish there was some use to which you could put these oddments?

You do. I know it! And here is the very idea for which you've been looking.

Use them to make an unusual collar and matching scarf for yourself, to see you through any chilly days till summer comes.

(By the way, if you're looking for an inexpensive and easy-to-knit idea for a stall at a school or church bazaar, this is the very thing. For there's no cost at all, and the result is distinctly sell-able!)

MORE COLOURS

THE MERRIER

First gather together all the oddments of wool you can find—2-ply wool, for preference. It doesn't matter if the wools are in every colour of the spectrum—or would you prefer me to say rainbow? In fact, the more varied they are, the brighter will be the result, and the nicer will the collar look on a simple, darkish frock.

No. 9 needles are the ones I select for this; but you can use others, if you like, of course.

Cast on 21 stitches for the collar and knit for 20 inches in plain garter stitch—which is only the correct term for "plain" stitch, let me add. (Your stitches should measure about 7 to the inch if the result is to be the same as mine.)

Cast off, and sew a bow on the ends of this strip to tie at the front of your neck.

chum up in every possible way, immediately gave up the idea of the rounders game she had in view.

"Well, you know, I don't think I feel like rounders," she said. "And I've got some lines to do. You wouldn't mind if I worked on one corner of the table, Janet?"

Janet smiled.

"Clara, you're just trying to be nice."

"Oh, no, not at all!" Clara protested, crimsoning.

"You're sure you don't want to play rounders?"

"Well, I've got to dot those lines done, you know," Clara answered

evasively. "And if I get them done during break that means I can have more time off after afternoon lessons. Come on, Janet!"

She tucked her arm in that of her chum, and, joined by Marjorie Hazeldene, the three of them set off down the corridor. Clara boisterously flung open the door of Study No. 7.

"Well, here we are—"

And then, on the threshold, she stood stock-still, staring like one suddenly stupefied.

Then she cried out: "My hat! What vandals' done this?"

"Done what?" asked Barbara Red-

fern, at that moment preparing to enter Study No. 4.

"Come and look!"
Babs rushed to the scene. Mabel Lynn and Bessie Bunter darted after her.

They saw Janet standing there, her eyes round, gazing into Study No. 7, looking as if she were about to faint.

And then, reaching the door, they gasped themselves.

"Oh, great goodness!"
"What the—?"

"Oh, I say!"
Cause for exclamations! Cause for consternation!

For what a sight Study No. 7 presented!

The whole room reeked of soot. Soot hung in threads from the ceiling, in festoons from the pictures. The table, the carpet, was covered with a thick layer of it.

"My books!" choked Janet.

Her books, there they were. They had been slung ruthlessly, haphazardly into the fireplace. They had overflowed from the fireplace on to the inside of the grate. Obviously they had been dumped there in one ruthless heap, and consequently, choking the fire, had caused it to pour its smoke into the room instead of up the chimney, until finally it had been strangled out of existence altogether.

There they lay now, the whole great pile of them, the top ones smothered and dirty, the bottom one—the one in the grate, burnt and defaced beyond recognition.

"My books!" shrieked Janet.
She blundered into the room. With tears in her eyes she stumbled to the fireplace. But it was too late then to undo the vandal mischief which had been done.

Nearly all those priceless books, so necessary to her studies, upon which she had spent every penny she had saved, were ruined. Those on top of the pile, if untouched, were grimy and black.

Poor Janet! For a moment she stood white-faced, dull-eyed, her lips quivering, gazing at the wanton wreck of her treasures.

The chums, aghast, looked at each other, though each of them was filled with deep and burning indignation against the unknown vandal who had committed this deed.

Babs bit her lip as her eyes went round the ruined study. Bessie, with something suspiciously like a sob in her throat, turned her head. Only Marjorie, her gentle lips quivering, made a move.

She went across to Janet and flung a sympathetic arm round her shoulders.
"Janet—Janet, old thing!" she gulped.

Janet turned. Then, with a sudden hardening of her face, she stared at Babs & Co. Her eyes blazed.

"Who did it?" she demanded fiercely.
"Oh, kik-crums, dud-don't lu-look at mum-me like that!" stammered Bessie.
"I did-didn't, you know."

"No, you didn't." Janet's arms dropped to her sides. "But someone did," she said between her teeth. "Someone who had a down against me. Otherwise why should they spoil my books? But who's got a down on me?" she asked wildly. "Who could hate me so much as to go to these lengths?"

"Only one," Clara Trevlyn said slowly.

"And she?"
"Gail Greeves Gregory!"
Janet's eyes narrowed.

"But Gail isn't in the school," Janet objected. "Whoever did this must have done it during morning lessons. How could she—?" And then she stopped as

Babs, suddenly stepping forward, stooped, picking up something which Clara Trevlyn had almost trodden upon. "What's that?" she exclaimed.

Babs started up. Quickly she took out her handkerchief and wiped the object free of soot. A silver book match-case gleamed in her hand.

"Whoever," she said slowly "caused the mess in this study left this behind, Janet." She looked at the thing closely, and then gave a sudden jump. "Oh! Look!" she cried in a voice vibrant with excitement.

"What?"
"These initials!"

"The six of them craned eagerly forward. With fingers that were almost trembling Babs pointed at the three initials that were engraved upon the front of the case.

For there could be no mistake about those initials. Three G's, each plainly to be read, with beneath them a smaller word engraved:

"Bombay 1934."
"Gail Greeves Gregory," breathed Mabel Lynn. "Then—then she is in the school, after all!"



Keeping Her Word

INDISPUTABLE, it seemed, the evidence of that fact. No other girl in the school had three consecutive names beginning with G. If there were any doubt about that "Bombay 1934" unquestionably identified the owner.

Only Gail Greeves Gregory of the girls at Cliff House School had come from India.

"But—but if she's in the school, where is she?" Bessie Bunter wanted to know. "Nobody's seen her, you know."

Janet's eyes glistened.
"She's come back. She said—remember what she said? She hadn't finished with me! It would be like her to sneak back into the school, allowing everyone to think she's gone for good. She's here, right enough—hiding like the sneak she is!"

It was a startling conclusion.
"But—but supposing—" Babs frowned. "Wait a minute," she said quietly, "we don't want to rush to conclusions. If she's got back into the school she must have been seen."

"By whom?" asked Mabel Lynn.
"Well, by—by someone."

"But why?" Mabs asked, and shook her golden head. "Easy enough for her to have got back last night while the school was asleep. Any girl who knew the ins and outs of Cliff House like she did could have done it."

"You mean—" Babs asked.
"I mean," Mabs replied, her face taking on a new keenness, "that Gail came back when the school was asleep. She's inside somewhere now—at this very moment, lying low. She waited until we were all in at lessons this morning before she came here to destroy Janet's books."

"In which case," Clara said grimly, "we're jolly well going to find her!"
"Hear, hear!"

"Yes, rather, you know. Look here, you girls! Leave this to me—"

But nobody was leaving it to Bessie. Nobody even replied to that eager suggestion. They felt, rightly, that they had arrived at the right conclusion. Startling as it seemed, Gail Greeves Gregory had returned in secret to Cliff House School—and Gail Greeves

Gregory was obviously bent upon revenge.

Gail had marked Janet down as her enemy. She had struck her first cruel blow.

But if Babs & Co. knew it, no further blows were going to be struck. The callous cruelty of that action had aroused the ire in every one of them. Fond they were of Janet, sympathetic towards her. They admired her for the fight she was making against the misfortunes which had swept upon her, and which might have utterly overwhelmed another girl.

Characteristically courageous, Janet had not flinched. She had accepted her misfortune—had set out to fight against it.

