

"CHAMPIONED BY CLARA":

POWERFUL LONG COMPLETE CLIFF HOUSE
SCHOOL STORY INSIDE

THE SCHOOLGIRL

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EVERY 2^D
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Incorporating
"SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN"



**"DOWN WITH THE
FOURTH!"**

A FELLOW FIGHT THAT
BECAME A BATTLE IN
GRIM EARNEST!

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

TOMBOY CLARA TREVLYN Stars in this Brilliant Long Complete Story of the Girls of Cliff House School



Championed by CLARA

By HILDA RICHARDS

The Third Form's Demand

"CLARA, you old prize parson!"
"Jolly good, Clara, old thing!"
"Absolutely marvellous!"

Tomboy Clara Trevlyn, junior games captain of Cliff House School, almost jumped out of her chair in Study No. 7 as the door was suddenly flung open and a tide of eager, chattering Fourth Formers surged in.

Although Clara was at all times delighted to see her classes, she frowned now. For Clara had been in the midst of a task imposed by Miss Bland, geography mistress of Cliff House. By no means satisfied with the advancement of Clara's knowledge in her pet subject, Miss Bland had set the Tomboy the task of drawing a careful map of the northern shires of England.

Now, as Clara leapt to her feet, the pencil in her hand still completely across Yorkshire, divided that county into west halves and finished with a swirl in the county of Lancashire which added an entirely new tributary to the River Mersey.

"Clara, Clara!"
"My hat! You giddy duffer, what's all this?"

"Clara! You're done it!" Barbara Botherby shouted.

"Oh! Yes, I'll say I've done it!" Clara snarped, with a glance at her map. "Look at Yorkshire!"

"Blow Yorkshire! You're in the first eleven!"

Clara's gaze changed to a stare at that.

"You mean, the first team's posted off?"

"What do? Jersey learned."
Clara stood stock still. It was obvious that Miss Bland, Yorkshire, her map, and everything she became

elaborated from her mind on the instant.

"You're playing against Brambledale at Folkestone on Saturday," Mabel Lyons added. "And wait a minute! You haven't heard the rest of the news."

Clara nodded weakly to the armchair and sat down.

"Oh, ye good-fishes! Let me get my breath! You!"

"Prissy says that all girls of the Lower School who would like to go to Folkestone to see the match—"

of Audrey Dabwood Verrier of the Sixth Form, that chance was now an achieved fact.

"But there's one snag," Babs put in. "And that's up to you, Clara. Half the Fourth and the Third have applied for coaches."

Whether they want to see the match or not, everybody in question has a day at the seaside. Prissy says that they'll only give coaches and passes on condition that we don't own black marks in the morning, and that goes for you, too. So now, no more trouble," Babs went on adamantly. "No more news with the Third. You've got to believe yourself!"

Clara groined.

"You mean, if I don't go, none of you come, either?"

"Well, I guess that's the sort of notion that Prissy's got hold of," Lolla Carroll nodded. "So no foul tricks."

A little shadow came into Clara's eyes, for she was remembering suddenly—the memory prompted by Babs' remark about the Upper Third.

For Clara and the Upper Third, normally good friends, were not on the best of terms at the moment. It was not Clara's fault. It wasn't the Third's. The new girl, Lucy Camperhill, sister of the unsupparful proctor, Grace Camperhill, who had recently joined the ranks of that redoubtable Form, was the innocent cause of all the trouble.

It was through Clara's championing of Lucy's cause that friction between herself and the Upper Third had come about.

"But, I mean, you girls——" Bessie Hunter piped up.

"Bessie!" Jane Marrett said good-humoredly.

"Oh, really, Jane! But, look here, you know, we ought to jolly well, only hate this," Bessie said earnestly. "And

RESOLVED to see fair play for little Lucy Camperhill.

Tomboy Clara Trevlyn takes her part in the new girl's feud with the Third—and in so doing threatens to bring disgrace upon her own head, and disappointment to her chums of the Fourth.

"Good old Prissy!"

"Clara has a whole day's leave and railway vouchers in addition," Mabel finished.

"And—here, Bessie, don't look you old duffer! That means," Mabel cried, "that she's making special arrangements to junior school just because you'll be in the team!"

Clara looked overcast. She was gulping with excitement now, so were her chums, though to be sure, the news was not entirely unexpected.

Clara had played such splendid hockey this season that Dulcis Fairbrother, games captain of the school, had hinted more than once that she was up to first eleven standard, and had promised her a chance as soon as a vacancy occurred. With the dropping

I vote, for one, that we all go down to the tackshop and let Clara stand at the head."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Hear, hear!"

Clara laughed.

"O.K.," Fay cried, "do agreed. Luckily for all of you, I had a remit this morning. Biggest leather lights with a diamond set through 'em!" she called roastingly. "What's for the tackshop?"

There was a whoop. Apparently someone was for the tackshop. In a chattering body, Clara in their midst, they streamed out of the study, down the stairs, into Big Hall, and out into the afternoon sunshine of the quad.

There was a general shout from the girls there when Clara was spotted.

"Clara!"

"You giddy old heroine!"

"I say—we're going to Folkestone!"

"And so," Clara beamed, "am I. So are all of us, and I'm standing treat on the strength of it. Fall in, everybody. Follow your leader! And here, I say!" she added, and stopped abruptly, her face suffusing with sudden indignation. "That was a big tick!" she cried.

Babs looked at her quickly, apprehensively. She did not like these signs of sudden stress in Torber. Clara's cheeks, and her eyes darted to the case.

The case was not far away. Just a dozen yards from where they stood, in fact, where little Lucy Casperhill, a conspicuous figure with her flaming crop of red hair (forming a crown for her wavy, white, wispish hair, but just steps of color) Upper Third Formers was supposed to be passing.

These three were Doris, Babs' own young sister, Madge Stevens and Fay Cuddehe.

Far as Lucy came forward, they all, with one accord turned their heads, and none in the air, walked past as though the girl who had spoken did not exist.

Clara's eyes glared.

"All right," she said, "you others, you go on. I'll join you in a minute. Babs, you go too, unless," she added, "you want to stick young Doris off for her heavenly display of bad manners!"

Babs flushed painfully.

"Oh, please, Clara, don't start it all over again."

"I'm going to start nothing," Clara declared. "At the same time, I'm not going to see that ripping little kid treated as though she were dirt. Lucy!" she called.

Lucy started. Then as she saw her heroine, her pale cheeks dyed bright with colour.

"Clara!" she cried.

"Come here!" Clara ordered.

Lucy came running forward.

"Oh, Clara! I'm so glad!" she beamed. "I've heard the news, it's on the noticeboard in Big Hall. I think it's lovely, you playing for the first. I mean, Clara, will Miss Pease now give for a pass and a voucher?"

"Of course. But what were you doing?"

"Oh, nothing," Lucy replied.

A few words about Madge and Fay followed. They exchanged a quick glance. Then suddenly they stroked their ears.

"Hi, hi, Clara," Doris said.

"Hi, hi," Clara replied profly.

"Honey, would you believe it the first, don't you?" Doris grinned, but suddenly turned a scowler upon Lucy, who fell back a pace, biting her lip. "Well, I'm glad—we've all glad in spite of the stables, but you've been treating us lately. Had the Form as

as been as wanted to go to Folkestone. We're all applying for vouchers, you know."

"Oh, yes?" Clara's eyes gleamed.

"And perhaps," she asked sarcastically, "you'll also apply for a few good manners at the same time. I see what you did to Lucy just now."

"Oh, my hat," gasped Babs.

"Clara!" Doris flushed angrily.

"It's not a question of manners. The Form's sent her to Coventry."

"Why?"

"You jolly well know why! Because she's a snob, because she's hard in spite with her beauty perfect sister and carries tales—"

"Don't you call my sister names!" Lucy flared. "And I didn't snob, Doris!"

"Oh, for goodness' sake," Babs cried exasperatedly. "Don't start a row now. Doris, be quiet!" she snapped as Doris opened her lips again. "Clara, come on. Everybody will be waiting in the tackshop!"

Clara heaved a deep breath.

"All right!" she said. "All the same I think it's pretty mean, especially of you, Doris!" whereat Doris winced, for Clara was her own particular heroine.

"You might have given Lucy a square deal. But never mind!" she added. "I'm sticking to her. Come on, Lucy, kid. If these little beasts won't speak to you, we will. Come to the tackshop."

"You're going to take her?" Madge Stevens gasped.

"Why? Have I to ask your permission?" Clara retorted.

"Her I will save she's in Coventry!" "I don't care if she's in Birmingham!" Clara snarled, and Clara to show her contempt of the Third Form's edict, put her arm about the slender shoulder of their victim.

Madge, Fay, and Doris, looking rather angry, stood aside. Babs and Doris a warning glance, then either worriedly trailed after Clara and her

protégée as they made off towards the tackshop.

She shook her head as she went, perhaps in that moment forecasting back trouble between the stubborn Torber and her boss of the Third.

It was a great pity, she told herself, for so much more depended upon Clara's keeping out of scrapes.

Rightly or wrongly, Clara had associated herself champion of little Lucy Casperhill, Lucy, whose only crime was a strange belief in the Sixth Form sister she idolized, but whom Babs & Co. and half the school generally knew to be in secret a disgrace.

Lucy did not know, as they did, that her sister, proud as she was, was in the habit of breaking boards and attending forbidden parties and dances.

Lucy, her opinion of Grace Reeve Casperhill built up at home, thought she was just the finest, the most adorable, the most marvellous sister a girl could have.

And Lucy, loving Grace as she did, had definitely stuck up for her in the teeth of all disgraced Third Form opinion. Because of that, Lucy had brought a great deal of trouble upon her own head. Because of that, the Third were rather too ready to believe ill of Lucy.

Babs knew the whole story and, while her heart was warm with tender sympathy for the little one, she could not help but feel apprehension. Where would it all end?

"Well, here we are," Clara announced cheerfully as they reached the door of the school tackshop. "So, everybody! Strike up! Lucy! This way, kid! What will you have?"

Lucy smiled shyly.

"Oh, Clara! I don't want anything."

"Don't you? You do! Here, auntie, ginger-beer and sausage roll this way! Hey, Babs, don't wolf all those doughnuts, you plump pig!" Janet, who you have one of those sorts! There we are, auntie, thank's five bobble!" Clara chirped, plucking up her chin and

glancing at her sister's

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"Oh, Grace—surely you're not going to a dance?" Lucy cried, at sight of the truck and the shoes. Grace looked flustered. "Of course not," she lied. Never must her sister learn the truth!

the table. "Serve everybody until that's gone."

Ginger-beer gurgled, girls laughed and chattered all gayly animated and excited at the prospect of the very pleasant Fellowship trip, which the Tomboy's absence in the first eleven had made possible. The little party was at its height, when four other girls came into the shop.

Clara raised a hand in welcome. "Hello, Fanny! What, you again, Midge and Fay? And you Fanny? Come in! I think there's another three half-pence left out of the five lots, and you can play it all! What'll you have?"

But Midge Stevens, Fanny Carter, Fay Chandler, and Fanny Tibbets of the Upper Third did not respond in that direction. Rather girls were their looks.

"We want to talk to you," Midge said distinctly.

"You can," Clara grinned. "Go ahead."

"About Lucy?"

A change came over the Tomboy's face.

"Oh! What about Lucy?"—less carefully.

"We form the committee of the Third," Fanny Carter volunteered. "We want you to know, Clara Trevlyn, that the Firm has sent Lucy Casperhill to Coventry. And it's no good, she pointed out, sending Lucy to Coventry if you're going to make a pet of her. We decided—and at that word Clara trembled disapprovingly—that you leave Lucy Casperhill alone."

Clara looked pensive.

"And in that all?"

"That's all."

"Then let me tell you this! Clara burst out. "No, Lucy, don't you speak. I'm not going to be dictated to by you, and I don't choose to be committed! And I think it's like your cheek when to try it on! I don't ask the Third who I can choose for friends."

"Oh, please!" Midge cried distractedly, rushing in. "Now wait! Don't start a row! Clara, please be quiet! We'll thank all this out after the match on Saturday. Now, come on, kids! Don't be so jolly uptight! Have a doughnut! Have some lemonade! Have some sweets—some chocolates!"

