

Thrilling LONG COMPLETE Story of - "JEMIMA AND THE CHINESE PAGODA!"
the Chums of Cliff House School :

THE SCHOOLGIRL

No. 519, Vol. 20.
Week Ending
JULY 8th, 1939.

EVERY 2^D SATURDAY

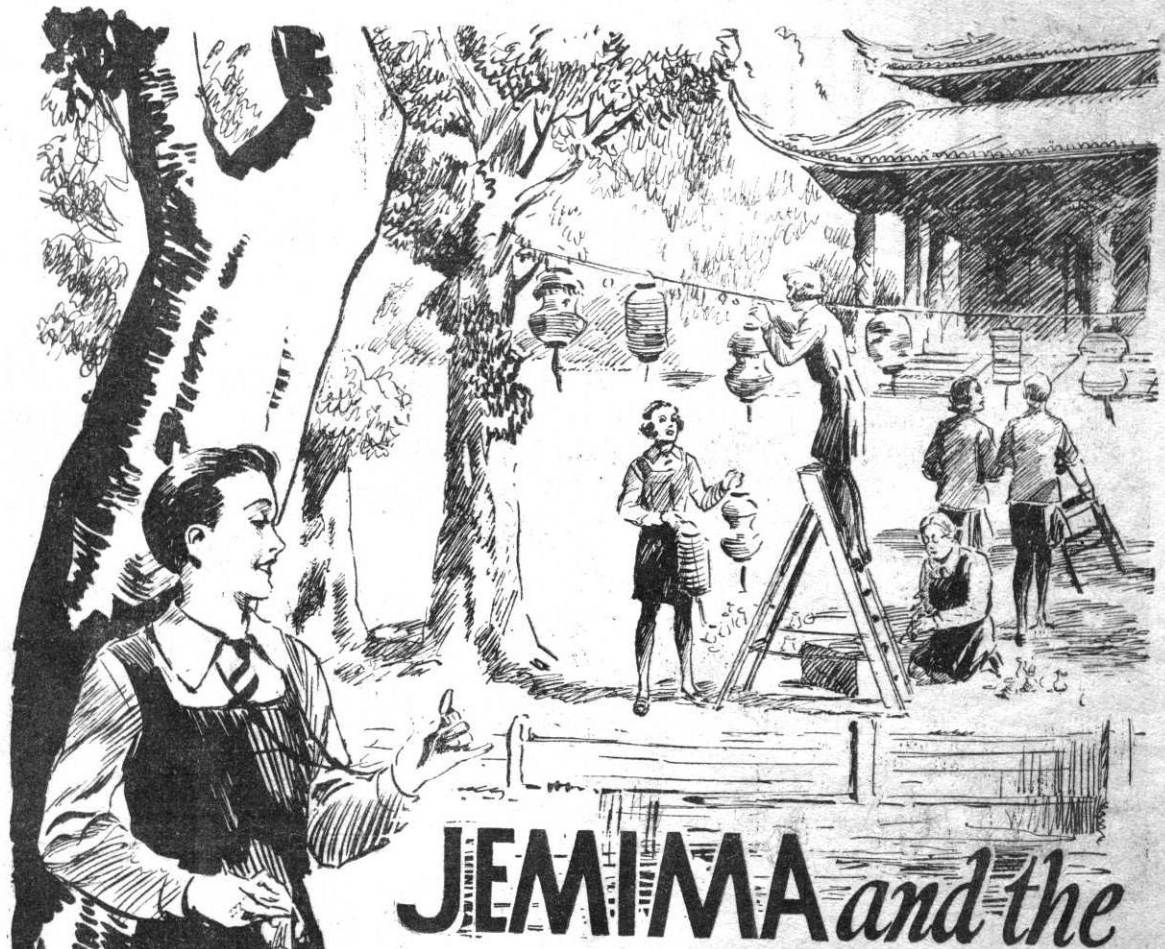
Incorporating
"SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN"



**THE CHUMS'
MYSTERIOUS ENEMY
AT WORK!**

*A dramatic incident from this
week's thrilling story of Barbara
Redfern & Co.*

Magnificent LONG COMPLETE story of Barbara Redfern & Co., the famous



JEMIMA and the

The Culprit Escapes!



"WE must have floodlights!" said Barbara Redfern.

"And fireworks!" dimpled Mabel Lynn.

"Fairy lights, too!" suggested Clara Trevlyn.

"Yes, rather! And paper chains, you know! I'm a dab at making paper chains," Bessie Bunter simpered. "And a great big bonfire for cooking an open-air meal, you know."

"Paper chains, nix!" Leila Carroll said briefly. "This isn't a Christmas celebration. And let's also cut out roasted oxen and things on blazing bonfires, because even if we're going to have fireworks, it's not going to be Guy Fawkes night. But Chinese lanterns would be just dinkie." Leila glowed. "They'll look a wow, I'll say! What do you think, Mr. Seale?"

Mr. Edwin Seale, the tall, grave-faced young secretary of Sir Willis Gregory, of Gregory Grange, stroked his clean-shaven chin.

"I think all the ideas are extremely good," he said deferentially. "But all you have to do, Miss Redfern, is to tell me the work you would like to put in hand, and I will attend to it. Sir Willis himself, as you know, will be responsible for all expenses."

The eyes of Barbara Redfern, Fourth Form captain and leader of the junior school at Cliff House, sparkled. More enthusiastically bewitching became those dimples in the rosy cheeks of her schoolgirl chum and lieutenant, Mabel Lynn. Broader and more beaming was the smile on Bessie Bunter's fat, bespectacled face; glimmering with eagerness was the light in Tomboy Clara Trevlyn's eyes. Marjorie Hazeldene, that gentle girl, smiled. Leila Carroll, the American junior, chuckled in open delight. All six of them seemed pleased—immensely, immeasurably pleased.

They were.

With good reason.

For the Fourth Form at Cliff House, under Babs' leadership, had once again pulled a plum out of the pie. The pie, on this occasion, was to be the entertainment of the Overseas Schoolgirl League, which was paying one of its rare sight-seeing visits to Cliff House in the near future.

A day of holiday-making and rejoicing that was to be, with the whole school extending itself for the amusement and entertainment of its Colonial friends. Back at Cliff House practically every Form was engaged in some stunt or another, designed, when the

great day came, for the satisfaction of its guests.

And the plum in that pie was the brain-wave of Barbara Redfern.

"Something new, something novel, is what we want to give the Overseasers," Babs said, and she really had hit upon the most novel suggestion when she had asked Miss Primrose, headmistress of Cliff House, to prevail upon Sir Willis Gregory, one of the school governors, to loan his priceless Chinese garden for a special evening's entertainment, to follow the rejoicings at the school itself.

That was the plum. That was the suggestion to which Sir Willis, after weighty consideration, had agreed. Extremely proud was Sir Willis of his unique Chinese garden, which was one of the show places of the district. At enormous expense, and with enormous care, Sir Willis kept that garden going.

It was something of a triumph to have obtained his consent to use it as a venue of entertainment, even though that consent had been given grudgingly. But once having given it, Sir Willis, as was his wont, had expanded almost to a point of reckless generosity, declaring, in fact, that he would foot the bill for the whole of the decorative scheme.

"Floodlights on the water," Babs said, nodding towards the lake. "Floodlights on the pagoda"—indicating a majestically imposing building in white stone. "Floodlights among the willows and the acacias. A string of lights across the bridge, and more floodlights on the lawn, here, where we're

chums of Cliff House School, featuring—

By
HILDA
RICHARDS

Illustrated by T. LAIDLER



CHINESE PAGODA!

going to have dancing and supper. Oh, fine!" she breathed, her eyes sparkling.

"Very, very good!" Edwin Seale admiringly approved. "Did you mention the pagoda, Miss Redfern?"

"Oh, yes!" Babs said. "That's the show place of the garden, isn't it? Everybody will want to see the pagoda, of course—and everybody. I should think, will want to climb its two hundred and fifty steps. There's a story connected with the pagoda, isn't there, Mr. Seale?"

Edwin Seale shook his head.

"I'm afraid I don't know, Miss Redfern," he said politely. "All I do know is that the pagoda was built a hundred years ago by a Chinese gentleman named Chin Wang. They say he had some special purpose in mind, but what it is nobody seems to have discovered. Unfortunately, nobody ever will now, for Mr. Chin Wang died years ago."

"Which was how Sir Willis was able to get hold of the property and add it to his own estate," Clara supplemented. "Still, who cares? The pagoda's the real thing, isn't it, built by a real Chinaman, in a real Chinese garden? And it's ripping!" she added, with a glance of admiration for the building. "Everything here is ripping."

Everything was, and it said much for its beauty that Clara, usually unappreciative of such things, should openly comment upon the fact.

Dominating the whole garden was the pagoda, surrounded by a white stone barricade, every upright of which was crowned by a Chinese dragon. In front

of the pagoda swept the lake, with lilies and acacias growing on its edges.

In the middle of the lake was an island containing another Chinese building with curving gable ends and colourful statues in stone guarding its entrance. Connecting the island with the pagoda was a rustic bridge, which was very reminiscent of the bridge so familiar in the famous willow-pattern plate design.

A pleasing and cheerful picture, in very truth. No wonder Leila had already used one whole film and part of another upon it.

"But," Mr. Seale said warningly,

A strange girl, Jemima Carstairs, with her monocle, her Eton crop and her puzzling ways. But never was Jemima more puzzling—and more infuriating to her own chums, Babs & Co.—than when the Fourth Form were arranging a big celebration in a beautiful Chinese Garden. For there seemed no doubt that Jemima was shielding someone who was bent on ruining all their plans.

"you'll be very, very careful, won't you, Miss Redfern? I don't think I need tell you how dreadfully hurt and angry Sir Willis would be if—if there was any damage done. For instance, damage was done yesterday—and done, at that, by a member of your school."

Babs looked at him sharply.

"A Cliff House girl? No!"

"Well, yes; there were two girls in the road, there; they were throwing a cricket ball about. The ball came into the garden and smashed a window of the model temple on the island, there. It was an accident, of course, but Sir Willis is very, very touchy about it, especially as the girl in question ran away. I—I had to restrain him from

setting off there and then to complain to Miss Primrose."

Babs & Co. looked at each other. This was news to them, and news which filled them with some uneasiness, for they all knew how irascible Sir Willis could be when roused.

"But, fortunately," Seale went on, "Sir Willis listened to my reasoning. I think the matter has blown over now. But you will be careful, won't you?" he added anxiously. "And, of course, what-

ever help I can give you I will. Now, please, do you mind if I leave you for a few moments? I fancy I heard Sir Willis' car a little while ago. He may want something."

"Thanks, we can manage splendidly!" Babs said. "Nice fellow!" she added, as Seale, with a quiet nod, slipped away. "I'm sure, you know, that he'll do all he can to help us. Still, bit rotten about the smashed window. Like to know who did that," she added, with a slight frown. "Now, Mabs, you're going to be in charge of the dancing troupe. Think we can make use of the bridge?"

"Can't I just!" Mabs said, with a laugh. "What about a torchlight dance from the pagoda to the island? We'll start from— And then she wheeled round. "What was that?" she cried.

"What was— Here, look out!" shrieked Clara. "Oh, Great Scott!"

Too late, she dived forward as the astonished chums spun round.

A dozen yards away, standing on a slender, ornate pedestal by the water's edge, was a beautiful bird bath. Behind the bath was a clump of shrubs, and, even as Clara shrieked, they saw a stick, held by a hand, push the pedestal towards the water. Then came a rustle, the stick was withdrawn, and retreating footsteps sounded.

Only half the intervening distance had Clara darted when—splash, crash! and pedestal and bird bath had tumbled into the lake, the bath breaking in two pieces as it did so.

"Oh, I sus-say, you know—" stuttered Bessie Bunter.

But nobody was paying attention to Bessie. With darkening brows, they raced towards the shrubbery. Ahead they heard the crash of breaking twigs, followed by a thud.

"This way!" called Babs.

She was ahead now. She shot on. Was it her fancy, or did she see a swiftly leaping shape in the distance ahead of her?

Just here was a tiny path which ended at a small gate that led to the road, but so narrow was that path that it was impossible to run in anything but Indian file. In a few moments, however, the gate had come into sight, and the fact that it was still closed showed that the unknown vandal had vaulted over it. Babs displayed the same athletic agility as the pursued, but when she reached the road she paused.

For hereabouts the road bent in a huge curve, and on its opposite side was a small, thickly wooded copse. There was no sign of the fugitive, however.

"Got away!" Babs panted. "Now, I wonder—Hullo, though!" she added, with a swift start.

"What's the matter?" Clara gasped.

But Babs was running across the road now. And Clara, with Mabs and Leila, paused as she saw her dive towards a fallen scarf which lay on the opposite bank. A yellow-and-red spotted scarf it was, and the fact that it lay just below the stile which gave access to the footpath that entered the copse seemed to indicate that it had been dropped by their quarry.

Babs' face was keen.

"This is her scarf," she said—"a girl's scarf, by the look of it. Might have belonged to a gipsy," she added, scrutinising it. "Anyway, it's obvious she went into the wood. Come on!"

She climbed the stile. Still hot on the scent, the chums followed her along the path. A hundred, two hundred yards they went, until Babs, with one foot on the edge of a swamp, pulled up, shaking her head.

"No good! On the wrong track!" she said. "Can't have gone this way! Must have cut through the woods."

Clara grunted as, in some annoyance, the chums halted.

"Which way?"

They shook their heads. Nobody could decide that. The mysterious girl seemed to have made good her escape.

"Well, what do we do?" asked Leila Carroll.

"Get back," Marjorie rather apprehensively advised. "Somebody might be asking about that broken bird bath."

They grimaced a little. To give up a chase was one of the things which Babs & Co. did not like. At the same time, a further questing of the woods was patently a mere waste of time; the girl might have vanished in one of a dozen directions.

"Well, we've got the scarf," Babs said. "That should be a clue, anyway. Only wish to goodness it hadn't happened the moment Seale's back was turned, though," she said apprehensively. "Then we should have had a witness it wasn't us. As it is, Sir Willis will be peeved, and, after the cricket-ball affair, he might not be too ready to believe we had nothing to do with it. Anyway, the mischief's done, and—Hullo!" she added suddenly, as they reached the stile again. "Look who's here!"

"Jimmy!" cried Leila.

"Jimmy"—or, to give her her correct name, Jemima Carstairs—it was.

A slim, neat figure, clad in an immaculate, tailor-made costume, she

stood thoughtfully in the centre of the road. The sunlight gleamed upon that part of her slim Eton crop which was revealed by the small hat she wore. It flashed from the monocle which was now stuck in one eye, and without which Jemima was rarely seen. It shone, too, upon those small, symmetrical, oval features of hers. In her hand she carried a small, brown leather attache-case. She started slightly as she saw them, then waved a gay hand.

"What-cheer, old Spartans! Bit on the warmish side for hiking—what? Thought you were visiting the old Oriental garden?"

"We're not hiking!" Clara snorted. "We've been chasing—"

"Oh, rabbits!" Jemima frowned. "Tut, tut! Say no more, Clara beloved! You know how the mere mention of those lusty blood sports overcome me with faintness!"

"Bother your faintness!" Clara snapped. "And don't jump to silly conclusions! We've been chasing a girl!"

"Round the room?" Jemima inquired.

"Round the—Oh, don't be an idiot!" retorted Clara. "Through the woods! A gipsy girl. Have you been through the woods, Jimmy?"

"Alas!" Jemima sighed. "My feeble old tottering footsteps have brought me that way!"

"Did you see a girl?"

"No, old Spartan."

"A gipsy girl," Leila explained. "She was wearing this scarf."

Jemima gazed at the scarf as Babs held it up.

"No scarf, no gipsy girl," she stated. "Still, nice bit of work, the scarf! Think she'd be peeved at losing it?" she added.

"She'll be more than peeved if we find her!" Clara said darkly. "The crazy chump went and busted old Sir Willis' bird bath!"

And then, as Jemima looked at her with inquiring sharpness, she explained what had happened.

Rather queerly Jemima regarded her then.

"Odd," she considered. "Sure it was a gipsy girl?"

"Well, who else? This scarf seems to prove it, doesn't it?" Mabs asked.

"On the surface, yes, but one mustn't jump at merry old conclusions," Jemima observed gravely. "Still, peculiar. Frightfully curiously, and absolutely peculiar, you know. Strange, the mistakes one can make," she added, with a shake of the head.

Babs blinked at her. At Cliff House they variously called Jemima the Enigma, the Odd One, and the Puzzle. Some who had only a passing acquaintance with Jemima called her a fool, and certainly there were times when that description seemed to fit her more aptly than any of the others.

But Babs knew Jemima. She knew the steely quality of her courage. She knew the keen brain that worked beneath that shimmering Eton crop of hers, and she knew that when Jemima was in her most idiotic, time-wasting, and irritating mood, that brain was working at swift pressure.

"Jimmy, what do you mean, mistakes?" she questioned.

"Oh, nothing!" Jemima answered, with the airiness which convinced Babs at once that she did. "Still, nice meeting old faces—ahem! I do hope you know that Sir Willis shares the same sentiment," she added, as a below from over the hedge in that worthy's well-known voice came to them. "Methinks he is inspecting the bird bath," she murmured.

"Oh, gollywosh!" groaned Babs. "Come, along! But, Jimmy," she added, struck by a sudden thought as Jemima pushed open the little gate. "I thought you said you couldn't come along this afternoon?"

"Ahem!" Jemima said. "Change of mind, you know."

"But didn't you say you had something fearfully important to do?"

"Ahem!" Jemima said again, just a tiny bit confused. "I did. Still, no matter—no matter. Here I am, you see. Sir Willis sounds wrathful," she added thoughtfully.

Sir Willis did. Even though they were fifty yards away from the scene of the recent "accident," they heard his voice raised in fury.

"I dreaded something like this would happen. I dreaded it!" he was saying. "I was a fool, egad, ever to give those girls the run of this garden. Horseplay, carelessness, stupidity! Utter disrespect for other people's property. No sense of what is right, and what is wrong. Here I am—"

And then, a picture of bursting fury, he barked as Babs & Co. came panting through the shrubbery.

"Hi!" he roared.

"Sir Willis," Babs panted—"Sir Willis—"

"Don't Sir Willis me! Look at it, egad!" And Sir Willis, his white moustache bristling with fury, pointed to the smashed bird bath. "This is the second time in two days my garden has suffered damage at the hands of a Cliff House girl!" he stormed. "I want to know, before I expel you from these grounds for good, why you did that?"

Their Infuriating Chum!



NO doubt about it, Sir Willis was in a raging temper.

It took quite ten minutes of almost passionate argument to assure him that the Cliff House faction had had nothing to do with the accident. But even then Sir Willis was still inclined to be suspicious.

"What gipsy girl?" he quivered. "I don't know a gipsy girl. Why should a gipsy girl come into my garden and deliberately smash this article? What sort of gipsy girl? Describe her!"

"Well, we didn't see her," Babs said.

"Then how do you know it was a gipsy girl?"

"We—we found this scarf," Babs said.

"Well, does that prove it?" Sir Willis glared.

"Oh, absolutely not!" Jemima said. The chums all glared. Sir Willis turned upon Jemima, brows beetling. "What do you know about it?" he snorted.