Those were qualities which could not help but compel admiration. If Janet was penniless, she still had her pride. Steadily she had refused every generous offer of help which had been made to her. She had her own way to fight, she declared, and she would fight it.

But this—being stabbed in the back by a treacherous enemy!

Every one of them was up in arms. While Janet stood, burning eyes and white-faced among them, they made a vow—that from that moment not one of them would know a moment's rest, or leave a stone unturned until Gail Greeves Gregory had been routed out from whatever hiding-place she was occupying, and expelled from the school. And they were going to start—

"Now!" Janet said grimly.
But where to look—how to start? That was the question. Babs again solved the problem—Babs, who in these sort of matters had a cool and calculating head, and could usually be relied upon.

"It must have happened," she said, "between eleven and twelve o'clock. The maids are in the Fourth Form corridor until eleven, and obviously Gail wouldn't have attempted anything while people were about. It stands to reason that she must have been watching her opportunity."

"Sounds reasonable," Clara agreed.
"There's also a possibility that while she was waiting she might have been seen," Babs went on. "I vote, therefore, that we find the maid who cleared up this study this morning, and question her. Which," she added, "is a chance for you to distinguish yourself, Bessie. Nip down to the servants' quarters and bring Sally here."

Bessie darted off. In a few minutes Sally, the maid, came in. Her eyes opened with horror when she saw the condition of Study No. 7.

"Oh, my goodness! What—?"
"Sally, you usually clean up the Fourth Form studies?" Babs asked.

"Yes, Miss Redfern; but—but I didn't do it this morning. You see, the new maid has the job now."

"Thanks, Sally! Will you send Ida along?"

A few minutes later Ida came. A very different girl she looked in her neat blue uniform, her spotted apron and the white cap which covered her dyed hair. She looked in amazement at the study.

"Oh, Miss Jordan, what a mess! And I did leave it so nice. What's the matter? Has the damper fallen in the chimney?"

"It has not," Janet told her. "Ida, at about what time did you leave the Fourth Form passage?"

Ida thought.
"Well, about a quarter-past eleven, Miss Jordan. You see, I'm not as

quick as Sally. I shall be, of course, once I get into the work."

"Did you see anybody in the passage while you were here?"

"No, Miss Jordan." And then Ida bit her lip. "Well, now you come to mention it, I did," she added. "A girl—a girl about as tall as I am, but with jet-black hair."

The chums exchanged glances. The description fitted Gail Greaves Gregory.

"I saw her twice," Ida went on. "Both times she was in the passage, Miss Jordan. When I first saw her she nipped into Study No. 6 rather quickly. I didn't think anything of it, of course—it not being my business. Then I saw her again just before I left, coming out of Study No. 10. She looked a little taken aback when she saw me, and ran back into the study."

"Obviously," Mabs guessed—"dodging about, waiting until you had gone."

"And—and then—" Ida frowned. "You know, Miss Jordan, I think I saw her a third time. I couldn't be quite sure. But it was before classes were dismissed. I happened to be looking out of the window in the servants' quarters, and I saw a girl with black hair running through the cloisters in the direction of the crypt."

"Thank you!" Babs said. "That will do, Ida."

But she exchanged a look with her chums—a rather steely, satisfied look, which seemed to indicate that she had received all the information she required.

"Yes, miss," Ida hesitated. "Thank you, miss! But excuse me. It does look so terrible. Miss Janet, shall I get Sally to help me to clean it up?"

"That's very sweet of you, Ida," Janet said.

"Not at all," Ida said, and smiled confusedly. "I'd love to do it, Miss Jordan—for you."

She beamed at them rather tenderly, leaving Janet smiling rather anxiously, in spite of her anxiety. Babs glanced at her chums.

"Well, what about that? Is it Gail?"

"Oh, it's Gail all right!" Clara Trevlyn said.

"And she's hiding—"

"In the crypt," Marjorie put in.

"Then let's go," Janet said impatiently.

And off they went, though not before there had been a hunt round for torches. They were keen now, feeling at last they were hot on the trail. The crypt, of course, would be an ideal hiding-place for any fugitive girl, far from the places usually frequented.

"I'll bet," Clara Trevlyn vowed, "she's in the old chapel. Have to buck-up, though; it's nearly time for dinner-bell."

In a body they crossed the cloisters, deserted as usual. They came at length to the ancient ruins, in the centre of which yawned the cavernous hole that led to the depths of the ancient crypt below.

Almost holding their breath, the six of them crept down, one step at a time, until at last they collected in the dim darkness below. For a moment they stood, tense and listening, but no sound reached their ears. Babs switched on her torch.

"Come on! We'll look at the chapel first."

They padded across the floor. The ancient chapel, used by the monks in days gone by, stood away to the left, guarded by its massive door. It was a roomy, lofty apartment, which had been the scene of more than one thrilling ad-

venture, and was, rumour said, haunted.

Very gently Babs pushed at the door. For a moment they stood stiff and tense on the threshold.

"Oh, crumbs! I sus-say—" Bessie gasped.

"Shush!" "Anybody in here?" Babs called. The echo of her voice boomed eerily back.

"Come on!" Janet cried. She was the first to push her way forward, Mabs on her heels. Babs and Clara followed. Marjorie, after a little hesitation, went after them. But Bessie, torn between the imminence of the dinner-bell and the legend of the chapel, hung uncertainly in the doorway. She blinked.

"I sus-say— Ow-wow! I'm being attacked! Help!"



The Night Alarm

"GAIL!" called Babs. But only the echo of a mocking laugh, followed by the sound of retreating footsteps, met their ears.

"Oh, kik-crums! Oh, dud-dear! I sus-say, you know, we're shut in!" Bessie bleated.

"Tell us something we don't know," Clara said shortly.

"We shall miss dinner! I'm fuf-famished!"

"But nobody paid attention to that complaint. In the glare of Mabel



STEP by step, scarce daring to breathe lest their presence should be discovered, Babs & Co. stole down the stairs that led to the crypt. If Gail Gregory was indeed hiding there, they were determined to surprise her!

For, quite suddenly, Bessie found herself flung off her balance. Unseen by her, a crouching figure had risen from the shade of a pillar near by. Two swift feet rushed across the intervening space. Two out-thrust hands pushed Bessie forcibly in the back. Helplessly Bessie went tottering forward, yelling as she did so. The next moment—

Crash!

"The door!" yelled Babs.

"Someone's shut it!"

"Oh, my hat!"

It was the door! The whole chapel quivered as it swung to in the darkness. There came the grinding of a key on the other side, followed by a laugh.

And then a voice spoke—a mocking, insolent voice, which they recognised at once.

"Now perhaps you'll try to find me again, Barbara Redfern & Co. I wish you joy!"

It was the voice of Gail Greaves Gregory!

Lynn's torch they stared at each other. No doubt now that Gail Greaves Gregory was hiding in the school. Their suspicions could hardly have been confirmed in a more startling fashion.

"We're idiots," Janet said grimly. "We should have guessed. Of course she was here! She saw us come down, and now—" Her eyes glittered. "Let's rush the door!" she suggested.

But rushing the door was as hopeless a task as rushing the solid walls themselves. Locked on the outside, it resisted all their efforts.

They desisted at last.

"Well, are we ninnies, or aren't we?" Clara grunted. "Let's shout!"

They shouted. But the crypt was remote, twenty feet deep in the earth. Nothing short of a violent explosion had even the faintest possible chance of being heard above ground.

They desisted at last, regarding each other angrily. Bessie complained, thinking not of the humiliation, but of the lost dinner. The time by Barbara's

watch showed that it was half-past one—which meant that dinner was over, and in ten minutes girls would be filing into the class-rooms for lessons again.

But what could they do? Gail, it seemed, had the last laugh. Another half an hour went by. Again they shouted. Ten-past-two then, with afternoon lessons already in session.