The four exchanged glances.

"Fanny, what can I order for you?"

Fanny hesitated, but Fanny Tibbets came forward.

"Oh, wait a minute! You can't get out of it like that!" she cried. "We'll come to the party, and jolly glad to, but we're not eating or drinking in her company!" And she stabbed a concerned finger at the flaming-faced Lucy. "Either you send her packing, or we refuse!"

"Then jolly well refuse!" Clara snapped.

"Well, see you—"

"No!" Clara blazed, bring her temper at her. "Now get out!"

"Wash! Slide, kids!" Lolla Carroll advised. "You're now sporting things used here!"

But the four did not "slide." Again they exchanged wistful glances.

Then grimly, suddenly, Fanny Tibbets made a step forward. Her hand caught the gasping Lucy's wrist and closed upon it.

"Well, if we're going, you're jolly well coming with us!" she coaxed.

"Oh, is she?" And Clara lunged forward. "Take your hands off her!" she snapped sharply, and, reaching out, tore Fanny's grip from her little chest, and at the same time gave Fanny an angry gash which sent her reeling back into the crowd.

"Now get out!" she snapped, her eyes ablaze. "If you don't—"

"And if she doesn't," put in a mockingly inquiring voice at the door, "what will you do, Clara Trevlyn?"

And then, while everybody stared, a new figure stepped into the doorway—the figure of Connie Jackson, Clara Trevlyn's nearest enemy, and the most divided object in the Sixth. A deathly silence fell.

Clara clutched her hands.

"I saw that, Clara Trevlyn," Connie Jackson went on. "I think, my girl, it's about time you had a lesson for bullying Third Formers!"

"I wasn't!" Clara hotly began.

"No! I'm going to tell me I can't believe my own eyes!" Connie added emphatically. "I saw enough. And just to remind you that you can't bully, you'll do me a special detention task in the Form-room after lessons. Apart from which I shall make it my business to report this to the Head. You Third Form kids, get off!"

And, with a cool, triumphant nod, Connie turned out again, leaving a flummied silence.

Clara looked at her hands.

From the crowd around her a little murmuring went up.

Bats shook her chestnut head despairingly.

"Well, that sure has shot the works!" Lolla Carroll sighed. "I guess Connie's got it in for you, Clara."

"Oh, nonsense!" Miss Redworth protested. "Clara shouldn't have picked a quarrel with the Third."

"Oh, how!" Clara snapped. "I didn't start it!"

"Well, Auntie," Diana Receptor-Claude put in. "I don't know! You'd be the first to boast if the Third started by interfering with the result of a Farm interlocking with the Fourth. I mean to leave passed by the Fourth. I mean to say, you've got to look at the thing reasonably."

Clara shrugged irritable shoulders; but Lucy, by her side, shook her head.

Her pale lips quivered a little. She turned a fierce glance upon the cryer and glided nearer to her kid as if to protect her. Next to her adored sister, she loved Clara Trevlyn more than anyone on earth—and Clara had done this for her!

"Clara, I'm sorry!" she faltered. "It was all my fault!"

"It wasn't your fault! It's—Oh, Clara, that best Connie's got her back!"

That best Connie's got her back! The words came back to Clara's mind, and she felt a little better.

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without a word, she turned on her heel. Lucy, after a moment's hesitation, went out after her.

But the girl's fellow Clara. Her serious little face was greatly determined.

She waited as she saw the Tomboy stride moodily off into the school, and then, following in her steps, made her way to Study No. 4 in the Sixth Form passage. It was there she would find her sister, Grace Beere Casperhill.

If anyone could help Clara in this crisis, Lucy thought, then surely Grace was the one.

Lucy brightened a little as she approached the study. A teacher, withal smile curled her lips. She adored Grace—ah, so much! She knocked, and, confident of her welcome, turned the handle and went in.

Grace Casperhill, at the table, jumped round with a start.

"Grace!" cried Lucy, and stopped, her quick, wide, startled eyes going round the room.

Grace Casperhill bit her lip, too late dropping the dagger over the dining table, she was at that moment in the act of cleaning. Lucy raised the necessary level upon her face, however.

"Yes, Lucy! What do you want?"

"Oh?"

Lucy blinked, her eyes wonderingly fixed upon the dance stool on the table, on the bulky pink satin dance frock that was hung over a chair near by, on the colorfully silk stockings that were thrown over it. For one instant she forgot the mission which had guided her feet to this room. She stared at her sister.

"Oh, Grace! I say, you're not going to a dance?"

Grace bit her lip.

"Of course not!"

"But what these are your dance clothes!"

"Oh, well—yes, of course they are!" Grace forced an uneasy laugh.

"But there are no dances being held in Cliff House, are there?"

Grace breathed deeply. She looked away, perhaps as that Lucy should not see the hunted chance that came into her eyes. Bitterly she was thinking to herself:

"Why must Lucy always get in as appearances at the most awkward moment?"

But she couldn't tell her the truth—no! She couldn't tell her that every one of those stairs Lucy had heard about her and had so fondly remem-bered were true. She couldn't tell her that she was going to a dance—and that a very forbidden dance which was to be held tonight in Courtfield at a time when Grace Casperhill was supposed to be in bed!

"No. Of course, there are no dances in Cliff House," she said. "But, on the other hand, there's no reason why I shouldn't brush my things up, is there? It's not often I have a few moments to spare, and I do like to be ready for any emergency!"

—And she stepped on the door, turned again and Connie Jackson looked in. "Ahem!" she said.

But Connie did not notice Lucy for she meant.

"Hello, Grace!" she began. "Just stepped in to tell you I've ordered the car for ten o'clock—"

And then she saw Lucy; jerked herself up with a start. "Oh, sorry! Didn't notice your sister!" she said. "See you later!"

She went out, rather hurriedly, leaving the swift October evening and going in Grace's face and Lucy's big eyes wide open in wonderment. She stared questioningly at her sister.

"Grace, what did she mean?"



The Sister She Trusted

CLARA TREVLYN clenched her hands. From the crowd around her a little murmuring went up. Bats shook her chestnut head despairingly.

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"Missusman" muttered Grace.

"About the car?"

"Yes, car? Oh, yes, the car?" Grace laughed with desperate cheerfulness. "It means that she's arranged for a car to take us to the match on Saturday, you know?"

"But I thought you said you weren't friends with Connie Jackson?" Lucy said doubtfully.

"Well, I—I'm not. But Connie's a perfect like I am, you see. Connie knows someone who will let us have a car cheaply, and so—well, just for once I agreed to share expenses." Grace explained desperately. "Now, Lucy, don't ask any more questions."

Lucy's face cleared. Just for one moment it had been filled with uncertainty. A flash of shame stained her cheeks—she thought, even for an instant, she could have doubted this wonderful sister of hers!

"Oh, I—I'm sorry, Grace! I—I didn't mean anything," she faltered.

"Well, of course you didn't!" Grace laughed. "But it did seem, Lucy, that you were rather cross-examining me," she could not help but add. "I know you've heard rotten things about me in the Third—"

The little one turned away red.

"And perhaps," Grace went on glibly, in possession of all her real living facilities some more, "you are allowing them to influence you."

"Oh, Grace!"

"Well, doesn't it seem like it?" Grace asked. "I mean—well, don't it all, if we'd been at home, and your people are tramping my feet, damn it, and cleaning my dress shoes, you'd never have dreamt of even consulting. But tell me now. Why did you come here?"

Lucy gulped.

"Oh, Grace, I want you to do something for me."

"Just say it!" the perfect invited lightly.

"It—it's about Clara." And earnestly Lucy told her. "And, Grace, it's so frightfully important that Clara should practice!" she finished appealingly.

Grace paused. She looked again at her sister. Perhaps a pang of jealousy shot through her at the ardent affection she read in her entreating little face.

Strangely, craftily, her brain worked. She smiled.

"You're very fond of Clara, aren't you? A good girl—topping girl!" she remarked, though there was bitter sarcasm in her heart even as she raised the glass.

"But, Grace, you will see Connie?"

"Yes, of course. I'll go and see her right away."

And, with a bright smile and a confident nod, Grace quitted the room.

But the smile died when she halted outside Connie Jackson's study. A rather worried look appeared to replace it. Without knocking she went in. Connie, smoking a cigarette near the open window where the fumes would quickly dissipate, looked up quickly.

"My hat! What's the matter with you? Been eating lemon?"

"It's my kid sister again."

Connie smiled.

"Oh, that little brat! Why the deuce don't you get rid of her?"

Grace bit her lip.

"How can I get rid of her?"

"Well, you say she thinks you've dashed her if you. Won't she go if you ask her?"

"Connie, why talk like that! I've the other asked finally." "Yes, that's I've tried that, and what happened? This insufferable prig, Clara Trevlyn, stopped



"I SEE you've put Lucy down to play," Madge said. Clara nodded.

"That's right," Madge's eyes gleamed. "Well, if Lucy plays, we don't!" she said.

in and persuaded Lucy to stop. I do believe—a little bit later—"that she thinks more of Clara than she does of me. And officially," she added, with a grimace, "that's why I've come—to ask you to let Clara off her detention."

Connie grinned.

"And, of course, you want me to."

"You know I don't. But never mind that, Connie, what are I to do about the kid? I'm awared. She's desperately trying not to be suspicious, but if things go on as they are she can't help but find me out. She came in just now—wanted to know why I was getting my dress things ready—"

"And naturally," Connie suggested, with a malicious twinkle, "you told her we were all breaking bounds to go to the Royal, in Courtfield, to-night."

"Don't be an idiot! I didn't! I married some lie. But I'm in a dreadful hole. That kid thinks I'm an angel. My parents at home think so, too. Oh, Con, don't you see? I can't break the kid's heart by letting her find out, and I can't be you and Audrey down. Apart from that it would just ruin me at home."

Connie glanced at her queerly.

"You say the kid's fond of Clara Trevlyn?"

"Desperately."

"And she thinks that Clara's getting into corners because of her?"

"Yes."

Connie laughed.

"Well, there's your cue," she said.

"Make things hot for Clara Trevlyn. Let Lucy go on believing that's it all for her. Let her go on thinking that she's bringing money and punishment to her's because. It's easy—just easy!" Lucy beamed.

"Especially now, when Connie's the champion blowing up between Clara and the Third. When things have got so hot for little Clara that they can't get any hotter, just break it to Lucy

that she's the fly in the ointment. Out of her very admiration for Clara she'll go. She's that sort of prig!"—with a touch of contempt.

But Grace, apparently, did not notice that. A dawning hope came to life in her.

"But, Con, how can it be done?"

"How?" Connie grinned again. "If I mistake me not, Clara herself will do me with a little help from the right quarter at right moments. But don't you worry. Your cue is to keep out of this, listening up Clara to Lucy, and keeping Lucy's suspicions balled at the same time."

With a yawn she tossed her cigarette away and leisurely rose, a coy, coquettish smile on her face.

"All right," she said. "Just leave it to me. I'll stroll along and have a chat with my sister Ida."

In a much happier frame of mind Grace bid. Lucy started up eagerly as she re-entered her own study.

"Grace, you saw her?"

"Yes," Grace replied reluctantly.

"And—and Clara?" Lucy gulped helpfully.

Accidentally the older girl shook her head.

"I'm sorry, Kiddie, but nothing can be done. The detour will have to go through. You see," she added heavily,

tossing her head so as not to see the program pain and disappointment in her sister's face. "Connie's already reported it to the Head."

"Oh! Lucy said that."

"And—and so—"

Grace gulped.

"Please, kid, don't look so cut up about it! Oh, my hat! Here, old thing, take this shilling and buy yourself some luck. And I say, where are you going?" she cried in alarm.

But Lucy, with the check of little smile, had walked to the door. There for a moment she paused, turning her

face, her hand on the book. She did not speak. She couldn't in that moment have spoken for the life of her, but the look in her face shone like a lightning. She felt suddenly small, treacherous, and mean.