"Nothing," Jemima said. "At least, nothing—yet," she added mysteriously. "Just backing you up, Sir Willis, you know. We Britishers must stand together, and all that sort of old rot! I mean to say," Jemima added inanely, "one swallow doesn't make a summer, and a gipsy-looking scarf doesn't mean that it was a gipsy who scattered it untidily about the countryside."

"Girl, you are a fool!" Sir Willis stated, with an emphasis which left no doubt as to his conviction on that point.

"Please, Sir Willis, take no notice of her," Babs broke in hastily, and darted a half-angry look at her

urbanelly smiling chum. "I'm sorry—we're all sorry. But honour bright, Sir Willis, we weren't responsible for breaking the bird bath."

"Hum!" Sir Willis said. "Hum! Well, perhaps this time I'll overlook it. I don't want to punish you if you aren't guilty. But I warn you—strictly. Seale, have this thing taken away and repaired," he said, "and see that nothing else of a like nature happens again. You understand, you're only allowed in this garden on the express condition that you do no damage. Clear, that?"

"Oh, absolutely!" Jemima beamed. Sir Willis stared at her; then, hands behind his back, he stormed away. Edwin Seale smiled a little relievedly.

"Well, I'm glad it turned out no worse," he said. "Phew, but he really was mad when he first came upon the scene! Funny, though, about the gipsy girl," he said.

"Did you see her?" Babs asked. "Well"—he looked cautious—"I thought I saw something—a girl running away. Whether it was a gipsy girl or not, I couldn't say."

"But it was a girl—what?" Jemima asked, screwing in her eyeglass.

"Oh, yes! Most certainly a girl!" "Not, for instance, a man, a woman, or an elephant?" Jemima asked vaguely.

"I beg your pardon?" He looked at her. "Oh, no, it was a girl!" he said. "I'm not likely to make a mistake on that point. I didn't mention the fact to Sir Willis," he added apologetically, "because I didn't want to prolong the argument. Er—did you say something, Miss Carstairs?"

"Oh, just mumble-jumble!" Jemima said cheerily; but Babs noticed that she was rather energetically polishing her eyeglass—a sure sign that something fairly terrific was going on in Jemima's brain. "Nice drop of view about here," she said admiringly. "Like the old pagoda arrangement. Nifty little structure—what? Leila beloved, tell me in secret confidence. How many films has left in that priceless camera of thine?"

"Oh, about four!" Leila said. "Why?"

"Then," Jemima smiled, "I wonder, fair sister from across the rolling old ocean, whether you might allow your old friend Jimmy to perform? Got an idea," Jemima said, "for a pretty nifty-looking snap. Mr. Seale, don't go," she added hastily, as that worthy turned. "You're in this."

The secretary stopped, smiling indulgently.

"Yes, Miss Carstairs, what's the idea?"

"The idea," Jemima said, "is to take a photograph. Can't miss this opportunity of a life-time, what?" She put her bag down, took the camera, and critically examined it. "Now, cherubs, look your best and prettiest!" she ordered. "A nifty little group round the steps of the old pagoda there."

"Oh, all right!" Clara said. "But huck up, chump; we've got work to do!"

And impatiently they grouped themselves, Mr. Seale among them.

"Heads up!" Jemima ordered. "Smile, please! Look for the ickie dicky-bird!" And snick went the camera. "What-ho, you're took!" she beamed. "Thanks, old Spartans, most awfully obliged, I'm sure! But oh, tut, tut! Stand easy a ticklet!"

"Now what's the matter?" Babs asked exasperatedly.

"That broken old bird bath thing—we've taken that as well. Rather a blot on the landscape, what?" Jemima asked. "Do it again, shall we? Mr. Seale, would you mind removing it, please?"

The secretary laughed. But, obedient to Jemima's whim, he moved forward. Jemima, meanwhile, thoughtlessly fiddled with the camera, and as the man stooped over the broken bath there was another snick.

"Jimmy, you galoot!" Leila cried. "You've taken another snap!"

"Tut, tut! Accidents will happen!" Jemima sighed. "Well, well! Still, never mind," she added cheerfully. "All makes for trade, and all that sort of rubbish, what? Now, Mr. Seale, wouldst mind posing again? Methinks," Jemima murmured, "I'll take the snap from this angle now."

She moved a few paces to the right. Snick went the camera again.

"Tops!" Jemima beamed. "Lovely! Now just one more, what, to finish the old film. Remind me, Leila old Trojan, that I owe you for half of it. I'll stand here this time. Try to look merry and bright, even though the effort be painful. Right! Then off we go!"

Snick went the release of the camera again, and Jemima chuckled.

"All done beautifully!" she said. "Leila, mind if I get this fillum developed and so forth?"

"Just as you like, I guess," Leila agreed. "Careful how you take it out, though."

Jemima smiled again as she retreated into the shadow of the shrubbery to remove the film. Seale, meanwhile, gathering the pieces of the broken bird bath, departed with them. Babs, looking round, shook her head.

"Well, I don't think we can do much more at present," she said, "as we're agreed on the decorative scheme. The great thing now is to order the things we want and get them delivered, and then, once they're here, come and fix them up. Of course, the electricians will fix the floodlights and the fairy lights and all that. Got all the notes, Mabs?"

"Yes, rather!" Mabel Lynn said.

"Leila, beloved, your camera," Jemima beamed, and coming up, handed that instrument to its owner. "I've taken the old film out. Thanks frightfully!"

While Mabs gathered up her notes, Babs took another look round at the Chinese garden, and then they started off. It was not until they had progressed half a mile on their way that Babs pulled up with a jerk.

"I say, where's Jimmy?" she asked.

A little blankly, a little guiltily, they looked at each other. Until that moment they had completely forgotten Jemima Carstairs.

"Oh, kik-crums! We must have left her back in the gardens, you know!" Bessie Bunter said. "She'll think we've deserted her!"

"Better turn back," Clara said resignedly. "Anyway, why didn't the chump keep with us?"

They turned back, trotting along the road which led through the woods. Above the tops of the trees they caught a glimpse of the white, shimmering cone of the pagoda, and presently they had reached the edge of the thick belt of shrubbery which surrounded it. Then Babs, who was in the lead, stood stock still.

"Well, mum-my hat!" she gasped. "Look!"

They all blinked, feeling the urge to rub their eyes.

For in front of them, in the act of climbing a tallish tree which overlooked the shrubbery and the Chinese garden, was a figure in a yellow-and-blue costume—the figure of a gipsy girl!

"It's the girl!" Clara cried, and her eyes suddenly gleamed. "Come on, kids!"

At once she started forward. Babs & Co., recovering from the shock, darted after her.

But Clara's voice, which possessed great carrying powers, had startled the girl. Suddenly they saw her look round, and then, with a bound, jump to the ground and dart into the shrubbery.

Unfortunately for the Cliff House pursuers, however, the ground hereabouts inclined sharply upwards, and they were panting when they reached the crest of the rise on which the shrubbery was perched. Ahead of them was the gap in the bushes which formed the path leading to the Chinese garden. Babs and Clara, running neck and neck, raced along it.

Then once again they skidded to a breathless standstill. For, emerging from behind a bush in the shrub-lined path, came another girl. But it was not the gipsy this time. It was Jemima. She stopped, barring their path.

"What cheer, old Spartans? What's the hurry?" she inquired.

"Jimmy, the gipsy girl!" Babs gasped. "Did you pass her?"

Jemima shook her head. "No gipsy girl has run along this merry old path," she denied.

"But, Jimmy, you chump, we saw her!" Babs cried.

"Something wrong with the eyesight," Jemima said. "Should have the merry old optics tested, Barbara beloved. Shocking thing to get so defective a vision at your young and tender years!"

"Jimmy, don't rot!" Clara said.

"Let us pass!"

"But why?"

Babs glared.

"Jimmy, are you trying to stop us?"

"Me? I? Oh, perish the thought!" Jemima said, shocked; but all the same she stood squarely in front of them. "I'm just appealing with you, fair comrades, to save your time and your breath."

"Jimmy, you idiot, will you get out of the way?" Clara fumed. "You're holding us up."

"Yes, my dear old-timer. But as I was saying—" Jemima began gravely.

Even in that moment of impatience, Babs felt a little amazed. For it was perfectly obvious now that Jemima was doing her best to delay them—and it was obvious, too, that she could not have failed to see the gipsy girl. But before Babs could speak, Clara, ever a girl of action, caught Jemima by the shoulder.

"Out of it!" she snapped. "Babs, come on!"

But Jemima was not so easily disposed of. Straight, slim, and willowy as she was, there were times when she could display a surprising agility. In a flash she had wrenched out of Clara's grasp. Two quick paces she took back, and then, making no possible room for doubt that her object was to stop their further progress, she stretched out her arms.

"I tell you," Jemima said, "there's no point in coming any farther, old Spartans."

Clara gritted her teeth. This time her efforts were more direct. She jumped forward, catching Jemima round the waist, her intention being to dump her to one side and clear a path. There was a short, brief struggle. Clara pulled this way; Jemima that. Then suddenly they both crashed over, rolling into a bed of lilies.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Babs. "You chumps—"

"Hey, what's this?" a voice growled, and the angry face of Ebenezer Windflower, Sir Willis' head gardener, appeared over the shrubbery. "Stop larking in them lilies!" he barked. "Great corks, look at them regales!" he hooted, as Clara and Jemima straightened up.

They looked at the regale lilies and gulped. At least three of them had snapped off at the base, and the foliage among which they grew was badly crushed.

"Them regale lilies are the pride of Sir Willis' heart!" Windflower said. "My heye, won't he be mad! I shall report this! Now be off with ye!"

"But—but—"

"Be off!" the irate gardener roared. In sickly dismay the chums looked at each other. They could guess the effect of a second report to Sir Willis following the accident to his precious bird bath. It was Jemima who stepped into the breach, however.

"Ebenezer Windflower," she said soberly, "Ebenezer, old aristocrat, listen to me, and if thou hast feeling at all, let thy tender heart melt in the pitiful pleadings of a sorrowful lady. Blame not the innocent cherubs you see about you. 'Twas not them, but I, who am responsible for the unfortunate decease of these fair and elegant regales. If you must report—"

"I shall report!" Windflower growled.

"Then," Jemima said, hanging her head with a jerk, "let the vials of Sir Willis' red-hot wrath fall upon my own shingled bean. And when you do, give Sir Willis this," she added, pressing a half-crown into the astonished gardener's hand. "That will help to pay for the regales' funeral. Bye-bye, fair Ebenezer. Give my fond love to your grandma!"

"I ain't got no gran'mother," Ebenezer said, "but thanks, Miss Jemima. Perhaps," he added, "I won't report after all."

"Blessed is the forgiveness of Ebenezer Windflower," Jemima sighed. "Ah, fair friends, what 'tis to be born with such a seraphic nature. Nice man, don't you think?" she added gaily to Babs as she led the way back.

Babs glared at her.

"Look here, Jimmy—"

"I look; I gaze," Jemima said fondly; "and such radiant vision my watery old eyes have rarely beheld!"

Babs flushed.

"Jimmy, don't rot!" she said crossly.

"Not this side of my ninety-ninth birthday!" Jemima valiantly promised. "And don't blather!" Clara put in with a snort.

"Blathering is an exercise that shall be expunged from my daily routine," Jemima promised seriously. "Let us talk of other things. Of cabbages, and turnips, and cherry-pies, and regales, and so forth. Warm for the state of the temperature, don't you think, old Spartans?"

The "old Spartans" surrounded her and glared.

"Jimmy, you washout," Clara cried, "why did you stop us from collaring that gipsy girl?"

"Oh, but I didn't, you know!" Jemima said.

"What! You deliberately barred the path!" Clara hooted.

"Oh, that!" Jemima said. "Ha, ha! That! But that didn't prevent you from collaring a gipsy girl, you know. There is no gipsy girl."

"There is. We saw her."

"As I said before, there's something wrong with the old vis—"

"You mean," Clara said, and flushed bitterly, "there's something wrong with your sense of friendship. You know jolly well that cat got us in one deliberate row. You know jolly well that you did see her, that you knew we were chasing her, and you deliberately prevented us from catching her. And if that," Clara said bitterly, "is what you call being a chum, you've got some queer notions of friendship."

"Ah, me!" sighed Jemima.

"Well, explain—if there is an explanation."

Jemima polished her eyeglass. "The truth of the matter is, old Spartans, that there is no explanation," she confessed sadly. "Ah least, not yet. Have I said enough?"

The chums exasperatedly glared. "Why, you chump, you haven't said anything!"

"Exactly," Jemima agreed, "and having said it, the air is clear, what? Now let us totter. I fain would look again upon the dear old home and the cake on the table of Study No. 7. This way."

And feeling helpless, the chums trailed after her as she led the way down the hill, sorely puzzled and more than a trifle used up. No wonder, at Cliff House, they called Jemima the Enigma, the Puzzling One. At that moment the chums had a new name for her:

It was Jemima the Maddening.

Had Jimmy Told an Untruth?



AND, strangely enough, mysterious, maddening Jemima was missing again when they reached Cliff House.

But the chums, puzzled and annoyed though they were, could not spare time on their provoking chum. There was work to be done.

First, of course, a list of requirements had to be got out and dispatched to the electrician in Courtfield. Over tea Babs did that. Meantime Mabs, who, as usual, was looking after the entertainment part of the evening, rallied the Forms who were taking part in the various dances and sketches to rehearsal in the Common-room.

Just before call-over Miss Primrose, the much-respected headmistress, sent for both Babs and Mabs, and chatted with them over the programme, nodding her head as they outlined their plans.

"It all sounds very, very thrilling," she acknowledged, "and I am sure it will be a great success—quite the most original feature of the Overseas School-girls' Day. But, Barbara, you will be careful what you do in the garden, won't you? I am sure Sir Willis would have heart failure if anything serious happened there."

Babs promised that. With Mabs she went downstairs again, just as call-over bell was ringing. They were slipping into their places in Big Hall when a slim, immaculately clad figure,

wearing an enigmatic smile and shining eyeglass, squeezed in between them. It was Jemima.

Babs eyed her curiously. "Hallo! Where have you been?" "Village," Jemima said laconically. "What for?" "Oh, just things," Jemima said airily.

"Well, I sure hope you got them," Leila Carroll said, with a frown.

"I sure hope I did," Jemima murmured. "Anyway, I shall know tomorrow," she added thoughtfully.

"Know what?" Babs asked. "Aha!" Jemima said in that affected way which proclaimed at once she was not giving away secrets.

And that, as usual, was all that could be got out of Jemima.

Smoothly enough after that, however, the evening passed off, with the whole Form excitedly and enthusiastically discussing the decorating of Chin Wang's garden, with girls from other Forms dropping into the Fourth Form Common-room to find out how the entertainment was getting along.

Bed-time came. In the happy stress of other congenial events, Babs & Co. had almost forgotten the serious happenings of the afternoon and the strangeness of their chum, Jemima Carstairs. Next morning, however, Babs, on her way to perform one of the numerous duties which fell to her lot as captain of junior school, met Jemima in Big Hall.

Jemima was thoughtfully reading a telegram.

"Hallo, Jimmy, not bad news?" Babs questioned anxiously.

"Eh?" Jemima started. Just a little hastily she crumpled up the wire and thrust it into her pocket. "On the contrary," she beamed, "a message of glad tidings. Always did say, y'know, that if you want anything doing well and doing quickly, ask the old guy."

Babs gazed at her wonderingly.

What new bee had Jemima in her bonnet? Why was she acting so secretly, so mysteriously, so evasively? Above all, what was her connection with the unknown gipsy girl who had served the chums such a shabby turn yesterday?

Babs shook her head. She didn't know, and she would never know until Jemima, in her own good time, chose to reveal her motives. All the same, it was worrying—and puzzling. Babs, so very fond of Jemima, did hate to be irritated by her.

She passed on, and then, in the stress of the morning work, once again forgot all about Jemima and her telegram, though what bearing a telegram from Jemima's father had on present events was more than a little obscure.

Before breakfast she received word from Seale that the electricians had arrived at Gregory Grange and were now fixing up the floodlights.

Shortly after that came the news that the lanterns and other decorations which had been ordered yesterday had been delivered, and at break came the news that the fairy lights had arrived, and would Babs & Co. come along as soon as possible in the afternoon and tell the workmen what was to be done with them? Such a thousand and one jobs to be seen to all at once.

After dinner, Babs collected her party in the quad. Jemima, carrying a small brown leather attache-case, was among them.

"Well, off we go girls," Babs said. "But no larks, mind."

It was half an hour later that, in a cheery body, they reached Gregory Grange, to be met immediately by the grave-faced secretary, Edwin Seale.

His eyes lit up as he saw them, his lips curved in a smile of welcome.

"Ah!" he said. "Here you are. Miss Redfern, there are such a lot of things I want to talk to you about. Meantime there's just one little hitch."

"Hitch?" Babs asked curiously. "Oh, nothing to get alarmed about," Seale laughed. "I think, if you accept my suggestion, that it can be overcome all right. It concerns the electric fairy lamps. Hollands, who have supplied these, have sent all one colour—white. Apparently, in giving the order, you did not mention colours."

"Tough," Jemima frowned. "Natural sort of mistake to make though, what?"

Babs bit her lip, annoyed with herself.

"And Hollands say, if you insist on colours, it will take them several days to get them," Seale went on. "But, as I say, I don't think there's need to worry. What we can do, Miss Redfern, is to paint the bulbs ourselves—and just in case you accepted that suggestion, I've already mixed several colours, and the bulbs are by the pagoda there waiting to be started on."

Jemima screwed in her eyeglass. "Brains, what?" she said admiringly. "Give me the man who gets things done! Bright wheeze, Mr. Seale," she added approvingly.

A "bright wheeze" it was—and one for which Babs was wholeheartedly grateful. From that moment Mr. Seale went up in her estimation with a bound and a leap. Really, it was jolly considerate and thoughtful of him to find a way out of her difficulty.

"Right-ho," she agreed. "Let's get to work. Clara, you do the red ones, will you? Leila, what about the green? Bessie, you'd better do the purple ones; Mabs, the pink. I'll do the yellow ones, and you, Marjorie, the blue. Jimmy—hallo, where's Jimmy?" she added, staring round.

"Oh, blow Jimmy! Let's get on with the washing," Clara said impatiently.

Blazers were discarded, the aprons which they had brought with them

swiftly donned, and then they energetically set to work. Seale smiled.

"Very good!" he said. "Won't take you long at that rate. They look very pretty," he considered.

"Yes, don't they?" Babs laughed. "Pity, though, we can't work some sort of design on them—" For when Babs had brush in hand that artistic nature of hers became wide awake. "Perhaps we can get some stencils?"

"Why, that certainly is a notion," Seale said. "Yes, Miss Redfern, why not? And I think," he added, "I can help you there. I've got a small set of Chinese stencils in my study which would be just the thing. If you'd like to borrow them—"

"Mr. Seale, you're a pet!" Babs cried. "Would we? Can we have them now?" she added eagerly.

"Yes, of course. If you would like to come and get them—"

But Babs, cheeks rosy, was already on her feet. Delightedly she danced at Seale's side as he went through the Grange itself, and, ascending a flight of stairs, halted before the door of a room. From his pocket he extracted a key and fitted it in the lock.

