

EVERY SCHOOLGIRL'S OWN PAPER

STORIES OF  
CLIFF HOUSE  
AND  
MORCOVE

# THE SCHOOLGIRL

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Incorporating  
SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN



"YOU SHAN'T DESTROY  
THE PICTURE!"

A tense situation in this week's  
fine long complete story of the  
girls of Cliff House School

FEATURING BARBARA REDFERN AND MABEL LYNN,  
This Brilliant Cliff House School Story Is Complete In This Issue



# Mabs, the Mysterious

The Man Who Forgot



"WELL, you <sup>mean</sup> your arm (not a right, Clara!"

"Oh, my best, here I shifted again! Sorry, Mabs!"

"That's it! Now hold it there," Barbara Redfern said. "Mabs, will you bend just a little lower, please? Sorry if I'm making your back ache, but I must get the light and shade on your shoulder. Whoo—there's popping! Now, just a few minutes—"

Tomboy Clara Trevelyn, of the Fourth Form at Cliff House School, drew a deep breath. Mabel Lynn, her golden curls peeping softly from beneath the delightful little hair tupe she wore, looked anxiously at Mabs.

While Barbara, seated in front of the easel on which the rather large canvas was supported, rapidly dabbed colour on the picture she was painting.

It was a strange scene that greeted the eye in the art-rooms of famous old Cliff House School.

Never had Barbara Redfern, the popular captain and leader of the Fourth Form, looked more intent. And never before, surely, had Mabel Lynn and Clara Trevelyn presented themselves as such a strangely assorted pair. They were sitting as models for the picture which Mabs was painting. Clara, in rag, misery on her face and bangs in ringlets, Mabs, enveloped in a rich fur outfit, borrowed from the lovely Diana Royton-Clarke of the Fourth Form, smilingly patting her shoulder as Clara sat hunched on an upturned box, with the bright sun of the room blazing down upon them.

"Good!" breathed Mabs. "That's just

WHAT was Mabel Lynn's secret? Not even Mabs, her greatest friend, knew that. She only knew that the shadow of that secret threatened to come between them—to undermine their friendship. Yet Mabs, ready to sacrifice everything for Mabs' sake, had to remain silent.

"I think! Lovely!" And, with relaxed delight, she laughed as she sat back surveying her work. "I must say," she said, "that you are a pair of ripping artists. Come and tell me how you like it now, both of you."

Clara, with a grateful, coo, and Mabs, with an eager beamed, was across the room at once, staring in rapt admiration at the canvas before which her leader sat.

That canvas showed Mabel and Clara in the attitudes in which Mabs had posed them. Clara was sitting hunched up on the stump of a fallen tree, outside a pair of bronze gates, easily recognizable as those of Cliff House School.

In the background a snow-covered house was aglow with lights, and the trees, snow-covered, too, were lit as before a blast of wind. A dog, the obvious model of which was Jemima Constant's mongrel, Tramp, faithfully linked Clara's subject here.

"Coming on!" was Clara's verdict, when she inspected the picture. "But, oh, pie and needles! I'm got cramp in your blessed muscle! I say, that's going to be some picture!" she declared, as she peered more closely. "If that doesn't win the first prize—"

"It will win the first prize!" Mabel said decidedly.

Mabs laughed—a pretty, radiant laugh. She was pleased. She knew there was good work in the picture she was painting, and, my goodness, there ought to

be, considering all the pains she had taken, and all the advantages which had so far attended her efforts.

All the same, the picture was by no means finished. Many more details had yet to be worked in, and Mabs was not quite satisfied with the trees. She pulled a wisp of hair.

"H," she said. "I got it finished."

"But you've got to get it finished!" Mabs cried. "The entries have to go in in three days' time, and yours is the only one for the Junior Class. Prizewise," she added, referring to the headmistress of the school, "will be rightfully upon it if you don't finish it. And, besides, what about the gold medal?"

Mabs panted. For a moment her eye lit up. Mabs' hobby was drawing and painting. Mabs, even as Mabel Lynn lived for her amateur theatricals, visualizing herself one day as a leading actress, so Mabs lived for her art, hoping one day to find herself on the roll of artistic fame.

Already she had entered this picture for the important County Arts Exhibition, which was to take place on Saturday. If she won—and everybody said she would—why, then, what an honour, not only for herself, but for the school, as well. To get that gold medal—

the most-coveted souvenir that anyone could wish for! Why, it meant that she was already on the first rung of the ladder of artistic fame!

"But it means," she said, "I'll have to put in every minute I can get."

"Well, put those in," Mabs advised.

"Clara and I will sit for you whenever you want to, won't we, Clara?" Now, Mabs, you'll have to take this seriously—deadly seriously," she said. For Mabs, like Clara as she was, seemed even more anxious than Mabs herself that Mabs should carry off the honours. "Now," she said. "Come on! Just leave it for a bit, and let's go and have tea. Oh dear, I almost forgot! Didn't you say, Mabs, that you needed some more colour?"

By

HILDA RICHARDS

"Yes," Babs said, and signed, as one reluctant to leave her life's ambition. She dropped the shirt over the canvas. "That means," she added, pulling a wry face, "that I'll have to go into Court-field after tea! Only Susan & Stephens stock any decent colours, and I've got the others and several others on order."

Mabe laughed. "You think you're going?" "I'll have to—"

"Well," Mabe decided, "you're jolly well not now. Time's precious, Babs. After tea you're jolly well going to get on with that picture—see? I'll be along to Court-field and get the paints while you and Clara and Bessie have tea, is that?"

"Oh, Mabe, it's too much—"

"Oh, rabbits!" Mabe laughed. "Work, old Trojan! That's your slogan!"

Babs laughed, too, but the look she threw at her cheeks was very tender, very grateful. What a sterling charm Mabe was!

Together they went out, rather glad, after two hours spent in the art-room, to stretch their legs again. They tramped into the Fourth Form corridor. Quite a flutter was going on there. It was the tea interval at Cliff House School, and lucky juniors who preferred to provide their own tea to the official meal served in Big Hall were privileged to have tea in their own studios. A cheery clatter of cups and saucers and happy girlish voices came from every open door. Bessie Baxter, the fat, impetuous daughter of the French, beamed round happily as they tramped into Street, No. 4.

"Hallo, everybody!" she said. "I guess I've started getting the tea. How's the picture progressing on, Babs?"

"Hopping!" Babs said. "Oh, I say—my, that's funny! I heard Primmy talking about it in Miss Ayton, the art-mistress, you know. Blamed if I've ever heard old Primmy as excited about anything. But to have heard her talking you'd have thought I'd painted the picture, you know. Of course," Bessie added, with that acidity for which she was famous, "it is a good picture—our-our quite the same thing as I should have done if I'd painted it, of course!"

"Go on!" Clara Trevan said, with a heavy sarcasm which was lost on the Owl of the Fourth.

"No," Bessie agreed, "what I should have done is something with plenty of colour, you know. She's reminding me—"

"At midnight!" whispered to Mabe. "Yes; that's it—at midnight! Eh? Oh, our-ourly, Mabe—"

She stopped at her hatbox turned to gaze at the expostious face which looked in at the door.

Lydia Crosscandle grinned. "Just come to gaze upon our budding Mim Redfern," she said slyly. "It's so refreshing having a captain of the Form whom one never sees except in class-room. I hear," she added, "you're making a hit with your new masterpiece, Barbara?"

"Do you?" Babs asked disbelievably. "But it's nothing," Clara declared, "in the lot I'm going to make if a person named Lydia doesn't snoot!" Her hand strayed towards a loaf of bread.

"Will you go quickly!" she asked pleasantly, "or must I bear this at you just to help you?"

"You dare?"

But, all the same, Lydia bent a hasty retreat as Clara, hot in hand, stopped forward. One never knew whether she

yearly of the Fourth was going to put those threats into execution or not!

Clara grinned, although Babs hit her by a little.

"Don't worry, old Babs," Mabe said. "You know jolly well that Lydia & Co. are only pulling your leg. They're just jealous, that's all! But, look here, I've got to hurry if I'm to catch the forty-third bus and be back in time for another sitting at six. Babs, try to keep a spot of tea warm for me, will you? Cheerio!"

Gaily she waved her hand and went out. At the gates she was just in time to catch the bus, and twenty minutes later alighted in the market-square of Court-field. Susan & Stephens, the artists' shop, was just across the market-square, and into it she plunged. The assistant behind the counter—a girl Mabe had never seen before—smiled.

"Miss Redfern's order?" she said, in answer to Mabe's inquiry. "Mr. Swan left it—and the other colours ordered! He said you'd probably be calling in today, Miss Redfern."

Mabe smiled a little, noticing that mistake. As the assistant did not know her it was a mistake natural enough, and Mabe did not bother to embarrass the girl by correcting it. She fished in her purse for her money. At that moment another girl came into the shop.

Mabe hardly noticed her, although the girl looked quickly at her Cliff House badge. She was a girl slightly older than Mabe, rather shabbily dressed, with a carefully, though obviously, hour-matched broop to one side, which told its own tale. Under her arm she carried a newspaper.

"There you are! Thank you, Miss Redfern," the assistant smiled. And Mabe, receiving her parcel, turned to go. "Good-day, Miss Redfern!"

"Good-day," Mabe answered. She strode out of the shop, snatching into the street. Just time to catch the

bus back, she reflected, with a look towards the Market Cross, which was the stop. She passed, drawing on her gloves. As she did so there came the sound of running footsteps behind her. A hand suddenly snatched her arm.

"Please!" a voice panted.

"Why—what?" And Mabe, blinking, stared into the face of the poorly dressed girl she had noticed in the shop.

"It's—it's your father!" the girl gasped.

Mabe jumped. "My what?"

"He—!" And the girl looked round. "Oh dear!" she panted. "I've been so wanting to meet you! Your father—"

She stopped. Mabe saw the money she had started towards the constable on point duty and noticed, with amazement, the shoulder the girl gave. "I—I can't speak to you here," she whispered. "If the police know—"

"Can we go somewhere?" she asked. Mabe hesitated. What was the matter with the girl? Of what was she so scared? Who was she? And why that reference to her father!

Indignant, curious all at once, Mabe nodded towards the near-at-hand tea-shop.

"Come in here!" She led the way. "Now—as they seated themselves at a table—what is all this?"

The girl gasped. Very strangely she eyed Mabe. Then, with a sudden impulse, she withdrew the paper she carried under her arm and passed it to Mabe.

It was a local newspaper, two days old, but the headlines seemed to leap out and hit Mabe like a blow.

"Here—here! What was this! With wide, incredulous eyes she found herself reading:

"WHERE IS ROBERT REDFERN? Police Hunt for Remorse Man Believed to have Abandoned with £10,000 Worth of Bonds."



MABE almost snatched the paper from the girl's hand, and in a flash she knew the meaning of those glaring headlines. It was Babs' father for whom the police were searching. And Babs did not know!

Rapidly Mabs dismissed the cofeman. She understood them. It was not her own father to whom this girl referred. It was Barbara's father—the girl having made the mistake by hearing the assistant in the artists' shop calling her "Miss Redfern."

But this—  
It was absurd, of course. Silly! Mabs knew Mr. Redfern. She had a deep and very sincere liking for him. Soad of apprehensions, of honesty, he would never, never have stooped to such a crime as this. She looked quickly at the girl.

"And what do you know about it?" she asked.

"I know everything—" The girl gulped. "Miss Redfern, listen, please!" she begged, and then a nervous glance round. "I don't believe that you could believe it! Miss Redfern, your father is—the Great man on earth!" she added fervently. "But he can't do a thing for himself. He can't even remember his own name!"

Mabs sat up with a jerk. She had been about to correct the name by which this girl was calling her. Now she rubbed herself, awayed by some queer instinct.

"What?" she cried.  
And then in halting accents the story was told. The girl's name was Jenny Bamberidge. She lived in a cottage on the outskirts of Courtfield, not far from the railway station, and she eked out a rather precarious living by selling programmes and chocolates in the Courtfield Theatre. Her wages amounted in no more than ten shillings a week, and that, plus the few shillings her mother carried as an assistant dresser at the same theatre, was all that kept the little cottage going.

"Yes, yes!" Mabs said.  
"Thank! Wait till the policeman's gone by!" Jenny whispered, with a nervous glance at the window.

The policeman passed. She bent forward.

