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THE SCHOOLGIRL

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Incorporating
'SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN



CLARA DEFENDS THE NEW GIRL

One of many dramatic incidents in this week's brilliant long complete Cliff House School story, the first of a new series.

First of an Enthralling Series Featuring Tomboy Clara Trevlyn

Not Wanted at CLIFF HOUSE

COMPLETE STORY

By

HILDA RICHARDS



The Newcomer

"NOT Clara!"

"Hib-tee! I tell you it's not Clara!" Beanie Bunker of the Fourth Form looked. "I-I heard Dulcia telling Stella Stone about it, you know. Dulcia doesn't think that Audrey Vernon is much good nowadays, and she's going to replace her in the first eleven."

"What, with Clara Trevlyn?" Barbara Redden, captain of the Fourth Form incredulously asked.

"Well, yes," Beanie explained. "At least, that's her idea. It depends, of course, on Clara."

"And Beanie, seeing that she had the attention of the crowd of Cliff House juniors which surrounded her, smiled.

"Dulcia is going to invite her to practice with the first eleven, you know, and if she keeps out of scrapes and does well on Saturday, then she gets her place in the senior team. Which, if you ask me," Beanie finished, "is a jolly big place for Clara. Not, of course," she added importantly, "when I couldn't do better in the first eleven."

But nobody there was listening to Beanie. Everybody was suddenly tremendously excited.

For it was the honour of becoming, surely, for Clara Trevlyn, captain of the Junior School, to be selected, if only tentatively, for the senior eleven. For that moment, of course, that Clara, though a junior, would get her school colours.

"Oh, my hat, what an honour for the Form!" Bala breathed.

An honour for the Form! Characteristic of Bala that she should look at it like that. Individually, of course, it was the greatest honour which could befall Clara Trevlyn, but the glory reflected upon the Form as a whole, and from that moment Clara was the

centre of everyone in the Common-rooms.

"Well, she jolly well deserves it!" Janet Jordan vainly spoke up. "Clara's been playing like a Trojan this season. And there's no doubt that Audrey Vernon has been going off."

"She'll be pleased," grinned Jane Merritt.

But girls pulled faces. Nobody could feel sorry for the laughing Audrey Dashwood Vernon. Audrey had only got what she deserved. It had been patent to most of those who took an interest in the school's first team that she had been decidedly off form lately.

There was a reason for it, of course. One couldn't play fast and loose as Audrey Vernon did. One couldn't break bounds right after night and attend all sorts of parties without suffering.

But except in a few, that fact was not generally known. Bala knew it. Clara knew it. Most of Bala's friends, and a few of the girls in the Upper Third knew it, too; and speculation had been rife recently as to how long it would take Audrey Vernon and the clique to which she belonged to get howled out.

Grace Reeve Campershill and Connie Jackson belonged to that clique, which was headed by Grace, who had a whitened reputation of being the sport girl in the Sixth.

It was a source of wonder to those who knew, that the trio had so cleverly and expertly been able to evade detection for so long. But perhaps that was not surprising, seeing that both Grace Campershill and Connie Jackson were prefects, and as such were above suspicion.

Indeed, Grace Campershill, so far from being regarded as one of the bad girls of the school, was often held up as an example—especially by Miss Belliveau, mistress of the Upper Third.

Grace had a great deal in common with the well-trodden Miss Belliveau:

At that very moment, indeed, the Upper Third Common-rooms was smoking with interest and with bitterness against Grace Campershill, who that morning had reported a whole crowd of them for making a noise while Miss Belliveau's back had been turned.

"Well, they say it's an ill wind that blows nobody good," Joanna Cartain teased. "Tough on naughty old Audrey—what? But list," she added, inclining her head towards the door. "Mightn't I hear the hurrying of someone tripping over her own feet. Can it be, my children, that it is our one and only?"

Their "one and only"—meaning Clara—was.

"Clara!"

"Clara, old top, is it true?"

"Yes," Dulcia rejoined.

"Fence! Oh, my eye, what a triumph!" Clara laughed. "Yes, it is true—in a way. I can hardly believe it myself. But I'm not in the eleven yet. It all depends on what form I play in Saturday's trial match whether I'm selected to go into the first eleven."

As it was true! Clara beamed again.

"Marvellous!" Clara added, "I've got to be a good girl." She pulled a laughing face. "No lines, no detentions—nothing, old Dulcia Fairbrother said, that's likely to interfere with training. But, I say," she added, and checked in the door swing open, to admit another girl—Stella Stone, the tall, graceful captain of the school, whose ravine-like attractive face was framed in a mass of chestnut brown curls. "Looking for me, Stella?" she asked.

Stella's glance was rather serious.

"Yes. Miss Primrose has sent me along to make some inquiries." Stella went on. "Yesterday, Clara, and you, Mabel and Barbara, had special permission to go into Courtfield."

Clara nodded.

"Yes, that's right?"

Stella regarded them covertly.

"You did not, by any chance, go into

Leigham?"

"Leigham? Why, no! That's out of bounds!"

HER first day at Cliff House

—and little Lucy Campershill

finds herself

—the

—against her Form—an object of

—scorn, an outcast!—And then to

—her aid comes Clara Trevlyn—

—Tomboy of the Fourth Form.

—"I'll stand by you!" Clara

—says—even though it means

—imperilling her dearest ambition

"Exactly!" Stella looked grim. "But it has been reported to Miss Primrose that three Cliff House girls, answering to your descriptions, were in Lantham at half-past five!"

Babe frowned.

"Well, we weren't in Lantham," she said. "Why should we go to Lantham?"

"Well, I'm sorry," Stella shook her head. "If you give me your word, of course I'll take it," she added. "At the same time, Miss Primrose seems pretty sure, and unless you can prove where you were at half-past five, I think you'll have a job to convince her. Particularly unfortunate," she added, with a glance at Clara, "that this should have happened at this time, when Dolina wants you, Clara."

"But, my hat, we weren't in Lantham," Clara burst out. "Primrose's all mixed up. And, my hat!" she cried suddenly. "Wait a minute. I can prove we were in Courtfield at half-past five! Babe, don't you remember—Grace Casperhill & Co. were in the tea-room when we went in for a snack?"

Stella looked relieved.

"Then, that's all right," she said. "If there's someone in the school who can prove an alibi for you, that dispenses of the matter. If Grace did see you, then I should not like to interfere for you with Miss Primrose. We can't have you getting gattings now, Clara."

Either not! The Fourth paled at the news, thought. If Clara were quiet, there that meant that she would be prevented from training.

But Clara looked determined. To appear in the snail stream had always been the height of sports-loving Clara's ambition. It was not going to be snuffed at the outset if she knew it!

"Come on!" Babe said.

"Yes, rather! Let's go!"

They went. In the Sixth Form passage they halted at the door of Room No. 4. From behind that door came a buzz of voices. It stopped immediately as Clara knocked.

"Well, come in!" Grace Casperhill's voice snapped out.

Clara, Babe, and Mabel entered. Grace was there, standing at the table, in the act of drawing up her gloves. Connie Jackson was there, too, busily composing a powder-puff in her handbag.

Audrey Vermer, appearing decidedly bed-tossed, her bright blonde hair looking as if it had received very recent attention from the hairdresser, was seated on the settee overlooking the quadrangle. At sight of Clara, her aristocratic nose elevated a little.

Grace Casperhill frowned.

"Well, what do you kids want?"

"Grace," Clara began, "you remember you saw us in the tea-room at Courtfield yesterday—"

Grace stiffened.

"Well?"

"If you remember," Clara pursued steadily, "it was somewhere about half-past five."

The three seniors looked at each other.

"Well, it's like this," Clara went on. "Something happened. Somebody has reported to Primrose that we were in Lantham at half-past five, and Primrose is after us with the chapter. The nuisance is," she added, "that we can't prove it—unless you come to Primrose and tell her that you saw us in Courtfield at the same time as we were supposed to have been in Lantham. One word from you," Clara added, "or even Connie here, will set the whole matter right."

A pause. Again the three seniors looked at each other. Grace's chin squared a little. Then:

"One moment," she put in. "Supposing I say we weren't in Courtfield at half-past five?"

"But you were!" Babe broke out.

"As it happens," Grace replied—but she was careful not to look at the juniors—"I mean! I was out on a buying errand—with Audrey here."

"That's so!" Audrey supported.

Babe, Mabel, and Clara blinked. For a moment they looked incredulous. Every incident of that meeting in the tea-room was as clear as crystal in each of their minds.

Without doubt, Grace, Audrey, and Connie had been there, and Grace, Audrey, and Connie had made a rather precipitate and hurried exit immediately they had come in, resulting, in her opinion, by Connie dropping her handbag.

And Clara suddenly Babe realized the truth. These girls, professed though one of them were, had been out of bounds without permission. Her lips curled rather scornfully.

"Oh, I see!" she said. "Of course, you weren't supposed to be in Courtfield."

Grace's face turned red.

"What are you insinuating?"

"Isn't it plain?" Clara put in contemptuously. "Oh, don't look so innocent! Half the school knows of your little goings-on. Playing at botany, when all the time you're just using the giddy goat! You jolly well were in Courtfield, and you know it! And that's why," she added, "you're scared to put in the word that you were in with Primrose." She glanced at them considerably. "What a crowd! And you call yourselves prefects!" she burst

out, her indignation getting the better of her.

Grace quivered. Connie suddenly had risen to her feet.

"Clara, you are important! Take a hundred lines!"

"Clara," Babe hissed, "remember!"

"Oh rabbits!" Clara snapped. Contempt, scorn showed in her face. "I'll take the hundred lines," she said mockingly, "and when I've done them I'll take them to Primrose! It won't be my fault if Primrose asks me what I got them for!"

"But—no! Clara, don't go!" In a moment Grace, fluttering in agitation, was across the room. "Wait a minute! Listen!" she cried desperately. "I'm sorry—I mean, I'll let you off the lines! But you're mistaken! We weren't in Courtfield!"

"That's your story!" Clara sniffed.

"I tell you—"

"And you're winking to it! Oh, very well! Don't alarm yourself! We shan't give you away, even if we do have to stand the racket! All the same—"

And, with another contemptuous glance round the room, she withdrew, leaving the three seniors looking decidedly amazed.

In rather moody silence, the three tramped down the passage.

"Well," Babe decided, "that's that!"

"Can't" granted Clara.

"Looks as if," Mabel said, with a grimace, "we'll have to face the music! Bad enough being on the carpet for something you have done, without suffering for someone else's sin! But, look here," she added, "somebody must have been in Lantham!"

Babe sighed. Obviously, that. Just as obvious that, somebody else had



CONNIE sitting round angrily. "Clara!" she snapped. "How dare you interrupt? Take a hundred lines!" But Clara stood her ground. She was not going to see the new girl bullied by this mean-spirited prefect.

reported the culprit. That didn't help matters, however.

In a glum group, they emerged from the Sixth Form corridor into Big Hall, and then stopped at somebody called Clara's name.

"The girl was Diana Royston-Clarke."
"Yeah! Clara, just heard!" she said. "Didn't think, at once, that they should have chosen you while I was absent! But, all the more, good luck! But why the gloom?" she asked lightly, her eyes travelling from one sister to another.

And then Clara told her. Diana stared, and then went off into a peal of laughter. Clara plovered.

"Well, I'm glad you can see a joke in it!" she growled.

"But it's funny," Diana cried, "because, my dear old building international, I was the culprit in Lathams yesterday! I went there with Frodo Perriers and Lydia Crossendale to see my pater, you know!" She laughed again. "Of course," Diana added lightly, "we departed with the obnoxious custom of making for porridge."

Clara giggled.

"That is *not* your *own*!" Diana roared, nodding. "Funny they should have got you mixed up. I'll just drop in to see Primrose."

Clara blinked.
"And *own* up?" she asked.
"Why *also*?" Diana asked coolly.

Clara raised a hand and strolled away. The girls stared after her.

"Well, my hat!" breathed Clara.
"Jolly decent of her!" Babs cried; and her heart wanted towards the First-year.

And Diana was as good as her word. She went to Primrose; there and then she owned up, carefully refusing to disclose the identity of the other girls in her company. Miss Primrose, apparently surprised by the confession, let her dress lightly.