Marjorie groaned.
"Oh, my goodness, what will Miss Charmant say?"

"Well, I jolly well know what I'm going to say," Clara vowed grimly. "I'm going straight to Primmy, and I'm going to tell her that that cat is hiding in the school. In the meantime—"

She stalked savagely across to the door again. Without expecting anything to happen she turned the handle. And then everybody gasped. For the door came open!

"Well, ye jumping cobblestones!" Babs gasped.

"Who the——"
But it was obvious what had happened.

Gail Gregory, creeping down while they were in captivity, had unlocked the door again!

But that, so far from filling them with relief, filled them with fury. What a trick to play! Goodness knows how long the door had remained unlocked—when all the time they had been fuming there, unaware that the door to escape lay open. Would Gail, wherever she was, be laughing up her sleeve?

"Well, come on!" Babs said resignedly. "We'll have to show up, I suppose."

Without any enthusiasm they clambered up the steps. Rather apprehensively they trotted into the school. Big Hall was deserted, but from behind class-room doors came the murmur of voices, showing that Cliff House was hard at work. They reached the Fourth Form class-room.

"Better let me do the talking," Babs said, with a glance at her chums.

"No, me!" Janet replied. "Let me, Babs! After all, it was my fault—in a way. If it hadn't been for me you'd never have got locked up. If there's going to be any blame attached to this——"

But that, though sweet of Janet, was out of the question. They were all in it, Babs declared. They would stand or fall together. With an involuntary movement she pushed open the door of the Fourth Form class-room.

A gasp went up from the girls as the truants stood there. Then a gasp went up from Babs & Co. For, standing by Miss Charmant's desk, was Miss Primrose, the headmistress.

She swung round sharply as they entered.

"Barbara!"
"Oh, crums!" muttered Bessie Bunter.

"Where have you been?" Miss Primrose rapped.

"Please, Miss Primrose, we've been in the crypt!"
"Indeed? You were aware lessons had commenced?"

"Yes, Miss Primrose. But we—we were shut in the chapel."

"What? This and who was responsible for this—this apparent joke?"

Babs hesitated. She hated the idea of sneaking, but under the circumstances she felt justified in naming the culprit. There could be no scruples about shielding a girl who had deliberately sought to get them all into disgrace. And there was Janet's future to consider.

"It—it was Gail Gregory, Miss Primrose."

"Gail Gregory? What do you mean, Barbara?"

Babs went on to explain.
"You are sure, Barbara, that it was Gail Greaves Gregory?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Primrose."
"You did not see her?"

"No, Miss Primrose; but we heard her voice."

"You did not," Miss Primrose suggested gently, "go down to the crypt for some purpose of your own, Barbara, and accidentally shut yourselves in the chapel?"

"N—no, Miss Primrose."
"I see!" But the headmistress didn't look convinced. "Barbara, either you are telling me stories, or someone has been playing tricks upon you. Gail Gregory most certainly did not shut you up in the crypt, because I had a telephone message from her only half an hour ago. She is with some friends in London."

Babs looked dazed.
"But—but——"

"In any case," Miss Primrose went on, "you had no business in the crypt without permission. You are aware, I take it, that the crypt is out of bounds. I am very much annoyed. You will each stay in half an hour after lessons this afternoon, and do me a hundred lines this evening."

Crestfallen and bewildered, the six went to their places. Bessie Bunter, however, hesitated.

"Oh, crums! Miss Primrose——"
"Go to your place, Bessie!"

"Yes, Miss Primrose, but—but I—I haven't had my dinner," Bessie blurted.

"And I'm starving, you know. You can't expect a girl to do lessons when she's on the point of perspiration with starvation."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Miss Primrose said unbendingly. "I presume, foolish girl, you mean expiration. If you missed dinner it was the result of your own wilful action, and you must regard it as part of your punishment. Now, silence, please!"

She went out, Bessie, with a groan, sank into her place. Utterly crestfallen, Babs & Co. took their places, gazing in bewilderment at each other.

Gail Greaves Gregory was in London. Was she? Then how in the name of all that was wonderful——

Was it, as Miss Primrose suggested, some other girl who had imprisoned them in the crypt?

But who? And for what reason?

And if that was the case, how to explain away that matchbox-case which Babs had found in Study No. 7? And who had been responsible for that damage there?

Babs racked her brains. She did not feel so confident now.

But Janet, three desks away, was looking grim. She, at least, had no doubts. If Gail Gregory was hiding in the school, it would be like her to throw Miss Primrose off the scent. Gail could easily have slipped out and phoned up from the box at the cross-roads. Nothing to prevent her, when getting into communication with Primmy, to say she was in London.

But Janet was worried. With the destruction of the greater number of her books, and half an hour's detention, and a hundred lines to fill in the evening, what possible hope had she of getting on with her studies?

Rather grim was Janet that afternoon, and inwardly desperation filled her.

Five days to the exam for the scholarship—and she had so much leeway to make up. But she was going to make

HANDS CAN

WHETHER you have artistic hands with tapering fingers, or strong capable hands, they must have lots of care. For they tell so much about you—even at a glance.

It doesn't matter in the least what the shape of your hands is—much as you'd probably like them to be worthy of one of the Indian Love Lyrics—"pale" and "pink-tipped like lotus buds"—what does matter is their whiteness, their smoothness, and that general air of good grooming that is as essential to the hands as it is to hair and face.

Whiteness needn't worry you too much, though. Some hands are quite lovely, yet they are human enough to go red in cold weather or after such unpoetic work as washing-up, for example.

KEEPING THEM WHITE

You see, whiteness depends so much on your circulation. If your circulation is good then your hands will be white, though not with alabaster whiteness which is rather lifeless-looking—but with a faint glow of health to it.

The best way of improving your circulation is regular exercise. Skipping, exercises, walking, and games are all excellent, of course. And if you enjoy as much of these as you can, you'll soon find a difference in your hands if they were inclined to be a little "beefy" before.

Having got the root of whiteness for hands, you can now try external remedies for helping.

Lemon is absolutely unbeatable for keeping hands white—and smooth, too. If you keep a half-lemon by the kitchen sink or in the bath-room and rub the cut part over your hands every single time you wash them, you'll be absolutely staggered at the amazing improvement.

Some of you, though, may find the lemon a little drying to your skin, the acid tending to absorb the natural skin oils.

FOR A SMOOTH SKIN

So you must also add to the lemon treatment the same treatments as those whose hands always seem to be rough and wind-caged, for smoothness is as important as whiteness.

First you must remove the roughness—and only a good grease will do this.

Rub some vaseline, or, if you're in an extravagant mood, some cold cream, well into your hands. This doesn't require any elaborate movements or a chart to show you how it should be done.

Merely smear a generous dab of cream into your palm and then massage your hands with this, with the same actions as if you were washing them.

It'll soon disappear, you'll find. And the sooner your skin absorbs its grease-bath, the more you'll know it needed it!

Some soaps tend to be drying for sensitive hands, so if yours come under this heading, you should ex-

TELL SO MUCH

periment and select a soap that definitely suits your skin—even if it is only your hands.

One with an olive-oil base, or a super-fatted cold cream soap, will be found most satisfactory in the majority of cases, I think. (Remember to avoid highly perfumed soaps—these generally have a drying effect.)

Once you have got your hands into splendid condition, you must keep them that way. A special hand-lotion of your very own is by no means an extravagance if it hands beauty means anything to you.

Your chemist will make you up a most generous bottle of glycerine and rosewater or cucumber for a very few pennies, you'll find, and if you apply this frequently, your hands will increase in loveliness. Or you can buy a bottle of an excellent hand lotion at your own—and my—favourite shop for sixpence. (I know sixpence sounds a lot, but it lasts for ages.)