The Peacemaker

"LOWLY"

That was Clara Trevlyn. It was after dinner, and Clara was in the Fourth Form class-room. Clara was frantically writing, now and again pausing to scratch a worried glance at the clock. Clara was engaged upon her detention task.

That task consisted of two hundred lines copied from Virgil.

A rather stiff task it was, but Clara, with undying optimism, was hoping to finish it in time for the practice which would begin on Senior Side at half-past ten. She knew the task was beyond her, but Clara was always a fighter. It was ten past three now, however, and though she was writing with energy she still had half the task to do. How could! Bless Virgil! Bless—

A creak at the door. Clara paused up.

A white, strained face intruded.

"What, Lucy?" Clara cried.

Lucy gulped.

"Oh, Clara, I had to come and see you. I—P've just heard Dabria Fair-leather asking for you. How are you getting on?"

Clara sighed.

"Better?"

"Will you be done in time?"

"I don't know. I'm hoping to."

"This perhaps," Lucy hastily suggested, stepping farther into the room.

"I can help you, Clara. It's all right, I think. I saw Conroy Jackson as I came in. She was going over to Miss Trevlyn's private house. That means she'll be detained some time, and so even as you've done the two hundred lines you can go, can't you?"

"Well, yes," Clara admitted. "But I don't see—"

"Oh, let me help you!" Lucy said eagerly.

"You know, Clara, your handwriting is very much like mine. If I can do a couple of these—"

Clara gazed at her. What a topping little trick the kiddie was! How eager she was for her not to lose her opportunity. Her face colored.

"Please, Clara," Lucy begged.

Clara nodded.

"Thank very nice of you, kiddie. O.K. then! Come and try your hand. I don't suppose Conroy will notice. If she does she can only make me do them again—and next time there mayn't be practice to interfere. You're a dashed good little kid, you know, Lucy. Grab that pen—"

And happily Lucy grabbed the pen. With her earnest face she busied herself in the task. Above the blackboard the clock monotonously ticked off the minutes—the only sound in the room apart from the scratching of two busy pens. Then suddenly Lucy laid down her pen.

"Clara, I've finished."

"And, by Jove, so have I!" Clara cried delightedly.

"Lucy, you little wonder! Look! It's only five-and-twenty past now. Here, kiddie, you take these and put them on Conroy's desk. I'll fly!"

Lucy smiled. Pride and happiness shone in her face. Pride because she

had helped her heroine; happiness because that practice, after all, would be saved. Oh, how Clara in regard to Dabria Fair-leather, just as the Senior Eleven was stepping on to the field, Dabria passed at her in astonishment.

"Clara, I heard you had a detention task."

"That's right," Clara grinned.

"Have you done it?"

"All washed, agreed, and delivered," Clara said joyfully. "It's on its way to Conroy's study now. Shall we start Dabria?"

Dabria regarded her searchingly. But she was satisfied. Not Clara to tell lies. Through, perhaps, she marvelled, as did everybody else, how on earth Clara had managed to get through her imposition in time. And so, while Lucy happily slipped off to Conroy's study, Clara joyfully grabbed her hockey stick.

"Jolly good," Dabria applauded at the end of the practice. "Keep on like that, Clara, and you'll win at the match. But careful," she added warningly. "No more hanky-panky. Steer clear of trouble."

Clara laughed gaily. And then, catching sight of Lucy's radiant face in the crowd, a tender smile crossed her lips. She went over to her.

"Been watching, kiddie?"

"Yes," Lucy breathed. "And, oh, Clara, I think you were wonderful. You saw, she added shyly. "I play hockey, too. I'm an outside-right."

"An' you was nice!" Clara cried. "I say, that's good news. We'll have to give you some practice, old kiddie, and see what you're made of. Does any practicing go?"

Voluntarily Lucy shook her head.

"No," she admitted. "Who am I to practice with? You forget, Clara, that I'm in Coventry?"

Clara bit her lip. In her happiness she had, for a moment, lost sight of that fact. Oh, it was rotten, rotten, she told herself readily. If she wanted one thing now to make her own job complete it was that Lucy should be friends with the Third. How kind! Loving hockey and not being able to play it! Clara could imagine no worse punishment than that!

"You've frozen a little."

"You'd like to be friends with the Third?"

"Oh, Clara, I'd love to."

"Then," Clara impulsively decided, "come with me. No, don't drink. We're jolly well going to the Third Form Coaches-room, kiddie, and we're just going to try to do something about it. Perhaps they'll listen to reason, if we can't catch them in the right humor."

Malta, Malta! I seem the practice!"

Baba, strolling up with Malta and Justina Cavatina, nodded.

"Jolly good," she said. "But how on earth did you get through detention?"

Clara winked.

"We could tell 'em, oh, Lucy?" she asked, with a chuckle. "And Lucy here. She did it!"

Lucy flushed crimson.

"Oh, but I loved doing it!" she protested.

"And so," Clara went on heartily, "one good turn deserves another. I'm jolly well going to try to make things right for Lucy. Cheerful! Come on, Lucy."

"Good practice! Here, wait a minute!" Baba cried. "Clara, what are you going to do?"

"Jog talk to those kids in the Third Form."

Baba hit her lip.

"But—Clara, no! You know there'll be a row."

"Oh, nonsense! Why should there be?" Clara asked. "Come on, Lucy."

They strolled away, Clara in the forefront of good humors. Baba looked at Malta and Justina. Malta pulled a face.

"Talk about walking into the fire! don't! What shall we do, Baba? Follow?"

But Baba shook her head.

"No," she decided. "Let her try it, anyway. I'm sorry for the kiddie. She's had a rough time. There's just a chance that Clara might sway the Third momentarily as half of them here put in for permits for Saturday. If a crowd of Fourth Formers interfered it might only put their backs up."

The advice was wise, though Malta and Justina, knowing the Tomboy's suit at a gate method could be circumvented for feeling doubtful. Meanwhile Clara cheerfully sailed into the Third Form Coaches-room.

Most of the Third were there, preparing tea. There was dead silence as the Tomboy came in, leading Lucy by the hand.

"Ahem!" Clara said.

Baba fastened upon her from every side of the room, Lucy shrunk back a little.

"Ahem!" Clara repeated, and grinned with feeble stability. "I've just come to have a little chat."

"About what?"

"Well, about us, you know," Clara said brightly. "The Third and the Fourth side—and all that. You know, it will be starting in we'll go on to Falkenstein on Saturday, won't it? And I'm just hoping like anything that we'll all win, you know. But at the moment," Clara went on, warming up, "we've not all too happy together, are we? I mean to say, you've sent Lucy to Coventry and all that."

"Who's that got to do with it?" Fanny Tibbets demanded, while Ida Jackson, bounding over the fire, looked round with a scowl.

"Well, a lot," Clara's cheeks pinkened.

"We know there's been a lot and not a lot done—mistakes, perhaps, both sides. Well, I don't want to see you kids at loggerheads with Lucy, and Lucy here is anxious to bury the hatchet, do you know very well that I wouldn't stick up for her if I didn't think she was true blue. And I do—yes, really, you know," she added, needing to give constant emphasis to that point. "I've never let you down yet, have I? And I'm not doing it now. All I want is for you to shake hands and be friends."

There was a pause. Girls glanced at each other. They glanced at Lucy, who, prominently smiling, still clung to Clara's side. Not all at once could the Third make up its mind. Rightly or wrongly, they blamed Lucy. Rightly or wrongly they thought she was a laughing-stock which reported all their blunders to her professed sister. Annet that there was just predicted trip to Falkenstein—on special permits and at least they could all afford. Clara stood between them and that.

Baba Redfern heaved.

"Well," she said, "I'm willing—as long as the deers'll sell any more tales."

"I haven't sold tales—" Lucy helpfully began.

"She's!" Clara blazed, and motioned her to silence. "Well, that's the staff," she said jocularly. "Madge, what about you?"

"Well, I'm willing too," Madge Green said reluctantly.

"Then come and shake hands."

And Clara heaved a breath of relief. She felt that she was getting somewhere at last.

Then Ma Jackson came forward.

"Well, I don't particularly see why we should make up to her," she objected.

"And in any case, before we do, I reckon she owes us something. She's sold some pretty rotten things in this store, just because we happened to sell her the truth about that awful sister of hers."

A pink flush came into Lucy's cheeks. "But if," Ida went on, with special magnanimity, "she's willing to apologize and admit that her sister is the most awful girl in the school—"
"What was wrong," in a spirit of hopefulness and justice, Lucy had come there; by the narrow stairs to head up all branches between herself and her Form-mates, she had been inspired. She was willing, for her own part, to apologize. But one thing she was not prepared to do—admit any doubts about her sister.

"You call!" she burst out passionately.
"What! Me, I say!"
"That's meant! That's unfair!" Lucy went on, her chest heaving.
"My sister is not a call! My sister, Lucy blazed up defiantly, "is the finest girl in this school!"
"What a head that!"
"Oh, chuck it!"
"She's a beauty!"
"I tell you, she's not!"
"Here! Oh, my hat, I say!" Clara pulled.

But the Third wore up in arms. Lucy was up in arms. The police shouting seemed to be ringing itself into a new waltz. Nobody noticed in the heat of the moment that Ida Jackson had vanished.

"Look here—" Clara roared.
"Take her out!"
"We won't be friends with her!"
"Tell her to get out of OUR House!"
Clara looked grim. Her eyes gleamed.

"Look here, you silly cockoo—" "That's enough!" said a scolding voice, and a hand plucked at her sleeve. "You can come with me to Miss Primrose. Clara, Trevelyan!" And while Clara wanted to blink in dismayed confusion at Connie Jackson, that grand old prefect tapped her towards the door. "I'm almost fed-up with this!" Connie added. "Never mind I see you, you're making a stink with this Form!" Clara gasped.
"But I tell you—" "Never mind! Don't tell me!" Connie sneered. "Have it for Miss Primrose. And all you kids," she shot back at the Third as she led the crimson Tenthair out, "can write out a hundred lines!"

Clara made an irritable gesture. "I know you did! I'm an idiot, I expect! But how was I to know that that little sneak like would go and spoil things? I went there with the best intentions in the world. I didn't want a row! I wanted peace. And instead—the scented lettery—here I am, accused of being a trouble-maker. And that poor kid Lucy worse off than ever before!"
"After classes shook their heads. Poor old Clara!"

"But," Clara went on angrily, "I'm not finished yet! I said I'd stand by Lucy, and I'm jolly well going to stand by her! Oh, don't glare! I know what you're thinking, and perhaps you're right—but I'm not going to tackle the Third again. I've got an idea."

"Well, as an idea, I—I guess so," Lolla concurred cautiously.
"Hooky's the thing," Clara went on earnestly. "When you're in a trap you've got to get time to feel lonely about the other girl. Lucy loves hooky—she told me so. And by the look of her, she should be a sippy little player!" Clara added warmly. "If she only does well then the Third will forget all about this rumpus, and we shall all be friends again. You see?"

They saw. But again they looked doubtful. Perhaps they had set the same ferment boiling in hooky as a peace-maker as Clara seemed to have; but it was obvious that Clara meant to have her way.

And, as usual, she did. There and then she wrote out the letter, posting them on the notice-board in Big Hall.



"SINCE you won't let Lucy have a smack at the ball, she shall be on my side," Clara said. "Come along, Lucy!" She was determined to stand by the new girl—even though it meant quarreling with the Third.



Heroine of the Hour



NOT by any means could Clara Trevelyan's first adventure as a peace-maker be said to have been a success.
For the Third, roused by a hundred lines such, were furious.
And the Fourth, when they heard about it, were furious, too. Smarting from Miss Primrose's stern words, Clara came to the Common-room to receive some useful hints and some very soothing remarks from her Form-mates. The attention was ended by Clara flinging off to her own study.
It was there, ten minutes later, that Babe, Mabel, Lilla, Carole, and Margie Blaindine found her.
"Clara, why do you do it?" Babe asked severely. "I told you—"

The four looked immediately apprehensive.
"An—an idea?" Mabel stammered.
"No—no idea!" Clara stuttered.
"Yes! A jolly good idea!" Clara looked up. "I promised the Third some time ago that I'd arrange a match for them. Well, if talking won't do it, perhaps hooky will! They won't be in school with Lucy in the same form with her, they can't very well ignore her then, can they? To-morrow," Clara went on, "is a holiday, and as junior games captain, I'm going to fix a game between the Third and the junior first eleven. How's that for an idea?"
Coming from anybody else, it might have been a jolly good idea. But Clara's intention seemed to have such an unfortunate way of running contrary to their inventor's wishes, that the four instinctively looked for trouble.
"Well, don't you think it's a good idea?" Clara demanded.