"A hundred times!" Diana said, with a laugh, to Babs, Mabel, and Clara, when the chance to convey that information, as to the three sat at tea in Study No. 4. "Makes heads-breaking worth while—what! And, by the way, Clara, Primrose told me to tell you she would like to see you."

Clara, with a laugh, rose.
"All right! Take my place at the tea-table," she said.

She went off. But, unfortunately for Clara, Miss Primrose had just gone to tea when she reached her study. She turned back; was crossing Big Hall when the sound of voices arrested her.

One was the harsh, rasping voice of Connie Jackson. She seemed irritable.
"Oh, don't bother me! Find your own way about!"

Clara passed. Quickly her eyes went towards the two. A girl she had never seen before stood in front of Connie, whose sulky face was scowling and savage.

The girl was younger than Clara—scarcely, Clara guessed, about the age of thirteen. She had on a brand-new Cliff House tunic, a brand-new Cliff House hat, and in her hand carried a small bag, on which the initials "L. M. C." were engraved.

Curly and curls of glittering red hair fell from the hat, framing a tiny, child face, whose large dark eyes were filled at the moment with astonishment and indignation.

"But, please, I'm new here!" the girl expostulated.

Connie gave an impatient shrug.
"Oh, go away!"

A flash of spirit came into the young eyes.

"I think you're very rude!" the younger said.

"Oh!" Connie swung round, with a stare. "What's that? Oh, you think I'm rude, do you? You've got cheek for a new girl, haven't you! Do you know you're talking in a profane!"
"I don't care! My sister Grace is a perfect ton, but she wouldn't have spoken to anyone like that!" the new girl replied fiercely.

"And do you know," Connie went on, grinningly, her face glowing into the other, "that prefects in this school have powers to punish cheeky young lads, whether they are new or not! I'm a prefect, and I'm going to introduce you to a little discipline right away. Take my lines!"

Clara stared at exclamation at that. Her hands clenched by her sides. Instinctively she had taken a liking to the younger. She admired her pluck, her spirit, the unflinching way in which she faced the bully of the school.
"Lines, hold on, Connie!" Clara interrupted, stepping forward. "Give the kid a fair chance!"

In a moment Connie had swung round.
"Clara, how dare you! Take a hundred lines!"

Clara heaved a deep breath. The younger, whose large eyes were fixed upon her, moved forward.

"Please," she begged, "don't set me into trouble for me. I know she's a prefect, because my sister is a prefect, but I do think she's horrid and mean, all the same," she added, with a flash of anger.
"It's not fair of you to give lines to this new girl," she added, turning to Connie, whose cheeks were rapidly assuming blood-red hues.

"Why, you cheeky—"
She made a step forward. But Clara, her eyes glinting, intercepted, staring challengingly at her furious face. At the same time there was a step from the other side of the hall. The curtains parted, and Miss Chawmatt, the pretty mistress of the Fourth, came out.

Connie gave her one look, bit her lip, and turned. Without another word she shrunk away. The child smiled.

"Thanks!" she said. "What a horrid girl! But you"—and her large dark eyes became very soft and tender all at once—"that was nice of you!" she breathed. "You reminded me of my sister. Like you?"

Clara grinned.
"And I like you," she said. "You've got pluck, kiddie. You think a lot of this sister of yours, don't you? Who is she?"

The younger drew a deep, rapturous breath. Her little face seemed to radiate her joy.

"Her name," she breathed, as though naming something sacred, "is Grace Rowe Campershill!"



Not So Welcome

CLARA TRIVLYN'S first meeting with her new companion thought was—*poor kid!* And her next a fierce wave of resentment against the shade of resentment against the shade of Grace for being so sister's authority of it.
"You like her, too, don't you?" Lucy whispered.

"Oh!" Clara blushed a little. "Well," she unperceived, "I don't have much to do with her, you know. Did she know you were coming?"

Lucy laughed shyly.
"No, it's a secret. You see," she said deliberately, "I wanted to give her such a lovely surprise. Grace thought that I should go to St. Katharine's."

"And you didn't?"
"Oh you silly! I shouldn't be here, should I?" Lucy laughed. "You see, daddy gave me the choice of two schools—Cliff House and St. Katharine's. Grace said that I should be better off at St. Katharine's, as I've got friends there already, but I've heard such a lot about Cliff House, and I do miss Grace so much between terms, that I just had to come here. You see, we have such lovely times when Grace is home on holidays," she added.

Clara understood. She smiled rather grimly. She needed to be told no more. Obviously it was that Lucy Campershill who had the sister. She wondered rather dismally how long it would be before she discovered that her told had had her of clay.

"Well, let's get along and see her, shall we?" she asked lightly. "I know her study. I'll take you to it."

Off they went together, Lucy, happily prattling, seeming to have forgotten the unpleasantness of Connie Jackson in her meeting with this nice girl, and thrilled to the marrow at the thought of meeting her beloved sister again. But when they reached the study it was empty.

"Poor Grace!" Lucy said. "She'd be sitting her head off if she knew I was here! But this is her room," she added, her eyes shining. "It's just like her own room at home."

"At home, Grace has the next room to mine. We've got a communicating door, and sometimes at Christmas, when it's cold, we snuggle in together, and Grace tells me all the wonderful things that happen at this school. I should think," Lucy added, "that everybody loves her, don't they, Clara?"

"Oh, my hat!" Clara gasped. How could she tell the kiddie the truth—that her sister was among the most disliked girls in the school? She couldn't! It would just break her heart!

And then there was a step along the corridor. The door opened. Clara jumped up, swinging round. An ostentatious little grudge came from Lucy.

"Grace!" she cried quiveringly.
Grace it was. Quick, questioning the look she dashed at Clara, Trivlyn. Then, as she saw her sister, she jumped.
"Lucy—you?"

"No, Grace!" Lucy seemed to be too happy to notice the alarmed expression which momentarily clouded her sister's face. Delightfully she flung herself forward, delightedly hugged her. Clara coughed.

"I think I'll be going," she stammered.

She went, glad to be out of it. Lucy looked at her sister with adoring eyes.

"Oh, Grace, aren't you pleased to see me?"

"Of course! But—" Grace looked almost haunted. "I—I—well, I never expected you," she said. "How is it that you haven't gone to St. Katharine's?"

"Oh, Grace, I wanted to come here—to be near you!" Lucy whispered.

"Grace, kiss me, please!"
Grace lifted her. Bumping a little. Then she pulled off her gloves with a nervous, irritable gesture.

"Have you seen Miss Primrose?" she asked.

"Yes, Lucy said.

"What Fern has she put you in?"

"The Upper Third."

Grace frowned. She closed the door, then she swung round.

"Oh, kid, I'm glad to see you!" she



LUCY faced the Third Formers, breathing heavily. "You're hateful, the lot of you!" she flared. "And I don't believe a word you say about my sister!" An angry murmur rose from the crowd of girls. . . .

said. "Very, very glad! But you know that, don't you? You know, Lucy, that I'd love to have you here, really, but— She shook her head. "Lucy," she added nervously, "I wish you hadn't come."

"But Grace—" Lucy stammered. "Yes, I know. That doesn't sound very cheerful, does it?" Grace shook her head. "But—well, there's a difference," she added. "We can't go on here as we do at home. Here you'll be nobody. I'm a prefect."

"But I shall have you—I shall be able to see you!" Lucy breathed.

"Not so much as you think you will, kiddie," Grace hit her lip. "We shall live on rather different planes, you know. I was so sure you'd have gone to St. Kathleen's. I wish you'd taken my advice and gone, you know. I—I don't want to discourage you, but I really don't think this the sort of school for you. Everything here is so big, so immense. And the Third—"

She turned her head so as not to meet the least surprise in the other's face.

"The Third!" Lucy gasped. "It's the worst Form in the school, the roughest, the rottenest," Grace hesitated. "Really, she thought, she was a pig! She shouldn't be scaring Lucy. And really she didn't want to scare her."

But why had she come here? Why, when she could have gone to St. Kathleen's, should she arrive at Cliff House, undermining her peace of mind? Too well was Grace aware of the reputation she had in the school. Naturally she viewed the not far distant time when Lucy would leave of that reputation.

"Lucy, kid," Grace said, and flung sound impatiently, "don't stop. Wire and tell daddy that you don't like it. Ask him to take you away; he will. There's going to be such a lot of—of—well, of disillusionment, such a lot of heart-ache."

Lucy stiffened, however. "No," she said. "I said I'd come here, and now I am here I'll stay."

Grace passed a hand across her brow. And then, just as luck would have it, the door opened and Connie Jackson looked in.

"Oh, Grace, did you get the tickets?" she began, and then, becoming aware of Lucy, frowned. "Hallo, you," she said, "what are you doing here?"

"Connie!" cried Grace. "This is the kid who was giving me shock."

"Connie, please go!" Grace gasped out. "This—this is my sister."

Connie blinked. She stared at Lucy; she stared at Grace. Then, with a bewildered shake of the head, she closed the door and went out. Lucy regarded her sister.

"Oh, Grace, you're not friends with that awful girl!" she asked.

"Of course not!" Grace gulped. "But what did she mean—about the tickets? And why does she come in here without knocking? She seemed to think—"

"Lucy, please," Grace said desperately, "you don't understand. She's not my friend; but she's a prefect, and as a fellow-prefect I just have to be nice to her. Now, please," she added, "I'm going to be dreadfully busy. You know I told you in my letter I was writing like anything for the botany exam."

She opened the door, sent her gaze along the passage, and, encountering Clara Trevillyn, who at that moment happened to be coming along on her way from Dalcia Fairbrother's study, called her.

"Oh, Clara!"

"Yes?" Clara said wonderingly. "You might take my sister to the Third Form Common-room and introduce her."

Clara nodded, and Lucy, gladly joining her, waved a gay good-bye and cheerfully went off down the passage with her.

Now she had gone Grace sank back with a groan.

"Oh, my hat! Why—why did she come here?" she cried.

Why? For all in a moment Grace saw her castle crumbling. How different the steady life she led here to the life she led at home! Her father and mother loved her. Little Lucy positively adored her—she, the kindly, the considerate, the girl whose reports were always such poems of praise, of whom the whole family was so proud. Why was she two such different types at home and at school?

But that was not occupying her mind now. In Lucy's tranquil presence at Cliff House she saw ruin, exposure, starting her in the face.

She rose to her feet. Temporarily she strode the room.

"It's not fair! It's not fair!" she cried aloud.

"No!" a voice said, and she jumped to face Connie Jackson at the door. "What's not fair?"

"Connie, my sister—"

"Oh, that kid!" Connie's lips twisted in disdain. "Well, what about her?"

Grace made a hopeless gesture.

"Oh, Connie, you don't realize. No, wait a minute. The relations between her and me aren't like the relations between you and your young sister Ida of the Third Form. That kid thinks I'm an angel. She thinks I'm wonderful!"

Connie grinned. "Then she's in for some shocks," she retorted.

"That's it!" Grace looked distraught. "Oh, I can't!" she said. "You wouldn't! You wouldn't," she said. "But if ever she finds out what I'm doing here, it will break her heart. It will break my parents' hearts, too," she added.

Grace sent her a swift glance at Clara.

"Here, I say, you're not going to turn up!"

"No!" Grace hit her lip. But for once there was repentance in her face. "But I don't have any peace while my kid sister is in this school."

"Then get rid of her," Connie calmly replied. "You told her not to come, didn't you? You warned her

what sort of life she'd have." If the kid gets completely fed-up with Cliff House School—

Grace snuck into a chair.

"Wouldn't she ask to leave?" Connie pounced.

Grace gasped and nodded.

"Then it's easy," Connie nodded confidently. "Leave it to me. She'll have to go through the hoops of course—but that, after all, is all part of her education," she added cheerfully. "Come up, Grace. Don't look so down in the mouth. We've got a ripping little ally in this, and I'll stroll along and have a word with her now."

"You mean?"

"I mean," Connie retorted, "my sister Ida! If anybody can make things hot for Lucy, then Ida can."