"My study," he said smilingly. "I have to keep it locked because I am at present working on some rather valuable documents belonging to Sir Willis. Come in," he added pleasantly, and pushed the door open.

Babs followed him as he walked in, only the next instant to stand frozen on the threshold.

For the room was not unoccupied. Opposite the door was an open window overlooking the shrubbery. Near the window was a desk littered with papers, and bending over that desk was a girl in a dress of yellow and blue. Even before she turned Babs knew her identity.

"The gipsy girl!" she cried.

The gipsy girl it was—here in Mr. Seale's study, apparently rifling his desk!

She saw the gipsy girl start. Just a tiny glimpse of a dark-skinned profile she got as the strange girl half-turned.

Then, before either Babs or Seale could take a step, she had dived for the window.

"Come back!" cried Seale. "But in one agile flash the gipsy girl was over the sill. As Seale darted forward he caught his foot in the carpet, measuring his length with a crash. Babs sprinted on."

She was too late, though, to collar the intruder, who slipped over the sill, hanging for a moment by one curved arm, around the wrist of which was a shimmering bracelet of some silver-looking metal.

Babs, reaching the window, peered down. Twelve or fifteen feet below was the ground, and a few feet from her eyes the tops of the waving bushes which composed the thick shrubbery. But of the mysterious gipsy girl there was no sign.

"All right—let her go, Miss Redfern," said Seale, as he picked himself up. "Let's see what she has stolen."

While Babs watched he anxiously ran through the papers on his desk.

A great many of those papers there were, and a curious mixture they presented. There were several old parchment sheets written over in caligraphic Chinese characters, several other pages of notes, some typewritten sheets, and one or two diagrams. He looked round at last with a breath of relief.

"Apparently," he said, "we caught her before she could make up her mind to take anything of value. Nothing is missing, thank goodness!"

"Oh, I am glad!" Babs said.

Seale produced the stencils and handed them to her; and Babs, after thanking him, left. But it is to be feared that her mind—for the time being, at any rate—was more on the unknown gipsy than upon the task in hand; and once or twice she thought of Jemima, wondering uneasily if Jemima's sudden absence from the party had any bearing upon the gipsy girl's latest activities.

She rejoined her chums just as Jemima herself strolled up. Very spick-and-span Jemima looked, with a



TO Babs & Co.'s amazement, Jemima stepped right in their path, holding up a hand. "No point in coming farther, old Spartans," the monocled one smoothly observed. Babs clenched her fists. It seemed as if Jemima was deliberately preventing them catching the fugitive gipsy girl.

new monocle gleaming in her eye and her Eton crop freshly brushed. Babs stopped.

"Hallo, Jimmy! Where have you been?" she asked.

"Been?" Jemima said vaguely. "Oh, just strolling around—what? Nifty little place Sir Willis has here."

Babs gazed at her keenly. "You didn't see the gipsy girl?" she asked.

"Eh? What gipsy girl?" Jemima asked blandly.

"Jimmy, don't fool. You know whom I mean!" Babs exclaimed. "But did you know she's—a thief?"

Jemima looked surprised.

"You don't say?"

"I do say," Babs said; and then went on to explain what had happened in Seale's study. "If that isn't an attempt at thieving, what is?" she asked challengingly.

"Sounds convincing—what?" Jemima asked. "Naughty, naughty! Still, if she didn't take anything she isn't a jolly old thief, is she? And I assure you, old Spartan, I have not seen her. But pardon me, fair Barbara," she added, nodding towards the industrious group of chums. "I fain would take a hand myself, dear Barbara, if wilt tell me what to do."

Jemima smiled. But Babs had a queer, uneasy feeling that Jemima knew more about the presence of the gipsy girl in the grounds of Gregory Grange than she had admitted.

Together they rejoined the group of fairy lamp painters. Jemima was given a brush and a pot of paint, and with an industrious will set to work. Shortly afterwards Babs was called away to consult the chief electrician. When she came back the lamps were all finished—and not only finished, but stencilled into the bargain.

"All to do now is to put them up—what?" Jemima chirped cheerily.

"Where shall we have them, Babs?"

"Well, a row under the first floor gabling of the pagoda," Babs said. "Then a double row round the fence there. The wires are fixed already, so it only remains to screw the bulbs in. Bessie, get the steps, there's a good old Fattikins."

Bessie Bunter got the steps. Babs placed them in position.

"Right!" she said. "Jimmy, will you do this section? Clara, will you and Marjorie do the other? You screw the bulbs in," she added to Jemima, "and I'll pass them up to you. O.K.?"

"O.K. it is, me hearty!" Jemima said. "Whoa for the mountaineers!"

Nimble she shinned up the steps, turning to beam down at Babs as she found her nose on a level with the line which had already been wired beneath the gable.

"What-ho! All serene!" she announced. "Get ready to hurl up the old lamps, sweetheart!"

She bent down as Babs reached up. As she did so, the pocket of her tunic bulged open, and for a moment Babs caught a glimpse of a flashing object which was in it. Jemima's fingers barely touched the bulb, however.

"Chump! Bend lower," Babs laughed, "or come down a step."

Jemima, however, having secured a firm foothold, preferred to bend lower. As she did so, the tunic pocket bulged even more widely, and the glittering thing which was in it, came rolling out, to fall with a faint, metallic clatter at Babs' feet. Jemima started.

"Oh, shuttlecocks!" she cried, with some apprehension.

But Babs had already seen the object. And now, as she picked it up, an electric thrill seemed to shoot through

her whole frame. For she recognised the thing at once. Indelibly was it printed on her mental vision. It was—

"Jimmy!" she cried vibrantly. "This is the gipsy's bracelet! I saw it on her arm in Seale's room. Oh, Jimmy—"

"Egad!" Jemima murmured, and for a second even she, so usually unperturbed, looked utterly confused.

Drama in the Pagoda



"AHEM!" Jemima said, and blinked at the incriminating bracelet.

"Ahem!" she repeated. "Jimmy, this fell out of your pocket!" Babs cried.

"Alas, how true!" Jemima sighed, descending the ladder.

"And it belongs to the gipsy girl!"

"Aha!" Jemima said. Steadily Babs regarded her.

"The last time I saw that bracelet was on the wrist of the girl as she escaped from Mr. Seale's study," she said. "That means you've been in contact with her since!"

"Seems," Jemima murmured, "I'm in the old raspberry jam, what? Or does one say a cleft stick? Nice bit of work, isn't it?" she added admiringly. "Bit on the tinny side, perhaps, but very spectacular. Nice thingummy in the design," she added, screwing in her monocle to take a closer look at the bracelet.

But there was no smile from Babs, and no smiling response from the rest of the chums, who, having gathered around now, were staring at the Eton-cropped one with angry suspicion. Babs breathed hard.

"You said, Jimmy, you hadn't seen the gipsy girl!" she accused.

"Quite right," Jemima nodded. "What a head you have for these old facts, Babs."

"But it doesn't quite fit in with this, does it?" Babs said scornfully.

Jemima regarded her curiously. "And so—what?" she asked.

"Oh, stop rotting!" Clara snapped.

"A nice thing it would be, wouldn't it, if Sir Willis knew that a Cliff House girl was in league with a beastly little thief who had broken into his house!"

Jemima shook her head. "So," she said, "that's what you think, eh, old tulip? I'm telling whoppers, and, in addition, am a full-size, un-British traitor?"

Clara coloured.

"Well, if you can explain—"

"Supposing I don't choose to?"

Jemima asked keenly.

"Well, then, you—you jolly well are!" Clara blurted.

"Right-ho!" Jemima looked at the faces about her. She saw the distrust in each one of them, but she read the fact that, loath as they were to do so, they all shared Clara's blunt view. "Then it stands to reason that you won't want my company any longer. Mind if I go?"

"But—but, Jimmy—" Babs faltered.

"Jimmy, we—we didn't— Oh, bother it, why don't you explain, you chump?"

But Jemima, with a gentle smile, took the bracelet from Babs' hand. With another smile she picked up her coat and donned it. Then she affixed her monocle, bestowed upon them all a sad and forlorn shake of the head, and strolled away.

"Jimmy—" Babs cried again.

"Oh, stuff! Let her go!" Clara said crossly.

They watched as she went, angry still,

yet feeling, somehow, small and mean. A bend in the path swallowed her up.

They looked at each other.

"Well, if she prefers her gipsy pal to us, let her, I guess," Leila sniffed.

"Anyway, we can get on without her."

That statement found ready approval, but not one of them was not feeling rather mean as they resumed their work. Not one of them, perhaps, was not remembering other occasions in the past when Jemima had acted with equal bafflement leading to some such scene as this. Always, in the end, Jemima had proved them wrong, and made them feel humiliated and ashamed. But it most certainly was difficult, this time, not to believe that Jemima was in sympathy with the gipsy girl.

In rather chastened silence they resumed their work. By-and-by the lights were strung round the gables, and everyone brightened again as the immediate work began to look shipshape and near completion. Leila and Mabs were in the middle of an argument as to whether a certain string of lights would be seen to full advantage from the lawn, when Seale came up.

"Miss Redfern," he said respectfully, "tea is ready. Will you and your friends go back to the Grange?"

"Oh, yes, rather! Let's hurry!" Bessie urged anxiously.

"But these lights," Leila said. "I guess half of them would be hidden behind that oak-tree!"

"And I say," Mabs objected, "they wouldn't. I tell you, the oak-tree won't be in the way at all. If you put the lights there and run them there, they'll be in full view. Anyway, we can't see properly here. Come up to the turret in the Grange, where we can get a better view. I'll explain what I mean, then."

To that suggestion Leila was readily agreeable. So, to settle the matter, they climbed into the turret of the Grange, and just because an arbitrator might be required, Babs went with the two. From a landing window high in the turret, they looked down.

There, spread like a map before them, was the exquisite Chinese garden.

"Now do you see what I mean?"

Mabs asked, pointing. "Start at the centre of the pagoda there, and run the line along to the shrub—"

And suddenly she broke off, her eyes bulging. "My hat!" she cried. "Look at that!"

But Babs had jumped even as Mabs broke off, and for a moment her face became frozen. For there, creeping towards the pagoda, was the gipsy girl!

"Come on!" Babs cried.

Across the landing she flew, Mabs and Leila at her heels. Down the stairs three at a time they raced, almost barging into Marjorie and Clara, who were just emerging from the cloak-room. Clara started.

"My giddy aunt! What the—"

"Gipsy girl!" Babs panted. "Pagoda!"

"Oh!" Clara exclaimed, understanding at once.

She joined in the chase, Marjorie with her Bessie, left in the cloak-room, heard the sound of thundering steps as the five of them went racing madly across the grounds, but not understanding what had happened, merely glowered and hungrily rustled on to the tea-room.

Breathlessly Babs & Co. pelted. They came within sight of the pagoda, but the mysterious gipsy girl had gone. Babs' eyes glimmered.

"She's inside!" she panted. "Hurry!"

They hurried, though each one of them was exerting herself to the full. Nearer, nearer they approached the

pagoda, eyes full upon the door. They reached it. Breathlessly they plunged into it.

And then Babs, the leader, stopped. She stopped with such abruptness that Clara, behind her, went smack into her. She stopped because of two things—one surprising, the other utterly startling. Of the gipsy girl there was no sign, despite their conviction that she was here.

But—

In horror and numbed consternation they gazed at the terrific mess which confronted them.

Paint! Wet, shiny paint! Green, purple, red, and yellow paint! It was everywhere—on the floor, on the walls, on the big screen which stood propped against the wall, on the door leading to a little ante-chamber.

It seemed as if someone had taken the paint remaining in the tins and had just hurled it wantonly in all directions.

"Mum-mum-my gug-giddy aunt!" stuttered Clara.

"Great snakes!" breathed Leila.

Stupefied still, they stared. Then Babs jumped back into life.

"It's that beastly gipsy girl!" she cried. "She did it; she must have done it! And if you ask me," she added, her eyes flashing, "she's done it simply to make things awkward for us, as she made them awkward when she pushed that bird bath into the lake. And that," she cried bitterly, "is the girl Jemima's championing against us!"

"She ought to be whipped!" Babs cried.

"She ought to be jolly well—" Clara said angrily, and then broke off as a step sounded. "Oh crumbs!" she gasped. "Here comes Sir Willis!"

Sir Willis it was, and with him Seale, his secretary. Reaching the doorway, he jumped two feet in the air. So suddenly furious and bucolic was the expression on his face, that Babs, for an alarmed moment, thought he was going to have a fit.

"Egad!" he blared. "Egad!" He stared at the wall, the floor, and then, with flames darting in his eyes, glared at the girls. "You—you—you—" he choked. "Get out of this!"

"But, Sir Willis—" Babs gasped.

"Get out!" the baronet roared.

"Sir Willis, we—we didn't do it!" Marjorie panted. "We didn't! It was the gipsy girl—"

"The who—who?" Sir Willis' eyes were popping. "That tale again!" he yelled. "You have the effrontery to tell me that! You did it!"

"Sir Willis, we didn't! On our solemn word of honour we didn't!" Babs cried. "Sir Willis, you must believe us!"

"Look at my pagoda!" Sir Willis fumed.

"Yes, Sir Willis."

"Clear it off, every tiny scrap, every stain, you young hooligans! And don't talk to me!" he roared, as Babs pleadingly confronted him. "I refuse to listen to a word until I see this place as shining and clean as a new pin! Get to work! Seale, see they have everything they want!"

"Yes, sir," Seale said, looking disturbed.

"And when you've finished, Miss Redfern, see me at the Grange!" Sir Willis stormed.

Shaking with fury, he turned away, muttering to himself. Seale looked dismayed.

"But, Miss Redfern, what happened?"

"I don't know. All I do know," Babs said bitterly, "is that that awful gipsy girl was here! My hat, though,

she must have been a quick worker! Mr. Seale, please try to persuade Sir Willis we had nothing to do with it, please!" she begged.

Seale looked indignant.

"I'm sure you had nothing to do with it," he said loyally; "but Sir Willis, as you know, is not a tolerant man when he is in a temper. However, I will talk to him. I'll do my best. In the meantime, unjust as it is, you'd better do as he says. I'll send the gardener along with the cleaning materials."

He went out, leaving the chums gloomily glowering at each other. Angry as they were because of the blame they got, they were almost as angry as Sir Willis himself at the perpetrator of the deed.

They waited as he vanished. Five minutes later Sir Willis, hands behind his back, strode into the room. He looked not at the girls, but keenly scrutinised the floor and walls, then gave an audible and very disdainful sniff.

"All right," he said grudgingly. "I hope this will be a lesson to you. Perhaps the next time you start slinging paint around, you'll do a bit of thinking first—and don't ever try to excuse your action by a trumpery story about a gipsy girl. It may interest you to know," he added, glaring at Babs, "that I've been on the phone to Miss Primrose."

"Oh!" Babs gasped.

"And Miss Primrose," Sir Willis said, with a certain amount of satis-



let worn by the mysterious gipsy girl whom she had caught in the act of burglary!

They were to become angrier still before that afternoon was out.

Tea obviously was out of the question from that moment. Sugar-soap, turpentine, emery powder, and other materials were soon forthcoming, and the chums desperately set to work. Having to remove that paint, however, meant they were being held up on more important tasks—meant, in fact, that their constructive activities for that day had come to a complete end.

And the groaning, back-aching exhaustiveness of that work!

Five o'clock came. Six o'clock. It was just half-past six when, feeling more dead than alive, they completed their task. Seale came in, nodding in relief as he saw what they had done.

"Good!" he said. "I think, Miss Redfern, I have managed to talk Sir Willis round. I'll bring him along now, but please leave him to do all the talking. He's in a very touchy mood."

"CHUMP! Bend lower," Babs said, with a chuckle, but the chuckle abruptly faded as Jemima reached down to take the bulb. Something fell from her pocket; something which Babs recognised at once. It was the bracelet worn by the mysterious gipsy girl whom she had caught in the act of burglary!

"will have a word to say when you get back. But you have her to thank, and nobody else, that you didn't leave this place for good. Seeing that you have cleaned up, however, and that Miss Primrose is a lady for whom I have a great respect, I've decided to give you just another chance. But the next time, Miss Primrose, or no Miss Primrose, you go! So behave yourselves!"

"Yes, Sir Willis," Babs said meekly. "And can we go back to school now?"

"You can go to the dickens!" Sir Willis grunted.

And they went, not to the dickens, but to school, feeling relieved, but quivering still with fury.

"Before we see Miss Primrose, we're going to see Jemima!" Babs vowed fiercely, as they strolled into the quad. "I've got quite a few things I've rehearsed to say to her about that precious gipsy pal of hers. Come on!"

They went in, grimly feeling a sort

of angry relief in the prospect of venting some of their own anger upon the girl who was connected with their suffering. In a grim body they went up the stairs, and strode along the Fourth Form corridor. There, outside the door of Study No. 7, which Jemima shared with Marcelle Biquet and Leila Carroll, Babs stopped.

"Now," she said, and thrust the door open, "Jimmy, you awful—"

A girl, standing near the mirror, in the act of slipping on a bracelet, had turned. Just for a second they all had a glimpse of her olive-skinned face.

It was not Jemima.

It was the mysterious gipsy girl herself!

"We've Done With You, Jemima!"



EVEN as Babs & Co. stood rooted in stupefied astonishment, the girl acted.

In one spring almost she was across the room.

Before Babs could rouse herself, she had been pushed back, and the door was slammed in her face. Then came the snick of the key in the lock inside.

"She's locked herself in!" Clara cried.

"Well, never mind." Babs' eyes were gleaming now. "She can't jolly well escape us this time!" she cried. "We've got her now! Hi!" she cried, hammering at the door. "Come out!"

From inside came no sound. "If you don't come out, we'll fetch a mistress," Babs threatened.

This time there was a sound—a distinct squeaking sound. Leila yelled.

"Shucks, she's opening the window! She's going to climb out!"

"Come on!" gasped Babs.

No need for that instruction. The chums were quivering now. Not if they knew it, were they going to be robbed of their quarry when that quarry was already a prisoner by her own hand. And yet had they thought before they acted, they would have left a guard on the door.

But in that moment of palpitating excitement they didn't. Down the corridor, down the stairs they went with a breathless rush. Out into the quad they burst, and, wheeling round, stared up at the window of Study No. 7, which overlooked the lawns. That window stood some fifteen or sixteen feet above the ground—certainly not a safe leaping distance, and one which would have taken a few minutes to negotiate. But there was no gipsy girl running across lawn or quad. There was no gipsy girl clinging to the creeper which grew up the wall. There was—

Just nothing.

"Well, where the—" Clara stutted. "Hey!" she called.

"Hi, gipsy!" Leila yelled.

They glared up at the window.

"Come out!" Babs cried, and then started again. "I say, look at that!" she cried. "The window's closed again!"

"What?"

For a moment they blinked. But it was true. The window was now firmly shut.

"Oh, my hat! What ninnies we are!" Babs cried. "We ought to have left someone on guard. She's bolted back into the school. Come on! Hey!" she added, starting.

For at that moment the window was pushed open again. A beaming, oval face, the light darting flashes from the

monocle it wore in one eye, stared down at them.

"Jimmy!" they all yelled.

"What cheer!" Jemima beamed.

"Nice to see you back," she said. "What's the excitement? School on fire, or something?"

