

There are many dramatic happenings
at Cliff House School because of

“THE SPLIT IN STUDY 3!”

THE SCHOOLGIRL

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EVERY 2nd SATURDAY

Incorporating
“SCHOOLGIRLS’ OWN”



**LEILA WASN'T
DECEIVED, BUT—**

Lorna's fake tears were for the
benefit of the newcomer.

See this week's magnificent Babs & Co.
story.

A Dramatic, Stirring Long Complete Story of Cliff House School, with Barbara Redfern & Co. and two popular chums well to the fore.

The SPLIT *in* STUDY 3!



By
**HILDA
RICHARDS**

Illustrated by T. LAIDLER.

A Good Turn, Or—?



"READY, Bessie?"
"Yes, rather! I—I only just want to finish putting this film in, you know" fat Bessie Bunter puffed. "There! It—it's all right now."

"You ready, Mabs?"
"Just!" Mabel Lynn laughed, and slipped her camera into its case. "I've got everything, I think. Bringing an extra roll of films, Babs?"

"What do you think?" Barbara Redfern, the pretty, blue-eyed captain of Cliff House's Fourth Form, said. "Of course! Light's good. We ought to get some decent snapshots to-day. Only

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hope," she went on thoughtfully, "the Fourth bags a prize in the amateur photographic exhibition! Everybody's off taking photos, I should say," she added, standing in the doorway of Study No. 4 gazing out into the Fourth Form corridor.

Everybody, apparently, was—at least, those girls who had cameras were. To-day was a half-holiday at Cliff House, and, to judge by the looks of things, Cliff House was camera-crazy.

A regular procession of girls, all armed with cameras tripods, or other photographic impedimenta, was tramping gaily towards Big Hall and the sunlit open air to which it led.

"Lo, Babs! Tomboy Clara Trevlyn greeted cheerily, as she swung down the corridor with her two study chums, Marjorie Hazeldene and Janet Jordan. "Taking snaps?"

"What do you think?" Babs countered.

"Where are you going?" Clara asked. "Ah!" Babs winked. "Now, if I told

you, you'd know the best spot for a snap, wouldn't you? Anyway, I don't mind. We're going along to Pegg to photograph the new destroyer in the bay. Where are you off to?"

"Oh, just down-river!" Clara vaguely returned. "Thought we'd take a boat out and see what's to be snapped as we go along. Hallo, Bess! Wouldn't like to come along with us and fall in the river just to give us a good snap?" she added hopefully.

"Rats! You go and eat coke!" plump Bessie said disdainfully.

"And we," gurgled Babs, "will snap you doing it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Clara sniffed. With her two chums she strode on. Rosa Rodworth, accompanied by Frances Frost and Jane Mills, tripped along. Rosa, whose father was a millionaire, carried a most expensive contraption done up in a suede case which had real silver fittings. She paused.

"Hallo!" she said. "If you're thinking of going in for the photographic competition, forget it! I'm on the trail!"

"Such modesty!" sighed Babs. "And what, maybe, are you going to do, Rosa?"

"Oh, we're hiring a fast car!" Rosa said airily. "I'm going to shoot scenes as we go along. This camera," she added importantly, "will take pictures up to a thousandth of a second. Cost my father no end of money."

"Well, so did mine, you know!" Bessie Bunter glowered, displaying a rather shabby box camera. "This cost ten-and-six, you know, and it was second-hand at that!"

Rosa grinned. "Looks about ten-hundredth-hand to me! Sure it wasn't the original model Julius Cæsar brought over with him, Bess?"

Bessie looked superior. "Now you're being ignorant!" she said. "Anybody knows that cameras weren't invented in Julius Cæsar's time, otherwise they'd have taken a picture of the Battle of Hastings! Well, blessed if I see what there is to cackle at in that!" she said indignantly. "Just you wait till you see my pictures!"

"We will!" Rosa chuckled. "And I only hope, dear old fat Bess, we survive the sight! Come on, kids! We've got to hire that car."

And Rosa and her friends strolled off. Babs dimpled. There was a light of excitement in her own eyes now. She was glad to see such whole-hearted eagerness and enthusiasm in the Fourth. Surely, among all the photographic experts which Cliff House School had so suddenly produced, there should be one prizewinner?

It was a good scheme. To be sure, the amateur photographic exhibition had not been organised by Cliff House. It had been organised, in fact, by the Courtfield Art Society.

Every girl who had a camera of any description in Junior School had already entered for the junior section of the competition, and everybody who had not a camera was working with a will to help those who had.

But both Mabs and Bessie were ready then—Bessie, taking the event with her usual ponderous seriousness, almost weighed down with the tackle which was strung around her. Bessie's camera, very large and out of date, bulged upon her fat hip like an over-weighted cash-box.

In Bessie's hand was a roll of maps, and on the plump duffer's other hip was a haversack containing all sorts of useless odds and ends. Bessie also carried a tripod which she had dug up from somewhere, and the fact that it did not fit her camera or anyone else's made no difference to its importance in Bessie's list of photographic requirements.

"Well, come on!" Babs cried, shutting her study door. "Hallo, here's Leila!" she added, and smiled. "Going to try your expert hand?"

Leila Carroll, the tall American junior from Study No. 3, along with her bright-eyed, black-haired, little French chum, Marcelle Biquet, stopped. Very cheery did Leila look, her brand-new and frightfully up-to-date cine-camera slung from one shoulder. But she shook her head.

"I guess not," she said.

"But you're going to take photographs?" Babs asked.

"Sure, we're going to take photographs," Leila replied, "but not for your old exhibition. We've other fish to fry, haven't we, Marcelle?"

"Ah, oui!" little Marcelle nodded

animatedly. "We make ze films," she explained. "We take ze so beautiful pictures of ze places of interest all around ze school to show when we get to Paris. I buy ze film; Leila do ze operations. Leila—she am ze expert. I take only ze snap with my little camera of ze still life."

"Sounds fine!" Mabs grinned. "But what does it all mean when it is interpreted?"

Marcelle made a little grimace. She was very, very sweet, and frightfully clever, too. But Marcelle, being French, had not yet so completely mastered the English language that she could string sentences together lucidly, and given more than half a dozen words to say at a time, she was rather liable to become involved. But Leila, good and understanding chum as she was, always knew exactly what her little French chum was driving at.

"Well, I guess the big brain-wave is this," she said. "You see, Marcelle's people are holding a party in Paris on Friday to celebrate the conferring of a professorship on Marcelle's brother, Alphonse. No end of a swell affair it's going to be, too, from all accounts. Marcelle's invited over, of course, and little me, as Marcelle's pal, is going with her."

"Lucky things!" Bessie said enviously.

Very different types of girl were Leila Carroll, the American junior, and petite Marcelle Biquet from France—but what wonderfully good chums! Excitedly they were looking forward to their short holiday with Marcelle's parents; enthusiastically they joined in the photographic craze at Cliff House, until—one girl set out to smash the happy friendship between the two. Why?

"And so, just to give the old folks in Paris an idea of what Cliff House and district is like, we're shooting a few of the familiar old scenes before we go," Leila explained. "Marcelle's taking some ordinary snaps"—with a glance at the French girl's little camera; "I'm doing the movie stuff. Good idea, I guess?"

"Topping!" Babs applauded, and smiled; for Babs had a whole-hearted admiration for Leila's photographic work, Leila being easily the most expert amateur camera enthusiast in the Fourth Form. "Pretty exciting trip to look forward to, too—a whole week-end in Paris. Suppose there's room for no more guests, Marcelle?"

"Ah, non!" Marcelle sighed. "I would like to take all my friends, but mon pere—he say only one. Ze reception is so big already, ze hotel have ze great difficulty in finding room for all ze guests. But now we must go," she added, beaming. "To-day we take ze film of Monks' Folly, and I am so ver' excited. Leila—she take already seventy feet of ze film, and we haf thirty more feet to go before ze reel is complete. You come, Babs?"

"Well, as far as gates," Babs laughed. Off they marched. They reached the top of the stairs which led down to Big Hall. And then Babs paused.

"Hallo, what's the matter?" Need for the question. For Big Hall was thronged. Clara & Co., Rosa & Co., Lydia Crossendale and her chum, Peggy Preston, and the Terraine Twins from the Fourth were all there. There was also a good sprinkling of the Lower and Upper Fifth, several Third Formers, and even two or three of the Second. And to judge from their

mutters and the glowering looks upon their faces something was wrong.

"Something up," Mabs decided, not very cleverly. "And something, by the looks of it, on the notice-board."

That was true. With a little frown Babs stepped down. She was greeted by a clamour.

"I say, it's a bit thick!"

"Too utterly thick!"

"Babs, do you know anything about it?"

"Well, wait a minute, ninnies; let's have a look what it says," Babs countered, and pushed her way forward. "Oh my hat!" she exclaimed, as she read the notice which was provoking all the excitement.

For that notice, to say the least of it, was disturbing. A little dampening, too.

It was a typed notice, signed by Miss Penelope Primrose, the headmistress of Cliff House. It said:

"NOTICE.

"A very serious complaint has been lodged by Mr. Aubrey Nicholls, of Nicholls' Nurseries, Friardale. Mr. Nicholls declares that at ten minutes to two yesterday afternoon some Cliff House girl deliberately hurled two stones through the windows of one of his greenhouses, damaging some very rare

and expensive orchids; the damage is computed at twenty pounds. The girl responsible is hereby ordered to report to me without delay.

(Signed) PENELOPE PRIMROSE,
"Headmistress."

Babs looked apprehensive. She foresaw trouble. Farmer Nicholls, of Nicholls' Nurseries, was the most bad-tempered landowner in the district, with a distinct dislike of all girls, and girls belonging to Cliff House School in particular.

One of the few spots put out of bounds in the five-mile radius in which Cliff House girls were allowed to roam was his nurseries.

Many times in the past had there been war between Farmer Nicholls and the school; many the number of the girls who had been reported. A dangerous, unreasonable man to oppose was Farmer Nicholls, and now that he had something against Cliff House, not the sort to relinquish his case without a great deal of unpleasantness.

"H'm!" Babs said. "Sounds serious. Anybody here know anything about it?"

"Well, of course we don't," Margot Lantham retorted indignantly.

"Nobody been near old Nicholls' place?"

"We wouldn't jolly well go there if he paid us to go," Diana Royston-Clarke sniffed. "Old grump!"

There was some grumbling, some mutters; but seeing that the sunshine outside was still insistently calling, the girls broke up then and went their separate ways. With Marcelle and Leila and Clara and Marjorie and Janet, Babs & Co. tramped down to the gates. There they parted.

"Well, good hunting!" Leila cried.
 "Same to you!" Babs laughed. "Mind you get something good, Leila. And steer clear," she added, "of Nicholls' Nurseries!"

"You're telling us!" Leila chuckled.

"Come on, Marcelle."
 Marcelle beamed. With a gay wave of her hand she bade good-bye to Babs & Co., turning off down the road. Leila tucked little Marcelle's arm into her own. Marcelle's face was radiant.

"Oh, I am so ver' happy," she sighed. "Is it not a jolly day for ze pictures, Leila? We go to ze Folly first, yes?"

"I guess so. And after that we'll go along to the old coastguard station and get a shot or two of that," Leila said. "Then there's the Fishermen's Rest on the bank near Sarmouth—that always makes a good picture, I figure. Soon use up your hundred feet of film, Marcelle," she added, with a grin.

"Nevaire mind; I buy more when he is gone," Marcelle said. "I—voila! It is my name I hear, n'est ce pas?"

Her name it was. It came from behind Marcelle, accompanied by the sound of running feet.

The two chums wheeled. Leila frowned a little as she saw the girl speeding towards them. A rather tall, plump-faced girl, with her dark hair done in a big plait down her back.

"Lorna Millerchip," Leila muttered. "What does she want with you, Marcelle?"

They waited. Leila looked impatient. She did not like Lorna Millerchip, niece of Miss Bullivant, and the newest girl in the Fourth. Not many girls in that Form, as a matter of fact, did like her. When Lorna had arrived at the school a few weeks ago she had not made exactly the best of impressions, though, to be sure, she had been very quiet and had kept very much to herself since then.

Now, breathless with running, she came up, panting as she held a letter out towards Marcelle.

"Oh, phoo!" she laughed. "Poof! I'm winded. But, Marcelle, this came just as you went out—"

"A letter for me?" Marcelle cried eagerly.

"And—and— Oh dear, I'm all out of breath—and I thought it might be urgent so—so I thought I should bring it along right away," Lorna gasped.

Marcelle looked at her. Her piquant little face melted into a smile. Very tender-hearted was Marcelle—and most extraordinarily touched by any little service which was done for her. She dimpled.

"That was ver', ver' kind of you, Lorna," she said softly. "I am grateful—immense. But ze lettre!" she cried.

"La, la! It is from Shimmy!"

"Shimmy" was Marcelle's peculiar way of referring to Jemima Carstairs, her studymate, more commonly known as Jimmy. Jemima, at the moment, was away on special leave at her home in Yorkshire.

Eagerly Marcelle slit open the letter. Lorna simpered, gazing at Leila as though to say, "Isn't she an excited thing?" But the gaze Leila returned was unresponsive.

Leila neither liked nor trusted Lorna, and Leila, though she had as much sympathy in her make-up as any girl at Cliff House, had not the soft, melting, unsuspecting character of little Marcelle. Marcelle suddenly broke in with a laugh.

"Foolish Shimmy," she said. "She have left her so precious set of monocles in ze study, and she asks zat I shall send zem on. It was not so important, after all, eh?" she added. "But it was ver', ver' sweet of you, Lorna, to so exhaust yourself running after me."

Lorna flushed.

"Oh, that's all right!" she mumbled.

"I—I only thought it might be important. You see"—hesitantly—"it arrived the very moment you went out."

"The postman brought it, I guess?"

Leila asked keenly.

"Why, yes, of course."

"Funny," Leila commented. "There isn't a post about this time—not for another hour or so."

Lorna flushed.

"I—I know," she said quickly. "But—but he said, you know, that somehow he had overlooked it. He made a special journey to bring it back."

Leila looked at her—harder still this time. If she was an American girl, she was well enough acquainted with English customs to know that postmen did not do that. And she was remembering now that Lorna had been hanging about the school steps when the postman had arrived that morning; had been the first to accost him, and had, in fact, taken the school's letters from him.

Easy enough then for Lorna to have abstracted Marcelle's letter and held it back, though why was a question which Leila could not answer. She said sharply:

"Sure?"

"Well, yes, of course I'm sure," Lorna pouted. "Really, Leila, if you're going to be suspicious—"

Marcelle anxiously shook her head.

"Leila—she not suspicious," she said, and gazed at her chum. "Leila, like me, is ver', ver' grateful that you have done the so-good turn, Lorna. Zank you. I loff you for it. Both of us loff you for it. Is zat not so, Leila?"

Leila emitted a sound that was almost like a grunt.

"Oh, yes—no—I—I suppose so! Anyway, let's get on," she said impatiently. "We'll never get to Monks' Folly at this rate."

Lorna beamed.

"Ah, oui!" Marcelle said.

"Then—then could I come with you?" Lorna asked eagerly. "You see, I want to take a snap of the place. Leila, you don't mind?" she added.

Leila shrugged her shoulders.

"Well, please yourself," she said, a little off-handedly. "If it's all right with Marcelle, I guess it's O.K. with me. Anyway, let's get going."

She turned impatiently. But Marcelle, her face suddenly clouding, stood still. She looked at Lorna, who, with a regretful shake of the head, sighed. Then she caught Leila by the arm.

"Leila, zat is not like you," she said. "Do you not wish Lorna to come? Is that it?"

Leila hesitated, her face crimsoning. But before she could answer, Lorna stepped forward.

"Marcelle, dearest," she said sweetly, "don't worry. You can see that Leila doesn't want me, and—and I should hate to come between friends. I'll go."

"Non, non!" Marcelle cried.

"Marcelle, please!" Lorna smiled again; but it was a tremulous smile, and it was a smile accompanied by those ready tears of Lorna's. "I—I'll go!" she muttered hastily. "I—I'm sorry now that—that I interrupted your walk, but I did feel that letter was important. Please, Marcelle. Good-bye!"

"Lorna!" Marcelle cried, starting towards Lorna.

But Lorna, with a little sob, had turned on her heels and fled back towards the school.

"No Longer My Friend!"



FOR a moment Marcelle stood, still troubled, looking after the running

figure. Leila, who had rather impatiently strode on a few paces, turned.

"Marc—" she began, and then blinked. "Geel! Where's Lorna?"

"Lorna haf gone," Marcelle said. "Gone? But—" And then Leila, beginning to understand, stared.

"Oh!" she added, and looked at Marcelle. "I guess it was just as well," she said, obvious relief in her tone. "Let's hike, kiddie!"

Marcelle looked at her. It was a strange look. Marcelle really and truly adored Leila Carroll, who, with Jemima Carstairs, was her greatest chum.

But Marcelle had been touched to the depths of her soft, sensitive nature by the effort which Lorna had made to deliver her letter, and Marcelle, unsuspecting, attributed to that no other motive than Lorna's anxiety for her own welfare.

"Lorna wished to come," she said slowly.

Leila sniffed.

"Well, I guess it looks like it if she runs away at the first opportunity. Anyway, let's get going!"

"It is not ver' kind to leave her," protested Marcelle.

"Well, dash her, if she bunks is that our fault?" demanded Leila. "Come on!"

Marcelle sighed. She fell in beside Leila. But her face was no longer radiant or animated. It was shadowed.

Leila said nothing for a few moments. The two walked on in silence. It was a silence of constraint; of—on Marcelle's part—a little resentment. Leila sensed that, and being Leila, the blunt and honest who hated mysteries, she had to come out with:

"Marcelle, what's buzzing in your bonnet?"

"No bonnet haf I," Marcelle said.

"Well, I mean what have you got on your mind, Lorna?"

Marcelle nodded.

"Sort of feel we've let her down?"

"Yes. She was ver' kind," Marcelle added; and then she gazed up at Leila with those big eyes of hers.

"Leila, mon amie, you were not ze kind Leila I loff!" she said simply.

"Lorna, it iss ze heart of her you have broke!"

"Oh, stuff!" said Leila. "You're just a simple little chump, Marcelle!"

"It is not zat you like Lorna?" Marcelle persisted.

"No," Leila replied, a little shortly.

"Why is eet zat you do not like her?"

"Because," Leila broke out, "she's not honest—sincere. I'm sorry, but you will have it, Marcelle. I don't know what her game is, but I figure that letter delivering was just a fix-up."

"But why," Marcelle asked, with some resentment, "should it be ze—ze what you say, fix-up?"

"I don't know," Leila said, rather more shortly than she intended. "But I tell you, I just don't trust the girl. Anyway, let's forget her."

Marcelle found it hard to forget, however. Marcelle felt that she was in Lorna Millerchip's debt. In silence they strode on.