And she walked out. While Grace, sitting stock still, stared with a sudden and utter hatred of herself, at the wall opposite her.



One Alone

WHILE there's no need to go to the Common-rooms yet," Clara Trevelyn said cheerfully. "And I bet you're hungry, Lucy! Besides, I've got some friends I'd like to introduce you to. What say to a spot of tea in Study No. 7?"

"Oh, that will be lovely!"

"Then let's go."

They went, Lucy's eyes gleaming with admiration.

Very rapidly in Lucy's regard Clara Trevelyn was becoming a heroine.

And Clara had taken an instinctive liking to the new girl. Allied to that liking was a great deal of pity.

Hostility towards Grace Revere Campbell was still in the ranks of the Third. The Third were not easy to get on, and most of them at that moment were groaning in the Third Form class-room as they groined out the impositions which the reporting of the class by the hated Grace Campbell had caused for them that morning at the hands of Miss Bullivant. It was hardly likely, Clara reflected, that they would fall upon the sister of their enemy with joy and welcome at such a moment.

So Clara, instinctively taking the new girl under her wing, plucked her into Study No. 4. Margie van Henshelen was there, and Janet Jordan, and Jennie Bala, Mabel, Rosemary Baxter, and Emma Cucksham. Nine girls there. Just the sort of crowd to put her Lucy completely and thoroughly at her ease.

Clara had already told them of her first encounter with Lucy Campbell, and that they were all, most naturally, interested in her. All set-out to be kind to her.

Magnificent, unsuspected by anybody, Connie Jackson was having a heart to heart talk with her younger sister Ida.

And Ida smiled. Ida and Connie were very much ships of the same block. Spirited and malicious Ida's nature. She was the streak and salt-tale of the Third.

She winked.

"Leave it to me," she said. "I'll see that she's made to sit up. What about Grace, though?"

"She won't interfere," Connie assured her.

Ida grinned. In great glee she went off to the Third Form class-room.

Most of the recollections of that redoubt-

side class had finished their lines now, and were sitting gloomily regarding the clock until their period of detention should end.

They all looked up as Ida, who had been released by Connie—for Connie, of course, had exercised her privilege as prefect—burst in with flaming face.

"News!" she cried.

The Third gazed at her. "My sister Connie just told me about her. And Grace!"

"Well, what?" Madge Stevens asked impatiently.

"Grace Campbell's sister!"

"What?"

"Kid named Lucy," Ida went on, with a chuckle. "She's coming into the Third. This Third—the Upper Third!"

"Oh, I say!"

Faces shone with sudden interest, with excitement. Some looked grim. Smearing under the lash of Grace's punishment as the Third was at that moment, the news could not have come at a more propitious time.

"And crony about her sister. Think she's just marvellous," Ida went on with a grin.

Jennie Gwenton scowled.

"Well, she's got something to smirk about, anyway. And is Grace fond of her?"

"Well, of course. Just goofy on her."

"Then in that case," Fanny Tibbets said, with a grin, "we'll jolly well take the shine out of her. It's bad enough having one Campbell in the school, without having two. Hat, heads up," she added. "Here's Miss Bullivant!"

Miss Bullivant it was. A thin figure with a face like flint, she appeared in the doorway.

"Have you finished your impositions, girls?" she rapped.

"Yes, Miss Bullivant."

"Very well, then, you may go."

The class dived in relief. A surge was made towards the Third Form Common-room at once.

Most of the girls were hungry, and thanks to digestion, tea was possible. There was quite a holler-to-holler rush down the corridor towards the Third Form Common-room, and Doris Redfern dashed with Fay Chandler at the door, she bang it open.

"Come on, kids, get the fire going, and—"

Then she stopped. For in the centre of the room stood Clara Trevelyn, the games captain of the Fourth, and a bright-faced younger girl, with flaming masses of red hair, standing beside her, with a shy and nervous smile. "Why, hallo, Clara!" Doris said, and gazed a little jealously at the newcomer.

For Doris was very fond indeed of Clara Trevelyn—Clara, indeed, was Doris' own particular heroine.

"This," Clara explained, "is a new girl."

"Oh, Lucy Campbell!" And Doris eyed her jealously. "Sister of Grace Campbell, aren't you?"

"Yes, rather!"

Lucy nodded obediently.

"I'm Doris Redfern," Doris said, rather blantly.

There was a pause. Most of the Fourth had crowded round now, were scrutinizing the newcomer, gazing at her rather as if she were some new and interesting exhibit.

"Just look after her," Clara instructed. "Show her round, and so on. Make things as easy as you can for her. I'll leave her with you, Lucy, if you should want to go home where I live."

"Yes, and thanks," Lucy said brightly. "I can get on all right now."

She smiled, Clara, with a little frown, crossed the door and disappeared through the doorway. Then, rather uncertainly and shyly, Lucy regarded the faces which surrounded her. "I say, I'm in your Form, you know?"

Fanny Tibbets giggled.

"And isn't that," she put in mockingly, "a break for us?"

Lucy flushed a little. Doris' face darkened.

"Here," held on a minute," she said. "Dash it, give the kid a chance. Fair play, everybody!" She yanked her up and down.

"I must say," she added, comparing her best prejudice, "that you don't seem a bad sort, in spite of your sister!"

Lucy stared.

"My sister!"

"But if you only try the line we'll overlook that," Doris went on magnanimously. "We pride ourselves on being broad-minded in the Third. Well, she'll never stand at me," she added, with a frown.

Lucy's eyes gleamed.

"You said something disrespectful about my sister?"

A shrill gust of laughter came from the assembled Third Formers. Doris sighed.

"Kid," she said seriously, "don't be an idiot. I've told you we're willing to forgive you your sister."

"Can that she is!" put in the voice of Ida Jackson.

Lucy looked round. Very white, all at once, her face became. By her sides the little hands gripped tightly on her palms. Full and straight she stared at Ida Jackson.

"You said that!" she cried.

"I did!" Ida asserted.

Lucy's chest heaved. The danger lights appeared in her eyes.

"She isn't a cat!"

"No!" asserted Ida. She lunged forward. "That's all you know about it," she cried contemptuously. "She is a cat! She's a snake, too! Who snaked on us in this morning!"

"She did!" a voiceless shout went up.

And who got up all detained this evening?

"Grace Campbell!"

Lucy went crimson. She hit her lip. Then, fiercely, a gust of tongue struck her. She looked around. Faces, hostile, staring, met her gaze. They were talking about Grace—her beloved Grace, her idol!

"I don't believe you! I don't believe you!" she cried, with passionate indignation. "If you get yourself detained it wasn't Grace's fault. She's a prefect. She's got her duty to do."

"Yes, my hat, and how she does it!" jeeringly derided Jennie Gwenton. "Playing the giddy goat! Flying the high kite! Who breaks bounds every night in the week!"

"She does!"

"And who jolly well runs up hills and goes to parties!"

"She does!"

Lucy quivered.

"Who goes to forbidden parties when she's supposed to be on holiday rounds!"

"She does!" howled Ida Jackson.

"Stop!" cried Lucy, suddenly baring.

"It's her—her!" she cried violently.

"Grace is my sister. I tell you she's true blue! She wouldn't do a single thing she was ashamed of, she wouldn't! And then, shocking, in-considerate with indignation, and seeing Ida's jeering face in front of her, blantly rushed forward. "You!" she cried. "You started this! I'll make you eat these words. I'll make you say—"

"Here!" called Ida Jackson, in alarm.

And the Third stood, for one instant, startled. For Lucy, quivering, looking, had lunged forward upon her chief tormentor. She caught Ida by the shoulders, she shook her. Back, backward, back again, with all the strength her anger inspired within her.

"Apologies!" she uttered.
 "I won't!" was the reply. "Rouse everybody!" yelled Ida in alarm.
 But there was no need for rouse. For, as suddenly as it had appeared, Lucy's little gust of fury subsided itself. Even as Jessie Cranston and Fanny Tibbotts rushed forward, she let go, and Ida, staggering backward, crashed against them, bringing them to the floor in her fall.

In one bound Lucy was across the room. At the door she turned, her face dead white. One instant, she looked only she gave, and then—alone! The door closed behind her, and quivering, heartbeating, she was gone!

(that interference, but Babe could not help feeling a trifle apprehensive.

"Babe," Clara said, and put down her pen. "I'm worried about that kid. Oh, yes; I know you're anxious about me! But leave me out of it for the moment. I've an idea," Clara added restively, "that she's not going to have a happy time with the Third. I was wondering, in fact, if you would have a talk to Doris about it, Babe?"
 Babe smiled.

"Why, of course! I'll go now."
 She went out. Straight to the Third Form Common-room she tripped. Doris, as it happened, was in the act of coming out as she jerked the handle of the door to go in. She grinned.

"Hallo, Babe! I say, have you got any of that chocolate left?"

"I have not," Babe replied, and paused. "Doris," she added, "I want to talk to you."
 "Oh! What about?"
 "About Lucy Campbell."

Doris pulled a face.
 "That little milkmaid?" she said disdainfully. "Why? Has she been running along complaining to Clara?"
 "She has not," Babe said, "been coming to anyone. By which I gather, she added, "that there's already been some sort of rumour. Doris, what's been happening?" she asked.

"Oh, nothing!" Doris shuffled her feet. "She just went bust when somebody said something about her beastly color, and threatened to set about the lot of us."
 Babe shook her head.
 "Doris, that's hardly fair, is it? The kiddie's a sweet sort. It's not her fault she's got a sister like Grace Campbell; and surely," Babe added, "it's something in her (never to stick up for her. She doesn't know her as we know her."

Doris shrugged.
 "After all," Babe went on tenderly, "if anybody said things about me, wouldn't you be up in arms? You've got to look at the thing from her point of view, and it's not like you, Doris, to be unfair. Give her a chance."

Doris flushed a little.
 "Well, I tried to."

"Yes, I was guess," Babe shook her head. "Well, try again," she coaxed, and suddenly she extracted a two-shilling note from her purse. "Doris, I do want her to have a chance. Look here!" she said, "Get hold of her, stand her a treat, and invite the dearest girl in the Form to come along at the same time."

"My hat, you're interested in her, aren't you?" Doris said.
 "Never mind. Doris, will you?"
 "Who's it?" Doris grinned, and checked the two-shilling note.



Conflict

"**B**LOW!" exclaimed Clara Trevlyn, with exasperation.

And she ground down on the sheet of rough paper before her, and at the early blot which had fallen from the end of her pen.

Beastly blot, that! And, of course, it would happen when she had practically filled the page. Should be more careful, she chided herself; but it wasn't easy to be careful when she had so many things on her mind.

In the first place, she was most tremendously excited about the prospect of her elevation to the senior class.

But struggling with her elation on that score was a vague worrying on account of the bright new girl who had arrived that afternoon, and who had taken, such a firm hold upon several Clara's affections.

So bright, so happy, and yet—She sighed. She was wondering rather woefully if she had been right to leave her things in the Third Form Room.

The door opened, and Barbara Redfern came in.

"Hallo!" she cried. "What are you doing? Not lines, surely?"

"Yes," Clara ruefully admitted. "Connie gave them to me."

Babe's face clouded a little.

"Oh, great goodness! What the dickens were you doing to upset Connie? Clara, listen!" she cried. "I've just been having a talk with Dulsie. You know that whole Form's been on a spree; you turn out for the first sleep!"

Clara glanced up.

"Clara, if you do anything to put that honour in jeopardy, they'll never believe in you again," Babe said seriously. "And that," she added importantly, "is the one thing Dulsie is afraid of. You see," Babe added insistently, though she knew it was her duty to speak out, "you're such an abnormal old goose at times that you don't just trouble to think about what you're doing until you've done it! And then, of course, it's too late. Why on earth did you get on the wrong side of Connie?"

Clara pulled a face.

"Well, she was being rude to the new kid."

Babe could—and did—admire the large-hearted spirit which prompted

BUT LUCY, for the time being, was not to be blamed. Lucy, as a matter of fact, was in her sister's study.

But Grace herself was not there. Grace, unknown to her younger sister, was in Connie Jackson's study.

Still shaken by Lucy from that scene in the Third Form Common-room, and she sank into a chair, her chest still heaving a little. As she did so something fell off the arm and dropped to the floor.