Half an hour later while she, Janet Jordan, and Margie sat at tea, there was a tramp of feet in the corridor. There came a thump on the door. Looking rather grim, Madge Stevens, Missie Jackson, Jessie Cranston, and Iris Marshall came in.
"No," Madge said, "we're playing Junior School to-morrow."
"That's right," Clara agreed. "Have some tea!"
"Not yet. We want to know something first. We've read the team list, and we notice that you've put Lucy Campbell down to play."
Clara stiffened.
"Well!"
"Well," Madge said, "the Third doesn't recognize Lucy Campbell."
Clara's eyes gleamed.
"Meaning?" she asked dangerously.
"Meaning," Madge retorted, her lips tight, "that if she plays, we don't—that's all!"

There was a moment of silence. First-class Clara's face became. "Ma'am, Jane and Janet glanced at her anxiously, recognizing at once that their teacher's remark was in her most staid form. But Clara did not rise. Coldly she stared at the first."

"Then listen to this," she said firmly. "In the first place, understand that this is a Third Form matter. I'm game captain of the Junior School. As game captain I've a right to include who I like in my teams. What ever you think of Lucy Chamberbill doesn't count! It's my decision that matters when it comes to games. Lucy's playing," she added finally.

"And so?"

"You can do what you jolly well like," Clara replied scornfully. "If you don't want to play, I'll find another side!"

The four passed. They glanced at each other. They did want to play, of course—most frightfully. Clara was within her rights. In assuming her prerogative as game captain, she was not bound to heed to anyone's demands. "Well, what about it?" Clara asked. "Better let me know. The match takes place after lessons to-morrow afternoon."

Midge gulped.

"All right, we'll let you know in half an hour," she said.

And, somewhat crestfallen, the Upper Third departed left, to carry their news back to the Third Form Common-room. In sauntering grim and angry silence the Third received it. Better they had to give way for once, or lose their places in the team. Clara obviously meant what she said, and Clara in that mood was as unshakable as a rock. What were they to do?

"Well," Ida Jackson said, "why look so gloomy?"

"Because we want to play, Miss!"

"And who says you need it?" Ida asked craftily. "Why shouldn't you play? If you all back out now it will only leave Clara with the laugh, and Lucy Chamberbill will play in any case. There's no need, because she happens to be in the team, why you should resign her. After all, she's in Coventry isn't she? Why not keep her in Coventry on the locker shelf?"

Bessie Redfern blinched.

"You mean—stare her?"

"Why not? It will show Clara what you think about including her, anyway."

Faces showed hope. Girls looked at each other. Ida grinned savoringly, knowing very well that her suggestion would be accepted. That was the idea, of course. Lucy was in the team, not by their wishes. There was no earthly reason, since they hadn't selected her, why they should take notice of her. As in the First Form, so in the locker 3-4-5—Lucy should remain in Coventry.

And so, while Clara congratulated herself at having effectually rebuffed the Third, while Lucy was sullenly congratulated at her decision, the Upper Third made their plans. Great were Clara's hopes when the two teams took the field next day—not about the result of the game, but because she hoped that when this match was finished, there would be a different understanding between her little protégée and her Fernessons.

The teams lined up. Lucy, severely eager, on the right wing of the Third's forward line. Georgina Sheppington of the Lower Fifth, who was collecting, put the white between her lips. There was a clasp! Sticks clashed in the telly-off, and the Third broke away.

"To me!" cried Lucy, racing up with the attack.

She was ideally positioned, unmarked,

with a clear run for goal. But Amelia Tenn, the inside-right, deliberately passed the ball back to Doris Redfern at her centre-forward. Doris nudged the pass. It went on to Diana Roydon-Clarke.

Lucy lost her Sp. Clara noticed that. She said nothing. Less than a minute later the same thing happened again. Then again. It became apparent to Clara that the Third were deliberately besetting their outside-right and her face shadowed.

The crisis came when Lucy, just outside the striking circle, in an ideal position for scoring, raced for the ball. Quickly, deliberately, Greta Green cleared it away from her.

Clara signalled to Georgina to stop the game. In a towering temper she came over to Midge Stevens.

"So that's the little game, is it?" she cried. "You call yourself a sport!"

Midge flushed.

"You haven't given Lucy a smack as the ball."

"Well, we don't want her!"

"All right!" Clara snarled grimly.

"Lucy," she said, "come here. For the rest of this game you'll be on our side. Janet, take Lucy's place in the Third team."

Midge stared.

"Here, you can't do that! She isn't a Third Form!"

"And this," Clara reminded her, "isn't a Third Form side. It's the Junior School eleven. If I want Janet in the Junior School eleven I can have her. Now stop it! Game!" she cried.

There was a chuckle from the side lines. Clara, staring, went back to her place. The Third scowled, sulkily, glowering as the game started again—but then, oh, what a change! Clara, an inside-right, passed at once. And at once Lucy ran up the field, and stick! Bang! Thwack! The ball was in the net.

"Oh, jolly good!"

"Well played, kid!"

Lucy laughed, her little face as red as her hair. The feelings of the Third were too deep for words.

But now that she had her chance, Lucy meant to show what she could do. She did! No doubt the kiddie could play hockey—well play it daintily. Perhaps the very human desire to score off her legs inspired her. Like a little international she played, bordering with her speed, tying the opposition's defences into knots by her subtlety and craft.

Clara glowed. She remarked Lucy at once for a player who would be worth her place in the Junior eleven. And she looked her up.

Smack! Goal number two—from Clara this time.

Now the game warmed up. It grew exciting. What an odd Lucy was! How marvellous her mastery of the ball! The right wing of the junior team became the most formidable flank on the field. With Clara playing on top of her legs, and Lucy determined to do or die, there was no doubt of the result. The Third were made to look like novices.

When the third goal came—a dazzling drive from Lucy, after she had just left Midge Stevens and Fay Chandler completely standing, enthusiasm knew no bounds.

"Oh, well played!"

Again Lucy laughed breathlessly. Again the Third fumed. Now the second half, with Lucy and Clara between them playing havoc with the Third's defences. The Third went to pieces. Bessie came another goal, this time from Barbara Redfern. And two minutes before time,

Lucy nudged her third and last. Clara grinned. "Well, aren't you jolly well right!" she told Midge Stevens. "If you'd played the game in the first place you might have beaten us. As it is—!" She frowned. "Well, you've only got yourselves to thank. Lucy, that was toping. Before long, my girl, I'll have you in the Junior eleven, or know the reason why. And I think," she added, "that this calls for a celebration."

"What-to?" beamed Jessica Carmichael.

"There's Bessie Barber!"

"Oh, really, Clara, here I am!"

Clara grinned.

"Bessie," she said, "here's five bob. Go to the bookshop and spend it wisely and spend it well. While you're changing in the pavilion, prepare a spread to study No. 7." She grinned triumphantly in the direction of the consultant Third.

"He's going," she said distinctly, "to do honour to one side if the only plays as the played this afternoon, will be in the junior team before the term's out. Now cut!"

And while the Third exchanged bitter and justified glances, Lucy, crimson and happy, followed her idol into the junior school pavilion.



When Forms Clash

NO doubt that Clara Trevize had scored. Reason, mainly by the agency of one of its own Form members, the Third was in no pleasant humour when they returned to their dressing-room. Bad enough to have received such a licking—but the crowning insult to many of them was Clara's invitation to the girl they despised to join her at tea.

"Sickening!" Fanny Carter frowned.

"Disgusting!"

"Just sending up to Clara for all she's worth!" Fanny Tibbotts fumed.

"And giving the rummy Fourth the laugh of us all the time!"

Gloomy, dismal silence. It was interrupted by the appearance of a grinning Ida Jackson. Ida had not played in the Third Form team, and, having no real Form loyalties, had really enjoyed seeing her Fernessons. She knew the temper the Third would be in now. She knew exactly what they were feeling.

"Well, are you going to let her get away with it?" she demanded.

"Get away with what?" Midge Stevens demanded.

Ida shrugged.

"Well, she helped to lick you. Clara from this moment will have her eye on her for junior side—which means," Ida sneered, "that the kid will get her junior colours before any of you."

"Oh, shut up!" snapped Fanny Tibbotts.

But Ida did not shut up.

"She's just made a laughing-stock of you," she went on rabbling. "And that's what you've done about it! Just let her. You let her walk off with the match, and now you're going to let her be fobbed by Clara."

"Will you shut up?" Fanny roared.

"When you lot come to your senses, perhaps," Ida retorted. "But it's about time somebody did something. Dash it all, the Ferns' job being made a laughing-stock—and it will be a bigger laughing-stock than ever if this lot take place! Fanny allowing that little cut to be letted for playing tactics!"

Bessie Redfern flushed.

"You mean—stop it?"
 "Why not?" Ida shrugged. "Til for her! And it's any strength, I should say. Supposing, in the first place, the girls were needed. No girl—no head! That would show Clara, anyway. That we were! I just going to let her do what she liked."

The Third exchanged glances. In their previous mood they felt there was justice in the Sewak's remarks. Humiliated, burning with indignation as they were, they were in no mood to reason things out calmly, and the celebration part of Clara's triumphs needed most kindly of all.

"Come on!" Madge Stevens said.
 "We're going to raid!" Ida asked.
 "We are!"

Ida grinned.
 "O.K. I'll go and get Bernie Hunter out of the way. You come along as soon as ever you're dressed."

She strodd off, but she did not go immediately to Study No. 7, she went to look up Connie.

"Here, where's the Third Form Common room," she advised her sister.
 "And if you can, get Palmyra somewhere near the store. I fancy there's a great lot to Clara costume."

She grinned and went off, while Connie sat aside the fashion magazine she had been reading.

Arriving in the Fourth Form corridor, Ida tapped at the door of Study No. 7, where Bernie Hunter, red-faced and happy, was kneeling in front of the top, making toast. She stared round as Ida entered.

"Here, is my—"
 Ida grinned affably.
 "I'm, Bernie, were you expecting a registered letter?"

"Er—"
 "Because," Ida said carefully, "Pages, the porter, has one for you. He asked me to mention it to you."

Up jumped Bernie, his eyes suddenly gleaming. "Ford Fourth, and Clara because of once forgotten."

"Pages, you say?"
 "Yes, I saw him. Oh, my hat! Here, Bernie the toast is burning?"

But Bernie was not waiting, thank you! Choking glowing, she was rushing off. Ida grinned. She slipped into the study, opened the tablecloth on the floor, and at a really record pace began to pile in the good things which Bernie had brought from the tuck-shop. By the time Madge Stevens heading half a dozen of her housemates, had arrived, the tuck was already packed.

"Oh, my hat! Good work, Ida!" Madge chuckled. "Here, Davis, catch that and! Now heat it!"

In checking greets the Third beat it, carrying the mugging tablecloth between them. Two minutes later Clara Trevillyn and Lucy Campbell chorused, followed by a crowd of their chums. Clara blushed.

"Hallo! What's the matter? Where's Bernie? And where," she added, staring round, "is the tuck?"

"Perhaps," Jennina suggested gently, "our Bernie is spending the donation as a refreshment."

But Babe frowned. That was not like Bernie. Bernie was often addicted to taking a snack when she visited the tablecloth, but with a spread in the office Bernie could be relied upon to do her duty. They were all staring, when there came a beating voice behind them.

"Oh crumbs! I suppose, you girls—"
 "Bernie, where's the tuck?"
 "The tuck? But the tuck's there, you know!" And then Bernie jumped. "Here, my hat! It's pig-gone!"
 "Gone it has!" Clara said grimly.