But as it was impossible for Marcelle to be morose or sulky for any length of time—her vivacious little nature was all against it—she presently found herself tempted to speak. But

she carefully avoided the subject which was in the foreground of her thoughts. "We are nearly zere," she cried. "And see, Leila. Zere is Monks' Folly." "Sure, that's it," Leila said, relieved. "Pretty little snap, too, against the setting sun. Now, where shall we shoot it from?"

"From zere," Marcelle said, indicating a spot on her right. "Zere you haf the full picture."

But Leila, her expert eye sensitive to the best picture, shook her head.

"I'll say not. Too ordinary. Over there is the spot," she said; "then we get a good angle shot, I guess."

"Oh!" Marcelle pouted her disappointment. "You do not like ze suggestion I make?" she queried.

"Well, yes, O.K. in its way. But I guess we want the best picture we can get—"

"Zen surely," Marcelle persisted, displaying an argumentativeness usually foreign to her, "you haf ze best picture when you get ze whole of ze picture? Over zere it is boggy," she added.

"Boggy or not, we'll get the best angle from there," Leila persisted.

"Anyway, there's a footpath leading to the spot. Come on."

And Leila led the way.

Marcelle bit her lip a little. More reluctantly she followed. On another occasion Marcelle would have taken no notice of her own idea being swept aside, but somehow, Leila's rejection of it now had a hidden significance. Just a little dashed she felt as she followed her chum, more than a little subdued.

Leila hurriedly went on. In her mind's eye she could already see her picture. It was true, as Marcelle had pointed out, that the ground here was rather marshy; but there was a narrow, hard footpath leading towards the spot, and if one took care the marsh presented no difficulties. She had nearly reached the spot, when—

"Oh!" came a gasp behind her.

Leila swung round. Then she jumped. For Marcelle, trailing behind her, had apparently strayed from the path. Marcelle, one leg still on the dry path, was now wildly floundering with the other leg immersed up to the knee in thick, squelching mud.

"Oh, help, help!" Marcelle cried.

"Help, I am distress! I sink!"

Marcelle, never very cool at the best of times, had completely lost her head then. It looked, in her desperate effort to extricate herself, that she would pitch head first into the mud. Leila cried out:

"Marcelle, you chump, keep steady!"

"I sink!" shrieked Marcelle.

In a dozen lithe bounds Leila had reached her. She caught her by the shoulders. Then throwing one arm round her slim waist, she held her firm. With the other hand she caught the embedded leg, and with a squelch dragged it free.

"Whoops! There!" she panted. "Now you're all right. But how the Uncle Sam did you come to get in that mess?"

Marcelle, gazing with dismay at her mud-soaked stocking, looked on the verge of tears.

"I slip!" she cried. "Oh, see my so beautiful stocking!" she wailed.

"Sure looks a mess," Leila said sympathetically. "Still, thank goodness it was no worse."

"It is worse," Marcelle flared up. "I wanted not to come; you would insist. If you had but taken my suggestion you would not haf come!" she cried bitterly. "It is your fault!"

"Oh, golly!" Leila cried in dismay.

"Marcelle, old thing, steady on! I say, let me help wash that mess off!" she cried.

But Marcelle, the tears in her eyes now, waved her away. She knew she was being unfair, but her excitement at that moment would not allow her to be anything else. Leila had slighted Lorna, who had tried to do her a good turn, thus causing the first rift between them. Leila had disagreed with her suggestion for taking the picture—with this result.

"Non, non! I do it," she said.

Leila stood aside as Marcelle frantically dabbed with her handkerchief. Almost with a sob she finished.

"Zere," she said at last. "Now I am done. Zank you for pulling me out; but it would nevaire have happen if you had taken my advice. Now I go and wait where it is dry," she added. "You go and take your picture."

"But, Marcelle— Oh, golly!" Leila added in dismay.

For Marcelle had turned, and was making her way back.

Leila looked after her. Silly little Marcelle! It was enough to make her ratty, though. Never mind. Give her time to get over it and she would get over it. Meantime, this was about the one and only opportunity of shooting the film.

She went back. Preparing the cine-camera she took her shot—an excellent one in all truth, and one which Leila knew was going to be jolly, jolly good. When she rejoined her chum it was to find Marcelle already looking half-ashamed of herself.

"You come," she said with relief.

"Leila, I am ver' sorry. I am ze pig brute! You forgive?"

"Shucks! Let's say nothing about it," Leila laughed. "But now, what about your stocking? Seems to me," she added ruefully, "that the coast-

guard station is kyboshed for to-day. We'll get back to Pegg, I guess, and fix you with some new stockings. This way."

Marcelle fell into step beside her, her face relieved now, yet not altogether free from the shadow which had settled upon it. Back to Pegg they went; the new stockings were purchased, and Marcelle put them on there and then. They emerged from the shop just in time to meet the Courtfield bus.

"Wait, I have ze idea!" Marcelle cried. "Let us go to Courtfield. Zere we take ze shot of ze town, and I collect my so beautiful snapshots I left yesterday at the chemists."

Leila nodded. She was willing to fall in then with any whim of her little friend if it would restore Marcelle to her ordinary sunny good humour. They boarded the bus, and Leila paid the fares. She grinned at Marcelle, who was looking rather pre-occupied and thoughtful.

"Penny for 'em, Marcelle."

Marcelle sighed.

"Well, tuppence?" Leila said good-humouredly.

"It is nozzing," Marcelle said. "I zink only of Lorna."

"Oh!" Leila said, and shut her lips.

They said nothing else then. But Leila frowned a little.

Thanks to Lorna nothing had gone right that afternoon. Thanks to her there was still constrained differences between her and her little French chum. In the usual silence which had characterized most of their outing so far, Courtfield was reached. But Marcelle cheered again when, having received the films she had left to be developed and printed yesterday at the chemists, she rejoined her chum in the street.



MARCELE, gazing with dismay at her mud-soaked stocking, looked on the verge of tears. "Sure looks a mess," Leila said sympathetically. "Still, thank goodness it was no worse!" Marcelle glared up. "It is your fault!" she cried bitterly.

"Now we go somewhere and have ze cup of tea?" she said, delightedly. "Zen, Leila, you shall tell me how you like my snapshots. I haf ze lovely one of the entrance to ze school crypt. Perhaps I put him in ze exhibition—yes?"

"If it's good enough, I guess you ought," Leila said. "Come on, though. Let's have a squint over them together."

Marcelle eagerly nodded. She was beaming now. The hasty glance she had taken at her snapshots in the shop had pleased her, and more especially was she delighted by the one of the crypt. Into a near-by cafe they went, and while Leila ordered a pot of tea for two, Marcelle jubilantly produced her snaps.

"Zere," she said. "Look at him. Is he not good?"

Proudly she put the snapshot in front of the American girl.

Leila smiled as she gazed at it. At first casual glance the picture was good, but Leila's eye was not the usual uncritical eye. Leila, where photography was concerned, almost instinctively looked for faults. But she nodded.

"O.K.," she approved. "Good enough for ze exhibition?" Marcelle asked hesitantly.

Leila paused. "Yes?" Marcelle pressed—and then, as she saw the expression on her chum's face, her own changed. "You do not think him good enough for ze exhibition, 's she accused.

"Well, I guess it's quite a good snap," Leila stumblingly fenced.

"But not good enough for ze exhibition?" Marcelle insisted.

"Well—well—" Leila mumbled, trying to force the fib to her lips, but finding it impossible. "Well, not—not quite," she confessed. "You see, Marcelle—"

Marcelle sat very still. "What is wrong with him?"

"Well, nothing much, I guess," Leila felt hot. "It's a good snap in its way, but—but there are just one or two little faults. The definition for instance—"

Marcelle's eyes were big and wide. "You—you should have used a smaller aperture to get the full depth of the bricks, I figure," Leila went on.

"Yes," Marcelle said, in a strangled little voice.

"And if you had given it just a slightly longer exposure—"

"Yes," Marcelle said, in an even smaller voice.

"Well, that—that's all," Leila stumbled. "Here, I say, Marcelle—" For Marcelle's eyes were suddenly betraying tears—tears of mortification, of disappointment. Hastily she sought her handkerchief.

"Oh golly! Marcelle!" Leila cried in consternation.

"Non, non!" Marcelle sobbed. "Leila, you are horrid—horrid," she cried. "Everyzings I do you quarrel with. Lorna, ze folly—now it is my photo you insult. I zink," she added, gazing tragically at the American girl, "you are no longer my friend this afternoon. I go!"

"Marcelle, you cuckoo," Leila gasped.

"Plis!" Marcelle choked. And agitatedly she pushed back her chair and hurried towards the door. In a moment Leila was on her feet.

"Marcelle!" But the door had opened and shut. And Leila, realising, just in time, that somebody had to stop and pay the bill, stopped in utter, crimson-faced dismay. Oh gosh what a touchy little chump Marcelle was! And what a clumsy hurtful chump she was herself!

Clever Flattery!



"HALLO!" Barbara Redfern cried. "That's Marcelle getting on the bus, isn't it? Marcelle! I say, Marcelle!"

The scene was Courtfield Square, and Mabs, Babs, and Bessie, who had finished their snapping, had just emerged from the Memorial Hall where Bessie had been taking photographs from the roof. Bessie believed in being original, and the fact that she had taken two excellent pictures of a smoky chimney dismayed her not a bit. As she pointed out, with some truth, it was hardly likely that anyone else would have thought of such an idea.

"Marcelle!" cried Babs again. Marcelle, in the act of breathlessly climbing on that bus, looked round. For a moment Babs saw her white, distressed face. She paused for a moment, then abruptly turned and hurried on up the bus stairs. The chums blinked.

"Oh crumbs! I say, what's upset Marcelle?" Babs muttered.

"And where's Leila?" Mabs asked. They stood still for a moment. In that moment the bus started. They caught a glimpse of little Marcelle as she plumped down in her seat, a handkerchief to her face.

"Marcelle and Leila can't have had a row, surely?" Babs said.

"Oh, of course not!" Mabs said. The idea, somehow, was unthinkable; for, in their own way, Leila Carroll and Marcelle Biquet were as good friends as Babs and Mabs.

But Marcelle, at that moment, was inwardly breaking her heart. Very childish was Marcelle, for all her years. Marcelle hated rows in any shape or form, and the fact that she could have brought herself to the brink of a quarrel with her most loved chum was the thing that was hurting her far more than the cause of the quarrel itself.

Watched by the wondering conductor, she alighted at the gates of Cliff House. With her handkerchief clutched as a little damp ball in her hand, she hurried up the drive without looking to right or left.

Reaching her study, Marcelle thrust the door open, and then paused as a girl rose to meet her. The girl was Lorna Millerchip.

"You!" Marcelle cried.

"Marcelle!" Lorna smiled. "I—I just dropped in. But what's the matter?" she asked in surprised consternation. "Marcelle, you have been crying!"

"Eet is nozzings," Marcelle said.

"But, Marcelle—" And in a moment Lorna was at her side. "Oh, Marcelle, please! What is it?" she cried. "I hate to see you so upset!"

Marcelle gulped. "Eet is nozzing," she repeated, almost fiercely.

"Is it Leila?" Lorna asked.

Marcelle gave a stifled sob.

"Marcelle, is it?"

"Yes," Marcelle choked.

"Oh!" Lorna shook her head, but for a moment her eyes glowed with a strange light. Unseen by Marcelle, who was now sobbing into her moist handkerchief again, a wave of triumph swept over her features. "But surely you haven't quarrelled with Leila?" she added incredulously. "Leila and you are such good chums."

"Yes," Marcelle sobbed. "But I am ver' unhappy."

"Poor Marcelle," Lorna said. "But do cheer up, dear. Look, Marcelle—this is what I came to see you about.

I've a snap here I took in the gym, and you've come out wonderfully in it. There!" she said, and laughed as she produced the photograph and held it in front of the French girl's eyes. "What do you think of that?"

Marcelle gazed at it. Her lips quivered as the memory of the scene at the cafe swept over her.

"It looks good to me," she said. "But how am I to know? I am just ze ignorant one," she said bitterly.

"Nozzing do I know about ze taking of ze pictures. My definition—he am bad. Ze exposition—I get him wrong. I am what you call ze rotten picture taker."

"Oh, Marcelle, you're not. I think you take jolly good pictures," Lorna indignantly said.

"Do you?" Marcelle blinked up, that little flattery relieving her gloom. "But Leila, she say— Oh, I do not know! I show her zis—" and without pleasure she produced her snapshot of the crypt.

"Oh, let's look!" Lorna cried, with pretended eagerness. "But, I say, this is jolly good," she stoutly declared. "Ripping, in fact. My golly, I only wish mine came out like this! You know what I should do if I'd taken a photograph like this, Marcelle?"

"You would burn him!" Marcelle said rather bitterly.

"No, I jolly well shouldn't. I should put it in the exhibition!"

Marcelle looked at her. Her eyes glowed then.

"Leila say him not good enough for ze exhibition."

"Oh, well, Leila's talking through her hat—or just pulling your leg!" Lorna said comfortingly. "I suppose, because she knows so much about photography, she feels she can pick holes in other people's pictures. Anyway, Marcelle, don't be touchy about Leila. After all, she is your chum, you know. You don't want to be bad friends with Leila, do you?"

Marcelle sighed.

"No; I loff Leila," she said mournfully.

"And Leila, I'm sure, loves you!" Lorna laughed. "Now just forget it," she cried. "Look here, Marcelle, I'll tell you what! Let's get a jolly nice tea for Leila, and when she comes in behave as though nothing had happened? She's just a silly old chump, you know; I don't suppose for a moment she meant to hurt you. Let's both buckle to now and get a spread for her."

Marcelle's cheeks flushed. If she had had a good opinion of Lorna before, that opinion now soared by leaps and bounds. This was the girl Leila did not like and did not trust—this girl who was trying her utmost to be helpful and friendly. Her tender heart warmed towards her.

She rose. Inspired by Lorna's leadership, she dashed away her tears. Yes, it would be all right; everything would be all right now. Lorna laughed.

"You lay the table, Marcelle, and put the kettle on. I'll run down to the tuckshop and lay in some really lovely supplies. No, never mind the money; I've got plenty. We'll have everything just right by the time she comes back."

"Oh, Lorna, you are so ver' kind," Marcelle said gratefully.

"Stuff!" Lorna laughed.

And with that laugh on her lips she hurried out. But once she was alone in the corridor—

A rather crafty look came over Lorna Millerchip's face, and she chuckled.

"Little fool!" she muttered. "Silly, idiotic little fool! But how easy—how marvellously easy it is to get her to play my game for me! Lorna, old girl, you're going to win hands down!"

"SURE I didn't want to quarrel with Marcelle. I guess I don't know how it all happened. I only hope," Leila added anxiously, "that we'll find her O.K. when we get back to school. Think she'll have got over it, Babs?"

Barbara Redfern nodded, though not very convincingly.

She, Mabs, and Bessie, waiting for the next bus to take them back to school, had met Leila in Courtfield Square—Leila having paid the bill in the cafe and rushed after Marcelle, to find that she had already departed.

Naturally Babs had told her of what she and her chums had seen, and Leila, who had no secrets from those loyal chums, had given a brief account of what had transpired that afternoon. Now, together, they were bowling back in the bus towards Cliff House.

Babs was looking a little anxious. Like Leila, she neither liked nor

and she are going to Paris at the weekend?"

"Ah, oui!" Marcelle beamed. "We go to ze big party to celebrate ze great honour which is to be conferred upon my brozairo, Alphonse!"

"How nice!" Lorna sighed. "Wish I were you!" she said enviously. "I expect Leila's loving the idea?"

"Ah, yes," Marcelle laughed. "And Leila—she take ze film of ze interesting places round about, so that, besides ze party, we have also ze film show!"

"Jolly nice," Lorna said. "Mind that crumpet, Marcelle; you're burning it one side. Pretty expensive, though, isn't it—taking films, I mean? They cost a lot of money!"

"A ver' great lot," Marcelle agreed seriously. "But Leila, she not pay for ze film. I haf ze idea," she added. "I buy ze film, and Leila take ze pictures."

"Oh!" Lorna paused. "So it's really your film?"

put in anxiously. "Lorna haf been so kind and good, so generous! We all be so ver' happy and such good friends—yes?"

"Well, of course!" Babs laughed, and glanced at Leila, telegraphing a message with her eyes to fall in with Marcelle's whim. "Phew! Pate de foi gras sandwiches! My favourites!"

"And mine!" Marcelle said. "Lorna—she buy them."

Leila breathed hard, and then shrugged.

"Well, I guess it looks prime," she nodded, determined not to open the old wound. "And gee—am I hungry! Anything we can do?"

"Just sit down," Lorna said, "and enjoy yourselves. Marcelle and I have done all the work, haven't we, Marcelle? Used up the film yet?" she added to Leila.

"Why?" Leila asked. "Well, nothing. I—I was only just



LORNA leant across the table. "Would you like a crumpet, or a cake, Leila—dear?" she asked. "I bought them," she added, with a hint of mockery in her tone. Curtly Leila refused. She couldn't help it, even though she knew the girl was trying to make her appear churlish.

trusted Lorna Millerchip, and she sensed some motive in Lorna's conduct. But it was absurd, of course, to think that Leila and Marcelle should be at loggerheads for any length of time.

"Oh, it's just a storm in a teacup!" Babs said consolingly. "We all know what a temperamental little thing Marcelle is. I expect you'll find she's almost forgotten about it when we get back. Anyway, let's all have tea together and put her in a really good mood!"

Leila nodded. That was a good idea.

Considerably cheered was Leila then, and at Cliff House Marcelle was also happy. There, Lorna, loaded down with good things, had just returned from the tuckshop, and she and Marcelle were briskly busy.

Lorna had refused to allow Marcelle to pay for any of the goodies she had purchased.

"There!" she laughed. "That's the table, Marcelle. Now some crumpets! Leila does like crumpets, doesn't she? By the way, Marcelle, I hear that you

"Zat is right," Marcelle said. "And leesten! Here she come!"

She straightened up. Lorna stiffened a little, as there were footsteps in the passage. The next moment the door flew open.

"Well, here we are," Leila began cheerfully. "Come in, Babs! And Mabs! And Bessie! I reckon— And then she saw Lorna. "Oh!" she added, in a different tone of voice.

Marcelle smiled.

"Lorna, she haf been helping me to make ready ze tea," she explained.

"And just look at it!" Lorna laughed.

"Jolly good spread—yum!" Bessie approved. "I sus-say, I ought to take a snapshot of that, you know! That iced cake looks ripping!"

"Lorna buy him," Marcelle said.

Leila's lips compressed a little. She looked queerly for a moment at the stranger in the study. Lorna glared back defiantly.

"I hope," she said, "I didn't do wrong?"

"Lorna, she stop to tea," Marcelle

asking," Lorna said. "I suppose you don't mind me asking a question?"

"No, of course not!" Babs chipped in hurriedly. "Leila hasn't used all the film—not yet, anyway. Leila, old thing, sit down here, will you, next to Marcelle? I'll sit this side."