The general air of good grooming of the hands which I mentioned in the first paragraph is made up of whiteness and smoothness—and the rest—

JUST AS IMPORTANT

Spotlessly clean hands—except, of course, when playing muddy games, or cleaning dirty shoes!—is the first rule.

But, in my opinion, even more important than clean hands—which simply will get grubby when coming into such frequent contact with well-worn atlases, or dusty rulers—are clean finger-nails.

No amount of dust and dirt around you will excuse these if they show a speck of dirt. You can't carry around a wash-basin and warm water, but you can carry around a little orange stick to smooth under your nails at unobtrusive intervals.

With nail-tips white and trimmed to a nice oval—not an ugly "straight" or a just-as-ugly-point—and the cuticles pushed well down to show your half-moons, you have the secrets of well-groomed hands.

Oh, and don't forget to wear those gloves—whenever you are out of doors.



it up. She would make it up! At all costs she must get through. And since, apparently, there was no chance of making it up during the day, she must make it up during the night.

There was no chance. When the half an hour's detention had finished, Babs & Co. dragged her off to tea in Study No. 4. Tea, in consequence of the detention, was late. It took all the time between tea and prep to do her lines. Then preparation itself, then call-over, followed by supper, and by bed.

At half-past ten, however, Janet raised her head.

"Hallo, everybody!" she breathed.

"There was no reply. Everybody, apparently, was asleep. Rising, Janet hastily dressed and tiptoed down the dark stairs into the Fourth Form passage.

The school was silent then, all the girls, including the Sixth, having retired.

A few mistresses were still up, however, and it behoved Janet to be cautious. Hastily she slipped into Study No. 7 and shut the door behind her. She pulled down the blinds and placed the hearthrug against the bottom of the door, to shut out any chink of light that by mischance might escape into the corridor.

That done, she sighed with relief, and, dragging together her damaged books, settled down to work.

For ten minutes she worked, steadily and earnestly, a sigh escaping her lips from time to time, her brows corrugated in thought.

Then—

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Janet jumped.

Clang! Clang! Clang! T-r-r-r-r-r!

"The burglar alarm!" Janet gasped.

The burglar alarm it was. Shri!l, insistent, its note rang through the school.

There were voices outside—shrill, up-raised voices.

"Where is he?"

"Who rang the alarm?"

"Please—please—" Miss Primrose this time. "Remain calm. Miss Charmant, see that all the windows are fastened, you?"

Miss Bullivant, examine the door. Miss Keys, come with me and look into the studies."

"Oh, my hat!" Janet gasped.

She stood still, quivering. She was thinking, not of the burglar, but of her own position. If she was found here—out of bed at this hour of the night—

"Get out of it, you duffer!" she told herself.

That, obviously, was the one course remaining open to her. Hurriedly she seized her books and rammed them into the cupboard. Escape by the corridor was out of the question, since Primmy and Miss Keys were obviously in it at that moment.

But there was the window, outside which ran a broad sill on which she could hide until the hue and cry had died down. Without a second's hesitation, Janet sprang towards it.

Now—oh, bother this stiff catch! Outside she heard the thud of footsteps. Horrors! Primmy was knocking at the door. Ugh! Janet exerted one fierce effort. The window flew upwards.

Bang!

From outside came Miss Keys' voice: "Who is in that room? Open this door!"

Janet bit her lip, her face white. What should she do now? She was discovered. But no, there was still a chance!

And even as Miss Primrose, outside, began to push at the door, which would

not easily open owing to the carpet having got wedged beneath it, she crawled on to the sill.

It did not occur to Janet in that moment that she was risking her life. For a moment she stood, shivering a little in the chill night air. By stepping from sill to sill it would be easy, she reckoned, to reach another study farther along the corridor, and so make her escape.

Gingerly she hoisted herself on to the sill of Study No. 6, from there to Study No. 5. From there to Study No. 4. Ah, thank goodness! Babs & Co. had left the window open. Quiet, now, no more alarms.

Gritting her teeth, Janet lifted the window. With a soft thud she jumped breathlessly into the dark interior of Study No. 4.

Swiftly she closed the window behind her, passing towards the door. For a moment she stood there, straining her ears to listen.

Was it safe to risk it?

But suddenly, dramatically, the question was answered for her. For even as she stood, the door was opened from the outside.

A hand reached forward, almost touching her face as she reeled back. The light went on with a snick, and there, before her, her face grim, stood Miss Primrose!



From Bad To Worse

TEN minutes later—

In silence Janet stood before Miss Primrose's desk. The head-mistress' face was severe.

"You deny, Janet, that you rang the burglar alarm?"

"Yes!" Janet cried defiantly.

"And yet," Miss Primrose said severely, "you were the only girl out of her dormitory. You say, Janet, that you left your dormitory for the purpose of secret study, yet when I entered your study I failed to find any evidences of that statement."

Janet bit her lip.

"But it's true, Miss Primrose."

"You are sure," Miss Primrose asked, "you were not actuated by some spirit of mischief, Janet? I have already once to-day," she added tartly, "had cause to reprimand you upon one point of misbehaviour. In any case, Janet, it is now your duty to point out to you, even if your statement concerning to-night's event is true, that you defied the rules of the school in breaking out of dormitory. You will do two hundred lines."

Janet's heart thudded.

"But—but Miss Primrose—"

"Thank you, you may go," Miss Primrose said tartly. "And remember, Janet, I am not at all satisfied with your conduct at the moment. The next offence of yours which is brought to my notice will be much more severely dealt with."

Janet's lips quivered. But she bit back the hot words that were upon them.

It was unfair—unfair! she told herself. She was being blamed, not because she had been up, but because she was judged to have set the burglar alarm going. She hadn't done that. Even in her most boisterous mood Janet Jordan would never have dreamed of alarming the whole school.

Yet, as Primmy said, she was the one girl in the whole school out of bed.

Evidence pointed unerringly to her as the perpetrator. Somebody, of course, had rung the alarm bell.

But who? The sudden thought that occurred to Janet made her bite her lip. But she said nothing. She saw that protest in any shape or form at that moment would only make matters worse. She was in Primmy's bad books—no doubt about that, and burning with a sense of fury and injustice, she went out of the study.

Rather listlessly she trailed up to the Fourth Form dormitory.

The lights were out, but half the girls were awake. A bombardment of questions greeted her as she went in.

"Janet, is that you?"

"Yes!"

"What was all the fuss about?"

"Who rang the burglar alarm?"

"Where the dickens have you been?"

Janet explained, as best she could.

"My hat!" Lydia Crossendale entered the conversation.

"But if it wasn't you, who was it?"

"I don't know!"

"Did you see anybody?" Phyllis Howell asked.

"No!"

"But it must have been somebody, you know," Bessie Bunter put in.

"I mean, burglar-alarms don't ring themselves."

"Perhaps it was Primmy herself,"

Jemima chuckled, "having a little joke on the school."

The idea of the austere Miss Primrose playing jokes of that description tickled the Fourth. But that by no means solved the mystery, though in Janet's own mind there was no doubt as to the identity of the culprit.

The more she thought of it, the more convinced did she become. Gail Greeves Gregory had seen her enter Study No. 7.

Gail, pursuing her campaign of revenge, had set the burglar alarm going, knowing that she would inevitably be caught.

"Very well," she vowed to herself, "if Gail was in the school—"

Strong confirmation of that suspicion came next morning. That was when, before breakfast, she entered Study No. 7 to find Ida Walsh standing by the window. The new maid's face, powdered as usual, was very serious.

"Oh, Miss Jordan—" she came forward impulsively. "I heard about what—"

"What?"