"This—the other night," she said, "I was on my way to the theatre. I was in the middle of the street, and I suppose I must have been day-dreaming or some thing, but—just suddenly there was a shock. A man, tall, well dressed, dashed off the pavement, pulled me by the arm, and fairly flung me back on to the pavement. I looked round—just in time to see a big car come rushing by at a terrific speed."

"Yes!" breathed Mabs. She was a tremble now.

"And—the girl shrieked—"the man who saved me—" Oh, Miss Redfern, I saved it all! Too late he stopped back. The policeman at the car caught him and his him. With a dreadful cry, he came spinning into the street. Who was driving the car I don't know, but he must have been the most colossal brute living. He never stopped; never even looked round."

Mabs set very still.

"And there was this man who had saved me—I should have been killed as sure as anything if it hadn't been for him—Jenny shrieked again—"lying unconscious in the gutter. There was nobody about. Some—somebody I managed to get him to his feet. I took him home. My mother did what she could for him. He wasn't hurt, thank goodness—I mean, no bones were broken, or anything—but he'd lost his memory!"

"Oh, my goodness!" Mabs breathed.  
"And then we saw that in the papers!" The girl gulped. "He couldn't answer our questions—didn't even know anything about himself! All he could say was one name—Barbara—Barbara. He kept repeating that over and over again, and since he men-

tioned Cliff House School. The only other class we got was his cigarette case. There was an inscription on it, which said that it had been presented to Mr. Redfern by his son in 1922. We knew by that and the descriptions the newspaper gave, that he was the man the police were after!"

Mabs started. Oh, what a horrible mistake! What a dreadful mistake it all was! When Barbara knew—

And then, on the instant, it was borne upon Mabs! Barbara must not know! Not yet! Not until, at least, this unhappy business was all cleared up! Her nose, coming at a time when Mabs was engaged upon what was, in her, the most significant task of her life, would surely warn that work.

The well Mabs knew the nature of her charm. How could Mabs work with this shadow of an evening?

In a haze, Mabs listened to Jenny's further details. How, for two days she had unsuccessfully tried to find this Barbara whom Mr. Redfern so continually babbed about. How she balanced, if only the necessary were right, he would be able to reject this ugly change which was laid at his door. At the moment, hapless, blank-minded as he was, how could he hope to disprove it! Obviously he was somewhere. Obviously he was the only man who knew whom they were.

Mabs compressed her lips. Again she was conscious of that queer instinct to reveal herself.

"Take you to him," she said, with sudden decision.

"Now!"

"Yes, please! At once!"

She paid the bill, then and then the two girls crossed the shop. Unconsciously Mabs paced along, thinking—thinking—thinking. Barbara's father—Babs! But she must keep this from Mabs. But how? How?

"Here we are, Miss Redfern," Jenny said suddenly.

She knocked at a door. It was the door of a cottage that stood neglected and shabby, half a mile from the station. A grey-haired woman, her cheeks stained with lines of care and worry, opened it to them.

"Mother, I've found her!" Jenny said.

"This is Miss Redfern?"

"My dear, my dear!" the good woman cried, and in a minute was all in a flutter.

"Oh, Miss you! Bless you for coming!" she said fervently.

Jenny and Mabs were almost at her wife's side. "I suppose Jenny has told you? Your father, my dear, keeps on talking about you! If anybody can bring back his memory, then it's you, I'm sure. And—now—but, come in!" she added breathlessly.

Mabs gulped as she stepped over the threshold. Into a poorly furnished but scrupulously clean room she was shown. And there—her heart leapt as she saw him! Barbara's father, sitting back there in the chair by the gathering fire. An empty pipe was in his hand, a strange, staring glassiness in his eyes. He looked up.

Mabs' heart seemed to stop beating as she left those staring eyes upon her. There was no recognition in those depths, however.

"Mr. Redfern?" Mrs. Bamberidge came eagerly forward. "Here's some tea, my dear."

Mr. Redfern stared at Mabs.

"Well, you ought to. This is—this is—" Mrs. Bamberidge said.

"Mr. Redfern," she said, a little quaver in her voice. "This is your daughter, Barbara! Don't you know her?"

Mabs had a sudden lightning sensation in her throat. She stood still, hardly knowing what to do or say. Mr.

Redfern stared at her. For a moment a gleam shone in his eyes; then, as quickly as it came, it was gone again. He passed a hand that trembled across his forehead.

"Barbara!" he whispered.  
"You—know her," Mrs. Bamberidge murmured.

"Hopelessly, desperately, he shook his head.

"Things have come to a sad pass," he muttered. "I—I can't even recognize my own daughter!"

## Waiting—



"I SAY, she's jolly late!"

Barbara Redfern made that observation in a rather worried tone. Clara Twynley, to whom she made it, shook her head at her.

"Queer," she said. "It's not like Mabs. You're sure you placed the art shop, Babs?"

"Yes! I got on to the very assistant who served Mabs," Babs said. "She said she actually mistook Mabs for me. If Mabs had caught the coat she wore she should have been here an hour ago. I can't—just can't," Babs sighed, "get on without her."

The scene was once again the art-room. Barbara remembered, more than a little puzzled, Babs and Clara occupied it. Dressed in their Sunday No. 4, they had come and gone, and in another half an hour it would be time for prep. Yet of Mabs there was no sign.

"Clara," Babs said, "you don't think she's not with an accident?"

"Of course she isn't," Clara said. She looked a little irritable. Clara, at the best of times, was not the most patient of girls. She hated waiting time, and was very conscious that she had frittered away the best part of her evening.

"I'm fed up!" she announced now. "We can't do any good sitting here. Let's go down and see if she's turned up."

"Oh, no; she'd come up at once!" Babs objected. "She—" And then she turned as the door opened and Miss Primrose, accompanied by the young art-mistress, Miss Ayres, came into the room.

"No, please, Barbara, don't get up," Miss Primrose graciously smiled. "I've just come along to see how you're getting on!" She smiled as she glanced at the picture, torn as the art-mistress with a proud "What do you think of that?" sort of look, and dropped.

"I must say, Barbara, that your picture is very admirable, a very creditable effort indeed. But I'm sure you have still a great deal of work to do! Can you get it finished in time, do you think?"

"Well, I—I'm trying to," Babs said.

"I'm—" Miss Primrose shook her head. "I want to tell you, Barbara, that General Habbeman—who is the chairman of our board of directors, you know, and he means and himself—is to be one of our judges of the paintings. I have mentioned this picture of yours to him, and naturally he is particularly pleased that a Cliff House girl has a chance of being among the prize-winners. So I do hope, to please him and to please me, and for the honour of the school generally, you will do your utmost! But there is Mabel Lynn!" she added. "Is she not sitting?"

Mabs bit her lip.

Mabs bit her lip. She was to Courtfield to get some paints, she said.

"Oh!" Miss Primrose frowned a little. "Well, I hope she's soon back."

she said. "Yes, Barbara, I do like it! Very, very much indeed! Don't you, Miss Ayres?"

"I think it's wonderful!" Miss Ayres agreed.

And with a final fond glance at the picture they went out.

Babe, however, looked troubled. She glanced at Clara again. The Tomboy, with an exaggerated shrug, stamped on to the box that represented the stamp of a love, and scowled into the spaciousness of the room. Then impatiently she ran.

"Oh, come on!" she said. "We can't do any good here! Let's go and see if she's turned up!"

Babe nodded. With a rather worried sigh she crossed her canvas. Together they tripped off to the Common-rooms. There was quite a crowd there. Lydia Crossendale, standing by the mantelpiece, grinned.

"Hallo, here comes our budding Rembrandt," she said. "Checked it early, haven't you? Looking for anything?" she pleasantly inquired, as Babe's eyes searched the room.

"Phyllis, has she been in?" Babe asked of Phyllis Howell.

"Why, no?" Phyllis said, with a shrug. "I thought she was sitting for you."

"And she isn't?" Lydia asked.

"Well, where the dickens is she? I thought," Lydia gazed, "that she was the most ardent of your backwashers, Barbara."

"Oh, shut up!" Clara growled.

"Come on, Babe! Let's wait at the door."

Downstairs she and Babe went. Anxiously they trailed across Big Hall, shivering in the cool evening air.

Then, suddenly, in front of them, there was a man. They heard a pattering breath. From round the corner a girl came rushing headlongly up the steps at full speed. Babe gave a cry:

"Mabel!"  
And Mabel Lynn, her face white, startled, and frightened, pulled up. Just the last person she had expected or aimed to meet was her class, Barbara Redfern!

Lydia Speaks Her Mind



FOR Mabel, back in that lovely cottage near Courtfield Station, had made her plans.

Babe should not know. That was her wish.

Babe, whatever happened, must not know. She had looked her picture. By a fortunate accident Jenny Handbridge believed that she was Mr. Redfern's daughter. Mr. Redfern himself, with his memory gone, did not recognize her. It was that fact which made Mabel decide to play a lone hand—to take upon herself this sorry, which should have been Babe's. Until Mr. Redfern recovered his memory she was going on being Barbara Redfern, both to Babe's father, and to his benefactor, who, she guessed, would most certainly have tried to find the real Barbara.

She looked up now, hating to see that faintly best look in the eyes of the class for whom she was doing so much, but determined at all cost to go through with it.

"Mabel, where have you been?" Babe asked.

Mabel bit her lip.

"Oh, I—I met someone!"

"Fancy now!" And Clara glared. "And got so excited, I suppose, that you forgot all about us sitting in that rotten sitting-room? Who did you meet?"



ONE look Babe flung at the smashed photograph and then she turned to Mabel Lynn. "Mabel, what have you done to my photo?" she cried accusingly. But Mabel could say nothing.

Mabel flushed.

"Oh, a—a friend!"

"Must have been a jolly important friend for you to keep Babe waiting," Clara replied. "I thought you were so anxious that she should have every moment she could spare in to finish her picture. It was you who said—"

"Please, Clara!" Babe broke in anxiously. "It—it's all right now."

All the time, she did look at Mabel a little oddly and a little disappointedly. And Mabel, catching the glance, again flushed. "Come on, now, let's get prep done early, and perhaps we can come in an hour before bed. Mabel, you—you wouldn't mind, would you?"

Mabel stood still.

"I—I'm sorry!" she muttered.

"Oh!"

"Well, you—you see—Oh, crumble, but what I've got to go out after prep, Babe."

Clara stared.

"But how the dickens can you go out after prep? Gates will be locked."

Mabel bit her face turn white. Oh, how could she explain? How could she tell Clara that she had arranged to meet Jenny Handbridge outside the gates of Cliff House School at half-past seven? And she must do it, for Jenny was making a special journey from Courtfield, and if she kept her waiting, Jenny would be late at the theatre and might lose her job.

"Mabel," Babe cried, "you—you don't mean you're going to break bounds, do you?"

Mabel looked up desperately.

"Oh, Babe, I must—I must!" she cried. "No, old thing, please, please don't look at me like that, I—I can't explain, not—not just yet," she added.

"But what about the picture?" Clara asked.

"What—ho! What about the picture?" a voice put in, and Lydia Crossendale entered from the lobby.

"Naughty old Mabeline Watson!" she

cried chidingly. "Breaking bounds so well! Now, if I?" Lydia said sternly, "was Fern captain, I should have to report you for that, Mabel Lynn. Unfortunately—with a sigh—"I haven't the good luck to be a favourite of the skipper—"

"Oh, shut up," growled Clara, "and here off! This isn't your business!"

Lydia grinned. But she threw the window Mabel a shy glance as she strode off. Babe frowned a little, glancing after her angrily.

"Well," she said, "what about prep?"

"And what about," Clara asked, "the picture?"

"Oh, never mind the picture for the moment! We'll leave that till to-morrow, Babe said.

Clara gave a shrug. If the Tomboy had been invisible before, she was utterly hidden now. Rather penetrating, rather hostile the stare she threw at Mabel; and then, with sudden decision, turned on her heel, looking very much as if she was concealing the indignation to burst out. Babe smiled.

"Silly old Clara," she said. "She's rather nasty, I'm afraid. After all, she has rather wanted her evening. And so," Babe added, "have all of us. But, come on, Mabel. You—you're sure you must keep this appointment?"

"Positive, old thing."