"Jimmy, the gipsy girl's escaped from your study!" Babs cried.

"Well, tut, tut! Fancy me not noticing a little thing like that!" Jemima said. "How careless of me!"

"Come on!" Babs said grimly.

It was absolutely absurd for Jemima to say she hadn't seen the gipsy girl, of course, for how had Jemima got into the study when it had been locked from the inside? Even if the gipsy girl had escaped by the door immediately they had scooted, Jemima must have walked right into her. Either the girl had the power of disappearing at will, or Jemima was just playing another gipsy-championing trick upon them.

In a puzzled but determined state they ascended the stairs again. At the door of Study No. 7 stood Jemima, beaming as though nothing had happened to mar her good relations with them that afternoon.

"Enter, old Spartans!" she said cordially. "Come and regale me with this story of the disappearing old gipsy girl. But she's not here."

One glance into the study was sufficient to show that.

Very deliberately Babs confronted her.

"Jimmy, don't rot!" she said angrily. "You know jolly well there was a gipsy girl in this room. She shut herself in after pushing me out.

We distinctly heard the window open, and thought she was leaving. In the few seconds all that took to happen you must have come along, and you must have seen her."

"Alas," Jemima sighed, "that my honest word is not believed."

"Jimmy, did you?" Mabs asked.

"No, old Spartan."

The chums exchanged looks.

"Jimmy, I'm sorry; we can't believe it," Babs said shortly.

Jemima shrugged.

"I'm sorry, too, old Spartan."

"You jolly well know that gipsy girl. You're shielding her. And if you're shielding her, knowing what she's done, well"—and Babs heaved a deep breath—"you're just playing traitor to us. Jimmy, you've got to tell us now what you know about that gipsy girl, and why you are sticking up for her. If you don't—"

Very gravely Jemima regarded her.

"If I don't?" she asked.

"If you don't," Babs returned. "Jimmy, I hate to have to say this, but you've brought it on yourself. If you don't, we can only conclude that you're hand-in-glove with her, and helping her in all the spiteful things she's doing against us."

"That's right," Clara said.

"And you really think that?" Jemima asked quietly.

"Well, what else can we think?" Babs countered.

"I'm sorry!" Jemima shook her head. "I hoped and thought you had more faith. At the risk of repeating myself I'll say again I'm sorry, but there's nothing doing, old Spartans. I absolutely refuse to believe in the existence of your gipsy girl. So what?"

"So," Clara snapped, "good-night!" With a glare at Jemima, she caught Babs by the shoulder. "Come on, all," she said. "After this, I reckon we've done with you, Jemima. We're through!"

And in a cold, angry silence, the girls trooped out.

Caught—But Not in the Act!



THROUGH" the chums were—at least, for that evening. There

could be no chummy happiness with a girl who had so badly let them down;

who was deliberately aiding and abetting some unknown miscreant in her plots against them.

Especially was their irritation against Jemima increased after the interview with Miss Primrose. Miss Primrose, bitterly disappointed that Sir Willis Gregory should have had further cause for complaint, was extremely critical in what she had to say. It was with a feeling that they were still regarded as being in the wrong that the chums finally left her.

None of them spoke to Jemima after that. Jemima was, for the time being, at least, virtually in Coventry. But Babs, in spite of all, was worried and troubled.

Though she shared the hurt of her chums, she was puzzled. The things they had accused Jemima of—apparently with every justification—were so utterly foreign to what she knew of Jemima's nature.

There must be an explanation—there must! If Jimmy would only speak out instead of making such a maddening mystery of herself!

It weighed on Babs' mind, that. It was still weighing on her mind when she went to bed that night. A particularly vivid dream, in which she saw Jemima gazing at her and shaking her head, caused her to wake with a sudden start, to blink in the bright moonlight which streamed through the windows. No, she could not go on in this uncertainty. She had just got to speak to Jemima and have it out with her. Perhaps, she thought, Jemima might confide in her alone.

She climbed out of her bed and approached Jemima's. Then her lips set as she looked at it. For Jemima's bed was tumbled and empty. Jemima was out!

Out—this time of night! Was the silly chump asking for expulsion now?

Where had she gone to?

Even as the thought passed through Babs' mind the door squeaked open, and Babs jumped as if she had seen a burglar as she met the eyes of Jemima—Jemima, dressed in her new black silk macintosh, with a tiny hat to match.

"Jimmy!" she breathed.

"What cheer!" Jemima chirruped.

"Spot of sleep-walking, Babs?"

She seemed in no wise disconcerted by being caught.

"Jimmy, I—I had to speak to you!" Babs gulped. Then she blinked a little as she gazed at Jemima's sleeve. "I say, you've torn your macintosh!" she cried.

That was evident even in the moonlight. For beneath the black macintosh Jemima was wearing a frock of some light material which showed through the gaping tear. Just for a moment Jemima did look taken aback.

"Tough," she said. "Careless old me—what? Still, accidents will happen. Hefty rent," she considered.

"But, Jimmy, where have you been?"

"Oh, just out taking the air, and all that sort of thing—what?"

"Not to meet the gipsy girl?" Babs asked, her mind fired with a sudden suspicion.

"Barbara, beloved, no! Haven't I told you I don't know a gipsy girl?"

Babs shook her head.

"Jimmy, you still stick to that fib?"

"I still stick to the truth," Jemima said. "Sorry, old Spartan, if you think my second name is Ananias. Hallo, friend Lydia is waking up," she added, as a sulky murmur came from Lydia Crossendale's bed. "Good-night, old unbeliever!"

Babs gazed at her. Oh, it was hopeless, hopeless! If Jimmy persisted in sticking to her fib, it was pretty obvious that no good could come of tackling her. Worried still, she got back into bed, but it was a long, long time before she could sleep. What was Jemima's game? What was her connection with the mysterious gipsy girl, whose very existence she took such pains to deny? And, anyway, what was the gipsy girl's objective?

It seemed, on the face of it, that her sole object was to get the Cliff House chums into a row. But why? What could she have against them—they, who did not know her; who, in fact, had never spoken to her?

It was certainly the gipsy girl who had broken the bird bath. Almost positively it was she who had defaced the pagoda with paint. And she had broken into Gregory Grange, and been caught in the act of rifling Edwin Seale's desk—though that incident, at least, seemed hardly aimed at the Cliff House chums.

Jemima was hand in glove with that girl. If Jemima was not actually helping her, Jemima was certainly condoning her actions—and Jemima, apparently, was even willing to break with her own friends because of her. Oh, it was a puzzle—a terrible puzzle!

She looked at Jemima, who, rather mysteriously, had retired behind a screen to undress herself, and now came forward in her pyjamas. Without a word, she climbed into bed, and Babs, still racking her brains, presently dozed off again. But hardly had the rising bell changed in the Fourth Form dormitory next morning, when Connie Jackson poked her head in at the door.

"Barbara, Miss Primrose wants to see you at once!" she rapped. "And look out for squalls," she added, with a hint of malicious satisfaction. "Sir Willis is with her, and he looks as if he's just swallowed a pepper-pot."

"My hat, more trouble!" Clara said. "What's happened now?"

Babs was soon to know that. When, in some apprehension, she presented herself in Miss Primrose's study ten minutes later, it was to find Sir Willis, eyes gleaming, moustache bristling, his ruddy cheeks a ripe beetroot colour, pacing the study, and Miss Primrose looking stern and uncompromising. It was quite another five minutes after that, what with Sir Willis' ejaculations and Miss Primrose's own agitation, before she had got the details of the latest happenings in the garden of Chin Wang.

But when she knew, her own eyes dilated with horror.

In the pagoda at the Grange there was a lovely and valuable figure of Confucius. The figure was of exquisite and most delicate workmanship, and stood in a specially carved niche in the wall in the room in which they had been working. That morning Sir Willis had found the figure lying on the floor smashed in a dozen pieces.

"Barbara, if you know anything about this—" Miss Primrose said.

"But—but I don't!" Babs broke out. "Miss Primrose—honestly! We've never even touched the figure, it looked so precious!"

"Ever since these girls have visited the garden, things have gone wrong," barked Sir Willis.

"Yes, I know; I'm sorry!" Babs shook her head. "But they've gone

just as wrong for us, Sir Willis, as they have for you. Honour bright, we didn't touch that figure. We were too scared to risk going near it!"

Miss Primrose shook her head. "Sir Willis, do you accept that explanation?"

"No, I don't!" Sir Willis cried. "I don't! My garden is going to rack and ruin—rack and ruin, madam! I was a fool, in the first place, to consent to its being used."

"Thank you!" Miss Primrose said acidly. "I hope you do not forget, Sir Willis, that it was I who begged that consent."

Sir Willis spluttered.

"Ah! Egad! Hem! I'm sorry, Miss Primrose, but—but—well, hang it all, you see the position? I can't help feeling that, if these girls hadn't been here, this would never have happened."

"But," Miss Primrose said, "nobody saw the girls smash your Confucius, Sir Willis. Barbara has given her word of honour that she knew nothing about it, and, for my part, while deploring the accident, I must accept that word. Sir Willis, please!" she added more gently. "Won't you think over it again? Won't you just this final time give the girls the benefit of the doubt?"

"After all," she added, "you are as keen as we are that the visit of the Overseas Schoolgirls' League to this school should be one of the most pleasing memories they will take back with them. Sir Willis, if I personally guarantee that these girls shall be held responsible for anything else that happens during their presence in the garden, will you retract?"

Sir Willis hummed and ha-ed, but if he had a weak spot for anything, it was for Miss Primrose, and when Miss Primrose spoke like that, even he was not proof against her. He glared.

"Well—well, madam, you make me feel weak! I vowed when I came here that never again should one of your girls step into the garden. Still—still—as you ask, I can't refuse. But, understand. Not a year's pleading will make me alter my mind if there are any more disasters."

Miss Primrose sighed.

"Barbara, you heard that? I may add," she considered, "that in this point of view, Sir Willis has my full support. That is all."

That was all. Babs left, feeling that she had stood on the lip of an erupting volcano. In the Common-room she rejoined her chums, and in angry, rather grim silence, they listened to what she had to say. In the middle of the talk Jemima came in.

"What cheer?" she said. "Hear noble old Sir Willis has been over this morning. What's he come for?" she added.

"Don't you know?" Babs asked.

"Me? Tut, tut! What ideas you grow beneath those chestnut curls, fair Barbara! Why should I know?"

"Jimmy, you were out last night," Babs said deliberately, facing her. "And last night damage was done in the pagoda. Were you anywhere near the pagoda?"

"Oh, hum!" Jemima said.

"Were you?"

Jemima looked just a little confused.

"Well, supposing I said I was?"

"Then I'd say you know something about it."

"And supposing," Jemima asked

casually, "I said I wasn't?"

"Then where were you?"

"Aha!" Jemima said, and screwed up her eyeglass. "Scuse me," she added hastily. "I've just remembered something I'd forgotten."

And before any of the chums could

stop her, she had coolly walked out of the room.

"Never mind; let her go," said Babs. "You know what a waste of time it is to try to persuade Jimmy to say something she doesn't want to say. All the same," Babs said keenly, "she knows a jolly sight more about this than she's going to let on to."

"I'll say!" Leila glared. "And if you ask me, it's Jimmy's gipsy pal who smashed old Confucius!"

To that Babs did not reply. It was an echo of her own thought. She was more disturbed about Jemima than Jemima's gipsy girl accomplice; remembering vividly that Jemima had been a little disconcerted last night, and had not accounted for the rent in her black macintosh coat sleeve. Babs badly wanted to talk to Jemima.

But that opportunity did not present itself. Jemima very adroitly steered clear of the chums for the rest of that morning. When, after dinner, they all met in the quad preparatory to adjourning to Gregory Grange, she was still not to be found. Not, indeed, that any one of them deeply regretted that. A meeting with Jemima in the present touchy state of feeling would inevitably have led to a row.

But Jemima and her mysterious activities, and the strengthening conviction that she was not altogether guiltless in the disaster which had befallen Sir Willis Gregory's Confucius, was in the forefront of all their minds when, finally, they entered Chin Wang's garden again and made their way to the pagoda, anxious to inspect the damage.

Just as they reached the stone barricade along which, yesterday, they had wired the double row of fairy lamps, Leila Carroll stopped with an exclamation.

"Shucks!" she breathed.

"Hallo!" Babs said.

Leila looked at her quickly.

"Babs, I guess you did say Jimmy tore a piece out of the sleeve of her mac last night?"

"Well, yes," Babs said. "But—"

And then she started as Leila, plucking a piece of black material from the protruding end of one of the staples with which the wires had been fastened, handed it to her.

No need for comment then. No need for anybody to say anything. As soon as Babs touched that piece of black silk she knew it was Jemima's. Jemima, then, had been here. If anything was required to make concrete the conviction that Jemima had been party to the damage to Sir Willis' Confucius, this surely proved it.

"Jimmy!" Mabs said.

"Jimmy!" Babs echoed.

She felt a little sick. Until this moment she had been trying desperately to cling to some shred of faith in Jemima Carstairs. But now—in view of this—

And then, while they all stared, first at the incriminating piece of material, then at each other, there came a fresh diversion. There was a sudden vibrating crash from inside the pagoda itself.

"Oh kik-crums! Wuw-wuw was that?" Bessie gasped.

"Oh, my hat! Come on!" Babs cried.

Her heart was fluttering then. Some dreadful presentiment of what had happened was already with her as she flew up the steps. The door of the pagoda, as usual, was wide open, and breathlessly she darted into it. And then she reeled.

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS



Week by week your friend PATRICIA writes to you in that cheery, chummy way of hers. She is young and gay, yet helpful and understanding, too—perhaps that is the secret of her popularity with you all.

DON'T you just adore taking tea out in the summer?

I often take my small brother to the "real country" as he calls it, on a Saturday afternoon.

We go by motor coach, with a shopping basket seated between us—in which is our precious tea.

There's nothing very exciting in the basket, really. But somehow, the most ordinary tea taken out-of-doors seems a banquet compared with the most thrilling one in the dining-room at home.

Just at the moment Heath—that's my small brother, whose full name is Heatherington—is keen on "paste sandwiches."

So I make some "paste sandwiches" for him, and some cucumber ones for myself. In my opinion, there is no sandwich more delicious than one made with cucumber—especially in the summer.

Then we take either some cakes or biscuits. A thermos of tea for me, and some lemonade for Heath.

And that's all. It doesn't sound very thrilling, does it? Yet it is really.

For example, last Saturday, a small dog came and visited us while we were having tea. I offered him one of my sandwiches—but he just turned up his small black nose at it.

It was Heath's he wanted—made with chicken and ham paste!

So I'm afraid Heath didn't have as much for tea as usual—for he just can't resist animals!

Very Soothing

Talking of cucumber reminds me that I burned my thumb the other day. I had made some cakes, and was getting them out of the oven when the ovencloth slipped.

I shrieked—for a burn can hurt for the moment, can't it? (Though it wasn't very bad, mind you.)

Do you know what mother did? She cut me a slice of cucumber and told me to hold it on the burn.

It really was most wonderfully soothing. So it's a tip for you to remember if you should have an accident with the hot stove, isn't it? (Not much use in the winter, I'm afraid, when cucumbers are more rare than sunshine, and nearly as expensive as a baby panda!)

I hope you haven't been ignoring all my wise advice and allowed your skin to become really burned and sore with the sun this weather. But—just in case you have, being human!—remember that a slice of cucumber rubbed over your face

will soothe the burning sensation, and do your skin good at the same time.

You can also rub it over your hands while you're about it; it is most beautifying and whitening, too.

One other thing about cucumber. You know that it gives some people indigestion? Well, if you eat it with the skin on, instead of peeling it, 'tis said that it won't!

Figure Fun

Now here's a little test for you with dates and figures that I think you'll enjoy.

Look at these, and see what they remind you of. Then look at the bottom of the page to check up.

May 26th

98.4

144

212

32

June 3rd

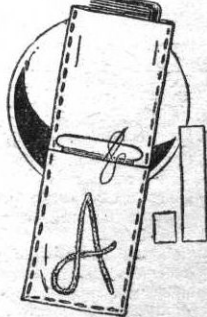
December 21st

1815

For the Holidays

Here's something for you to make yourself in time for the holidays—something to find room for in your suitcase.

It's a comb-case and a mending-case combined.



You'll want two strips of imitation leather, or American cloth, measuring about nine inches by two inches, and a small strip, about three inches long. (A strip from an old leather belt would do beautifully.)

Place the short piece—for the pocket—on the two longer strips and then sew all

three together at the sides and along the bottom.

Slip a comb into the long pocket and a card of darning silk in the little one. Then to add a finishing note, make your initial out of a pipe-cleaner and stitch this to the front.

Light-Hearted Letters

Are you one of those young people who just love writing letters?

A good many grown-ups have an idea that schoolgirls don't enjoy letter writing.

But I disagree with this. I think the majority of girls enjoy nothing more! Not stuffy letters, to dull people, of course—when you just don't know what to say. But you love writing friendly, cheery and witty letters, don't you?

When I was at school I know I used to write to quite a number of my friends during the holidays. One favourite trick we had was to write a little rhyme on the back of the envelope.

"Run, postman, run,
And be a schoolgirl's chum,"

was one of these.

I admit it isn't a very bright "poem"—for "chum" doesn't even rhyme with "run." Still, it amused us, and I'm sure the postman wasn't offended.

At other times I received letters with S. W. A. N. K. written round the flap of the envelope.

Of course, I was meant to be very intrigued by all this—for it does look rather as if your friend were calling you a swank, doesn't it?

But, as you know, it only means "Sealed With A Nice Kiss"—just for fun. There's one of these letter "seals," though, that I just don't understand. That is S. A. G. on the back of a letter.

Do you know what it means? I confess I don't. I've puzzled over it, but have had to give up.

So Handy

How do you like this little case for holding luggage labels? It can be made either with parchment paper or with stiff drawing paper.

You want to cut two pieces just bigger than an ordinary luggage label, and then stitch them together gently.

Mark the "lines" and the words "going away" on the front in Indian ink—and you'll be in real holiday mood!

Bye-bye until next week, my pets.

Your friend,

PATRICIA.



Now for the answers to my "test." (Just as if you don't have to work hard enough at school as it is!)

May 26th is Queen Mary's birthday. 98.4 (degrees Fahrenheit) is your "normal temperature." 144 is a gross, of course. 212 is the "boiling point of water" (in degrees Fahrenheit). 32 is the Freezing Point. June 3rd is the King's "official" birthday. (He has two!) December 21st is the shortest day. 1815 is the date of battle of Waterloo.

How many did you get right?

BEAUTY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

All schoolgirls want to be looking their very prettiest in time for the holidays. So Patricia has planned a special series of articles to help.

No. 2: COMPLEXION WORRIES.

IT'S sad, but it's quite true, that nearly all of us can find something wrong with our complexion.

One day we look in the mirror, and decide we're not looking at all bad to-day, thank you.

Then, the next. Horrors! There seem to be enlarged pores around the nostrils, blackheads tucked into the cleft of the chin, and a perfect crop of spots on the cheeks.

That, I'm afraid, is the way of complexions—if we don't take care of them.

And I might as well tell you right from the start, that it is the REGULAR care that counts.