"Oh, really, I wanted to sit next to Marcelle!" Lorna pouted.

"Oh, yes—plis! Just this once!" Marcelle begged anxiously. "Leila, you do not mind, n'est ce pas? Lorna haf been so ver' good."

Leila shrugged. If she had suspected before that Lorna was playing some mysterious game, she was convinced of it now. Lorna obviously was doing her utmost to ingratiate herself with Marcelle. But she said nothing, and took another chair.

They sat down. Marcelle, however, sensing the hostile atmosphere between the two, looked faintly troubled.

"Leila, you like Lorna to come to tea?" she asked anxiously.

"Oh, I guess I don't mind," Leila said.

"Zat is not very gracious," Marcelle pouted. "Barbara, will you take more of ze pate de foi gras?"

"And would you like a crumpet or a cake, Leila dear?" Lorna put in. "I bought them," she added, with just a hint of mockery in her tone.

Leila refused. The glare which accompanied the refusal brought a smile to Lorna's lips. Quite plainly Lorna was enjoying herself now; very, very obviously Leila was not. And neither was Marcelle. But mercifully Leila forbore to say anything that would thicken the atmosphere of hostility which was growing in the study. Marcelle, really anxious that nothing should happen to mar the party, tried her best not to notice anything unusual.

And so tea progressed. Not exactly a cheery meal. Though they did their best to keep the chatter going, Babs & Co. had a sensation as of sitting on the brink of a volcano which might flare up without warning at any moment. But, thanks to Marcelle's earnest endeavours, thanks to Leila's really heroic constraint, nothing happened. But as soon as tea was over Leila rose.

"I—I guess I'll go and see if my last negatives have come back from the developers," she said. "Be back for prep, Marcelle."

Marcelle nodded, though her face was a little clouded. Leila, with a sense of escaping from some unpleasant experience, quitted the room. Well, that would give Lorna time to get out, she thought. She really felt, if she had much more to do with that girl, that she would break out. Or was she perhaps being unreasonable? Was Lorna making a really honest attempt to be nice?

Then she shook her head. No; Lorna was up to some deep game. Lorna, for her own purpose, was trying to oust her from Marcelle's affections. Marcelle, of course, weighed down with a sense of gratitude towards the girl, couldn't see that.

Well, not if she knew it should that come off.

In the quad she strolled until prepbell rang. Well, that was O.K., she thought. Lorna, like everybody else, had her prep to do. Marcelle would be alone now, and it might be possible to have a talk with her.

A little cheered by that prospect, she sped back into the school and pushed open the door of her study. And then she frowned again, for Lorna had not gone. Lorna was there with Marcelle, and both of them were already engaged in doing prep.

"Hallo! Come in!" Lorna invited, just as if it had been her study. "Marcelle invited me to do my prep in here, seeing that Jimima is absent. Don't mind, do you?"

"I guess I don't, if Marcelle doesn't," Leila said, but not very heartily. "But what's the matter with your own study?"

"Oh, Leila, zat is unkind!" Marcelle protested. "Lorna, she am ze friend of mine."

"I see," Leila said quietly.

And to make an end of argument she got out her own books and set down.

Marcelle bit her lip. The look she sent towards Leila was rather resentful.

Marcelle, completely won over now by the kindness of Lorna, was really beginning to feel a glowing affection for Lorna, and that affection was increased by reason of the fact that Leila appeared to treat her so unkindly.

A little worriedly she sighed as she gazed at the two. Leila, head down-bent, became immersed in her work. Lorna, apparently absorbed in her

exercise-book, did not look up; but suddenly, with one eye upon Marcelle, she slyly reached out with her foot in Leila's direction, and gave that girl a sharp kick on the ankle. Leila uttered an exclamation.

"What is ze mattaire?" Marcelle cried.

Leila glared at Lorna.

"Nothing," she said; but the look which accompanied it said: "You do that again, you cat!"

Marcelle bit her lip. Oh, it was dreadful—dreadful, that Lorna and Leila should be at daggers drawn like this!

Lorna grinned to herself. Five minutes went by, then again Leila gave that sudden sharp exclamation.

"Oh dear! What ees it now?" Marcelle cried.

Leila glared at Lorna.

"Look here, Lorna, if you don't stop kicking me, I guess—"

"Kicking?" Lorna blinked. "I didn't kick you!" she cried indignantly.

"Why should I kick you? Oh, really, Leila, I—I think it's mean of you to make things up like that!"

"Leila—plis, you are making ze study ver' uncomfortable!" Marcelle pleaded.

"Why is it you not agree with Lorna?"

"I tell you," Leila breathed furiously, "she kicked me!"

"But I didn't!" Lorna cried, and looked ready to burst into tears. "Marcelle, you believe me, don't you?"

Marcelle's lip trembled. Leila, seeing the distress on her face, was overcome by a sudden wave of consternation. With a grim glare at Lorna, she sat down.

"Leila dear—" said Lorna gently. "Get on with your prep!" Leila cried.

And prep once again progressed. But Leila's mind was no longer on it. Leila, breathing rather quickly, was waiting for the next assault when it came. Then suddenly it did come—a vicious little hack at her ankle. Her eyes blazed then.

Leila had stood enough.

She made no protest this time. But under the table she raised her own leg. Her feet found and rested against the edge of Lorna's chair, and suddenly, all her fury flaming, Leila lunged out. There came a cry from Lorna as she felt her chair move beneath her, but, quick enough to take advantage of the situation, she gave one upward kick at the under side of the table before, in theatrical pose, she hit the floor.

Then it was Marcelle's turn to yell.

For Lorna's foot, striking the table just under Marcelle's inkpot, jerked the contents of that pot in the air and all over the front of Marcelle's clean blouse.

Up jumped Marcelle, clutching at her ink-soaked blouse.

"Lee-la!" she shrieked.

"Oh gee! I'm sorry—" Leila muttered in dismay.

"Sorry! Sorry!" Marcelle gulped.

"And I, too, am sorry!" she blazed.

"Look at me! How evaire will I clean myself again? Leila, you are ze horrid one!" she cried, almost bursting into tears.

Leila turned white.

"I guess I'm sorry; I've said so," she said.

"What is ze use of being sorry after ze zing has happened?"

"Well, I guess it never would have happened if it hadn't been for Lorna!" Leila's eyes blazed. Suddenly her own temper blazed at the sight of the simpering Lorna, now sheltering behind Marcelle and pulling faces at her. "Whether you jolly well believe it or not, she kicked me! So I pushed her

chair. If you want peace in this study tell her to get out of it!"

Marcelle's eyes were as wide as saucers.

"Leel-iaa!"

"Well, tell her to go!" Leila flamed.

"And if I do not tell her to go?" Marcelle demanded.

"Then I guess," Leila said bitterly, "I'll go myself. If you prefer her to me, jolly well get on with it! Well, is she going?" she added, with a glare.

Marcelle was quivering, trembling, every muscle of her little face alive.

"No! She is my friend."

"And I," Leila said bitterly, "am not? O.K.! Well, I wish you luck with your new choice! Good-bye!"

And while Marcelle stared she moved towards the door. It opened; it closed. While Marcelle sank down in a flood of bitter tears, Leila strode tempestuously along the passage. Only one girl seemed satisfied. Only one girl pleased. That was Lorna Millerchip.

Leila is Puzzled!



TAP! There was a hesitant knock upon the door of Study No. 4, where Babs, Mabs, and Bessie were bending over their prep. Babs looked up.

"Come in!" she sang out. The door opened. A girl, in response to the invitation, entered. It was a girl carrying her books under her arm, her face rather white and angry still. Babs blinked in some concern.

"Why, Leila—"

Leila flushed a little. "I—I was wondering," she stuttered, "if I might do my prep in here?"

"Your prep?" Babs started. Bessie looked wondering; Mabs frowned a little. "But I thought—"

"You thought, I guess," Leila said a little bitterly, "I was doing it in Study No. 3. Well, I was; but, seeing that Marcelle seems to prefer the company of Lorna Millerchip to me, I've cleared out, that's all. Do you mind, Babs?"

Of course Babs did not mind. Neither did Mabs nor Bessie. Willingly they made room for Leila, but at each other they looked expressively.

"You mean—you and Marcelle have had another row?" Babs said hesitantly.

"Yep!" Leila grunted.

"But why?"

"Ask Lorna!" Leila said bitterly. "I guess I don't count any longer in Study No. 3."

"Oh kik-crumbs!" muttered Bessie.

She blinked. Babs and Mabs looked at each other—rather grimly, but with something of dismay. Both Marcelle and Leila were their chums. It hurt them all to feel that there was such a terrific rift in the lute. But they said nothing more then. Words at this juncture, however soothing, would have been more calculated to aggravate than ease the situation.

Grimly, almost doggedly, Leila got on with her prep. Seeing that nothing was to be gained by trying to pump her, Babs & Co. got on with theirs. For half an hour pens scratched continuously—Leila's almost savagely, though it was obvious that her mind was not upon the work she was doing. Then Babs, with a relieved sigh, put down her pen.

"Done!" she said. "Bessie, what about a cup of tea? Finished, Leila?"

"I guess so," Leila said morosely.

"And I," Mabs said. "Phew! Thank goodness! Well, let's put the work away," she said. "Bessie, buck up with that tea; I'm dying! I say, what about

asking Marcelle to come along and have a cup, too?" she added eagerly. "Leila, you don't mind?"

Leila flushed.

"I guess I don't mind anything where Marcelle is concerned. It's Lorna who's my fly in the ointment!"

Babs nodded. She gazed gratefully at Mabs, and, eager for the quarrel to be patched up as soon as possible, she slipped out of the study. To Study No. 3 she went and found the door open; the study, however, was empty.

"Hi!" Babs said, and withdrew, just in time to meet Lorna herself coming down the passage. "I say, Lorna, where's Marcelle?" she asked.

"Well, I think she's in the library," Lorna said. "She was frightfully upset—couldn't do her prep. Nothing wrong, is there?" she added with apparent concern.

"You should know that," Babs retorted.

And, without giving Lorna a chance to reply, she hurried away. In the library she found Marcelle, tears on her cheeks, her little face very dejected and woe-begone.

"Marcelle, you little silly!" she said softly.

"It is Leila," Marcelle choked. "She has to quarrel with me. Always we quarrel, and always because Leila is horrid to Lorna. Lorna, she am ze nice girl, she do ze good turn for me, and because I am grateful I am her friend, and Leila likes not me to be her friend. Oh, Babsie, what is it zat I can do?" she added worriedly.

"What you can do—and what you'll do now," Babs said firmly, "is to come and see Leila and make it up, Marcelle. It's just too potty going on like this! Leila really doesn't want to quarrel with you. Now come along to the cloak-room and wash that tearful little face of yours."

Marcelle gulped. But she dried her eyes. Babs smiled, glad to have won Marcelle round again. What a child the French girl was!

Leila, meantime, in Study No. 4, frowned as she glanced at Mabs.

"I guess Babs is having a job to persuade Marcelle to come along," she said. "Perhaps Marcelle figures I should have gone along and asked her myself. I'll trot along, if you don't mind, Mabs."

"Yes, rather!" Mabs said. "But whatever you do, Leila, bring her back."

Leila nodded. Anxious and unhappy herself, she could not help but feel impatient as the minutes passed, having no knowledge, of course, that Babs, at the moment, was in the cloak-room with Marcelle. Glad of action, she trotted out of the study, pushing the door of Study No. 3 open. Then she paused.

Study No. 3, apparently, was untenant. Apparently, but— And Leila suddenly stiffened. For clearly she saw the screen near the window move, heard the swift catch of a girl's breath. She looked round. And then she saw something else. Her precious cine-camera, which she had left on top of the bureau in the far corner of the room, was now on the edge of the table near the screen. Somebody had moved that. Somebody had been tampering with it.

And that somebody—

In three strides Leila had crossed the room. She caught the screen, dragging it back. A half-crouching girl, crimson-faced and furious, stretched up.

"Lorna!" Leila cried.

"I—I—" Lorna gasped.

"What have you been doing with my camera?"

Lorna gulped.

"I—I've done nothing to your camera. I—I hadn't even seen it!" she blustered. "Really, Leila, why you should blame me—"

"Then why," Leila asked, grim-faced, "were you hiding behind this screen?"

"I—I wasn't hiding behind the screen. I—I was just looking out of the window."

"Don't tell fibs!"

"I'm not telling fibs!" Lorna's cheeks flamed. Then, as she saw the door open again, her voice rose. "I think you're mean and horrid, Leila Carroll!" she cried. "You're just jealous because Marcelle likes me, and you're trying to make things up about me. I—I—" And suddenly she burst into tears. "I— Oh, hoo, boo-hooo!"

Leila's lips curled in contempt. With her back towards the door, she did not notice the figure of Marcelle, who, leaving Babs at the end of the corridor, had called back to the study to collect the remnants of the cake which had been left over from tea in order to enjoy it with the cup of tea Bessie Bunter was making. For one moment, in wild-eyed amazement, she paused.

Then Leila, unmoved by Lorna's easily produced tears, spoke again.

"I guess you can turn the tap off!" she said scornfully. "You might be able to get over Marcelle with that stuff, but I'll say it doesn't wash with me! Anyway, you can get out of this study, you sneak—and in future jolly well stay out! I—"

And then she gave back as Marcelle, all quivering indignation, rushed past her, putting a protecting arm round Lorna's shaking shoulders.

"Le-la, how dare you!" she cried passionately. "How dare you speak to my friend like zat! Lorna shall not go from ze study. I invite her. If she goes—"

"Well, if?" Leila asked quietly.

"I go wiz her!" Marcelle answered spiritedly.

A Scare in the Night!



IT seemed, after that, that the split in Study No. 3 was almost complete.

Leila went out. She went back to Study No. 4. But this time she took her film camera with her to inspect it for damage. There was no damage, however. Nothing had been tampered with.

But there was no doubt now that Lorna had had that camera. No doubt, either, that she had been about to do something with it when Leila had interfered, and Lorna, in confusion, had dodged behind the screen to hide.

It was a miserable evening for Leila, despite the efforts of Babs, Mabs, and Bessie to cheer her up. In Study No. 3 it must have been a miserable evening for Marcelle, despite the fact that she had the company of Lorna Millerchip. For once they were all glad when call-over bell sounded.

Miss Primrose was there, of course—and Miss Primrose was looking unusually grave. After the registers had been called and duties given for tomorrow, she faced the school. Her face was serious in the extreme.

"I presume," she said, "you all saw my notice on the board this afternoon—the notice which refers to the damage done in Farmer Nicholls' nurseries? I regret to say," she added a trifle sternly, "that the girl responsible for that damage has not yet been to see me."

There was a mutter. A good many of the girls had forgotten all about that.

"There is no doubt," Miss Primrose

went on, "that the girl concerned is a Cliff House girl. Mr. Nicholls himself saw her, although he was too far away at the time to identify her. You all know that Mr. Nicholls is by no means on the best of terms with this school, and now he threatens to take the matter to court unless he obtains complete satisfaction."

"The rotter!" muttered Clara Trevlyn.

The school stood tense.

"Apart from the expense of such a step," Miss Primrose went on, "Cliff House would not come out of it without a certain amount of publicity. I appeal now, for the sake of the school, that the girl come forward. If she does not—" She paused. "You know I hate doing this sort of thing, but circumstances leave me no alternative but to consider gating the whole school. If the culprit will not own up to save her own face, her conscience, surely, will not allow her to see every other girl in the school suffer for what she did? Meantime, will all captains of Forms attend in my study immediately after dismissal? That is all."

All! But with what consternation girls looked at each other! With what dismay that news was received!

Cliff House threatened with gating—just at the time when everybody was so excitedly looking forward to the photographic exhibition.

After call-over, in Miss Primrose's study, Babs, captain of the Fourth and Lower School, foregathered with Flora Cann of the Lower Fifth, Grace Woodfield of the Upper Fifth, and Dulcia Fairbrother of the Sixth.

Miss Primrose gazed at them.

"To you girls I am entrusting the task of finding out the girl who is guilty," she said. "I do not want to punish the whole school, and perhaps, in that direction, you can do much more than I can. I beg you all to leave no stone unturned to discover the culprit. If you discover her I hope you will bring pressure to bear upon her to own up. If," Miss Primrose went on, "she still refuses to own up, then I think that in this instance it will be your duty to report her."

That was all. But it gave the Form captains a line of action. At once Babs called a meeting of the Fourth. There every girl in the Form was questioned closely. Who had been in the vicinity of Farmer Nicholls' nurseries at ten minutes to three on Tuesday?

A dozen girls immediately owned up to being in the vicinity of the nurseries. The photographic craze which had swept the school had sent the amateur camera enthusiasts picture-prospecting far and wide.

Leila had been near the nurseries—at what time she did not know. Margot Lantham had been within half a mile of them. So had Rosa Rodworth and the Terraine Twins. Beatrice Beverly had been taking photographs on the bridge which spanned the stream near the nurseries somewhere about two-thirty. Peggy Preston had been with her, and so had Sylvia Sirrett. But one and all denied having been in the actual grounds of the nurseries, and not one of them was sure of the exact time.

It seemed hopeless.

Bed-time came with the Fourth anxious and wondering. One by one they settled down to rest. But there were three girls who did not. Marcelle, in her own bed, was sniffing unhappily under the bedclothes. Leila, thinking of her break with Marcelle, felt far from sleep. The other girl, surprisingly enough, was Bessie Bunter.

For the bright moonlight had given Bessie a most wonderful idea.

Supposing she could snap that moon? Supposing she could get a jolly good photograph of it? That would be original, wouldn't it? That would be something utterly different from anything anybody else had got.

Bessie chuckled.

It was a good idea—or it would have been a good idea if Bessie had had the accessories necessary for carrying out such a task. That Bessie had not, worried her not at all, however.

To Bessie a camera was just a machine which you pointed at an object of which you were desirous of getting a photograph, and having snicked the shutter, there you were! The more Bessie thought about that idea, the more in love with it she was. Wouldn't it be a surprise to everybody!

Leila dropped off presently. Marcelle dropped off, too, restlessly turning in her bed. But Bessie was excited. Bessie's brain, for once, was alert and alive. She'd take that picture. She'd take it in secret, and she wouldn't say a word about it until it was an accomplished fact.

The more Bessie thought of that, the better she liked it. Not nice, creeping down to Study No. 4 in the dark to get her camera; but in the cause of art, who cared? Hence, towards midnight, Bessie slipped out of bed and donned her dressing-gown and slippers.

Study No. 4 she reached without adventure, too excitedly keen about her projected snap even to think of the dark, though to be sure the penetrating moonlight made one hardly conscious of the fact. In Study No. 4 she switched on the light, got out her camera, and opened the window. Even Bessie knew that she would have to take a time exposure, and that meant resting the camera on something steady.

She chose the window sill, and then frowned.

For the sill sloped away towards the ground, and what Bessie wanted at this moment was a surface which sloped upwards towards the moon.