Babe nodded quickly. If Mabel did not want to confide in her, she wasn't going to confide that confidence. All the same, she did look a little hurt, and she really felt it as she abandoned her chair along the corridor. Never before had Mabel behaved like this! Never before had Mabel shown herself to be so sensitive, so disinclined to account for her absence. Perhaps, she thought, Mabel would confide in her later.

But Mabel showed no desire to do that. Not a word did she say as they made their way to Study No. 4. Not a word as she hung up her coat, and got

out her books. In silence she sat down, in silence hurried through her prep.

At half-past seven she got down her pen, with a sigh. Mabs looked up as her chair rose, going to the bureau in which she stored the little notebook and in which she kept her savings. She had promised to let Jenny have some money.

For Mabs' father!

For Mr. Redfern, most unfortunately, had had very little money on him. He had had his cheque-book, of course, but impossible, in the circumstances, to cash a cheque. Out of her box she took two pounds, carefully looked it again, and put it back. Mabs stared in amazement.

"Mabs!"

"Oh, please," Mabs broke out—"please, Mabs, don't ask questions!"

Mabs flushed a dull red.

She did not ask any more. But she shook her head as Mabs went out rather hurriedly, and not at all in her best vein she finished her own prep, and put her things away. Barely had she completed that task when the door opened, and Miss Charmant, the popular mistress of the Fourth came in.

"Oh, hullo, Barbara," she said.

"Do you know where Mabel is?"

Mabs hit her lip.

"She—the last went out," she answered.

"Oh, where?"

"Well, well, I don't know!" Mabs answered truthfully.

"H'm! That's awkward," Miss Charmant pursed her lips. "I wanted to see her—rather urgently. It's in connection with the hints of the costumes for the last play. I am sending the bill of tonight, and I wanted Mabs to check the hints before I posted it."

Will you tell me to come and see me at eight at the corner, Barbara?"

"Yes, Miss Charmant."

The mistress nodded, and went off.

Mabs, with an anxious glance at the clock, went down to Big Hall, there to keep an eye open for Mabs.

As she stood at the door three girls came out, Lydia Crossendale, Freda Ferrier, and Frances Frost. They were all dressed as if for going out.

Mabs threw the three a sharp look.

"Hays, I say! Where are you going?"

Lydia nodded feebly.

"Oh, don't worry!" she said. "We shall be back before call-time."

"You're not going out?"

"Your mistake! We are!" Lydia answered.

"But girls are dressed—"

"Well, what of it?" Lydia shrugged.

"What's good for the goose is good for the gander," she said. "If your own pal can break bounds, why, then so can we." And, with a mocking laugh, she nodded to her friends.

"You can, of course, report us if you like," she said slyly. "But I don't think you will, will you? Not knowing that darling little Mabs is in the same boat. Come on, kiddles!"

And, with a mocking glance at the captain of the Form, she passed on her way.

Mabs stared back, her face crimson.

Lydia, having discovered that Mabs was breaking bounds, was doing so herself out of sheer spite!

Again, unknown, came that recent word: that feeling that Mabs herself was to blame for making her position so awkward.

She waited, shivering in the cold. Half an hour went by. Another fifteen minutes, and all-over hell would go. No sign of Mabs; no sight of Mabs!

The first strokes were already becom-

ing through the school, when a dark figure loomed up outside. Mabs, rather breathless, came up the steps.

She halted at sight of her chum.

"Oh, my goodness! Is that you, Mabs? I'm not late, am I?"

"Not very," Mabs answered; but for the life of her she could not keep a grin from her face.

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## Fateful News

TABLETS was a busy, a nervous. Mabs forced away. But she was painfully conscious of the glances being towards her then, and if any confirmation of that assertion was required, then surely it came in her face.

But Mabs, in arms against the suggestion, flushed hotly.

"Don't you think," she asked, "that you might keep your remarks to yourself, Lydia? What Mabs does is no business of yours."

"No!" Lydia answered. "But it is business of yours, isn't it? And it's the business of the Form, too, if you ask me. If— Here, who throws that?" she yelled, as a pillow sailed out of the blue.

"I did!" Clara Trevyns scouted.

"Now go to bed!"

And Lydia went, not because she was inclined to obey Clara's orders, but because at that moment Miss Charmant came in.

"Mabel, I shall want you to improve morning," she said. "No, don't look alarmed, my dear. It is only an account of the costumes for the last play. Report to me after breakfast, will you?"

"Yes, Miss Charmant," Mabs said.

"Thank you very much, good-night, girls!" And Miss Charmant quitted the dormitory, closing the door behind her.

Mabs climbed into bed, ignoring the murmurs of the other girls. Lydia, in her own bed, laughed softly and sweetly, but Mabs took no notice. She was thinking not of Lydia, but of Barbara, realising sharply now the position into which she had put her chum, wondering desperately what was to be the outcome of it all. If only, she thought, she could make Mr. Redfern recover his memory!

For a while she toyed with the idea of telling Mabs—telling her to see him in the hope that sight of her might restore his memory.

But that was too risky. Supposing the presence of Mabs did not have the desired effect, then all she had thought for would have been wasted.

Mabs, undeterred in the problems of her father, shielding him, warning him, trying to win him back to health, would forsake everything.

And then another idea came to Mabs. Wait a minute—wait a minute! There was a chance—just one. Downstairs, on the study table-top, was a photograph of Barbara, in a silver frame. It was Mr. Redfern's favourite photograph of his daughter. Supposing she took that to him? Supposing, through that, she succeeded in re-opening that door of his memory?

It was a good idea. Having thought of it, Mabs felt happier, somehow. She went to sleep, then, to be awakened by the sunlight peering upon her face, just before rising-bed, and Mabs, looking rather nervous, standing over her.

"Hullo, Mabs!"

"Hullo!" Mabs returned. "Thought you might like a turn in the quad before breakfast."

"Why, certainly!" Mabs agreed.

She rose. But she knew that was not the real reason for Mabs' early morning call. Mabs' face bore traces of anxiety. Mabs looked, indeed, as if she had not spent too pleasant a night. She got up, washed and dressed, and together the two of them strolled off. Very pleasant, it was, with the morning sun warming the air, but not until they were

half-way down the drive and sitting tall was staying in the school behind them, did Babe break the silence. Then she said:

"Mabe, I—I hope you don't think I—I'm trying to nose into your business, but—"

"No," Mabe said.

"But—but—Oh, Mabe, we've been chosen for so long, I—I don't remember us ever having secrets from each other before. And—well, frankly, old girl, I've not a lot to hide. What's your trouble in it? Won't you tell me what it is on your mind?"

Mabe hurried a step, deep breath.

"I'm sorry, old Babe, I—I can't."

There was silence. Babe flushed. Rather strange, rather peculiar, that look she flung towards Mabe as they went on.

"You—you know what they're saying, Mabe?"

"I'm sorry!"

"And—and—well," Babe got over, "it is making it a bit rotten for me. Ledia & Co. have got wind of something. They—they know that you looke honest just night, and that I know all about it. Naturally, they're out to make the most of it. When you broke boards, they did the same."

Mabe, more worried than ever, shook her head.

"Shall we turn back now?" she asked wretchedly.

No more then. But Mabe crossed the sudden children, the new hostility in Babe's bearing.

And then something happened which banished from Mabe the mental agony which she was at that moment enduring, and filled her suddenly with leaping apprehension.

It was not a very remarkable thing. Indeed, it was the most commonplace of things. The news was from Courtfield at the hour of the morning was a familiar sight at Cliff House, and on an ordinary evening Mabe would never have given it a second glance. Yet newspapers for Mabe had dreaded significance now. She found herself peering even before she saw that poster which was fastened to one side of it. And at sight of that key heart ceased to jump right into her throat and stood still there.

The poster was that belonging to the "Courtfield Times." It read:

"Missing Suspect believed to be in Courtfield!"

At once Mabe knew an agent of mystery. Natural in that moment that her thoughts should fly straight to Mr. Redfern. If this news got wind!

If this became known—! But not! It must not! It should not!

The car rolled up. It stopped. The face of the driver gazed down at them.

"Morning, ladies! Nice morning?"

"Very," Babe smiled. "Are these our papers? I'll take them along for you, if you like. We're just going back into the school."

"Well, thanks, Miss Redfern, that's nice of you," the man said. "I'll give you a bit of a journey, and I'm late as it is. Here they are!" And he reached behind him, grabbed the papers, and handed them over. "Thank!"

Babe took them. Mabe stood still. She caught the headline on one of them: "Has the Police Are Trying to Trace?"

She turned quickly to her chair.

"Oh, Babe, I say!" she burst out. "Let—let me take the paper in. I—I want to see Babe, the man," she added, "and—and that will give me a good excuse to go to the servants' quarters."

And, giving Babe no chance to expostulate or refuse, she grabbed the papers feverishly and bobbed.

"But, I say—!" called Babe.

But Babe did not heed. She sped on. She felt she must look at those papers first. Whatever happened, Babe must not see them.

Towards the school she flew. Breathlessly she pulled up the stairs. Entering Big Hall, she paused for a moment in dismay, having forgotten, in the desperate urgency of the moment, that dress-hall had gone, and that most of the girls would now be up. Ledia Crossdale, Frances Frost, and Freda Perrow were standing near the notice-board as she came in.

"And it's sure to be advertised to-day," Ledia was saying. "It's going to be a really high-stopping affair, as far as I can make out."—

And then she spotted Mabe. "Hi, Mabe, are those the papers?"

Mabe paused; only for a moment. Then she hurried on.

"Here—!" Ledia called.

But Mabe, flinging her a look, quickened her steps. Frances Frost started.

"Here, come back with those papers. We want to look at them!"

Mabe, however, did not go back. White-faced, she raced for the stairs and pulled up there. Like a whirlwind she burst in Study No. 4.

Then she looked round. She heard the furious steps of Ledia Crossdale & Co. ascending the stairs. Her eye fell upon the cupboard. Quick as thought, she wrenched open the door, handed the papers in, and then, locking the door, thrust the key into her pocket.

Not a moment too soon. There was a thump at the door. It burst open. Ledia, Frances, and Freda streamed into the room.

Ledia glared.

"Where are they?" she snarled.

"Where are what?" Mabe asked calmly.

"The newspapers. You had them?"

"Really? What do you want to see them for? But—excuse me!"—and Mabe, with a bland smile, moved forward as the breakfast bell sounded.

"That's breakfast, I think."

"But, look here! What have you done with them?"

"Ah!" Mabe said profoundly.

And she watched towards them. Quietly she turned her way out, while Ledia & Co. stood glaring at her bitterly. Fortunately for Mabe, Lady Patricia Westhansen came down the passage at that moment.

"Breakfast, kiddies?" she cried, in that cheery way of hers. "Happy up, or Bonnie Basher will have gobbled up all the eggs and bacon!"

Ledia & Co. scowled. But Mabe smiled. Off they hurried to breakfast. Immediately after the meal Mabe went off to see Miss Charmers. Babe, still rather anxious, but remembering now her picture, looked at Clara Trevlyn.

"Clara, are you ready?" she asked.

"I—I expect Mabe will join us as soon as the Charvers's done with her."

"Right-ho!" Clara briefly agreed.

They quit the dining-hall together. But, alas! for Barbara—she was not destined to go far. Hardly had they reached the end of the passage, when around the corner Miss Princesse came bustling, looking very annoyed indeed. She stopped at the new Babe.

"Oh, Barbara, here you are!" she cried.

"Why have you not delivered the newspapers?"

Babe started.

"Oh, but—"

"I hope," Miss Princesse said, "you are not going to deny having had them. Barbara, I have rung up the newspapers in Courtfield, and the delivery man assured me that he handed them to you in the drive."

Babe crimsoned. Loyalty forbade her to give Mabe away. This would for one instant have Mabe had almost snatched those papers away from her, how she had rushed off. She had never had a doubt from that moment that Mabel had delivered the newspapers.

"I—I'm sorry," she said. "I—I must have—must have— I—I'll bring them to you right away, Miss Princesse."

"Please do!" Miss Princesse snapped, and went on her way.

Clara started.

"Well, why the deuce did you take the newspapers, if you didn't mean to deliver them?" she asked.

"But I did!" Babe cried. "Oh, dear! I gave them to Mabe. She must—must have forgotten," she added. "But come on! I expect they'll be in Study No. 4. I'll go and get them now."