It's not a bit of use removing blackheads one day and then letting the face look after itself, with just a twice-daily flick-over with the face flannel. You've simply got to take care, if you want your skin always to look lovely.

And you certainly want it to look this way in time for the holidays, don't you?

So we'll pretend that it's a brand new complexion you're after, and see if we can't tackle all the complexion problems that can be cleared away by home treatment.

First, those ever-recurring "blackheads."

GETTING RID OF BLACKHEADS

There is no way of making these vanish overnight with a dab of ointment. They must be removed one at a time.

First wash your face gently, using lukewarm water and a good complexion soap.

After drying it, hold your face over a basin of hot water for a few minutes. Or you can apply a face flannel wrung out in very hot water to your face three or four times.

Now the pores of the skin will be open, and removing the blackheads should be easy.

Place your two forefingers under an old (but clean) hankie or piece of rag. Then press very carefully and very tenderly each side of the blackhead. It should come out in a twinkling. But if it shouldn't, please don't be harsh with your face, otherwise you'll bruise the

skin; instead, steam your face again and then repeat the pressing.

When the blackheads have all been removed, you should burn the rag immediately and then splash your face vigorously with very cold water. Do this at least twenty times, to close the pores again, and to prevent dirt entering.

ROUGH PATCHES

Flaky pieces of skin around the sides of the mouth are another "worry" that schoolgirls often have. This is sometimes called "scurf," but actually the reason for it is very simple. It is just that the skin there is over-dry, and requires nourishment.

So, if this is your worry, you must buy a tin of good cold cream, and smooth this into the dried skin every night for a week. Leave a film of the cream on the face all night while you sleep, so that it can do its good work. But if you're a thoughtful daughter, do slip an old pillow-case or cloth over your pillow, to prevent the cream from soiling the bedclothes.

Avoid using soap on your face, if possible—for a day or two—until the trouble has vanished.

Spots and pimples come to nearly everyone at times. Generally, the best treatment for these comes from within. If you pay special attention to "inner cleanliness" for a day or two, you'll find them clearing away most magically.

To help on the good work, be sure to drink plenty of water between meals—and don't forget a glass last thing at night, just as you're going to pop into bed.

ENLARGED PORES

Another complexion "worry" that is quite frequent among schoolgirls—especially those who live in town—is "open pores." Generally these are at the sides of the nose and on the chin, and can make your skin look rather like orange peel in those places.

To prevent these, you should never use very hot water for washing your face. Luke warm water is best—and incidentally is more cleansing.



Also, every time you wash your face, you should be sure to rinse it with cold water, to which you may add a few drops of toilet eau-de-Cologne, patting it specially on to those places where enlarged pores seem to collect.

A slice of cucumber rubbed over the face at night and the juice allowed to stay on all night is also very good for refining and bracing the skin.

LOVELY LASHES

Though I suppose it isn't, strictly speaking, a complexion worry, a good many girls wish their eyelashes were longer and more curly.

It is possible, you know, to make eyelashes grow—though it needs perseverance. I don't know any speedy way—and I don't think anyone else does. But certainly, if you apply a dab of "Vaseline" to the eyelashes every morning and every night, brushing the eyelashes upwards with your fingertips as you do so, you will soon notice a vast improvement.

Even better than applying it with your fingers is to use a little eyelash brush. The brushing does actually stimulate the growth, as well as giving them that upward curl.

A BRIGHT COLOUR

For girls who are very pale and wish they had more colour in their cheeks these summery days, there is a very good trick.

Every morning, after washing your face, dip your hands into cold water and shake them.

Then pat your cheeks briskly with the tips of your fingers. This will bring the blood rushing to the surface and make you charmingly rosy.

Next week we'll tackle Hair Problems.



THE WAY THEY DO THEIR HAIR

Miss Hilda Richards and Patricia put their heads together to describe for you some Cliff House Fourth-Formers' hair styles.

This Week: JANET JORDAN (She's the last!)

Janet's admirers would call "fair."

It's that colour which makes mothers say: "Oh, your hair was such a lovely colour when you were a baby. I do wish it had kept like it!"

You know the shade, don't you?

By nature, Janet's hair is also rather straight. But I don't think you'd have guessed it—unless you saw her 'doing

JANET'S hair is what some of you might call "mousey" in colour, but which

it up" in pipe-cleaner curlers before she goes to bed each night.

She only curls up the ends, leaving the top part. Six curlers—or rather pipe-cleaners—Janet uses. She says these are very soft and don't dig into her neck as some others do.

Also, Janet's hair tends to be thin—that is, she hasn't much of it.

So to make it look more, Janet combs her curls outwards, fluffing them away from her head all the time, to give her hair a bushy look which makes it appear thicker.

The top part she combs smoothly and keeps it in place with a hair-grip.

Another "hair worry" of Janet's is

when she goes swimming. You know how she loves this!

Well, Janet used to find that the water sneaked in under her cap, and made those poor curls look very rat's-tail. She bought a patent cap with a sort of rim inside it. But this wasn't comfortable, she said.

Then she tried wearing two caps for a time—one thin one under her helmet.

But now she has found the ideal arrangement. She bought a band of rubber material, which is made to slip around the edge of the hair before the cap is pulled on.

Now Janet finds her hair is perfectly dry when she comes out of the water—and the rubber band cost only threepence!

(Continued from page 11)

"Oh, great golliwogs! Look!" she cried.

They were all looking, horrified and petrified, at the sight which met their gaze. In front of them was the carved niche in which the statuette of Confucius had stood. Beneath that was a small bureau table inlaid with turquoise. On that table was usually the minute temple of Chin Wang, a rare little masterpiece in delicate carved ivory, inlaid with turquoise. That temple was the treasure in the pagoda which Sir Willis prized most.

But the temple, alas! was no longer on the table.

It was on the floor.

A mass of twisted ivory and smashed woodwork, it lay there in a pitiful heap, two or three of its rose quartz figures scattered among the debris it now presented. In rooted horror the chums gazed at it. Then Babs leapt forward.

What she intended to do she did not know. But the sight of that pitiful wreck called, somehow, for action. She had hardly taken three paces, however, when there was a bellowing interruption behind her.

"Egad!" a voice roared. "Egad!"

Babs, her jaw dropping, turned, to find herself confronting Sir Willis. His face was not crimson this time. It was livid. His eyes were popping as he gazed at the wreck of the priceless treasure on the ground.

"You—you—" he stuttered. "This is the way you keep your promise! This is—this—" Words failed him; he caught his breath. "No, do not dare excuse yourself!" he cried, as Babs opened her mouth. "Don't say a word, miss! I want no stories this time of vanishing gypsies! I want nothing—except to see the backs of you all! Go—this time, for good!"

"But, Sir Willis—" protested Babs.

"Go!" he yelled, almost dancing. "Go! This is the end—this is the finish! The garden party will not take place, and I forbid any Cliff House girl ever to put her foot in this garden again!"

An Amazing Prisoner!



"WERE in the soup!"

That grim announcement came from Clara Trevlyn. It was met by a silence which showed the full, if not hearty, agreement of her listeners.

Very chastened, very downcast those listeners were—very anxious and embittered, too. An hour ago they had returned to Cliff House, to be immediately summoned by a quivering Miss Primrose. Their cheeks burned every time they thought of the interview.

But worse had followed.

For the news that the plum in the pie of the Overseas Schoolgirls' League celebration was cancelled had set the whole school bitterly by the ears. Most of the Fourth Form, having spent money on the hiring of costumes and time on its preparation, were feeling bitter indeed. On top of Miss Primrose's bitter condemnation, Babs & Co. had to suffer the biting scorn and anger of the school. Everybody was utterly fed up.

Everybody had reason to be. But nobody in the school was as fed up as the gloomy Babs & Co.

"And to-morrow," groaned Bessie, "the Overseas Schoolgirls' League will

be here. Oh dear! What are we to do?"

"Go and see, Sir Willis?" Leila ventured. "He might have got over it by this time."

Marjorie shuddered. The others shook their heads.

"Go and see Jemima, more like," Clara put in. "I'll bet it was her gypsy pal responsible for that little lot. Where is she, by the way?"

"Oh, bother Jemima!" Babs said wearily. "Talking to Jemima won't mend matters. The only thing that will—is to convince Sir Willis that we had nothing to do with it."

"About as useful as trying to convince a goat it would look better without its beard!" Clara grunted.

"All the same," Babs said, "we might try. No, I don't mean going over to the Grange. But we can find out by telephone. If Sir Willis would only see one of us, for instance. Shall I get in touch with him?"

There was a general, though not hopeful, nodding of heads. Without enthusiasm, the chums watched Babs go. Without hope, they regarded her as, three minutes later, she came back. She shook her head.

"Sir Willis, apparently, has gone up to London," she said. "He's not expected back until to-morrow. Had an urgent call or something. All the same—"

"All the same, what?" grunted Clara.

"I've got an idea—just a glimmering," Babs went on. "It may lead to nothing except a long wait; but, on the other hand, it's worth trying. We're all agreed that gypsy girl is at the bottom of this?"

Nods.

"And it seems to me," Babs went on, "that, besides wanting to get us into rows, she's up to something else—in the pagoda. Think what's happened! The bird bath near the pagoda was smashed. Paint was scattered in the pagoda itself. It was in the pagoda that the statue of Confucius was smashed. It was in the pagoda that she busted up the model temple. Doesn't it seem from that," Babs added, "that her interest is all in the pagoda?"

"Well, so, what?" Clara asked impatiently.

"Supposing," Babs asked, "she's going to try another stunt—as she did last night?"

"With Jemima's help?" put in Clara. "Never mind Jimmy. Keep her out of it for the moment," Babs looked at them. "Supposing she's got some big design on the pagoda?" she asked.

"Everything seems to point that way. Just supposing, for instance," Babs added, "that she's not really up against us, but she found us in the way of her design on the pagoda, and done all these things to get us the blame?"

"Shucks!" Leila said, staring. "Say, that's surely an idea."

The others started. It seemed that Babs had hit something.

"Well," Mabs asked, "what then?"

"Then," Babs gulped, "she'll have another cut at doing whatever it is she wants to do, and she might easily try it on again to-night. Oh, I'll admit it's a faint chance!" she said. "But it is a chance—that's the thing; and if we happen to be on the spot when she arrives—why, then, we catch her red-handed in the act!"

A thoughtful pause followed that observation. They looked at each other, faint hope gleaming in their faces now.

Blamed by Sir Willis, thrust into the bad books of Miss Primrose, scorned by

the school, something had to be done if they were to retrieve their good name; and, as Babs pointed out, they could only retrieve their good name by fixing the guilt on the real guilty party. Seeing they did not even know the name of the guilty party, that was a remote hope, but they were desperate enough to try anything now.

"And so," Babs went on, "what about keeping watch on the pagoda to-night? If we gain nothing, there's no harm done. It means breaking bounds, of course," she added, "and we'll have to go jolly carefully now that Chin Wang's garden is forbidden ground. But while there's life, there's hope."

"And we're grasping at the hope, I guess," Leila said. "I'm game."

They were all game, even Bessie, though Bessie, unintentional blunderer that she was, was excused from the party. The more they discussed the plan, the more their hope soared. In any case, it would be something to feel they were making an attempt to grapple with the situation. And so it was decided.

"To-night, then?" Babs asked eagerly.

"To-night," Mabs promised.

"But not a word, mind, in the meantime," Babs cautioned, "and especially no word to Jimmy."

"Well, for my part, I'm not on speaking terms with Jimmy!" Clara returned hotly.

None of them were, though to be sure they were all faintly puzzled as to what had become of Jemima. Since break nobody had seen her.

And nobody saw her again until after call-over! After that ceremony she vanished once more, not reappearing until bed-time. Nobody spoke to her, and Jemima, for her part, showed no desire for conversation. An hour after lights out, however, the chums rose in the dark. Hastily dressing and making their way out of the school by the lobby window, they hurried across the dark fields towards the Chinese garden of Chin Wang.

It was dark—very dark—to-night, which was all to the good. Like five silent shadows they sped towards the pagoda, and there, in the shadow of the shrubbery, they positioned themselves. Nobody spoke. Even a whisper could be heard in the still, clear air with which the night was filled.

Half an hour went by, when suddenly they tensed.

"Hush!" Babs whispered.

From the path leading through the shrubbery they heard a faint step.

Silently they stood. Now they heard breathing, and suddenly an electric thrill seemed to shoot through all of them as, not half a dozen yards away, a slim, girlish form passed them with soft steps. They distinctly heard the rustle of her garments as she went.

They allowed her to pass, wheeling round to follow her movements.

Now they saw her for a moment—the gypsy girl! Almost on fire with excitement they watched. She stepped towards the pagoda, stopped for a moment to listen, and then, with a swift look round, plunged inside.

Babs almost fainted with excitement.

"We've got her!" she said tensely. "She's in! And now she's jolly well in, she's not getting out again. Marjorie—quickly—scoot to the Grange and get Mr. Seale or someone! The rest of us surround the pagoda and collar her if she comes out. Hurry, Marjorie!" she added breathlessly, as there was the sound of a car in the near-by drive.

Marjorie, with a gulp, rushed off.

"Now!" hissed Babs.

In a group the remaining four stole forward, making no sound. They halted outside the door of the pagoda, positioning themselves across it. As Babs said, there was no second entrance or exit to that pagoda; as the girl had gone in, so must she come out.

"Let's go in and collar her!" Clara muttered.

"And give her a chance to get away in the dark—no thanks!" Babs said. "We're taking no risks! Hallo!" she added, with a sudden start. "Isn't that Sir Willis?"

Sir Willis, whom they had supposed to be in London, it was. They heard his voice.

"If this is another Cliff House trick, young lady—"

"Sir Willis, no, no!" Marjorie's frantic voice came. "But hurry! She's in the pagoda now!"

A crunching of footsteps. Sir Willis, dressed in top hat and coat, came into view. He glared at Babs.

"If this is some trick, I'll see you all expelled!" he threatened.

"Sir Willis, it's no trick," Babs assured him.

"No?" He glared again. "And I suppose sending me an urgent wire from London was no trick?" he snorted.

"Wire?" Babs started.

"Wire!" Sir Willis said. "This afternoon I received a wire from Felix Little. Said he was in London; wanted to see me on urgent business. I obeyed it. I took the next train down, only to be handed another telegram at Croydon, where the train stopped, telling me that the first was a fake, and I was to return at once. Well, just to be on the safe side, I phoned Little at once and discovered that the wire was a fake. And no sooner do I stop here and set foot out of my car than this girl comes up with some cock-and-bull story that you've trapped a gipsy girl in the pagoda."

"But we have," Babs retorted. "We wanted to prove to you that Cliff House had nothing to do with the damage that has been done. We told you about the gipsy, and you wouldn't believe us, but we've got her now, and this time we're going to catch her in the act."

"And she's in there now?" Sir Willis snapped.

"Yes," Babs said.

Sir Willis nodded. Grimly he braced his shoulders. Then he stepped towards the door. With a fierce glare he pushed it open, at the same time switching on the light. From the inside of the room there was a sudden movement, and Babs, hot on Sir Willis' heels, was just in time to see a wisp of yellow-and-blue skirt disappear round the screen. She gave a cry.

"There she is! Clara, stand on guard by the door! Now!" she cried.

"Egad!" Sir Willis shouted.

For, like a young tigress, Babs was leaping across the room, Mabs and Leila at her heels. She caught the screen. She flung it aside. And then she gave a yell.

"Got you!" she cried.

There, facing them, was the gipsy girl!

"Got you!" repeated Babs, and grabbed an arm. "Sir Willis, here she is! You awful cat! You scheming—"

And then she blinked, so amazed that she almost released the arm of the girl who, with an eyeglass in her hand, beamed upon her. For, in spite of the brown powder which covered her face, Babs recognised her at once.

"Jim-Jemima!" she almost shrieked.

"Jimmy!" stuttered Mabs.

"Alas!" Jemima said. "Alas and alack! I'm caught!"

"Then—then you were the gipsy girl all the time?" Clara hooted.

"Alas!"

Sir Willis came storming forward. "Hold her!" he said. "Hold her! Egad, I'll make you sorry for this—all of you. A Cliff House girl all the time, hey? One of your own friends! This makes it worse than ever! Girl," he thundered, "what are you doing here?"

"Sssh—Watch!"



IN blank, angry dismay the chums stared at the dark-faced Jemima. But Jemima showed no trace of guilt, or even alarm. She smiled composedly.

"Sir Willis, old top—"
"How—how dare you—"
"Listen," Jemima said, "please! I came here, if you must know, to make

bluster by the surprising sequence of events, seemed dazed, and for a moment was as clay in Jemima's hands. Fiercely she caught his arm and dragged him behind the screen. The chums, hardly conscious they were doing so, joined them.

"But, Jimmy—"
"Hush! Not a word!" Jemima breathed. "Just watch! Sir Willis, glue your eye to the hole in the screen here. Ah, hear that?" Jemima hissed.

The chums tensed. Now they heard, outside, a soft, stealthy step.

It was coming towards the pagoda.

Breathlessly they stood. Sir Willis rumbled in his throat, but Jemima caught his wrist, exerting a warning pressure which silenced even that old fire-eater for once.

Now there was a step at the door. The door creaked. It came open. Then suddenly a beam from a powerful torch shot across the floor. And the chums almost gasped as they saw the man behind it. It was—

Seale, the secretary!
The torch flickered round the



FURIOUSLY, the chums flung open the door of Jemima's study. "Now then, Jimmy, you awful—" Babs began, only to break off in astonishment. Facing them across the room was not Jemima, after all—but, their enemy, the gipsy girl!

a tour of the old pagoda. I've something I want you to see. Unfortunately," she added, "I didn't expect to be caught, but seeing that I am caught—well, then, we're all in it together. But quick—out with those lights!" she added quickly.

"What?"
"Now, behind the screen!" Jemima hissed, as she herself snicked out the lights.

"Egad! But what—"
"Shush! Babs, get behind the screen, too!"

"But Jimmy—"
"Do as I say!" Jemima rapped.

Almost imperious was the note of command in her voice now, almost compelling. In a moment Jemima, the quarry of the party, had taken command, and amazingly the chums found themselves obeying her.

Even Sir Willis, robbed of his usual

pagoda. It shone for a moment on the screen, then went round the wall until, finally, it came to rest on the carved niche which yesterday had contained the jade statuette of Confucius.

Then Seale stepped forward, at the same time producing a long, thin chisel from his pocket.

Now he had placed the torch on the ground so that its rays shone upwards. Now he was getting to work on the wall, prising beneath the carved panel which formed the back of the niche. They heard him gasp, they heard the woodwork squeak.

Then came a rending sound and the chisel plunged deeper, accompanied by a protesting squeak of wood. From Seale came another hiss as he burrowed, and then a faint cry as the whole panel heeled forward, disclosing a dark, oblong cavity.

The chums held their breath.

Seale's own breath was rasping in excitement now. He was almost trembling as he groped into the cavity. Presently they heard an exultant cry escape his lips. Then, in trembling triumph, withdrew something that gleamed with a golden sheen in the ray of the torch—an exquisite casket.

"Got it!" they heard him mutter. "Got it—at last! The treasure of Chin Wang. The treasure that old fool Gregory never even knew existed. Rich for life, and that old fool Gregory, in London, none the wiser! Now for the getaway!"