Lucy bent to pick it up. It was an envelope. She picked it up by its corner, and as she did so three paste-board cards fell out, spilling themselves on the carpet at her feet. Rather curiously, she stooped to retrieve the cards, and then, as she read the lettering on the front, straightened up. What was this?

"Fancy Dress Dance."



THE door swung open, and on the threshold stood Connie Jackson. "So," she cried angrily, "I've caught you!" The Third Formmen muttered threateningly. Someone had sneaked!

"A dance," she whispered incredulously.
She looked at the card again. It was for to-morrow night at the Royal Hotel, Courtfield.

"Dancing, 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.," it read.
Lucy's eyes became wide. These tickets—in her sister's possession!

For a moment she set stock-tilt. Claretous, indigestion, these tickets which had been booked at her in the Communion-room came bounding through her brain: "Who goes to forbidden district?" "Who goes to shady parties?" "Who breaks through?"

Her sister! They had said these things about her sister! She, patiently, indignantly, had refused to believe them. Now, then?

Perfectly still Lucy sat. No, no! It wasn't true! It wasn't! There must be some mistake—

The door opened. Behind her, the face of Grace Campbell underwent a swift, startling change as she saw her sister seated there. And then she moved because a host of steps as she saw the tickets in her hand. She coughed.

"Lucy, why aren't you in the Communion-room?"

"Lucy about her head."
"I—I couldn't stop!" she said. "The—they were horrid! They said things—things about you, Grace—awful things! They—they—and she gulped— they as good as said that you sister history your excuse to go off head-bashing and attending dances!"

A little glint came into Grace's eyes. "Grace, it's not true, is it?"

"Kid, of course it isn't true!" she said. "If you believe half of what you hear said against people, you'll think they're all wrong! Don't worry your head about it, Lucy!"

Lucy hit her quivering lip.
"But I do worry, Grace. I—I don't like to hear them saying things about you, and—and—" She hesitated, then slowly withdrew the dance-tickets in her hand. "Grace, I—I found these in your trunk!" she faltered, with a look that begged for explanation.

"These?" Grace's eyes gleamed a little. She took them lightly. "Thank you, Lucy. They aren't mine. I took them from a girl in the Fourth. You see if this sort of thing got to the ears of Miss Pringle, there would be trouble, and I do my best to cover up trouble whenever it's possible. But what's this about you?" she added, regarding Lucy. "You say you've been having trouble with the Third?"

Lucy nodded.
"I told you, didn't I, that they were just a set of young rascals." Grace shook her head. "Lucy, the crowd, 'why don't you write to Kathleen?' daily to send you to St. Kathleen's?"

She hung with more anxiety than Lucy knew upon her reply. But Lucy, so low secret shagrin, shook her head.
"No," she said grimly. "I won't. I'll stick it out. If they think rotten things of you, Grace, I'm jolly well going to show them they're mistaken!"

Grace gazed at her hopefully. "What loyalty the little one had! But how she wished for once that that loyalty was not so fierce."

For a moment she hesitated, gulping a little as she thought of Lucy's credit in the Third Form Communion-rooms. Then her heart hardened. It couldn't be helped!

With loyalty feverishly renewed, Lucy started out. At the end of the passage she met Doris Bellows.

"Hello!" Doris said, as though nothing had happened. "Looking for you, Lucy. I say—guess?"

Lucy stared at her.
"We're having a lead," Doris went on. "Here, give me your arm. Don't shrink away, you chicken! I'm not going to eat you. We're having a lead," she expanded gleefully. "In the dorm—after lights-out. And you ought to consider yourself jolly lucky," she added, "because it's in your honour! Madge Stevens and I have been discussing the Third—"

Lucy gulped.
"You mean—"
"I mean," Doris said easily, "that we're going to forget all that other stuff. It's not your fault if Caspary's not here. I mean, after all, you're a new school, and new kids should be made welcome. So we're having this lead. See?" Doris added authoritatively.

"Oh, I say!" Lucy's eyes shone. "But isn't it against the rules?" she asked.

"Of course it's against the rules. That's what makes it fun!" Doris retorted. "But here we are!" And, reaching the door of the Third Form Communion-rooms, she pushed the hesitant Lucy in. "Attention, everybody!" she called cheerfully. "Well, here we are, Lucy—all friends again, what?"

Lucy flushed. Willing enough she was to be friends, but she could not forget all at once the insults which had been levelled at her adored sister. She couldn't possibly be friends with girls who held such opinions.

"Well, thank—thank you," she said somewhat treacherously. "I'm sorry if I can't say things just now. But you didn't mean, did you, what you said about Grace?"

There was silence. Lucy's eyes spread wider.

"Doris!" Lucy turned and then started. "Doris, tell me!"

"Oh, for goodness' sake be quiet about your sister!" Doris said irritably. "Don't go and spoil things now!" "You mean—you still stick to the belief that she's an outsider?" Lucy breathed.

"Well, you?"

"And you, Fay?"

Fay Chandler bit her lip.

"Well, I don't see how anyone can believe anything else."
Lucy's face was bitter.
"I see!" she said. Her chest heaved. "Well, I don't believe you—I won't believe you!" she cried, breaking into sudden passion. "And I won't be friends with girls who say things about my sister. I know her—you don't!"

A warmer glow, becoming a shout.
"And I won't," Lucy cried, "come to your beastly feud!"

"Why, you little prig!"

"Three her out!"

The Third, angry, increased, was in an uproar. Lucy, with flashing eyes, stood scornfully at bay.

Then something whirled out from the crowd of girls—something from Ida Jackson. It hit Lucy sharply on the shoulder, and her staggering back with a cry of pain. At the same moment the door opened, and Clara Twenty, her eyes gleaming, came into the room.

but in the Third had rushed upon her ears. Grinly she came into the room.
"Stop it!" she cried.
A fresh haul went up.
"Get out, Fourth Form!"
"Mind your own business!"
"It is my business," Clara said between her teeth, and interposed herself between Lucy and the door. "You out and run, kid," she added hurriedly. "I'll deal with this."
"Hi!" Lucy muttered.
"Hi!"

And Clara pushed her towards the door, bundling her out. The Third choked.

"Stop her!"
"She's got to apologise!"
But Lucy, tumbling, was outside then, and Clara closed the door upon her. Scornfully she turned and faced them.

"In this," she said bitterly, "what can all fair play? About twenty of you on to one girl!"

"Mind your own business!" cried Jennie Cranston.

"Get out!"

"I'll just stay," Clara said grimly, "when I've said what I want to say. And then the judge, an another fellow whined at her head. Her face flushed suddenly, her hands clenched.

"Ida Jackson, you little beast!"
And quickly she stepped forward. Ida, with a yell, dodged back. In dodging back she collided with Fanny Tildetin, who, reaching up for a book, caught the shelf for support. The shelf was not made to stand that treatment. It gave, and with a terrific crash, came down, showering books all over the floor. There was a moment of silence.

Then—

"Clara!" stepped a sharp voice from the door.

"Oh, my hat, Miss Bullivant!"

"What are you doing in this room, Clara?"

Clara flushed.

"Well, you see—"
"I see—yes!" Miss Bullivant looked bitter. "I have just heard," she added meaningly. "It is quite apparent, Clara, that you came here to create a disturbance, and have succeeded in doing so. You will take a hundred lines."

Clara clenched her hands. From Ida Jackson went up a titter. But the words that trembled upon the Tutor's lips, but she remembered in time. To-morrow was the practice upon which she had set her heart. If she loaded herself up with impositions—

Grimly she compressed her lips and went out. Miss Bullivant remained to deliver a few stinging words upon the subject of discipline and good behaviour, and walked off. Immediately she had gone, Ida Jackson sneaked after her. And Ida went straight to Connie.

Connie was in her study, smoking a cigarette. She put it down hurriedly as her sister entered, and then placed it between her lips again as she saw her visitor. Ida grinned.

"I'll say!" she said.

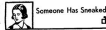
"Oh, yes!" Connie smiled.

"I've never seen." And Ida cheerfully related what had happened. "The kids read with the Third. She said she wouldn't take part in their awful feud at any price. The kids' going to take place to-night after lights-out. Now if you missed in—"

Connie grinned.

"Good egg!" she said. "I get you. You mean it would look as if somebody had sneaked!"

"Of course!"
Connie chuckled.



Someone Has Sneaked!

VERY angry Clara Twenty looked. Very angry she was, Clara, having founded her love, had been on her way to the Fourth Form Communion-room, when the hub-

"And in the Third's present mood against precious little Lucy— She chuckled as she thought. "O.K., leave it to me!"

As for your night—

The feed in the Third Form dormitory was at its height. Cassie had been in. The good things provided by Barbara Radford's money, added to by a scotch-up by members of the Third, lay spread in tempting array upon Doris Radford's bed. The soft apples, the popping of ginger-beer corks, the clink of knives against plates, testified to the Third's extreme satisfaction and gratification. All the Third was clustered near or around that bed, and all the Third was enjoying itself.

Except one girl. That girl was Lucy Campbell.

Lucy, in her bed at the far end of the room, lay very still looking on at the scene. Winded her gaze; rather restraining the look on her face. She wanted to take part. She wanted—oh, goodness knows how she wanted that—to be friends with these Form-mates of hers. She liked Doris and Madge and Fay Chamberlain, almost their doublets in her sister; but, she told herself with that fierce loyalty so characteristic of her, she couldn't be friends with girls who so hated the girl she held dear.

There was subdued chatter and laughter.

"Gossipations!" Fay Chamberlain said. "Rather! Pass the cardines."

"More ginger-beer, Madge!"

In the excitement nobody noticed the door opening. But suddenly a hand cracked out. Suddenly there was a creak, and the girls, blinking in the sudden radiance of electric light, turned to behold Connie Jackson on the threshold. A dismayed gasp went up.

"Oh, my hat!"

"So," Connie said grudgingly, "this is it, eh? All enjoying yourselves, eh? And not knowing, of course," she added mockingly, "that I know all about it. Thanks, Lucy!" she said, to that girl's bewilderment. "I'm glad you told your sister about this."

The Third stood crimson with dismay. Lucy half started up.

"But I didn't!"

"Thanks, then's enough from you!" Connie snapped. "Get this stuff collected, all of you." She waited grimly while the infuriated Third, with many a bitter glance towards the dismayed Lucy, set about the task.

"And silence!" she rapped, as Lucy opened her lips again. "No more talking, thank you! Every girl, with the exception of Lucy Campbell, will do a special detention task to-morrow afternoon. Now get to bed!"

As if they had been whipped, the juniors crept back. Connie, with a grin, switched off the light, and, leaving the task behind her, went out. For a moment there was deep and bitter silence. Then—

"You sneak, Lucy Campbell!" came blithely from Jessie Grayson's bed.

Lucy gasped.

"But I tell you—"
"You've an need to tell us," Ida Jackson's sneering voice put in. "We know." You went and sneaked to your sister."
"I didn't!"

"Just to get your beauty corn back because we need her in the Cassiopea room!" Fancy Carter hissed.

Lucy, in her frantic anxiety, got out of bed, a slip of a figure in the moon-

light that streamed through the windows immediately above her. She cried out.

"Girls, please listen to me!"

"Go to sleep!"

"We don't want your set here, Lucy Campbell!"

"Will you listen—"

The answer was a pillow. It whizzed through the darkness, sweeping Lucy back upon her bed.

And then, in a moment, Lucy lost control of her fiery temper.

She snatched the pillow, hurled it into the darkness. There came a muffled yell from Jessie Grayson's bed.

"Who, you call!"

"Will you listen to me!" Lucy panted.

But the Third was in no mood to listen. Forgotten as once because their recent lesson; forgotten the hour, the fact that they were running a rumpus. In their wrath they rose. Pillows were grabbed.

Somebody threw a shoe among the flock that suddenly blazed in the darkness towards Lucy. She gave a cry as it caught her; and in the Fourth Form dormitory, Clara Twyala, suddenly jerking out of her sleep, heard that cry and recognized the voice which uttered it. In a moment she was out of bed.

"Clara!" Babe cried from the next bed.