A bit of a teaser, that. Blow! thought Bessie, and frowned a fat and ponderous frown. If only her tripod fitted her camera! Then suddenly she brightened. Well, Marcelle had a tripod. That might fit.

Bessie chuckled again. She felt frightfully clever. Trust a Bunter to get herself out of difficulties! And with the idea of borrowing Marcelle's tripod from Study No. 3, she crept back into the corridor again. She opened the next door, and then paused.

For, inside, came the distinct sound of a movement.

Bessie blinked. For a moment all those old fears of darkness came rushing back. She stared anxiously into the gloom.

"I sus-say—" she breathed.

Then—crash! Something hit the floor. Out of the darkness came a figure. Bessie had a glimpse of it bearing down upon her.

"Wow!" yelled Bessie, and threw caution to the winds. "Burglars! Ghosts! Wake up, I'm being murdered! Woow-wow!" she yelled, as the figure, thrusting outward, sent her spinning back into the corridor, to hit the wall with a breathless crash which woke the echoes.

The sound of that crash, accompanied by Bessie's lusty yell, brought Barbara Redfern and half a dozen Fourth Formers out of their slumbers with a jerk.

"My hat! Bessie!" breathed Babs, and almost instantly had leapt out of bed. "What the dickens—Mabs, you awake?"

"Here!" Mabs said.

"Come on! She'll rouse the whole school!"

But Mabs was already out of bed. So were Clara Trevlyn and Leila Carroll. Bessie's yells still resounded.

"Help, I'm dead!"

"Shucks!" breathed Leila.

She and Babs headed the rush towards the door. Together they hurried out of the room. More by instinct than anything else, the American junior gazed at Lorna Millerchip's bed as she passed, and a slight curl came to her lip when she saw that it was empty. Along the corridor they bounded, down the stairs. They reached Bessie, now sitting up.

"Bessie, you chump!" cried Babs.

"You foghorn!" chortled Clara. "Wonder to me you haven't had the fire brigade here, kicking up this din! What's the matter?"

"Well, I've jolly well been attacked, you know—"

"Oh, stuff!"

"I have! In Marcelle's study!" Bessie said indignantly. "A whacking great mu-monster rushed out at me, you know, flapping its wings! Oh crumbs! I've had a fuf-fearful experience, you know!"

"But what," Babs asked, "really happened?"

"Well, I've told you!"

Leila looked at her. Anxiously then, she turned into the study. She gave an exclamation.

"My camera!" she cried.

"Well, what's the matter with your camera?" Babs asked.

"It's on the floor."

That was true. Leila, that evening, had tucked away the camera in her desk before going to bed. Now, near the window, the instrument lay on its side.

Whoever Bessie had surprised in Study No. 3, it seemed, had been tampering with that camera.

Anxiously Leila shot forward, just as Miss Bullivant came up the corridor. She picked the camera up, unheeding the fact that the strict mathematics mistress had arrived and was now demanding to know the meaning of the commotion. There was a little dent in one corner of the casing where it had made contact with the floor, but otherwise it seemed unharmed. Leila whistled a little, her eyes glimmering.

For she was thinking suddenly of Lorna—Lorna, who was out of bed; Lorna, whom she believed to have handled this camera before.

"Leila, what have you there?" Miss Bullivant rapped, looking into the study.

"My camera," Leila said; her face was a little grim. "Somebody has been tampering with it, Miss Bullivant."

"Oh! Why should anyone tamper with it?"

"That, I guess, is what I don't know. All the same, I'll find out. Whoever came in here came to get this camera, I figure. Bessie must have popped in just at the moment she'd taken it out of my desk. If you don't mind, Miss Bullivant, I guess I'll lock it up."

"Then, please," Miss Bullivant said, with some exasperation, "do so. Bessie, you will take a hundred lines for being out of bed. Barbara, Leila, Mabel—all you others will take fifty. Now go back to bed, and let me hear no more of this!"

They went, Bessie somewhat dashed now. But Leila's face was grim. Once again they reached the Fourth Form dormitory, where more than half the girls were awake now, and Leila, looking quickly towards Lorna Millerchip's bed, saw that girl was sitting up. Her face was the picture of surprise.

"Oh, Babs, what was the matter?" she asked.

"I guess you don't know?" Leila said.

"I?" Lorna's eyes opened wide. "Why should I know?"

"You weren't down in Study No. 3 five minutes ago?"

"Good gracious, no!"

"And you weren't, of course," Leila said bitterly, "tampering with my camera?"

Lorna stared. Marcelle, sitting up, stared anxiously from Lorna to the American junior.

"I—I don't know what you're talking about!" Lorna faltered. "Why should I want to tamper with your camera?"

But Leila saw that Marcelle was watching her. Leila saw that the crafty Lorna was ready once again to turn this position to her advantage. She shut her lips.

"I guess," she said quietly, "I'll talk to you some other time, Lorna. And I guess," she added pointedly, "you're not pulling the wool over my eyes."

She shrugged and turned towards her own bed, and then, hesitantly looking towards Marcelle, smiled. But Marcelle did not smile in response.

The Damaged Snapshot Album!



BY the first post next morning Marcelle Biquet received a letter.

The letter was from her parents in Paris. Marcelle had already written to tell them that she was bringing Leila and that Leila was making a special film for their benefit.

When she read that letter, glowing with her parents' enthusiastic pleasure at the prospect of seeing Leila again, her feelings were rather mixed.

Marcelle knew how very fond both her parents and her brother Alphonse were of the American girl. She remembered with a pang her own fondness for Leila until this distressing quarrel had broken out on the subject of Lorna Millerchip, and now she was asking herself for the first time—how could she and Leila go to Paris together with this friction between them?

But Lorna—

Marcelle sighed. Her friendship for Leila, her gratitude to Lorna, pulled her each their separate ways. But Leila was her oldest friend. Leila must come first. The breach between herself and Leila must be healed—and, after all, if Leila did not like Lorna, there was no need for them to come together.

There were many girls in the school who had friends who did not like each other very much, and yet still seemed to keep harmony. Yes, that should be it. She would make it up with Leila. In the meantime, since her loyalty could not allow her to desert Lorna, she would keep them apart from each other.

Before breakfast she sought out Leila and found her, after many anxious inquiries, in the gardener's shed which the industrious page-boy, Boker, had fitted up as a sort of temporary dark-room. Leila, her camera in hand, had been investigating its interior for possible damage, and was vastly relieved to find that it had sustained none.

She started when she saw Marcelle's pleading, earnest little face.

"Leel-la!" Marcelle faltered. Leila's face broke into an immediate smile.

"Hallo, Marcelle! Nice morning!"

"Oui." Marcelle paused, blinking a little. "Lee-la, it is zat I wish to speak to you," she said troubledly, "about ze Paris voyage. Zis morning

I hear from my papa, and he say 'Are you still coming?'"

Leila looked at her curiously.

"You still want me to come?"

"Leila—yes."

"Then that," Leila said jovially, "is O.K. I'm ready—as soon as I shoot the other fifteen feet or so of film in the old camera."

Marcelle gulped.

"Is it zen zat we are ze so-great friends again?"

"I'll say!" Leila glowed.

"And—and Lorna—" Marcelle paused. "Leila, I am troubled about Lorna, for I know you do not like her. Is it zat you mind me being friends wiv Lorna at ze same time? I like her."

Just for an instant a bitter look came and went in Leila's face. Everything, so far, which had happened had been due either directly or indirectly to Lorna.

The thought crossed her mind for an instant—was Lorna plotting to rob her of this trip to Paris? And then she shook her head. For if that were so, why should Lorna be so extraordinarily keen to tamper with her camera? No; Lorna had some deeper motive than simply smashing up that trip.

She said, with a shrug:

"Well, I guess I don't mind—no. But just keep her out of my way, Marcelle."

"Zat I will use all ze power I haf to do," Marcelle said, and smiled. "Now we are happy again—yes?"

And so, to the delight of Babs & Co., the breach was again patched up.

Lorna heard about it, and Lorna, for some reason, scowled, though when she saw Marcelle she professed the utmost delight.

Leila, glad from the bottom of her heart that relations were on their old footing again, felt immensely bucked.

In that mood Leila cast about in her mind to do something which would please Marcelle. But what? And then she remembered Study No. 3's snapshot album—an album in which she, Marcelle, and Jemima Carstairs appeared very frequently, and which Marcelle had eagerly suggested they should also take to Paris with them.

Particularly proud and pleased was Marcelle of one photograph in that album—a photograph which depicted herself and Leila in costume, and had been taken by Barbara Redfern during the production of the last Fourth Form play. Well, the album still required a few snaps to complete it. She'd do those. That would please her little French chum.

After assembly, Leila sorted out the snaps, and after lessons that morning set to work. She was in the middle of her task when the door opened and Lorna looked in.

"Oh!" she said, and glanced at what Leila was doing. "I—I thought I might find Marcelle in here. Know where she is?"

"No," said Leila shortly. "And I'm busy," she added pointedly.

Lorna scowled. But there was a curious light in her eyes as she went off. Five minutes later she ran Marcelle to earth in the dormitory—Marcelle looking out some of those little treasures she had saved up for taking home.

"Oh, Marcelle," she laughed, "I've been looking everywhere for you! But, I say, what's the matter with Leila?"

"Leila?" Marcelle looked up quickly.

"She—she seems quite savage," Lorna shook her head. "I don't want to tell tales out of school, of course; but—a few minutes ago I looked into your study to see if you were there, and there was Leila running through that snap-

shot album of yours. Oh, Marcelle, she had an awful scowl on her face, and she was absolutely making faces at that picture of you and her which Babs took in the last play—you know, the one you're so fond of. You haven't had another row, have you?"

"Non, non!" Marcelle looked anxious. "You make ze mistake."

"Well, I hope so," Lorna smiled. "But, Marcelle dear, don't look so worried about it. Come down to the tuckshop, will you?"

"But if Leila is unhappy, I go to see Leila," Marcelle said.

"Oh!" Lorna said hastily. "Leave her alone. Perhaps it's something else that's happened to upset her—I don't know. Anyway, let her get over it. Come on, Marcelle!"

Marcelle allowed herself, as usual, to be persuaded. Off to the tuckshop she and Lorna went, there to meet Babs, Mabs, and Bessie, who were enjoying a grapefruit squash before dinner.

Meanwhile, Lorna had disappeared into the school. The vague "second" in which she had promised to absent herself lengthened into a good ten minutes before, breathless and beaming, she returned to Marcelle and Babs & Co. in the tuckshop. She gasped.

"What a chump I am! Do you know, Marcelle, I'd left a half-crown in my other tunic, and had forgotten to take it out when I changed. I couldn't think for the life of me what I had done with it at first. But here we are. My treat, aunty!" she called to Mrs. Jones. "Babs, will you have something?"

"Thanks, I don't think so," Babs said quietly.

Marcelle frowned a little. Somehow it hurt her to hear generous Lorna's offer refused. And, despite herself, she was still thinking of the account with which Lorna had furnished her of Leila. What could have made Leila vexed again?

She drank up her grapefruit. Anxious



"LORNA!" cried Leila, whipping back the screen. "What have you been doing with my camera?" Lorna gulped. "I've done nothing to your camera. I—I hadn't even seen it," she blustered. "Then why," asked Leila, grim faced, "were you hiding behind this screen?"

Lorna bought a grapefruit for herself and Marcelle, and then uttered an exclamation.

"Oh, great goodness, what an idiot I am!" she exclaimed. "I've left my money in my study! Won't be a second, Marcelle!"

She raced out, meeting Leila as she came down the drive. Through the window of the tuckshop Lorna had already spotted the American girl, which may have accounted for her rapid exit. Leila passed her without a look.

The American junior strode on—not to the tuckshop, but to the cycle-shed, to pump up a tyre which she knew was rather flat. In the last bid for photographs that afternoon Leila intended to use the cycle to go over to Sarmouth in Marcelle's company.

She smiled a little as she thought of little Marcelle. Dear, dear kid! She hoped Marcelle would get back to Study No. 3 before her, and see the snap album, complete now, and left open at the page which contained her favourite photograph.

to see Leila again, she left Lorna in the tuckshop and hurried back into the school, and up to Study No. 3. She entered the study, frowned as she saw no Leila in it, and then looked towards the table. Her cheeks dimpled as she saw the treasured album lying upon its surface. With a little laugh, she stepped towards it.

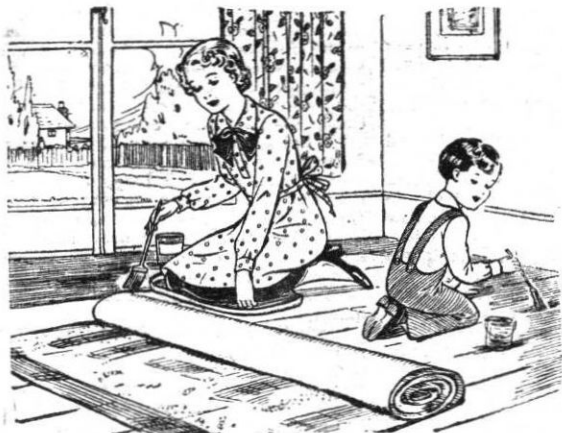
The laugh abruptly faded.

For—what was this?

Marcelle blinked. Then her eyes became round. A little pained cry left her lips as she gazed at that treasured page, the centre-piece of which had been herself and Leila in their so beautiful costumes. Gone was that picture now. In its place, planted firmly over it, was one of Marcelle's throw-outs—a clump of trees which, owing to bad focusing, looked rather like three or four black heaps of slag seen through an obscuring mist.

In a moment all Marcelle's happiness had turned to distress and anger.

(Continued on page 14)



OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS

PATRICIA is your very own friend, who writes to you each week on these pages. She tells you about her family, of her own activities, of things to do and things to talk about. Her letters are always so chummy and helpful that it is not surprising she is so popular with you all.

I WONDER how many of you will be going to see the Boat Race this year?

You'll probably think this Patricia of yours is either very lazy, or very odd, when I tell you that I have never seen one!

Even though I do live in London!
As a matter of fact, I'm one of those luxury-loving young people who prefer the comfort of the news-cinemas in which to watch the big events of the day. And, as I think I've told you before, I can't bear being pushed about by crowds of people.

Oh, and just in case any of you are interested, I'm Oxford!

But my small brother with the long name, young Heatherington—known as Heath—is Cambridge.

Why, I don't know. Unless it's because his big-boy friend, young Bobby Lane, who's nine, and lives in our road, has told him that Cambridge is the thing to be!

● Spring Cleaning

There's also Easter most excitingly near. I'm saving pennies in order to buy some very tiny gifts for the family—as I expect you are, too.

I'm also hoping to have a new dress for Easter—but that will have to wait a day or two yet, for first, all the spring cleaning must be finished.

Mother likes this all to be completed before Easter, so that the house looks radiant and fresh for this very happy festival.

How many curtain hooks I have unfastened, and how many miles of floors I have stained during the past week or so, I wouldn't like to guess.

And I shall probably get "Tennis elbow," after the number of carpets, blankets, and mattresses I have beaten! Of course, the joke is, I like staining floors.

Olive, our maid, scrubbed them all first to remove the old chipped stain. And here's something you might like to know. Where stains seem impossible to remove, you must use what is called "sugar soap," instead of ordinary soap.

But, one warning. This is frightfully strong, and rubber gloves should be worn when using it.

Another good way we've found of removing stains from floor-boards is to rub with "steel wool." You probably know this under several special names used by the manufacturers. But it's that same stuff which is used for cleaning and polishing aluminium.

You rub this up and down the floor-boards—the way of the grain—and it's positively marvellous the way paint stains and varnish come off.

I must tell you, by the way, that Heath's "staining" wasn't too good.

His idea seemed to be to make pictures

on the floors, instead of smooth up-and-down, backwards-and-forwards strokes.

So I shooed him into the garden and gave him the job of cleaning up all the brushes in turpentine—which he did exceedingly well, apart from the fact that he got himself into the most frightful mess while doing it.

● Ten Favourites

You remember that popular question which arises every so often: "Which book would you choose to take with you if you were to be stranded on a desert island?"

Well, just recently this question was asked on the radio in America—a little differently. "Which books would you choose, if you could have ten only to read in your lifetime?"

Listeners-in in America sent in their replies to this question, and the result is—to me—rather startling.

The ten books selected were:

1. "The Bible."
2. Homer's "Odyssey."
3. "Montaigne's Essays."
4. One volume of Shakespeare.
5. Tolstoy's "War and Peace."
6. Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."
7. Boswell's Private Papers (including Life of Johnson).
8. "Don Quixote."
9. "Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain.
10. "Tales of Gengi," by Lady Marasaki.

Now perhaps you'll realise why I was startled, for several of those books this Patricia of yours has never read!

I can understand "The Bible" as first choice. For certainly here is the most wonderful collection of books which can be read and read again, not only for wondrous stories, but for lovely writing and poetry.

I have read parts of Homer's "Odyssey" (translated, I might add) but I don't think I'd include it on my list.

"Montaigne's Essays" I have not read. I wonder if they are as good as Charles Lamb's essays. Most of you know of "The Decline and Fall," and "Life of Johnson," though not all of you may have read them.

"Don Quixote" and "Huckleberry Finn" are also well known to you—though I've an idea English people prefer Dickens to Mark Twain.

"Tales of Gengi" I just haven't heard of—which sounds very ignorant of me.

I wonder if you know this book?

● A Little Present

Doesn't this bowl of crocuses here look gay and spring-like?



Actually, it's a needle-case—or, if you like, it could be a penwiper.

To make it, you should cut four pieces of flannel to the shape of a bowl, then cut a piece of coloured silk for the top layer. Place all these together, and then concentrate on the crocuses.

These can be cut out of coloured felt—which can be bought very cheaply, and is marvellous because it requires no stitching. Make the flowers in mauve or yellow, and the leaf part in green. Then place these between the folds of material and stitch right through all thicknesses.

Add an array of needles if it's a needlecase you have in mind—and you have a charming and original little gift which has cost only a few pennies.

● Butterfly Bows

I expect you have one or two coat hangers with pretty silky covers on them that you use for hanging up your best, party-time dress.

A very good idea is to make a little bag to hang over the hanger. In this you can keep your party shoes—with your dress.

This will save much looking around for them when you want them, and also save the shoes themselves from becoming soiled and dusty.

And if you have any spare pieces of ribbon, you could make a pretty butterfly bow to fix on your "best hanger" and make one to match on the bag.

They look so dainty and luxurious, somehow, when the wardrobe door is opened.

● Useful Vinegar

You do know, don't you, that a teaspoonful of vinegar added to the rinsing water when you have washed your hair is perfectly marvellous for brightening it, as well as for removing every trace of soap?

Dark-haired girls, particularly, should always remember this, for it actually adds glints to brown and black hair.

But vinegar is also very useful in other unexpected ways.

I expect you have often heard mother saying she's not looking forward to washing out the sticky pudding-cloths after dinner.