Clara grabbed. Clara felt herself rapidly losing patience with mysterious Mabe. Off she hurried at Babe's heels, however. The two entered Study No. 4, to find Babe glowering at the cupboard door. She turned at Babe and the Tumbler came in.

"I say, you know, it's a bit thick! Who's locked the cupboard door and taken the key?"

"Oh, bother the cupboard!" Babe cried. "None, where are the newspapers?"

"Well, how should I know where the printing newspapers are?" Babe retorted. "What I want to know is, who has locked—"

But Babe was paying no attention to Babe. She was hunting around. Obviously the newspapers were not there. But Mabe, after all brought them to the study? Perhaps, she thought, she had taken them downstairs, after all, and the maid had perhaps forgotten to give them out.

Off she and Clara went, while Babe, still questioning persistently, departed the study cupboard, and called along to see if there were any letters.

She met Ledia Crossdale in the passage. Ledia stopped her.

"Why so lugubrious, Patricia? Have Babe and Mabe fallen out?"

"Oh! Oh, really, Ledia, as if Babe and Mabe would fall out! But some tick, you know, has locked the cupboard door, and—and—well, there's something I wanted to get that cupboard."

"Oh!" Ledia said thoughtfully. "Is there now?"

But her eyes shored a gleam of interest. She was remembering all at once that the key of Study No. 4 cupboard stood Study No. 4.

"Perhaps Babe has the key," she suggested.

"Babe hasn't, because I asked her. Babe is busy looking for some silly newspapers which Princesse wants. I saw her. Ledia, you've just come up from Big Hall. You didn't notice if there was a letter for me, did you?"

"One letter?" Ledia enquired. "Why?"

Because there was a whole suitcase! And as Babe, with an almost shamed look, drew off to discover, of course, that she was once more having her key pulled—Ledia chuckled. Then quietly she slipped into Study No. 4.

Meanwhile, Babe was questioning Sally, she said. Sally shook her head.

"No, Miss Redfern, I haven't even seen Miss Lynn this morning. And certainly," Sally added, "I haven't seen any newspapers."

"But—but Mabe said she was coming to see you?"

"Well, she hasn't been," Sally said. Babs looked helplessly at Clara. Clara gave an impatient jerk of her head. More and more fed-up was Clara becoming. Mabs really did seem to be doing her best to make trouble for Babs. Together they strolled back to Study No. 4. Hastily had they entered that apartment, however, than the door opened and Mabs herself came in.

She stopped as she found the chairs starting at her. Babs, for once, was looking almost annoyed.

"Mabs, what have you done with the newspapers?"

"Mabs wanted, I—I'd almost forgotten."

Babs bit her lip.

"Well, she's coming on end of trouble," she said. "Primmy's looking for them. She thinks I've got them. Where are they?"

Mabs panted.

"If—if," she said, "you'll go out of the room for a moment, I—I'll find them."

Babs blinked. Clara rolled her hair. What was the matter with this amazing Mabs? Why must she invent even her simplest action with this air of mystery?

"Mabs, you're being very funny," she said.

"Please, Babs, both of you," Mabs begged, "don't worry. I'll take them to Primmy, and I'll explain," she added.

Once again Babs stared at her. Clara, without a word, turned towards the door. Mabs stood aside, not daring to look at them as they went out; but as soon as the door had closed, she stepped towards the cupboard. Now what was she to do?

But she knew what she was going to do. She was going through those papers. She was going to try out of them any reference to Mr. Redfern. How she should account for the location of the chairs, she didn't know. But it didn't matter. Nothing mattered provided Babs did not find out.

From her pocket she withdrew the key. She approached the door. She turned the key in the lock. She turned it, and then stared, every drop of colour leaving her face.

For the papers—which apparently contained that vital news concerning Barbara's father—were to be found there!

### Friendship Falters



"I'm going to be good," Lydia Cromatdale observed.

"What do I?" Freda Ferriss said.

The three were in Study No. 1. They were eagerly poring over the front page of the "Courtland Times." There was a mixture of small ads and news on that page. But Lydia & Co. were not reading the news. They were reading the small advertisement at the foot of the column, which announced the Calceol Dance at the Courtland Cafe that night.

"Doesn't start until half past nine," Freda said. "That means we'll have to break bounds."

"Well, what of it? Dash it all, we've broken bounds before, and after all, this is an extra special event, with Lydia Langham's address there coming straight from London. I—"

And then she started as the door opened—opened without even a preliminary

knock, and the white, intent face of a girl peered in.

The face belonged to Mabel Lynn.

One look Mabs gave. She had remembered, too late, that the key of Study No. 1 fitted the cupboard of Study No. 4. She had remembered, too late, how eagerly intent Lydia & Co. had been upon having those newspapers, and suspicion had brought her foot-heel to Study No. 1.

Ahmed a jump she gave as she saw Lydia, with that incriminating sheet spread out before her. With one bound she had leapt into the room, with one swift clutch had swept the papers from the astonished Lydia's hands. Lydia gave a yell.

"Here, what the—"

But Mabs, before any of the surprised trio could move, had snatched up the other two newspapers, and sped away in the direction of Study No. 4. Lydia rushed after it. Quickly she entered, springing round to turn the key in the lock, and then she started. For, on the other side of the room, looking at her in amazement, was Babs—Babs, who had slipped back from the art-room to get her paint-brushes.

"Mabs—"

Mabs left Babs.

Outside she heard the footsteps of Lydia & Co. pounding up the passage. What was to save her precious secret now?

Her eyes almost bravely fell upon the papers, and then she started. A sudden laugh came from her lips—a laugh as startling, as relieved, as stingly self-berating, as that Babs gave a cough.

For, in that flanking place, Mabs had taken, in the whole of the headmaster's party of which she had seen before. They did not relate to Mr. Redfern. They related to a man called Donald Coppens—a man called who had been leading the police a wild-goose chase for nearly a fortnight. She had given herself all that appetitive trouble—for nothing!

"Mabs!" Babs repeated again.

That came a knock at the door.

"Oh, you!" yelled Lydia Cromatdale's voice. "Give us those papers!"

"But what—?" Babs gasped.

"Mabs—"

"Oh, dear, I—I'm sorry," Mabs said, like laughing weakly. "I—Oh, shut up!" she called towards the door.

"There—there's been a—a bit of a mistake," she said coolly, as she saw the wide eyes of Babs fastened upon her.

"But—but I've got the papers, you see. They—"

"Lydia, and you, Freda, and Frances—what are you doing here?" an angry voice cut in from outside. "And, I declare! This door is locked! Barbara—upon any word, how dare you, girl! Open this door!"

"Primmy?" muttered Babs.

"Oh, my hat!"

And Mabs hurried to the door. She opened it. Miss Primrose, in a state of great indignation, stood on the threshold.

"Barbara, those papers!" she glared. "Why, have they are all the time! What do you mean by keeping them like this?"

"Oh, dear, I'm sorry, Miss Primrose!"

"Perhaps," Mabs said, coming forward, "I ought to explain—"

"Thank you! I do not think that explanations are necessary," Miss Primrose said tartly. "Barbara is responsible for those papers."

"Miss Primrose, please let me—"

Mabs said.

"Oh, dear! You see—"

Babs followed.

"I do not see! Your duty," Miss Primrose said, with severity. "Was to

give those papers into the right hands. You will take fifty lines for your neglect. Now, Mabs, please—not another word. Give them to me!"

Mabs bit her lip.

"But you must listen, Miss Primrose. Babs isn't responsible—"

"Give them to me!"

And Mabs handed them up. Then, flushing hotly, she turned to Babs as the door closed upon the headmistress.

"Oh, Babs, I'm awfully sorry, I—"

"Thanks!" Babs said, but she spoke in a strained voice. "Do you mind, Mabs, she asked vaguely, 'if we don't discuss the matter any more?' But I do hope," she added not help but add, in tones that were unintentionally plaintive,

"that next time you decide to play a joke for which I shall reap the consequences, you'll warn me in advance. I'm going up to the art-room now. Will you come along when you're ready?"

And Lydia & Co., hearing that in the passage, looked at each other and grinned in gloom. It seemed that a split was coming in Study No. 4!

### Strained Relations



"MY hat, they're quarrelling!" muttered Freda Ferriss.

Lydia's eyes glowered.

Her natural spite and animosity against Babs and Mabs would have urged her to encourage this startling development in the relations of the chums of Study No. 4.

The fact that she had been fired last night added to that urge. Lydia did not forgive her longer easily, and she had always looked upon Babs and Mabs as her worst enemies. At once her cunning mind was afoot.

"All right, don't spoil it," she said. "Leave me to work this out. There they are!" she added; as the door opened, and Babs, looking rather strained and white, came out. They turned, smothering of down the passage. Babs gave them one look and went off in the other direction. She disappeared.

"Mabs hasn't come out!" Frances muttered.

"No, but wait a minute! I'll see what she's doing," Lydia replied, and with a nod to her hairdresser, sidled back up the corridor.

She halted outside the door of Study No. 4. It was ajar as Babs had left it. Mabs was in there—staring at the photograph of Barbara Redfern which stood on the mantelpiece. She went over to it. With a half guilty glance towards the door, she took it down and slipped it into her pocket. Lydia frowned.

"Now why," she mused, highly intrigued, "has she done that?"

But she retreated next morning as Mabs turned towards the door. From a point far away along the passage she watched Mabs come out, watched her through narrowed eyes as she smiled of towards the art-room.

Babs greeted her chum a little constrainedly as she entered the art-room. Clara eyed her, frowning a little, but said nothing. For an hour and a half they worked, for the main part in silence. Babs, obviously worried, looked now and again rather queerly at Mabs.

It was a relief almost when the bell signalling the end of the first period changed, and work finished for that day, they tramped down into the school-room.

The picture was going on. Babs had reason to be satisfied with her morning's work, but somehow half the joy, the inspiration, had gone out of it. She



reached her chin's arm as they reached the classroom door.

"Mabel?"

"Yes!"

"I—I'm awry about—about what happened in the study," Babs said, flushing.

"I—I hope—"

"For answer, Mabel pressed her hand.

They went in. Babs, a little happier, took her place. The next lesson was English, and little Miss Wright was taking the class. To Babs' surprise, her books were already on her desk.

"You will now open your English grammar at page one five six," Miss Wright said, in her precise way.

A rustle, a stir, a great hurrying and reading of pages.

Very quietly Babs opened her own grammar, her mind by no means on the lesson, but divided between her picture and Mabel. She found the page, threw the leaves apart. Then she sat deeply aghast.

For in that section of the book, written in block capitals upon a scrap of paper, was a message. It read:

"Don't trust Mabel Lynn! She's jealous of you!"

Babs felt her face drain of colour. Suddenly she crushed the obnoxious note in her hand.

"Jealous—Mabel! What utter nonsense!" Quickly she glanced towards her classmate, but Mabel's golden head was bent over her lesson.

And yet—and yet—

But no! Babs wouldn't think those thoughts. It was unfair—unfair! Mabel was the truest, most loyal classmate! She and Mabel had always been friends, always would be friends. And yet—

In a chill whisper the voice seemed to come. Why didn't Mabel trust her now? Why was Mabel behaving so strangely?

And Mabel, in her own place, was thinking of the afternoon in course! She had the photograph of Babs. If only that photograph should help her father's secretary! No more need then for secrets.

Impatiently she waited for the end of the lesson. Irritably she rose when the morning finally was at an end. She was first out of the classroom and first into a dinner when the group separated. Almost wolfishly she gulped down her meal.

"Mabel, you're not going out?" Babs asked her, after the usual, when Mabel, in Study No. 4, took down her hat and her coat.

"Hats, I mean!"

"But the picture. I may want you—"

Mabel hid her lip.

"Oh, Babs, can you manage—without me?" she asked. "I've just got to go. I'll get back as soon as I can. Perhaps," she added hopefully, "you can get someone to double for me if I'm not back in time!"

"But where are you going?"

"Oh, Babs, please don't ask me questions!"

And off went Mabel, leaving Babs feeling more wretched than ever before. Again she thought of that note. Mabel was lacking interest in her picture—Mabel, who had been so enthusiastic before! Was it true? Was Mabel really jealous?

There was a stop in the passage, and Lydia Crossendale barged into the room.

"Hello!" she said. "Going to be busy on the picture, Babs? I see—Mabel can't get gone out."

"Well, any business of yours?" Babs asked a trifle suspiciously.

"None at all," Lydia shrugged.