But Clara was snatching up her dressing-gown. Fervently she was running her feet into slippers. She did not speak, did not even look round. In the Third Form dormitory the din increased. "Oh, my hat!" gasped Babe. "Mabel! Mabel! Wake up! Clara, the chump! She's gone out! We've got to bring her back!"

In a moment Mabel was fully awake. Some of the other girls murmured. Clara had gone; and now, as they hurriedly dressed, they heard her strident voice:

"Stop it, you kids!"

"Oh, my hat!" growled Babe.

She was in her dressing-gown then. Followed by Mabel, she darted towards the door. And then their both struck back as they stepped into the corridor. For sailing up this corridor, her face a mask of stern majesty, was Miss Pinrose.

"Barbara-Mabel! What are you doing out of bed?" Miss Pinrose said. "What is the meaning of all this disturbance?"

Babe and Mabel fell back. Miss Pinrose, almost breaking into a run, snatched on towards the Third Form dormitory. In dismay the two glanced at each other. They heard the door open, heard Miss Pinrose's voice:

"Clara!"

Babe hit her lip.

"The idiot, she's caught!" she panted.

"Now there'll be riotous!"

not beginning to be sorry now that I creased up I was in Lantham yesterday! What the deuce did you go sticking your nose into the Third Form business for?"

"They were bullying Lucy," Clara retorted.

"Yikes! Anybody would think the kid was your sister the way you go on about her!" Diana scoffed. "Can't her own sister look after her?"

Clara did not reply. Moodily she stalked towards her bed. She was bitter, furious. She had stopped the riot in the Third Form dormitory, but at what a cost. Four hundred lines! And all of them to be done by six o'clock to-morrow. She couldn't! Why, there was two hours' work there!

"Clara!" Babe said.

"Well?" Clara asked crossly.

"How the deuce are you going to do the lines and get the practice in?"

Clara groaned.

"There's only one way," Babe said quietly. "That is to do them to-night. No, wait for half an hour, then Mabel and I'll creep down and help you."

And that was what they did. The three of them worked steadily in Study No. 3, and at the end of an hour the task was done.

"And," pleaded Babe, "for goodness' sake don't run any more risks!"

"I'll try not to," Clara sighed. "And I wouldn't, if only the Third would leave Lucy alone. But that kid—Oh, Mabel, I don't know. There's something about her that just wings my heart!"

"And while," Mabel interjected, "that kid's wringing your heart, you're wringing the hearts of the Form!"

They went back. Well, thank goodness the job was done! And the next afternoon Clara, despite the dismal prophecies of her Form-mates, played on Honor Side, with the viola of the Fourth—and Audrey Varner—watching her.

And how the Form cheered! How they roared! No doubt that afternoon that Clara, flushed with pride, fervently determined to win her spot, was on top of her form. After the practice, Diana approached her.

"Good!" she said. "Very good! Play like that in your own match on Saturday, and the place in the first team is yours. Not 'ears," she added, with a frown. "I've been hearing reports about you, Clara!"

Clara flushed.

"Seems to be running into trouble again!" Dublin asked. "Beow clear of it. You haven't the place in the team yet, you know—and you won't get it until I see what you do on Saturday. When you feel tempted to run off the rails again, just think of that, will you?"

But when the practice had been in progress, the Third Form had been having the most uncomfortable time of their lives.

For the Third were, thanks to Connie Jackson, detained.

And Connie was the prefect in charge of the detention—Connie, who considered she had a mission to fulfill on behalf of her troop, Grace Reeve Campbell.

Grace was squawked, she told herself contemptuously. Grace was not fit to handle this. The more increased the Third became against the prefect in charge, the more vicious was their wrath likely to mount on the head of the girl whom they blamed for their sufferings.

So Connie worked upon the feelings



The Scooby Trap

RUCTIONS there certainly were! For Clara, as the prize of her intercombes on Lucy's behalf, earned another two hundred lines. All the Fourth was awake what she came in, and every eye in the Fourth fastened upon her bitterly. Diana Rayton-Clarke clicked her tongue.

"Well, and a nice mess you're making of things," she said. "Dashed if I'm

of the Third. She lived there; she gazed there; she gazed every night, every morning. Everybody had eyes, and more than during that detention, and the Third was working when at last dismissal time came. Perhaps it was fortunate for Lucy that she was not within distance of her angry Form-master then.

"We'll jolly well get our own back!" Jessie Cranston said vindictively. "We'll make her sit up. Two hundred times I've got-for nothing! Nothing, mind you!" she victoriously stamped. "I'd like to see that least school! I'd like to see her thrown out on her back!"

There, she is, going out into the quadrangle now! Fanny Carter put in with a snarl. "And didn't the cat look pleased with herself?"

Something was the Third—in a mood for vengeance, for recklessness. When Fanny Tibbets suggested rigging a booby trap for Connie upon her return, the Third took up the suggestion with back of head.

They just had to have some outlet for their wrath, and, seeing that Connie at the moment was the worst of all enemies that ever had existed, with glue and jelly the booby trap was prepared.

Ide Jackson, most fortunately, and perhaps a little mysteriously, was out of the way. But Ida was not far. Ida, forced for the sake of appearances to share the Form's detention, had, nevertheless, not been the victim of her sister's spiritual cruelty. Ida, indeed, had got off scot-free, a fact which Ida was rather apprehensive that the Form might tumble to if they started coughing their grievances in her company.

Ida most certainly did not like the temper of the Third. To their anti-Connie mood they were just as likely to turn upon her as upon her sister. She heard the booby trap plot being discussed, and flew to find Connie.

Meanwhile, preparations on the booby-trap were completed. An empty basin filled with powdered chalk was glued fully hooked along to the Sixth Form corridor. It was lighted mark, but Doris Bottom and Fay Chandler fixed it, while half a dozen other girls stood about keeping "sure."

Fortunately Connie's study was in the angle of the Sixth Form corridor, away from the rest, and adjoining a cold-draw which was never used.

Doris, climbing on to a chair, suspended the tin over the door by means of a piece of string hung on to a picture hook. The tin was then delicately balanced on the framework, so that even at the slightest push the door would tipple it over.

They were in the act of finishing when there was a sudden warning cry from Fanny Carter.

"Care! Oh, it's all right! It's only that little mouse, Lucy Chamberhill!"

Lucy it was, Lucy fresh from the practice on Senior Side, in search of her sister, who apparently had gone off one of her botany rambles. She stopped, eyeing the flushed, excited juniors in wide-eyed amazement.

"I say, what are you doing?"

"Mind your own business, mouse!"

Fanny Tibbets said indignantly.

"Fished, Doris?"

"Yes."

"Then back up! somebody's coming." Somebody was. They heard footsteps ascending the stairs on the other side of the corridor. Lucy, not understanding, stood still, blinking a little as the sound below-shattered down the passage in the opposite direction. Then up the corridor strode the angular form of Miss Ballivan. She seemed very "as-

"Lucy, I heard voices. Who was here?"

"Oh, dear! Non-ono-ono. Miss Ballivan!"

"What are you doing here?"

"Please, Miss Ballivan, I've just been to my sister's study."

"Very well," Miss Ballivan nodded.

"But (staring), she murmured, "are not allowed to loiter in girls' quarters."

"However, as you are here, you may retrace and help me to take some exercise."

"Unhappily she approached Connie's door, knocked, and, receiving no reply, pushed it open."

And then—

In startled amazement Lucy jumped back. Miss Ballivan's frame stiffened. From out of the sky, it seemed, there descended with a hissing crash a great cloud of white dust.

"White as a ghost, her eyes glaring in a dead white face, Miss Ballivan turned with a choking splutter."

"My good-god-god!" she said, not very intelligibly. "You—girl!"

But Lucy, with one blank, terrified, utterly scared look, took to her heels. Sky flew.

Miss Ballivan breathed powdered chalk and wrath. She dashed herself down, in quavering fury glared around her. There was a step in the corridor—a hurried step. Connie Jackson crept round.

"Why, good gracious, Miss Ballivan!"

"I—I am shaking!" Miss Ballivan spluttered. "Never, never have I been more humiliatedly treated in all my life!" She threw out a quivering, talon-like finger towards the empty basin in the end of its string. "This, I presume, was a booby-trap. Obviously intended for you, Connie. Have you any idea of the author of this outrage?"

Connie looked grim.

"As a matter of fact, I have," she said. "Lucy Chamberhill!"

"The new girl? She was here a moment ago. Did she do it?"

"No, but it was she who reported it to me," Connie said feebly.

"With the names of the girls concerned?"

"Yes."

"Very well." Under her camouflage the thin lips of Miss Ballivan compressed. "Connie, go and get those girls—get them all! See! The report." "Bring them to my study! Ugh!"

Connie grimaced. With a smile on her lips she ambled off to the Third Form Common-room. Head, apprehensive silence greeted her entry.

"So," she murmured, "how very clever, Doris Bottom! You rigged that booby-trap for me, did you? But as it happens, Miss Ballivan got it!" She saw Lucy look up and smiled. "Rather too late, isn't it?" she asked, with a sneer.

Doris Bottom gulped.

"How did you know?"

"A little bird told me," Connie grinned. "The same little bird, as it happens, who told me about your feud last night. Doris, and you, Fay Chandler, and you, Madge Stevens—"

she named the culprits—"you are to go to Miss Ballivan at once. And I hope," she added viciously, "that you get it hot and strong!"

And leaving the Third pallid and shaking with dismay, she went out.

There was a moment's dumb-founded silence. Then Jessie Cranston broke out.

"That beastly little traitor!"

"She sneaked on us again!"

"But this time," Fanny Tibbets said,

a savage glint in her eyes, "she's not jolly well going to get away with it. She might think she can do as she likes because she's a new kid, and in with that beastly Sixth Form gang, but we'll show her. We'll give her a lesson, we'll show her. We'll make her see the gauntlet. We'll make her sorry that she ever saw the Third Form! Show the school for her, everybody! Bring her back here! We'll make her sit up!"



Detention for the Tomboy

TRAMP, tramp, tramp!
Bang!

In Study No. 3 Clara Trevlyn, Marjorie Blankens, Janet Jordan, and Lucy Chamberhill jumped.

The tramp was the sound of marching feet. The bang was a loud thump upon the door.

And before she could call out "Come in!" that door opened. Framed in the doorway stood a crowd of incensed Third Formers.

Jessie Cranston and Fanny Tibbets were at their head, but in the crowd behind them snarled a dozen other girls, at least. There was a yell as they saw Lucy.

"There she is! Collar her!"

Lucy's eyes opened wide. She shrunk back, but in a moment was on her feet.

"Here, wait a minute! What's happened?"

"What little mouse!"

"She told the Boss!"

"I didn't!" Lucy panted.

"Yes, you jolly well did! Or, at least, you told Connie Jackson!" Fanny Tibbets burst out in heated fury. "You got away with it last time, but you're not jolly well getting away with it this! And don't you interfere, Clara Trevlyn!" she cried furiously.

Clara compressed her lips.

"Did you speak, Lucy?"

"Oh, I gapped Lucy!"

"Oh, I believe you!" Clara eyed them grimly.

"This kid," she said bitterly, "is under my protection. Run off!"

"We won't!"

"We want her!"

"We're jolly well going to try her by Form law!"

"But Clara, except her back. She knew the ordeal of Form rule. She knew the time Lucy was likely to have at their hands."

"Get up!" she cried. "Get out, all of you! If you don't get out I'll jolly well throw you out!"

"We want Lucy!" came a loud cry.

"You can't have Lucy!"

There was a pause. The intruders looked at each other grimly. And then, as though inspired by one common impulse, they made a rush. Marjorie and Janet rose to their feet. Marjorie went sniggering, someone tried on Janet's foot. Then—

"Lucy! Lucy!"

"Collar her!"

"Oh, my hat, you little hoodlums!"

Then Clara was no match for her fourteen or fifteen determined girls. Clara was swept back. Fanny Cranston reigned in the study. The table went over with a crash, and she followed it. Then—

"Stop!" cried a voice.

It was Connie Jackson!

And there stood Connie at the door, and with her was Grace Chamberhill.