"And you were jolly well in charge! What's happened to it, you shacker!"
 "Well, it wasn't my fault!" Bernie said aggressively. "That little beast Bernie bitterly commented, 'I suppose, it's a job to tell me how about a registered letter!'"

"Who did you say told you?" Clara demanded.
 "Ida Jaj-Jackson!"
 "And the tuck was here when you left!"

"Yes, of course, but—"
 Clara's eyes glimmered.

"Then I guess that's good enough. See the idea? Ida got Bernie out of the way while she sniped our grub. Come on!"

"Oh, my hat, where are you going?" Babe gasped.
 "To see Ida!"
 "But, Clara, no!"

But Clara was up in arms at once. Her expression was grim as she strode towards the door. Babe hung behind in front of her.

"Clara, don't. There'll only be a row."

"Well, let those be," Clara cried recklessly. "You don't think I'm going to let these kids pinch my spread and get away with it! Come on!"

And off without further ado Clara strode. Babe gasped.

"Come on, follow her! We can't let the chump get into any more hot-larks."

In a group they flowed out of the study. Lucy, seeing more trouble ahead for her heroine, dashed out with them.

Clara had the lead then, and Clara, in her most reckless mood, reached the Third Form Common-room just four or five yards in front of them. She did not knock. Instinctively she threw the door open.

And then let out a cry of rage.

Far there was the Third, and there, on four desks pushed together was the spread. Tarts and cakes and pastries, sandwiches, jellies, and a number of wine pies. If Clara had any doubt about the real ownership of that feast, it was settled by the sight of the Victorian glass tiffin dish, which she recognized immediately.

Her jaw set. The old fighting light came into her eyes.

"Hallo, Third!" shrieked Linda Lee. As one the Third grouped together, prepared to defend their raided feast in the last gasp. But if they were determined, Clara was no less so.

"Are you going to hand it over?" she snarled.

"No!"

"Then I'll jolly well take it!"

And stormily the Trolley advanced. The Third stiffened. Ida Jackson, a spiteful gleam in her eyes, picked up a wine tart. Clara saw her. She plunged forward with a shout.

"Don't you dare touch that!"

She caught Ida's arm as it went back. Ida yelled. Then the wrath of the Third broke loose. Clara, surrounded, caught up in a tide of scolding jammers, found herself being jostled towards the door, just as it opened to admit the broad-limbed Babe & Co. Clara shouted.

"Hallo! Hallo! Here! Here! Here!"

"My, hat! Hi, leave Clara alone, you little wretches!"

"Habbit!"

"Get out, Fourth Form!"

Babe & Co. passed. Clara, hounded in and furious, struggled. There came a loud boom. Ida Jackson, as the Trolley's big foot accidentally descended upon her too, and Ida spitefully kicked

back. Clara cried out. In sudden fury she twisted round, clutching her attention by the shoulder. At the same moment.

"Girls!" cried a terrible voice.

"Miss Primrose!"

Instantly all became silent.

"Girls, this—this. My goodness gracious, what a boisterous! And you girls of the Fourth Form, what are you doing here! Clara, what were you doing in Ida Jackson's?"

"I was doing nothing!" Clara retorted.

Miss Primrose's lips tightened. Connie Jackson, who had come in with her, smirked. She looked around.

"Who was responsible for this?" Miss Primrose wanted to know.

"Clara Trevillyn!" piped a voice.
 "Clara!"

Clara gasped.

"I—I'm sorry, Miss Primrose—"
 "Did you start this?"

Clara bit her lip.

"Answer me, girl!"

"Well, yes, yes—"

"I think," Miss Primrose said, her brows coming down, "I do see, Clara. I have already had cause to warn you about this scrib you are creating between your own Form and the Third. You will," she added, "go at once to my study. And every girl concerned in this disgraceful disturbance will take a hundred lines," she added. "Now please be quiet!" Clara, gasped.

And Clara, with a helpless look towards her chums, went.



Third Form Vengeance

THIS is the last, the very last time I shall warn you," Miss Primrose concluded. "Were it not for the fact that the Senior Eleven is relying upon you, I should unhesitatingly detain you, Clara. As it is, you will take two hundred lines, and please," she added tartly, "be done be an exhibition of this sort."

That was all. Clara, swelling as if she had been whipped, left the study. Outside the Fourth were waiting for her. The Fourth, anxious to know the result, bearded relief when they learned it, and in that relief told Clara a few plain truths about herself and her recklessness.

And naturally there were representations in the Third. The Third were smarting. They had not only lost their raided feast, but they had earned an extra hundred lines as well. Bitter indeed was the feeling towards Clara.

But more bitter than that was the feeling against Lucy; Lucy, who through Clara, had humiliated them that afternoon.

Encouraged by Ida Jackson, there were meetings and dark hints of vengeance against Lucy in the Third Form.

But Lucy knew nothing about these. Lucy, rather troubled and worried, was in Clara's study. She was helping Clara to get through her two hundred lines, when there came a knock at the door and the coffee face of Bernie Hunter looked in. The Minked.

"Oh, how are you, Lucy?"

Lucy smiled.

"You want me, Bernie?"

"Yes, rather, you know! Just—"
 and Bernie mysteriously closed the door —"just to warn you," she said in a whisper.

to "Championed By Clara"

Clara frowned.

"What have you got to wear for school?"

"Well, you know," Bonnie panted. "Ahem! I—I hope you don't think I'm unattractive," she said. "Haw-well, Lucy is such a nice girl."

Clara started.

"What on earth are you prattling about?"

"Oh, really, Clara, I'm not prattling! I've only come to see the Lucy a good time, you know. These little houses in the Third Form—"

Clara frowned.

"What about them?"

"Well, they're going to make it hot for Lucy in the dormitory tonight," Edna Jackson said. "I happened to overhear Edna Jackson talking about it to Fanny Tibbotts. They're going to make her pay the password, you know, and—well, I'm just passing Lucy on her guard."

Lucy bit her lip. But Clara, with a sudden fierce expression on her face, rose to her feet.

"They are, are they?" she asked quietly.

"Clara, please!" Lucy rose agitatedly. "Where are you going?"

"I'm going," Clara said between her teeth, "to put a stop to that."

"No, Clara, please, no!" Lucy gasped. "Don't! There—there'll only be more trouble, and—and think of the match, she cried desperately. "Think of the girls! Clara, don't! I—I can look after myself," she cried.

Bonnie blushed. Perhaps she felt sorry now that she had said anything. Clara passed, going quickly, affectionately at the messenger.

"Clara—!" Lucy faltered.

"All right!" Clara said coolly.

"Don't worry, kid."

"But—how are you not going to the Third?"

"No," Clara agreed deeply. "I'm not going to the Third."

But all the same, she was going out. Her first impulse had been to rush off to the Third Form Common-room. On second thought, however, she changed her mind. Not if Clara knew it was Lucy going to be left in the tender mercies of the Third. Her eyes glared. Well, she had done her best. It was about time that Lucy's own sister did something about it.

And off to Study No. 5 in the Sixth Form passage Clara strooped. But pausing at the door, she paused. It was slightly ajar and inside she saw the figures of Connie Jackson and Grace herself.

Grace was facing Connie Jackson.

"But Connie, opposing the Third out!"

Connie made an impatient gesture.

"You're an opponent as a kitten. Why should she find out?"

"I don't know!" Grace shook her head. "I've a feeling, that's all. A—fancy sort of feeling as if something is going to happen. If Lucy don't find out I'm knocking boards I've finished. Oh, Connie, if you could only get rid of her, if she'd only go!"

Clara's eyes flashed. She knocked at the door. Grace wheeled as if she had been shot.

"You, Clara! What do you want?"

"A word with you," Clara replied scornfully.

"Clara, how dare—"

"Oh, I dare!" Clara's lips curled. "I didn't come to listen, but I heard. A fine sort of sister you are, aren't you?" with withering contempt. "Bipson!" with perfect to set an example to the school. Oh, don't glare at me—"

not you," to Connie Jackson. "If I did the right thing, I should tell Lucy about this."

Grace's cheeks blanched.

"Clara—"

"All right, I'm not a sneak," Clara said. "But I wouldn't break the kid's heart. She (thinks the world of you—) and you—she added with violence—"So remain her, want to kick her out of the school! Well," Clara added, "perhaps I'll have something to say about that when the time comes."

Grace was white to the lips.

Connie stood silent, sharpening a pencil on the table.

"Have you come here to tell me that?" Grace demanded.

"No, but I feel better now for having said it," Clara returned. "I haven't given you away—I don't intend to give you away—not because you don't deserve it, but simply because I just couldn't bring myself to shaver that poor kid's faith in the old she made of you. I came," Clara said, "for your help."

"Oh?"

"Not for me, for her! Fat lot!" the Tansley went on, "you've done for her since she's been in the school. You know the poor kid's having a rotten time in the Third. Instead of trying to help her, you're just encouraging her to the Third. And why? Because, Clara went on bitterly, "you'll hope she'll get so fed up that she'll leave."

Connie coughed.

"Ahem! I think I'll go—"

"Goodbye!" Clara scoffed.

Grace glared at her.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Tonight," Clara went on coolly, "the Third are planning to bully Lucy in the dorm."

Grace bit her lip.

"And you want me to interfere?"

"No."

"Then what?"

"I want you to make it impossible for them to have a perfect. You're Lucy's sister. As a prefect and her sister, you've got the power, if you only like to use it, to take Lucy out of that dormitory. You can for once invite her to come and sleep here in this room with you. If you did that, it would save her a lot of trouble. It will save the Third from running their heads against another brick wall. I'm asking you to do that, for Lucy's sake!"

Grace gasped. She thought of her duties.

"But it's against the rules."

"Well," Clara sneered, "hardly that doesn't matter to you! Haven't you heard—with things around—that you're particularly keen on observing the rules when you've got your own ends to serve. Will you do that?"

Grace gazed at her. Her face was white. She couldn't do it, she couldn't. She was committed now. The car was ordered, the dance tickets paid for, Connie and Audrey would make no end of fun of the backed out. And yet—

"How poor kid."

"Oh, bother, she was being a fool! Wasn't this what she was working for? Wasn't this what she was hoping for? The harder the time Lucy had, the more quickly she would become fed-up, the more quickly she would leave the school. She passed.

"I'm sorry, I can't do it!"

Clara gazed at her bitterly, scornfully. Grace walked under the gaze. Her surprised, the Tansley said no word, the Wilton even another glance, and she walked towards the door, shutting it behind her as she went back to her own

study. Lucy, just finishing off the book, looked up.

"Clara!"

Clara stood for a moment in moody silence.

"Lucy," she said then, "I want you to promise me something."

"Promise!" Lucy's big blue eyes opened wide. "Well, of course, Clara."

"I want you," Clara said, "to promise me that, as soon as lights are out in the Third Form dormitory, you'll come to me in the Fourth. That's all!"

"You mean so—so they won't rag me?"

"Yes!"

"But, Clara, it might mean more trouble."

"Never mind that. It can't mean half as much trouble as there will be if you sleep. There's no empty bed just to mine in the dorm, and you can't have that. You've promised, you know."

Lucy sighed, though her eyes for a moment filled with worshippful admiration.

"All—all right," she said. "But, Clara, I wish you wouldn't worry so much about me!"



Night Raid!

IT was five minutes since Lady Patricia Northampton, duty prefect for the day, had got out the key in the dormitory occupied by the Upper Third Form at CHB House School. All was silent, all in darkness, with no hint of the undercurrent of excitement which was shaking the whole Form, with no suggestion yet of the storm that was to be unleashed.

Then suddenly there was a rustle. The sheets on the bed across the door were suddenly thrown back, and Lucy Campbell, a pale, warlike little form in the moonlight that shined in from the window, rose.

Edna Jackson set up a start.

"Here, what are you doing!"

But Lucy did not reply. She was remembering her promise to Clara—not, however, that Clara had any intention of allowing her to keep it, for at that very moment the Tansley was padding down the corridor outside, intent upon finding Lucy herself. She slipped out feeling Lucy herself. She slipped out feeling Lucy gathered her dressing gown, hurried for her shoes.