"Doesn't eat a girl," she said. "I was just wondering, that's all, how you'd manage for a sitter if Mabel wasn't here? Only want to help, you know."

"I'm about Mabel's height and build. If you'd like me to stand in for her—"

Babs flushed a little. It occurred to her all at once that she had been rather abrupt.

"I'm sorry, Lydia, thanks!" she said. "I can manage all right, I think—"

though Mabel, she added, trying to have a conviction in her tone she did not feel, "is bound to come back if she can get away. I—"

And she stopped, staring at Lydia, who for her part was staring at the mantelpiece where Babs' photograph had rested. "Well, what's the matter now?"

"Oh, nothing! I was just wondering what Mabel had done with your photograph, that's all," Lydia said. "Mabel's place looks sort of lonely without it."

For the first time Babs noticed the absence of the familiar ornament from Study No. 4.

"Mabel?" she said.

"Why didn't you know? I saw her removing it this morning," Lydia said.

"Fanny," she sneered, "what's come over Mabel lately. Just as if she can't bear to be in the same room with you. And can't even," she added, "tolerate your photograph about the place. All right," she said, "you wouldn't look so mad. I'm only saying what the rest of the Form is saying."

And with that she beat a hasty retreat.

While Babs, white to the lips now, stared at the emptying burner at the place where her photograph had been.

WHEN Mabel, at that very moment, was knocking at the door of the Runnells' cottage.

It was Jenny who opened the door—

—a Jenny whose face expressed its unscrupulous intent.

"Oh, Miss Redfern—"

"Is—is he any better?" Mabel asked quickly.

Her heart fell as the girl shook her head.

"I—I'm afraid not. He—he had another turn this morning. But come in!"

Mabel, her heart thumping, went in. Mr. Redfern, a wreck of his former self, treated her to a wistful smile as she entered the room.

"Well, well, Barbara," he said, "it's nice to see you again. But I wish—ah, how I wish that I could remember you!" he added dreadfully.

He passed a shaking hand across his forehead, as if exhausted; he dropped heavily into a chair.

"But come, Barbara, come closer! Let me look at you, girl. There is something—something—"

And he caught her with an intensity that was almost frightening. "I seem to see—I seem to—"

and then he shook his head. "No, it's gone—gone!"

For a moment Mabel stood in an agony of doubt and despair. Had she done right? Caught she to have deceived him in the way she had? But it was the only way—the only thing she could have done to help Babs, to save her the worry which would undoubtedly cost her the art prize which meant so much to her career.

But there was still the photograph!

Thinking with supposed excitement, she drew it from her pocket.

"I—I wonder," she said, "if—if this will help you to remember?"

And she held the photograph in front of him.

"This is a photograph of somebody you know very well, someone—"

And then she gave a cry. "Jenny—quick!"

For the most amazing thing suddenly happened. One look to gaze the photograph, and then, to Mabel's horror, he pitched forward in a heap.



MABEL face pale as she saw the notice boldly flourished by Lydia Crossendale. She knew the truth at once, Lydia & Co. were trying to foster ill-feeling between herself and Babs!

Instinctively Mabs jumped forward, catching him as he fell. The whole weight of the man's body slumped into her arms.

The photograph was torn from her grasp and went whizzing into the tiles of the hearth. Almost without being conscious of it, Mabs heard the curious sound of breaking glass. Somehow she saved the one specimen invalid into his chair.

"Jenny, we'll have to get a doctor," she said.

"But how can we when the police are—"

"I know one—only one," Mabs said. "Jenny, help me to get him ready." Her mind was racing now. It was obvious that Mr. Redfern must have expert attention—at once.

And there was one who would give it to him—none so soon. Mabs could tell. His name was Fellows. He lived on the other side of Courtfield. Once, many years ago, Barbara Redfern had nursed him.

Recall the life of his small boy, and Dr. Fellows had been most tremendously grateful. He had said then that if he could ever do anything to repay Barbara, that he would do. She could trust him with her secret—and Barbara's secret—and Mr. Redfern would be safe. In any case, the risk must be taken. No longer could Barbara's father be allowed to go on like this.

Between she and Jenny they held him up. Jenny got smelling-salts and a stimulant.

Fortunately she opened his eyes, shaking his head wearily like a man who is very, very fatigued and sees nothing but misery and hopelessness ahead of him. Rather (obviously Mabs picked up the shattered photograph from the hearth, she was afraid, after that experience, to show it to him again).

She put it in her pocket. Now she must be off to the doctor. She left Jenny trying to persuade Mr. Redfern to go to bed. Off she flew, and was long journey to Dr. Fellows, and was long served by any of his doctor-his notes, as Mabs had said.

It was a quarter past three when she reached home to be informed, to her dismay, that Dr. Fellows was attending a patient in Lenthams, and had promised through to say that he would not be back until half-past ten that night.

Oh, great goodness! Now what? What—

There was but one thing to do. Mabs did it. She scribbled a note:

"For Barbara Redfern's sake, please meet me at Barnbridge's cottage as soon as you come back tonight," she wrote. "Do not say a word to anybody until I have explained—Mabs. Lynn."

She left that for the doctor when he came in. Then she hurried back to the cottage. Mr. Redfern was in bed there. Barbara seemed to have asked him, and it was obvious Mabs could do nothing else. To-night, perhaps, Dr. Fellows would be able to do what she, in her own clumsy way, had failed to do.

Mabs hurried back to Cliff House School. To-night—to-night! It would mean breaking heads, but that could not be helped. Meantime, she must keep this photograph hidden until she could find the means and the time to get it repaired.

With her mind in a riot she entered the school at last, aware even as she entered Big Hall of the curious stare with which she was regarded. She hurried up to the cloak-room. There she hung up her coat, leaving

the ruined photograph still in her pocket. She went to Study No. 4. No one was there. She went up to the next room.

Mabs was there, just putting the finishing touches to the afternoon's work. Margaret Lenthams was posing in place of Mabs. Mabs came forward eagerly.

"Oh, I say!" she said.

She stood still, looking at the picture, unaware for the moment that Mabs had rather noticeably drawn aside, that Clara was staring at her, that Margaret was springing her in frank curiosity. Her eyes shone as she gazed at it. Mabs, despite the worry on her mind, had made rapid strides. The picture, made rapid strides. The picture, made rapid strides, reflected all the soaring complexity, reflected all the best work of which she was capable. It looked vivid, it looked alive. There it looked vivid, it looked alive. There it looked vivid, it looked alive. There it looked vivid, it looked alive.

"Oh, Mabs, aren't you getting on?" she cried.

"You think so?"

"I do, indeed! Don't you, Clara?"

"No thanks to you!" Clara said gruffly.

Mabs winced. She did not reply. She stood looking at the picture, still fascinated, unshaken by it. It was, indeed, a wonderful effort—an effort, indeed, a wonderful effort—made just which she felt constrained would put Mabs at the top of the tree. It was worth all that she—Mabs—was suffering, indeed, a wonderful effort—made just which she felt constrained would put Mabs at the top of the tree. It was worth all that she—Mabs—was suffering, indeed, a wonderful effort—made just which she felt constrained would put Mabs at the top of the tree.

"Had ten?" she asked.

"No; not yet," Mabs said.

"Oh, then—then shall we have it?" Mabs hesitantly asked.

"You're sure you want it?" Mabs asked.

"Oh, Mabs—"  
Mabs bit her lip. She hadn't meant that. But her, puzzled as she was, she felt utterly bewildered herself. Then, this Mabs, appeared to be helping her. This Mabs who could go off the whole afternoon without saying where she had been, who could come back so full of enthusiasm.

"Well, I'm going," Clara said.

"Coming, Margaret?"

"Yes, rather!"

Together they went off. Slowly Mabs turned. Long and anxiously she regarded her chum.

"Mabs, you—you've got nothing to say to me?" she asked wistfully.

"Yes—you still don't trust me to—"

"Mabs, old thing, please!" Mabs begged. "Oh dear!" You know there's no one else I trust more, but please—please be patient. I know I know I know it's rotten. I know I must soon be to behaving—well, not quite as you'd like me to behave, but—"

Mabs heaved a sigh.

"But what?" she asked. "And—Mabs, why—why did you take my photograph of the mantelpiece this morning?"

Mabs started.

"Oh, you—know?"

"Yes, Lydia Cromwell's are you?"

"Oh!" Mabs smiled faintly. "I—I just wanted it for something," she mumbled. "No, Mabs, don't ask me. Let's—let's go and have some tea."

She added desperately.

Mabs turned. Slowly she covered her canvas with the sheet. Slowly she turned away. Not one more word was

said until they reached Study No. 4. And there Mabs, entering the doorway, gave a sharp cry:

"Mabs, what have you done to my photo!"

And Mabs, looking in the direction in which her chum's eyes were fixed, felt herself trembling.

For on the corner of the mantelpiece its frame battered, the glass broken, the photograph itself crumpled, stood Barbara Redfern's photograph!

"Go To My Study!"



THERE was no doubt about the rift in the life of Study No. 4's harmony that night. The whole Ferny noticed it. Lydia & Co. were jubilant—especially Lydia, who had followed Mabel Lynn up to the cloak-room, had stolen that smashed photograph from her coat pocket, and, anxious, as any coat, to keep the part of article hidden, had placed it on the mantelpiece in Study No. 4.

It was observed that, when Mabs went back to the art-room after tea, Mabel Lynn did not go with her. Margaret Lenthams once again was called in, and Mabs, white-faced and wretched, was left alone in Study No. 4.

A rift in the life—yes. No wonder Lydia & Co. were jubilant. And no wonder when shortly before half-eleven Mabel Lynn came into the Common-room, there was an immediate and hushed silence.

Lydia, standing by the mantelpiece, gave a snort. There was open mockery on her face.

"No," she said, "the little chick-birds have fallen out of their parental nest—oh! What price Barbara Redfern now, Mabel Lynn!"

Mabs hung her a bitter look. She had no doubt as to who she had to thank for her present plight. Desperately had she tried to explain to Mabs—but how to explain convincingly to Mabs when the secret she was frantically trying to keep was so involved in the shattering of that photograph! She could not even deny having smashed it!

She picked up a book, ignoring the glances, the stares, of the others, she sat down, to while away the few remaining minutes to callowness. It came. After it—had. It was noticed by all that Mabs had her good-night in the secret whisper.

Wretchedly unhappy, Mabs undressed, and only partially. She lay awake, thinking of her appointment with the doctor.

At ten o'clock she arose, her heart clanking a lute. Quietly she dressed and stole out, arriving in the quadrangle just as Miss Fennimore's car, with Miss Fennimore—who was off to join Miss Matthews, the headmistress of Whitechester, in a little bridge party—shot out of the garage.

In the darkness Mabs creathed, watching with palpitating heart until the big car had disappeared through the gates. Then she rose, taking in her heels.

Half past ten was chiming when she reached Courtfield. At that moment Lydia, Freda, and Fessenden, in the Fourth Form dormitory, looked for the dance at the Courtfield Club, were in the act of dressing. Barbara Redfern, who had slept but fitfully that night, arose.

"Who's that?" she asked sharply.

A him came from Lydia.

"Who's that?" Babe repeated.

"Oh, go to sleep!" growled Lydia. Babe rose. Quickly she slipped out of bed. She moved to the wall, pressing on the switch. Lydia, Freda, and Frances, almost fully dressed in their best dance frocks, stood revealed.

Babe's eyes glanced.

"Be you're breaking boards!" she said. "You know that's against the rules, Lydia!"

"And what are you going to do about it?" Lydia sneered.

Babe's lips compressed.

"As captain of this Form, it is my duty to order you back to bed," she said.

"Go home!"

"And if—" Babe threatened, "you don't get back to bed, there's going to be trouble."

"Oh!" Lydia sneered again. "And if there's going to be trouble, it won't only be as who'll be in it. I like your shock," she added, with a gust of indignation, "trying to stop on breaking boards when your own pal can do what she likes! If you report us, you can tell well report Mabel Lynn," Lydia added, and pointed to Mabel's bed.

Babe started. Mabel—Mabel breaking boards! Mabel was not! Mabel—Her hands fell to her sides. Lydia had the whip hand. Lydia, for once, was in a position to detain them. Even if she had felt inclined to report Lydia—which, of course, she had no intention of doing—she could hardly have done that without involving Mabel, as well. Her lips curled bitterly.