"And now," Jemima cried, "for the showdown! Babs, lights up!"

And bang—over went the screen! Seale spun round with a cry. In one leap Jemima had reached him; with one swoop had snatched the casket from his hand.

"Villain!" Sir Willis shouted, and grabbed an ebony statuette.

Babs, meantime, had rushed to the lights. Mabs, Clara, and Marjorie were leaping to head off Seale's retreat. But Sir Willis, stung to fury by the knowledge that this secretary of his intended to rob him, sprang forward and felled the man with one blow.

Like a log Seale dropped, rolled over on the floor, and lay still. Sir Willis' eyes glittered.

"Scoundrel! Traitor! Blackguard!" he yelled. "But, egad, you've met your match! Miss Redfern, fetch the manservants! Miss Trevlyn, phone up the police! Thought you could get the better of me, did you, egad?" he added, as gloweringly he gazed at his fallen foe. "We will repair to the Grange. I want to know all about this—and I want to know," he added, "from the beginning!"

Jemima smiled. "Ring up the curtain," she murmured. "The story shall unfold. Ahem! Shall we bring the casket along, Sir Willis? I fancy it contains thousands and thousands of pounds' worth of priceless jewels!"

IT DID. But, almost more incredible than the sudden revelation of that hidden hoard, was Jemima's own cool, calculated story.

It had all happened, Jemima said, on the day of the broken bird bath, when she had been coming to Gregory Grange. Jemima had not intended, that day, to visit Gregory Grange, because she was expecting a rather special costume from Courtfield which she had hired for the garden party fete—the costume of a Chinese lady.

But subsequently, when the costume had turned up, it proved that the costumiers had made a mistake, for instead of sending a Chinese fancy dress, they had sent a gipsy dress.

"And so," Jemima explained, in Sir Willis' great lounge, "I was in the old raspberry jam. What shall I do with this? thought I, and, with my well known knack of making a decision, decided to send it back. And then, seeing there was no time like the present, and as it was a nice afternoon for a stroll, as you remember, decided to walk to Courtfield, dropping in at the Grange to see how you were getting on, by the way."

Jemima continued. Near the foot-path, the case had accidentally slipped open, throwing the costume on the ground. In the act of retrieving it she had been surprised to see a man come leaping over the gate and scot for his life down the road. Brief though the glimpse of him had been, Jemima had recognised him at once as Edwin Seale.

It was then that Babs & Co. appeared, and to Jemima's dismay had found the scarf, before she could retrieve it.

Jemima then described how Babs & Co. had vanished; how, as soon as their backs were turned, Seale had come sneaking back up the road, to disappear over the gate again. From that moment she made up her mind that a mystery was afoot, and, being Jemima, had, in her own inimitable way, set out to probe it.

"If I hadn't been convinced then that Mr. Seale was an up-to-no-good sort of Spartan, what he said, Babs, when you told him about the gipsy you thought you'd chased would have convinced me. Apart from that, Mr. Seale's face had a sort of familiar look. I seemed to remember having seen it in my governor's album of the naughty lads he had dealings with when he was in the Secret Police service. Also." Jemima added, "I was vastly intrigued."

She described the taking of the photographs, including the accidental one. That was really a stunt to get snaps of Edwin Seale's face from various angles, which, later, she had despatched to her father. Her father had sent her a wire the following morning saying Edwin Seale was a man known as Flash Fred, who had been put behind prison bars on a forgery charge, some years ago.

Continuing, Jemima explained that she had worn gipsy clothes so as not to be recognised as a Cliff House girl, because if she had been seen acting suspiciously it might have ruined things for all the chums. She had rifled Seale's desk to learn what he was up to.

In Seale's study she had found translations from the Chinese manuscript which Chin Wang had left behind—that manuscript describing the hiding-place of the treasure which the pagoda had been built specially to house. Seale, having forged references to get the post of Sir Willis' secretary, was most anxious to get hold of that before Felix Little, one of the signatures on the forgery, came along for the garden-party. His work in the pagoda, however, had been suddenly interrupted by the activities of the Cliff House chums.

"And so," Jemima said, "he had to get us out of it—and did, by what means you know. As the garden-party is to-morrow, his last chance of finding the treasure was to-night, which meant he had to work swiftly. So he faked the old wire to get Sir Willis out of the

way, but in my usually modest, clever way, I found out about the fake and sent the other wire to Croydon, to halt Sir Willis' merry old progress. I had hoped," Jemima murmured, "that he would arrive back in time to catch the naughty old man."

"And—and that's all?" Clara stutted.

"That's all," Jemima beamed. "Oh, but for one other little thing—that broken window of the temple. Old Seale, naughty lad, did that when he was rooting around, and, spotting a couple of our merry old schoolmates in the distance, thought: 'Ah! Excellent chance to blame them!' Being old Sealey, he did blame them. By the way, I made two little miscalculations."

"Oh," said Clara. "What were they?"

"One—not realising you would be on the scene to-night; the other, dressing myself up as a gipsy in my study yesterday. I wanted to see how I looked, admire the beauty, and all that. Still, here we are, all merry, bright and chirpy, and all's well that ends well—what? Sir Willis, do we have the garden-party?"

Sir Willis beamed. "Gad, you can have whatever else you like besides!"

"And we're chums again?" Jemima smiled at Babs & Co.

"Oh, Jimmy, if—you'll forgive us?"

"And you do believe now," Jemima asked, a twinkle in her eyes, "that I told the truth when I said I hadn't a gipsy girl chum?"

"Washout!" snorted Clara. And they laughed.

Later, when they had had refreshment, they went back to Cliff House, accompanied by the glowing and much richer Sir Willis himself. And next morning all Cliff House thrilled to hear the story.

All that next day Cliff House rejoiced in the entertainment of their Overseas Schoolgirls' League. Happy and great that day, but the high spot was the simply marvellous display which took place in Chin Wang's garden, Jemima being the heroine of the hour.

"And to think," Babs said, when the fun was at its height, "if it hadn't been for you, Jimmy, all this would never have happened!"

"To think!" Jemima murmured. "To think, my little chick-a-biddy! Aha!" she said pleasantly. "Let's totter to the fireworks, shall us?"

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.



"LITTLE DOLORES' GREATEST AMBITION!"

Tiniest and youngest girl at Cliff House School, Dolores Essendon wanted one thing more than anything else in the world—Snowey, the lovely white pony. And he could be her very own—if she rode him well in the local gymkhana. No wonder Dolores was beside herself with excitement. But there was someone else, jealous and vindictive, who resolved that Dolores shouldn't ride Snowy at all—Connie Jackson, the spiteful Sixth Form prefect. And so well did she scheme that it seemed that even Babs & Co., stoutly rallying to little Dolores' aid, could not save the kiddie from a broken heart.

This grand COMPLETE story, one of the most appealing ever written by Hilda Richards, appears in next Saturday's SCHOOLGIRL. You simply mustn't miss it.

Fascinating COMPLETE Canadian story introducing that attractive character—

KIT OF RED RANCH



By ELIZABETH CHESTER

Ahead on the plain Kit saw the train, and urged the horse along at a canter. "Beaten?" she said crisply. "You've fired yourself, huh? Cut the tether, and bolting like the horse did?"

The school-marm bit her lip.

"Y-es," she murmured.

Kit gave her a slow smile.

"Reckon you're acting in a temper, like we all do at times," she said gently. "On'y once you get aboard that loco it won't be stopping for nigh on a hundred miles. Won't be so easy gettin' back, supposin' you should change your mind."

"I'm not changing my mind. I won't go back!"

"O.K.," said Kit quietly.

But she shook her head sadly. She was not the giving-in kind herself. She knew how tough the local boys were, and that a schoolmistress' life was not all honey. All the same, the thing to do was to stick it out, not to give in.

At the station Kit reined up and jumped from the trap, just as the loco thundered in with shrieking whistle, to the accompaniment of the station bell's clanging.

Reaching for the sack of mail, she

Kit is Impetuous!

"GIT along, Daisy!" said Kit Hartley, in encouraging tone, to the mare between the shafts of the shay. "Haven't you got any sense of shame? Gee! There's only one train in the day, and you can't even be on time for that."

Kit cracked the whip well away from the mare's back, and turned with a rueful smile to the Redskin girl who sat beside her.

The station was only a mile away, and pretty soon the loco itself would come steaming into sight from under the blue hills. It was a few minutes' journey only, but Daisy was taking her time, day-dreaming, and Kit of Red Ranch had an idea that they might even yet miss the train with the mail. If they did they would have to wait until the morrow.

Then, noticing how absorbed Redwing, her little Indian friend, appeared to be as she looked behind them, Kit turned her head.

"Gee! Someone hitting the trail," she murmured. "Coming along in a cloud of dust."

Dust was all they could see, but they heard the clatter of hoofs, and next moment over the brow of the hill came a horse, pulling a trap. Standing up in it was someone holding the reins and crying out in agitation.

"By golly, that nag's making a bolt for it!" exclaimed Kit, and sprang from the shay to the road.

Waving her arms, Kit ran towards it, whip in hand, and she cut the lash through the air with a pistol-like sound.

The horse slowed. Kit, catching at the reins as it came level, hung on, while Redwing sprang to the animal's head from the other side.

On the box was a young woman whose cheeks were pale and stained with tears. Her town hat was on the back of her head; her hair was untidy, and she looked in the last stage of exhaustion. As she saw Kit take the horse, she flopped down on the seat and covered her face with her hands.

"All right now," Kit said consolingly. "Reckon something scared him."

"School-marm," whispered Redwing. The young woman uncovered her face, looked at Kit, coloured deeply, and, brushing her eyes, made a grand effort at self-control.

"I—I'm sorry! I'm a fool!" she said. "But—but it was the last straw when the horse bolted. Oh, the little wretches! Fancy putting fireworks under the trap!"

"Fireworks!" exclaimed Kit, frowning. "Who did that?"

"The boys. Who else?" sighed the young woman. "Off the fireworks went, and the poor horse just bolted. I—I might have been killed. Oh, I hate them! I'm glad I'm going. I'm glad!"

The young schoolmistress was going home, cowed and beaten by her pupils' japes. And then Kit took a hand in her own way. Japes? Well, she'd show those boys a jape of her own that would cure them for good.

Kit shot a quick look at the luggage in the trap, and saw that it was enough to be the school-marm's entire outfit.

"Hitting out for good," she murmured. "Well, if we don't get this loco it'll be a whole day's waiting and more fireworks. Git along," she said to the horse. "And no tricks. Fetch along the mail, Redwing, will ya?"

Redwing brought the sack of mail from the shay, and put it into the trap; then offered to take charge of Daisy and the shay.

"I'll be back soon," called Kit, and got the trap moving.

Half-way to the station she saw that the schoolmistress had dried her eyes and composed herself.

"End of school? Broken up?" she asked gently.

The schoolmistress, gulping, spoke in a rush.

"Broken up is right. Smashed up. I can't stand it. I'm going," she said huskily. "I'm no good as a school teacher, that's all about it."

ran into the station with it, giving it to the old man there, then returned to the trap to help with the luggage. But, to her amazement, she was forestalled. From the bushes on the other side of the road sprang half a dozen lads, with yells like Redskins.

"Yahoo!"

"Sling the baggage aboard, boys!"

"No more school!"

Kit's eyes blazed with anger as the young rascals snatched the luggage from the trap and banged it on to the road. Then, jumping to the trap, she grabbed the whip and cracked it over the head of the nearest boy. She could certainly crack a whip, and the boy dropped the bag, none too sure that he hadn't been shot.

"That's enough!" snapped Kit.

"Stand away, you hobos!"

From behind her the station-master-porter shouted.

"Hey! Git along! All aboard! The choo-choo pulling out in two minutes."

Your Editor's address is—
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Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

BETWEEN OURSELVES



MY DEAR READERS,—You may remember that in my chat some five weeks ago—in the No. 513 issue, to be exact—I mentioned a horse which had belonged to a Canadian rancher, a horse which was reputed to be a regular "fire-eater."

I told you, didn't I, that I intended to ride it at the first opportunity. Well, last week-end I did so, with the groom at the stables warning me to "go steady" as I trotted off.

I heeded that warning, because Malpie—the horse's name—had a reputation of doing the unexpected. So steadily I rode, very much on the alert for any sort of trouble. None came, and I had been riding for half an hour with perfect ease, before it happened.

OVER THE TOP—

We were trotting down a narrow lane, with a low hedge on one side. On the other side of the hedge was a field containing cows. Now I don't know if sight of those cows took Malpie back to his ranching days, but at all events, without the slightest warning, he swerved and jumped the hedge!

I haven't done much jumping, and it was a wonderful piece of luck that I managed to keep in the saddle. But before I could gain control over Malpie again he simply streaked across that field, heading straight for the cows.

I tried to rein him in, but it was no use. Malpie was going hard. I prepared for the worst, for the cows, dead in our path, were milling in a scared fashion. A crash seemed certain—but Malpie went through that jumble of cows, swerving and turning in miraculous fashion, and in a manner that nearly had me off two or three times!

The schoolmistress took a step forward, but Kit held her arm.

"No," she said, in low tones. "Don't do it! If you go there'll be no coming back. Let that train go. To-morrow there'll be another."

The schoolmistress tugged to free her arm.

"Let me go!" she gasped. "My goodness—really! How dare you?"

Kit held her, and, short of a struggle, the schoolmistress had no chance of catching her train.

"You're staying on," said Kit. "That train's pulling out without you; and you're going to show these ginks just where they get off. You're staying on, and you're a-goin' to be boss at that school."

With a tremendous shoo-shoo, sho, sho—the loco got under way. The schoolmistress, giving a startled cry, managed to wrench herself away from Kit, but even as she turned to run, the stationmaster put up his barrier.

For better or worse, the schoolmistress was staying on!

Finally, he neatly leapt the far hedge into the main road and, seemingly quite satisfied with the little "fun" he had had, trotted on sedately.

Another rider was coming down that road and had apparently seen that dash across the field. On passing, he called out: "Wonderful riding! Bit risky, though, wasn't it?"

I have to confess that I unblushingly answered: "Oh, it's all right when you know your horse." Not for worlds would I have admitted that Malpie just took me through those cows, and I hadn't a say in the matter at all!

And when I arrived back at the stables my answer to the groom's query: "Did he behave all right, sir?" was a casual: "Oh, quite."

But believe me, girls, I had a nasty few seconds in that field, and I'm ready to hand it to Malpie for being something quite out of the ordinary—very much so!

Now I must rush on very quickly to next Saturday's Long Complete Cliff House story which, oddly enough, features horses, and stars that great little favourite of you all—Dolores Essendon, the youngest girl at Cliff House.

"LITTLE DOLORES' GREATEST AMBITION"

is the title, and the ambition is to own a certain white pony at a stables near the school.

Dolores loves that pony, and when a chance comes her way to possess it her heart is filled with joy. Babs & Co., fond as they are of the sweet kiddie, are delighted, too.

But obstacles arise. Connie Jackson, spiteful prefect, takes a hand and Dolores' ambition is in danger.

Here is a story that all animal lovers will revel in, and which portrays little Dolores in a light that cannot fail to appeal.

The other grand features—"Brenda's Task of Mystery," "Kit of Red Ranch," and those delightful pages contributed by Patricia, also await you in the next SCHOOLGIRL. Oh, and of course,

Your sincere friend,
THE EDITOR.

A Grand Idea, But—

ALITTLE taken aback, despite herself, Kit turned to the schoolmistress, whose cheeks were crimson, whose eyes blazed.

"Well, there it goes!" she said slowly. "And there's no catching it now."

The schoolmistress did not reply, but, wheeling, clambered aboard the trap, which the boys had turned. One lad threw a clod of earth and the horse started up, moving well and truly.

Kit, left in the roadway, looked after it, silent, frowning. She was just beginning to realise how high-handedly she had acted. Perhaps she had gone a bit too far.

That was what the boys thought, anyway.

"Wah's tho idea?" asked a tall lad, with sullen expression. "Who are you, a-buttin' into our doings?"

Kit looked him up and down, and then surveyed the rest.

"Listen, all of you, you cowardly

little bullies!" she said grimly, addressing the boys. "It's mighty easy to play jokes on a nice, kind-hearted gel. If you've got some funny pranks, try workin' 'em off on Bill at Red Ranch, or Jem, or any of the boys. But you wouldn't. You're yellow!"

And with that she left them, rejoicing Redwing, who had arrived with their shay.

"Duck!" she said to Redwing, springing up.

They ducked, and clods hurtled harmlessly past. Then, swinging the whip aloft, she urged Daisy along.

"Bad fellers," said Redwing. "Throw books. Make fire in school. Flood school-room. Bad!"

Kit nodded. She knew how bad they were, but she also thought she had an idea how they could be cured. In thoughtful silence she drove back to Red Ranch, tethered Daisy, and then strolled into the compound to see her father's foreman, Bill. Bill was a tough cownpuncher of the old school, strong as a horse, a little slow of wit, but a man with a heart the size of a house. Cheerily he saluted her.

"Lo, Miss Kit," he said. "Get the mail aboard all right?"

"Certainly did, Bill!" said Kit. "And I've struck a mighty fine idea. Reckon there's no one knows more'n you do about throwing a rope."

Bill braced himself. The burly old fellow had his vanity, and his beard seemed to bristle a little.

"Waal, now, that's mighty nice of you, Miss Kit," he said. "I kinder can throw a rope some; but it's a knack."

"Sure is!" said Kit easily. "And the time to start's when you're young. No school-marm's teaching. That isn't any use to growin' boys. Sums—spellin'! Huh!"

Her eyes glimmered, but Bill did not notice it.

"You've sed it, Miss Kit. Eddication gets a boy nowheres!"

"Good for you, Bill," nodded Kit. "Now, how about your giving a lesson in rope-throwing to the lads in the village school?"

The cat was out of the bag. Bill shot up, and then frowned at her.

"What, me? Giving lessons in a school?" he said uneasily.

"That's the idea. 'Course, they're tough—" Kit began, and paused.

"Tough—tschuh!" said Bill, in scorn. "I'll learn 'em!"

Kit patted his arm.

"I knew you'd jump at it," she said. "Good for you. I'll skip right along and tell the school-marm the answer's yes."

And Kit sped away before slow-thinking Bill could make up his mind whether to call her back or not.

Twenty minutes later she reined up at the school. Near by was the small house where the schoolmistress lived, and in front of it her trap waited, the luggage still packed in it, the horse grazing.

Kit, rapping on the door, entered, to find the schoolmistress pacing up and down, hands behind her back.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, as she saw Kit, and drew up.

"Bit kinder mad with me?" asked Kit gently, with a smile. "Reckon I did my act sort of high-handed. I'm sorry! But those boys got me fired up inside, and it made me want to get them fixed."

The schoolmistress faced her, now composed. She was quite pretty, Kit saw, hardly more than a girl, with a clever face, that was intellectual rather than strong.

"You did act hastily," she admitted. "but—but, you know, I—well, I'm

glad. You made me ashamed, but you've also given me courage. You're from Red Ranch?"

"Yes—Kit Hartley."
"My name is Judith Cairns."
Kit held out her hand and smiled, quite touched by the girl's gratitude. "Well, Judith," she said, "I—I've been a little more high-handed since we were at the station."