"Yes, Miss Jordan, that's what I thought, too." Ida hesitated. "And—"

and with the idea of seeing if I could find something out, I went to the burglar-alarm this morning." She paused, and then from her pocket she drew out a small, lace-edged handkerchief.

"I don't know if this will help, Miss Jordan, but I found it on the floor."

It did occur to me that the girl who rang the alarm might have dropped it."

"She held it out. Janet, with a penetrating look at her, took it.

She looked at it, but there was nothing extraordinary about it. A score of girls at Cliff House School used handkerchiefs of which this might be a replica. There were no initials and no laundry-mark.

But—

Very slowly Janet lifted the handkerchief to her nose. She sniffed, and then she sniffed again—more sharply.

She flung a queer look at Ida.

"Thank you, Ida," she said gently.

"That was very thoughtful of you."

"Is—is it any good?" Ida asked.

"I think so—yes."

"Oh, Miss Jordan, I'm so glad."

Janet smiled softly.

"You're a good sport, Ida," she said softly. "A good sport. Thanks again!

And—keep your eyes open. If you see that girl with the black hair again, come and tell me."

"I will, Miss Jordan—the very minute I see her."

"Good!"

Ida went out, a smile on her lips.

But had Janet observed it, there was a gleam in her bespectacled eyes which might have made her wonder a little.

But Janet was too excited now to wonder anything. For that handkerchief—the handkerchief itself told no tale, but the perfume upon it—

Straight to Study No. 4 she rushed, there to find Babs and Mabs, who had just come down. They stared at her as, flushed and quivering, she entered.

"Why, Janet—"

"Babs, smell that," Janet cried dramatically. "Tell me—whose perfume is that?"

She flung the hanky across the table.

Babs, with a wondering look, picked it up.

She sniffed, and then a startled light shot into her eyes.

"Why, my goodness! It was the Indian stuff that Gail Gregory used."

No question of that. Mabs agreed with it. Everybody knew that peculiar perfume. It was a special blend which Gail personally imported from Bombay.

A sweet-smelling, rather sickly perfume it was, with a penetrating aroma which more than once had caused pointed comment.

"That," Janet told them, "was found by Ida Walsh near the burglar-alarm."

If that doesn't prove that Gail Gregory had something to do with last night's scare, I'll eat my hat. She's in the school fooling everybody. She's here to get her own back on me."

Babs and Mabs looked stunned.

"But—but the telephone message—from London."

Janet laughed contemptuously.

"Supposing," she asked, "I went out into Grande Lane. Supposing I rang you up and said I was speaking from London? You'd believe it, wouldn't you?"

"Why, of course," Babs said.

"And that," Janet answered contemptuously, "is exactly how Gail diddle Primmy. I tell you she's here, Babs. She sent that message to put Primmy off the scent. She's lying low somewhere, and she's lying low in this school. She means to mess up my scholarship chances. And—then she stopped, swinging round towards the door as it opened."

It was Clara who entered, Clara, her face alive with excitement.

"I say, I've found something."

"What?"

"This." And on the table Clara put down a handkerchief, identical with the one which, at that moment, rested in Babs' hand.

"Niff it, Babs, and tell me who that scent belongs to."

"But—but where did you find it?"

"In the governors' passage. It was shut in the door, wedged between the door itself and the framework. Just as if," Clara added quickly, "somebody had bolted there in a hurry and had dropped it while she was shutting the door, shutting the hanky in at the same time."

The four looked at each other askance.

In the face of each lively excitement was working now. Each mind leapt to the instant conclusion. What a

ripping hiding-place for any fugitive the governors' room would make! What a splendid place in which Gail Greeves Gregory could lie low!

For the governors' room was the one deserted apartment in the whole of Cliff House School. It was a room entered only by the servants and the headmistress and the governors themselves.

Moreover, it was a room with the one remaining secret passage known to be in existence at Cliff House, and a room used only on such occasions as when the board met at the school.

For many weeks together it was entirely vacant. In the secret passage in that room a girl might hide for months and months, without anyone being the wiser.

But the room, also, was out of bounds. Dire punishment awaited those who, unbidden, entered it.

Janet's eyes blazed.

"Then," she said, "I'm jolly well going to the governors' room! No, Babs, don't you come."

"Oh, rabbits!" said Babs.

"But I don't want—"

"Janet," Clara said, "pipe down. We're your clams, aren't we? We stand or fall together in all things, and if you're going to the governors' room, we're jolly well going with you. Or, perhaps, on second thoughts," she decided, "it would be better if you stayed here and left the nosing around to us."

Janet flushed.

"Letting you fight my battles for me? No, thanks!"

"But the school—" Mabs cried.

"Well, what about the school?"

"Janet"—Mabs was very serious—"don't be a goose. You're in bad odour with Primmy as it is. If—if things should happen—though I can't see what—it would be better for you to be left out of it. You've got more lines than you can do as it is."

But Janet shook her head.

"No," she said, "I'm coming."

She said staunchly. "It's my affair."

And so she had her way.

Not without misgivings was the governors' room approached. Babs led the way, casting a quick look to right and left as they entered the corridor. No one was about, and, as luck would have it, the key was in the door of the room. Babs turned it, flinging the door open.

"Quick, inside!" she hissed.

Into the room they all bundled, closing the door after them.

A long low, beautifully furnished apartment, with an exquisitely carved fireplace and walls hung with priceless old masters, the governors' room presented its severe, dignified interior to their vision.

In the centre of the room hung a heavy alabaster bowl, believed once upon a time to have served as a fruit dish at the palace of Nero, presented to the school by an old-time scholar, and converted into a lampshade.

"Well, here we are," Janet said impatiently.

"Don't see any signs of her," Clara murmured.

"Well, she'd hardly be on exhibition," Mabs said. "Let's try the secret passage. That's the panel there—next to the fireplace."

They tiptoed across the room.

Behind them, unnoticed, the door opened. A girl looked in. She had a cricket ball in her hand, and on her face was a spiteful grin of glee.

Her dark eyes flamed as she saw the girls.

But the girls, intent upon their quest, did not see her. Every nerve was

concentrated upon the panel. But suddenly Janet, who was in the rear, heard a sudden sound. She whisked round just in time to see the door closing.

And then—

"Look out!"

Crash!

Unerringly the cricket ball flew to its mark—the priceless white alabaster bowl.

There was a splintering crash. Just in time Babs pushed Clara out of the way while the priceless alabaster shattered before their eyes.

White to the lips, the girls started.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Who did that?"

"How—?"

Janet's eyes flamed. She leapt forward and picked up the cricket ball, which had rolled at her feet.

"This is how it was done," she said.

"I saw the door. Some girl threw the ball from the door. She must have spotted us. She must—!" And then her face grew grim. "Gail!" she breathed. "It was she!"

"But—?"

"Oh crumbs, come on—no 'but's'!" Clara cried. "If anybody connects us with this, somebody will be sacked. Primmy will just go crazy. Primmy will—"

And there the words froze upon her lips. For the door was open, and in the doorway stood, not Miss Primrose, but Miss Keys, her eyes wide with horror.

"JANET, YOU will remain behind." Miss Primrose said sharply. "Barbara, Clara, and Mabel, you may go."

She was still white with anger, and the chums' ears still burned from the ten minutes' lecture of which they had been the recipients.

"You will each, as I have told you, do two hundred lines, and a special detention on the next half-holiday. But you, Janet—"

Babs gulped.

"Please, Miss Primrose, it was not Janet's fault."

"Miss Primrose informed her acidly, "am the best judge of that, Barbara. Please go."

"Please, Miss Primrose—"

"If you do not do this very moment," the headmistress threatened, "I shall double your imposition."