Without a word, she struck out the light. Without a word she climbed into bed. Lydia & Co., with a chuckle, left.

But Babe lay and worried. Mabel boards breaking—Mabel, keeping her out of her vestibule! Mabel, as it seemed, hitting her down at every turn! Mabel, that host of all friends, with whom, at its moment, she felt on the verge of a quarrel! What mad crooked was this?

But if she could have only seen Mabel at that moment—

In the little bed-room of the Barnbridge's cottage, on the bed of which Mabel now lay, her face, pale, but sleeping, the doctor was working his hand.

"It's a distressing case," he said. "I admire you, Miss Lynn, for what you are doing. But I do advise you against springing any further surprises. A shock may bring her memory back, but a shock, on the other hand, may make his condition worse. The only remedy is rest and quiet."

Mabel went off this, a trifle more happy to know something definite, and very satisfied that her patient was in more capable hands, but with no solution whatever of her own problem.

Into the street Courtfield street she hurried, she slipped slowly and dazedly now, with only a glimpse of a constable on point duty, or a passing car, to show that life existed in the place at all.

Twelve o'clock boomed out as she passed the Town Hall. She turned into Broad Street, where, at least, there were sounds of activity. A band was playing "Auld Lang Syne."

The sound came from the Courtfield Cafe, whose lighted entrance threw a beam of brilliance across the dark pavements. Mabel hurried on. She came abreast of the cafe, and threw a glance into the hall, out of which three girls were emerging. For a moment Mabel stopped dead.

For the three girls were Lydia Crossendale, Frances Frost and Freda Fernier!

"Hallo, there's Mabel Lynn!" cried Lydia, in quick recognition. "Mabel! Mabel! I see, where have you been?"

And the three of them came rushing out to meet her. Mabel sat her lips. She had no wish to be mixed up with the escapades of Lydia Crossendale & Co. She took to her heels. She reached the corner of Broad Street just as Lydia & Co. shot out on to the pavement.

At the same moment—

There was a whirl of wheels! A big car came bounding past. Mabel had one frightening glimpse of a woman who sat upright in it, and then, as though a

dozened lamps were on her heels, she flew. Oh, my goodness, had Miss Primmer seen her?

But Miss Primmer apparently had not. Otherwise, Miss Primmer most certainly would have chased that car to stop. The car whirled on.

Recklessly Mabel waddled back to Cliff House School. Without mishap she reached the Fourth Form dormitory.

Less than ten minutes later Lydia & Co. came in. Babe, listening from her bed, maintained a grim-lipped silence. Well, that was that, thank goodness! And Mabel, tired out, presently went to sleep. In the morning she awoke, and Babe glanced at her curiously.

But to ward did Babe say, though Lydia & Co. winked at each other. Not till morning assembly did the board-school fall.

That was when Miss Primmer, after delivering the usual address to the school, passed. The expression on her face showed she had something to say.

"Last night," she announced, "four girls belonging to this school were out of bounds in Courtfield. From my car I saw them in Broad Street. I demand that those girls stop forward now!"

Mabel sighed. Lydia & Co. shifted. Nobody came forward, however.

"Very well—Miss Primmer's lips compressed. "I have at least the identity of one," she said. "I hope that she will give me the names of her companions. Mabel Lynn!"

Mabel jumped.

"Oh, yes, Miss Primmer?"

"Please go to my study."

The Face at the Window



MABEL, feeling the horizon was dropping out of her world, went. There was a murmur of awe, of amazement, as she walked out of the Hall. Lydia & Co. heaved a sigh of relief. They, at least, thank goodness, had not been recognized.



[If Mabel had glanced towards the window she would have seen, pressed to the glass, the white, strained face of Barbara Redfern—her glass for whose sake she had suffered so much.]

"You—you don't think she'll speak?" Frances Frost ventured anxiously.

"Of course not! She's not that sort," Lydia said.

"Dinner" was given then. The girls tramped off into their dressing-rooms. Miss Pringle, her face grim, searched off to her own quarters, only to be accosted by Miss Belliveau as she reached the head of the stairs. Miss Belliveau was looking perturbed.

"Miss Pringle, a call has come through to my room. It has been put through in mistake, I think. It is from the manager of the Cornfield Club House hall."

"Oh!" Miss Pringle said. And emphatically she ceased at once to Miss Belliveau's room. The voice of the manager came through. The manager of the Cornfield Club was now, and a lawyer, and, knowing nothing of the rules and regulations which governed girls of Cliff House, completely gave the game away! Apparently Miss Cornsfield had asked him to send her tickets for the next dance. Would the lady who was answering the phone be good enough to tell her that the next dance had been postponed?

Miss Pringle's eyes gleamed. "How many tickets did Miss Lydia ask you to send?" she asked.

"Why, three, madame; for herself and the two young ladies who were with her last night!"

"And those names? Do you know them?"

"Oh, madame! There was a Mademoiselle Ferraris and a Mademoiselle Forest!"

"Thank you!" Miss Pringle tartly replied. "Well, now listen! I most certainly refuse to give these girls your message, madame. Also I shall take good care that none of my girls come to your dance hall again. Good-bye!"

"But, madame—" in a low, old, guttural up the receiver. Miss Belliveau was waiting for her. She read her friends.

"Mabel, you were out of bounds last night. I saw you, though at the time I did not recognize you, in Broad Street. The countess at the Market Cross gave me your name. Why were you out of bounds at such a time?"

Mabel licked her lips.

"I—I want to see a friend," she said.

"You did not say by any chance go to the Cornfield Club?"

"No," Mabel said.

"But you knew that three other girls were there?"

"Mabel was there."

"Mabel?"

"I—I'm sorry, Miss Pringle, but that's nothing to do with me. And—and I can't speak."

The harsh features of the headmistress relaxed for a moment.

"Very well, Mabel, I will not press the point. At the same time, I must warn you that the offence of which you have been guilty—that of being out of bounds at midnight—merits extreme punishment. You will be detained for the next three half-holidays. Now go each to your dressing-rooms, and send Mabel, Pringle, and Frances to me!"

Mabel started.

"Lydia!"

"You heard, Mabel. Do not ask questions—okay?"

Mabel smiled. She entered the Fourth Floor dressing-room, to become at once the focal point of every girl's attention. Lydia & Co. looked quickly towards her, and Mabel, meeting their gaze, and knowing the message she had to deliver, flushed guiltily, as she had in reality given them away. She

repeated the headmistress' message to the Form-mistress.

Shaking the three girls stood up. Lydia flashed a bitter look at Mabel.

"So," she said between teeth, "you did speak!"

"I didn't!" Mabel cried.

"Please go, Lydia!" Miss Charmant said sharply.

They went. In ten minutes they were back. Each girl's face was white. Burn-singed, their glances fastened with grief, bitter hostility upon Mabel. The class shifted restlessly, sensing drama in the air. Had Mabel Lynn spoken?

An hour it was all over the school that Mabel Lynn had snatched on Lydia & Co., and so a result the three of them were not only detained, but were going to be reported home!

A wave of fury, a gust of indignation, swept the Form, for speaking, whether the culprit was in the right or the wrong, was the most dreaded offence against Cliff House code. Then and there a meeting was called. Mabel, as Form captain, was asked to preside.

"But what's it about?" she cried.

"It's about Mabel Lynn."

Mabel felt herself torn white.

"Then I'm sorry, but I can't preside!" she said in a stifled voice.

"You'll have to hold your meeting without me!"

She turned quickly with that. Back she hurried to her study. But Mabel—had she sneaked!

Mabel was not in the study. Mabel bit her lip. Oh, what a mess, what a tangle everything was! Mabel, the sensitive, Mabel the silent! Mabel in disgrace with the Head, and now in disgrace with the Form! Almost, without realising what she was doing, she tramped up to the art-room.

And, pushing open the door, passed. Mabel was there. She was standing in front of the picture. She did not hear Mabel as she came in, but she entered, the glowing look upon Mabel's face would have revealed Mabel's emotions at that moment even to Bonnie Baxter. Mabel stared a little. Certainly there were no signs of jealousy on Mabel's face. Certainly none of that hostility which she had been fighting desperately against hitherto. Wonder, awe, and admiration—yes, jealousy—definitely no!

With a sigh, she dropped the sheet.

"And well," she said, speaking her thoughts aloud, "that's finished, you must never, never know, Mabel!"

"Mabel!" Mabel exclaimed.

Mabel's face drained of colour as she saw Mabel.

"Mabel—yes?"

"Mabel come forward."

"Mabel!" she cried. "No, don't go!"

And she laid a hand upon her chin's arm as Mabel, flustered and confused, would have helped for the door. "Mabel, look at me," she demanded. "I heard that, I couldn't help it. What do you mean? I must never know until that picture's finished!"

Mabel bit her lip.

"Oh, Mabel," Mabel cried fiercely.

"But I want to know," Mabel said.

"Oh, Mabel—Mabel," she broke out.

"What is it? What are you doing? What's this the Form is saying about you? Mabel, we've been friends too—too long a time. We've never had a secret from each other before. Won't you trust me in this?"

Mabel drew a deep, heaved breath.

"Mabel, please!" she begged. But she realized now that she couldn't get out of it. "Oh, my goodness, Mabel, I haven't any secret from you. It—it's just that I—I can't tell you. Finish your picture, and then—then I'll tell you all."

Mabel eyed her queerly. Almost timidly she picked up her palette with its brushes and paints.

"The picture is the cause of it, then—and the reason why you won't say anything?"

"Yes," Mabel said desperately.

"And you think that while this is happening—as that I can go on working happily?" Mabel asked anxiously.

"You think I'm enjoying working on that picture, knowing that our friendship is at stake? If the picture is going to come between us, then," Mabel said, and with a sudden sob, she snatched up the palette knife—"then——" she cried.

"Mabel, no!" Mabel panted. "You shan't spoil the picture."

And just in time she pulled her chair away as Mabel made a sudden vicious stab at the canvas.

"Oh, my hat! Mabel, you idiot, you idiot!" Mabel cried. "No, no! You that! If—if you destroy that picture now I'll never tell you anything. I—I'll never speak to you again! Mabel, the day after to-morrow it will be entered."

Then, then, oh, please, please have patience!" she begged. "Now, get that knife down! Come with me!"

Mabel, shaken and flustered, felt rather ashamed of that little outburst. But if Mabel was harassed and worried, she was no less so. Mabel, indeed, seeing that fine friendship which she had so treasured going to pieces, was in a mood of complete distraction. What did the picture matter? What did anything matter?

They went downstairs together, perhaps down close because of that little outburst. They reached Study No. 3. Bonnie Baxter was already leaving too. Mabel looked pleadingly at her chin.

"Now, Mabel, you believe in me?"

Mabel winked.

"Mabel, you know I do."

"And—and you'll get on with your picture?" You won't worry any more?"

But before Mabel could reply to that question, there was a tramp of footsteps outside. The door suddenly flew open. Lydia Cornsfield, supported by a crowd of other girls, appeared in the doorway. Their faces were grim.

"Well!" Mabel snapped. "What do you want?"

For answer, Lydia withdrew a card she was holding under her arm. She displayed it so that its lettered face was presented to the two classes' vision. On that card was printed:

"DON'T SPEAK TO MABEL LYNN. SHE IS IN CONVOY!"

Mabel's face paled. Mabel started, and then her eyes glittered.

"And who?" she asked. "Is Mabel in Convoy?"

"Because," Lydia replied, "she sneaked to Pringle."

"She didn't!"

Lydia shrugged.

"Very well," she said. "If you believe her, carry on. The Form believe she did—out of spite, because she believed I replaced your sneaked photograph! Anyway, this isn't my order, it's the order of the Form. Are you still going to speak to her?"

"I am!"

"You know what it will mean?"

"I don't care!"

There was a matter for the girls in the crowd. Mabel lined them. Good on the girl's care! She didn't care! All her old loyalty, her faith, came rushing back. Mabel was her champion; she was going to stick up for her. Quickly she slammed the door in their faces. Mabel, miserably wretched, shook her head.

"Mabel!" she said.

But Babe did not reply. Trembling, she sat down.

But Mabel, having taken that decision, seemed to sink in it. She believed Mabel! She trusted Mabel!