Well, next time she says this, you tell her that a little vinegar added to the water will quite take away that glue-y feeling. She'll be frightfully grateful, I'm sure.

Bye-bye now until next week, my pets.
Your friend,

PATRICIA.

P.S.—One of you sent me a Valentine card—anonymous, of course. But bless you, whoever it was; I loved it.



MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BATH

A bath can be a rest-cure, a beauty treatment and a tonic, says Patricia. And here she tells you how.

THERE are all sorts of ways of doing most things, you know—yes, even of taking a bath.

There is the serious, get-clean-quick bath; there is the business-like, splash-down bath after a strenuous game, or a soaking in the rain. There is the buck-up-and-get-it-over bath, when someone else is waiting for the bath-room.

And—there is the bath of glorious, restful luxury.

This is the bath I want to talk about, for it is so terribly good for you occasionally.

When you have had a particularly tiring week at school, and mother says you can have the bath-room to yourself some time on Saturday morning, when the rest of the family is out, that is the time to indulge in it.

It can make you feel as good as if you've just had a holiday, and as lovely as if you've just had a beauty treatment.

So we'll pretend you have an hour or so in front of you, shall we? That the water's piping hot, and that you're going to have a really good time.

PREPARATIONS

Well, first, I'm going to suggest that you arrange your hair. Press all your waves into place with your fingers, and curl up the ends if you like. Now pop a bathing cap over your hair to keep out the steam. If you haven't a cap, then use a towel—turbanwise—instead.

While the water is running into the bath, go and fetch your nail-scissors, a nail-file, and a comb. Get your little tin of cold cream, too.

See that you have a nice big, scrubby towel handy, a loofah (one of those things that looks like the inside of a mattress) plenty of soap, and a nail-brush.

If you can find a spare one, pop a bath-cube into the water, or some bath-salts.

Now, when you are undressed and just before you get into the bath, smear your face all over with the cold cream.

Leave this on, and the steam from the bath will seep into it, and do the most wonderful cleansing work. (Remember that cold cream is not a "beauty cream" but a cleanser, that cleans the skin more effectively than the hardest rubbing with soap and water.)

Lie back in the bath and relax.

Gradually, you'll feel all the tiredness going out of your limbs, and out of your brain, too.

SO REFRESHING

Then the washing part.

Start with the feet and work upwards. Give those toe-nails the scrubbing of their lives. In fact, scrub your legs right up to the knees, using plenty of soap and the loofah or brush. This will brisk up the circulation and remove goosey-spots.

When you reach your arms treat the backs then in the same manner, using lots of soap and brushing really briskly.

But don't touch your face—yet.

After the washing process, give yourself a brisk rub-down.

When you are quite dry, wring out your face flannel in clear water. Then wipe off the cold cream from your face.

Just look at that flannel! Can all that dirt possibly have come from your skin?

It most certainly did, young lady! So now you see why cold cream is so good.



Your face will now feel beautifully smooth and soft, and look like new. But before you dry it, you must splash it vigorously with cold water to close all those pores that were opened by the steam of the bath, and which allowed the dirt to escape.

FINISHING TOUCHES

After dressing, you must now do your toe-nails.

Cut them straight across, and you'll be surprised how easy they are to cut after the bath. File off any jagged bits.

When you are dressed, remove the bathing-cap or turban-towel.

Next comb out your hair. It'll look so soft and pretty—just right to match your face, you see.

Now, after rinsing out the bath, hanging up the towel and generally tidying up the bath-room, you can skip downstairs to show yourself to mother.

She'll probably gasp and wonder if it's a new daughter she has.

That's what the "luxury bath" can do for you.

YOUR VERY OWN SPRING CLEAN

Some "turning-out" tips for the schoolgirl who is fond of helping at home.



"START at the top and work down," is a favourite saying of the good housewife. It's a good maxim for schoolgirls to remember, too, if they are going to do a spot of spring cleaning among their own precious possessions before Easter.

WHEN turning out cupboards, always start with the top shelf. Move everything off this. Sort out the things you want

to keep and those to be destroyed. Now dust the shelf and place clean paper on it.

TO clean books, just bang them together, sharply but lightly. Prizes and other valuable books with red leather covers should have the outsides polished with good furniture cream.

ALL clothes from wardrobes should be taken out into the garden and given a good brushing. Then they should hang over the line in a breeze for an hour or so—but not in the strong sun, for fear of fading—to become sweet and fresh again.

MEANWHILE, the cupboard should have been brushed out and washed over with warm soapy water.

IF you are spring cleaning your own bed-room yourself, the walls should always be swept down first, after dust sheets have been placed over the bed and dressing-table.

FURNITURE which has been polished frequently is sometimes sticky. This should be washed over with warm water to which a dash of vinegar has been

added. Wipe it dry and then polish. It will look like new again.

SCRATCHES on furniture are a problem. Often these marks will disappear if you rub them over with a brazil nut—not the shell part, of course. Or apply a dab of linseed oil. You can even add a touch of dark brown boot polish to conceal the scratches.

FLOORS should be scrubbed at spring cleaning time, even if they are already polished. It is possible, you know, to "touch up" linoleum to hide any worn patches. You buy this "liquid linoleum" in sixpenny tins, in all colours, and it is applied just like paint.

BLANKETS will probably be washed, ready for the summer. But if not, do see that they have a good shaking and a blow in the garden.

AS for yourself, you'll remember that spring cleaning is a dusty and tiring business, won't you? Do remember to keep your hair covered, to wear comfy shoes and a big overall that will save your dress from spoiling.

(Continued from page 11)

So this is why Leila had been working on the album—not to please her. Oh, no! Leila, in spite of her confession of friendship, did not want to be friends while Lorna Millerchip was still in the camp. Leila had done this! She no longer wished herself and Marcelle to be seen photographed together!

This, then, explained Leila's bad mood.

Marcelle quivered. Sudden roses of anger glowed in her cheeks. That picture—that awful, obliterating picture! She found herself trembling. Then, hardly realising what she was doing, just carried beyond herself by her fury, her sick disappointment, her heartbreak, she grabbed down at the snapshot and, with fierce energy, tore it loose.

So violent was the wrench she gave that the surface of the paper beneath came up with it and tore the page half across, defacing three other photographs on that page.

"Zere!" she panted.

And then she wheeled as the door opened, and Leila, her lips parted in a smile, stood there.

Marcelle wheeled furiously, carrying the defaced portion of the page in her hand. Leila blinked. Then, gazing at the album, gave a cry.

"Hey! Who did this?"

Marcelle faced her.

"I did!" she panted.

"You?" Leila's eyes widened. "You?" she cried incredulously. "What ever for?"

"Zat," Marcelle said, "you should know! I did it! I—I am glad I did it! I thought that you were ze great, forgiving friend! I thought zat—zat— And then she choked. "Do not talk to me!" she cried passionately. "Do not look at me! I nevaire, nevaire spik to you again!"

And, while Leila stared in amazement, she rushed from the room. The tears welling from her eyes, she burst into Study No. 4. Babs and Mabs, who had just returned from the tuckshop, stared.

"Marcelle—"

"Plis," Marcelle said furiously, "haf you ze telegram form?"

"Yes. But—"

"Zen you will plis give him to me! I haf ze wire to send!"

Babs blinked. But she fished out the telegram form, and Marcelle, with fingers that trembled, took up a pen and sat down. Babs could not help seeing what she wrote.

Marcelle addressed the telegram to her parents, and underneath that address she wrote in French:

"Am not bringing Leila. I bring my friend, Lorna Millerchip, instead. All love.—MARCELLE."

"Marcelle!" cried Babs. "Marcelle, you don't mean that?"

"I mean him—yes! I mean him!" Marcelle choked. "Nevaire, nevaire again do I spik to Leila!"

"But, Marcelle!" cried Babs.

Marcelle, however, had darted from the room.

An Unusual Film Show!



"LEILA, can't you do anything—a y—thing?" Babs cried. "You can see Marcelle's breaking her heart, though she does pretend to be standoffish."

Leila Carroll looked a little desperate. "But what," she cried, "can I do?"

I've tried to speak to her, I guess. She won't even listen. She walks out of the study when I go in and gives me the cold shoulder whenever she meets me."

Mabs and Babs looked glum.

"Would the film you're taking help to—"

"Oh, stuff to the film! I'm sick of it!"

There was a shaking of heads in Study No. 4 after dinner that afternoon, for Babs, Mabs, and Bessie had planned to join up with Leila and Marcelle in the Sarmouth trip. Babs bit her lip.

"Well, there's just one thing for it," she said. "I'll go and talk to her. But, Leila, who did damage that snapshot album?"

"Can't you guess?" Leila asked grimly. "I can. Lorna!"

"But why?"

"I don't know, except that she's just trying to smash up everything between Marcelle and me. What other reason?"

Babs sighed. It was hateful to see such good friends at loggerheads. Nevertheless, it was up to her to try to save the situation if she could, and off, there and then, she trotted.

She found Marcelle in Study No. 3. With her was Lorna—a Lorna looking overjoyed and radiant—a Lorna slightly staggered, for Marcelle had just told her of her decision to take her to Paris in Leila's place. Marcelle wheeled round as Babs entered.

"Yes, Babs, what is ect?" she asked, a little stiffly.

"Marcelle, it's about Leila—"

"Leila I do not wish to discuss," Marcelle said coldly.

"But, Marcelle, there's some mistake—"

"Ze mistake I wish not to discuss," Marcelle said.

"But, Marcelle, Leila wants you—"

"I haf finished with Leila. No longer do I know her."

"But the film—" Babs cried.

"Ze film I care nozzings about."

Babs shook her head. She gave it up. Rather worriedly she tramped out of the study. But Lorna, left alone with Marcelle, looked at her.

"But, I say, you know, you ought to get the film," she said. "After all, you paid for it."

"I am not interested," Marcelle said distinctly.

"But, Marcelle—no, don't be a noodle!" Lorna said warmly. "Dash it all, it is yours! Besides, think how disappointed the people in Paris will be."

"I haf not ze interest," Marcelle said, but less certainly as she thought of her beloved papa and mamma. "It is in Leila's camera."

"But," Lorna persisted, "you can borrow the camera and shoot the rest of it yourself."

"Of Leila I ask not ze favour," Marcelle retorted a little bitterly.

Lorna breathed deeply.

"Well, supposing I ask her? You could work the thing, couldn't you?"

"I work it—yes. But I not ask," Marcelle said, with freezing dignity.

"If you are so ver' anxious, you may ask."

"Well, I'm jolly well going to," Lorna said, with feigned indignation. "After all, the film's yours, and you're my chum, and I'm going to see you get your rights. I'll go now."

She went, catching Leila, camera in hand, just as she came out of Study No. 4 on her way to the cloak-room. Leila glared.

"Well?"

Lorna sneered.

"It's about Marcelle's film in your camera," she said.

Leila's eyes glimmered.

"I guess you're pretty interested in that camera," she observed.

"Me? I don't know what you mean. At the same time," Lorna said warily, "Marcelle paid for that film, so it's hers, isn't it?"

"Well?"

"Well, the least you can do, now you've broken up with her, is to let her run the rest of it off."

"Or what?" Leila asked.

"Well, or take the film out and give it back to her."

"And you want my answer to that?"

"Yes, of course."

"Well, here it is— No!" Leila said definitely. "I'm not ruining my pictures. I'm not allowing you or anybody else to take that camera, Lorna Millerchip, and if Marcelle feels I owe her a film, you can tell her I'll pay for it as soon as my next remittance arrives. That's all!"

And Leila, leaving Lorna glowering, strode on her way.

Lorna stared after her.

"Hang her!" she muttered.

She tramped back. When she next saw Leila that girl was going off with Babs & Co. Lorna watched them as they strode through the gates, and her face was bitter.

"And if—if she finishes that film this afternoon—" she muttered. "Oh my hat!"

It seemed, suddenly, that some dreadful weight was pressing on Lorna Millerchip's mind.

That afternoon, in spite of her new-formed friendship with Marcelle, she was apt to be rather worriedly silent at times, and Marcelle was not the best of companions, though she tried to speak lightly and excitedly about the glorious times they would both have when they reached Paris. They went to Pegg together, tea-ing at the Beach Cafe, after which they returned.

Leila, her camera on her arm, had just come in. Lorna accosted her, while Marcelle, seeing her, walked rapidly away.

"Well, finished the film?" she asked.

"I guess, if it's any interest to you, I have," Leila said disdainfully.

"Then don't you think you ought to let Marcelle have it?"

"If Marcelle wants it," said Leila, "she's only got to ask for it. Anyway, I want to have a look at it myself as soon as it's developed, I guess."

"And—when will you be getting it developed?"

"Say, you seem interested! Tomorrow, if you want to know. Now buzz off!"

Lorna went off—but not before Leila had seen that strange, thoughtful look which settled on her face. Leila herself looked thoughtful as she gazed after her.

"H'm!" she said.

"Eh?" Babs came along. "What are you humming about, Leila?"

Leila smiled a trifle twistedly.

"Just trying to figure something out," she said, "and can't. But I'm wondering—I'm wondering mightily at the moment, Babs. And I guess I've got a bit of a hunch. Yes," she added, even more thoughtfully, "it's a hunch that can do no harm, anyway."

"Well?" Babs looked curious.

"Supposing," Leila said slowly, "we have a sort of little film exhibition tomorrow night—in the Common-room? Could you fix that up, Babs?"

Babs gazed at her. She saw then that Leila had some other plan in view than the mere entertainment of the Fourth Form. But eagerly she nodded. Leila's film shows were always worth while. Besides, it was well-known that

Leila had specially hired several miniature British films for exhibition during the Paris trip.

"Fix it?" she laughed. "Won't I—just. You're sure, Leila?"

"Positive, I guess," Leila said. She went off then, while Babs sprinted towards the Common-room to spread the good news. The news was received with joy and jubilation. Before long, excited girls in quest of foreknowledge of what they were going to see were all on Leila's trail. But Leila, strangely enough, seemed to have vanished completely.

She was not in for prep. Five minutes before gates were due to be closed she strolled into Big Hall. Clara Trevlyn pounced on her.

"Hallo, here's the giddy film expert!" she said. "Leila, where the dickens have you been? We're just dying to know what you're going to serve up tomorrow."

Leila smiled. "I guess I've just been out—had an appointment," she said. "As for tomorrow—well, wait till I've mapped out a programme, I guess. I hope there'll be a surprise amongst it."

And that, then, was all she would say, and with that the Fourth had to be content.

Call-over came. Miss Primrose rose, looking worried. She announced that the girl responsible for the damage to Nicholls' Nurseries had not come forward; she had till to-morrow to save the school from punishment.

Uneasily received was that announcement. Not in a very happy frame of mind the girls went to bed. It seemed certain now that the guilty one had made up her mind to lie completely low, which meant, of course, that the threatened gating would become a fact, and if that gating became a fact, the photographic exhibition, as far as Cliff House was concerned, was finished.

Small wonder that girls grumbled and complained. Small wonder, from that moment, there was a falling off of interest in the exhibition. There was a good deal of indignant chatter in the Fourth Form dormitory that night, but in that chatter one girl took no part. That girl was Leila Carroll.

Lights out, eventually, the girls settled down to slumber. Chatter died, to be replaced by the rhythmic breathing of girls as they dropped off to sleep. Ten—half-past—chimed out from the clock tower. Then suddenly there was a rustle. In the darkness, Lorna Millerchip sat up.

"Anybody awake?" she asked, in little more than a whisper.

There was no reply. Lorna slipped out of bed. Donning dressing-gown and slippers, she moved towards the door. She went out, and for a quarter of an hour did not return. But when she did, the moonlight showed a satisfied, relieved, and almost triumphant look upon her face. Again she repeated her inquiry, and again receiving no reply, clambered back into bed. The night passed.

Leila was the first to awake in the morning, and immediately on waking, climbed out of bed. Babs, a few beds away, stared at her in surprise.

"Why, Leila, you're up early!"

"Yes; I guess I want to see something," Leila replied. Babs regarded her curiously.

"I guess if you want to see it, you can come along with me," Leila said; "though it may not be there," she added cryptically.

Babs smiled puzzledly, but she rose. Quickly she dressed, and with Leila went down to Study No. 3. Leila gazed round.

And then a swift exclamation came from her lips. A look of rather excited satisfaction came into her eyes.

"I thought so," she said. "But what," amazed Babs asked, "is there here?"

"Take a squint at the fireplace," Leila said. Babs looked in that direction. On the cold ashes left from yesterday's fire was a twisted, charred mass of something which sinuously snaked and coiled.

"But—but what is it?" she asked. Leila laughed, a little grimly. "You don't know, eh? I was kind of expecting to find that there, though. Well, I guess this makes everything O.K. now—if I play my cards right. Babs, I wonder if you would help me?"

"Help you? Why, of course!" Babs said. "But what can I do?"

"Plenty, I guess," Leila dryly replied. "Say, just listen to this!"

was a suspicious quiver about her lips. After lessons that afternoon there was great activity in the Common-room. Leila herself superintended the erection of the screen—quite a large one, for Leila's projector was of the most powerful type. With Babs and Mabs she helped to arrange the chairs and fix up the projector at the far end of the room opposite the screen. And at last all was ready.

Eagerly, excitedly, the Fourth tramped into the room at six o'clock. Miss Charmant and Miss Bullivant had been invited, and they attended, too. They all took their seats.

"Well, come on," Clara said, after a lapse of ten minutes. "Where's Leila?"

Leila, however, was not there. "It's a leg-pull!" sneered Lydia Crossendale. "She doesn't intend to give us a show at all! Anyway, come on,



FIERCELY Marcelle scribbled out the telegram. Babs, seeing what she wrote, gasped in dismay. It seemed that the friendship between Marcelle and Leila was smashed for good.

And while the thunderstruck Babs did listen, she talked seriously, rapidly.

SOMEHOW that day dragged away—not altogether a happy day for Cliff House. In spite of a renewed appeal that morning by Miss Primrose, nobody had yet stepped forward, and the threatened gating now was looked upon as inevitable.

Of Leila herself the Form saw little, except during lessons, and at meal times. Marcelle saw her hardly at all, for Marcelle, leaving that night with Lorna for Paris, was busily packing her belongings. Yet in spite of the entrancing prospect of seeing her beloved papa and mamma, and La Belle France again, Marcelle was not happy. Lorna, on the other hand, was bubbling with delight.

Whatever worry Lorna had on her mind yesterday, seemed utterly to have disappeared now.

"Oh, it will be lovely!" she said. "And, Marcelle, we'll have such good times together. I'm glad I'm coming."

Marcelle did not reply. But as she stooped towards her case again, there

somebody! All the stuff is here. Marcelle, you can work this camera."

"I haf not ze permission to touch," Marcelle said, in a quiet little voice.

"But," Babs said, "I have." She glanced at her watch; rather anxiously she glanced at the door. She, of them all, knew where Leila was, and she was remembering Leila's instructions: "If I'm not back by six, start the show." "I think," she said, "we'd better start. Leila has given me permission to work things, though she should be here any minute now. Mabs, put out the lights, will you?"