"What's that?" Edna Jackson gasped. "It's Third!" she cried. "Lucy Campbell's gone out!"

"What?"

"Sleep!"

But Lucy had her shoes on. She swung her dressing-gown on. Quickly she dashed towards the door. Behind her, however, Edna Jackson, Nancy Tibbotts, and Madge Stevens stopped from their beds. The door opened.

"Lucy!" breathed Clara.

"Clara!"

"Come on—quick! Get back, you kids!" Clara hissed, and, holding the door open, gave Edna Jackson a push, so she caught Lucy's arm and heeled her through. "Now, quick—beat it!" she cried.

Up the passage they flew, leaving a smouldering yell behind them. The Third cheated of their prey, glared.

"Well, my hat!"

"That cut Clara again!"

"She must have got wind that we were going to rag Lucy!"

Eda showed her teeth.

"Well, are we going to stand that?"



CLARA springing into the Commons-room. "You've stolen our food!" she stormed. "Hand it over!" But with rallying cries, the Third leapt up to defend their loot.

she cried. "Are we going to let Clara get away with it? Every time we play something, she gets in to upset things."

"She's fooled us twice to-day," Ida went on. "Now she's done it again. It's obvious this was a setup job. And we—well, a fat lot of idiotic-looking clumps we are! Are you going to let the Fourth have the laugh of us?"

"No; rather not! But what—"

"What," Ida said vindictively, "we've got to do is to get her back. And we'll jolly well get her back—now! We'll teach the Fourth that we can stand to eat our own business, and we'll jolly well show them, at the same time, that we've going to stand no lanky-panky! They're as good as pinched! Lucy Caspell, she belongs to us. Get your pillow!"

"Oh, great pip! You mean—rid the Fourth?"

"Why not?"

Why not, indeed? Faces became grim. Ida was right. It was up to the Third to maintain their prestige. In the Jackson pillows were grabbed. But Ida, wrenching hers from the bed, quickly opened it, and slipped a bar of soap inside. Ida had her own peculiar idea of what she was going to do in that pillow fight.

"Ready!" breathed Madge Stevens. "Go!"

"Then not a sound. Follow me." The door was opened. In stealthy file the Third crept along the corridor. Outside the Fourth Form dormitory, Madge paused.

"Now, when I give the word, jump in," she breathed. "Go for 'em! Get Lucy out of the bed and hustle her along before the Fourth realizes what we're doing! Quick! the word. Ready!"

"Yes!"

"Then—go! And no noise, mind!" And the door of the Fourth Form dormitory was flung open. The Third, clutching pillows, swarmed in. There was a scuffle that of feet. As one the Fourth woke.

"My hat!"

"The Third!"

"It's a trap!"

A raid it was! The Third were on the approach with a vengeance now. Pillows were grasping Fourth Formers. Girls rose, only to be lashed back. A pillow hunt, a cloud of feathers filled the room. A quick line went up.

"Hurrah!"

"Third Form for ever!"

"Get hold of Lucy!"

But that was easier said than done. Lucy, as it happened, was at the farther end of the dormitory. Clara Twyns scrambled out of bed. Babs & Co. alarmed now, had grabbed pillows. Doris Redden went over with a yell, swept aside by Jean Cartwright, Patsy Carter and Fay Chandler, swept back by Jessica and Beulah Falloy, clasped together and went down with a thump.

"Hurrah!"

"Hurrah!"

But the Fourth had recovered. The element of surprise, upon which Madge had reckoned to give her Form the advantage, had gone. In groups of two and three and fours, girls leaped to hand battles were taking place all over the dormitory. Then suddenly Ida Jackson slipped out from the group.

Clara was in the act of groping for her pillow. Lucy, out of bed, was standing still, not understanding, rather bewildered by it all. She saw Ida leap at Clara; she let out a shout.

"Clara, look out!"

Just in time Clara turned. The blow aimed at her missed. Ida, thrown forward by the terrific energy she had put into the stroke, went she had put into the pillow staggering on. Clara caught the pillow and wrenched it from her, as she stumbled forward. Then she swung it round.

"Yike that!" she yelled.

And crash! Down came the pillow upon Ida's head. It came down with a thud. And Ida, with a frightened cry, went rolling forward to collapse, most unceremoniously, on the floor. At the same moment there was a cry from the door:

"Girls!"

And while everybody, breathless and electrified, whirled round, dropping pillows as if they had become red-hot, Miss Pringle, a figure of wary majesty, swept into the room.

"Oh, my head—my head!" Ida wailed.

"Ida! Miss Pringle cried.

"She hit me—she had something in her pillow!"

"Why, post little fiber—? Clara blazed.

"She did?" Ida panted.

And suddenly, amusingly played upon the pillow which was still in Clara's hand. She upturned it, and then, everlastingly gapped as out of the pillow rolled a bar of soap. Clara's eyes goggled; from Lucy came a cry. Miss Pringle looked horrified.

"Clara, did you—"

"No," Lucy cried, and jumped forward. "She didn't. That pillow"—and she pointed at Ida Jackson—"belonged to her! If anyone put that soap in it, it was Ida herself!"



Clara's Firm Stand

SOMETHING more serious than the pillow-fight in the Fourth Form dormitory was at issue now.

Everybody was staring at Ida Jackson and Clara. Miss Pringle hit her lip. She looked really worried.

"Ida, is this true?"

"It is not true!" Ida cried.

"But I tell you—" cried Lucy.

"Yes, she would!" Ida turned a flaming, vindictive face upon her.

"Naturally," she cried craftily, "you'd stick up for Clara Twyns—naturally," she added bitterly, "when she wanted to protect you—"

"Ida! Miss Pringle cried.

"Well—"

"Please—please!"

The headmistress looked almost distressed. She saw the faces of the Third and Fourth, glowing, angry—no longer mere rivals, but deadly enemies.

The Third believed that what she said was true. The Third, knowing their Clara, resented of the Third's interference, went all on Ida's side.

Miss Primrose lit her lip.

"Clara, did you start this?"

"I did not," Clara cried.

"Why, you—"

"Silence, please!" Miss Primrose frowned. "Madge Stevens, I believe you are looked upon as the leader of your Form. Tell me what happened."

"Well," Madge gulped, "we were going to rag Lucy Campbell."

"You?"

"And—well, Clara forced out. She and Lucy got up a scheme between them. Clara helped Lucy to escape from the dormitory, and brought her here."

"I see! And so," Miss Primrose said quietly, "you determined to retrieve her?"

"You."

"Why were you—going to rag Lucy?"

"Because," Madge said, "she's a snob and a cheat!"

Again Miss Primrose looked at her—again compressed her lips. But having started now, she meant to get to the bottom of all this. Normally, the Third and the Fourth were on friendly terms. It distressed and worried her to find such hostility between them. Her eyes fastened upon Clara.

"And so," Miss Primrose asked, "you've been protecting her?"

"Well, yes."

"I see!" Miss Primrose's eyes went toward the group. Again they came to rest upon Clara Trevity. "I am not condemning your charity, Clara, but as a girl in a higher Form, I really do feel that you have been employing the wrong methods. I have had occasion to reprimand you before about causing strife with the Third. I told you last time that if it happened again that I should detain you on Saturday."

"Yes," Miss Primrose said, "I should detain you on Saturday."

"She stopped. Girls glanced anxiously at each other.

"However," Miss Primrose coughed—"since I am so much more enlightened as to the cause of this strife, and since, as headmistress of this school, it is my first and most obvious duty to create happiness between girls of all Forms, I am going to give you one more chance. Just one! But I am going to give it to you on one condition only—that you cease this strife between yourself and the Third!"

Clara gulped.

"And since," Miss Primrose went on sternly, "the chief feud seems to have existed between you and Ida Jackson, Clara, you will shake hands with Ida now, and all leave this dormitory friends again!"

There was a pause. Ida looked up from beneath her brows. The look she shot at Clara was unmistakable, meaning: Clara's back stiffened.

"Clara!" Babe whispered.

"Ida, are you willing to shake hands?"

"Oh? Oh, yes, Miss Primrose! Provided," Ida muttered cunningly.

"Clara will apologize for putting a bar of soap in her pillow first?"

Clara's eyes flashed.

"I won't! I didn't do it!"

Miss Primrose's eyes gleamed.

"I ask you," she repeated, "for the peace of both Forms, to shake hands, Clara."

Clara set her teeth.

"How can I shake hands with her while she tells such lies about me?"

"You refuse?"

"Yes, if she insists upon telling lies!"

A doubtful silence. Miss Primrose's lips twitched. A flood of angry color ran up to her cheeks.

"Very well," she said bitterly, "then that ends the matter! I have tried most patiently and most liberally to bring you to your senses and to make peace. As neither of you will give way, I must take sterner and more authoritative measures. Clara, you are detained on Saturday."

"Oh, but—"

"Will you apologize?"

"I—I can't!"

"Very well!" Miss Primrose went indignantly stiffened. "I am sorry," she said. "I hope, upon reflection, you will come to your senses. You Third Form girls, get back to your dormitory at once! And you others, clear up this mess and get into bed! As Clara," she added, "refuses to pronounce peace between you, there will be no passes on Saturday."

"Oh, but—"

"Will you apologize?"

"I—I can't!"

"Very well!" Miss Primrose went indignantly stiffened. "I am sorry," she said. "I hope, upon reflection, you will come to your senses. You Third Form girls, get back to your dormitory at once! And you others, clear up this mess and get into bed! As Clara," she added, "refuses to pronounce peace between you, there will be no passes on Saturday."

Deep and dismal the gloom which descended upon the Fourth Form at that bitter indeed the remarks hurled at Clara Trevity's head. In silence Clara listened inwardly sick with the misery and disappointment which consumed her.

For, if they were losing a happy day's holiday, what of her? She had so looked forward to playing for the senior eleven.

But she wouldn't give way. She wouldn't! She had justice and right

on her side. No power on earth could have moved the Tomboy then.

And it didn't. Though her cheeks flushed hot, though the Form whispered behind her, and Dacia Fairbrother sympathized her, her mind was made up. Even to Lucy's heart-broken plaints she was dead.

SURPRISE ARRIVED. Gloomily junior school gathered to watch the coaches in the quad as the senior eleven climbed into them, en route for the station.

Clara was there, and grouped around her were her chums—Babe, Maie, Jennina, Janet Jordan, and little Lucy Campbell. Clara's heart was heavy. What yearning, what longing, was in her face as she watched the senior eleven preparing to leave! Dacia Fairbrother saw her, hesitated, and then, with a sudden, suspended stroke, swung towards her.

"Clara, it's not too late—even now," she said.

Clara gulped. The girls around her stiffened with sudden and renewed hope. For one moment the Tomboy felt even her iron resistance weakening.

"If you wish, like, Clara, I will take you now to Miss Primrose," Dacia urged. "I am sure she would accept your apology."

But Clara merely shook her head.

"Thanka, Dacia—no!"

"It is your last chance."

"Clara—Clara, please do it!" Lucy cried. "Oh, Clara, please! Don't rub yourself—"

A murmur supported her. But Clara's eyes were hard; her chin out-thrust. Bitter, bitter her disappointment, but sterner was her pride, her resolution, her refusal to sacrifice a principle. Babe, watching her, sighed, looking at Babe, who shook her head. Dacia, reading her answer in the Tomboy's fierce expression, bit her lip and walked away.

"Clara!" Babe muttered.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" Clara cried distractedly. "I know I must seem to be behaving like a stubborn fool. But, Babe, you know what this means to me. You know I'd give everything I possess to be going in that coach to Falkstone. But I can't—I can't!"

Lucy gulped. Ross Redworth glanced at her.

"Not even," she asked lightly, "for our school?"

"Your sales!" In a moment Clara was in arms. "What are you whispering?" she cried. "An absolute cut. What am I missing? My school colours! Everything I've worked and hoped for. But I won't go back on my word. I couldn't! Babe, you don't blame me, do you?"

"No, of course not," Babe said soothingly, "and neither does Ross—in her heart. Do you, Ross?"