She trusted Mabel—well! But when she went into the dining-hall with Mabel, when somebody stared so steadily and so gleefully—how her heart seemed to turn over! Lonesome in the Conservatory, when, half-desperately, she strolled into that room, arm-in-arm with Mabel, how her face whitened. What a striking sensation she experienced as everybody turned their backs, and looked steadily away. She, the most popular girl in the Form. Their captain, their heroine, was shunned!

But she was going to stick to Mabel.

Came the evening. Even Deane seemed to be avoiding Steady No. 4. In silence Babe and Mabel had their tea. In silence cleared up. Then, suddenly, there was a knock at the door. Mary Barter came in.

"Mabel," she said, "you're wanted—in the parlour's room. There's a man on the phone. He gives his name as Dr. Fellows."

Mabel bit her lip. With a quick glance at Babe she left. Babe eyed her, guessing that this was something to do with Mabel's secret. But Mabel, with a strangely contained aggression on her face, went. Babe waited, shifting restlessly.

Five, ten minutes went by. And then, looking out of the window, Babe saw her. Mabel, in her hat and coat, hurrying across the quad. Mabel was going out!

All of once, Mabel was seized by the most alarming thoughts. Mabel was jealous! Mabel had already been warned! Mabel was breaking bounds on this secret mission, which, for some reason, she would say nothing to her about again, after her picture was taken. Mabel was—

No longer did Babe hesitate. In a flash she had made up her mind. Mabel was taking a dreadful risk! It was up to her, at Mabel's elbow, to help her—and help she was going to. But first, she must find out the nature of this worry that was playing upon her dear friend's mind.

No more. In a flash Mabel dressed. She rushed out into the darkness of the quad, just in time to see her chaperon disappear through the gates. She waited. As Mabel plunged into the woods, taking the short cut towards Courtfield, she followed.

Where was Mabel going? Mabel, apparently, had no suspicion that she was being followed.

Almost breathlessly she stumbled on, at times running, at times walking, a dreadful fear tugging at her heart. For Dr. Fellows had rung up to tell her that Mr. Redfern had had another relapse, and that he felt it would be advisable for Mabel to go at once to the cottage.

Now she was out of the wood; in the fields. She skirted Gregory Grange, passing Brindale village on the left. It was dark now, but Babe, still on the trail, was guided by the sounds of her chaperon's footsteps.

Then at last Mabel saw the winking lights of the Hambridge cottage far down the road, and broke into a run.

She was almost in a state of panic when at last she knocked at the door of the Hambridge cottage.

"It—it be better?" she asked of Jenny, who opened the door.

"It's in a bad way," Jerry replied. "The doctor's with him. The doctor says he mustn't be moved. We've got him into a chair."

Flinging aside her hat and coat,

Mabel advanced into the little cottage parlour. She went across to Mr. Redfern, who was sitting at the table, his head in his arms. Mrs. Hambridge was in the room, but Dr. Fellows had gone outside to fetch something from his car.

Mr. Redfern looked up as Mabel reached his arm.

"Who are you?" he whispered.

"Mabel—you're not Mr. Barbara?"

Mabel's heart leapt. Was his memory returning at last?

She was about to speak, but Mr. Redfern's tired voice spoke again:

"I want Barbara," he murmured.

"Where is she? Oh, why—why can't I remember?"

And, with something like a sob, he buried his head in his hands again.

Watching him so intently, none of them saw a sudden movement outside the cottage window; none of them saw the face that was pressed to the glass—the white, strained face of Barbara Redfern!

Suddenly Mr. Redfern raised his head again. It was as if some inner sense had warned him—and prompted him—for his tired gaze travelled slowly to the window.

Mabel, watching him in breathless silence, saw his expression suddenly change. His eyes seemed to light up, and a look of joy flashed across his haggard features. With an effort he roared himself.

"Barbara, Barbara, Barbara!" he choked. "Barbara, my Barbara!"

Arise outstretched, she tottered towards the window. Mabel turned and then fell back as she glimpsed her chaperon's white face pressed to the glass.

At the same moment:

"Quick! Save him!" shrieked Jenny.

And Mabel, as he groped and wept, rushed forward. She it was not she who saved him. It was another girl. For suddenly, impulsively, the door was flung open. A girl with brown curls flung herself across the room.

And Barbara Redfern, catching the invalid as he fell, choked out one word.

"FATHER!"

"It's so good to be all right!"

"Yes."

"The necessary—has it come back?"

"Yes."

"Thank goodness!" Babe and Mabel breathed as one.

It was an hour later. Both girls sat in the sitting-room of the Hambridge cottage. In that hour a great deal had happened. Mr. Redfern had passed through his crisis. Babe, at last, had heard the full story of Mabel's supreme sacrifice. At last she understood.

There were tears in her eyes as she loved the doctor.

"And—would you go and see him now?" she asked.

"You may," the doctor smiled weakly. "I said, Miss Lynn, a shock might do it," he said. "It was the shock of seeing his own daughter in the flesh that restored his memory, and will—within a very short time, restore his health. Miss Lynn, you have made a wonderful effort—a great sacrifice."

Miss Redfern, thank goodness you rescued up when you did! But I must leave you. I am going to the police."

"The police?"

"The doctor nodded.

"The police," he confirmed. "For your father. He has just told me about the bonds. Naturally he completely forgot about them when his memory went. And, naturally, as they were so valuable, he did not leave them lying about where anyone could find them. There are in his secret safe at Holly Hall, where they have been ever since they were landed to him. After that—"

she paused, his eyes twinkled. "Well, I have a destination to announce."

He did not say what that commission was. But they knew an hour later—the hour spent most happily with a transfused Mr. Redfern, laughing, joking like the great boy he had been before his illness. Then suddenly there was the sound of a car driving up outside.

Into the room came Miss Primrose and the doctor. The two girls stared.

But Miss Primrose smiled.

"Please be seated, Barbara and Mabel," she said. "The doctor looked up; I have heard the whole story, Mr. Redfern, I am glad—so, very glad that you are recovering. Mabel," she added,

"I love, Miss Primrose!"

"I—I wish to thank you for what you have done, dear girl. Thanks to the doctor, I know it all. I have learnt also how the Form has been treating you. To prevent further injustice, I have told them exactly how I received the news of Lydia's head-breaking. Meanwhile," she paused. "Well, after this," she said, "I can hardly hold you to your destination. You are pardoned, Mabel. And you, Barbara—"

"Yes, Miss Primrose," Barbara said.

"If you really want to thank Mabel,

you—"

Mabel blushed very red.

"Oh, I do, Miss Primrose!"

"Then," Miss Primrose said, "the very best way to do it, is to finish your picture and win the Gold Medal. Is that not so, Mr. Redfern?"

And Mr. Redfern, with smiling, grateful eyes, fastened upon the confounded Mabel said: "It is, indeed!"

So Babe did!

THE END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

## • TEN O'CLOCK!

Chiff House slept. The clock in the ancient tower above the school began to strike. One—two—three—four—and then stopped!

### WHY?

The solution to that and other mysterious happenings was known to one girl—Joan Cartwright of the Fourth Form. For Joan had a secret . . .

Read all about it in next Saturday's grand long complete story

## "THE SCOTS GIRL'S SILENCE"

By HILDA RICHARDS

A MORCOVE GIRL NO LONGER: Tess Trelawney, Expelled, Begins Her Attempt to Solve The Mystery of Cliffedge Bungalow

# WHEN MORCOVE EXPELLED HER

By

MARJORIE STANTON



FOR NEW READERS.

MARION FRIDAY and her brother, HALPH FRIDAY—who is a member of Grangeville—are being at Cliffedge Bungalow, MORCOVE. They are outwardly friendly to Tess; secretly they are engaged in a cunning plot.

TESS TRELAWNEY, the Fourth-Form artist, owing to her striking activities on the location, became an important threat to their plans. Because of this they succeed in getting her expelled as a morcovite. Various of their schemes, Tess, rather than write an interesting episode, accepts expulsion! (See next col.)

## Her Great Refusal

TESS TRELAWNEY made such a quiet entry into Study No. 12 shortly after the midday dinner, it went almost unnoticed by Form captain Betty Stanton and others.

A heavy downpour of rain had "stopped play," and as Betty & Co. were enjoying a session of lively chatter.

Tess received a charming nod or so, but there was no pause in the talk—to hear anything she might have to say.

Nor did anyone read in her looks a sign that she was at all upset. There was nothing unusual in her then entering—finding somewhere to lounge in the crowded study and listening, hardly ever adding herself to the lively discussion which took place there.

But suddenly, during a chance pause in the talk, Tess spoke.

"I may as well tell you," she said, "I'm going to be expelled!"

All eyes were instantly upon her. For a moment or so no one spoke. But there was a very noticeable air. Some girls were bounding up from their chairs.

Folly, who always favoured the table edge as a perch, appeared to fall off it with a better, as a dainty fellow when its edge is dropped. And ducky Nansie Nabara, just then exploring the corner cupboard's shelves, came out of that private lair like a shot out of a gun.

"Tess?" was the general gasp at last.

"Expelled!"

"Yes."

"But—but— Expelled—you?" the incredulous chorus went on. "Why! What on earth for?"

"That's what I don't quite like having to tell you," she said solemnly. "It might not be fair."

"Yes, fair to whom?" Betty curiously inquired. "By us or to yourself, Tess? Oh, come on!"

"Yes, Tess! Don't be gray!" she was called at. "When we're all your friends!"

"And out here is any injustice, am we fully well got on strike about our quest?" shrieked Nansie. "Everybody! Hang up for a strike on—"

"You," Folly cried, "what up, kid! Go on, Tess! For this is simply—"

"Incredibly, you, neither, but Jove!" sighed pretty Paula Crowl. "And it takes morcovites!"

"I suppose I've got to tell you," Tess began, looking a little upset. "Only I—"

There was a sudden interrupting tap at the door.

"Excuse me," pleaded parlormaid Ellen, as her pretty head came round the door. "But is Miss Tess—"

"Yes, here I am?"

"Oh, ruin, will you then report to the headmistress at once?"

"Right to—"

Again, Tess—as the cool calm girl of them all. She walked out—to follow the parlormaid up the corridor, leaving behind a batch of chums utterly appalled by this great sensation.

"Tess—then Tess—to be expelled! Not some girl or other who always had been 'difficult,' insolent, getting into disgrace time after time—but Tess, the ineffable—the law-abiding!"

Tess—with all her talents and not an ounce of toadyism in her make-up!

"Look it, I'm off to find out!"

That was Betty—for next speaking as wildly as headstrong Folly Linton, she rushed away—with the approving

glance of all the other juniors coming after her.

"Yes, Betty—do! And come back here as soon as you know! We'll be here!"

She was caught up with Tess, to whom she spoke not a word, but simply let a smile explain. Said Tess unconcernedly:

"You'd better not!"

"Oh, yes!" Betty then insisted. "But I'll wait outside for just a minute, Tess, in case it's to be all right after all, as I hope."

"It won't be that!" was the grim prediction.

Soon enough, when Betty had hung about in the downstairs passage that served Miss Somersfield's private rooms, for a couple of minutes after Tess had "reported," it began to look as if the interview would not have a happy ending.

Betty had not deliberately posted herself so as to overhear what was being said, but she was bound to mark how the headmistress, now and then, was slightly raising a voice that usually spoke so gently.

So, at last, Betty marched up to the analogous door and tapped. Without waiting for any "Come in!" she let herself into the room, and her determined mood was such that a reproving stare from Miss Somersfield took no effect. Betty walked forwards, beginning abruptly:

"About Tess, please, Miss Somersfield! An captain—"

"Very well, then, Betty: as captain—you may say. I only wish," Miss Somersfield sighed on, "that an captain you had been able to influence Tess, so that she would not be before me now. But perhaps she has not told you anything?"

"Only that she is to be expelled! And that, Miss Somersfield, seems to us, who see Tess' best chance, unthinkable!"

"If a girl will be as obstinate, Betty—as defiant as Tess is being to-day—she must go! How sorry I am, you may imagine. But to any clash between scholar and headmistress, there can be only one conclusion, if authority is to be upheld. And you know it must be, Betty!"

"But what has she done?"

"Firstly, Betty, this girl has refused to answer for her conduct in last evening, after looking time—we late looked that Miss Merrick felt bound to report the matter to me. You saw you will see something serious enough in that. But there is much—much more besides."