"What is all this?" Connie cried.

"Here, you Third Form kids, get back to your Common-room. Clara Trevlyn!"

Clara, her hair wavy and disheveled, her face red, panted.

"You mean, Connie said gruffly, "to be looking for trouble, Clara?"

Clara hit her lip.

"And as," Connie went on, "a girl senior to the Third, you should know better. You will take a hundred lines."

"A little my cousin from Lacy."

"But it wasn't her fault?"

"I'm not asking whose fault it was," Connie said emphatically. "It's my business to keep law and order. I won't have those girls in the Fourth Form passage, and as Clara has been such a cunning sneaker in this trouble between the Third and the Fourth, she can take the punishment." She stood studying the malicious flush that appeared on the Tenby's face. "I shall expect those lines with the others I gave you, by to-night," she said.

Clara's eyes glistened.

"Well—something you want to say?" Connie growled.

Clara drew a deep breath. As no more was to be said she might get to put up with indignation. She flung out.

"Yes, I've something else to say," she cried bitterly. "I've a lot to say, Connie Jackson! You talk about law and order. You talk about keeping order, and you set the example, don't you?" she cried hotly.

Connie's face was white with fury.

"That's enough!" she cried.

"Opp more word from you, Clara, and I will report you to Miss Priceless. In the meantime," Connie went on vindictively, "you are detained for to-morrow afternoon."

Lacy gave a cry.

"Has she match—she's playing in the match?"

Connie's lips twisted in a bitter sneer.

"She should have thought about that before!" she said. "Clara, you hear?"

But Clara, white-faced, stood stiff, rigid and silent. Her face was bitter. For she knew, as Marjorie and Janet well knew, that Connie had deliberately gossiped her in order to give that punishment.

The match, in which she had so hoped to play, would now take place without her!

"It's so sorry, Lacy, I can't do any thing," Grace Casperhill said irritably. "Clara has brought it on herself."

"But Grace, you're a friend of Connie's. Couldn't you persuade her?"

"I've already tried to persuade her," Grace lied.

Miserably Lacy drifted out of her sister's study. Oh, it wasn't fair—it wasn't fair! Clara had brought it all on her head through her own big fault, she told herself. That match to-morrow meant everything to Clara.

How could she help her?

But the couldn't! Moreover she was keeping out of the increased Third's way. While in the Common-room Clara was facing a bitterly disappointed crowd of her Form-mates.

The Fourth was wild; they might have known, they told Clara furiously, that she would miss up the chance. But Clara said nothing. She was too sick at heart herself. But she was thinking—deeply she was thinking. The match was on Thursday. If she slipped once before the team went to-morrow, defying Connie's edict, she could make it. She would make it!

But she didn't make it. Perhaps Connie, knowing Clara, guessed what was in her mind. While Clara was in the act of getting her things together she came into Study No. 1. Her face was grim.



OUT of the darkness came a pillow—followed by another, and another! With a sinking heart Lacy realized that the whole Form was against her—had condemned her as a contemptible sneak!

"I want you," she said.

Clara panted, tempted to retreat. But no! She couldn't jeopardize her place. Oh she went with Connie, Connie, as it happened, being duty perfect for the day, and so much, having power to call upon any girl in the school for assistance. She took her to the school library.

"Take down those four rows of books and dust them," she ordered.

Clara glistened, but complied. As soon as Connie's back was turned she would make a bolt for it, she resolved. But Connie, as it happened, remained in the room all the time, and when that task was finished, scoured Clara helped to the Fourth Form class-room. By that time the team was in the act of leaving.

"And now," she said, "you will do your detention task. And in case," Connie added mockingly, "you feel inclined to slide off while my back is turned, I'm going to lock this door and shut you in."

Clara felt almost faint. Connie had anticipated her every move. What now—what now? Outside she heard the coach with the team departing. She heard another, a more disturbing sound. The sound of tramping feet and of furious voices raised in an angry, scolding chorus.

"We want Lacy Casperhill!"

She sat her teeth. She went to the door, found it tightly locked. She went to the window, gazing down into the quad. Her chance—her chance of winning her space in the first team—

It was lost!

And then as she stood staring in dizziness, a small figure came running round the angle of the building. It was Lacy.

"Clara!" she cried. "Oh, Clara, I'm so sorry!"

Clara compressed her lips.

"No good being sorry. But—Lacy!" she cried, "wait a minute! Here, kid,

come here! I've looked in. Get into the school! Open this class-room door."

Lacy's eyes widened.

"But—Clara, you'll get into trouble!"

"Never mind the trouble. I'll face that afterwards. Lacy, quick! It's my only chance!"

Her only chance—yes! But a desperate chance. Lacy, at this moment, was the only one who could help her. Lacy would help her! Immediately the little one vanished. Two minutes later the boy groaned in the lock and Lacy came in. Clara patted her head.

"Good lad!"

"But, Clara, won't you get into an awful mess?"

"Never mind."

And Clara, with a gasp, hurried off. Five minutes later she was on the bus bound for Courtfield. And at the same moment the Third, headed by Fanny Tibbatts and Jennie Cranston, spotted little Lacy, sprang upon her, and, struggling, took her away.

"And now," Jennie Cranston grated, "you've jolly well going through it, you little sneak! And this time," she added vindictively, "there'll be no Clara to help you!"

And roughly she was dragged off towards the Third Form Common-room.



"I'll Stand By You!"

IT was a good match against Courtfield. And a very, very, everybody declared, had Clara Tenby played a better game in her life. Four goals to one in Cliff House's favour—and two of those goals scored by Clara herself.

The Fourth went wild with delight. Dulcia Fairbrother was unreservedly enthusiastic.

"That," she said, "is good enough! Topping, Clara!"

In triumph Clara was escorted back to Cliff House. Repeatedly reminded to leave happening the fact that she was supposed to be in detention. Not, in doubt, that there was any need to worry about that, for Connie Jackson had taken the afternoon off, and Connie Jackson, not supposed to have that afternoon off, could hardly punish her for breaking detention without giving herself away. The Fourth was jubilant. Clara, from that moment, was their heroine, their idol.

In an excited swarm they rushed up the stairs, Clara in their midst. And as they passed the door of the Third Form Common-room it came open. A fellow little figure, her face dead white, her little face wrong, and the telltale traces of tears glistening on its eyelashes, came out.

It was Lucy Camperhill.

She dodged back as the crowd surged past. Clara never even saw her.

But she gulped; she shook her head. Lucy had been through the mill. The Fourth tried, with nobody to defend her, had gone against her from the first. She had been sentenced to run the gauntlet. She had run the gauntlet. She had been sentenced to Coventry, and was an outcast.

What a mess she was in—what a horrible school this was!

Dusk the hour; darker her thoughts. She wasn't wanted. She was an outsider in her own Form! Nobody would speak to her, or even look at her. She who was made for friendship, for sunshine, who had come to Cliff House with the rosiest dreams and such happy ambitions, was the scorn of her Form!

Almost instinctively her footsteps dragged her towards Grace Camperhill's study. She knocked and entered. Grace, in the act of smoking a cigarette, hastily threw it away, and turned furiously. But Lucy, in her misery, never even noticed the telltale smell of the smoke. She stood there and gulped.

"Grace!" she cried.

"Lucy, kid, what's happened?"

"I—I—" Lucy shook her head. "Oh, Grace, I'm so unhappy!" she cried.

Something like a flash of hope lit up Grace's features.

"Poor kid!" she said.

"The Third—" Lucy's lips quivered. "Grace, they're saying horrid things about you; about me. They call me a snob. They say that you—you're worse! I had to stick up for you—for both of us! Oh, Grace, why do they go on saying things?"

Grace shook her head.

"Poor kid!" she sympathized. "It's always the same, though," she added.

"I'm in authority as a prefect. I have to do things for the discipline of the school which aren't very popular. But Lucy, look at me," she added. "I can't—well I won't see you as unhappy as this! You shouldn't have come here, in the first place. And now you're here, there's no reason why you should stop."

"Oh, don't you see?" she cried. "While I'm a prefect you'll always be victimized like this. They'll always try to make your life a misery. But I don't want to see you miserable."

Lucy sobbed.

"Lucy, kid, do the best thing—do it now," Grace urged. "You know I love you, kiddie. You know I wouldn't advise you to do anything against your own interests. Write at once—don't

and ask daddy to take you away and give you a chance at St. Kathleen's."

Lucy gulped, she nodded. Her spirit was broken at last. Grace was right. She had given her nothing but trouble since she had come. She had given Clara nothing but trouble. Her place was not here; she could never be happy here.

She dashed off towards the Third Form classroom.

Furiously she drew paper towards her, started to write, the tears falling unheeded upon the paper:

And then the door opened, a girl looked into the room. It was Clara Trevlyn.

"Lucy!" she cried. "Lucy, kid! Oh, my! But I've heard what's been happening in the Third. You're crying."

Lucy gulped.

"No, I'm not!" she denied steadily.

Clara compressed her lips.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm writing home, I—" Lucy's lips quivered. "Grace said that I've not wanted here. Grace says it will be better for me, better for her—and for you, if I go. Oh—Clara—what are you doing?"

But what Clara was doing was obvious. She caught up the paper from beneath Lucy's pen. Very deliberately she tore it in two.

Her face was grim.

"Kid," she said, "you've got it all wrong. You're not going, do you hear? You're going to stay! You're going to fight it out! You've seen the worst side

of this school; but there's a better side, and you're going to stop and see that. Where's your pluck?" she added rallying. "Where's your spirit?"

Lucy gulped.

"But, Clara, you don't understand!"

"Don't!" Clara's face was stern.

"I understand that there are certain girls here who would be glad to see you out of the way. You're just falling into their trap, Lucy. You're just surrendering to them. Stop! That's my advice. Stick up your chin. Fight it through. You've got pluck."

Lucy's eyes shone. Then despairingly she shook her head.

"But how can I, Clara, without a single friend?"

Clara laughed.

"Without what!" she cried. "But you've got friends, Lucy. Ruby and Mabel—all of us. I'm your friend, aren't I? Lucy, you're going to do it!" she added, leaning forward. "You're going to stop!"

Lucy's cheeks flamed.

"If—if you want me to!"

"I do! And," Clara said softly, "don't worry. I'm with you, Lucy! Through thick and thin I'll stand by you. And there," she added, stretching forward her hand, "is my hand on it!"

And Lucy, her little face completely transformed, took it. She wouldn't give in! She couldn't give in! Not while she had such a big-hearted friend as this to stand by her!

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

NEXT SATURDAY . . .

TOMBOY Clara Trevlyn has made her vow—to stand by Lucy Camperhill. But little does she guess how her decision to help the Third Former is to jeopardize her own greatest ambition.

In next Saturday's fine complete story you will read how Clara staunchly tackles one of the biggest problems that she has ever had to face. How she shields Lucy, in face of tremendous odds, will make you admire the Tomboy more than ever.

The title of this powerful complete story is

"CHAMPIONED BY CLARA"

By HILDA RICHARDS

and it is a story you must not miss. Look out for it next Saturday . . .

IN "THE SCHOOLGIRL"

Out of the Storm Comes the Derelict — Yet Another Mystery for the Morcove Castaways



Morcove Marooned!

By MARJORIE STANTON

FOR NEW READERS:
BETTY BARTON & Co., of Morcove School, together with members of the management, are on their way home from Africa by air-line, when they leave so many a second landing on a tiny island. With them is a mysterious girl named **MURIEL**, who has jumped by parachute from another plane. She tells Betty & Co. that she was coming from the people who had kidnapped her. The leader of the kidnapers is a man named **DUPPE KRAN**, an Indian spy and tyrant. Later, a strange-looking ship is driven in shore at the apex of a fierce storm.
(See end of...)

The Ship Without a Name

WAS there anything the Morcove castaways could do to save that hurricane-stricken vessel? Nothing!

Then the sea, in the deep gloom of the havoc-wreaking storm, rapidly and helplessly drifting towards the island's beach.

Not even the most modern of life-boats, manned by men of gallant crew, with a lifetime's experience of the sea, could have saved off this disaster.