Out went the lights. The Form settled down. With the projector already focused on the screen, Babs had no hard job—simply the pressing of the light button, and the pulling over of a little switch. On the screen there flashed a cartoon.

The Fourth sat watching. The film was, of course, a hired one. There was quite a lot of tittering. Babs followed with one of Charlie Chaplin's early comedies. And what a roar of laughter at that! The next was a short film which Leila herself had made during

the summer, when they had all been on holiday together in the Indian Ocean.

"I wondaire," Marcelle whispered to Lorna, "if Babsie will show ze film Leila haf made just now? Ze film"—with a little catch in her voice—"that was to have gone to Paris."

"Well, how can she?" Lorna said. "She hasn't got it developed; hasn't had time."

"Oh!" Marcelle said. She hadn't thought of that.

Now came the next film—an old one of Leila's, in which most of the Fourth Form saw themselves represented. There were chuckles and gurgles at that, for they all so loved to see themselves again. Then suddenly in the middle of it the door opened and closed. A voice which sent them all muttering, sounded.

"All right, Babs! I guess I'll take over now! Shut the door, will you?"

"Leila!" said Clara. "She's here! Leila! Where have you been?"

"I guess I'll tell you that after the show," Leila replied, busy now winding back the last film to free the projector. "Meantime, sit tight. I guess I've got a little surprise-packet for you now."

"Oo! Something new?" asked Bessie Bunter.

"Something," Leila replied, a hint of griminess in her voice, "very new. I guess we're going to see the first part of this masterpiece in slow motion."

Everybody sat still, eyes glued to the screen. It seemed that suddenly the room had become charged with tension, with drama. There was something in the voice in which Leila made her announcement which stirred them all.

A square of light flickered on the screen.

Then the film started. The scene opened with the ruined monument near Friardale village church, showing the monument in the foreground, a hedge on the right, and beyond that hedge Nicholls' Nurseries. A rabbit in slow motion ran across the face of the film and disappeared.

Now there came more movement. The branches of the hedge between the monument and the nurseries were moving. They saw the branches bend backwards. A hand and arm appeared. From Lorna Millerchip went up a little cry.

"Shut up!" hissed someone.

Now a girl's face appeared—it was a girl wearing a Cliff House hat. What a hunted one was that face, and what a gasp went up as it was recognised!

"Lorna! Lorna Millerchip!"

"Look here—" Lorna cried agitatedly.

"Sit down!"

She was forced down. With tingling pulses the Form watched. In that inexorable slow motion Leila unravelled the film. They saw Lorna spring for a clump of trees behind the monument; they saw her disappear. And then Leila spoke.

"That film," she said, "was taken on Tuesday. I'll just bother you all, I guess, to look at the time by the church clock."

"Why, it's just after ten to two!" Rosa Rodworth cried. "Then—Lorna, you cat, you were the girl who did the damage in Nicholls' Nurseries!"

Uproar then. Somebody switched on the lights. It revealed Lorna, pale, motionless, her face wearing a hunted, incredulous look. Miss Bullivant and Miss Charmant rose, their faces grim.

"Lorna!" cried Miss Bullivant in horror.

Lorna gasped.

"I—I—I—" she stuttered. "Oh

dear! Well, he asked for it!" she flared out. "He reported me three weeks ago for trespassing, didn't he, and got me a gating. I vowed I'd pay him out—and I did! I—I mean—"

"You mean," Miss Bullivant said icily, "that you did that damage deliberately. And not content with having deliberately done it, you were prepared to allow the whole school to suffer!"

Lorna's face was like starch.

"But—but—no!" she cried suddenly. "No, this is a trap—a trap! That film is faked! Leila must have faked it, because—"

"Because, I guess, you thought you'd destroyed it last night!" Leila's lips curled. "I had an idea you'd try to get at it before it was developed," she said. "That's why I took it out of the camera and substituted an old one that didn't matter. You all wondered where I was last night, didn't you? Well, I was out—rushing that film to the developers, and to-night I was late because I went to fetch it back from the developers. And I guess," she added bitterly, "that this was your game all along, Lorna Millerchip. You tried to mess up the friendship between Marcelle and me because you didn't want that film to be finished until you had been able to get hold of it. And by becoming Marcelle's friend you had a better chance of getting it."

A little cry went up from Marcelle.

"Lorna! Is—is zat true?"

But Lorna's haggard, terrified face told its own tale. There was silence. Marcelle stood shaken. But as Lorna, sobbing now, was led away, she turned impulsively to the American junior.

"Leila! Oh, Leila! I am ze fool—ze great fool!" she said. "How can you forgive me?"

Leila grinned.

"Just easy!" she said.

"And ze Paris trip?" Marcelle shook her head. "Lorna, she will not come—oh!" she said. "Leila, is it zat you can get ready to come as before?"

Leila grinned again.

"I guess there's no getting ready to do," she said. "I'm packed. I'm ready." And while Marcelle blinked she took her arm. "Marcelle, I knew this was going to happen, and so I got myself all pre-

pared this afternoon to come away with you to-night. Happy now?"

Marcelle's face was radiant.

"And you?" she asked.

"Me, too, I guess. No more quarrelling, eh? We go to Paris together—to-night?"

"And we," Babs cried with a laugh, "will jolly well come to see you off. Three cheers for Marcelle and Leila, girls!"

And those cheers were given with hearty good will.

They reached the ears of Lorna Millerchip, who, in Miss Primrose's study at the moment, was listening to her fate.

And that fate—

Her pocket-money withheld for the term. A period of one whole month confined to bounds.

AND SO, at last, the clouds rolled away.

With Farmer Nicholls satisfied, the threat of gating lifted, and Marcelle and Leila cheerfully despatched on their way to France that night, Cliff House regained its enthusiasm for the exhibition.

On the morrow that exhibition was held, and though Leila was not there, it was one of her photographs which won the first prize in the junior section.

Babs & Co. glowed at that. And Babs & Co. both glowed and laughed at the surprise of the show. That surprise was a photograph of Bessie Bunter's—a photograph with a roof of a house, a full moon, Clara's feet, and parts of hedges all mixed up on one film. The reason, of course, was that Bessie, in her enthusiasm, had forgotten to wind the film after taking each snap, with the extraordinary result that she had about four or five views on one negative. Nevertheless, Bessie entered that, and the judges, looking upon it as an attempt to depict a surrealist subject, awarded her the prize for the most original snapshot.

Was Bessie proud and pleased! And did Bessie brag and boast about her photographic skill! But nobody minded, least of all the delighted chums of the Fourth Form—delighted because Leila and Marcelle, whose friendship had stretched nearly to breaking point, were united once again!

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.



NOT WANTED at CLIFF HOUSE!

To Letty Green, born in humble circumstances and denied the opportunities of most girls, the biggest thing that ever happened to her was when she went to Cliff House. But—Cliff House, particularly the Second Form, into which Letty went, was a frightening place, for Eunice Hunter, the mean-spirited younger sister of prefect Helen Hunter, deliberately tries to make Letty's life a misery. Tender-hearted Dolores Essendon, the youngest girl in the school, and Babs & Co., loyally rally round Letty, until . . .

But read this superb Hilda Richards story for yourself next week.

COMPLETE
THIS WEEK

Another fascinating story of Merry England in the Middle Ages.

SECRET HELPER to ROBIN HOOD

By IDA MELBOURNE



"'Tis the Baron! Beware!"

THE Lady Fayre le Feuvre wrapped her shabby old brown cloak about her, and then, flinging it out as though it formed a bird's wings, laughed and danced in the sunny wood.

Spring was in the air, and she sprang in the air, too, with sheer joy and light-heartedness. There were wild flowers in the woods; new green leaf was showing, and the birds sang gaily. It was enough to make any girl dance.

Had her uncle, the Baron le Feuvre of Longley Castle, seen her then, he would have roared like a bull. He always roared like a bull when he was angry; and this sight would have made him furious. For Fayre was a lady, his niece, and had no right to be in the woods at all, still less to be there dressed so shabbily.

But Fayre was not ashamed to wear it. She liked it even more than the rich red, gold-trimmed frock which she wore in the magnificent Norman castle. For this frock and cloak were her passport to freedom and happiness.

Thus dressed, she was but a village maid. It did not matter what she did. She could dance and sing, speak to friendly people—yes, even to Robin Hood, the outlaw.

It was to see Robin Hood that she now went jaunting through the woods; for he had promised to teach her how to whistle bird songs so that even the birds were mistaken.

Of a sudden, however, her dance ended. She stood quite still, and held her breath.

For ahead of her in the thick undergrowth there had been a movement. Not a movement that a rabbit would make, low down, nor any other small animal. It was a movement that suggested a larger animal, perhaps even—a wolf.

Anxiously Fayre groped for her whistle. Robin Hood had given her the whistle, which made a shrill noise disliked by wolves; and because of it, she had the courage to venture right into

the depth of the wood far from the road.

The bush stirred more, and her heart froze. And then—then suddenly a large shape moved into view, a horned head followed by a bulky, bony body.

"A—a cow!" gasped Fayre, and laughed.

She laughed so loudly and so suddenly that the cud-chewing cow goggled at her, wheeled in fright, and galloped off.

Almost immediately a girl ran into view, almost breathless from much running.

She was shabby as Fayre was, and obviously poor. In one hand she held a length of coiled rope, and Fayre knew that the girl was a cow-herd's daughter.

"You are looking for a cow?" asked Fayre.

"Oh, dear; for six of them, for all our cattle!" groaned the girl. "Cows and bullocks. Some rascal has broken down the fence that railed them into my father's field, and now they have wandered away."

She spoke with such distress that Fayre knew that it must be a very serious business; even though, as a young

And she at once ran in the direction of the laughter. After some twenty yards running, she came in sight of the glade, and what she saw there made her laugh, too.

Gay Robin Hood was mounted on a bullock's back, while some of his men, gathered round, were roaring with laughter.

For the bullock was not so easy by any means to ride as a horse. It bucked and jumped and plunged and reared, so that Robin Hood, bounced and bumped, clung on with great difficulty. But as the farmer's daughter joined Fayre, the outlaw was pitched off, to collapse on the ground, to the accompaniment of his men's merry laughter.

The bullying baron, Fayre's uncle, had robbed a farmer of his cattle—so to put matters right Fayre became a Fairy Queen.

lady of the castle, she really had very little knowledge of a farmer's affairs.

"They will come back," she said. "Perhaps, at evening, they will want their home."

The peasant girl looked at her quizzically, and then shook her head. "Not if the outlaws find them," she said. "This is a trick of Robin Hood's. He is called the friend of the poor—but are we not poor? We have a few cattle, but it is little enough they earn us in the milk they give, or what the butcher pays for them! And now, if they are gone, why—why—" She gave a gesture of utter despair. "Why, everything is gone! My father will be ruined—"

Fayre's heart was touched. "Oh, then we must get them back. But please don't blame Robin Hood; for I am sure he would not do this."

A shout of laughter came then from a glade a hundred yards distant, and Fayre, recognising it, wheeled.

"Why, that is Robin Hood himself. I know his laugh too well to mistake it!" she exclaimed.

Laughing himself, albeit ruefully, he stood up, rubbing his elbow.

"A frisky fellow," he said. "But I made the wager, for I counted a hundred while on his back."

Fayre clapped her hands in approval, and the young outlaw, turning, recognised her, and bowed deeply.

"The mystery maid!" he exclaimed. "Well met. You have come in time to see the sport. I am challenging the baron to combat in the lists. He was once a champion, and now he will have good chance to prove his merit. Armed with quarter-staves, we will mount young bullocks and joust for honour."

The idea of her uncle, the baron, being mounted on a bullock, made Fayre laugh merrily. Robin Hood did not know that the baron was her uncle, but anyone would have thought it funny to mount the burly, beefy baron on a bullock.

Or so Fayre, and Robin Hood thought; but there was someone who held a contrary opinion. The farmer's daughter, a flash in her eyes, stepped forward.

ANOTHER SUPERB HILDA RICHARDS STORY



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"By what right, Robin Hood, do you make sport with my father's cattle? Is it to amuse such as you that they are reared and fed?"

Robin Hood's laughter died.

"Your father's cattle? I did think they might be the baron's since he claims these woods as his."

"Some rascal set them free," said the girl. "Some rascal who wanted to mount them—or steal them perhaps!"

Fayre, knowing that Robin Hood robbed only the rich, coloured at this charge against a gay young man she regarded as her good friend. But Robin Hood although he looked unusually grave, was not angry.

"Your pardon, young miss," he said to the girl. "But neither I nor my men have freed your cattle! But we will gladly help you to round them up."

"And I, too," said Fayre eagerly.

The girl's expression changed, for Robin Hood's manner was charming and sincere.

"We'll soon find them," said Fayre.

With Robin Hood leading, and Friar Tuck, fat and jolly, and the huge fellow humorously called Little John rallying the other outlaws, it was not long before the lost cattle were trailed and assembled.

Fayre, running hither and thither, chasing cows and young bullocks, and shooting them back towards the main group, enjoyed every minute of it.

She had forgotten the castle and the fact that she would have to return there before her absence was noted; and in fact, she did not think of anyone there until a trumpet sounded.

It was a soldier's trumpet, and following it came the roaring voice of the Baron le Feuvre:

"Robin Hood! We have him trapped! Archers, prepare!"

Fayre screamed a warning:

"Robin Hood! 'Tis the baron! Beware!"

Then she flung herself low as arrows sang towards her.

Captured in Her Own Castle!

FAYRE knew how the baron had vowed to capture Robin Hood; knew, too, that he had often nearly had his wish, only the daring, wily outlaw had been too clever for him.

In a pitched battle Robin Hood could have no hope of victory against the baron's Norman soldiers, all clad in chain-mail and well armed, and far superior in numbers, too.

It was wiliness that aided Robin Hood, courage, and his woodcraft. So Fayre, giving warning, hoped that he would escape now.

And her heart leaped with joy when she heard his hunting horn give a signal to his men. There was no thought of fleeing from combat. But when Robin Hood fought, he chose to fight where the woods aided his methods.

"Hail, baron!" he shouted. "The battleground is a quarter mile farther on! Make haste, and we will await you! When you meet a flight of arrows you will know that the battle has begun!"

Fayre dodged back towards a mighty oak-tree, and took shelter behind it as the baron, her uncle, came cantering forward on his charger, armed in chain-mail.

He made a brave figure, a shining helmet on his head, gleaming sword in his hand, and the farmer's daughter, guarding her roped cattle, paled. For the baron was a man whose word was law in these parts, and mercy was unknown to him.

Meekly the girl dropped a curtsy.

"Hah!" cried the baron, noticing her and the cattle. "So these are Robin Hood's spoils? Men, take charge of the cattle. We have let him get away, but the spoils we keep."

Soldiers ran forward, and, giving no heed to the girl's protests, surrounded the cattle and took the ropes from her.

"Oh, my good lord," cried the girl, in distress, "these cattle are my father's!"

"Did Robin Hood steal them?"

"Why, no!"

"Then what are they doing in my wood—eh?" snarled the baron. "You send your cattle into my woods, do you? If they are your cattle! You know the law! Any cattle found straying in this wood are mine!"

Fayre crept from behind the tree. She had met the baron face to face before in her disguise, and because his sight was imperfect, and she was able by grimaces to alter her appearance, she had no fear of being recognised.

"My lord—" she said, in quavering tone.

"Huh! Who are you? How dare you speak to me without a curtsy! You'll find yourself in the stocks, my girl!" he thundered.

Fayre dropped a curtsy.

"My lord," she quavered, "I do but bear witness that the fence that guarded this girl's cattle was broken! It was by no fault of hers they roved free!"

She knew her uncle's expression well, and quaked as she noted his triumphant smile.

"A broken fence. 'Twas doubtless in bad repair. Losing his cattle will teach the farmer wisdom," he answered, "if they are indeed his!"

"The bells on their necks bear our name," said the girl.

"Bells! Are there bells?" roared the baron to his men.

There was a hurried search, a shaking of heads, and a decided negative reply.

"No, my lord. No bells; no sign whose cattle they are."

"Aha! Cattle stolen by the outlaw—claimed by this wench! My girl," the baron added grimly to the farmer's daughter, "to pretend these cattle are yours when they are not is theft! Come later to my castle with good claim and proof. The matter will then be examined."

And the baron signalled his men to take the cattle away.

Fayre's anger rose, and a glint came to her eyes. For she knew, as the distressed girl suspected, that once the cattle were in the baron's compounds they would remain there. He would accept no proof that they were hers.

A moment before his arrival there had been bells on the animals' necks. Where were they now? Fayre could guess easily enough—the baron's men had taken them off.

Infuriated to see a poor peasant and her father robbed by one so rich as her uncle, Fayre took courage.

"Beware, baron!" she said in a croaking voice.

He stared down at her, and then started.

"I have seen you before!" he said keenly.

Fayre bowed her head. Once before in these clothes she had confronted him in a cottage owned by an old woman reputed to be a witch, and the baron had taken her for the witch's daughter. He had thought then that she, too, had some power of witchcraft. So now she decided to play that part again.

"I am the witch's daughter, my noble lord!" she said. "Beware!"

The Baron le Feuvre made a short, jeering sound of contempt, but there was uneasiness in his eyes. A superstition, ignorant man, he was never quite sure whether to believe in the powers of witches or not.

"So you'll put a spell on me—huh?" he said threateningly.

"Beware! The cattle are bewitched!" Fayre went on. "They will bring evil on the castle!"

"Bewitched? They will give no milk?" he asked.

Fayre knew that her spellbinding would be made a joke if she said that the cows would not give milk, and they subsequently did.

"Ah, not so!" she said. "But they will give—they will give green milk."

The baron stared and then laughed. "Ho, ho, ho! Green milk! Ha, ha, ha!"

And while he was overcome with laughter, Fayre slipped away through the wood and ran as hard as she could towards the road.

It was best that she should be back at the castle before the baron returned.

But the cattle? As she ran, Fayre vowed that now she had set that spoil the cows should give green milk. When the milk was in the buckets, standing, she would make quite sure that it turned green.

She was breathless when she reached the castle barbican; but, carrying her basket of wild flowers on her arm, she persuaded the guard that she had a reason to see the Lady Fayre, who needed some special flowers.

The guard had seen her often in this kit, and besides, being but humble soldiers, they were not well acquainted with the appearance of the Lady Fayre, except at a great distance. They let her pass without question, therefore, when she had made her explanation, and Fayre hurried discreetly to the keep, and up the wide stone stairway to her bed-chamber.

It was some five minutes later that, once again in her rich red velvet frock, she looked from a window of her school-room, and saw the baron re-enter the castle. Behind him came his mounted men, knights and squires, and then the cattle, lowing, led by soldiers.

The baroness, happening to be there with Fayre, gave a murmur of pleasure.