Betty, as Miss Somersfield passed, gazed in consternation at Tess, who stood like a prisoner at the bar when the case has been patiently tried and there is only one sentence to be pronounced. Guilty!

"You know what happened yesterday afternoon at the Cliffside Zigzag," Miss Somersfield said to Betty, after a long pause. "I have since ordered Tess Trelawney to write a letter, apologizing to Miss Fender's brother for the disgraceful display of temper—"

"That?" Betty ejaculated. "So that's what it is about! But, Miss Somersfield, oh, it was more by accident than—than intention—if Tess—"

"No, Betty—no! I have all the facts. Tess herself has been unable to deny that she flew into a rage about—nothing! For it should be nothing that she had dropped her palette by accident. Yet, even when he was wanting to pick up everything for her—feeling so sorry, I am sure—she flew at him like that—knocked him down! So I ordered Tess to apologize. She was to bring me the letter by half-past twelve for me to approve it. Now it is twenty to one, and Tess has not brought me that letter—has not even attempted to write it!"

Betty faltered across in tragic-looking Tess, taking her extraordinarily by the arm.

"Tess, dear! Oh, you will—"

"No!"

"You see," Miss Somersfield sadly commented on Tess's refusal and the shaking off of Betty's hand, "I am left with no alternative. Tess now understands, she must pack and go—She knows, too, that as soon as she has come to her senses and is ready to have authority, then I shall be only too glad to have her back."

"Miss Somersfield," Betty said imploringly, dividing to stand in front of the implacable headmistress, "can there be now a few hours before anything is done? Can I have a chance? I mean, perhaps—"

"I understand perfectly well what you mean, Betty, and I appreciate the intention. Well, there is still five o'clock this afternoon. Take Tess away with you now. And, Tess Trelawney, if ever you have valued Betty as a friend, as well as your captain, now is the time to—"

"Oh!" Tess cried out, with sudden wildness. "In those say need to add that? It might just as well be said that I don't realize what a—what a ripping headmistress you've always been! And Miss Merrick, my Form-mistress—"

"There it is then. Why not—"

"As it happens—no!"

Miss Somersfield could not be expected to like such an answer. She would say no more, but gave a "Take her away!" sign to Betty, who was next moment outside the room with Tess.

"You can do as she has asked, Tess!"

"No, I can't!"

"But why not? Whatever your reason for not liking to apologize, is it worth—"

"Yes, it is!"

"Expulsion, Tess!"

"I don't care. And do leave me alone, and go, Betty!" The wild outcry was raised in such a tone as evidenced Tess' painful regard for the old friendship. "It's what you can tell them all, upstairs; to me, my reason seems more than good enough."

"You're coming up to the study, though?"

"I'm not. I'm only going upstairs to get packed!"

And Tess, shaking off the captain's restraining hand a second time, dashed ahead, turned a corner, and was gone!

Miss "False-heart"

**A** GIRL to be—expelled! It was all over the school before the gang went for dinner. At every Form table in the great dining-hall there was excited whispering, which those in charge pretended not to notice.

Afterwards, every a study filled up for a great chattering about the day's sensation.

Everybody, by now, knew that it was, of all girls—Tess Trelawney! Everybody knew that it was a case of a "clash" between headmistress and scholar. But, as usual, there were girls to come rushing in with what might be called the "latest."

So, at one moment it was being asked, had this or that bunch of chatters heard that Tess would not be able to go home, because her parents were laid away and the house was closed? Had they heard that Tess would have to go to stay with her Aunt Pembroke, in Harrogate? ("What, Harrogate?") Fresh sensation!

Then there was a breathless reporting, from time to time, of what Study No. 12 was doing about it all—so trying to do.

The captain—she had been asked to get up a petition, begging Tess off. And the captain had said that there wouldn't be the slightest sense in doing a thing like that.

Many whispers in all the studies ran the wisdom of Betty's ruling. It was not a case for petitioning for democracy. What Study No. 12 had to do, whilst the time was running out, was to bank

down Tess' own obduracy, if it could. But Study No. 12 couldn't.

One reason was that Tess had even declined to go to Study No. 12 to talk things over with her best chums. So they had gone to her, the whole crowd, where she was indignantly getting packed. And then Polly Linton had upset herself, and everybody else, by "going" for Tess and calling her a fool. It had been a big blow-up, for Tess would not stand that sort of thing. Later on—at the half-past three dinner, when school was over for the day—Betty was seen to be going off on her bicycle, full pet.

Instantly it was inferred that, at this last hour, so it almost was, the Form captain was resorting to some desperate expedient. It must be on account of Tess that Betty was off and away like that!

And girls who spoke to this effect were right.

Betty ended her furious bit of "biking" at a roadside gateway, forming the entrance to Cliffside Harrogate. She ran to the porch, unlocked a larger as a key, and was next minute being shown in to Miss Fender, in the bright sitting-room.

All that was so sweet and gracious about this very pretty girl of nineteen impressed itself more than ever upon Betty the moment she entered. She, Betty, had recently been involved in one wild scene after another, and now suddenly she was here, in this tranquil room, and Miss Fender was saying kindly:

"Do sit down, dear! So glad to see you again! You'll let me give you some tea, won't you?"

"Oh, no—no, thank, Miss Fender, it's like this," Betty went straight to the point. "In about an hour's time, unless something can be done, Tess is to leave Harrogate as an expelled girl. But, Miss Fender, I'm sure you don't want such a thing to happen!"



VERY calmly Tess took the note from Miss Fender and tore it across and across. So much for Miss Fender's letter of sympathy! Full well Tess knew that this other girl was glad that she had been expelled!





things to hinder your sketching down there on the shore? Why should he?"

"And to that question Tom would have been forced to answer:

"I don't know!" She really didn't know. But—the moment to have a good try at finding out!

Meanwhile, she looked like being led a miserable life by Aunt Penelope.

A cross-grained governess who never had been able to see, Aunt Penelope was not wishing the prospect of having to provide a home for Tom during the next week or two, until Tom's own parents returned to their own house.

Once and once again, already, Tom had heard her ably aunt saying that she didn't think she was going to have an easy time!

"What your parents will think of you, my girl, it is not for me to say. But I know what I think! Miss Fothergill has told me everything, and I consider it disgraceful of you! So, mind, while you're under my roof, you'll be up at six every morning, and you'll do the things a maid would do for me—if I kept one."

Aunt Penelope never kept a maid, for the simple reason that no maid would stay more than a week.

"And not a penny pocket-money, Tom—understand that!"

There was that same coaxing voice now, calling up the stairs:

"Tom—Tom! What are you doing up there in your room? Come down this instant!"

"All right, aunt!"

"It isn't all right! How can it be, all right, when here it's gone over, and I've said I like my room at eight! Perhaps next time I'm going to cook and do, with you about the place like that! You, with not a word to say for yourself, as your headmistress told me!"

Tom went down, not to get upstairs again until after tea that night. Nag, nag, nag! She in the kitchen, washing up the supper things and getting ready for the morning; and Aunt Penelope, in the villa's dining-room—complaining next of the time.

Tom, going to bed at last, was still smiling to himself, if a little grumpy. In his room she was to sleep to-night, instead of in the old dormitory at St. Mary's. Alas, when there used to be here many dear cousins and schoolmates with whom to exchange a last yawn "Night!" And yet she could keep smiling.

Ah, but this other life, although it might be going to prove hard and dreary, would take in one tremendous compensation.

How could there fail to be better chances than school life offered, of finding out more about the Fenders?

Determined to keep on the right side of her aunt, down she went next morning, two hours before that astute lady. She, Tom, dressed herself for getting through no more work before breakfast, and then serving such a nice breakfast punctual to the minute. But there was only half-dressing. She was shown a jerk. "Clean! Call that clean!"

And at eleven, just before Aunt Penelope was going out for a run in her baby car, she came to inspect the kitchen.

"I want to see how you are keeping the sink, Tom. Those taps—brighter than that for me?"

Alas at last in this brand-new villa on the outskirts of Harrogate, Tom fell around on a nice work before breakfast, at the same time waiting to all the cooking.

Dinner was quite ready at one o'clock, as she had been told it must be; but

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**MY DEAR READERS,**

Rain . . .  
And, after such an impressive opening, I shall simply have to begin a fresh paragraph, if only to preserve the credence of the first line! Not that it needed much thinking out. It is the first thing that strikes one on looking from the office window. (On looking out of the office window it is the first thing that strikes one literally.)

As I resumed before—Rain! It has been leaping down in seriously wild showers all the morning. I can scarcely imagine that there is any more water left in the clouds—and yet it still comes down. There is a vast grey pall over London, and the City weeps.

**COST.**

It's snug enough in my office, however. The fire crackles merrily and throws a cheerful glow on walls and ceiling.

My pipe is drawing slowly, sending meek little spirals of blue smoke rolling upwards, and from an adjoining office I can hear Gusty juggling with cups and saucers—sure sign that tea is on the way!

Meanwhile, it continues to rain. The streets begin to resemble rivers. Umbrellas bob busily up and down on the pavement, keeping up and unfastening themselves from each other on crowded corners. And every passing car has its fussy little wind-screens wiped jerkily clearing its fan-shaped portion of glass.

**RAIN IS NEWS!**

I can imagine the printers in the great newspaper buildings in Fleet Street blowing the dust off some of their favourite headlines: "LONDON'S DOWNPOUR," "RAIN HOLDS UP SPORT," "THAMES ABOVE NORMAL LEVEL," "FEAR OF FLOODS," and so on.

To-morrow, of course, we shall have the usual spate of letters from "Retired Colonel," and "Yvesport" about the weather of to-day and how much hotter it was fifty years ago, and it is the fault of the columns!

Isn't it a grand thought? Don't you imagine "Retired Colonel"—and of you, twirling his moustache—after having bowed his family with his views on modern weather till they will no longer listen—sitting down at his desk and beginning fearfully: "Sir,—The modern weather conditions contemplated by the dewspereers of the last few days are undoubtedly due to disturbance of the ether by wireless waves, etc., etc."

**DREAM OF VENICE.**

Personally, I shan't be in the best surprised if I have to go home from the office to-night by Highbury or public-transport.

And tonight's thought—there ought to be a chance to get some good fables from the roof of Flimsey House!

(Momentary vision of promise floating gracefully up Farringdon Street, accompanied by goblins and "O Sole Mio.")

with portly City Gentlemen reclining inside!

A pleasing thought, I must admit, and one with a great deal of possibility. We could have a water carnival, with high-diving off the roof of Flimsey House and surf-board riding up and down Farringdon Street. We might even, if it went as nothing long enough—

But it won't. It's stopped. There's actually a patch—a very small patch—of blue sky showing.

Which is, perhaps, a little disappointing, although, on second thoughts, I feel that a dry London has several compensations.

Goats, for instance, has just brought in my afternoon tea, and I've now that wouldn't have happened under the conditions we've been visualising. Gusty would have been scripping life on passing steamer or else fishing with a tent pole!

And now, as the rain has stopped, we may as well leave discussing it and turn to the rest of next week's story programme. Shall we? Let's!

**NEXT SATURDAY'S ISSUE WILL CONTAIN:**

"THE SCOTS GIRL'S SILVER," a brilliant, long complete story of Old House School, written by Hilda Richards. As you'll guess, it features Joan Cartwright, and as I can imagine you're fond of her, you may wish to read the story. Forgive me also, as I can promise you that you are in for a treat.

"WHEN MOOROVIC EXPULSED HER!" by Marjorie Stanton. Tom Trelkway, one-time artist of the Fourth, now in disgrace as an expelled Maroonian, is plunged into a whirlpool of amazing adventures which lead her to—what? Don't miss next week's vital chapters of this vivid new story.

"HAPPY-GO-LUCKY LULU"—so happy and so lucky and so lively as ever. Look out for her in another sparkling complete fantasy next Saturday.

"MISS MYSTERY" OF CARNIVAL LARK," by Elizabeth Chester, is approaching the dramatic climax, so as to no account miss next week's five chapters of a story that has proved immensely popular.

"OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS," edited in sparkling fashion by your one-and-only Patricia, provides you with a host of articles that are packed with ideas and entertainment.

Don't miss so many good things! Order your Schoolbags right away. Oh—and one more item of news that'll excite you:

In the near future I shall have an announcement to make concerning a fine new Educational feature. Look out for this special " scoop "!

With best wishes,  
YOUR EDITOR.

(Continued on following page)