The three turned away with one pitting look at Janet, who stood there quivering, her face white, her shoulders bowed as if to receive a blow.

"Janet"—Miss Primrose spoke more harshly than Janet had ever heard her speak before. "This is the last—very last time I warn you. It is very plain to me that you are the ringleader in this wanton outrage. I must say that I am shocked beyond measure at your conduct of these last two days. You had no business in the governors' room. On your own admission, to trespass in that room was your idea." Janet breathed deeply.

"I presume your idea was to indulge in some bear-garden game away from your fellows. You see what has happened! I can't ask your father to repair the damage, knowing his circumstances, but my patience is strained, Janet—very. With the other culprits, you will do two hundred lines, making a total of four hundred in all. With them you will be gated for the next half-holiday. In addition, Janet, I shall report this outrage to your father, reluctant as I am to distress him in the midst of the worries he is

THE HOME-LOVING GIRL

She had lots of good points—but she didn't give herself a chance

WHEN Ann Colman first went to the school where Veronica and the others attended, it looked as if she'd be enormously popular.

Above all, Ann was kind. She'd mind the odd rackets during a tennis match; she'd find a lost girl in the most amazing way; she'd fetch glasses of water, or keep a seat.

Naturally, Ann was often asked out to tea by other girls in her class. When at first she said No, they thought she was shy. But when she continued to say No, well—they just ceased to ask her.

Ann explained to Veronica one day when Veronica tackled her about it, that she thought her duty was to go home and stay there.

She was quite happy about it. Ann loved the wireless, the gramophone, and reading to her small brothers. She hadn't time for going out, she said, when there was so much to do at home.

Veronica, who always gave the impression that she was rather gay and carefree, couldn't understand.

She protested that she often helped with the washing-up at home, and sometimes did her own shopping—she always found time to attend Saturday afternoon hockey matches, or Sunday afternoon "hikes" that were planned by the girls at school.

ANN EXPLAINS

"I think mother likes me to be at home, as I'm the eldest," Ann said. "I don't know what she'd do without me. I knit jerseys for the boys, warm dad's slippers and all that sort of thing—you see I don't get much time."

Veronica did see. That was different, of course. She felt a little sorry for Ann. Then gradually she was forgotten. Not in school, of course—but out of school.

Ann adored music—classical music. There was a scheme at school whereby twelve girls could attend the final rehearsals of a series of wonderful concerts at the King's Hall.

Tickets on the opening nights were not less than five shillings, and the most expensive were two guineas—so you can tell what sort of concert it was. (The schoolgirls did not have to pay anything, of course.)

Veronica was going; although she wasn't keen on music, her mother said she shouldn't miss the opportunity. Nellie was going, so was Susan and so was Winifred. In fact nearly all Ann's class. But they didn't even mention it to her.

Ann would have given anything to go—but she felt she was wanted at home on Saturday mornings, to do the shopping and help with the week-end cooking.

HER FIRST REGRET

For three whole weeks her heart ached at the thought of the concert, and for the first time since she remembered, she wished she were more like Veronica.

But it was no good; the twelve girls were decided on. It was too late for her to go even if she could be spared from home.

At school on Friday all was excitement. Ann heard the party discussing for the last time where they should meet; how they'd catch the train, and then the bus—and how they'd enjoy it.

That Saturday morning was the most miserable Ann had ever spent.

"I can't think why you don't get out more, Ann," her mother said to her at ten o'clock. "No, don't bother about the potatoes, dear; I can do those later."

Ann suddenly realised that she was not hearing these words for the first time. Of course, her mother had often said little things like that.

"Silly!" Ann gave herself a little shake. Of course mother didn't mean it; she herself was extra-conscious of the words to-day because of that concert.

As if mother could possibly do without her. And Ann went upstairs to get the pull-over she was making for dad.

Naturally, Ann went to the door when a knock came at eleven.

"Postman," she thought, and called: "I'll go, mother!"

THE SHOCK SHE NEEDED

It wasn't the postman. It was Veronica.

"I say, is your mother in?" she asked Ann.

Mrs. Colman came to the door. "Mrs. Colman," Veronica panted. "Nellie—one of our girls who was going to the concert—on, unwell, and can't come. So I wondered—I hope you don't think it awful cheek—if you could spare Ann. Just to make up the number!"

Mrs. Colman beamed.

"Why, of course," she said. "I'd love Ann to go. I'm always saying she spends much too much time indoors. And the silly girl simply refuses to go out. It's very kind of you, dear." She turned to her daughter. "Run and get your hat and coat on, Ann."

Ann was so overjoyed, she hardly thought of what her mother had said. The concert was sheer heaven to her. Ann remembered her mother's words after it, though.

"Mother dear, I thought you liked me to help you about the house," she said that afternoon.

Her mother kissed her. "Darling, I do," she said gently. "But no one is indispensable, you know, and I don't want my eldest daughter to grow—dull!"

Ann hugged her. "You're right," she said. "I was growing dull. And I never realised till now what a nuisance I must have been to you at times. Wasn't it sweet of Nellie to have a cold?"

"Bad girl!" Mrs. Colman chided fondly. "Now perhaps you'll go and see her while she's ill. Meanwhile, what about inviting that chery Veronica to tea next Saturday?"

"Oh, I'd love to!" Ann said.



no doubt experiencing at this moment. "And"—she gazed at the white-faced girl—"I must warn you, Janet, that your next offence will compel me to remove your name from the scholarship list. Now go!"

Janet went, crestfallen, humiliated, but raging inwardly against the unseen

vandal who had been the cause of her downfall.

She clenched her hands as she walked along the corridor.

Gated! Four hundred lines! A note to her father! Oh, heavens, what had she done to deserve all that? And her chums—

If Janet Jordan had met the girl she believed to be her secret enemy at that moment, it would have gone hard indeed for Gail Greaves Gregory.

She was trembling as she entered Study No. 7 again—a study empty at the moment, for Clara, in company with Babs and Mabs and Marjorie and Bessie, was in Study No. 4.

Four hundred lines! Her examination to swot for!

She couldn't do it—she couldn't!

But she must—she must!

But if she should meet Gail Greaves Gregory—

But that, Janet decided, was out of the question. If she was to find time for extra study, she must make time.

There and then she drew impot paper towards her. Frantically she began to write. Breakfast-bell went, but she did not heed. Furiously she scrawled on. There, that was one page—thirty of them. But, oh, heavens, another three hundred and seventy!

Never mind! Stick it, Janet!

Janet stuck it. Three pages. Getting on. Her back ached, her throat felt sore, when suddenly behind her the door opened. She did not turn, did not look round. Feverishly she scrawled on.

Then a sneering voice spoke:

"What about it now, upstart?"

If Janet had been stung, she couldn't have jumped more suddenly. Down went the pen, back with a crash went the chair as she flung round, just in time to see the door close. For the voice—

It was the voice of Gail Greaves Gregory!

"You cat!" she choked.

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a mocking laugh from the corridor. Janet, her face flaming, was across the study.

She jerked the door open and plunged into the passage, just in time to see the hem of a flying skirt disappear round the corridor.

"Come back!" she yelled.

But the flying figure did not come back. Janet set off down the passage. Like the wind she ran, determined at all costs to come to grips now with her persecutor.

At a breathless speed she rounded the corner, never noticed that the door of Study No. 1 was in the act of closing, and never suspecting in that furious moment that her quarry had slipped into that room. Along the passage she went, round the next corner.

And then—crash!

Bodily she hurled herself into someone. She gave a gasp. The someone went reeling against the wall, all the breath knocked out of her body, and Janet, too blind for the moment to notice who it was, flung herself on top of her.

A voice came from beneath her:

"Janet, release me—at once!"

And Janet obeyed, that injunction as if her victim had suddenly become red-hot. She stared in horror.