Betty and her Morcove chums, Jack and his pals of Grandmoose—all there, and the three grown-ups who were sharing the juncos' fight for existence on this lonely island, could only wait and watch for the end!

It could not be long in coming! Even now the watchers on the beach, clatching each other steadily because the tempest dealt them such violent buffeting, saw the schooner being driven fast to her doom.

She was only a few hundred yards from the shore, and the raging waves and mounting water together were heaving her onwards swiftly.

Not even the broken mast, with all its tangle of rigging and torn canvas, dragging about her side, could hold the doomed ship in check.

And suddenly she wallowed about amongst white-capped waves—became broadside-on to the beach, and there were horrified cries of:

"Look at her now!"

And indeed the plight of the storm-driven vessel could hardly have been worse. The Morcove chums felt themselves feeling for her as if she had been a living thing.

"But what of the crew? What of those on board? The watching chums suddenly realized that, so far, no single figure had been seen.

"Can't make it out at all!" Betty shouted to chums with whom she stood at the very edge of locally howling surf. "Why isn't those anyone on board her? Would crew and captain all take to the boats as soon as the storm burst!"

"No sense, that I can see, in their doing that!" Jack gave his opinion in a hoarse voice. "They wouldn't be better off cut at sea, in small boats, at a time like this—far worse off, I'd say!"

"Anyhow, it's not like sailors to take to the boats unless their ship is absolutely going down!" some of the girls heard Dave cry. "My belief she was abandoned before the storm came on!"

"Just what I was thinking!" Polly shouted. "It's why that man named snapped! There was no one to take in sail!"

"Then let's hope that, wherever her crew are, and the captain, they're not out in this," Midge feelingly exclaimed. "Pretty certain if they were still on board her—now!"

The excitable shoutings died down, and there were only distressed exclamations from time to time, woefully heard amidst the tumult of the hurricane, which the island's castaways—themselves such hard-hit victims of fate—still had eyes only for the schooner.

The wind remained at almost topside strength, lashing into bigger waves the wide ocean which it was creating, to wreak destruction upon the island.

Betty and the rest no longer heeded the appalling roar of the wind around the island's tank woods, and the inces-

sant crash of palms and other trees laid low for ever.

They could not even give a useful thought to their camp—utterly destroyed in those first few minutes of the fearful storm.

Mind and sight were alike concentrated upon the hapless ship as she broadsided into the deadly shallows.

Then—the shock!

They saw her driven to a standstill, and saw how instantly waves, coming on behind her, pounded and buffeted her dark hull. Not there was the slightest chance to leave her!

Wind that shrieked in the rigging of her unbroken masts still supplied a tremendous driving force. Waves that burst against her, sending fountains of spray over her upper works, lifted her again and again and banged her mill round us.

And at last, with the storm showing not the least sign of abating, she was simply cast right up on the shingle beach by one great swelling flood that was like a tidal wave.

So suddenly it came, that transfer wave, all in an instant the castaways had to run back to avoid being swept away.

They staggered round when a few yards higher up the bank, and saw the schooner piled close in. Surf still roiled about her, but in normal weather she would be high and dry.

Presently the girls were able to get aboard after their menfolk and the Grandmoose had gone first. It was not that the storm had died down; the wind still blew as hard as ever. But that one tidal-like wave had flung the ship so far beyond the normal high-water mark, she had only knee-deep surf washing about her.

The broken mast, hanging over the side all anybody, served Betty & Co. as an easy means of making a lively scramble on to the slightly tilted deck. Then a first shower of hail did so much that meant rain and doudoulan caused a renewed sense of awe to mingle with scotchable feelings.

There, on the fo'c'sle, during calm and life evenings on a long, long voyage, some fine fellows or other may have occupied open air accoutrements. A song, a joke, a bit of talk of home. Or, again, in rough weather—away up amongst the top ropes and hanging castles—

Poor pay and hard work, but a sailor's life! And that had been the life aboard this very schooner many years past!

But she would know the life no more—and as far her men, where were they now?

"I say, Polly—"

"Yes, Betty?"

After looking each other for a minute or so during the first eager peering about, the two girls were together again.

Pam's father says the ship must have been abandoned without any haste. There was time to take off nearly all the food."

"Successful!" shrieked Nance, turning up just in time to hear this said "abandonment" when we could do with a proper meal for once!"

"Oh—always thinking of food!" Polly inevitably roared. But at heart she was inclined, for once, to share the ducky one's feelings.

"No mistake, Betty," Polly grinned, "we are not in luck! We'd so sooner get that S.O.B. off than the weather turned bad. Ships that may have been coming full speed to find our island—"

"Oh, there's going to be delay—no doubt about that now," Betty hastily chattered. "And so we could well have done with a nice store of food from this boat. Isn't it a mystery, though, that she was left like that in mid-ocean, and probably in calm weather?"

"Her papers are gone, too," Pam joined in. She and Marcell, coming by together on the rain-soaked deck, were going to keep with Betty and Polly now. "And we know, as soon as the drove inland, that her men had been scuttled out."

At that instant a most startling scream was heard. But next moment many a Moroccoan was laughing, for the scream had been only Paula Croft's, at sight of a scurrying rat.

"Demond! gnah—a w'ful!" she wailed. "Wight under my nose, but Jove! Oo! He let's get where again, and—"

"Do wha-ah!" Polly scowledly yelled. "When the whole camp has been blown to the other side of the island almost, and we've got this vessel to do as we like with!"

"Eh—er—you don't really propose, Polly dear, that we should—er—go into washboards?"

"It has already been proposed—and carried!" the Madcap glibly answered. "And it's no use being afraid of a single rat. There are probably dozens!"

There were! A sample dozen of these rushed out amongst the girls at that very moment, chased from some hole or other by Jack and Tom, whom "Hi, hi!" changed to great guffawing as they saw Paula spring for the mainmast's rigging, to be out of the way.

"You won't be like it up aloft," chuckled Jack. "Not that we chaps can exactly recommend down below!"

"Water in all the holds," Tom supplemented. "Water—and nothing but water! She hadn't a scrap of cargo that we can see."

"Perfectly ridiculous, then, to talk of remaining on board!" sighed Paula, glibly leaning herself down to the wet deck. "Ah dear, what a life it is, really!"

"Wait," Betty cheerily laughed, "and we'll manage!"

"Oh, don't keep her waiting!" Polly eagerly rejoined. "Give her a hammock straight away!"

"Oo, yer-quick, quick!" Nanceer clapped, visualizing great sport with the obtusest duffer. "Gurjos!"

Nor was it many minutes later when Paula, having been lugged into a sailor's hammock joyously rigged up for her on the open deck, was being sweetly advised to "Go to bye-bye now, pet!"

She certainly was content to lie where she had been put, having been rendered limp and listless by much futile straggling.

Nanceer, as one of the leavers, promised to come back in a little while.

"Dolen, you never know! Kef a rat should creep out whilst you are asleep, and slide through so rope—down you would go, whishp!"

But somebody had got the galley-fire going by now, and Nanceer, naturally gravitating to the schooner's air cook-house, soon forgot all about Paula.

There was to be a hand-rouse, after all, along with a welcome brew of tea. Nothing like a stock of victuals remained; but a few stables had been forthcoming—from such odd corners that it suggested their having been overlooked when the ship was abandoned.

Roon "Morocco & Co." were enjoying the first square meal that had come their way since the wrecking of their own air-line.

Night was at hand by the time they were enjoying this high-spirited gathering; and a wind-lushing group they made, some faces catching the light from the stove, the front of which had been stood open so as to send a faint glow beyond the galley door.

Alone their heads the wild wind still shrieked and moaned in the rigging, and the dimly lit beach upon which the ill-fated vessel had found her last resting-place was all arched with the peering waves. But everybody felt very happy.

This day, now ending so temptingly, had, at any rate, brought an end to the peril threatening Marcell. About that not a doubt existed. As to their all being still unscathed—why worry! That S.O.B. of theirs, if it had done nothing else, must at least have relieved the minds of dear ones at home. But, of course, there had been vessels already on the way to find the island, only this terrible hurricane had upset all calculations. Sooner or later, help would arrive!

Meanwhile, they saw their way to making a very comfortable night aboard the derelict.

Mystery Man

"O H, going to be a lousy day!" Betty said that to herself as she awoke with a sense of having benefited by an unbroken night's rest.

She yawned lazily, stretched her arms, set up—just as she might have done any day morning in the dormitory at Morocco.

All those who had "kipped" with her on this sheltered side of the schooner's

deck, her cotons of Morocco, and Marcell as well, were still fast asleep.

And Betty, although she longed to give a gay yawn-up about—because at last they looked like having a sunny day—refrained from doing so.

It was, after all, very early in the morning—would not have been light yet, only the sky had cleared during the night, whilst the wind was falling.

The sun, when to rise in a little while upon a level horizon that was well defined at least, would soon prize open the eyes of all those soundly sleeping folk. And then—what a host of delighted comment there would be; just like Morocco School again, first thing on a Saturday morning—the weather right for a grand "ha'fies."

Some had enjoyed ramming-out hammocks, and some bits of makeshift bedding laid upon the deck, where there was shelter from the falling wind. Everybody had preferred to sleep on deck, rather than below. Betty, who never minded a hard bed, had been one of those to do without a hammock. Now, as she rose up, she had to step warily to avoid treading upon sundry seaweed-beds.

Coming into the open, she looked around.

At once she saw Dave and the ninnies, obviously sharing the last watch of the night together. They were well up, leaning over the rail on the ship's seaward side—gazing out over the wide waters as they chatted quietly together.

Betty laughed inwardly. That would be the way for everyone to look to-day—towards the clear horizon! Such low weather as it was going to be, now that the gale had blown itself out, must soon produce a swedge of some steamer's smoke upon the horizon, heralding—a rescue!

And so, most likely, to-day was to mean goodbye for ever to the island.

That thought took arresting effect upon Betty. She had been going along to say "Morning!" to Dave and the ninnies; but she had to pause and gaze upon the beach.

The island! Their island, where not a day or night had passed but what it had meant some great happening or other; and now it looked so peaceful in the first golden light of dawn.

She could see examples of the havoc wrought on shores by yesterday's hurricane. But there was this wonderful calm after storm—the birds chattering and screeching happily in the wind-ravaged thickets, and the waves along the shore content to mend up only a whistling plashing. Almost Betty could believe that the island, when its mountains were gone, would miss them all!

She was withdrawing her gaze from that landward side of the nearly high-sandy schooner, when suddenly she saw someone up by the fo'c'sle, making as if to go ashore by simply dropping ashoreboard.

The figure of a man it was, and yet she did not instantly identify it as that of Pam's father or Madge's. But she supposed it must be one or the other of those two—Arman. Remembered being already accounted for—in a fresh rig-out, acquired from the ship.

There was no time for her to make sure the figure being partly absorbed to her when she first saw it, and next second it was over the side and altogether gone from view.

So she scowled a few paces, to be able to look over the side and cry a merry "Good-morning, Mr. Willoughby!" or "Mr. Menden!" as the man might be.

To her utter amazement then, the build of the man—was she saw him scurrying up the stumpy bank, with his back

towards her—was neither that of Pam's father nor Mr. Minden.

A strange man—one who belonged to the schooner, and so he had been on board all night, unbeknown to any of them.

"Dave—Mr. Sowerfield! Oh—quick!" Betty shouted, fushing out to beckon them. "Here—quick!"

Then, during the few moments that it was taking the startled pair to run to her, she looked again, and saw the mystery man dashing his fastest for cover that was to be obtained amongst ground growth behind the beach.

He was not glancing back at her, and this Betty regarded as a sign that he did not want his face to be seen, even at a distance, not to be remembered. She thought him a desirable object of a man—lean-limbed, and his clothing the most rough and ready.

There was no need for her to give directional gestures as Dave and the airman got to her side. They had glimpsed the man as they came running to her.

Mr. Sowerfield gave a shout. "Hi, you there! Hi, stop!"

But at that very moment the man topped the shrubby bank, and was able to plunge out of sight into a scrubby clump of mimosa.

"Oh!" Betty gasped, for a disarming thought had come. "One of Khan's men!" Left behind on the island, after all. And he has been on board during the night!"