"I was wondering what fare I should provide for Saturday's banquet. This is indeed thoughtful of the baron," she smiled.

Fayre gave a horrified start as she heard that, for Saturday was but two days ahead.

"You mean, my aunt, that the bullocks will be killed?"

"Yes, Fayre—to-morrow, that they may be well hung," nodded the baroness. "There shall be good milk, too, from such fine cows. But I trust my lord did not pay too great a price for them."

Fayre thought of the price he had paid—just nothing—and of the poor farmer and his daughter, now without means of livelihood, and her cheeks reddened with rage.

"When this castle is mine—" she murmured aloud, in a tone so fierce that the grim baroness frowned upon her.

"While your uncle lives you are his ward, and the castle, though doubtless yours in name, is his," she said coldly. "But what will you do different when, if ever, it is yours to rule?"

Fayre hesitated, for the baroness had a ready hand to box ears, and an acid tongue.

"Why, I shall buy cattle," she said simply.

The mystified baroness told her that she was a stupid, brainless girl, and went down to praise the baron for his "marketing."

It was in sad mood that Fayre settled to her work with her tutor, the bearded Venerable Brie. And when, with laborious care, she wrote "Honesty is the best policy," she underlined it carefully.

Then, smiling grimly, she asked her

tutor if she should show her penmanship later to the baron.

"Why, yes, it will give him great pleasure," said the tutor innocently.

Fayre thereupon wrote further wise sayings much to the point. "Evil deeds wreak evil harvest." "Guilty conscience steals away courage." "Iron armour guards not against the stab of justice."

But as the baron could not read, she had perforce to read them aloud to him as he was eating his evening meal at sundown.

"'Tis all true," he grunted. "Learn it well, as I myself did when young. But you have writed well, and as reward you shall have a glass of fresh milk."

"Of milk?" exclaimed Fayre sharply. "From my new cows. Go you down to the dairy."

Fayre needed no second bidding, but before she went to the dairy she slipped to the school-room, and, in the absence of the Venerable Brie, opened his desk, where he kept many secret dyes brought from Ireland. With those dyes it was his wont to illuminate the account he was writing of the baron's deeds in the Crusade.

But Fayre needed them for another purpose. The dye she chose was one that turned water a brilliant green; and what it would do to water she did not doubt it would do to milk.

When the baron saw the green milk he would believe that the cows were bewitched, and be only too eager to get rid of them!

But Fayre did not reach the dairy. As she passed near the castle entrance she saw the drawbridge lowered, and one of the baron's stewards rode in.

Hardly was he inside when commotion arose. A guard walked backward, fighting desperately to defend himself against a horde of angry villagers armed with sticks.

Angry voices rent the air, shouting for the baron, calling him a thief and rogue, and demanding back the cattle.

Fayre paled as she saw them. Reckless and courageous they were, coming to stand by their friend the farmer; but although they had defeated the three men at the drawbridge, what chance had they against the hundred soldiers who could be summoned instantly?

"Oh, stop! Stop!" cried Fayre.



"I AM the witch's daughter!" Fayre cried in a croaking voice, pointing at the rascally baron. "If you steal the farmer's cattle—beware!" Her uncle frowned uncertainly.

On the instant three of the men and a woman turned to her.

"The young lady—we'll take her! We'll hold her to ransom for the cattle!"

Fayre drew back, turning to run; but before she had gone a yard hands grasped her, and she was a prisoner!

"I Am the Fairy Queen!"

FAYRE, dragged over the drawbridge, shouted in vain. Her words of protest drowned, she was lifted on to a horse's back and galloped off.

"I am your friend—I am your friend!" she cried, in distress.

"You are our prisoner," said the burly man who rode the horse. "The baron has my cattle, and I have his niece."

Fayre nearly let out the truth—nearly told him that she had spoken to his daughter. But if ever once she let the truth of her dual character be known it would reach the baron's ears, and never more would she be given a chance to leave the castle.

She must hold her peace.

She did not fear that she would be harmed; for the villagers were kindly, and even though they had reason to hate the baron, they would not wreak their spite on her.

What distressed Fayre was the thought of her ruined plan.

At the edge of the wood they halted, and then Fayre's heart beat anew, for from the wood came Robin Hood.

"Fools!" he cried, more in pity than in anger. "You heeded not my advice. I said do not storm the castle. The baron will not forget this. And who have you there?"

"The Lady Fayre. Our prisoner!"

Fayre was lifted down, and she turned, white-faced, to Robin Hood, who did not recognise her in her new garb.

"The Lady Fayre! Do we take girls as prisoners? Set her free!" he cried. "There are other ways than this."

And Robin Hood swept round his quarter-staff as though to defend Fayre against all comers. The crowd fell back.

Then Fayre, hands clasped, spoke softly and demurely.

"Fear not," she said. "Your cattle shall be returned. I—I promise it. I have heard that there is a spell on the cattle, and the baron—"

She was cut short by the sound of a trumpet.

"Flee!" cried Robin Hood. "My men have ambushed the lane, and will hold off the baron's soldiers."

His arm went round Fayre, and he lifted her easily over the hedge.

"Pretty maid," he smiled, "get you back to the castle without loss of a moment. And, for kindness' sake, tell the baron that the villagers set you free upon your promise that the cattle should be returned."

"Gallant Robin Hood, it shall be done," Fayre said, and thanked him deeply.

She could not stay to see the battle. Such sights terrified her; but she did spot the baron rein up, as a hempen rope which had lain slack on the ground was tautened in front of his horse. The horse reared, and the baron dismounted without intention.

The other horses slithered to a halt, and before swords could be drawn Robin Hood and his men rushed in with their quarter-staves.

Fayre, gasping from running, reached the castle, to be greeted by a relieved cheer. The moment she could she slipped away to the large dairy, where girls were taking buckets of fresh milk from the new cows.

Seizing a moment when the shed was empty, Fayre secretly dropped green pigment into all the buckets, staying only until the first pale shades of colour showed.

"And now, my lord baron, 'twill be more than you dare to drink that milk!" she vowed, as she sped away.

THE BARON had returned to his interrupted supper in none too good a temper, his right arm numb, and a bruise on his face. He was certainly not in a frame of mind to listen sweetly to the message which Fayre had promised Robin Hood she would deliver.

But the message had to be given; and Fayre dropped a curtsy to her uncle, who promptly rated her for allowing herself to be captured.

"Oh, my lord, the villagers set me free!" she said.

"They feared my wrath."

"My lord uncle, I did promise the cattle should be returned," said Fayre.

The baron nearly choked over some meat, goggled at her, spluttered with rage, and then, knocking back his stool, sprang up.

"You promised—you! Never—never shall the cattle be given back! How dare you! Pah! Ungrateful, stupid brat!"

Fayre backed before his wrath, moving to the far end of the table, very glad that some of the knights were now returning to the meal.

"This fool child," roared the baron, as Sir Geoffrey asked what was amiss—"she promised to give back the cattle to—"

"Why?" said Sir Geoffrey.

Fayre spoke weakly.

"They give bad milk," she said.

"Bad milk?" said the baron scoffingly.

"You a judge of milk! Huh! Why?" But his expression changed, and Fayre knew that he was remembering the threat in the wood. "How so—bad milk?" he added.

"Why, 'tis green," said Fayre.

"Green?"

The knights murmured aloud, and looks were exchanged.

"'Tis the spell!" they muttered.

Then loud above their muttering

came a shrill, girlish voice from the corridor, and a plump, red-faced dairymaid, a milk bucket in her hand, pushed through the knights.

"Oh, my lord—oh, my lord," she shrilled, her eyes wide, "these cows be proper haunted! They do give green milk! Look, look! Green milk!"

The bucket was taken to the baron, who stared into it, brows knit; then he sneered.

"Pah! They have been eating grass, that's all," he said. "What fool gave the cows grass?"

One or two of the knights tittered, and the dairymaid blinked at him.

"Cows always do eat grass, my lord," she said. "But the milk is now green; 'twas white when it came from the cows."

The baron stiffened; and Fayre, watching him closely, saw a nasty glint come into his eyes.

"So-ho!" he said in rolling tone.

"There's trickery—eh? The milk was white, and turns green. Some rascal villager sneaked into the dairy—huh? With whose cunning dye he turned our milk green, did he?"



Joyfully Lola Sharman looked forward to returning to her home in Mexico. She would see her gay, laughing father again. And she would start out on her career as a dancer. Then Lola discovered a secret that was to change everything. For her father was—a bandit!

You'll revel in every word of—
THE BANDIT'S DAUGHTER

Read it in the
GIRLS' CRYSTAL
2d. EVERY FRIDAY.

The knights murmured approval of the thought; and Fayre felt suddenly afraid, knowing that her plan was ruined. For the baron, having suspected a trick, would not believe now that the cows were bewitched.

It was a desperate moment for Fayre. With only faint relief she noted how reluctantly the baron sniffed a cupful of the milk.

"Sir Geoffrey, you are brave enough to drink this milk?"

"Oh, sir knight, 'tis bewitched!" said the dairymaid, and ducked as the baron struck at her.

But Fayre, a sudden idea in mind, stepped forward.

"Stupid wench! Bewitched, indeed!" she said, and, snatching her goblet, she dipped it into the milk and tossed it to her lips.

Her swift action had prevented anyone's seeing how much she took—a mere tablespoonful. And it was the same amount she showed in the goblet after apparently taking a long draught.

"There! Am I bewitched?" she

mocked. "Am I changed at all?" And she smiled.

"Why—why, no, my lady!" faltered the girl.

"No, indeed!" said the baron in scorn. "No—"

He broke off, because Fayre suddenly let out a shrill peal of laughter.

"Trala! Ha, ha, ha! Tra, la!" she cried, lifting the hem of her frock and dancing. "Who am I? Who am I?"

The baron and the knights stared blankly as Fayre skipped on to the table and danced there, kicking off goblets.

"Who—who— You are the Lady Fayre," said Sir Geoffrey.

"No, no, no! I am the Queen of the Fairies!" laughed Fayre, rolling her eyes and flinging her hair in all directions.

The baron fell back, and his knights huddled together; while the dairymaid, hands to pale cheeks, squealed in fright.

"She is bewitched! Oh, oh! Do not cross her!"

Fayre ran to the window.

"You say I am not the Fairy Queen?" she asked her uncle. "I will show you. I will fly—I will jump from this window and fly down! I will fly to the magic cows! They, too, are fairies!"

Fayre went so far as to stand on the window-ledge; but then one of the younger knights, springing forward, caught her in his arms.

Never had the baron looked so pale; never had he quaked so as he saw Fayre protesting she was the Fairy Queen and promising him a trip to the moon.

He found his voice at last and gave a bull-like roar.

"Set the cattle adrift! Send them away!"

The knights rushed to obey, shocked by the sight of Fayre so bewitched that she thought herself the Fairy Queen.

"How shall we cure her? How shall this witchery be taken from her?" moaned the baron. "Send for the Venerable Brie. Send for the old hag who launders."

Fayre, on the table again, shook a forefinger.

"I am happy now," she said. "Be proud you have the Queen of the Fairies here, sir, whoever you may be; and, above all, I beg you give me not honey, give me not pure milk, give me not freshly roasted chicken, and sweetmeats, or I shall become normal again."

That settled it. The baron ordered her honey, pure milk, freshly roasted chicken, and sweetmeats. And to that lovely meal, singing gaily, Fayre presently sat down.

Only when the meal was over did she show signs of being normal. But a good night's rest would be needed to complete the strange cure.

Needless to say, in the morning Fayre was herself again, and looked puzzled when she was told about the Fairy Queen, but mentioned a strange dream she had had.

Later, escaping for a while from the castle, she sought the field belonging to the robbed farmer. The cows and bullocks grazed there peacefully, tended by the girl Fayre had met in the woods, while the farmer himself was mending the fence.

"If I had indeed been the Fairy Queen I could have worked no better kindness," smiled Fayre, as she saw the happiness of them all, humans and cattle. "I am content!"

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

MEET the young Lady Fayre and gallant Robin Hood in another fascinating COMPLETE story in next week's issue. And be sure to tell all your friends about this lovely series.

Fun and Excitement Galore—and Mystery as well—if you go—

ON TOUR with YIN SU



FOR NEW READERS.

MAY JOLIPHANT, a cheery English girl, and her less daring chum, DAPHNE YARDLEY, have the task of conducting around England a quaint, high-spirited but most likeable Chinese girl, YIN SU. Yin Su's governess is apparently too ill to accompany the girls. After various adventures, they discover that a mystery woman wearing an emerald ring is scheming against them. They go to a gipsy camp, where Yin Su, trying on the future queen's costume, is mistaken for her by rival gipsies and kidnapped in a horse and trap. Rescuing her, the chums resume their journey, but get lost in a mountain mist. Suddenly they hear a dog barking. Can it lead them to safety?

(Now read on.)

It All Depended on Binks!

"COME on, Daphne!" urged May encouragingly. "It's a hope—it's a chance. If we stay here the dog may go, and then we're just lost."

Daphne struggled to her feet. She was tired, and her shoes were tight after so much scrambling over the mountain-side. Merely putting her weight on her feet made her wince.

"I—I'll wait here," she faltered. "The dog's not howling now."

"Come on!" begged May. "Yin Su and I will help you, and— Hark! There he is again!"

The sound of the dog's howling was eerie and uncanny in the mist, and yet to the three girls it was now an almost welcome sound. At any other time they might have shivered a little; but, as May had said, where a dog was there was surely a house, or, anyway, people. That howl was the first sound they had heard for an hour except their own voices. It had given them hope.

Daphne struggled up, and May and Yin Su linked arms with her.

"I'll be all right," said Daphne tearfully. "But I'll never—never go out on a mountain in mist again."

"We none of us will," agreed May. "Not without a compass."

All around, the damp white mist drifted in the faint breeze, and every object was concealed by it save only the ground at their feet and bushes and stones a few yards ahead.

But now they had a guide—the howling dog—and there was no longer danger of walking in a circle.

"All right, boy—coming!" called May. "Good dog! My golly, I wish I had a bone to give him."

"We've got sandwiches," said Daphne.

"Golly, so we have! And it must be lunch-time, too," exclaimed May. "I haven't had time to think about being hungry, though."

The dog, hardly a hundred yards away, yapped now, and, when they called, responded excitedly.

"Hurrah!" cheered May. "I bet he's in the garden of a cottage. There'll be a nice old woman, a fire—"

The dog was much nearer than he sounded, for a mound rose in front of

Just as May & Co. planned to help a troupe of dancing girls, Yin Su received a startling message :

"DANCE AT YOUR PERIL."

them, and his yapping came from it. He was not beyond the mound, yet they could not see him on this side of it.

Between them and the misty mound was a line of gorse-bushes, and May, pressing forward to it, looked right and left.

"Hallo, boy! Good dog!" she called, halting a yard from the gorse-bushes.

"He's in the bushes," said Daphne, surprised.

"Yes, yes," murmured Yin Su.

She ran forward, then gasped and started to totter. May, flinging out her arm, caught her by the coat and held her just as she swayed forward on the brink of a crevasse!

The line of gorse-bushes, safe and friendly looking, was a trap. A foot beyond them the ground fell away in a narrow gorge not visible until they were almost into it. And on the other side of the gorge rose the mound.

"But the dog—" said Daphne,

May dropped to her knees and called, bringing a response from below.

"My golly! The poor thing!" she exclaimed. "He's down there in the gorge."

All three knelt then and stared down into the mistiness, whence came the dog's excited yapping. There was no sound of pain in his cries, merely delight.

"All right, all right," soothed May. "We'll get you."

Then she looked from Daphne to Yin Su, and gave a shaky laugh. Daphne could not laugh. Tears of disappointment shone in her eyes, and it was a hard battle she fought with herself not to let them become her master.

For this was their journey's end. Instead of being led to a house they had found a poor trapped dog as lost and deserted as they were.

"But I'm glad we found him," said May, "even if it hasn't helped us. Think of him being there for days—and it might be weeks in this lonely place. And perhaps, but for him, we might have slipped down there ourselves."

She was glad that it was something that would take their minds from their own plight, for this disappointment really brought its seriousness home to them.

They were utterly and completely lost. Until the mist lifted they had no earthly idea where they were, and walking, as they had discovered, would merely bring them back near their starting point.

"Come on—never mind us!" said May briskly. "Before we think of anything else we've got to get him up. He may have been there for days. He may be ravenous."

May crawled along the edge of the gorge, looking for a way down, and Daphne, brushing away her tears, called down soothingly to the dog, and then joined in the search of the precipice-edge for an easy slope.

It was Yin Su who, going in the

—BY—

ELIZABETH CHESTER

opposite direction, found the end of the gorge. Instead of running right across the plateau, it ended in what appeared to be the course of an old waterfall that had cut its way through the ground.

There was no water flowing now, but the course was terraced down, and, although steep, not dangerous to follow for those who used care.

"I'll go first," said May, unfastening the belt from her coat. "Daphne, hold the end of this. Take yours off if it's strong at all. We haven't ropes, but this will help."

May climbed down warily, keeping a tight grip on her belt, the other end of which Daphne wrapped round one wrist, gripping Yin Su with her free hand.

As May walked the mist seemed to clear for a yard's gap before her. With

immense relief, she saw that the fall of the watercourse was not steep, although it was slippery.

"All right—stay where you are!" she warned Daphne and Yin Su. "I can go down now."

Gripping a tough bush, she tried her weight, and then, passing herself from one bush to another, getting grips where she could, went down the course of the dried waterfall to the bottom of the crevasse.

At the bottom was a four-foot drop, and there the dog, a wire-haired terrier, barked excitedly, hurling himself in vain at the jump.

When May dropped to the soft, springy ground the dog, almost frenzied, jumped up at her, whining and yapping; and when she stooped he licked her face, his tongue flicking in and out, his whole body quivering.

"All right, chappie—no bruises—no bones broken?" asked May. "Good!"

Then she called up to her friends, who were asking if she wore all right. She assured them she was, told them that the dog was unharmed, and then—then wondered how on earth she was to get back.

But that was a problem soon solved. She lifted the dog clear of the four-foot bank, and as he stood quaking, slapped him to make him move forward—which he did with a leap.

Then up she scrambled before he slipped back, gripped him, and hauled him forward, until presently, getting a sound grip, he ran on ahead of her to the top.

"Hurrah!" cheered Daphne. "Hurrah!" gasped May, when she rejoined them, none the worse for the adventure. "And here we are again—Babes in the Wood, four of us instead of three. Lost."

Daphne had already opened her packet of sandwiches, and gave some of the meat to the dog, who snapped it up and asked for more. Although obviously hungry, he did not eat ravenously, but only with the normal zest of a healthy dog.

"That means he can't have been here long," decided May in relief, and stooped to examine his collar. "Let's see who you are, what your name is—"

She ran her finger round his collar, and brought forward not a metal disc, but a small, tied-on label.

"A label!" gasped Daphne. "What a strange idea!"