But Ross, biting her lip, turned aside, perhaps to hide the swelling admiration in her eyes. In the quad there was a cheer. The coaches rolled down the drive. Tenderly Clara stood, her teeth fastened upon her lip, as she watched. Then suddenly there was a checked sob at her side. A snuffling, trembling little hand slipped into her palm, catching it with a clasp that somehow said more than a whole volume of spoken words.

And Clara, looking down, saw little Lucy's face, eyes shimmering with admiration, and bright with tears. Convulsively her hand tightened on the little palm in hers.

"Cheer up, kid!" she muttered huskily.

NIGHT OF STORM—

The streets of Courtfield swept by curtains of driving rain—the sky scythed by vicious lightning. Then above the growl of thunder comes the sound of an crushing car. The scream of tyres on the wet road ends in a crash of broken glass and the car stops—head on in a shop window . . .

A dramatic moment—a happening that was to precipitate a climax in the same situation at Cliff House School . . . In the form of Loty Campbell and Clara Trevity!



Read about it in this long complete story by Hilda Richards in next Saturday's **SCHOOLGIRL**

SCORNED

Ship Ahoy!—But Does it Mean Rescue? Exciting Chapters of This Grand Desert Island Adventure Serial



FOR NEW READERS.

BETTY BARTON & Co., of Morcove School, together with members of Orange-grove are on their way home from a five-day sojourn, when they have to make a forced landing on a tiny island. With them is a mysterious old man!

MURKIN, who has jumped by parachute from another plane, has with Betty & Co. that she was escaping from the people who had kidnapped her. The leader of the kidnappers is a man named

BULLY KHAN, an Indian ruler and tyrant. Later, a strange-looking ship is driven to shore all the way of a five-story. A mysterious stranger is discovered on board, and refusing to give any explanation of himself, he takes to the forest. A party of Morcovians, including Murkin, go exploring. They are watched by two people—Khanan Khan, sister of Bully Khan, who, unknown to the Morcovians, is still on the island, and the stranger from the forest. They intend to capture Murkin.

(You read on.)

When Hearts Were Gay!

"No ship is sight yet!"
 "Not a sign of one?"
 "Oh, well, we can afford to wait!"

"Rather!"
 And Betty Barton and her chums, where they sat slumped about upon the island's central hill, their bodies most fatigued, resumed all their jocular talk.

They were an eight-membered crew they had been when enjoying a day's outing in the Homeboard. This waiting for a ship to appear upon the ocean's wide horizon to rescue them from the island, had ceased to be an arduous waiting.

The juniors might simply have been pleasure for whom a car would soon be raring up, to romp them all home again. Nightly excursions. That was all.

"Jolly, up here, isn't it, Marlin?"
 "Glorious—such a lovely day, too, Madge," answered that girl for whom Morcove & Co. had done so much during the last few days and nights, to save her from the awful fate that had threatened her.

Marlin asked in a tone that proclaimed her own high spirits:

"It is worth it for those who are anxious about us—almost we'd be wanting to get in a few days longer here!"

"Now that Khan has chucked off in his steamship—rather!" came Polly Linton's blithe voice. "Anyway, we needn't be in a hurry to get down to the beach again."

"No last day—no make no best of him!" shrieked Naasoo, resorting to a phrase associated with Breaking-up Day at Morcove School. "And we would be a good idea, and we got some of us others who stayed behind on so much to come out to us, with some tea, Bekas—"

"Thinking of tea, she is, now," Polly commented exasperatedly, "when she's only just finished lunch!"

"A coconut will do for me," Benny piped, "next time I feel hungry. All the hundreds we eat on our way here!"

"All a-growing and a-blooming!" shouted Jack. "Fine walkly creature—let, hey!" as if he had a street barrow. "And I mean to take one home, to stick on the shelf in our study at Orange-grove, chaps. Scarcely! And Dave,

"Still on the island," Benny blazedly stated. "And better off without you, perhaps!"

"Bekas, you were would not have been so many months to find!"

"I'll tell you what to paint on the water-board," Jack continued, with no grin to suggest that he was joking. "On this island find, far—how many days it is, shape! Anyhow. A party of school-girls and five Orangegrove schoolers. Here he made pretence of fingering his school tin. "This board is set up in recognition of the valour, courage, and fortitude with which the five Orangegrove schoolers—"

"Bekas!"

"True to the traditions of their school, protected those who could not protect themselves!"

"(11.)"

"Strange, name!"

"And shed a tear," Benny supplemented Jack's imaginary inscription, "for those who, after tating the joys of—"

"The life of the Unforterred Savage," "Mad in return to school."

"Yes, overboard!" Naasoo put an end to further improvising. "Zat is so worst of being stranded; no sooner home again, can back to school."

Betty got up from the grass of the hill top and stretched. There was a general, joy rising, and for a minute they all stood gazing around again. No better viewpoint did the island offer, and they could compass the sea's blue horizon at all points. Still not a sail in sight, not a tiny smudge of steamersmoke!

"But we know why," Betty exclaimed, as lightly as ever. "Yesterday's horizon—lasting well on into the night as it did, must have hindered seeing a vessel."

She waved along with others to those dear ones who had remained aboard the beachy schooner about which so much worry hung. Once again there was an answering wave by Grace that, from this distance away, looked very diminutive.

By MARJORIE STANTON

you shall carve the date, and the name of this jolly old island—"

"Better still," cried Betty. "If there is some paint on the bulk, and a brush—wouldn't it be fine to do a board that we can stick up on the island? We could say—"

"On this spot—" Polly eagerly led off.

"Loved the Morcove Cantanoo," "Not so much of the Morcove," Jack objected. "What about Orangegrove—the fire of the best, and where would you find the best, and where would you Morcove girls have been without us?"

"We haven't seen a sign of that man who snatched off the ship this morning," Judy remarked. "Strange that he preferred to keep out of the way, instead of being glad of our company?"

"Oh, we've guessed what his game is—only he won't be allowed to play it," Betty shrugged. "He'd like us to be taken off the island when a ship does turn up. It's probably got something ugly to answer for."

"As soon as a ship is in sight," Dave quickly suggested, "we'll soon be ready to find what he became of him. That'll save a last moment hunting for him."

Meanwhile, the junior's "happy sailing" feeling led to an eager roaming off in jovial tones and thrives. This, the last day—as they felt certain it would prove to be—was also their first day upon the island under safe conditions.

So, now, with a joyful sense of having the island to themselves at last—except for that mysterious stowaway—Betty and those others were in the mood to explore.

One way and another they roused off, singly as the inclination took them. To Betty and her few companions, of whom Marjell was one, it seemed as if some of the boys had very soon found great fun over a climbing after coconuts.

Not that there was any need to climb for yesterday's gale had felled dozens of the trees in their thick outer bark. But Jack, prevented from doing any climbing himself by that still disease attack of his, must have got Tom and Tully to show what they could do in the gymnastic line, with skilful spirits like Nasser and Henry for audience.

But Polly and Betty & Co. wandered on through the undergrowth. There was so much to be seen—and to be reconsidered ever after.

Wonderful flowers were growing amongst the ranker kinds of tropical vegetation. Marjell knew the names of many, for they were vivid blossoms that abounded in Korea, where her parents had smiled when they left India.

She even started to pick some of the familiar flowers, because to-day they were only a happy reminder of home. "I think perhaps I can save them from withering," she said to her Morocco charm. "And I shall have having the bunch to take on board the boat."

"We shall be in the sea soon enough between now and our getting aboard again," Betty mentioned. "It's already enough hot here. Like the African forests all over again!"

"Then come a rapacious cry from Judy:

"Oh, and a spring of water, girls!" "Water?" yelled Polly. "Where?"

Marjell laughed to see how eagerly her present companions ducked together as the ladies looked apart.

The water trickled from a rocky tank at the foot of which a dark, moss-covered pool gave vigorous growth to medicinal ferns and other moisture-loving plants. She here saw too, so thirsty that she could not wait until she had picked all the flowers she wanted, then she would go to the spring for a drink, and dip all the flowers in it in the pool.

As for Betty and the others, no sooner had they sipped some of the spring water to their lips than they were enjoying a puddle in the pool. Their delighted voices kept up a "De come!" chorus for Marjell as they splashed about.

"In a moment!" she called back, pressing more into a tangle of vine-like twigs, so as to reach, in a particularly sleeping bloom. "Girls, just look

at this one! It's an orchid, awfully nice, but at home, we—"

If anything else passed her lips just then it was only a faint, startled "Oh!" as that reaching hand of hers was suddenly seized at the wrist.

There came a loud cry from her, however, less than a moment later, a frightened scream, as she found herself being pulled off her feet.

She fell forward into the restraining undergrowth, and then—somebody who had hold of her was pulling her still, dragging her away; and it was that half-dressed man again, Dilip Khan's half-brother!

"HELP! Come—oh, help! I'm being caught! I can't get away!"

"My goodness!" shouted Polly, as one of those whose hand was reaching could get that sudden frantic appeal from Marjell. "Who is it?"

"Can't you see it?" Betty yelled, already out of the pool, and starting to dash to Marjell's aid. "It's the stowaway woman—I just glimpsed her! Hi, let her go!" she yelled on. "Let her go!"

But Marjell was already out of sight, her own efforts at resistance having been so futile. Her captor had only to give another violent tug or two, and she would have the girl dragged along of the dense foliage, which would certainly fall back, offering a feathery screen, through which the other girls must have their way.

From the pool to that place where Marjell had been so exclaimingly possessed upon was a mere dozen strides. In half an angry second, the horrified Moroccan would have covered that distance; but now they were brought to a dead stop—at the point of a revolver.

A man walked in. He was one who, obviously working in conjunction with Suvrajee Khan, had been one of the bushes and creepers to bar his way to the girls. He held the revolver at arm's length, pointing it towards one girl and another.

"I mean it!" he snapped. "The first of you to move—I shoot!"

"The stowaway!" Betty yelled incredulously. "The man from the schooner!"

"They've Escaped!"

"ABSOLUTE scandal!" "I can't help it," he said wildly. "This is what I've been asked to do."

"To help that woman carry off a girl?" Betty raged out. "Now get out of the way! Let us get by—"

"No," he refused. "One good turn deserves another, and that woman is doing us a good turn. As for the girl, she's not to be done any harm. That's been promised me."

"No harm?" shouted Polly. "Oh, but we can't argue with this fellow. I don't care if he does shoot! I'm off to give the alarm to all the rest."

And, stepping across, she rushed away, stopping as she ran, so as to utter less of a shriek.

"You're all welcome to do as she's done," the ruffian started the rest by saying. "I don't want any shooting."

"You have enough to answer for, haven't you, without that?" Betty submitted fiercely, and he looked as black as thunder, then, forcing a laugh: "Only when I'm taken!" he retorted. "And who says I'm going to be?"

"Marjell!" Betty now reconsidered to shout, at her very loudst, hoping that the poor girl would hear and be reassured. "We'll save you—get you back

—that is! The whole lot of us, as soon as—"

"Ah, stop that too!" the man struck in, and he took aim at Betty, as the one who had shouted. "Beat it, the lot of you, I say! I'm desperate, mind you, so you had better look out!"

Yes, that was a thing they must take into account; the man's own hard-driven state—as a fugitive criminal, most likely, in terror of being taken to the mainland and brought to trial for what he had done.

Polly led impulsively sped away to let others know, and that was all to the good. But were they to do the same as Polly? It did not need more than one to give the warning. Was there to be no getting past the man, and so keeping in pursuit of Suvrajee?

The runaway himself ended the girls' perplexity by suddenly firing the revolver as he took a quick, retiring step.

Very likely it was a shot fired safely high, solely to keep them on the pass. Naturally enough, they flinched at such a close-hand bang, when the weapon had previously been pointed at each in turn. The sharp report had scarcely started them before the man had backed out of sight.

But he had dodged away into a part of the thicket lying to the left of the way Suvrajee Khan had taken with her captives. He might be ready to fire in deadly earnest from the cover obtained for himself—he might have turned to run. The girls took these chances about this, and, doubling down, ran the way the woman had gone.

A moment or so of thrilling uncertainty there was; then they had got past!