"No," Dave said crisply. "That fellow's no Hindu. I saw his neck and hands, if I couldn't see his face. He's a white!"

"Marvel, at any rate, is safe!" Betty spoke on rapidly. "I left her only a minute since, with all the other girls. I saw the man drop over the side."

"And yet," the woman frowned, "we went right through the ship yesterday; searched every hole and corner, so we thought, to make sure there was still no one on board, either alive or dead!"

"Go after him, sir!" Dave calmly suggested. "Get him back!"

"That's the idea, my lad! You and I, come up now, and the others will follow. Not you, Betty!"

"Oh!" Betty laughed her protest. And Dave and the airman were no sooner letting themselves over the ship's side, to make the drop to the beach, than she was doing the same.

Many of her chums were trying to detain her by their wondering cries—"Hi, Betty! What's up?"—as they came rushing to where she was going.

But, if she were to keep with Dave and the airman, she could not delay herself to explain.

Clambering down as far as was possible, she let herself dangle, then released her hold and dropped—splash! For the beach, just below her, was covered to a depth of a foot or so.

Nothing did Betty think of plunging into the warm sea-water. She and her chums were used to that sort of thing by now. She went gliding after Mr. Sowerfield and Dave, who were already halfway up the beach.

She caught up with Dave, who had run one way amongst the mimosa and came clumps, whilst the airman ran another.

Level-headed Dave looked round at her, and the look said: "You know what you were told, Betty!" But she only laughed.

Only a hundred yards had the fellow hid after that, when there were sounds for both of them to hear, as of someone galking and thrusting desperately through some impeding tangle of vegetation.

Dave called out a calm: "This way, sir!" to Mr. Sowerfield, who could not be far off, and then, with the fugitive's track to follow, ran on faster than ever.

Betty, as she still kept close upon Dave's heels, was quite prepared to have to offer her assistance at any moment in grappling with the run-down man—a violent character, perhaps.

But all in an instant they had that was constituting them, where he was held up by the impenetrable nature of the thicket, and, as much to her surprise as relief, he did not even attempt to offer resistance. He was an abject manner, proclaiming a readiness to, as it were, go quietly.

Betty saw him become more hanging than ever now that Dave looked him up and down, calmly asking:

"What's the game?"

They Who Watched in Secret!

THE man made no answer, and for a moment Betty wondered if he were a foreigner who had not understood Dave's challenging question.

But it was evident, from the shifty look in his eyes, that he was simply at a loss what to say. A dark beard gave him a foreigner's appearance; but it was a new growth, brown—a stubble one, that suited him no better than did his baggy, mottling clothes.

"You can say who you are, can't you?" Dave was asking, when the airman came hurrying upon the scene, followed by a whole troop of eager quints, including Polly and Jack and Harry and Tom.

There were, too, Pam's father and Mr. Minden to loom up beside the airman, as the latter now took his stand in front of the strange seafarer.

"You weren't one of the crew!" the airman guessed, and Betty was not surprised, for she herself had quickly inferred that the man was not of the genuine seafaring type. "And you certainly aren't the skipper," added Mr. Sowerfield. "Who are you, then?"

"I'm not going to say," was the

meekest response at last. "I don't see why I should."

"You don't!"

"No," with a sneer. "It's no business of yours!"

"Oh, all right!" said Mr. Willoughby, "if that's the line you choose to take! We expect a ship to turn up any hour now, to take us all away. They'll be taking you as well, of course, and so it will be for some British consul or other—or a magistrate—to deal with you."

The man shrugged.

"Right," he said, as silent as ever. "let it go at that. When I'm wanted—I'll be around."

"Oh! How do you mean?"

"That I just want to be let alone until a ship does turn up, was the early answer. "Haven't done you folks any harm, have I? Well, then, you leave me alone, and I'll leave you!"

"Nice way to talk, that isn't it?" Mr. Willoughby frowned. "I should have thought you'd want us to do what we can for you—"

"Well, I don't—see! You've taken to the ship, and I've taken to the shore. I don't know what this place is, and I don't much care. It'll suit me for the present—be a change, eh?"

"But you want us to let you have some food? Such as there is, on the boat—you're welcome to take your share—"

"Oh, I guess I can pick up something to eat, here on shore. Anyway—"and the man made shifty movements—"I can be off, can't I?"

Mr. Willoughby was not the only one who laughed.

"You can do that, certainly," he answered, drawing back a step or two. "It's only an island. And a tiny one at that. You won't, by the way, meet with anybody to talk to."

"Shan't I? Well, that'll suit me, too. So I'll—I'll just get along," he snatched, and the juncos made way for him to come shuffling between them. He was leaving to return a little way towards the beach, before being able to reach—whatever way he favored.

"Extraordinary man!" Polly



EAGERLY the Mercantiles scrambled aboard the dinghy. What would they find there? What strange secrets did the weird old ship conceal?

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

MY DEAR READERS.—You remember, I expect, that a short while back I promised to tell you some more about my holiday trip aboard a coastal steamer? Well, here you are. I know that it is rather late in the day to talk about holidays; but that, I'm afraid, can't be helped—not that you will mind, I'm sure. Holidays are pleasant things to talk about whatever the season. Don't you agree?

Really, this holiday of mine was rather different. The ship, you must realize, was no gleaming white luxury cruiser, with sun decks and swimming pools, but an honest-to-goodness "tugger," manned by real hardy British seamen.

To take a leaf out of the American "talker," they were "tough"! Thick-set men, most of them, with wavy hair and weather-tanned faces, and muscular arms that looked capable of flinging ton weights about!

They were always fellows, nevertheless. It was good to join them in the evenings after dark in the "bar"—to listen to their hearty singing to the strains of an accordion—played by a steady little fellow with a strong Scotch accent. About our heads the blue-tinted smoke eddied round the oil lamp, gently swinging in the roll of the boat; bursts of roaring song were punctuated by rough-wheeled laughter, and outside, the sea added its ceaseless thunder against the sides of the vessel.

For quite a week after my holiday I felt strangely hot without that sound of the sea—and felt rather odd, too, walking about on a floor that did not roll under my feet!

The only slightly uncomfortable experience I had—no, it wasn't sea-sickness! I'm glad to be able to say I'm a good sailor—was during a thick fog for which none of us had any idea. For several hours nothing could be seen beyond the head light but a gray pall. Yet, curiously throbbing steadily and regularly "boom-boom" of the siren were the only sounds to be heard.

After a few hours of this sort of thing one begins to be a trifle weary. I began to picture huge shapes bearing down on us out of the darkness—

But enough of this nautical talk. You will want to hear all about the features of our Saturday's **ROMANCE**.

"**CHAMPIONED BY CLARA**" is the title of Hilda Richards' long complete CHINA story. It deals, of course, with the Tansu's continued efforts to help little Lucy Chanchell, as her plucky stand against the Third Formers and against the scheming of Cassie Johnson.

"**HAPPY GO-LUCKY LULU**" features in another delightfully funny complete story of St. Winifred's School, and there will be further instalments of our two great serials. Patricia contributes another edition of "Out of School Hours"—full of ideas, suggestions, and helpful hints.

Your sincere friend,
YOUR EDITOR.

located, as they all watched him skulking off. "Whoever can he be?"

"Nasty bit of work—shifty," Jack muttered. "Got something to answer for, I would say."

"He didn't want us to know about him," Betty exclaimed, "and yet—he couldn't wait long before getting a gripe away from the ship. Why ever didn't he slip out of his hiding place in the night?"

"That's an easy one," said Dave. "He had to wait for daylight to be able to see his way about. He knew the ship was swimming with us all. Another thing, where he was in hiding, probably he couldn't see out so as to be able to tell just how the vessel was lying—whether he'd have to swim for it or not."

They made their way back to the steamer. Reaching the open beach again they looked round for the strange man again. But he was not to be seen. He must have had no time in making off for the heart of the island.

Nor could Morrow & Co. doubt that he would do his best to go into hiding, hoping that when a ship did turn up there would be no getting hold of him. But, as Mr. Wiloughby explained during a most jovial breakfast upon the steamer, Morrow had no right to detain the man.

Gradually the sea was shining out of the blue by the time some of the girls and boys set off for an excursion upon the island; their very last chance, they felt, of enjoying a jolly outing amidst surroundings which had been the scene of so many thrilling adventures. This was a burning-hot, cloudless day at last, such as they were entitled to expect in such a tropical part. The sea was azure, and the horizon clear.

Far and wide could one see the smoking, from the schooner's decks. But the party going ashore meant to make for the very highest part of the island, there to be able to watch even better for a ship's appearance upon the skyline.

Mystery packets of food for the mid-day lunch had been carried out to the chairs by those in charge of the ship's gear, and this resulted in an eve being kept upon Nansoo, by Polly and other fair-haired, but the over-lucent one should open her packet before the appointed time.

Again and again, during the light-spirited amble out to the island's central hill, Nansoo was found to be hanging back and starting to fiddle with her packet of provisions, and again and again she was treated to a grin. "You dare!"

But Nansoo, after all, did not go without a "bite" to sustain her, during this toilsome penetration of the island's juncy interior. Tobby came to her rescue.

Tobby had his ration crammed in a haversack, some of the sticks of which had long since burnt. He could, with out infringing the rule—"No unburnt until the time comes!"—help himself through a hole in the haversack, and this Tobby did, smiling that his smile of his as he openly and ably supplied various titbits in Nansoo.

Past midday it was when they got to the hilltop, for there had been no inclination to hurry. Gathered there on the barren summit, high above surrounding woods, they could scan the blue ocean in all directions.

Blue it was, too, the most wonderful colour that any of the clouds could ever remember seeing. It was quite different from the dull, patchy blue, as often

"Morrow Marooned!"

reared a crew, that they remembered seeing at home. It was bright—merging into a rich purple on the distant skyline.

"It's just the colour of that dress you wore last week," Benny whispered across to Betty. "Remember?"

Betty nodded, smiling. Quaver how their thoughts invariably turned toward, to the far-off, well-loved things, however beautiful or beautiful the scene before them!

And this certainly was a perfect vision. The distant murmur of the sea, the plaintive calling of gulls—floating above them on lily-starched wings, the quivering patterns of sunlight and shadow beneath the elegant palms—all combined to form a tranquillity, strange, yet lovely, different from anything they had ever known.

And all around them the limitless sea. "Queue to have it all round you like this," Polly remarked cooing. "Might almost be on a floating island."

No one answered her, although Betty and Benny nodded. For Nansoo had fallen under the spell of dreamy visions which had overcome them for the moment.

Not a ship in sight yet—only the lurching steamer. They could also make out those who, for one reason and another, had elected to remain aboard her.

From the hilltop Betty and her companions were out ringing cheers, and waved; and back came faint chattering from those who, at such a distance, were now moving slowly about the desolate.

Between the one party and another, that exchange of hearty cheers implied a reassuring: "All's well!" And yet—

AND YET, it was but a few minutes after the schooner had gone into port that every passenger treated forthcoming from their "mystery packets," that strange, unexplained, lurked close at hand.

Fears deep cover in the rank woods at the base of the hill, two persons had the patient under observation, using field glasses for the purpose.

A man and a woman they were, and it was the woman who was provided with the glasses, lending them to her companion after she had first let these raised for a good while to her fierce, eager eyes.

"Do you see?" she whispered to the man crouching close beside her as he saw under the leaves. "Do you see the one I mean?"

She nodded him impatiently, adding: "We've talked it over, haven't we, and we are agreed? I'll save you from being taken when a ship goes up, if you help me to take that girl away from the others."

For the moment he only nodded, making steady use of the glasses. He was the schooner's steersman, suspicious-looking occupant, and she—Seraphy Klara, in secret still upon the island, when the castaways had been so sure that she was gone.

"Farthest from the left up there," she whispered on. "That one, yes?"

And her finger pointed at—Muriel!

UNSEEN, undrest of the plotters crouch in the shadows—and the Morrow drama do not even gaze at the blow which is about to fall. It seems that nothing can save Muriel from the kidnapers. Whatever happens, do not miss the enthralling chapters of this vividly dramatic serial which appear in next Saturday's

SCHOOLGIRL!