And she told about Bill and his rope-throwing lesson.

"Good gracious!" said the amazed mistress. "But he wouldn't be allowed to teach here. I—I don't really think—"

"He's got to be allowed," said Kit quickly. "The school inspector's coming to-morrow, isn't he? I know what that means all right. If this school's in an uproar you'll be fired. O.K. It's not got to be in uproar, that's all about it. When those boys turn up to lessons they'll find Bill here. And Bill could pick the whole bunch of them up in one hand."

She saw the schoolmistress' eyes brighten.

"Kit, you're right," she said. "It's the way out. I'll say he came to give a lecture if questions are ever asked."

"Two o'clock, then?" asked Kit.

"Two o'clock. And—oh, Kit—thank you so much!"

Happily Kit returned to the ranch, and she saw to it that Bill kept his

ground without effort, and then released his grip.

The youth collapsed in a heap, and a roar of laughter came from his pals. "I'm agoin' in," Bill declared. "Like this, son!" He unfastened the door and pushed it wide.

Instantly there came a crash, a jangle, and a thud, and a flood of black dirty fluid.

"Gee!" muttered Kit in horror.

For Bill, the new schoolmaster, had walked smack into a booby-trap. Pans, buckets, and baskets rained down on him, covering him from head to foot in mud and ink.

Redskins on the War-Path!

KIT'S eyes rounded. She had never seen anything quite like Bill's face when he turned. Ink and mud swamped it, matted his hair, and ran down his shirt, his neck, his trousers.



TO judge by the sight of the nearby Indians, Kit and the boys were in awful peril, but when Redwing came crawling to Kit's side, Kit turned and gave her a delighted wink!

word. At a quarter to two he was ready. At two o'clock, accompanied by the faithful Redwing, she went with him to the school, all three riding horseback.

Outside the school, waiting for the bell, stood the boys and girls from the near-by ranches and villages, waiting for the doors to open. They were muttering and whispering and giggling as though some plot was afoot, but when they saw Kit and Bill the laughter died.

"O.K., Bill, walk right in!" said Kit.

Bill dismounted and gave the boys the once over with a look that made them draw back. But the tall lad edged forward.

"Say," he exclaimed, "don't go in there, Bill!"

Bill turned.

"Air you a-tellin' me what to do, son?" he asked, craning his head forward.

"Waal, no," said the lad, backing away. "On'y I—I shouldn't go in, that's all."

Bill walked up to him, and as the lad ducked reached down a mighty hand and caught him by the collar. He lifted him three feet clear of the

A howl of laughter came from the assembled school, and then Bill gave a roar; the whole gang fled, and did not stop running for a hundred yards.

The schoolmistress, hurrying from her shack, stood appalled, dropping some books she had been holding.

"My gosh!" said Kit, awestruck. "Poor old Bill!"

Bill staggered out, gouging fluid from his eyes, which goggled wildly. He choked; he fought for words. Then he snatched a bucket and hurled it almost fifty yards in his rage, and reached for his gun.

"Hey, steady, Bill! They're kids!" warned Kit.

"By—by hokey!" roared Bill. "I'll flay them! Whose idea of a joke is this—huh? Is this why you got me along, Miss Kit? Just to make some kinder a butt of me? Gah! Look at me."

Bill made a run at the nearest boys, who fled; then, with a savage glower at Kit, he ran to his horse, mounted at a jump, and whacked it to life. Next moment he was gone.

Kit, looking after him, felt her heart sink, and she turned dismally to Judith Cairns.

"Well?" she said. "Reckon it didn't pan out the right way, after all."

Judith shook her head, and her lips twitched faintly. Gathering her books, she put them under her arm.

"It was meant for me," she said. "But poor Bill got it."

Then, with a resolution Kit could not help but admire, she walked to the schoolhouse, stepped over the litter, took the bell-rope, and hauled it to summon the boys and girls to lessons.

But the summons was not answered, except by mocking laughter, cheers, and a chorused imitation of the bell.

"Seems they can't hear the bell," grimaced Kit.

"Seems I'm catching that train to-morrow, after all," answered Judith Cairns, sadly. "I'm afraid it's no good."

Kit, sighing unhappily, took the schoolmistress' hand; for it was really defeat this time. Even she could see no way out—yet.

But back of Kit's mind was the conviction that there was a way, because

there had to be a way. If there wasn't one, then Judith Cairns' career as a schoolmistress had ended. She was a failure.

Kit looked towards the boys, who had drawn apart from the girls, under the leadership of the tall, sullen-faced lad.

"Come on, fellers!" he called. "Come and trail Redskins on the mountain. Reckon we can pick up with 'em."

For several moments Kit was silent, watching them; then she turned to Redwing.

"My gosh! I've got an idea!" she exclaimed. "Redwing, this is where you help. Quick—come inside! It's a chance—and a mighty good one, I reckon!"

"HEY! Looks to me mighty like Redskins—and real Redskins at that!" exclaimed Kit sharply.

It was an hour later, and Kit was on the mountainside, where she had joined the boys to plead with them to go back to the school. But the only answer was laughter, taunts, and jeers.

The boys were living again the days when Redskins and white men had fought for possession of the land.

Kit was with the settlers, who were sending out spies to locate the Redskins, and her keen eyes had seen a movement above on the mountainside.

"Great gosh! It's happened!" she cried.

"Happened? What's happened?" asked a red-haired boy. "Say, that looks mighty like a real Injun!" he said uneasily, and pointed through the trees.

"A real Indian, yes," said Kit. "It

certainly is. Mean you haven't heard? There's been talk of a Redskin rising these last weeks. Was it a thousand or two thousand who were said to be gathering beyond the big canyon?"

The boys were silent, but whispering arose as one after another of them saw figures skulking through the trees. Then clearly into view came the head-dress of a chief, the bright red and blue feathers catching the sun, and several other Indians. Next moment they were down out of sight, but it was enough.

"Stand together!" said Kit sharply. "Has anyone a gun?"

"I've got a catapult," said the tall lad. "Say, you fellows, we've got to die hard, all right!"

"Take cover! Duck down!" snapped Kit. "Someone's got to get through with a warning to the ranch to bring the boys."

Kit took a pencil and a slip of paper from her shirt pocket and scribbled a note; folding it, she gave it to the tall lad.

"Take this through to the ranch," she said.

The tall lad shook his head. "I—I'd never get through," he faltered. "They're behind us, too. Let's get under bushes and hide."

"All right, hero," said Kit scornfully. "Three boys offered to take it, and Kit gave it to the toughest looking, who crouched down and went cautiously on through the thicket down the mountainside, carrying the note in his mouth.

Kit studied the lads; some looked grim; some were pale, but they had courage, and the glint in their eyes was good to see. Only the tall fellow with the sullen face was showing real fear, and he had already gone to earth under a bush.

Then the Redskins came into view again, shouting and prancing.

"Run for it!" yelled Kit. They did—but a half-dozen of them were captured, desperately though they resisted.

Kit had got clear, with several lads, and was watching the tops of the Indians over a hill, when Redwing came crawling up to her.

"Plenty 'nuff Redskins?" she whispered.

Kit smiled. "Plenty 'nuff," she said. "But warn them not to be rough, Redwing; and get them moving around to look like two hundred. Where are the wigwams? Top of the hill, like I said?"

Unseen by the uncaptured boys, Kit and Redwing crawled to the top of the hill, and Kit nodded with satisfaction as she saw wigwams pitched there behind a small camp. They had been cunningly placed so that half a dozen, showing amongst the trees, gave the impression of a big camp; and a fire, burning and crackling, with squaws attending it, added to the reality of the scene.

"Rope me up," said Kit, "and then have those other boys collared. Quickly, Redwing!"

Kit was duly roped up, and presently joined by the entire band of boys. They were pale, but their chins were up, except for the tall bully and one of his friends.

Redskins in war paint came on to the scene in a string, doing a shuffling waltz, and nothing could have looked more frightening. Boys who had seen Redskins on the flickers knew that this was the real stuff, and a shiver went down their spines.

"Reckon we'll be scalped?" gulped the tall lad to Kit.

"Doubt it. Help will come when the

message gets through," said Kit easily. "We're just hostages."

"What's that?" asked the tall lad. "If you learned lessons at school you'd know!" retorted Kit.

The Indians danced in a string, chanting, while tom-toms sounded their war-music. Bunched together, roped, the prisoners watched, hardly breathing, until the big chief with the flowing headdress, a tomahawk in hand, stopped the dance, and shouted words that none of the prisoners understood.

He was half-way through his harangue when there came a rustling in the bushes. A gun barked, and the chief turned round and fell on his face. Came another shot, and another man fell.

Then into the clearing came the frail figure of Judith Cairns, her cheeks flushed, her eyes shining, and a gun in either hand.

"Stick 'em up!" she shouted. "The boys are coming."

Her guns spoke again, and an Indian, clutching his arm, howled and ran into the bushes. The others fell back; some jumping for tomahawks.

Kit rolled over, and the school-mistress, dropping one gun, took a knife from a sheath at her belt, and slashed at the rope.

With a speed that might, at a less exciting moment, have caused suspicion, Kit tore her arms free, snatched the spare gun, and fired as an Indian rushed. He fell headlong, even though there were only blank cartridges in the chambers of the gun.

Then, while the rest of the Indians retreated, Kit and Judith Cairns slashed with knives at the prisoners' bonds.

In a short while, the boys were freed. "Run for it—down the mountainside!" commanded Judith Cairns.

The boys ran, although one or two paused to throw things at the nearest Indians. Kit and Judith, managing to keep solemn faces, followed, and half-way down the mountainside found the lad who had tried to get through with the message. A lurking Indian had caught and bound him.

Joining up with the others, he ran down to the plain; and they jog-trotted, ran, and walked back to the school-house, where the mistress joined them.

The tall lad cast an uncertain glance the way they had come.

"Seems kinder funny," he muttered. "Them Redskins haven't come after us."

"Maybe the boys are chasin' them," Kit put in, concealing the twinkle in her eyes.

"Mebbe," said the tall lad, and frowned.

He was thinking, then, that so far he hadn't seen any of the ranch boys. Nor, for that matter, had anybody else—because the truth of the matter was there were not supposed to be any ranch boys on hand. That wasn't part of Kit's plan.

"What's the worry? You're safe now, anyhow," Kit observed.

"Inside for roll-call," she commanded.

In they went like lambs, and Kit followed.

"I reckon you boys showed plenty of pluck—most of you," she said, with a look at the tall lad, who shifted uncomfortably.

The boy who had tried to get the message through jumped up.

"But I reckon Miss Cairns showed the most pluck," he said. "It was mighty brave of her."

"Hear, hear!"

"Three cheers—"

Judith Cairns held up her hands.

"Silence!" she commanded.

There was silence at once, and she put her guns down on the desk, walked behind it, and faced the school.

"Now, boys," she said. "You thought I was brave. And I hope that in a real emergency I should be as brave as that. Most of you were brave, too. I needn't make special mention of those who weren't, because your eyes are as good as mine. But I've got this to say. You're good at playing jokes. So am I. I've just played a joke. Those weren't wild Indians—and they were paid half a dollar each to do what they did."

A startled murmur came from the boys.

"A joke for a joke," said Kit, smiling. "I reckon this will be the laugh of the whole district if it gets around!"

The boys crimsoned, and wriggled, and gave sickly smiles.

"You're not going to say anything, miss?" asked one of them anxiously. "We shouldn't dare show our faces."

"Me? I won't say anything," said Kit. "That's up to Miss Cairns, and I shouldn't think she'll tell about her joke, unless some of you get funny and play some more on her."

"That's true," said Judith Cairns. "And now—as you didn't want Bill's lesson on rope-throwing, and I reckon you made that clear to him, we may as well start with arithmetic."

She walked to the blackboard, and Kit slipped out.

In the school playground, removing his belt, was Bill, his face shiny from much washing, and his brow dark.

"Say, Bill," said Kit, dragging him aside, "she's tamed 'em. Got them eating out of her hand. If you've a complaint, just go and mention it to her before you start lashing about with that belt."

Bill grunted and grumbled, and then, when Kit had got it through his thick skull that the booby-trap had been intended for the school-marm, he gave a deep growl.

"Playing pranks on a gel?" he asked. "Huh! I'll show 'em."

He barged open the door and looked in.

"Well?" said Judith Cairns. "And what do you want? Oh, Bill, come in, please!" she added, recognising him.

The door closed, but a moment later she heard a chant:

"We're sorry, Bill. It won't ever happen again. Never."

Kit waited by her horse, smiling until the door opened again, for Bill to emerge; but he paused in the doorway, flourishing his belt.

"Remember," he barked, "I'm the whacker-in-chief from now on. You report any young gangster ter me, ma'am, and he'll certainly get this strap mighty hard where it'll do him most good."

He rejoined Kit, and shook his head, puzzled.

"Say, she seems to have got 'em right down and under," he said. "Purty quick and queer, I'm thinking."

"Ah, she's got the knack, Bill," smiled Kit. "Keeping order is jes' like throwing ropes—it's a knack. The laugh was all one-sided before, but she's turned it round. That's all."

"Waal, they wouldn't get me school-mustering not for a hundred dollars a week," said Bill. "It'd cost me all that in belts, I reckon."

END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.

BE certain to meet Kit and Redwing again next week in a fascinating COMPLETE story—and do tell all your friends about this lovely series.

Further chapters of our dramatic and unusual serial—



By
**Margery
Marriott**

FOR NEW READERS.

BRENDA DAY, who has spent most of her life in an orphanage, is delighted when she is asked to become companion to wealthy **VERONICA SCHOLLES**. Veronica lives with her aunt and uncle and her five-year-old brother, Dickie. Part of Brenda's duties consist of looking after the lovable youngster.

On arrival at Fernbank, the Scholes' house, she meets a mysterious boy, **RONALD BENSON**, who tells her he is working on her behalf and that for the sake of her future happiness she must remain at Fernbank and do well in her new position. He warns her to let no one know that they are friends and working together.

Veronica discovers that Brenda has a mysterious boy friend. She and a friend of her own, a certain Mr. Jones, try to discover who Brenda's helper is. Veronica and Mr. Jones are up to some game of their own.

One night Brenda slips out of the house, to follow up a certain clue with Ronald. They are chased by Veronica and Mr. Jones. Separating from Ronald, Brenda hides in a garden and there is caught by Mr. Jones himself. It is his garden. He marches her off to Fernbank, meaning to complain to Mr. and Mrs. Scholes, and thus get Brenda into trouble.

(Now read on.)

The Cunning of an Enemy!

HER arm held in a vice-like grip by Mr. Jones, Brenda was marched down the moonlit lane towards Fernbank.

Filled with dread at what would happen when her employers learned of her escapade, still amazed and rather bewildered by the dramatic events of that night, she yet tried to hide her feelings.

Mr. Jones glanced at her.

"Little fool, aren't you, meddling in things that don't concern you?" he hissed.

Brenda just managed to suppress a start of astonishment, for she had not expected any direct reference to the clash between her and Ronald, on the one hand, and this man and Veronica, on the other hand, which had resulted in her capture.

Keenly she pondered, while giving a little shrug of apparent indifference.

Obviously, this man did not know—unless, of course, he were bluffing—that the activities of Ronald and herself were vitally concerned with her own

future. Even she had no proof of that; only Ronald's word.

"Well, maybe I am a fool," Brenda said eventually. "But you've no right to treat me like this! I've done nothing wrong!"

"You've been trespassing in my garden, and that's quite enough for me!" returned Mr. Jones coolly. "I'm going to teach you to mind your own business!"

In silence they went on.

Tight-lipped, filled with increasing consternation as Fernbank drew nearer and nearer, Brenda found herself puzzling once again at this man's peculiar association with her young mistress.

Who was he? Why was he so interested in the activities of Ronald and herself? Why had he and Veronica

ORDERED TO LEAVE THE HOUSE. SENT BACK TO THE ORPHANAGE.

And then little Dickie came to Brenda's rescue.

been so affected by the drawing of the old mill which she had found in one of Dickie Scholes' toys?

Did he and Veronica know that that drawing, which Veronica herself had crudely executed when a child, and which marked the hiding-place of one of her story-books, was the vital link in the whole chain of Ronald's investigations on her behalf—the one outstanding clue which could change her entire future, bring her certain happiness?

Ronald declared that the book could achieve that. And if Ronald said so, then it must be right. But—

And she glanced at her captor again. Did this man know it? Was that why Veronica had stolen the drawing from her and tried to give it to him—only for Ronald to frustrate the attempt and snatch the drawing away at the very moment it was being handed over? Brenda's efforts at reasoning ended

there abruptly. For, even allowing that the answer to all those problems was "Yes," it still did not explain the reason why Veronica and this man had set themselves against her.

For they had. Of that there could be no shadow of doubt. But why—why? What possible bearing could her past and future life have upon them? At that moment Fernbank came in sight. Instantly all desire to grapple with the mystery oozed out of Brenda. She looked entreatingly up at her captor, and gulped:

"Please—please don't take me to the house! You know I wasn't doing any harm! I was only—only—"

She broke off. Mr. Jones had elevated one eyebrow in cynical amusement. Oh, what was the use? As though he'd listen to any kind of plea when he wanted to get her into trouble; when he was determined to fake a charge against her—something about damaging the flowers in his garden!

She felt ashamed then of that outburst. To think she'd cringed to this man! But the knowledge that she had already been in disgrace with her employers, and that this latest offence—considering she had left the house against orders—would almost certainly mean dismissal, had made her desperate.

"If ever you got the sack," Ronald had warned her, more than once, "it'd just about wreck everything!"

And she was being headed straight for the sack! They were at the entrance now. Mr. Jones was ringing the bell.

The maid who answered the door blinked as she recognised Brenda, but, jerking out of her stupor, stared at Mr. Jones as he rapped:

"Your master or mistress in?"

"Nun-no, sir! They're out, but they'll be back soon."

"Then," Mr. Jones said steelily, "we'll wait for their return. Excuse me!"

And, pushing Brenda before him, he strode into the hall.

The startled maid led the way to the drawing-room.

"I—I'll tell master and mistress you're here, sir, when they arrive," she said; and, shooting Brenda the strangest of looks, hurried out.

The door closed. Mr. Jones, releasing Brenda at last, took the chair nearest to it.

Not a word passed between them. Mr. Jones picked up a magazine, and, scanning it occasionally, kept a watch on his prisoner.

Brenda, in one of the armchairs, gripped her hands, waiting—waiting—

And while she waited she thought of Ronald, wondering where he was, if he knew of her fate, if he still had the precious paper, if he was even now trying to find her. She thought of Veronica, wondering—where is she? She's keeping out of the way. Why? Doesn't want to be seen with this man! That's it!

"Aha!" came an ejaculation from Mr. Jones, and he jumped to his feet.

Brenda rose to hers, too, for she also had heard the sound of a car drawing up outside the front door.

The Scholes had returned!

From the hall a series of sounds told their own story. A key in the front door; the pattering of footsteps—the maid's, of course; her voice ringing out rather excitedly; an exclamation from Mr. Scholes; two pairs of steps approaching the door—the one firm, heavy, determined; the other shorter, agitated.

Next moment the door opened and in came Mr. Scholes. Behind him, hands clasped, a look of anxiety on her face, was his wife. Both glanced first at Brenda as she stood on the far side of the room, head erect, lips compressed. Then they looked questioningly at Mr. Jones.