"Miss—Miss Primrose!" she gasped faintly.

For Miss Primrose it was—Miss Primrose considerably shaken, a Miss Primrose in an overpowering, quivering temper.

The headmistress looked at her with quivering lips.

"So," she said slowly, "it is you again, Janet. What is the meaning of this disgraceful escapade?"

Janet's heart seemed to turn to cold stone within her. She had been warned. Next time, Miss Primrose had said—

Janet felt as if she must faint. This was the end!



When All Seemed Lost

IT was I

Morning lessons in the Fourth Form class-room had been in progress ten minutes before Babs & Co. saw Janet again.

The fact that Miss Primrose had failed to take assembly in Big Hall that morning showed that dire things had been happening to Janet Jordan, who all the time had been shut up with the headmistress in her study.

Janet came in. A little sigh went up as the Form saw her. White was her face, her dark lashes showing only too plainly the evidences of recent weeping.

She looked listless, spiritless, all the life gone out of her.

Marjorie, at the mere sight of her, bit her lip. Even Lydia Crossendale looked sympathetic.

"My hat, she's been through it!" she whispered to Freda Barriers.

"Poor kid!" murmured Leila Carroll.

"Janet, you will go to your place!"

Miss Primrose's tones were flintlike.

"Miss Charmant, I have to report you to keep a special eye on Janet Jordan.

Recent exhibitions of her conduct have convinced me that she is the unruliest girl in the Form. Meantime, I am writing to Miss Fielding immediately, to tell her that Janet's name is removed from the scholarship list."

"Oh, I say!" cried Clara Freylin.

"Clara, did you wish to speak?"

"No, do you?" Clara stood up.

"Miss Primrose, I don't think that's quite fair.

We girls know Janet isn't to blame—"

"Clara, you will take a further fifty lines for impertinence. Allow me," Miss Primrose said frigidly, "to conduct my own affairs. It is not only fair, Clara, it is lenient. Had Janet's past record been less meritorious, I should have unhesitatingly expelled her!"

Clara, her face fiery, sat down. More than one head turned to regard Janet Jordan, with that rigid, white, unearthly pallor on her face.

Babs clenched her hands. Mabs shook her head. Jemima, leaning across, whispered:

"Chin up, old Spartan! Remember it's the darkest hour before the dawn. Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Charmant! Did you speak to me?"

"I did! I said twenty lines for talking in class, Jemima," Miss Charmant replied, looking a little shaken herself as the Head went out. "Now, please pay attention!"

Everybody paid attention—except Janet. Janet sat motionless, like a figure carved out of stone. She couldn't realise it yet—not fully. Cast out of the scholarship—her one remaining hope of remaining at Cliff House gone!

Gail Greaves Gregory had done her work well, she reflected bitterly.

Janet could have wept, but she didn't. But she shrank from the prospect which awaited her. This term was to be her last at Cliff House—her last! Oh, it was heartbreaking!

Good-bye to Clara and Marjorie! To Babs and Mabs and dear old Bessie!

Good-bye to Leila and Jemima, Jean Cartwright and Peggy Preston and Phyllis Howell—all those dear, jolly chums who had made her life so happy, with whom she had had such topping times!

Oh, no, no!

Yet it must be. Gail had done this! No turning back now, no more good times. She was an outcast, disgraced in the headmistress's eyes though, to be sure, she still had the sympathy of her chums. If only—oh, if only the past could be wiped out!

Miserably she sat through morning session Miss Charmant, perhaps realising what was going on in her mind, did not trouble her. Almost the whole morning Janet sat in that still, dreadful attitude, looking neither to right nor left. The class pitied her.

At break—a welcome event in a day that proved to be unbearable—she found herself surrounded.

"Janet, old thing!"

"Janet—"

"Janet, we're frightfully sorry!"

"Can we do anything?"

Janet wearily waved them all aside. "Please, please," she said tremulously, "don't—don't bother me! Let me be alone."

It was the first time Janet Jordan had made such a request as that. Out of deference for her wishes the Fourth fell back. Babs bit her lip.

"We've got to do something," she said. "We can't let her go on like this!"

"But—"

"She had a good chance for the school, too," Jean Cartwright put in. "I know. I overheard the Charmer say, two days ago, that if anybody would come through with flying colours, Janet Jordan would. It's a shame—a beastly shame!" she burst out. "The school won't be the same without old Janet."

"And the swimming championship—"

Clara groaned.

The chums were in despair. If it was dreadful to Janet to think of losing them, it was no less dreadful for Babs & Co. to think of losing her.

"We're going to try," Babs said. "All of us. We all know that Janet is not to blame. It's true what she says—that cat Gail is somewhere in the school. It's Gail who worked this, and Gail who'll go on working it. It's up to us. Who's for seeing Primmy?"

"Hurrah!" cheered Clara.

Quite a crowd were for seeing Primmy. Babs, Marjorie, Jemima, Bessie Bunter, Leila Carroll, Clara and Rosa Rodwirth. Margot Lantham and Diana Royston-Clarke volunteered at once.

But, as Babs said, Primmy wouldn't like to see half the Form, and finally it was decided that Babs herself, Clara, and Marjorie should make up the party.

They tripped off, to find Miss Primrose getting ready for going out when they reached her study.

"Well, what is it?" she asked, rather impatiently.

"Please, Miss Primrose, it's about Janet," Babs began.

The headmistress's face immediately set.

"I am sorry, Barbara. I have no time to stay discussing that question!"

"But, please, Miss Primrose, listen to us!" Babs went on desperately. "We came on behalf of the whole Form, Miss Primrose, we don't want to lose Janet, and we all feel that Janet has been made the victim of some enemy, working in secret. A girl, Babs, got out desperately, who is hiding in the school!"

"Barbara, are you still trying to tell me that Gail Greaves Gregory is here?"

"Yes," said Babs.

"Then, Miss Primrose said, "kindly dismiss the idea. Less than ten minutes



THINGS were going badly for the unhappy butcher's lad, when suddenly a figure darted from the school-house. It was Ida Walsh, the new maid—and the watching girls saw her rush to the boy's assistance.

ago I was in telephonic communication with her."

"But—but—" Babs stammered. She was determined to speak. "Miss Primrose, don't you see?" she asked desperately. "You're being tricked! That message wasn't from London, it was from the telephone box outside!"

"Indeed!" Miss Primrose pulled on her gloves. "You seem rather sure of yourself, Barbara. I, too," Miss Primrose pursued, "do not jump to conclusions, Barbara. I had the presence of mind, if it will ease your own mind, to ask the telephone operator, after the call had come through, where exactly it had been telephoned from. She gave the address of a call box in Maida Vale, London."

"But we've found things belonging to Gail!" Babs cried.

"No doubt. Others have found them, too," Miss Primrose frigidly interposed. "One of the maids—the new maid, I believe it was—discovered a bundle of

letters belonging to Gail in the Third Form Common-room this morning. I do not know how they got there, but very obviously Gail left them behind. A brooch of hers was also found in this very study. The girl seemed to have a habit of leaving her things about."

"So that," as Clara said bitterly, "was that!"

Primmy had all the answers. Despairing, Babs & Co. left, puzzled and bewildered.

If what Miss Primrose said was right—and obviously it was—then their own clues just didn't count. Gail could hardly have phoned from London and been at Cliff House at the same time.

But what about the voice? Who, if it wasn't Gail, had imprisoned them in the crypt? Who had thrown the cricket ball at the alabaster bowl in the governors' room?

"Well, I'm beaten," Clara confessed. "But that doesn't alter things. Janet's still in the soup."