May read the inscription aloud. "Binks, c/o Vero Dillon, Theatre Royal, Morsworth."

"Binks!" cried Daphne; and the dog looked up from his meat and barked.

"Another passenger for Morsworth," smiled May. "And just as lost as we are—"

But Yin Su shook her head. "Wise, intelligent dog never lost," she demurred. "Hungry dog eager to find home—but dog well filled with sandwich meat happy where he is."

Daphne took the hint, and refrained from offering Binks another sandwich, even becoming strong-minded when he sat up and flapped his paws.

"Home, Binks," said May. "Come on. Lead the way—"

Binks looked at her bright-eyed; then suddenly he ran on through the mist, turned, barked, waited for them, and ran forward again.

"Tally-ho!" cheered May. "Saved! He knows the way. He'll save us! Hurrah!"

And at the trot—because Binks bounded ahead like a hare, and could hardly wait for them—they forged on, hope renewed. For as Yin Su had wisely remarked, an intelligent dog is never lost.

One Good Turn—!

IT was ten minutes later that Binks suddenly went racing ahead out of sight, without waiting for them, and they heard his excited barking in the distance. But not only his barking was heard; a girlish voice came, too.

"Binks! Oh! How marvellous—Binks! And I thought you were lost for ever and ever—"

Out of the mist ran May and Yin Su, with Daphne hobbling behind.

"Hurrah!" cheered May exultantly, as she saw the girl—and behind her a large object with lights, a stationary motor-coach.

The girl, fair-haired, trim, smartly dressed, greeted them in surprise, and then heard the story of Binks' rescue—

Your Editor's address is:—
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Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

BETWEEN OURSELVES



MY DEAR READERS,—This week I want to tell you a little story, and make a small suggestion. The story is actually true, for it happened to me; and the suggestion is one which I know you will appreciate and certainly act upon when you discover what it is.

A few weeks ago I had occasion to visit a small niece of mine who was recovering from a childish ailment in hospital. Naturally, I searched around in my mind for some suitable little gifts to take her, and quite a nice collection I gathered.

Some sweets—if such luxuries were permitted by kindly nurses; some drawing-books and crayons; a doll's tea-set; some fruit, of course, and a bundle of old copies of the SCHOOLGIRL.

The whole parcel cost me perhaps the price of a few pipes of tobacco. But my goodness, you should have seen the happiness it brought that little niece of mine.

I'm sure I'll never forget her radiant face as long as I live.

But this, strangely enough, is not the end of the story. It is really only the beginning, for you see, I visited that same hospital—the same children's ward, in fact—only last week, this time to pay my respects to one of my neighbours' little boys, who has broken his leg.

I was delighted to find him marvellously cheery; full of good spirits; thoroughly at home, and well on the way to recovery. (In fact he's returning home to-morrow.)

But it was another discovery which gave me most food for thought. Do you know, those same copies of the SCHOOLGIRL which I had taken my niece weeks and weeks ago were still being passed round the ward!

Tattered and torn, some of them were, and kind nurses had repaired them with stamp-paper, but several little girls who had recently come to the ward were avidly reading them.

And more than once a swift, eager

exchange took place before my eyes. Somebody wanted the continuation of the serial; another wanted "the next Cliff House story"; a third little girl declared with shining eyes that she was going to carry out some of Patricia's hints right away! Please, nurse, could she have cardboard, paste, and scissors?

The moral of this little story, of course, is that books never age in a hospital. There are always new readers; new patients. I'm sure those SCHOOLGIRLS will be passed from hand to hand until they literally fall to pieces.

Now this is my suggestion, readers all. Why not send YOUR old SCHOOLGIRLS to a hospital? Or come to that, any old papers and books you would otherwise throw away? It would save you wondering what to do with them if Mr. Dustman frowns on taking bundles of papers—as he does in my case—and it would bring such happiness to others, over and over again.

You will think about it, won't you? But there—I know you will.

But I simply must fly on to next week's fine programme. First, we have another superb LONG COMPLETE Cliff House story, entitled:

"NOT WANTED AT CLIFF HOUSE!"

A very poignant, dramatic story, this, telling what happens when a new girl joins the Second Form at Cliff House—a little girl from the slums, Letty Green.

Letty cannot help her upbringing. She's true at heart, even if her ways are crude and rough, her sense of discipline almost nil. But Eunice Hunter, that mean, spiteful little creature in the Second, sets about making Letty's life a misery. Viciously, cruelly, she attacks the former slum child, until Letty's spirit is all but broken.

But Letty has staunch friends in Babs & Co., not to mention wee Dolores Essendon, the tiniest girl in the school, and on her behalf a tremendous conflict is waged; a conflict that involves almost the whole of Cliff House.

Don't miss this magnificent story; and also make sure of reading the continuation of "On Tour with Yin Su," the next delightful COMPLETE Lady Fayre and Robin Hood story, and some more of Patricia's Bright and Useful Pages.

With best wishes,

Your sincere friend,

THE EDITOR.

and his good guidance, interrupting now and then with expressions of gratitude.

"Dear old Binks. Fancy finding me!" exclaimed the girl. "He's been lost for half an hour or more; all the time we've been held up here. I am glad I put that label on him. You'd have known where to take him even if he hadn't brought you here."

"Where are we?" asked May.

"Oh—the Morsworth Road," said the girl, whose name was Vere Dillon. "Our motor-coach is held up by the mist. The driver has gone ahead to find a cottage and telephone that we'll be late. He says the mist will clear enough for us to get on. And my goodness, I hope so; we're due for a show."

It was only then that May, Daphne, and Yin Su realised that the motor-coach was occupied; for the interior lights had been turned off to spare the electricity for the fog and sidelights.

"You're acting at the Theatre Royal?" asked Daphne, deeply intrigued. "Not exactly acting," said Vere. "We're the Novelty Nine—or rather six. Talk of a chapter of accidents. My golly! First three of us had to go down with 'flu, and now—here we are stranded. And it's our first night of the tour."

"What a shame!" exclaimed May.

"Shame it is—" But Vere was interrupted by the waving of a torch and a shout in a man's voice.

"We're moving on. All aboard—"

"All aboard," said Vere. "Hurrah—and I say," she added, "that means you, too, if you're going our way—"

"Morsworth?" asked May. "Rather!"

Gladly they went with Vere to the motor-coach, where there was ample room for them. The other five of the Novelty Nine—now Novelty Six—greeted them warmly, and hearing the story of Binks' rescue, welcomed him, and insisted that May had been very brave.

"Not brave at all," said May.

And then she introduced herself, Daphne, and Yin Su, who came in for close scrutiny.

In fact, every girl of the troupe had been staring at the striking, pretty Chinese girl, noting her lovely hands, her grace, her almost porcelain clearness of skin, her dazzling bright eyes, and shapely mouth.

"Here's Miss Anderson!" exclaimed Vere presently.

A plump woman boarded the coach, and staring in surprise at the number present, counted them. Only then, adjusting her glasses, did she realise that three were strangers.

"Oh dear," she sighed. "And I really thought that in some magic way the other three had got well and caught us up. On the Symphony Six, Supple Six—Suitable Six—"

"Novelty Nine!" chorused the troupe.

May looked at Daphne and smiled.

"What a cheery crowd," she breathed.

"Novelty Nine it had better be with an empty stage," sighed Miss Anderson. "Oh—er—" she added eagerly. "Do you three dance?"

May, Daphne, and Yin would have gladly said "yes" if possible, but when it came to stage dancing, the honest answer had to be "no."

"Oh dear," said Miss Anderson sadly, and muttered only half-aloud: "The Sylph-like Six—"

But obviously nothing was so good as the Novelty Nine as a title for the troupe.

The motor-coach forged on slowly, but without danger, through the worst of the mist, and presently faced the downhill run. The mist cleared, and daylight shone. Below, at the foot of the hill, were the roofs of the town of Mors-



STOOPING beside the dog, May gestured through the mist. "Home, boy!" she cried. "Lead the way!" Daphne and Yin Su watched tensely. He was their only hope of getting to safety.

worth, the spires of two churches, and a green dome, the Theatre Royal, the sight of which brought from the troupe a glad cheer.

"And hurrah from us, too," said May. "At last—at last—"

At that moment, travelling fast, a dark saloon car overtook them, and at the sight of it May nudged Daphne, who bit her lip anxiously. In the back seat of that car, as they saw through its rear window, sat a woman in tweeds; but she did not look back.

May, in happy mood, blew a kiss. "Good-bye, Madame X," she called softly.

For Madame X it was in the car, baffled for once, unaware that they were so close at hand.

"And the last place she'll look's the Theatre Royal," murmured May.

The motor-coach entered the town, and stopped in front of a gay theatre, outside which were red-and-blue bills, and from which hurried an anxious-looking man.

"At last!" he exclaimed, looking into the coach, all smiles. "I had given you up. And all nine. That's splendid. It must be nine—nine or nothing, as we've billed that number."

Miss Anderson, May noticed, went a little pink and opened and shut her mouth.

"Tumble out, girls," said the theatre manager.

May glanced at Miss Anderson, who gave her a wry smile, and then a look of appeal.

"Please—could you just pretend to be with us for a little while until I can settle matters?" she asked softly. "It won't take long. Half an hour—just to give the impression—you understand? It won't mean your going on to the stage. But if you can come into the dressing-room—"

Yin Su answered promptly. "Most desirable ignorant Chinese girl must see inside English theatre to improve vacant mind," she smiled.

May laughed. "Well, bother my mind, but now I've got a chance of getting behind the scenes, I'm snapping at it. And you, Daphne—"

Daphne's eyes were shining. "Dare we?" she breathed.

"Duffer—just watch us and follow," said May.

"I Dare Not Dance—Now!"

MAY, Yin Su, and Daphne stepped down from the motor-coach with the others, and finding three small hampers spare, took one each. Just as though they had been doing it for years, they trooped in with the rest of the Novelty Nine, who, enjoying the joke, were giggling and winking.

Yin Su had come to England to study the life there; to see it in all its aspects. Perhaps the absent governess' idea was not for her to see behind the scenes of a theatre; but it was certainly Yin Su's.

"Tra, la! Tra, la, tra, la, la, la!" chanted May gleefully, as for the first time in her life she walked in through the door marked "stage."

They went past the doorman's little office-cum-cubby-hole, down a long, stone corridor, and halted as the old woman who had walked ahead opened a door.

"Here you are—large room for the whole nine," she said. "The chorus-room. And I'm your dresser, dearies."

In trooped the girls, and May, Daphne, and Yin Su looked about them with all the interest of visitors in a foreign country.

There were long tables with mirrors down the centre of the room, and at the sides there were cupboards for clothes, hooks, wall mirrors, a picture or two, a large clock, candlesticks, a photograph a previous occupier had left, a last year's calendar, and some fresh flowers in a tall vase.

But every girl made for the most pleasant thing in the room—the fire!

"Well, well!" breathed Miss Anderson, when she had sent the old dresser on an errand. "I don't know if I did right or wrong—"

"Right," chorused the girls merrily. "Dead right," said Vere, and Binks barked excitedly. "There, even Binks says so, and he usually argues."

"At least, we are nine," smiled May. "And if only we could dance!"

"Yes, if only," Miss Anderson sighed. There came a rap at the door and Miss Anderson, opening it, peeped out.

"Ah, Mr. Straker," she murmured. The room was hushed to hear what was said, and when they heard there came gasps.

"All on the stage in ten minutes, please, in practice kit," said the stage manager. "We must just run through the music!"

"Yes, yes—" said Miss Anderson hastily, then wheeled as he departed, and leaned against the door, her cheeks crimson. "Oh, my goodness—be sure your sins will find you out!" she gasped. "What are we to do—what ever are we to do, girls?"

"Practice kit means that we have to wear something?" May asked.

"Yes—shorts and shirts," said Miss Anderson. "There are enough and to spare. That is not the problem. It's just the dancing—"

"Just that," May agreed, and suddenly made up her mind. "We'll go on, Miss Anderson, and do our best!"

The other girls were already starting to change in brisk, unhurried way. Cases were unpacked, and there was a babel of talk.

Yin Su, unpacking the hamper she had carried in, had found shorts, and she at least, it was evident, intended to change.

"You can dance?" asked Miss Anderson eagerly.

Yin Su gave an exhibition step or two. Her movements were graceful, and it was quite obvious that she had danced a little—but whether she knew any of their steps was doubtful.

But Miss Anderson, studying her, suddenly brightened.

"The Chinese girl shall be the pivot," she exclaimed. "She need not do a great deal of dancing—and, ah! Brain-wave. Wait, wait, I think I can manage."

She bustled from the room, and Vere winked at May.

"She's a darling—but my goodness! She just rushes and circles round and nearly catches fire with flurry. But she's a sweet thing, and I'll say this. She gets good ideas. Where from we don't know. But they just flash into her nut."

"Then we'll change," May said.

Yin Su was already changed. In shorts and shirt she looked slighter than ever, slin- and graceful.

For a moment May, Daphne and Yin Su forgot about their mission at the post office. Instructions, even money, were quite forgotten.

Daphne was quaking, and looked as though she might faint; but Yin Su's eyes sparkled.

"Wear concealing masks?" she asked. "Masks—gracious, no!" said Vere, with a laugh. "Are we as hideous as that?"

"No, no," said Yin Su, quite shocked that she should think they needed masks. "But in China honourable ancestors moan gently if well-born girl show face to public in place of entertainment and dancing."

"Well, let 'em moan," said Vere, chuckling.

Yin Su lowered her eyes; for ancestors to a Chinese girl were sacred and revered. In all things their feelings had to be considered. Nevertheless, it was her pious hope that dancing without a mask would be forgiven her as this was England, and there were no Chinese in the audience.

Suddenly Miss Anderson bustled in. "I think I see how to fix things," she whispered. "On the stage, girls—or, rather, in the wings!"

Excited, yet anxious, filled with

misgivings, May, Daphne and Yin Su went with the others down the corridor, turned right and left, and then found themselves in the intriguing, mysterious wings at the side of the stage itself.

"Oh dear!" sighed Daphne. On the stage stood the stage manager in his shirtsleeves, talking to the orchestra conductor.

The whole theatre was otherwise empty and in darkness; and to May and Daphne it seemed most strange and unreal. And yet, not so frightening as they had supposed, for they had pictured a keen, critical audience.

The orchestra struck up, the six members of the Novelty Nine tapped their toes, their eyes on Miss Anderson, who was rocking gently, moving her lips soundlessly and beating time with her forefinger.

A heavier down beat of her right hand sent them off at the signal on to the stage, and the chums watched in breathless fascination.

The step the girls danced was simple to them, and yet to Daphne and May seemed almost acrobatic. Not a girl faltered.

"Fine—fine!" he said. The stage-manager was impressed. "But I say, why only six?"

"The nine are not dancing all the time together," said Miss Anderson. "You will remember that three are speciality dancers."

"Good! Let's see 'em!" said the stage-manager briskly.

And he pointed to Yin Su. Yin Su hesitated. Then, with a quick, winsome smile, she tripped on.

The only dance she knew was a Chinese dance that she had been taught during early childhood by a nurse.

It was essentially Chinese, exotic, novel, with a flowing, subtle rhythm, little quick steps, graceful posturing of hands, and demure downward glances.

Not a sound was heard until her quick tripping to the back cloth and sideways run showed that the dance was over.

A ripple of applause broke out, the members of the Novelty Nine exchanging looks of amazed delight, clapping as loudly as Daphne and May.

"Well, my gosh!" said the manager. "That's what I call novelty. In full Chinese war-paint, of course. Ah, ha! My word, my word! That'll make the show. But the right music—"

Miss Anderson, trembling with excitement, looked at Yin Su.

"The music—er—oh dear—haven't you got the music?" she asked the conductor. "Tut, tut! I'll see about it."

And she sent on Vere and another girl to do another speciality number.

The stage-manager approved; the conductor was faultless with his orchestra timing, and all went well.

"And now, this music," said the conductor. "We must get that right. See if you can find it in the luggage. And don't forget, there's a matinee at twenty-thirty."

Miss Anderson shepherded them back to the dressing-room, where she almost purred at Yin Su, who blushed prettily.

"It was a simple Chinese dance—any Chinese child can do it," said Yin Su modestly. "Myself most inept performer, clumsy, without balance and not to time—"

"Nonsense! How can you say such a thing?" protested Miss Anderson.

There was plenty to do; and chatter reigned in the dressing-room. Yin Su

hummed an air for the dance, Miss Anderson, amongst whose gifts was one of scoring music, mastered the air, and with pencil stabbing ruled paper rendered it into readable form.

"The band parts can be done by Mr. Symes," she said. And opening the door she shouted: "Boy!"

A boy came into sight, took the script, and hurried away with it, and Miss Anderson did a dance and clapped her hands girlishly.

"Now—one and all, coffee!" she exclaimed. "Oh, but this is going to be such a success. What luck, meeting you three. I wish every day had a thick mist."

At that moment the call-boy returned. He rapped the door, and May perked her ears as Miss Anderson looked out. For she heard Yin Su's name.

"A message—oh, yes! I'll give it to her," said the dancing mistress, and turned to Yin Su, a scrap of paper in her hand. "This is for you—a message. Chinese, by the look of it—"

"Chinese!" exclaimed May.

A perplexed look came on to the Chinese girl's face as she unfolded the paper, her brows knit, and then, with pallid cheeks, she looked at May, hardly aware of the attention she received from the others.

Yin Su walked to the door, beckoning May who, puzzled and alarmed, followed; but not until they were in the corridor with the door closed did the Chinese girl speak.

"Well?" said May anxiously.

"Letter—Chinese writing," said Yin Su jerkily. "Bad warning. Listen, please—"

She read the letter aloud:

"Unhappy ancestors of so worthless a girl! The detestable ways of white people are not for the high-born Chinese, and the face of one whose ancestors were too great for their feet to touch common earth is not to be seen unmasked in public assembly. Great evil shall fall upon the unashamed if such should happen—"

May looked at Yin Su round-eyed, surprised, puzzled, but not frightened as Yin Su undoubtedly was.

"Yin Su, it's an idle threat," she said.

"No, no! It is a terrible warning," murmured Yin Su. "For how should it be known I am here? Who wrote? Who sent it? Only by some unaccountable magic unknown to the ignorant mind of Western peoples could it be sent. It mean, in simple words, 'Beware you dance at your peril.' I dare not dance—now!"

May heard Miss Anderson's laugh in the dressing-room, thought of the joy that Yin Su's dancing had brought, how it was needed to save the Novelty Nine's show—and then, of a sudden, a name jumped to her mind.

"Yin Su—Madame X—she's in the town! It's a bluff, a trick. If she came to this theatre we can find out. We can find out who sent this message. Wait—"

And May turned and hurried to find the call-boy, for if the woman with the emerald ring had brought the message, then it was not to be feared at all!

WILL May be able to discover the origin of this amazing note and put Yin Su's mind at rest? The success of the chummy dancing troupe depends upon it. Don't miss next week's enthralling instalment.