And Mr. Jones, acting the part of a righteousness-indignant victim, inclined his head.

"Mr. Scholes?" he inquired pleasantly. "Oh, Mr. Scholes, I'm terribly sorry to bother you at this hour of the night, but I know you will understand. This girl, I regret to say, has done a considerable amount of damage to my garden."

"Indeed?" Mr. Scholes looked serious. "When was that?"

"This evening—an hour or so ago."

"I see." Mr. Scholes darted Brenda an ominous look. "Is this true?" he demanded.

"It's true that I was in this man's garden," Brenda said, breathing heavily, "but I didn't do any damage. What's more, he knows I didn't!"

"But, my dear girl," Mr. Jones protested in injured tones, "those lilies and rose-trees, and that cucumber-frame—Really, sir," he added, addressing Mr. Scholes, "I'm a man of extreme tolerance as a rule, but this was beyond a joke. I pride myself on my garden. In the few months I have rented it I have lavished every care and more money than I could afford on its cultivation—"

Brenda writhed. Oh, clever, cunning schemer! He sounded so hurt; so genuinely suffering from a grievance.

"You admit being in this gentleman's garden, Brenda?" Mrs. Scholes asked tremulously.

"Yes," Brenda said almost fiercely. "But—"

"That's quite enough!" Mr. Scholes cut her short. He turned to Mr. Jones. "I deeply regret this happening, sir, and I will make good the damage as far as possible. And you may take it from me," he finished grimly, "that so far as this house is concerned the last has by no means been heard of it!"

Mr. Jones inclined his head. He nodded to Mrs. Scholes, gave Brenda a mildly admonishing look, and then, as Mr. Scholes held open the door, passed out, followed by the master of the house.

"Brenda—Brenda dear!" Mrs. Scholes said, coming towards her. "Oh, you silly, misguided girl, why did you do it? And why were you out so late? You know you were told to be in by eight!"

"I—I know, Mrs. Scholes," Brenda confessed.

"Why did you go out, then? Was it something important? If it was, dear," Mrs. Scholes said, a note of hope in her voice, "then tell me."

But Brenda, knowing that she could only tell the truth—and that if she did it might ruin whatever chance of success remained to her and Ronald—dumbly shook her head.

Mr. Scholes returned then. He left the door wide open, stood beside it and, flinging out his arm, exclaimed:

"Go up to your room, girl! This is the last straw. To-morrow you return to the orphanage!"

"Oh, but Arthur, don't you—don't you think—" came a beseeching cry from his wife, and she hastened towards him.

But Mr. Scholes, iron-faced, did not take his eyes off Brenda.

"The girl has had too many chances. Obviously, she is incorrigible. Well, go on. Don't stand here!" he rapped. "Upstairs! And you can start packing at once, because the earlier you leave in the morning, the better I shall be pleased!"

Dickie Takes a Hand!

SOMEHOW Brenda kept her lips from quivering as she moved towards the door. She turned to Mrs. Scholes, her eyes glisten-

ing. "I—I'm sorry, Mrs. Scholes," she murmured, and so husky was her voice that she hardly knew it as her own. "And—and I'm sorry, Mr. Scholes, that I've upset you, too," she went on. "I didn't mean to. I've been so happy here. I—I never wanted to— Oh, Dickie! He's woken up!" she added in concern.

For an unmistakable cry in Dickie's voice had come from upstairs.

Instinctively Brenda leaped forward, but Mr. Scholes, putting out an arm, pressed her back.

"Please, Vera," he nodded to his wife. And only when Mrs. Scholes had hurried out did he lower his arm. "You've finished with that now, my girl," he remarked sternly. He gave a twisted sort of smile. "Happy here, you say? I should think so indeed. We've treated you too leniently; that's been the whole trouble. Stay here until Mrs. Scholes comes down."

But when Mrs. Scholes did come down it was with a request that came as a distinct jar to the unsentimental master of the house and a thrilling joy to Brenda.

"Oh, please, Brenda, will you go up to Dickie? He wants you. I can't do anything with him. He seems to think—" Mrs. Scholes' voice broke—"you're not here," she finished, with a glance at her husband.

Without a word Brenda raced upstairs. Her heart was hammering. She could hear the voice of the little fellow she had come to love raised in frightened entreaty:

"Aunty Brenda—Aunty Brenda! I've wants you. Where is you, Aunty Brenda? Oh, don't go 'way!"

Into Dickie's bed-room she rushed. The light was on. He was sitting up in bed. And as he saw her his face became transformed. He flung out both arms and literally hurled himself into hers.

"Aunty Brenda—Aunty Brenda—you is here!"

"Yes, I'm here, darling," Brenda murmured. "And I wouldn't leave you—never!" Her arms tightened about him as she said that. Oh, if only it were true! If only—"I was only downstairs, darling," she said. "Did you wake up and wonder where I was?"

Dickie nodded, rubbing his wet cheek against hers.

"Yes, an—an' when I called an' you didn't come, I thought you'd gone 'way for always!"

Brenda closed her eyes. Darling, unsuspecting little fellow. She could guess what had happened. Dickie was accustomed to her arriving on the scene almost as soon as he called out during the night.

"Well, you're all right now, aren't you, darling?" she whispered. "You'd

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better go to bye-byes again. It's awful late! Oooo, lots an' lots late! In you go—curl up like a ballie. That's the idea!"

She tucked the bedclothes about him and bent to give him a good-night kiss. Her lips trembled. Perhaps it would be the last kiss of all.

She felt the touch of his little mouth on hers; the warm, soft pressure of his cheek as he snuggled close. Almost at once he was sound asleep, and she gently released him and stepped back.

For a long moment she stood there, staring down at his curly head. Her eyes were misty when she turned to the electric light switch. The light went off. She crept from the room, cautiously closing the door. She moved off down the passage in the direction of her own room, and then, from behind her, a voice said softly:

"Brenda!"

It startled her. She swung round. Mrs. Scholes was there. Her husband, lips pursed, stood in the background.

"Brenda dear," Mrs. Scholes said, resting a hand on her shoulder, "we—we were outside Dickie's room. We heard what was said, and—and we looked in. You love that boy, don't you, Brenda? Oh, but anyone could tell that. But even more important still—"

"The boy loves you!" Mr. Scholes put in gruffly. "That's why I'm prepared to give you one final chance."

Brenda's whole body glowed to the most glorious thrill.

"Oh, Mr. Scholes—Mrs. Scholes, you mean—I can stay!" she breathed.

"Because Dickie needs you," said Mr. Scholes brusquely. "That's the only reason. But if there's any more trouble, then, Dickie or no Dickie, you'll go back to the orphanage. Come, Vera!"

Mrs. Scholes patted Brenda's cheek before following her husband downstairs.

"I'm so dreadfully glad, dear," she whispered. "I'm sure you had some important reason to go out to-night. But you won't let me down again, will you?"

"Oh, never, Mrs. Scholes! Honestly! Never!" Brenda vowed.

And, filled with the most wonderful elation, she skipped along to her room. How marvellous! Saved, after all! But she'd have to exercise every care in future to see that nothing else happened. And the first thing to do would be to keep an eye on her puzzling young mistress, Veronica, who had not yet returned.

Oh, and another thing—Ronald! Simply must see him again, to find out how he had fared after they had parted last night, and to set his mind at rest about herself. First opportunity she got she'd phone him and arrange another meeting. But only when it was absolutely safe!

NEXT MORNING, when ushering Dickie into the dining-room for breakfast, Brenda was very much on her guard. What would Veronica's attitude be? What had her reactions been to everything that had transpired?

Brenda soon discovered that Veronica intended to put over one gigantic bluff. Not a word did she say about their clash last night; not by so much as a glance during the whole meal did she betray what she knew—or what she knew Brenda knew—about her and Mr. Jones, and the drawing of the old mill.

In the hall, when breakfast was over, Brenda was going upstairs with Dickie, when Mrs. Scholes appeared. Veronica behind her.

"Oh, there you are, Brenda!" she ex-



MR. SCHOLES flung out his arm. "Go to your room, girl!" he cried angrily. "This is the last straw." Brenda turned dismally to the door. The worst blow of all had fallen.

claimed. "Dickie, dear, run up to your play-room, will you? I'm having some little friends of yours in this morning. Brenda," she went on, as Dickie reluctantly let go of her hand and stumped upstairs. "I want you to go into Featheridge for me!"

"Why, certainly, Mrs. Scholes!" Brenda said eagerly, and her heart leapt, for this might mean a chance of seeing Ronald—at least, of phoning him.

"I wanted to go into town, aunty," Veronica instantly offered. "I'll get anything for you."

Mrs. Scholes looked at her and then chuckled.

"Good gracious! What an extraordinary girl!" she cried. "Have you forgotten, by any chance," she added, a note of flippancy in her voice, "that you're eighteen years of age in a few days' time, and that on that auspicious occasion you inherit a considerable sum of money?"

"No, aunty," Veronica said quickly. "But—but I don't—"

"You don't remember, evidently, that you've an appointment with the family solicitor this morning," Mrs. Scholes pursued, and Veronica, with a little "Oh!" fell back. "Silly girl, I expect you're too excited to remember anything. Come with me, Brenda," she added, leading the way to the kitchen, "and I'll give you a list of what I want."

It was news to Brenda that Veronica was to inherit a fortune on her eighteenth birthday, and her chief emotion was one of surprise.

Ten minutes later, with a basket over her arm, and a written shopping-list in her purse, Brenda sallied forth. Half a mile from Featheridge was the same telephone kiosk that Veronica had used to get into touch with Mr. Jones last night. Brenda used it to phone Ronald's house, but, to her disappointment, he was not at home.

"Well, perhaps I'll see him in town," she thought, striding on.

One of the first persons she did see in town was Mr. Jones himself. Mr. Jones did not see her, although, standing at a street corner, he was staring about him, obviously searching for someone.

Brenda, not wishing to be involved

in any more unpleasantness, skipped into the nearest doorway—that of a cafe. From there, pretending to be studying the contents of the window, she managed to keep Mr. Jones under observation.

But not for long. All at once her arm was seized, and, to her alarm and astonishment, she found herself being dragged willy-nilly into the cafe.

Disturbing News!

WHY—why, let go of my arm! Let— And then, recovering her balance sufficiently to twist round and look at her captor, Brenda jumped. "R-R-Ronald!" she gasped. "You—"

"Ssssh! Don't let everyone think I've kidnapped you," Ronald hissed back, releasing her arm. "Come over here."

He led the way to a table, set with coffee and pastries for one, tucked into a corner, and shielded from the window by a gauze curtain. Brenda, still blinking, sat down. Through the curtain and the shop window beyond she could just see Mr. Jones still peering about him.

"You spotted him, then?" Ronald went on, in a low voice, beckoning the waitress. "Another coffee and more pastries please. O.K. with you, Brenda? All right, miss. Old nosy parker," Ronald continued, leaning towards her, "has been on my trail all the morning. I gave him the slip last night, but he was evidently watching my house when I left for the mill today, because he started shadowing me at once."

"Then—then they know about us?" Brenda said, catching her breath.

"Afraid so." Ronald nodded grimly. "Yes, they know I'm the fellow you've been meeting. And that chap's stuck to me like a limpet. I simply couldn't shake him off until I hopped in here. Hadn't an earthly chance of trying to find that story-book at the mill. Brenda. But, I say!" He looked at her sharply. "Gosh, I'd clean forgotten! What happened to you last night?"

In a few words Brenda told him. He pursed his lips.

"Phew! A narrow shave, old thing! Good old Dickie! And Veronica?"

Quite anxiously he looked at her then, and Brenda half-smiled as she told him of her young mistress' attitude.

"Big bluffer!" Ronald said scathingly. "Cake?" He held out the dish. "Sugar? One, two, three! Now then," he resumed keenly, while Brenda stirred her coffee, "we've got to get hold of that book, and if I'm going to be shadowed by that amateur tee, then we've got to do some pretty nifty work, and I think I know what. Can you possibly meet me to-night?"

"I doubt it," Brenda said, "unless," she added, to a flash of inspiration, "I slip out in the middle of the night. It'd mean taking an awful risk—"

"We've got to take risks now, Brenda," Ronald muttered. "If we don't, we'll go under. That fellow and Veronica may not know what I do, or even what you do, about that drawing, but they've probably got a hunch, and if they find the book instead—"

He gave an eloquent gesture of disaster.

"Ronald," Brenda said, a new note in her voice, "why is Veronica acting as she is? Anyone would think she was my enemy. But that's so—so fantastic! It just—just can't be right, can it, Ronald—really?"

But Ronald, true to his perpetual reserve, would not be drawn.

"Sorry, Brenda, but that's one of the things I'd rather not tell you at this stage. As soon as we find that book we—"

His eyes lit up. Then, twisting round, to stare through the curtain, he elevated a thumb. "O.K.! He's gone! We'd better be getting along. You go first, and keep your eyes open."

"And to-night?" Brenda prompted, as she rose. "Where—what time?"

"Spinney at—well how about half-past twelve?"

"Everyone ought to be asleep by then," Brenda nodded. "Half-past twelve it is. But what's your idea to trick that fellow if he's hanging about then?"

"You'll see," was Ronald's tantalising reply.

And that was all the information Brenda received. Leaving the cafe, she made her purchases without catching sight of Mr. Jones again, and returned to Fernbank.

There were other tasks for her at the house, all of them connected with Veronica's coming inheritance; for a most stupendous party was to be held—dancing, tennis on the recently constructed hard court, bridge, games, and entertainments of all sorts.

Brenda assisted Mrs. Scholes to address more than a hundred invitations. That took until lunch. And immediately after lunch, she was detailed to phone several catering firms for estimates. A lengthy business this, and she wasn't finished the rather exacting, wearying repetition of questions and answers until well into the afternoon.

And then a little light relief. As Dickie was fretting to go into the grounds, Mrs. Scholes suggested that they might ask the gardener if he wanted any assistance with his marking out of the tennis court.

It was really for Dickie's benefit, as Brenda fully realised, but naturally Dickie, like all children, while jumping for joy at the suggestion, completely

forgot all about it once they arrived on the scene.

He had brought a teddy-bear and a golliwog, and, placing these in the bushes some yards apart, proceeded to stalk them, armed with a broken pop-gun, in the manner of a "Red Engine," as he put it.

"Red Indian, darling," Brenda corrected him gently.

"Why not a Red Engine, Auntie Brenda?" Dickie said, looking round from where he crouched on all fours.

"Well—well, because Red Indians aren't red engines," Brenda said, rather vaguely.

"I've seen a red engine," Dickie stated. "I saw one when we went for our holidays. And it had lots an' lots of trucks an' things. An' the driver said what a big boy I was. An'—an', Auntie Brenda, do you know," he went on slowly and distinctly, his big, brown eyes wide open, "he—he let me pull the hooter! Oooo! It was gorjus!" he ended, with an excited little shiver.

Then, mind fully concentrated on the inoffensive teddy-bear, he jerked his broken gun at it, and made banging noises.

Meanwhile, at a distant corner of the garden, well hidden by trees and shrubs, Veronica was talking to Mr. Jones over the privet-hedge; he, in the lane, ready to bob out of sight at the first sign of anyone's approach.

But if both of them were alert, they were clearly agitated, too. Veronica was pressing her knuckles to her chin, looking almost fearfully at her mysterious associate.

"You—you're sure about Ronald?" she said thickly. As Mr. Jones nodded she licked her lips. "Oh, my goodness! To think he's an old playmate of—of mine, and I never realised it! Then—then he must suspect—"

"Us!" said Mr. Jones, through his teeth. "Of course he does, confound him! Everything points to that—the drawing the girl got, showing where one of your kiddie's books is hidden, and then their going to the mill. He knows what he's up to, Veronica, and I've a nasty feeling he knows what we're up to, too. The cunning little monkey," he snarled—"getting that girl to help him! He couldn't have chosen anyone better placed. Right on the spot—"

"In this house," Veronica breathed.

"And able to tell him all you say and do."

"You don't think she knows anything?" Veronica jerked out.

"Oh, no; she's just helping him, and probably hasn't the foggiest idea what it's all about. But, see here, my girl, somehow we've got to forestall that fellow!"

"And Brenda, too," Veronica muttered. "Brenda's a menace as well."

"If she's helping him—"

"We've got to deal with both of them," was Mr. Jones' fierce declaration; "not only to get hold of that book—though goodness alone knows how that crazy young fool thinks it's going to help him—but to settle them personally, once and for all. And I know a way of dealing with this Brenda Day. Come closer. Now, then, supposing—"

Unaware that she was causing so much concern to two people who, as it happened, were figuring prominently in her own thoughts, Brenda was plucking off dead blossoms from one of the flower-beds, when—

"Auntie Brenda—Auntie Brenda!" cried a familiar voice, very excited, and out of the bushes Dickie came tearing. "Auntie Brenda," he panted, halting before her, "please—what's a menace?"

Brenda stared.

"A menace, Dickie?" she echoed. "Why, what an extraordinary word for you to get hold of! Where—"

"What is a menace, Auntie Brenda?" Dickie burst in impatiently, hopping up and down. "Ooooo, please, do tell me! What is it? Is it something nice?"

"Well, not exactly," Brenda said; and had to smile, even though she was puzzled at such a wee fellow having learned the word. "A menace, darling, is a sort of—sort of enemy. Look!"

She stooped, putting an arm about him, while trying to explain.

"Now if you had a very nice toy and—"

she began, when Dickie cut in. "A motie-car, Auntie Brenda?"

"Well, yes, a motor-car. Now if you had that, and you were playing with it in this garden, but another little boy—a nasty little boy—waited to take it away and keep it, and he hid in the bushes, waiting until you left the motor-car so that he could run off with it—why, then he'd be a menace," she ended, feeling rather pleased with her own ingenuity.

It certainly brought things home to Dickie. Slowly he put his head on one side. In open-mouthed astonishment, he regarded Brenda.

"Cooo!" he said. "An'—an' is you going to run away with Veronica's motie-car?"

"Goodness, no!" Brenda nearly doubled up. "What ever made you think I would?"

"Well, you said that what menaces do, Auntie Brenda, an'—an' I just heard Veronica telling someone that you were a men—men—menace," he finally stammered out.

Brenda's laughter froze. Startled, incredulous, she looked at Dickie's puzzled little face.

She—a menace to Veronica! Why, the whole thing was absurd! Veronica was a menace to her, perhaps, but—

but—

"Are you sure Veronica said a menace, dear?" she asked.

"Um! I heard her. Over there. She told a man you were a menace."

"It wasn't any other word like menace?"

"Ooo, no, Auntie Brenda! I know that. Menace. That's what Veronica said. 'Brenda's a menace.' I heard her—really, truly!"

Brenda drew a deep breath, and looked across the grounds.

She was a menace to Veronica. She, a girl from an orphanage—a girl with nothing to call her own, except her few clothes, and the salary she drew every month, was a menace to someone who had wealth, luxury—everything that money could buy—and was inheriting a fortune of her own within a few days.

But how—how? How could she be a menace to Veronica? What ever did this amazing revelation, so innocently brought to her by Dickie, really mean?

YOU will learn the answers to these questions—as Brenda does—when Ronald tells her the astounding truth about herself next week.