Janet was! It was just heart-breaking to see her white face in afternoon class. With some idea of cheering her up, Babs, Mabs, Leila Carroll, Clara, and Marjorie accompanied her to Study No. 7 after lessons.

"Janet, old thing—"

Janet moved to the window.

"Oh, please—"

"Janet, buck up!" Jemima urged. "Chin up, old thing! The end of the term's not yet—what! And until it comes there's hope! Though I must say," she added thoughtfully, "that all this strikes your little Jimmy as very queer. Janet, you're sure it was Gail?"

"Deadly, positively certain!"

"But the telephone message—"

"Those," Janet said, between her teeth, "are fakes! If those messages came from London at all, she must have got someone to ring up, and— She started suddenly. "My hat, look!" she cried. "If that isn't some more of her work!"

"What?"
"The pets!"

There was a rush for the window at once. Janet, with quivering finger, was pointing down into the quadrangle, and at once the chums saw the cause of her exclamation.

The quadrangle seemed to be filled with dogs!

"What on earth!" gasped Leila Carroll.

"My word, look! They're loose!"

It was at once evident what had happened. Someone had obviously left the door of the Pet's House open—and the dogs had not lost their opportunity to snatch a few minutes' freedom.

They were all there—Janet's little Gyp, Clara's Alsatian, Babs' Brutus, and Jimmie's mongrel, Tramp. In a yapping, barking mob they rushed round and round the quad, joying in this unexpected romp.

And, just as luck would have it, at that moment the butcher's boy from Friardale came along, carrying a tray of meat.

"Oh, great goodness! Look!"

No need to look. The dogs, scenting the meat he carried, were upon him. With a gleeful howl the whole pack converged upon him while the boy, suddenly frozen with terror, stood wide-eyed.

The dogs meant no harm, but he was not to know that. As Pluto leapt he kicked out with his foot.

It all happened in the fraction of a second. Pluto gave a yelp as he was flung back into the midst of the other dogs. The pack yelped again; threateningly, they surged forward; while the boy, frantic with terror, swung his tray. Then suddenly, from nowhere it seemed, darted a blonde-headed figure.

It was Ida Walsh!

She had a broom in her hand. What Ida did then was courageous, if foolish. Without hesitation she plunged into the midst of the dogs. Brutus she cuffed; Pluto, as he was about to spring, she caught by the collar in mid-air, at the same time catching him a resounding thwack across the flanks. Pluto howled.

"Br-r-r! Bad dogs! Go! Go!" Ida cried, and shooed them off towards the gate just as Miss Bullivant, rustling in surprised indignation from the schoolhouse, appeared on the scene.

"Oh, great goodness!" gasped Marjorie. "Look! They're scattering through the gates!"

"They're making for the road!" Babs cried.

"Pluto!" yelled Clara.

"Gyp!"
"Brutus!"

"Come on! If those beggars run into the road, they might get killed." Pandemonium then. Anxiety for their pets suddenly took the place of every other emotion.

Janet, who was particularly fond of her Gyp, as Clara was of her Pluto, turned quickly. She was the first of them to leave the study, the first down the stairs and into the quad. She shouted desperately, heedless of Miss Bullivant's imperious cries:

"Gyp! Gyp!"

At the gates Gyp turned, tongue lolling, eyes gleaming happily. He gave a yelp.

"Woop!"

"After them!" cried Clara.

"Who let them out?"

Janet ran desperately. Out into the road she went, yelling at the dogs, wheeling in the direction of Friardale. There came the sudden sound of a motor-horn.

"Oh, my hat, they'll be run over!"

"Quick!"

But no need for that. Everyone was running as hard as they could now. But none ran harder than Janet, at the head of the crowd by a good ten yards. Now she was near the gates, was through them.

At the same moment came a shriek.

Squeak! came the sound of brakes hastily applied. Janet was just in time to see a big saloon car coming along at a fair pace from the direction of Friardale village.

She saw the dogs, almost under the wheels of the car—she saw the chauffeur's suddenly white face as desperately he pulled at the wheel.

Round shot the car, mounted the embankment, and then, with a crash, overturned, flinging the chauffeur heavily into the road. The dogs yelped in terror.

"Oh!" gasped Janet.

For one moment she stared, stupefied with horror. There came a cry, a scream. She saw petrol spurting from the engine. She heard an explosion as the petrol tank burst open, and then—

A flash and a roar! The car was on fire!

Desperately Janet sprinted. She had forgotten the dogs now. Babs & Co., arriving at the gates at that moment, were just in time to see the catastrophe.

With a shout, they tore in her wake. But Janet was there first, staggering in the rushing volume of flames that suddenly shot up.

She saw, for one dreadful instant, the

face of Miss Primrose, one hand raised as she sat on the top of the car inside.

Then—

What happened?

Janet did not know. She saw only a fellow-being in danger of being burned.

"Miss Primrose!" The cry left her lips. Unconsciously she grabbed the door handle. Unconsciously she shut her eyes and held her breath. Now she was in it. She felt flames surrounding her. But she had the handle.

Into the thick of the smoke and flames she stepped. By a miracle she found Miss Primrose. With a strength that was inspired, she caught her arms and dragged her through the wall of flames. She felt her senses reeling, felt the flames scorching her face, her hands. She staggered back.

Clara caught her, and helped her to the ground. Clara and Babs, at the imminent risk of being burned, bent over her, frantically trying to stifle her smouldering clothes.

Janet saw them, recognised in a dim sort of way what they were doing, and closed her eyes.

She did not open them again until she found herself in the Cliff House sanatorium, with Miss Primrose, unhurt, bending over her, and Babs and Mabs and Clara, with minor injuries, standing around her.

"JANET, I—I can never thank you enough," Miss Primrose said, in trembling accents. "What you did was the bravest, the most gallant action I have ever seen in my life. Janet, I owe you my life!"

Through puckered lips Janet Jordan tried to smile.

"I only hope, my dear, that you are not in too great pain," Miss Primrose went on, her lip quivering. "But for you, Janet, I should not have been here now. My dear, I can never, never really thank you; but—"

She paused.

"Janet, would it make you happy to learn that Miss Fielding has awarded you a free scholarship, and—^{and}—and that that happened is, of course, wiped out? If you have any other wishes, Janet, I—"

Janet smiled.

"Only one, Miss Primrose."

"And that, my dear?"

"Is—is that you free Babs & Co. as well?"

"My dear, I have already done that."

"Then—then"—Janet sighed—"that—that is all, Miss Primrose," she said. "And—^{and}—and thank you. Are—are the dogs all right?"

"Perfectly, Janet."

"You—you didn't find out who set them free?"

"No, my dear; but"—Miss Primrose's face darkened—"I am making inquiries now," she said. "I promise you, as soon as we have traced the culprit—"

But Janet shook her head. She, at least, knew who the culprit was. Her eyes flashed a message to Babs & Co. which communicated her thoughts.

But Babs shook her head. She was not sure, she could not be sure. For in her hand at that moment was a letter.

The letter bore a London postmark, and it was from Gail Greaves Gregory, which seemed to prove, beyond all doubt, that Gail was not in the school.

But if she was not, who was Janet's secret enemy—an enemy who could do her little further harm now—but who still remained at large in the school?

It was, Babs felt, a deep and baffling mystery.

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

IS GAIL GREGORY STILL AT CLIFF HOUSE?

THAT is the question which is uppermost in the minds of Barbara Redfern & Co. If Gail is indeed still within the school then it is certain that she will strike once more at those against whom she has vowed revenge.

In next Saturday's vivid, long, complete, Cliff House School tale there are dramatic developments which seem to prove that Gail is in hiding in the school. But although they strive to find her, the chums meet with no success.

Do not fail to read this powerful school-mystery story, the title of which is:

"ALL THE SCHOOL WONDERED"

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