The man could not be heard, so it did not seem as if he could be coming out after them. And now, if he fired, it could only be a random shot from amongst the baffling greenery.

"Don't crowd!" Betty had the presence of mind to cry to her companions, as they all pressed on with the pursuit—and instantly they spread out at a safer distance from one another.

It was a wise precaution, for they were emerging from the deep cover on to a big glade across which Suvrajee had perhaps rushed, with Marjell in her arms. There were tracks in the deep grass, and a dash across this bit of open ground would help anyone to get a good distance away at good speed.

Now that the girls themselves, however, were chasing across the glade, they ran a bigger risk of being fired at, as they did well to keep apart.

Bang! a shot sounded, but Betty shouted:

"That's only to scare us!"

"He's still behind us, too, and not coming on!" Judy thankfully commented.

"They completed their dash to the far side of the glade yesterday."

Another thicket showed, at its edge, where somebody might have gone plunging through to obtain keep cover. Instantly the girls started, one after another, into that thicket in the vegetation. But the trail soon gave out.

A few moments more, and they were held up by the impenetrable, unpromising nature of their gloomy surroundings.

"Dash, we've come wrong!" Betty panted. "And even a moment or two's delay like this—"

"Hark!" jerked one of the others.

"Is that—?"

"No, that's only some of our chums, Morocco!" Betty said up the old rallying cry. "This way!"

Polly was amongst those who, a few



Quite small the island, and the east-ways all cut like this, some scowring the wooded interior, others scooting right across the beach, and yet—no trace!

Serajee Khan, taking poor Marcell with him, had vanished.

The slowway, now—it was as if he, by some marvellous means, had been able to leave the island!

"But we know for certain there has been nothing of that sort, anyhow," Betty said to Polly and Jack, when the fruitless search had become fully an hour old. "The beach all round the island has been in sight to some of us all the time—and the open sea, of course."

"Then where are those two wretches?" Polly fumed. "Where have they got Marcell, that there's simply not a clue to be picked up? Ugh!" she stamped. "When I think! That woman, after all, was left behind on the island by Khan yesterday!"

"Although a woman was seen to be amongst one of the boatloads going out to the beach," Betty gloomily nodded. "And there has only been one woman all along."

"What it means," Jack frowned—"there was a man dressed up to look like Serajee Khan, so as to deceive us from a distance."

"And, Polly concluded distractedly, "they've got Marcell after all."

"The slowway," Betty muttered. "He must have jumped at some other woman made when he fell in with her this morning. I'll never believe they're trying up had anything to do with the ruffian's plan to kidnap Marcell."

"Not it!" Jack shrugged. "That slowway is just out to save his own bacon. But we mustn't stand about talking."

"No."

And they went on with their share of the widespread search, only to draw blank once more.

"Jack—that winkle of yours—"

"Oh shut up about my winkle, Polly! It's nothing!"

But involuntarily Jack was fidgeting badly by now, and it ended in his being put under orders to return to the schooner.

Mr. Willoughby had come upon the three, whilst he was making his own lonely search. He saw how it was with Jack and promptly decreed:

"You're about all in with that leg of yours, my lad, and so you need do as I see. The schooner ought to have someone looking after her. Take it slowly going back, and then you can feel you're still doing your bit by being on guard there. Polly, my dear, you go with your leather, and you can work off your bad temper on the galley fire. Betty, I'll soon find some of the others for you to be with."

Like it or not, brother and sister had to obey. All along Mr. Willoughby had been the "Chief," whose nearest word was law. The going-back did not put Jack to much strain, for he and Polly were returning over ground that had acquired well-formed tracks.

He hobbled along at a great rate, frequently muttering that he might just as well have been still scowring around as doing this! And as soon as he was on board the beached derelict with Polly, he dashed some of the rigging.

"That won't do your game by any good," Polly protested, as he started to go aloft.

"It'll help us to keep a better look-out, won't it? Well, then!"

She watched her, and it went to her heart to see how he lacked that monkey-

like agility which had always been his.

Then she remembered the galley-stove and Mr. Willoughby's way of hinting that she could occupy herself there. The fire was in, and she made it up and saw to it that there should be hot tea for any of the others who might come this way whilst still searching. Chattering work it was, proving, whether carried on in the open, under the burning afternoon sun, or inside the humid mood.

But she knew that there was to be no abandonment of the search. Even though they would soon be going over much of the same ground again—they were to keep at it.

Presently Polly, carrying a steaming metal jug, came out of the schooner's galley crying aloft to Jack:

"Some tea, Jack! I'll come up with it."

"No, I'll come down. Nothing is aight— Hang!" he disappointedly rapped, passing for a last look round before the awkward descent. "And only another hour to sunset!"

"I know," Polly bitterly crossed. "So there it is, and poor Marcell will have only an tinny spoon. 'Oh,—and she stamped the deck—how I wish it could be found—where they've got her!—below dark. Every minute longer that she remains in their hands means so much more suffering for—"

"There—Polly!"

"What, Jack—oh, what?"

The interlocking about had been such an excited one, she had nearly dropped the tin jug.

"There's a small boat going away from the island now!" he roared on.

"And the woman's in it—so's the man!"

"Never! Oh, Jack, they've escaped and—"

"With Marcell—yes!" came his distracted response. "I can see her so well! Who scouted the beach round there?" he roared, starting to climb down quickly. "That they never see any of those three, nor the boat! Gosh, Polly—"



"THERE'S a boat going away from the island," Jack's eager shout came to Polly's ears. "And they've got Marcell! They've kidnapped her again!" Polly's heart sank at that dread news.

seconds later, came rapping upon the ropes. She had brought Pam and two other Marjorie damsels, and three of the boys—Jack, Jimmy, and Dave.

"The rest have gone another way!" Jack puffed. "We'll get there about if they're doing any good!"

"We're all the work in this wood!" Betty restfully declared. "We thought we had a mail, but it came to nothing. Now, what? Better to comb the whole place?"

"But we must let them hear, back at the schooner," Dave calmly put in. "Will two or three of you girls out away—"

"I will, by myself," Pam promptly offered; but Dave was not the only one to give a scurrying shake of the head.

"Can't have you going alone, Pam," said Betty. "Judy, will you go with her? We mustn't take any of the boys off the search."

"Of course not! Right-ho!" Judy nodded; and, with that, she and Pam were off back together, at a run, to make for the beached schooner.

Then the rest formed into various parties of two girls and a Gungweese fellow.

Betty and Polly had Jack with them, and it was no less their trying to pay regard to his odd feet. Anxiety for Marcell was making him forget that. If Betty and Polly went a little slower at any moment, or were inclined to avoid difficult ground—and how much there was of it!—so very difficult!—than Jack himself, ignoring the pain, set a rapid pace.

And all in vain!

Fervently, desperately though they and other parties searched around, there was no reward.

All the grown-ups were soon joining in the hunt. Not a soul remained aboard the beached schooner. And still it made no difference—that the number of searchers was so great.

"It is just too bad! It's terrible, this! For all of us," she added lamplily, "to have been beaten like this—beaten at the finish!"

"Beaten—who says beaten?" He glanced down at her whilst lowering himself. "Now, Polly-wally, you and I, it's up to us. Use a bunch—"

"Jack! Oh—"

"The two launches that we collared from Khan," he cried fiercely, as he leaped on the deck. "They're down there on the beach, where we hooked 'em up when the gale came. Marvie, some of the others will turn up in time—especially if we shoot, Polly. If not, we—"

She nodded, realising they were to pursue them above. But her eyes were on the boat. It had come round from the other side of the island and was a mile away from this part of the beach.

Little bigger than a seaside rowing-boat, it appeared to be moving fast enough to be under propulsion from a motor. But Polly could only see it as something little larger than a speck, rising and falling in the sea's swell.

Jack leaped to where he could get over the schooner's side deck to the dinghy. A rope-ladder had been in use for getting all on or on the deck's trolley, but he slid down, thus sparing his boot stile and knee.

When Polly, suddenly coming out of that spell-bound state which was due to intense thought, ran to get advice by means of the rope-ladder, the new Jack leaping quickly over the loose stowage, to get to one of the captured launches.

She herself, in a mere every possible moment, slid down the dangling ladder. And then, as she started to overtake her desperate-minded brother, there came a breathless halting cry from a little way off.

Pam and Jimmy were running this way at top speed, making signs that they had news!

If They Can—They Will!

BUT that news was to put no check upon what Polly and Jack had been intending to do. Rather did it spur them on to action, with Pam and Jimmy no helpmate.

"We remembered those two boats directly we saw Marvie being taken out to sea, so we came along full pelt," Pam pointed on, whilst they all four roared the chosen launch down to the water's edge. "If you hadn't been here, then Jimmy and I would have put off by ourselves."

Unluckily, there was a good distance for them to have to keep the boat grinding over the shingle down to the water. Yesterday's high seas had meant pulling the boats so very far up, to prevent their being swept away and smashed. Jack was being looked at by his companions as he lugged just as strenuously at any of them.

"Had you better come with us?" Pam gently suggested.

"What! Does a game leg make any difference, sitting in a boat?" he gruffly retorted. "I don't care, we haven't saved Marvie again, and again, only to lose her in the end! How the blazes those who watched all round the shore came to miss seeing—"

"You can't wonder, when it's explained," Pam said apologetically. "Jimmy and I knew how it was worked. We came out on to a part of the beach just now, and were simply horrified to see that boat with the man and woman in it, and Marvie, already getting off. On the shore there was a lot of tarpaulin stowing. We found that it was a large one that had been used to cover the boat over."

"That'd leaped sand over the sheet, so that the spot looked all one with the rest of the stowage," Jimmy explained, as Pam passed. "Heavie, Jack, it's no wonder nothing was noticed. I reckon

the woman took Marvie straight to that boat, and then the stowaway chap got there as well—before there'd been time for all the search-parties to get busy. They could crawl in under the tarpaulin, to contrive to replace any sail at the crawling-in place, and so be lost."

"With Marvie stowed?" Polly willy inquired. "Oh! But come on, there—see!"

They had the launch at the water's edge. Once again they all lugged and pushed together, and got the vessel, becoming afloat. The girls climbed in first.

Jimmy, standing in the shallows to be ready to shove the launch off, gave a swing of his head as a sign to Jack to get in.

The girls wanted to help, nudged Jack, but he simply threw himself on board, all anyhow, and laughed as he scrambled up.

"Oh! let us get our breath back, and we'll shoot—to try to hit the others later," he puffed. "How much juice, I wonder?"

Polly, scolding him to sit still, dived into the engine-giut and looked on the petrol-gauge.

"I don't know, Jack—about three inches."

"Good, is that all! But now—shoot, all of us!"

And they shouted, whilst Jimmy, treating the reserve launch to a last mighty shove that sent her into deeper water, swung himself aboard as the reserve launch.

"About as inside a row as half a dozen cockroaches in a coop," was Jack's grim comment on their attempt at calling attention afloat. "Can't be helped! Nothing can be helped! It's just up to us, chaps!"—meaning, as usual, the girls as well.

He and Jimmy huddled together in the engine-giut, leaving the motor to start up. Polly sat gazing over the sea to where that fugitive boat, more of a speck than ever, was speeding along. Pam looked inshore, this way, that way, hoping to see one of the search-parties suddenly bearing upon the scene. But not a soul appeared.

"No quick!" Polly whispered. "They'll soon be out of sight! And it's almost a year that Khan's yacht is coming back to pick them up! That must have been all arranged."

She had just said this, and the motor had just then pulled to life, when she had reason for shaking her eyes from the winking sun, so as to be able to see right away to the horizon. Next moment!

"A ship!" she yelled, above the roar of the launch's engine. "Pam! The boys! Look there! Oh, at last—a steamer, coming to take us off! Hurrah!"

In great excitement, Jack and Jimmy had stood up to look the way Polly's outstretched arm was pointing. For a few seconds the face of one lad was as radiant as the other's. Then Jimmy's expression faded.

"Oh, is it," he hoarsely muttered, "the very boat that we don't want? Jack—can you tell?"

"I can—and it is," Jack's sighing answer came. "Khan's yacht—coming back to pick them up!"

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